

MAINSTREAMING GENDER EQUALITY, DECENT WORK AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN IWRM

South African Department of Water Affairs
in cooperation with International Training Centre of the ILO

PRELIMINARY REPORT FROM FIELD VISITS AND INTERVIEWS

Background

This visit was part of a broader set of interviews of groups work done with members of the communities involved in the DWAF IWRM Programme in the Western Cape. Case Study 1 is the report of an interview done during a field visit. Other interviews were done during the IWRM Expo that took place on 18-19 March 2008 in Dooringbai.

The objectives of the interviews were:

- to make a preliminary, qualitative assessment of how the IWRM I projects have a potential to positively impact on women's empowerment, creation of better employment opportunities and poverty alleviation.
- to identify gender-related challenges and opportunities in the implementation of IWRM projects
- to assess how the gender equality policy of SA government is perceived by IWRM project beneficiaries (i.e. the extent to which DWAF is able to convey and implement the SA gender equality and WE policy in its field of competence as related to IWRM)
- to offer women and men IWRM project beneficiaries the opportunity to collectively express views and discuss how they see the linkages between IWRM, promotion of decent work, gender equality and poverty reduction.
- to collate qualitative information and data to feed the participatory learning and gender self-assessment of DWAF IWRM staff.

Methodology

The framework for analysis adopted is modelled upon two well-tested ILO analytical approaches to gender issues in developmental context

- ILO Participatory gender audit methodology
- The "Gender Poverty and Employment approach"

The PGA methodology involves the assessment of how a specific work unit (here DWAF IWRM) is able to implement gender mainstreaming in its service provision to the public. The interviews therefore also aimed to assess the extent

to which IWRM projects can contribute to gender equality, and whether staff have been able to provide gender sensitive services, and transmit the SA gender equality and women's empowerment policy for the water sector.

The GPE approach considers that sustainable poverty reduction strategies need:

- to be planned in the longer term perspective of the promotion of decent working opportunities for all women and men
- a holistic analysis of the multiple and interlinked dimensions of poverty, including its gender dimensions
- to be addressed in an integrated manner, by considering the interplay of various policy dimensions,

It therefore argues the necessity to understand the linkages between poverty and:

- the extent of organisational power, empowerment, rights awareness and participation in decision making;
- access to and control over natural resources such as land, water and infrastructure;
- access to and control over financial assets (credits and savings);
- access to and control over training, education and information, including on occupational safety and health;
- formal employment opportunities and opportunities for sustainable self-employment;
- access to and control over social protection and health services

The interviews and the activity undertaken with the project participants during the IWRM Expo Workshop were made in order to be able to understand the specific gender related needs in these six areas. In addition, specific questions were posed in order to elicit information on the extent to which IWRM have effectively communicated the SA gender equality policy-.

Case Study 1

Wupperthal Organic Vegetable Farming

Contacts , persons met-

We were able to speak separately with
Dennis Bantom, Chairperson of the cooperative
In group

- Seven out of the 8 female members of the organisation.

Anita, Catherine, Sarah, + another 4 ladies working in organisation.

Mr Bantom joined the group interview for a short while. No other member was available (e.g. the young man).

Location

Wupperthal village, 74 km from Clanwilliam.

The German Rhenish missionaries, Baron Theobold Von Wurmb and Johann Gottlieb, established the village in 1830. The Moravians took control in 1965, further capitalising on freed slaves who had flocked to Wupperthal in 1838 following the abolition of slavery. The village is still largely dependent on the mission which owns all the land of the village

The village economy mostly relies on seasonal work provided by the commercial farms located in the area.

The only semi-sustainable employment option for young people, women and men, in the village, is seasonal work in commercial farms. This obliges them to leave their families (children) for long period during the high season. The groups hopes to be able to prove that the investment in organic farming will bring sustainable employment opportunities also for younger people.

