

## **Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme**

4<sup>th</sup> Extraordinary session of the Intergovernmental Council  
(Paris, 29 September-1 October 2021)

### **UNESCO'S WATER FAMILY**

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

#### **Summary**

The document provides a progress report on “Accelerating gender equality in the water domain: bridging the data gap and developing concrete actions”, pertaining to sub-item 6.3 UNESCO World Water Assessment Programme of the Provisional Agenda

Decisions proposed:

The Council may wish to discuss and approve the proposed Draft Resolution

**REPORT ON ACCELERATING GENDER EQUALITY IN THE WATER DOMAIN:  
BRIDGING THE DATA GAP AND DEVELOPING CONCRETE ACTIONS (Agenda  
sub-item 6.3: UNESCO World Water Assessment Programme)**

1. In line with the UNESCO gender strategy, in 2015 WWAP developed the first ever methodology, and 40 gender-sensitive indicators to collect and analyze sex-disaggregated water data for national, regional and global scale assessments, and for monitoring the progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In June 2018, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Intergovernmental Council of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme endorsed the Resolution XXIII-2<sup>1</sup>. Through this Resolution, the IGC Members recognized the UNESCO WWAP Toolkit on Sex-disaggregated Water Data and Gender-responsive indicators (the “Gender Toolkit”) as a critical tool to help close the gender gap in national and regional water data and enable gender mainstreaming into water policies. The Member States are encouraged to facilitate the Toolkit’s dissemination through joint extra-budgetary projects, capacity building workshops, and field data collection efforts, as well as to provide financial and in-kind support to realize these actions.

2. Following the 2018 IHP-IGC Resolution XXIII-2<sup>1</sup>, UNESCO WWAP launched the second edition of the Gender Toolkit in 2019 to explicitly reflect the interlinkages with/among the 17 SDGs of the 2030 Agenda, and to incorporate essential inputs gathered from field testing conducted in four Member States. The 2019 Gender Toolkit holds 105 gender-responsive indicators to address ten interrelated ‘water and gender’ priority topics and includes a full methodological package for the collection of sex-disaggregated water data with detailed guidelines and questionnaires.

3. Over the period 2018-2021, the Gender Toolkit has been applied in intra-household surveys in a few countries (Botswana, El Salvador, Honduras, Namibia), and the gender-responsive indicators have been used to implement institutional monitoring of sex-disaggregated water data (by Argentina and Colombia); finally, several trainings, workshops, webinars have been provided to a total of 56 countries. In line with these efforts, WWAP in 2020 has launched a dedicated regional capacity development programme that aims to address four different sub-regions for two years on a rotational basis (e.g. ongoing for West Africa, Central and South America, and Asia-Pacific SIDS). The capacity programme, started up with WWAP core-funding’s seed-money, look for international, regional and local partners/donors to expand the number of trainees and of countries involved.

4. 2020 marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action and the 5-year milestone towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. Despite numerous international gender- and water-related commitments the world is not on track with the global promises made as reflected in a dedicated ‘Taking Stock’ assessment document<sup>2</sup>. In this context and aligned with the UNESCO Gender Equality Priority, WWAP is leading a Multi-stakeholder Coalition for the Call for Action initiative: “Accelerating gender equality in the water domain: bridging the data gap and developing concrete actions”. The initiative has been presented to the UNESCO Permanent Delegations and Observers in July 2021, and launched globally at the

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<sup>1</sup> <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000265364>

<sup>2</sup> <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000377601>

Stockholm World Water Week in August 2021. The Call aims at the identification and implementation of good practices and concrete actions to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in the water domain.

5. The Call for Action is supported by a Multi-Stakeholder Coalition, consisting of supportive Member States, international, regional and non-governmental organizations, academia; and civil society. The Call is based on specific recommendations for concrete actions reported in a dedicated Position Paper<sup>3</sup>, prepared with the support of the WWAP Water and Gender Working Group. The support of the Member States is crucial to call for the swift implementation of actions, including the urgent collection of sex-disaggregated data, gender-inclusive strategies and policies, and adequate gender-equal financing. The initiative is set to span the period up to the completion date of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. An important milestone will be the UN Conference on the Mid-Term Review of the International Water Action Decade in 2023, where members of the Multi-Stakeholder Coalition will be able to showcase their activities related to the Call.

