Advocacy Strategy

Palestinian Women Water Practitioners

Abstract
Empowerment equality lobbying

Consortium of

November, 2022
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Chapter 1: Introduction

1. Preamble.
Palestinian women are considered to have played a major role in all aspects of public life throughout the long history of Palestine, which is known as an agricultural society, women took lead of household responsibilities, as they are the main caregivers, thus managing water, sanitation and hygiene was one of the main duties they had and still have to accomplish.

Yet, faced by many obstacles that hindered women from performing their assigned roles efficiently—specifically the ones related to water management—such as: lack of safe access to water resources, in addition but not limited to: occupation, necessary knowledge, regulations...etc, women empowerment, support, advocacy become an urgent need.

Looking back into history, The Palestinian Women role can be noticed as the contemporary feminist movement began in 1929, when the first Palestinian women’s conference was held in Jerusalem, from which the Executive Committee of the Arab Women’s Association emerged, and then in the same year the Arab Women’s Union was established. In Jerusalem, and another in Nablus, and in the period 1948-1967, many women’s charitable institutions were active, such as orphanages, elderly care centers and others, and in 1965 the General Union of Palestinian Women was established.

Many important initiatives to empower and advocate women in different sectors took place ever since, the most recent was the initiative to establish **Palestinian Women Water Practitioners Network (PWWPN) 2020** to focus on consistently raising the profile of women in the water sector, both in their professional capacity and as a major group in society. As it supports women active participation in water sector nationally and regionally.

The progress of the network is highly noted, as it had many activities accomplished so far, including preparing the network’s strategy (2022-2024), which clearly realized the need to introduce an advocacy strategy for **(PWWPN)**, among other activities, such as capacity building, knowledge management supporting innovative initiatives, and supporting best practices.

2. Who is the Palestinian Women Water Practitioners Network “PWWPN”? (The Beneficiary)
   - A platform uniting women water professionals nationally and regionally. All members of PWWPN are rooted in society and are active in areas of water and sanitation, sustainable development, women participation and empowerment.
   - Targeted memberships are active women in rural areas, rural women CBO’s, young female water professional, Women working in NGOs all levels and social movements.
   - Significantly contributes in improving access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) through exchanging knowledge among members and others, water projects and policies ensuring also gender issues.
   - Lobby and advocacy, women water network is to issue a lobby and advocacy program for advocating the importance of linking the implementation of achieving gender equality and
empowerment of all women, ensuring availability and sustainable management for water and sanitation for all.

- supports Palestinian water women in accessing training and job opportunities in order to advance their careers.
- is considered to be a knowledge exchange and learning platform, along with regional workshops and peer-to-peer support, facilitates members in sharing best practices, lessons learnt and expertise on different themes. It contributes to improved project implementation, and stimulates “out of the box thinking”.

3. Palestinian Hydrology Group (PHG) The Host

The Palestinian Hydrology Group (PHG) was established in 1987 as a nongovernment, specialized organization dedicated to deliver quality and innovative actions that contributes to protect and develop local water and environmental resources as well as to ensure just allocation of water and sanitation services to all Palestinian Communities and to build the capacity of water and sanitation practitioners. Furthermore, to contribute in building a civil society and empowers the vulnerable groups, including women, to participate in decision making and to promote good water governance and the right to water as well as to improve water, food and energy security for all Palestinian Communities. (PHG) represents the host of PWWPN under establishment.

WeeCon and APT (The Consultant)

WeeCon and APT Engineer Consulting Center was established as a multi-disciplinary consulting Company provide expertise in the fields of planning, engineering, construction supervision, social and environmental management plan, capacity building and public awareness.

WeeCon and APT Engineer provides consulting services to both public and private sectors, undertaking major projects in the fields of construction, water, wastewater, irrigation, environmental and social management, capacity building and public awareness. Our engineering services range from planning and feasibility studies to conceptual and detailed design, acquiring permit for construction, assisting the Client in the bidding process, contract management and administration.

