



Partnership Interventions for the Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for Lake Tanganyika

Countries	Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Zambia
Funding	GEF Grant = \$13,500,000 Country Investment/Co-Financing = \$42,500,000
Partners	African Development Bank; Governments of Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Zambia, Nordic Development Fund; UNOPS
Area of Work	UNDP Thematic Area: Waters and Oceans Governance / GEF Focal Area: International Waters
Project ID	PIMS 1941 / GEF ID 1017
Project Activity Dates	February 2008 – August 2012

KEY GENDER RESULTS

- The Revolving Fund in Zambia was established to promote alternative income generation activities and has financed 837 farmers, including **366** women. Average **annual income of women** assisted through Revolving Fund has **increased from 157 USD in the 2008-2009 farming season to 3,125 USD in 2009-2010** based on alternative income generating activities.
- In Zambia, formal capacity building workshops have trained 1,853 members of the local community including **742** women. In Tanzania, capacity building trainings were carried out on wastewater and catchment management for 2,500 people including **1,200** women.
- **Women's groups have been formed** as a result of advocacy and training activities and are taking the lead in implementing mitigation measures against sedimentation loss, organizing tree-planting activities to rehabilitate degraded areas, and championing solid waste management and sanitation related issues.
- The project's Strategic Action Programme (SAP) created an entry point for gender by identifying "The Principle of Gender Equity" that recognises the roles of both men and women in environmental management.
- As group members, **women have access to funds** to implement their own alternative income generating activities and as leaders, women can participate in leadership training and visits to other communities developing participatory resource management.
- The **gender balance** of the Project Coordination Unit's senior technical staff is currently **50/50**.

EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH A REGIONAL WATER PROJECT

Project Overview

Lake Tanganyika is one of the world's great lakes and has an important role in the economies of Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, and Zambia. Apart from the vast biodiversity and ecological importance of the lake, it is also extremely valuable to local communities. The lake is a source of fish for consumption and sale; it provides a key transport and communications links supporting the economic and social development of lake-shore communities and it is a permanent source of water for industrial and agricultural development as well as for domestic use. There are about one million people around the lake who depend on the fish resources and fish is also transported to distant urban centres where it is part of the preferred diet.

The project seeks to address the environmental threats to the Lake Tanganyika system through activities including catchment management, improved wastewater management systems, establishment of a Regional Integrated Environmental Monitoring System, and institutional strengthening for improved regional coordination. Additionally, the project is working to address fisheries concerns, particularly the pervasive problem of poverty and livelihood dependence on fisheries resources among the communities around the lake.

This is a regional project with four participating countries: Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Tanzania and Zambia. The project follows an earlier project which designed the participatory Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for Lake Tanganyika and facilitated the development of the Lake Tanganyika Convention, which provides for regional oversight and management of the lake and its resources.

Gender Mainstreaming

Gender considerations were integrated into the Strategic Action Programme (SAP), the framework developed for implementing the activities of the project. In the SAP, the participating countries agreed on a set of principles and values for environmental management and social development including a Principle of Gender Equity. The Principle of Gender Equity recognizes the roles of both women and men in environmental management:

Acceptance and implementation of the support of women's central role in environmental management requires positive policies to address practical and strategic gender needs. Women in particular should be

empowered and equipped to participate at all levels in the development of sustainable management strategies and environmental conservation programmes. This must include women's involvement in decision-making as well as implementation in ways determined by local communities themselves.

The SAP also includes a Principle for Participation which requires that all stakeholders, including communities, individuals and concerned organizations, be given the opportunity to participate in decision-making and management processes that affect the lake.

Results

Capacity Building

Implementation of the Principle of Gender Equity in project activities has been particularly strong in Tanzania and Zambia. Apart from general awareness creation, public meetings, and demonstrations through which the project has reached more than 12,000 people in Zambia, formal capacity building workshops have trained 1,853 members of the local community including 742 women. The focus of the training has been in low input agriculture, mitigation measures against sedimentation, and business and leadership skills. The impact of this training is seen in the increasing number of small-scale entrepreneurs that are emerging in the project area as well as the ability of the community to organize meetings and produce action plans.

In Tanzania, advocacy activities aimed to create project awareness have reached more than 55,000 people. Capacity building trainings have engaged 2,500 individuals of the local communities for both wastewater and catchment management components out of which 1,200 are female representing 48%. The trainings have focused on participatory forest management, village land use planning, related by-laws formulation, and working with billing and accounting software. Women groups have been formed as a result of advocacy and training activities and are taking the lead in implementing mitigation measures against sedimentation.



Women at fish market, Lake Tanganyika. Photo by Saskia Marijinissen

The Village Development and Conservation Committees (VDC) in Zambia and the Village Environmental Committees (VEC) in Tanzania help promote long term and sustainable resource custodianship among resource-user groups. Given that 37% of the VDC members in Zambia are female, these groups have provided an avenue for women's empowerment. As members, women have access to funds to implement their own alternative income generating activities and as leaders of VDCs, women can participate in leadership training and visits to other communities developing participatory resource management.