A crèche as well as a government primary school are available and provide for board and lodging for children coming from other villages in the area, or whose parents are away for seasonal work. A health care centre including maternal care services is also available. The village has one multi-purpose food shop, one butcher, one restaurant.

Organizational issues – representation – participation to decision making and perception of empowerment – rights awareness

The project is managed by a community based organisation however they are intending to establish themselves into a Section 21 (non profit organisation). The CBO was started upon initiative of Mr Dennis Bantom, a former electrician who has moved to Wupperthal for health reasons and whose wife runs a small women-based organisation producing rooibos-based soaps and body creams (the coop has 8 active members and it seems to be the only formal business in the village together with the shoe factory, which seems to employ only men – some 5 workers were observed in the workshop.).

The coop has 17 active members and a board made up of a Chair, a Treasurer and a Secretary. They have 50% women's representation and Treasurer and the Secretary are women.

However it appears that the women involved do not feel confident enough about their capacity to speak in public and participate in public events in first person. They rather rely on Mr Barton for this. However they are pleased to be able to attend project meetings even if in a secondary role. The interviewers suggested

they may take a more active role in the future, by gradually taking more and more responsibility. The option was not excluded.

The women were aware of the gender equality and women's empowerment policy of the SA government. They had not heard this through IWRM but they had it clear that IWRM had posed women's participation as a condition for project submission. The reason, in their view, is that "they know that women work hard and will make it into a success". Whatever the reason, they all expressed enthusiasm and satisfaction about their participation in the project. Beyond the financial aspect, the project would seem to give them:

- the feeling of being able to help themselves and have a more autonomous role in the community ("I wake up with joy knowing that I am going to work in the coop")
- the feeling to belong to a strong group of "old women" who instead of working individually are ready to help each other and overcome conflict
- the opportunity to help their community (e.g. through provision of excess vegetables to the old and the sick**)

The interviewer informed about the possibility to have students' loans for university, as related to the right to higher education. When questioned on whether they thought that the local church supported the Government's women's empowerment policy, the women preferred not to respond.

Access to finance – credit and savings

In order to start up the project the community has received grants from DWAF IWRM and assistance from the Department of Agriculture (short-term training). DWAF IWRM has also provided assistance in various areas such as project planning and accounting, irrigation methods etc.

An agreement with the Moravian mission was made to secure some xxx hr of land.

Members of the coop pay a 50ZAR yearly membership fee (it means that the coop can count on 850 ZAR operating fund to pay for land rent, water, seeds, compost, natural pesticides, tools and other equipment).

The women involved in the project are in most part widows and/or retired and they benefit of a monthly social old age pension (ZAR 870). The gains from working in the coop come in as an additional, necessary income that helps put food on the table and pay for house rent and electricity.

Intra-household division of income was not discussed in detail. Those who did speak of how they used the money mentioned support to university studies of grand-daughter and buy food at the local shop or butchery.

The group has not thought/is not aware about community based savings schemes (such as the Poor People's Movement or stokvels). They believe that they do not have the possibility to save at the moment. As Ouma Anita said "all the income gets eaten". Food is very expensive in Wupperthal as it is available in the only shop/butchery. Others said that their savings are all meant to help children/grandchildren (two girls) to attend University in Cape Town..

Employment, working conditions, social protection issues

In terms of working time and remuneration, the women normally only work during high season (about six months from xxxx to xxx) for some three days a week and get paid 60R a day on the basis of 8 hours a day.

The pay is set in accordance with governmental rules for remuneration of farm workers. However there does not seem to be any thinking in terms of additional benefit packages/social insurance provisions. (This may be covered through other social allowances through indigent or childcare grants). The women seemed to have only limited awareness of occupational safety and health issues and their relations to organic farming. However they were aware of the necessity to have clean water in order to protect organic certification of their products.

The chairperson said that as soon as the association starts to make some income, income will be reinvested to improve production systems. In the medium-term, the idea is to change the status of the organization in order to be able to offer more formal employment in the area.

