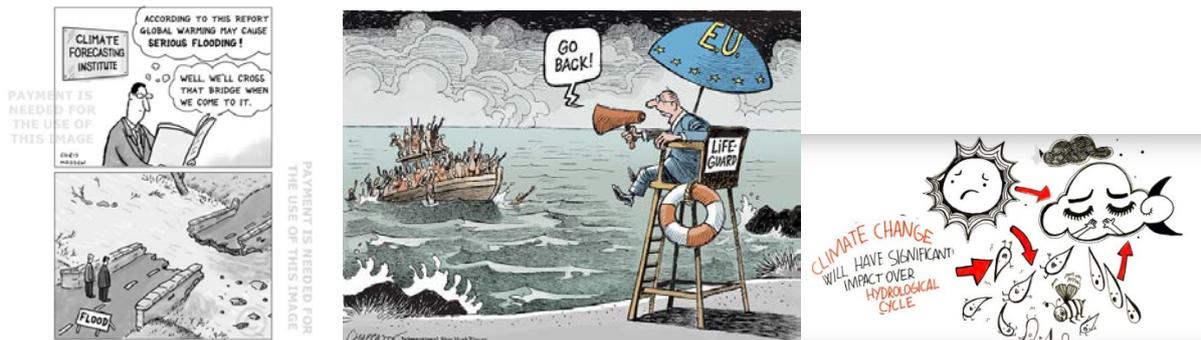


Case Description – Regional 8th World Water Forum process

Youth Challenge on climate-water-related displacements:

Who knows, who understands, cares?

Women for Water Partnership (WfWP) is looking for more information on the attitude and awareness of peoples living in Europe towards the relationship between climate change, water and all kinds of involuntary migration. This effort is part of the European Regional Process of the 8th World Water Forum.



Who are we; what do we do.

WfWP (womenforwater.org) is a unique partnership of women’s organizations and networks, uniting women leadership in around 134 predominantly low and middle-income countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA region) and Western Europe, reaching over one million women.

All 27 member organizations are rooted in society and are active in the areas of water and sanitation, sustainable development, women’s participation and empowerment. The membership ranges from rural women, academia, women water professionals, and businesswomen to service organizations and special interest groups. WfWP positions women as active leaders, partners, experts and agents of change in water.

WfWP uses water as an entry point to women’s empowerment and to improve equitable access to water for all, for all uses. Women traditionally have vast experience in the water sector and the crucial role they play in effective and efficient water management is increasingly acknowledged and supported by evidence. Involving both women and men in integrated water resources initiatives leads to better sustainability, governance and efficiency.

Being a diverse network of women’s organizations, WfWP can draw from a magnitude of expertise and knowledge relating to different themes and topics in the broad water-gender-sustainable development nexus. When a specific expertise is needed, globally, regionally or nationally, WfWP calls upon the relevant member to represent WfWP and provide input for that specific occasion.

WfWP is inter alia a founding member and facilitator of the European Pact for Water, founder and steering committee member of the Butterfly Effect (<http://www.butterflyeffectcoalition.com/en>), founder and steering committee member of the #ClimateIsWater campaign (<http://www.climateiswater.org/>).

(For some of our thoughts on water and migration, see annex)

The **European Pact for Water** was established in January 2016 as an informal coordination and advocacy network across the wide-Europe on water governance. Its aim is to disseminate information, build capacity, exchange on and pool collective efforts and knowledge in order to highlight the importance of water and sanitation to attain the goals set out in fundamental international and European agendas specifically on water-related issues.

Its participants are Europe-based non-state actors, specifically NGOs and CSOs. The network currently connects directly 30+ organisations¹ and its members across the (European part of the) UNECE region. The network exchanges with and receives input from organisations like Aquafed, OECD, SIWI, European Commission (DEVCO, Environment and EEAS), WWC, Member States of the EU; through its participants it connects with platforms and initiatives like SDGWatch, End Water Poverty, #ClimateIsWater, Butterfly Effect NGO coalition, avoiding duplication but making use of their expertise and connections.

The network contributes inter alia actively to the European Consensus on development, the process on the SDGs in Europe, the debate on the intergovernmental architecture for water in the UN and initiatives around monitoring of the SDGs (water specific).

It's vision is to create "Aquawareness" (in Europe) to achieve sustainable water resource management and universal access to safe water supply and sanitation because we value water in all its dimensions – in its economic, social, environmental and cultural importance².