Income Generation

The Revolving Fund in Zambia was established to promote alternative income generation activities and is benefiting both men and women. The Fund has financed 837 farmers, out of which 366 (44%) are women. Notably, the average annual income of women assisted through the Revolving Fund has increased from 157 USD in the 2008-2009 farming season to 3,125 USD in the 2009-2010 farming season.

Women's participation has been very important to the project's success particularly in identifying vulnerable but viable beneficiaries of the Revolving Fund loans for alternative income generating activities. Women actively contribute to application screenings received by the VDCs and to monitoring implementation of funded activities, and have helped to increase the chances of repayment so as to continue the revolving fund. This is a crucial step in minimizing the risk of giving out loans to individuals who may never pay back even if the interest rate is much lower than what structured money lending institutions, such as banks, would charge. The women have more information on individuals than their male colleagues in the VDCs, and thus are a critical component to project success.

In Tanzania, the project works together with several women groups for advocacy, tree-planting, and land rehabilitation activities. In line with the Government policy that encourages equal gender participation at all levels, women's participation in the project activities has been paramount to the formulation and activation of the VECs. Women have played a role in identifying vulnerable groups and beneficiaries for the training workshops as well as the micro credits for the alternative income generating activities subcomponent. Women groups have been critical in the implementation of mitigation measures against sedimentation such as the Milombani Women Group involved in tree planting at Karema Village and the MUNA Women Group involved in solid waste management and sanitation

related activities in Kigoma Ujiji Municipality. Women members of the VECs are taking the leading role in the implementation of project activities including tree-planting activities to rehabilitate degraded areas and championing solid waste management and sanitation related issues.

Women in Zambia have also been involved in the implementation of communal mitigation measures against sedimentation such as planting of trees in bare areas and in demonstration plots meant to promote low input agriculture. Women's community mobilization abilities have been more successful than their male colleagues' and, when exposed to new farming techniques through exchange visits to centres of excellence in conservation farming, women were more adept at picking up new knowledge than their male counterparts.

Challenges

One of the principle challenges related to gender of the project was that all three Technical Officers were male. This created a communication barrier with some of the female stakeholders especially at the community level at the start of the project. To overcome this challenge, the Project Manager held meetings with heads of stakeholder institutions and they decided that the Field Facilitating Teams were going to make a concerted effort to have a balanced composition of men and women from stakeholder and government institutions. Currently the gender balance of the Project Coordination Unit's senior technical staff is 50/50. Among 4 national project managers, one manager is a woman. Women's representation at the Conference of Ministers of the Lake Tanganyika Authority (the highest executive organ of the Lake Tanganyika Authority) is 25%. This is far from gender parity, but the participation of women at the strategic decision-making level is notable.

Another challenge has been cultural. Women, because of their workload and other responsibilities, have been reluctant to utilize opportunities offered by the project, especially in villages that are administered by male Village Executive Officers. Villages administered by women, on the other hand, have more active participation among women. To overcome this challenge, the Project Manager (also a woman) provides recommendations and encourages women to be active participants in project activities. This has led to positive results as evidenced by the number of women-led income generating groups and women-only community base groups.

While still on-going, the project has identified a number of gender-disaggregated indicators and started tracking them since 2009 to measure the gender balance among the beneficiaries of the project activities. Results will lead to the promotion of more gender-sensitive alternative income generating activities in the Lake Tanganyika catchment.

Additional Resources

Why Gender Matters: a Tutorial for Water Managers, http://www.unwater.org/downloads/why_gender_matters.pdf
Strategic Action Programme, www.ltbp.org/FTP/SAPFINE.pdf
Project Document, GEF Project Database, <http://www.gefonline.org/projectDetailsSQL.cfm?projID=1017>

LESSONS LEARNED

- **Participation by local women has been a critical component to project success, particularly in identifying and monitoring participants in the Revolving Fund.**
- **The collection and monitoring of gender-disaggregated data helps determine the projects strengths and weaknesses and is a necessary aspect of any gender-focused or gender-mainstreamed project.**
- **The gender focus must not elude any step of project planning and implementation including recruitment of officers. Female Technical Officers were more successful in communicating with local women than male staff.**
- **During the project preparation phase it is important to mainstream gender into the project document with SMART indicators to measure project performances related to gender equality.**

Prepared by: Madeline Knaup and Ciara Daniels with edits from Akiko Yamamoto, Simbotwe Mwiya and Saskia Marijnissen **Cover Photo:** UNOPS/Saskia Marijnissen: Woman at fishing landing site, Lake Tanganyika. **For more information:** www.undp.org/gef