In the short-term the women seem to consider emigration to town and secondary studies as the only desirable option for young people in the village. (the only other formal job opportunities being the soap and the shoe factory above)

Most women already benefit of an old-age pension. A health-care centre is available in the village.

Access to natural resources (land, water), technology and infrastructure

The village lies in a remote semi-desertic and semi-montaneous area and can be reached via a 74 km trip on a non-tarred road from Clanwilliam. Donkey is still used both as a means of transport and to plough the land.

The Chairperson informed that the organisation has entered into a lease agreement with the Moravian mission (300 ZAR per year). An issue of concern is the foreseen increase in the rent, which the mission would like to raise to 500ZAR per year. The members are discussing the opportunity to purchase the land as land recovery through Dept. of Land Affairs seems to be a very remote option. The issue was not raised by the women interviewed, whilst they noted

that soon they shall start thinking of more efficient ways to irrigate their fields as they will need to start paying for water.

Women have tap water and electricity in their houses. They have to use electricity to have hot water. House rental which includes electricity is R120-130 per month.

The women interviewed seemed not to be entirely autonomous with respect to:
- use of agricultural technology and marketing (men use tractors/ spray pesticides/drive/maintain contacts with prospective customers)

- transport to main town. The cost of a ride to Clanwilliam is 80ZAR, far too high.
- Negotiation on land rental (as this is left to the Chair of the organisation)
- Understanding of organic production methods in a more holistic way (e.g. what are the differences from ordinary production methods/ are they more labour intensive)

When asked why they would not drive a tractor/car or be more active in marketing/negotiating the reason given was “being aged and therefore not able to learn anymore”. It is the opinion of the interviewee that this self-explanation is born of societal stereotypes, as proved by the fact that when asked “what is your most immediate need” the reply was “training”.

Access to Training and Education

All the women can read and write Afrikaans watch television and listen to the radio. All of them understand English and some proved able to entertain a conversation in English with the ILO interviewer.

With the support of the Dept. Of Agriculture, two male members of the organisation have received long-term training on organic farming in Stellenbosch agri-institute (the Chair and the son of one of the ladies we spoke to).

The women involved in the project have all received short-term training on organic farming methods. However they consider the need for further training as primary.

No further training opportunities are available in the village. The distance from Clanwilliam makes it impossible to the women to attend other training unless specifically planned for them (they stated that they would not have mobility problems in that case).

They would like to attend more training both in agricultural methods and in business accounting/management/marketing. This is especially important in anticipation of the increased production costs due to rent and water (see below).

Longer term training would be particularly appreciated by both the women and the male member interviewed.

Case Study 2: Masikane Goat Farmers

Description of the project: This project has 21 members of which 2 are women. These small scale farmers own cattle, goat and sheep. Currently, members have 150 goats. Yumna Beukes, the spokesperson for the organisation has 7 lambs. Sandra, the other female member does not own any cattle. In addition, to cattle farming, members plant foot gardens in their yards. Currently, the project is negotiating 2, 5 hectare of land from the local municipality.

Lobbying

Yumna as the spokesperson for the group admits that this is a male dominated sector. Government encourages women because they are 'hands-on'. Membership of the organisation is R150 per year. The organisation has links with the Wupperthal community from whom they purchase their cattle.

Access to and control over financial assets (credits and savings)

Women members organise street markets to raise funds to run the organisation. At this event, women members manage their male counterparts who do all the manual tasks in order to make the street market a success.

Access to and control over training, education and information

This group has had access to municipal grazing land since 2003. Access to licenced water is being negotiated so tanks can be placed for cattle to drink. Yuma's role is to lobby government. She is of the opinion that water meter readers could actively educate residents on water conservation and access to clean water because the drinking water is green. Often, the household kettle has to be bleached after boiling the water.