Weecon and APT Engineer achieved respectable reputation within private and public industries for its technical knowledge, effectiveness, and dedication to quality. We take great pride in the integrity and technical application of our services and strive to accomplish the goals of each Client.

4. The Advocacy Strategy (The Strategy)

“Empowerment of women in water sector by establishing Palestinian Women Water Practitioners Network” – hosted by The Palestinian Hydrology Group (PHG) & (PWWPN) intends to conduct the advocacy strategy in full cooperation and coordination with the relevant stakeholders.

The expected deliverables of this assignment will include advocacy strategy document and proposed implementation plan, all in which will be achieved through several activities;

- A general overview of the gender situation in the Palestinian water sector,
• Conducting 3 focus groups with stakeholders in order to share the initial SWOT analysis, and the outcome of their comments and recommendation,
• Produce main goals and objectives of the advocacy strategy, and
• Finally conductive tentative implementation plan.

5. The Strategy’s Applicability

Who: All women in the water, sanitation, and hygiene sectors regardless of their backgrounds, and all personnel in relation to women and water related issues.

Where: Palestinian water sector and its inter-sectoral domains.

When: 2023-2025.

Why: Palestinian women empowerment in water sector.
Chapter 2: Methodology

1. Previous Work: PWWPN lobby and advocacy

Based on the executive plan outcomes of PWWPN strategy, a lobby and advocacy program for advocating the importance of linking the implementation of achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women to be issued, ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. Following this, the advocacy strategy for the network has to be established and developed for the upcoming three years.

2. Analysis of Scope of Work and Implementation Plan-Objectives and Understanding of the Assignment

The ultimate outcome of the project is to establish and develop an advocacy strategy for (PWWPN), while the immediate outcome of this assignment is to develop advocacy strategy document for three years.

The Terms of Reference specify the following activities:

2. Conduct 3 focus groups with stakeholders in order to share the initial SWOT analysis, and the outcome of their comments and recommendation.
   a. One focus group with marginalized women.
   b. One focus group with young professional women and new graduates
   c. One focus group with women working in the water and gender sector.
3. Produce main goals and objectives of the advocacy strategy including tentative workplan after identifying problem and obstacle table.
4. Finalize the strategy document after a validation meeting.

It is understood that in order to achieve the objectives of this assignment, the scope of work will be conducted in compliance with the TOR requirements in order to ensure that goals of each phase have been achieved without delays. A key element in the achievement of the assignment objectives is to maintain full coordination and cooperation with (PHG) & (PWWPN), relevant stakeholders, and all other pertinent parties to manage all tasks related to the present services.

3. Overview of Phasing

The assignment will follow a logical sequence from assessment through analysis and agreement on the main goals and objectives of advocacy strategy

These steps and phases are visualized below:
Figure 1: Phases of advocacy strategy assignment

The main deliverables of the assignment are, in addition to this Inception Report (A):