World Water Forum Regional Process

WfWP is one of the coordinators of the European regional process for the 8th World Water Forum <http://www.worldwaterforum8.org/file/1509/download?token=cOrB1fEW>.

Historically, a regional approach has always had a significant place in the World Water Fora. The justification for such a prominent role in the Forum is that regions share commonalities, both in terms of problems and solutions that may not exist at the global level and therefore should share experiences to learn from one another to further the goal of sustainable water resources management. This structure also allows for regions to acquire new knowledge through linking common thematic areas across regions.

It is the goal of the 8th World Water Forum Regional Process to not only align its activities and initiatives with the other processes of the Forum, but also to utilize the timing of this event to make progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Climate Agreement and other international frameworks relevant to sustainable development.

The case: Do people in Europe understand the impact of climate change on water and migration?

¹ Current participants (May 2017) (organisation and members of): Action contre la Faim (ACF), BORDA, Business & Professional Women Europe (BPWE), Coalition Eau, Earth Forever (Bulgaria); Eau-vive, Forum Umwelt und Entwicklung (working group water); French Water Partnership (FWP), German WASH coalition, Good Planet Belgium, Green Cross International, Helvetas, LIVIA, OXFAM UK, Portuguese Water Platform, Protos, Pseau, Right to sanitation; Secours Islamique, SIMAVI, Soroptimist International Europe (SEI), Spanish NGO coordination (Water Working Group); VENRO: Verband Entwicklungspolitik und Humanitäre Hilfe, Wateraid, Water Youth Network, Women of Europe for a common future (WECF), Women for Water Partnership (WfWP), World Youth Parliament for water (WYPW), WWF Germany and Netherlands.

² Adapted from the vision <http://www.ewp.eu/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/water-vision-for-europe.pdf> with thanks to European Water Partnership

Women for Water Partnership, as founding member and facilitator of the European Pact for Water is looking for more information on the attitude and awareness of peoples living in Europe towards the relationship between climate change, water and all kinds of involuntary migration. This effort is part of the European Regional Process of the 8th World Water Forum.

For the European Regional process, a report will be drafted at the end of November, which will be discussed probably during the regional meeting in Budapest.

In this report, the European perspective concerning Water security and Climate change will be leading, and less the specific topics that are chosen for the theme. And in Europe, a survey with several stakeholders showed that especially awareness concerning this topics seems very low. Part of this effort is a regional report which includes a chapter on climate change. A survey, which was filled out by 100+ government officials and CSO/ NGO across Europe showed, that they basically all estimate that awareness on these related issues is low and hence people do not understand or are willing to support measures to address that.

The report will include input from European institutes, but would benefit as well from a more in-depth research. During the challenge, one of the case-studies will thus focus on the following question:

Are European citizens indeed not aware of climate change and the water security issues that relate to it? What do/don't they know, and what would they like to know? How does this awareness relate to the occurring displacements in Europe due to climate? Think of Italy and the higher intensity rainfalls inducing landslides, or the flooding of the Rhine in Austria and Germany.

We would be highly interested in more information on “ water induced” involuntary migration of groups coming into Europe; impacts of displaced persons/ refugees on water and sanitation availability in the “ hosting” countries and mainly social-economic impacts for those that are part of “ planned” (internal) migration because of water-related new policies of government.

The group is asked to (1) do a media-analysis, in order to find trends on media attention on the topic and to interview people or hold surveys, on their experiences and awareness concerning the topic.

The information could be collected by desk research and interviewing of different – as specially young - people across Europe in person or e.g. by skype. It would be great if it then would result in ideas for actions to raise awareness among European citizens, politicians etc. and hence to concrete mitigation or adaptation strategies.

Depending on the quality of the work and outcomes, the research would become part of the European regional report for the 8th World Water Forum. And maybe lead to it be presented by one of the researchers in Brasilia in March 2018.

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Annex 1

Migration and water: women's issue(?) but certainly a “ domino game”.

When social unrest erupts, especially at a scale that causes involuntary displacement and migration, it is nearly impossible to identify a single cause. **Water scarcity**, however, is cited with increasing

frequency as a significant multiplying factor. The problem of so-called climate change-induced population migration is increasingly seen as one of the foremost crises of our times. Climate change (80-90%) is **felt through “water”** (too little, too much, extreme weather conditions).