Formal employment opportunities and opportunities for sustainable self-employment

To encourage youth participation, Yumna recommends that computer assisted technology be introduced into farming methods. Youth could be taught to administer projects, set up databases and create packaging and labelling of products (for example herbs). Young women could be encouraged to run training workshops on nutrition to people affected or infected by HIV/AIDS.

Conclusion: The spokesperson is a vibrant entrepreneurial woman who uses her culinary skills to run street markets to raise funds to build her organisation. She is conversant with municipal payment structures for water as a scarce resource and considers this approach to be unfair to poor people. Her keenness to involve the youth in computer aided farming is an attempt to modernise a work practise that enslaved the older generation. As she remarked 'young people do not want to work on the land that enslaved their parents. They prefer to work in the cities' Setting up a computer one stop shop will provide both skills and jobs to youth in the area.

Case study 3: Poor People's Movement

This organisation's slogan is 'from poverty to prosperity'. The PPM was established in 2000 as a women's saving club. Membership covers Klaver, Ebenezer, van Rhynsdorp and Vredendal. Members consist of 11700 – 6700 men and 5000 women. National Leader is Marlene Don.**ARE YOU SURE ABOUT FIGURES I WAS ALMOST SURE THE MAJORIT ARE WOMEN**

Organisational power, empowerment, rights awareness and participation in decision making

The organisation is engaged with provincial government who assisted them to identify 8 areas of operation. Initially there were few male members because they tend to cling to tradition and women were expected to sit at home. Men worked in nearby factories.

Role of government policy: For Marlene, post apartheid gender sensitive policies have turned around tradition roles. Women are now eager to educate themselves and 'stand up' and do things for themselves.

The method of empowerment: PPM utilizes a saving method which works well. The minimum saving is R7, 00 per week (1 Euro = 12 R). Members who collect the savings go from house to house weekly and keep personal contact with people who save. They help them plan and manage their savings schemes and find out what happened when someone has not been able to save.

Initially, some women members experienced violence in the home because husbands did not want 'their wives to join projects'. Because of their determination to encourage women's economic independence, members would visit the particular woman's home to explain the PPM approach to the husband and diffuse the cycle of violence. This approach took time because now a family can take membership. However, women do the actual work of mobilising members but male members support them. Men have now joined the organisation.

Access to and control over financial assets (credits and savings)

The whole movement revolves around capacity to save and then invest the savings in longer term projects.

According to Marlene, provincial government has its own agenda. Initially, they funded small projects and then tried to steal projects. Now the organisation has no access to government funding and uses their own savings and it claims to be able to totally self sustain itself.

Access to and control over training, education and information

There appear to be no visible government resources or interventions for training
CAN WE ASK MARLENE IF THEIR MEMBERS GET ANY COMMUNITY BASED TRAINING?

Formal employment opportunities and opportunities for sustainable self-employment

The savings scheme creates jobs and could be used as a benchmark for other projects because it is an income generator. The funds could be used to

- build houses
- food gardens
- crèches
- small projects
- beadwork projects
- spaza shops
- chicken farms

Currently, a project harvesting snails export products to French Restaurants. The project has a hibernation centre in partnership with Elzane Exporting Company based in Hermanus.

SHARON YOU SAY “COULD” ABOVE, BUT I THINK THEY ACTUALLY HAVE ALREADY A NUMBER OF PROJECTS FUNDED. CAN WE FIND OUT?

Access to and control over social protection, health services as well as occupational safety standards

The membership is debating whether to register their organisation. Currently, projects are self-funded and there is little profit. Recently, it was decided to register ‘Mama’s Coin Factory’ as an **NPO**. It is an ngo which sells jars of chocolate coins. The empty jar is refilled with coins and returned to the

organisation. Proceeds are used to fund shoes for local children or help a woman member.

Each town has a network with a banking account. Savings can start with as little as 5C per persons – reaching R7, 00, R1, 00 or 71c.

As Marlene said: ‘don’t give your problems away’ Poor people keep to themselves and solve it.