6. Counting on its expertise in the water and gender domain and its leading role in methodological approaches for water and gender analyses, UNESCO WWAP recalls the 2018 Resolution and reiterates to the Member States of the IHP Intergovernmental Council the need for financial and in-kind support to disseminate the Gender Toolkit. Moreover, WWAP solicits the interest, goodwill, and support of the Member States for bringing forward the critical and urgent Call for Action referred to in this document.

## **Draft RESOLUTION XTR-IV-2**

### **UNESCO WWAP-led Call for Action: “Accelerating gender equality in the water domain: bridging the data gap and developing concrete actions”**

The Intergovernmental Council of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme of UNESCO

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|------------------------|--|
| <b>Bearing in mind</b> | the UNESCO global priority of Gender Equality, in line with the UNESCO Gender Equality Action Plan (2014-2021),  |
| <b>Highlighting</b>    | that the Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5) on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment and the Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6) on Water and Sanitation for all have evident interlinkages, as no aspect or impact of the changing hydrological cycle is gender neutral, |
| <b>Recalling</b>       | that the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development also  |

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<sup>3</sup> <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000377601>

pledges the need for high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by gender (SDG 17, Target 18), as they are key to decision-making and in ensuring that no one is left behind,

**Reiterating**

that the “Water and Gender Toolkit”, developed by the UNESCO World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP), consisting of a methodological framework and gender-responsive indicators, was endorsed in June 2018 by the 23<sup>rd</sup> Inter-Governmental Council of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme – IHP (Resolution XXIII-2) with the request for financial and in-kind support to disseminate the Gender Toolkit among the Member States,

**Acknowledging**

that UNESCO WWAP has developed in 2019 a second version of the ‘Water and Gender Toolkit’ based on the field tests done in four Member States, containing 105 gender-responsive indicators, to close the gender gap in national and regional water data, enable the creation of data-driven gender-responsive water policies, foster gender-transformative actions in water strategies, and monitor progress towards SDG 6 and SDG 5 and the interlinkages with the other SDGs,

**Recognizing**

that the year 2020 marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and that, despite numerous international gender- and water-related commitments, the world is still not on track with the global promises made,

**Recognizing further**

that the limited gains made in the past decades are at risk because of the COVID-19 pandemic, and how urgent actions are now more crucial than ever,

**Taking note**

that UNESCO WWAP is leading a Multi-Stakeholder Coalition to assess the progress made so far towards gender equality in the multi-faceted water domain, through the interconnections between water, gender, and numerous relevant aspects (e.g. health, governance, knowledge resources, transboundary waters, agriculture, industry and enterprise, human rights-based water management, migration, displacement and climate change, indigenous and traditional knowledge and community water rights, and education and training), which identification, evaluation, and associated recommendations for concrete actions are put forward in the Call for Action: “Accelerating gender equality in the water domain: bridging the data gap and developing concrete actions”, launched in August 2021,

**Calls upon**

the interest, goodwill and support of the Member States to the critically urgent “Call for Action” promoted by UNESCO WWAP

to accelerate gender equality and women's empowerment (SDG 5) in the water domain (SDG 6), and to join the Multi-stakeholder Coalition to advocate the development and implementation of gender-inclusive strategies, and sustain concrete actions among which to ensure adequate gender-equal financing;

**Encourages**

the provision of financial and in-kind support to implement the necessary concrete activities to support this Call for Action, including the implementation of integrative water and gender analyses, capacity development programmes on water and gender and advancing the collection of sex-disaggregated water data in all regions; and to sustain WWAP's advocacy process (e.g. communication campaign, establishment of a digital community to exchange best practices) and monitoring of actions and progress in light of the celebrations for the completion of the UN Water Decade in 2023).