Often water-related migration is obscured by its economic facade: recurrent drought or soil salinization combined with poor land and water management can diminish the sustainability of rural agricultural livelihoods, stimulating a farmer to leave his or her home in search of economic opportunity. In addition, often, the underlying reasons for the migration and refugee flows – such as poor governance, and poor water and land management – are overlooked when analyzing the key reasons behind migration.

Upon external or legal characterization, these people are deemed economic, not environmental migrants.

Evidence shows that control over power and water infrastructure is used as a weapon of warring parties, contrary to international law. (E.g article 17 of the UN Water Courses Convention and the Geneva convention). Access to such resources are basic human rights (UN resolutions on human rights to water and sanitation), not to be bargained over for political or strategic gain. Safe access to water is a key priority. The lack of water is directly responsible for reduced livelihoods and dignity for both displaced AND host populations - many desperate and willing to make significant life decisions based on the availability of supply.

Dry seasons can be devastating for people who depend on subsistence agriculture or are poor and particularly affected by rising food prices. A devastating drought in Syria from 2006-2011 drove more than 1 million people into food insecurity and helped trigger a mass migration of 1.5 million people into cities. That wave, combined with exceptionally poor economic conditions, a political reform movement, and a violent uprising against a repressive political regime helped ignite Syria’s ongoing civil war.

Regime’s failure to establish proper water governance (water-intensive crops like cotton (what is it about “ cotton” causing major problems in Aral sea, Syria etc.)?!; over abstraction of ground water, water intensive tourism, etc.) led to unpreparedness when drought hit harder than usual. While drought led to major internal migration, the reasons were not the drought itself (alone), but were rather “part of a broader pattern of rural neglect”. So current focus on “ urban” might make matters worse.

Challenging agricultural conditions have also contributed to past migrations from Africa’s Sahel drylands and Horn region, underscoring the link between water supply variability, food insecurity, the potential for unrest and mass migration.

In the “ receiving” countries, increased demand resulted – on top of water stress - in an associated increase in sewage generation. The generated sewage is disposed of – untreated – into surface and subsurface water sources, common practice in most areas due to the lack of wastewater treatment facilities. The contamination resulting from this pollution renders more water sources unusable thereby depriving more people of an increasingly scarce resource.

So what the “ domino game”? and thus the gender aspect?

Not enough water for livestock and food production. Young men leave (male-out migration) resulting in female headed one person households with no coping mechanisms, food insecurity and unsafety.

For the young men, there is No work in the city, so they leave for somewhere else; again women left behind.. not getting an income.

Women are in general more victimized by floods and Tsunamis: they have less coping mechanisms available, go back for the children, no alternatives offered, cannot swim..) Then the death of men is analyzed, that of women not.

The relationship between women and authorities is “stressed”: 1) women have a lack of knowledge about approaching the right authorities and 2) a lack of trust in the service provider due to failures to resolve past challenges. 3) they have time constraints to attend meetings and seek assistance due to increasing household and agricultural responsibilities and 4) perceive that women are treated differently because of their gender (why is your husband not dealing with this? Well he left...).

There are no real statistics / data to connect the events (internal movement > international migration). so no conclusions that are really evidence based. No sex-disaggregated data collected, so a lot of “obvious” connections are not recorded.

Of course this is not to say that we should seek to end water-related migration. Migration can act as an adaptation strategy, enabling escape from precarious environmental circumstance. We must thus seek to minimize the displacement impacts of water scarcity, poor quality and water-related disasters, while maximizing the choice to stay or to leave affected areas in humane conditions. In order to do so, it is of the utmost importance that we recognize the crucial impact of water on the lives of millions of migrants around the world – however they may be labeled.

https://www.unesco.nl/sites/default/files/dossier/climate_change_water_stress_conflict_and_migration_0.pdf?download=1

[file:///C:/Users/Windows/Downloads/Water-migration-and-how-they-are-interlinked-Chapter-1-DIGITAL%20\(2\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/Windows/Downloads/Water-migration-and-how-they-are-interlinked-Chapter-1-DIGITAL%20(2).pdf)

<https://www.unesco-ihe.org/news/international-migrants-day-%E2%80%98-story%E2%80%99-water-migration>

https://www.unesco.nl/sites/default/files/dossier/climate_change_water_stress_conflict_and_migration_0.pdf?download=1