A – Advocacy strategy document

B – Tentative implementation plan for 3 years
Chapter 3: Situational Analysis

1. Overview

The year 2020 marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Beijing Declaration, and the ten-year anniversary of the General Assembly resolution 64/292, recognizing the human right to water and sanitation. In that year the 10-year countdown to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) began. As such, it seemed apt to take stock of the progress (or lack thereof) made on SDG 5 – gender equality and women and girls’ empowerment, vs SDG 6 – access to water and sanitation for all. While gender equality and the right to water and sanitation are intrinsically linked, achieving either of these goals needs more effort and work. Today, more than two billion people lack access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation services. This data suggests that achieving universal access to even basic sanitation services by 2030 would require doubling the current annual rate of progress. Water scarcity affects more than 40% of the global population and is projected to rise, with more than 1.7 billion people currently living in river basins where water use exceeds recharge. With the impacts of climate change increasing, issues of water access and scarcity will worsen and disproportionately affect poor communities. At the same time, gender inequality persists as a result of unfair social norms, legal discrimination, women’s under-representation in politics, and violence against women and girls. One in five women and girls aged 15–49 have reported experiencing sexual and/or physical violence by an intimate partner in the past year. Women spend three times as much time as men on unpaid care and domestic work. Globally, women’s representation in national parliaments and elected local deliberative bodies averages only 24% and 26%, respectively. At the current rate of progress, it will take 170 years before achieving full economic gender equality. Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) are deeply relevant for women’s and girls’ empowerment, affecting their education, health, income and safety. The 1992 Dublin Statement on Water and Sustainable Development stated: ‘Women play a central part in the provision, management and safeguarding of water’ and policies should ‘address women’s specific needs’ and ‘empower women to participate at all levels in water resources programmes, including decision-making and implementation, in ways defined by them’. The 1995 Beijing Declaration also referenced gender equality in relation to water, stating ‘inadequate access to safe water, sanitation facilities ... all overburden women and their families and have a negative effect on their health’. The Declaration calls for ensuring that ‘women’s priorities are included in public investment programmes for economic infrastructure, such as water and sanitation’. women and girls – especially those living in poverty – are disproportionately affected by a lack of water and sanitation services, making SDG 5 and 6 fundamentally interdependent. Inadequate sanitation and hygiene put women’s health and survival at risk during pregnancy and childbirth. Girls may drop out of school or suffer psychological stress because of the lack of adequate sanitation and hygiene facilities in their communities. In 8 out of 10 households without a water source on the premises, women and girls are responsible for water collection. Globally, they spend an estimated 200 million hours collecting water every day. In addition to placing them at risk of violence and harassment, spending time on water collection can prevent girls from attending school and limits women’s ability to engage in other productive activities. Furthermore, despite being responsible for household water needs, women are often under-represented in water governance, including water user committees. As a result, development policies fail to recognize women as key stakeholders in water management and perpetuate cycles of
gender inequality. The only explicit reference to women and girls under SDG 6 relates to sanitation and hygiene (Target 6.2) – but not to water access and management. Of the Voluntary National Reports submitted for the 2018 High-Level Political Forum, only five countries mentioned the interlinkages between water and women as priorities for achieving the SDGs. The SDGs do not highlight the role of women in water beyond Targets 6.1 and 6.2, which only relate to water access, sanitation and hygiene – and not, for example, to water governance. In sum, the theoretical recognition that women and girls are key water and sanitation stakeholders has not translated to best practices on the ground. As Miletto et al. (2019) note: ‘Despite the countless number of gender and inclusion strategies within the water management sector, a clear gap remains evident between policies and practice and, most importantly, on the ground, where progress remains limited.’ Gender equality and access to water are basic human rights and are thus foundational for achieving the other SDGs. If achieving these ambitious goals by 2030 is to be accomplished, leaving no one behind, promotion of more gender-transformative water and sanitation programs. In particular, addressing the hidden causes of gender inequality, transforming power dynamics. This briefing note sets out three key policy recommendations to do so: 1. Increase the availability and quality of sex-disaggregated data on water, sanitation and hygiene, including water governance; 2. Increase women’s leadership and meaningful participation in water governance and integrated water resources management (IWRM) at all levels (household, community, national, and transboundary); 3. Challenge social norms around unpaid care work, women’s leadership, and gender-based violence. This note highlights only some of the shortfalls in our approaches to achieving SDG 5 and 6. For example, it is also important to consider how age influences women’s and girls’ water and sanitation needs. In addition, with the increasing impacts of climate change, and as conflict over scarce water resources escalates, consider how women and girls will be affected differently – for example, whether such trends place them at greater risk of gender-based violence.

Based on all of the above, in addition to the review of previous work listed below, the interventions of the advocacy strategy were formulated based on tackling all the above-mentioned challenges, these are listed in the weakness column, in the next sections the strengths, opportunities, and threats are listed in Table 3.1.

2. Connection to other documents (literature review)

2.1 Women in Water Utilities: Breaking Barriers WB, GWP

Women are significantly underrepresented in the water workforce. Multiple barriers, ranging from social norms, to inadequate HR policies, to an unwelcoming work environment, pose challenges to female water professionals’ entering, staying and advancing in the water sector. This study explores these barriers and provides utilities with practical approaches to advance their gender diversity.

