



Taskforce "Women for Water"
Business and Professional Women International

- Free high-quality legal services should be provided to local authorities, national authorities and civil society organisations to fully understand the consequences of public-private-partnerships negotiations, so that public control can be guaranteed.
- An inter-ministerial dialogue on gender should be established and incorporated into the existing ministerial networks. This should be supported by regular contact between the public sector and civil society to monitor progress made on gender mainstreaming in Integrated Water Resource Management.

How can I get involved?

- Contact your own Federation and ask about their activities
- Contact a member of the Taskforce (see page 3) and/or a member of the Standing Committee on Environment of BPW International; see www.bpw-international.org
- Become a Water Ambassador and send an email to: water@bpdwnl.nl. The tasks of the "water ambassadors" entail:
 - Be the liaison between the Taskforce and active women in their region/ community
 - Report about projects, good examples, ideas etc. on water/(management)
 - "translate" information both ways: help create awareness
 - Assist local groups or "organize" assistance (from the Taskforce or others)
 - assist / be part of the "Women Water Watch", monitoring the Beijing+10 and millennium goals in relation to water issues
- Become a member of an existing (local) network for water management
- Start asking questions about the water situation in your area (see website)
- Get involved in one of the projects (see website) or set up your own!
- Find supporters and funding for the projects and Taskforce
- Safe water in and around your home and at work (see suggestions at the website)



www.bpdwnl.nl/water water@bpdwnl.nl
P.O. Box 184, 1260 AD Blaricum, the Netherlands



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- **Everybody's business; especially women**
 - **A public common good**
 - **A vulnerable resource**
- Why Women for Water?**
- Water is:
- **Change our focus**
 - **Take responsibility**
 - **Act locally and join forces globally**
- We have to:**

When there is no Water, there is no life. Without safe drinking water and without clean fresh water, we cannot grow food, sustain our own existence.

"Water is everybody's business": it is not only the business of technicians, of women in countries where there is a water shortage, of farmers or governments, but of all of us. In most cases use of water is unbalanced. It is up to civil society to express their needs, come up with good local solutions and insist on balancing the management and use of water.

Good **"water management"** is about **"behavior"**. Water development and management should be participatory, involving users, planners and policy makers at all levels – as also stated in the "Dublin Principles"

Major conflicts in our times will be about water. Water or lack thereof is the main reason for conflict in the future. There can be no democracy and no peace without control over a main resource like water by the people(s) themselves.

Safe and affordable water is **a human right**. Water is central in sustainable development and poverty eradication.

Women play a central and essential role; they are the main users and suppliers in many parts of the world. Women motivate and educate; take action. Governments are slow in implementing their own principles and sometimes do not even know how to do this.

Gender-sensitive, environmentally sound, locally appropriate and affordable technologies are needed to realize the water and sanitation targets.

BPW International decided to be part of the "Women for Water Initiative" and, after discussion off a resolution at the XXIVth Congress in 2002, set up an **International Taskforce "Women for Water"**



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What does the Taskforce do?

The taskforce (members) have the following tasks:

- I. Set up of taskforce:
 - a. (at least) One member in every region
 - b. Link up with members of the Standing Committee on Environment and Regional Coordinators
- II. Define issues and projects and find partners
- III. "Spread the word" and motivate women all over to participate
- IV. Find and/or create tools for women to participate, get ideas about their involvement, their (possible) contribution
- V. Get funding (EU, national governments, "private" funds)
- VI. Find and "coach" women as "water ambassadors"
- VII. On request – assist Federations in setting up national taskforces on "water"
- VIII. Set up website for info exchange and communication
- IX. Set up knowledge bank / databank: "best practise" and information
- X. Stimulate and assist in building gender accountability into policies and accounts in the water and sanitation sectors by assisting in further developing the necessary tool(s) and lobbying for their use
- XI. Set up "Women for Water Watch" to monitor the development of Agenda 21 and the millennium goals as far as "Water" is the issue
- XII. Participate actively in influencing government-policies regarding Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) e.g. by taking part in international (UN) conferences related to the subject, becoming a member of the Global Water Partnership
- XIII. Promote participation of BPW federations – where possible – in national water partnerships
- XIV. Stimulate (and assist) BPW women at national / regional level to participate actively in the influencing of government-policies regarding IWRM
- XV. Together with the Standing Committee on Legislation assist in setting up free high-quality legal services to assist in understanding the consequences of public-private partnership negotiations, so that public control over public-private partnerships can be guaranteed
- XVI. Assist in setting up (local) projects, find funding, course-development.

Current projects and plans already carried out and the planning up to 1 May 2005, can be found on the website: www.bpwnl.nl/water in the Taskforce Plan of Action etc.



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Who are the members of the Taskforce and how to contact them?

- Rita Assogna, Germany: Rita.assogna@t-online.de
 - Alice Bouman, Netherlands, one of the coordinators of the "Women for Water Initiative": alice@genderduurzaamheid.nl
 - Dianne Glenn, New Zealand: Dianne.glenn@bpw-international.org
 - Pat Lunn, UK, Chair of the Standing Committee on Environment: pat.lunn@dpw-international.org
 - Yara Rosemann – Blochtein, Brasil, member of the Standing Committee on Environment of BPW International: yaraeco@terra.com.br
 - Elise Sonnenberg, South Africa: esonnenberg@delswa.co.za
 - Lesha Witmer, The Netherlands, Chair of the Taskforce: water@bpwnl.nl
- You can reach the members by using the email addresses, stated above.
Members in the Asian region and the Arabic countries will be added in the future.

What does the Taskforce advocate?

- "Water for Life" is a good initiative, but we don't want to wait until 2012 or 2015 to get safe water. Low cost sustainable solutions can be implemented immediately and help create local employment. Successful programmes need to be carried by the local communities, have a gender perspective and equal participation of women at all levels.
- "Water is everybody's business. It is up to civil society to express their needs, come up with good local solutions and insist on balancing the management and use of water
- Good "water management" is about "behavior". Water development and management should be participatory, involving users, planners and policy makers at all levels – as also stated in the "Dublin Principles"
- Major conflicts in our times will be about water. Water or lack thereof will be the main reason for conflict in the future. There can be no democracy and no peace without control over main resources like water by the people(s) themselves.
- Safe and affordable water is a human right. Water is central in sustainable development and poverty eradication.
- Women play a central and essential role: they are the main users and suppliers in many parts of the world. Women should be equipped for and show leadership in this field: motivate and educate; take action
- Women's organisations should form a Global Women's Water Watch enhancing the implementation of the Women's Water Agenda. Such a platform could provide governments with valuable feedback.
- Promote affordable efficient sustainable solutions such as eco-sanitation, organic farming, rainwater-harvesting and decentralized waste-water treatment
- Gender-sensitive, environmentally sound, locally appropriate and affordable technologies are needed to realize the water and sanitation targets
- Gender Responsive Budget Initiatives (GRBIs) should be introduced in the water sector, as these will enable governments, donors, multi-lateral agencies and civil society organizations to be accountable to their commitments to gender equity, poverty eradication, sustainable development and rights-based governance.