





THE **OVERARCHING GOAL** OF THE **WOMENS WATER DIPLOMACY NETWORK** IS:

**WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND LEADERSHIP
IN HIGH-LEVEL DECISION MAKING IN
TRANSBOUNDARY BASINS**

Which will be achieved through **objectives** and **activities**,
defined within **five strategic pillars**.



Strategic Pillars:

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND LEADERSHIP IN HIGH-LEVEL DECISION-MAKING IN TRANSBOUNDARY BASINS

PILLAR 1



GENDER AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

In transboundary
water decision making

PILLAR 2



PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING

Capacity development &
experience exchange

PILLAR 3



RESEARCH COOPERATION

Supporting network
members & institutions

PILLAR 4



LINKAGES TO BASIN

Regional and
global processes

PILLAR 5



PROCESS SUPPORT

Strategic analysis; Design, monitoring & evaluation; Communications; Partnership development



‘We call upon our fellow decision makers to leverage all available skills, experience, and leadership to improve cooperation across the Basin and achieve our shared goals of sustainable water management and development.’

Excerpt from the 2020 Women in Water Diplomacy Network Joint Statement




Women in Water Diplomacy Network's first-ever Global Network Forum; August 2022






Women in Water Diplomacy Network Official Side Event at the 2023 UN Water Conference

WEDNESDAY MARCH 22, 2023 | 15:30-16:45 ET
UN SIDE EVENT ROOM A | UN HEADQUARTERS | NYC



Elevating Critical Voices in Water Diplomacy

This event highlights the critical importance of inclusive water diplomacy processes with a focus on linkages between women, water, peace, and security, and the value of water for peace and human security.




CO-CONVENORS:



WWDN CO-CONVENING PARTNERS:



WITH THE SUPPORT OF:





Women in Water Diplomacy Network at the 2023 UN Water Conference





“WWDN, is a vibrant and vivid network, where meeting women experts in water in other countries help me to educate myself through real life experience from around the globe and how various questions and needs were tackled. This exposure enriches my experience and develops my own experience in water within the context of diplomatic ways of bringing women together to understand our needs and challenges.”

Dr Maha Abdelrahim Ismail | UNDP/GEF Groundwater
Project Team Leader Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat





‘The Women in Water Diplomacy Network provides women with a space where we can learn and share experience about water governance and transboundary cooperation issues. It is very empowering to be part of this Network.’

Yodit Balcha | founding member of the Women in Water Diplomacy Network and serves on the Network Leadership Council





“Water is life, and life is precious. My passion for water cooperation is driven by the belief that equitable access to clean water is a fundamental human right and by cooperation we can protect and restore our shared water resources for the benefit of people and nature and for sustainable development.”

Dr Muna Mohammed Musnad Farah | Water Resources
Modeler, ENTRO: Member of the Women in Water
Diplomacy Network’s Leadership Council





“Botswana is a landlocked country in Southern Africa and most of its headwaters come from neighbouring states, hence water-linked. This makes water cooperation precious like our diamonds. Botswana is therefore signatory to the Limpopo Watercourse Commission; the Zambezi Watercourse Commission; the Orange-Senque Watercourse Commission and the Okavango Watercourse commission.”

Bogadi Mathangwane | Commissioner, ORASECOM Secretariate





“Gender equality is essential for water cooperation, the meaningful inclusion of women in water diplomacy will result in durable solutions which foster stability and security. No one gains by ignoring the immense potential of women's leadership in transboundary water cooperation, governance and peace.”

Bethlehem Mengistu | founding Member of Women in Water Diplomacy Network, Global Coordinator, Agenda for Change





“The WWDN is a valuable network empowering women. It gathers scientific women representing different environment, culture and scientist concerns. The network promotes our interests as women in communication, research collaboration, career advancement and mentoring. The network is always trying to foster opportunities for training and gaining more knowledge in the field of water especially the transboundary shared water.”

Prof. Karima Attia | Emeritus prof., Nile Research Institute and former Director of Water Resources Research Institute National Water Research Center





“My passion for water cooperation is driven by the urgent need to address escalating water demands due to climate change, population growth, the number of countries increasing and industrial expansion. As a woman observing these global challenges, I believe proper management of water resources is crucial to prevent shortages and conflicts, emphasizing the importance of sustainable and equitable water use.”