Case study 4: Busy Bee Dagsorg Sentrum (Day Centre)

Ouma Stuurman, 70 years old, has a crèche in a nearby building in Doringbaai. She has been widowed for 16 years. The crèche hours are from 6h00 to 18h00 and accommodate 42 babies. Four young people assist her to care for the children.

- Two women look after the babies,
- 2 young women care for the 2 year olds and
- one is employed to cook.

The crèche owns three prams and three walking rings. The mobile clinic visits the crèche to vaccinate the children.

Mothers are charged R30 per week per children. The child is collected from her mother who works in the nearby industrial centre. The mode of transport is a pram or physically carried if it is a baby.

Organisational power, empowerment, rights awareness and participation in decision making

Ouma Stuurman cannot read nor write and had to give up an earlier crèche to an organisation to ‘those who were literate’.

In 2000 she decided to open this crèche when a ‘3 month old baby girl was raped and murdered

Access to and control over training, education and information

Ouma Stuurman shares her knowledge of HIV or reproductive health issues with the mothers.

Case study 5: Disabled people’s project

Ouma Stuurman manages a disabled people's project which accommodates 50 persons. The project runs from 10h00 to 15h00 on Tuesdays and Thursday.

Organisational power, empowerment, rights awareness and participation in decision making

Currently, there are five children living on outlying farms who enjoy the attention provided by Ouma when she visits them.

IS THIS PROJECT RELATED TO IWRM AND HOW?

Case study 6: Organic Rooibos and Vegetables (individual interview with one member of Project described under Case Study 1?)

Amelia Zimri is a mother of four children and matron of the Wupperthal Boarding School.

Organisational power, empowerment, rights awareness and participation in decision making

Amelia is aware of the Moravian church's role in the current land claims process taking place in South Africa. She questioned why the church retained so much land when her forefathers worked and lived on the land for decades.

Access to and control over natural resources and infrastructure

The Moravian church does not have any community representation on the Water Management Committee.

The local government do not appear to be keen to intervene in land disputes.

However, the church has leased land to commercial farmers.

Amelia is lodging a land claim with the assistance of the ngo Surplus People's Project because her family have lived on the land for decades. A legal representative has been appointed to lodge her claim.

Access to and control over financial assets (credits and savings)

Parents either work on nearby farms or live as migrants and visit their children over weekends.

ANNEX (Confidential for gender Audit) Interview with Willie Enright, Chief Engineer, Water Resource Management, Department of Water Affairs and Forestry.

As we drove to the conference in Doringsbaai on 18 March 2008, Willie pointed out the sandstone formations. Because the area has a low rainfall area and the

rain seeps into the sandstone creating formations. The area has hot springs and currently drilling is taking place to assess whether the underground water is drinkable.

The unique vegetation of Cape Floral Kingdom stretches from Clanwilliam to Stellenbosch. There are 6 protected plant species grown here with the largest number of species found globally.

Recycle sewerage water: In the Western Cape recycled sewerage effluent is used for golf courses. This approach could be used to meet the needs of local communities.

Gender equality:

The department has an internal focus on equality through promotions and appointments of personnel. Thus, projects are an extension of human resource policies. Consequently, external stakeholders have 50% women on their structures – for example: WUA, CMA and management committees of projects.

Departmental focusses on children using television as a medium targeting the child to take messages home to their mother. Themes include: don't over irrigate the field.

Men's roles are different: Culturally white men will pay the additional water bill because his role is to manage the family finances. Afrikaner women are the head of the household, managing household staff and administering the finances.

Black women do the gardening and appear open to learning how to use water more economically. Women's access to taps are a walking distance away or of not good quality. While government's free water service is designed to provide 60Kw of water, in fact it promises 20Kw depending on availability of resources. Consequently, there are two scenarios to access water. First, formal housing have taps in the family yard. Informal sectors occupants must queue and fill containers of water which could easily become contaminated.

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