2.2 Empowering Women in Water Diplomacy in the Middle East and North Africa: A Comparative Study of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Palestine, GWH, GWPmed

This mapping work, capitalizing on the methodology used for a similar mapping exercise undertaken in 2017 in Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine, reviewed and updated the work in the three countries and expanded the mapping to the Maghreb sub-region by including the cases of
Egypt and Morocco. Based on the findings, it identified the capacity building needs in terms of the various skills of a 21st century water diplomat.

Co-organized by GWP-Med and the Geneva Water Hub, within the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Water Policy Framework for Actions 2030, the virtual launching event commenced with welcoming remarks on behalf of the institutional partners. Prof. Michael Scoullos, Chairperson, GWP-Med, Mr. François Münger, Director, Geneva Water Hub and Mr. Isidro González Afonso, Deputy Secretary General for Water, Environment and Blue Economy, Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Secretariat, highlighted the value and vulnerability of water resources, also in view of climate change impacts, the contribution of hydro diplomacy in building bridges across the diversity of the Mediterranean mosaic and the critical role of women in this process. The three speakers re-confirmed the commitment and dedication of their respective institutions to supporting the role of women in water diplomacy.

2.3 Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) Advocacy Strategy for 2019 – 2021

The HCT’s Advocacy Strategy was formulated based on widespread consultations with humanitarian and other partners across the oPt that took place between December 2017 and February 2018, culminating in a national-level advocacy workshop that involved the participation of 60 representatives of UN agencies, international and Palestinian NGO, as well as in meetings of the HCT Advocacy Working Group during the formulation of this document. This advocacy strategy covers the three-year period.

2.4 GIZ Water Program Palestine

The importance of involving women and men in provision, management, and safeguarding of water is recognized globally. Therefore, the GIZ Water Program in Palestine includes gender equality as a crosscutting issue in all activities and supports key partners in mainstreaming gender in the water.

Even though Palestinian women play an essential role in the water sector in Palestine, their role is still mainly at the household level. In leadership and management in the water sector the role of women has yet to be strengthened.

Baseline study

In 2010, the GIZ Water Program supported a baseline study to assess gender-related challenges in the water sector in Palestine. The study revealed that women are highly underrepresented in the sector. Only 8% of the employees at water service providers are female. Moreover, only 2% of these women reach the management level and none of them the top-management. Challenges encountered by women are mainly apparent in the stigmatization and exclusion of jobs due to a traditional division of labor. Further obstacles are lower salaries for same jobs, limited access to training opportunities and information as well as lower participation in decision making processes. Women’s needs, priorities and capabilities are not given sufficient attention by decision makers. Furthermore, the evaluation of the institutions policies revealed a lack of gender-sensitive tools and mechanisms and that guarantee a mainstreaming of gender participation.
National Gender Strategy for the environmental sector with focus on water and solid waste

Based on the study results, the Ministry of Women’s Affairs and other relevant ministries developed a National Gender Strategy for the environmental sector with focus on water and solid waste. The objectives were formulated on three levels:

- Policy Level: promotion of gender-responsive policies
- Institutional Level: promotion of gender equality in sector institutions
- Community Level: women empowerment in decision making processes with regards to project planning, implementation and monitoring

Different activities

Enhancing gender equality in the water sector is basically realized through the empowerment of relevant Palestinian institutions in promoting gender equality. The gender achievements are measured by this indicator:

“Three relevant sector institutions (e.g. PWA, WSRC, UPWSP, WSP) have implemented measure (e.g.

Gender Audit in the PWA, Gender Code in similar WSP reporting of the WSRC, Gender Advanced Training of the UPWSP for members of the association on gender sensitive client orientation) to promote the implementation of gender equality in the water and waste water sector.”
Chapter 4: Focus Groups and SWOT Analysis

1. Overview
Three focused groups were conducted as follows:

1. One focus group with marginalized women.
2. One focus group with young professional women and new graduates.
3. One focus group with women working in the water and gender sector.