Belyou Tekola Boundary and Transboundary Rivers Lead
Executive Office Hydro Politics and Diplomacy Desk Head,
Ministry of Water and Energy Ethiopia





“Every drop shared is a bridge built, a conflict calmed. Witnessing the transformative power of water cooperation, where scarcity becomes opportunity and borders blur into shared solutions, fuels my unwavering passion. It is about ensuring equitable access, fostering peace, and safeguarding our planet’s future, one drop at a time.”

Dr. Nehal Adel | Head of Central Department for External Cooperation, Nile Water Sector, Ministry of Water, Egypt





“Women and youth possess immense potential to contribute significantly to water cooperation and overall water management. However, their contributions often go unrecognized, leading to critical concerns. Addressing gender-related issues in water cooperation is not only about empowering women; it also elevates the role of women and youth in water governance.”

Maria Amakali | Director, Directorate of Water Resource Management Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform





“The network is full of supportive and inspiring water women. As the youngest member of the Network, I see the importance of the Network in my professional life as I meet water role models.”

Meerim Seidakmatova | Central Asia Regional Network on Youth Environmental Activism





“The Women in Water Diplomacy Network has allowed me personally to grasp a variety of issues pertaining to sustainable development, and to share my experience on transboundary cooperation whilst enjoying the conviviality and friendship. It is a safe platform to realise your inner potential to grow into a force to reckon with. It ultimately brings me satisfaction to see the miles we have walked and the inspiration we have created collectively.”

Julienne Ngo Yebga | Stockholm International Water Institute &
Women in Water Diplomacy Network





“The Women in Water Diplomacy Network stands at the confluence of the water, peace and security and the women, peace, and security agendas. The Network supports women’s leadership in dialogue and peace mediation processes in boundary crossing basin communities – in the Nile Basin, Central Asia & Afghanistan, the Orange-Senqu Basin, North America and across our growing global community.”

Elizabeth A. Koch | Senior Manager, Environmental Law Institute and Process Support Team Lead for the Women in Water Diplomacy Network





“It is better to cooperate regarding water issues as opposed to conflicts. Making the world peaceful is what drives me to water cooperation. Water is an economic good since it drives all the other sectors, for example energy, industries, health and agriculture thus the benefits of cooperation alleviates poverty, thus the passion to cooperate with other countries in water issues.”

Margaret Irungu | Deputy Director Transboundary Water Resources Department, Ministry of Water, Sanitation and Irrigation, Kenya; Nile Basin Initiative Desk Officer, Kenya & Deputy Project Coordinator Horn of Africa Groundwater for Resilience Project.





“For sustainability transformations to happen an ever-closer cooperation across all borders is an urge, a must, indeed the only way. Transformational change is only possible when everyone is equally in.”

Cholpon Aitakhunova | Programme Manager at Collective Leadership Institute (CLI) Potsdam





“Addressing gender-related issues in water cooperation is necessary as research shows that including women in peace processes makes agreements more durable and leads to lower instances of conflict. But in this case, we should find out how and why women’s inclusion makes agreements more durable; maybe women make reliable and responsible decisions which focuses on a win win approach.”

Aigerim Karibay | Senior Engineer, KMG Engineering and specialist working on water resource management at the local and basin levels





“My passion for collaboration in the field of water resources is fueled by the understanding that water is not just a resource, but a link between communities and different personalities. By working together, we can ensure equal access to water, promote peace and preserve this resource for future generations.”

Minura Begishbek kyzy | Mercy Corps Kyrgyzstan





“Involving women in water diplomacy isn't just about equality; it's about improving the quality of solutions. Our voices bring diverse perspectives, empathy and a focus on the well-being of communities, which are essential for forging sustainable agreements and promoting cooperation over water resources.”

Gulzhan Makhmudova | National Project Coordinator/Advisor
for the EU-funded project Climate Change and Resilience
in Central Asia (Ferghana project), UNDP Kyrgyzstan





‘The Women in Water Diplomacy Network provides a unique and vibrant forum for connecting, enhancing capacity, and raising the profile of women around the world who are playing key leadership roles in transforming the ways in which we think about and manage critical issues related to water, peace, and security.’

Jessica Troell | Senior Attorney, Director, International Water Program, Environmental Law Institute





“The Women Water Diplomacy Network has allowed me to learn from so many amazing women water diplomats, specialists, and experts and I feel humbled to support a network that has also helped empower many women water diplomats and leaders to grow in their careers and support peaceful cooperation processes.”

Katie Goldie-Ryder | Programme Manager,
Stockholm International Water Institute





‘To navigate the currents of water diplomacy, gender equality is a primary tributary that supports empowerment, development and sustainability. For the Okavango region, addressing gender-related issues is not just a choice; it is the current that moves us towards a future where every choice counts, every voice matters, and every life thrives.’

Yara Fernandes Lourenco | Chief of Party,
ECCO Okavango Basin Program





“To address the complexity of the water difficulties my country is facing, cooperation in the water sector is not only required but also essential . Water diplomacy can tackle issues related to the use of water resources and offer sustainable solutions.”

Hana Teshome | International Legal Affairs Directorate
General Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ethiopia





“Gender mainstreaming eventually results in truly effective and long-lasting water cooperation that gives broader results.”

Oygul Usmanova | Head of International Communications
Division Scientific-Information Center Interstate Coordination
Water Commission of Central Asia (SIC ICWC)





“In a world facing multiple crises and aspiring peace building, the role of women in leadership and decision-making in water diplomacy and cooperation is crucial. The global water crisis can only be addressed with transformative thinking that includes women and with a new governance framework. Diplomatic skills and a good network of women doing similar work within their regions are needed and I believe that the Network will provide a good opportunity to learn and contribute with my knowledge.”

Dr. Yolanda Lopez-Maldonado | Global Diversity Foundation





“As a member of the Women in Water Diplomacy Network, I believe in the power of diverse perspectives to address complex global challenges. Water diplomacy requires inclusive approaches, and women often bring unique insights and solutions to the table. By collaborating within this network, I aim to assist in the implementation of sustainable water resource management and promoting gender equality in decision-making processes.”

Foman Forough | Water Resource Specialist, South Nation Conservation Authority, Canada & (Former) General Director of the Kabul River Basin, National Water Affairs Regulation Authority, Afghanistan





“Water co-operation must work for all stakeholders if it is to be sustainable. We have seen progress in integrating the needs and realities of the environment, climate change, and sustainability of water resources into water co-operation planning and management. Similarly, we need to see progress in incorporating gender-related issues and intersectionality that articulate differences in water needs, water access, and water values to have a complete and accurate picture of what all stakeholders need. Without this, we can not foster sustainable water co-operation.”

Kathryn Pharr | Founder of Community of Women in Water





“I'm a member of the Women in Water Diplomacy Network because I believe in the power of diverse perspectives and inclusive dialogue to tackle complex water challenges effectively. Addressing gender-related issues in water cooperation is crucial because women often bear the brunt of water scarcity, yet their insights and contributions are integral to crafting holistic, equitable.”

Beesan Shonnar | Palestinian Women Water Network
Steering Committee Member and Water & Sanitation Engineer





“Being in and around water brings me joy. But it is only through communities and Networks like these that we can truly witness the tangible impact of water co-operation. The Women in water Diplomacy Network makes us feel as though we are a part of something greater than ourselves. It can give us opportunities to connect with people, to reach for our goals, and makes us feel safe, secure and empowered.”

Letizia Zuliani | Assistant Project Officer, Environmental Co-operational Unit, OSCE





“Cooperation starts with understanding, and understanding starts when you speak up! Water is a need for every society, and cooperation that is driven by understanding each and everyone's perspective is where we can address gender-related issues. As a member of the Women in Water Diplomacy Network, I have come to understand the importance of sisterhood and speaking up for what you need. Cooperation starts with inclusivity, and inclusivity starts with understanding.”

Yodit Balcha | Alliance of Biodiversity International and CIAT-Africa Hub & Women in Water Diplomacy Leadership Council





“Creating a conducive environment for enhanced women participation in water resource management and development is key to sustainable development. The Women in Water Diplomacy Network provides such.”

Tracy Molefi | Programme Coordinator, OKACOM Secretariat





“As an Indigenous woman, I have been raised with my traditional teachings that water is sacred, water is life. Our most sacred ceremonies uses water, water from the sky, and place where water flows upon the earth are vitally important to the Apache people, including near springs, seeps, rivers and creeks. Water provides us sustenance through our traditional culture and religious practices. Water is the unifying force for our people, it has the ability to heal, there is no alternative to water.”