2. Interviews and results
Meetings and interviews were held with each focus group, the members and meeting results were as the following:

A- Marginalized woman focus group:
The meeting was conducted with “The Palestinian Working Woman Society for Development-PWWSD”, the head of society (Dr. Aqel Abu Qare’) and Educated field coordinator (Ni’meh Assaf) focused on the challenges that faces the marginalized women in water sector;

The main areas suffering from lack of water
- The areas adjacent to the apartheid wall
- Jericho and the Jordan Valley
- Bedouin speculators, especially livestock owners and animal breeders in the Jericho area

Reasons for water outages
- The occupation is the main reason and its control over the water resources
- The occupation prevented access to the groundwater reserve, especially if it was close to the settlements and the apartheid wall
Suggested solutions

- Implementing sustainable and advanced development projects related to the infrastructure, water networks, linking residential communities to them, and maintaining damaged water networks
- Building large reservoirs for large quantities of water and redistributing it to the population
- Constructing dams at the streams of torrents and valleys to collect water
- Construction of house wells to collect rainwater

Recommendations

- Making the water problem one of the primary concerns of the authority and civil institutions
- The Palestinians have the right to access their financial resources because it is a basic right for them
- Optimal use of water and rationalization of consumption by preventing water loss due to network damage, inappropriate water consumption in bathrooms, laundries, home gardens, and car cleaning.
- Women’s awareness and education in water use.
- Women capacity building how to improve the quality of water, especially in Gaza.

B- Young professional women & new graduate focus group:

The meeting was conducted with young professional women and new graduates “Engineer Isra Balta and engineer Yassmin Inrat “Water and Wastewater Engineers BS degrees” from WB and Engineer Angam Al Madhon “Water and Wastewater Engineers MSc degrees” from Gaza.

Opinions in General

Focusing on special awareness workshops for the Women and Water Network to include the largest number of members in the network in addition to promoting the website of the network through several channels and also finding ways to support professional women in the water and environment sector to reach positions Decision making and effective participation in building policies and strategies. Empowering and training women graduates by developing their capabilities and qualifying them to assume their roles with high efficiency

Opinions Should be Given Attention and Focus On

- Women are an underutilized talent group in the water sector- Water sector workers are mostly male, especially in specialized professions

The data collected during the meeting shows that the percentage of female workers in this field is much lower than the percentage of males (on average), there is also a large amount of heterogeneity in work facilities, as the interviewers indicate that there is inequality in opportunities, and sometimes they see that society is a male-dominated society and does not do justice to women, especially when applying for a job in this field.

- Increasing Women's Participation in Water Facilities Benefits Women And Society.
Women can benefit from having more jobs, and this also benefits communities from better representation in water sector management institutions, as increasing women’s participation in water utilities can lead to improved community relations, and more diversity in the workforce in utilities can help to better understand and respond to the concerns and needs of women workers.

- Improve Employee Retention.

When the work environment is seen as diverse and welcoming to different groups of people, employees are more likely to feel satisfied with their work and therefore less likely to leave the organization. Higher levels of gender diversity and HR policies and practices that focus on gender diversity are associated with lower levels of turnover rates. Since hiring and training new employees is costly for companies, reducing employee turnover can lead to savings and improve productivity.

C- Women working in the water and gender sector focus group:

The meeting was conducted with a group of female directors specialized in the water and gender sectors in PWA; (Majedah Alawneh, Abeer Awwad, Rana Abu Saoud, Bissan Al-Shunar), the discussion resulted in the following main points:

1- Amending the Cabinet’s decision regarding the formation of gender units, to have equal opportunities for both male & female, in the water sector.
2- Pressure from the Ministry of Women to form gender units to ensure equal opportunities in the water sector.
3- Awareness of the need to integrate gender in all levels (i.e.; planning, building capacities, setting budgets..etc.)
4- Awareness and capacity building for legal departments to consider gender in the water regulations (i.e.: tariff).
5- Direction of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics on how to consider gender in data collection and analysis related to water issues.
6- Ministry of women to lead an awareness campaign regarding the definition of gender, and cultural heritage related to the water sector and women.
7- Raising awareness of women’s suffering in obtaining water, especially in marginalized areas and those close to the apartheid wall.
8- Protecting women to access safe water sources.
9- Providing projects to supply water to marginalized areas for the benefit of women.
10- Highlight and share women's success stories & lessons learned through social media “Facebook &Instagram, TikTok” and media, by recording short films, interviews, etc, regardless of the scale of the project.
11- Exploiting the media to display the image of the strong, successful Palestinian woman.
12- Upgrade PWWPS website and Facebook page by:
   - Adding a section for woman's advocacy.
   - Adding a “Donate section” as an initiation to provide funds for marginalized women.
   - Ability to add the women's success stories, thoughts, needs, and suggestions.
13- Create a special logo for woman’s advocacy.
13- Assign a date in the year for woman’s advocacy in the water sector.

3. SWOT Analysis
The following table (Table 3.1) illustrate the strategic analysis for women situation in water sector;

Table 3.1: SWOT analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strength</th>
<th>Weakness</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Institutionalized water utilities</td>
<td>• Prevalent ideas that refer to work in water facilities is not suitable for women</td>
<td>• Vacancies and hiring opportunities</td>
<td>• Existing norms and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Role model employees in the water sector.</td>
<td>• The girls’ lack of role models for female employees in the water sector</td>
<td>• Regional and international role models available</td>
<td>• Imitating role models that have unacceptable values and visions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Capacitated Universities teaching water and environment related programs.</td>
<td>• Low percentage of female graduates technical fields specifically water and environment related</td>
<td>• Increase female’s acceptance rates in these</td>
<td>• Lack of female willingness to join such programs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Governmental policies and plans to support technical and vocational education for all.

• Water utilities have needs assessments.

• Hiring is based on needs assessments

• No incentives to hire women

• National policy agenda and prevailing laws encourage equal chances in hiring process.

• Women work-life balance family that hinders professional progress for the woman.

• Educated women in water and environment related fields.

• Unsupportive work environment for female employees

• Work facilities not meeting the needs of women

• Lack of tracks and plans to switch from study to work.

• Lack of information about training internal water utilities entry-level jobs, etc.

• Bias in the hiring process

• Availability of jobs, trainings in water utilities.

• Hiring is based on announced criteria and interviews.

• Funds are gender related

• Some jobs can allow working while studying

• Quiet on studying for a vacancy.

• Biased allocation of these jobs and trainings.

• Hiring is done by nepotism.

• Discrimination against women in hiring for certain jobs.

• Women forced to quiet on their career for the benefit of their families.

• Female employees low working efficiency

• Governmental policies and plans to support technical and vocational education for all.

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• Hiring is based on needs assessments

• No incentives to hire women

• National policy agenda and prevailing laws encourage equal chances in hiring process.

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• Biased allocation of these jobs and trainings.

• Hiring is done by nepotism.

• Discrimination against women in hiring for certain jobs.

• Women forced to quiet on their career for the benefit of their families.

• Female employees low working efficiency
- Work environment are controlled by various prevailing laws
- Developed work facilities in water and environment sector.
- Lack of training opportunities for women planned to be merged into joint service councils
- wage gaps between males and females
- Public awareness on women rights on related issues.
- Women empowerment against mistreatment.
- Lack of communication mentoring opportunities for women
- Educated female are the largest percent of work force
- Professional Women missing these opportunitie s, due to different reasons
- Minimum wage is adopted by the government based on job ranking
- Lack of communication mentoring opportunities for women
- Professional Women missing these opportunitie s, due to different reasons
- Specialized training opportunities are designed and planned nationally and internationally.
- Wage discrepancie s is maintained
- Specialized training opportunities are designed and planned nationally and internationally.
- Wage discrepancie s is maintained
- Professional Women missing these opportunitie s, due to different reasons
- Specialized training opportunities are designed and planned nationally and internationally.
- communication mentoring opportunities are offered nationally and internationally.
- Mentoring and outreach programs are designed and planned nationally and internationally.
- Minimum wage is adopted by the government based on job ranking
- Specialized training opportunities are designed and planned nationally and internationally.
Chapter 5: Advocacy Strategy Message, Vision, Mission and Goal

5.1 Message
Representation of women in the workforce in the water sector and at leadership levels is an important factor in contributing to improving water management. As the presence of women in leadership positions/decision-making positions enables them to provide advice and guidance in the water sector and sanitation, by monitoring women's needs in this area within the sector’s policies, which provides more policies Comprehensive approach towards water management and sustainable development. There is an opportunity to highlight leaders in senior management, whether it is for women or men as role models within the water sector.