Gwendena Lee-Gatewood | Co-Chair, Indigenous Women Leadership Network (IWLN),





“One of the main things that drives me in water is to create opportunities for more women, and to think that they can be inspired by something they hear or see you doing for or with them. That engages me and encourages me not to give up. I'm excited about what we can do together” Marissa Mar Pecero Water Women in LAC.”

Marissa Mar Pecero | Water in Women Community LAC





‘I would like to thank our sisters from the Nile Basin and other Basins in the Network for having our backs, helping us and making us feel so strong. We have a long way to go to achieve our goals in Central Asia and Afghanistan, but we have confidence with your help.’

Tais Reznikova, Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC) | founding member, Central Asia and Afghanistan Network





‘When I fly over the vast expanse of Central Asia, I do not see political borders, just endless steppes and mountains stretching for miles. But when I spot rivers and lakes, everything comes to life below. It is clear how crucial water is for the region, ignoring the boundaries we have created. Cooperation is our only path to prosperity.’

Tais Reznikova | Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC) | founding member, Central Asia and Afghanistan Network





Orange-Senqu River Commission Commitment

‘The Orange Senqu River Commission pledges to support the Women in Water Diplomacy Network’s Global Strategy and its objectives that emphasise peace and security.’

Commissioner Bogadi Mathangwane | Orange-Senqu River Commission
| founding member of the Orange-Senqu Network





“Walking alone is often lonely, unpredictable and long. In the company of our Women in Water Diplomacy Network sisters and brothers all around the world – and the collaboration, partnership, mentorship and support that binds us - we are stronger together and can achieve much!”

Dr Zodwa Dlamini | on behalf of the
Women in Water Diplomacy Leadership Council





“The Shared Waters Partnership has had the honor of supporting water diplomacy processes in conflict sensitive basins for over 10 years. Throughout this time, the gender gap in high level water decision making has been more than apparent. The Women in Water Diplomacy was initiated by SWP as a targeted engagement to address and transform this dynamic.”

Kerry Schneider | Senior Manager,
Shared Waters Partnership Program, SIWI





“The Women in Water Diplomacy Network has been a consistent and tremendous source of inspiration for my career development. Through this Network, I have connected with numerous exceptional women dedicated to the fields of water and environmental conservation.”

Lyazzat Syrlybayeva | Project analyst, UNDP Kazakhstan |
Member of the Women in Water Diplomacy Network





“Network members have helped me reach out to potential partners in the region, allowed me to brainstorm and test ideas for new initiatives, and mentored me when I needed guidance. The Network inspires me every day and makes me feel that we are all on a learning journey together.”

Sogol Jafarzadeh | Governance and Gender
Coordinator for East and Southern Africa,
Member of the Women in Water Diplomacy Network





“I have learned much from the Women in Water Diplomacy Network about the role and importance of involving women in water diplomacy. As member of Nile/NEL Technical Advisory Committee, I was able demonstrate the importance of gender equality and social inclusion in Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) /Nile Equatorial Subsidiary Action Program (NELSAP) and projects and this will be taken into consideration during the NBI/NELSAP Project cycle.”

Jacqueline Nyirakamana | Transboundary Water Resources Cooperation Specialist and Nile Equatorial Lakes Technical Committee Chair in Ministry of Environment, Rwanda; Member of the Women in Water Diplomacy Network’s Leadership Council





“Gender inequalities often reflect broader social injustices, making their resolution crucial for sustainable development, by integrating gender considerations, water cooperation efforts can build resilience to challenges like water scarcity and climate change, benefiting communities through inclusive and informed decision-making processes.”

Safia Saldeeye | Office of the President, Somalia





“When water is a shared resource between two nations, challenges and objectives are also shared. In this sense, this network of women in water diplomacy gives us the opportunity to share their experiences with a common goal of improving water management.”

Commissioner Adria Resendez | International Boundary and Water Commission, Mexico





“The US International Boundary and Water Commission is appreciative of the great work of the North American Women in Water Diplomacy Network and supports the efforts to advance women as leaders in transboundary water decision-making. Both our organizations share a common mission of improving the health and welfare of vulnerable border communities through innovative and bold solutions associated with access to clean and reliable water.”



Dr. Maria-Elena Giner | Commissioner International Boundary and Water Commission, U.S. Section



Women in Water Diplomacy Network Special Event with the United States Institute of Peace



Celebrating the International Day of Women in Diplomacy; June 2023



“Since 2017 we've seen the Women in Water Diplomacy Network grow as the world increasingly recognizes the critical role of women water leaders around the world. The launch of WWDN in North America is an important and natural expansion of these efforts to foster networks at the intersection of women’s rights, resilience, and water. The Environmental Law Institute is honored and excited to support this work.”

Jordan Diamond | President, Environmental Law Institute (ELI)





“A key take-away for me in our partnerships with indigenous women leaders is a reminder on the importance of respect and listening to learn, along with the importance of building relationships.”

Dr Sharon Megdal | Director of the Water Resources Research Center at the University of Arizona





**“The Women in Water
Diplomacy Network provides a much-
needed network and community
building space for women working in
and around shared waters.”**

Dr Andrea Kristen Gerlak | Director,
Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy





“As women, we understand the importance of supporting other women. Women take on many roles - mother, daughter, leader, teacher, and so on – all in one day. As leaders, we must bring other women along with us and help them be better than we are. The Indigenous Women Leadership Network supports Indigenous women, particularly in the Colorado River Basin, to bridge the knowledge gap, support women in leadership, and help them succeed in their careers. When one woman succeeds, we all succeed.”

Lorelei Cloud | Vice Chair, Southern Ute Tribal Council
and co-chair of the Indigenous Women Leadership Network





“Empowering women in water diplomacy not only unlocks our potential, but also through our perspectives - and abilities to listen and connect - opens the floodgates to more sustainable solutions.”

Jennifer Pitt | Director, Colorado River Program, National Audubon Society





“Indigenous women, as water warriors, have an important role and responsibility to protect the water. By coming together with each other and our allies we create opportunities to further protect the land and water for future generations.”

Chairwoman Amelia Flores | Colorado River Indian Tribes





“To meet the challenges facing the Colorado River Basin, we need leadership from diverse voices. The Women in Water Diplomacy Network helps ensure women are in decision-making roles where they can drive solutions that help people and nature thrive together.”

Ted Kowalski | Colorado River Initiative Lead and Senior Program Officer, Environment Program, Walton Family Foundation





“CAP is honored to be part of the Women in Water Diplomacy effort and to contribute to fostering inclusive, cooperative dialogue and decision-making around water resources.”

Brenda Burman | Central Arizona Project General Manager





“Water is fundamental to life and the prosperity of communities across the globe. Empowering the voices of women and integrating the diverse perspectives of marginalized community members is critical to sustainably and equitably managing our precious water resources. Stantec is proud to support the Women in Water Diplomacy Network in creating this important forum where ideas, understanding, and dialogue can flow.”

Kari Shively | Senior Vice President and Water Business Leader,
Stantec





“The energy and humanity generated by the Women in Water Diplomacy Network is phenomenal and inspiring no matter where in the world one goes. This fellowship, this sisterhood, gives life to all who touch it, giving us the energy needed to bring people together to find solutions to help both people and planet.”

Felicia Marcus | William C. Landreth Visiting Fellow,
Stanford University, Water in the West Program





“Women provide diverse, strategic, and healthy perspectives to decision-making, and through mentorship, training, shared experience, and skills transfer, the Women in Water Diplomacy Network helps to broaden inclusion within the water industry today and into the future.”

Colby Pellegrino | Deputy General Manager,
Southern Nevada Water Authority





“Mentoring women in science and policy helps promote collaboration in water management and decision making. It is exciting to support the mission of the North American Women in Water Diplomacy Network and share our experience in the western United States with a diverse group of women leaders.”

Juliet McKenna | Principal Hydrogeologist,
Montgomery & Associates





“To deal with - and overcome - today's climate and water challenges, we need to break down silos and build cross-functional collaborations. Harnessing the power of women to support one another, join forces and rethink old paradigms is the key to achieving this goal.”

Tamar (Tami) Shor | COO, N-Drip #Bringthemhomenow





“In this era of conflict and war, water scarcity poses a great threat to society. The diplomacy of women working across multiple boundaries is the best approach, perhaps the only viable approach, to ensure we equitably and peacefully find ways to share this precious resource. I am honored to be a part of the North American Women In Water Diplomacy Network launch.”

Meena Westford | Executive Policy Advisor,
Colorado River, Metropolitan Water District
of Southern California