5.2 Vision
Influence the decisions made by the government and others to the benefit of our network empowerment, and create a more viable women-empowering platform under the principles of IWRM, to achieve the related SDGs.

5.3 Mission
Support the empowerment of women roles in water governance and management in relation to SDGs achievement, through policy-making and contributive merging in all water-related issues nationally, regionally, and internationally.

5.4 Goal
Women Empowerment and Advocacy to play an effective role in water and environment sectors at all levels.

5.5 Values
- **Safety**
  Will always be the top focus - for every employee, customer, and community. This includes physical safety, emotional safety and health and wellbeing. Nothing is more important.
- **Trust**
  Is built through one interaction at a time. commitment to a mutually respectful and inclusive workplace for all employees.
- **Environmental Leadership**
  Means delivering safe, clean, reliable and affordable water and wastewater services. protect our water sources and use this precious resource wisely.
- **Teamwork**
  work together toward our common goals by sharing and debating ideas, leveraging our diversity, respecting differences of opinions and being accountable for our actions.
- **High Performance**
  Performing at our best includes getting the fundamentals right every time, managing risks, and addressing issues quickly and transparently.

5.6 Principles
All Advocacy strategy activities will be guided by the following principles:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client</th>
<th>Beneficiary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Palestinian Hydrology Group</td>
<td>Palestinian Women Water Practitioners Network (PWWPN)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Community based and community driven
In line with our network Plan, we will also keep our community informed of our advocacy priorities and encourage their involvement.

• Evidence Based
Our priority projects will have rational and sound research and data to support their merits.

• Partnerships
Partnering with Governments or other organizations and alliances

• Solution oriented
Incorporate solutions, not just issues and aim to be innovative.

• Proactive, not reactive
Identify and advocate projects through a considered approach.
However, our advocacy principles will guide us if required to respond to unforeseen or emerging issues.
Chapter 6: The advocacy strategy

5.1 What is Advocacy
Advocacy is the process of influencing others to create change. It is often aimed at decision makers to make positive changes to public policy or resourcing for a community. Advocacy can be undertaken through a series of smaller actions or a larger, partnership approach.

Effective advocacy requires the proponents to have a clear understanding of the issue or challenge, and ideas on how to address these that can be clearly communicated.

A successful advocacy framework relies on working closely with the community to identify the problem or need, research relevant issues, plan a set of activities, undertake actions and evaluate the results.

Some external factors may influence the advocacy priorities and result in them either being escalated or postponed. These factors can include a funding program, change in government policy or allocation of funding to a competing project.

5.2 What is An Advocacy Strategy
An advocacy strategy is defined as “organized efforts by citizens to influence the formulation and implementation of public policies and programs by persuading and pressuring state authorities, international financial institutions and other powerful actors.

Formulating an advocacy strategy is a way to influence a process to ensure that those making the final decision has the necessary information and conviction to do so.

Advocacy is a common theme in democratic theory since it is employed in processes in which groups of citizens exercise their sovereignty in an informed and active way. The goal of these groups are to engage in the decision-making process on issues that are fundamentally in the public interest because these issues affect or interest them.

5.3 Why is an Advocacy Strategy Important?
An advocacy strategy promotes the participation of groups, institutions or organizations external to the authorities in the decision-making process. These groups are often not involved in making the final decision, but they can influence the final result. This means that an advocacy strategy is the ideal tool to democratize and socialize the decision-making process. The strategy’s importance therefore partly lies in its demonstration that power is not exclusively wielded by those holding political office, but also by organized groups of citizens and institutions with an interest in public issues.

Some aspects demonstrating the importance of advocacy are presented below.
Helps to resolve specific problems through concrete changes in policies and public programmes

Many organized groups pursue change in different economic, social, political and cultural realities. Through advocacy, "(...) they can channel their efforts towards solving specific problems within these complex realities, formulate plans and implement strategies and actions to reach concrete solutions" (BioAndes, 2008).

Strengthens and empowers civil society

Creating alliances and building relationships at regional and national level strengthens social organization as well as strengthening and empowering civil society. Consequently, advocacy "(...) does not only help to solve concrete problems, but also jointly strengthens the group or "coalition" and provides a greater scope for it to focus its efforts in relation to public policy" (BioAndes, 2008).

Seeks to promote and consolidate democracy

By strengthening citizen participation in decision-making relating to public policies and programmes, it also seeks to promote a culture of political transparency. The achievement of this leads to a more democratic model of power relations between state institutions and citizens.
5.4 The Advocacy Strategy Interventions

Suggested interventions for facilities to attract, recruit, retain and achieve career advancement in the women's water sector are as follow:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Suggested Approaches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attractions</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Prevalent ideas that refer to that work in water facilities is not suitable for women | - The facilities implement awareness programs and campaigns in schools and colleges to encourage young women to think about work and employment in Water utilities, such as the Take Your Daughter to Work Day initiative.  
- Launching facilities for communication campaigns.  
→ Collaboration efforts between facilities, schools, and colleges at the district level |
| The girls' lack of role models | - Sector representatives explain the organization’s work to schools and the community.  
- Show female field workers as role models in society.  
→ Collaboration efforts between facilities, schools, and colleges at the district level |
| A low percentage of female graduates in technical fields | - Providing scholarships to girls and women for training in water-related fields.  
- Organizing international exchange programs.  
→ Collaboration efforts between facilities, schools, and colleges at the district level |
| Recruitment | |
| Lack of tracks and plans to switch from study to work | - Develop plans for training for the transition from study to work.  
- Balanced participation of men and women in the internal training programs.  
- Providing vocational training and employment programs.  
- Vacation work programs for both men and women.  
- Vocational training targeting men and women.  
→ Collaboration efforts between facilities, colleges and universities |
| Lack of information about training for entry-level jobs, etc. | - Utilities hire female engineers directly from universities.  
- Participation of facilities in employment fairs.  
→ Collaboration efforts between facilities, colleges, and universities |
| **Bias in the hiring process** | - Companies need to reform their recruitment processes to include the following recommendations:
|                              | - Using specific analytical tools to modify the language of job descriptions to be more gender-neutral.
|                              | - Remove all references to gender and age in application documents.
|                              | - Include tasks in the interview process that simulate the tasks to be performed during work, including written tests.
|                              | - Using structured interviews in the recruitment process to avoid informal discussions that could lead to job applicants.
|                              | - To reveal certain information such as marital status and number of children.
|                              | - Ensure diversity between men and women in the personal interview committee.
|                              | - Training the hiring committee to avoid implicit gender bias.
|                              | → Collaboration efforts between utilities and sector leaders. |

| **No incentives to hire Women** | - Set goals to encourage facilities to expand diversity.
|                              | - Develop an action plan aimed at achieving the goals of gender diversity.
|                              | - Provide rewards to companies for hiring women.
|                              | - Offering awards to honor the male and female heroes who contribute to the development of women working in the sector.
|                              | - Develop measures to track gender diversity.
|                              | → Collaboration efforts between utilities and sector leaders. |
### Retention

#### Work-life balance

- Office environments should provide the following:
  - Return-to-work arrangements for returning parents, such as phased return schedules where working hours are gradually increased until
  - Get to the final table.
  - Flexible working arrangements, including options for part-time, telecommuting, flexible core hours, and a flexible work arrangement.
  - Participation in work and others.
  - Develop guidelines for managers to ensure flexible working arrangements.

#### Water utility units and locations must provide the following:

- Child care arrangements such as on-site child care facilities or financial assistance for child care expenses.
- Lactation rooms on site.
- Policies that allow nursing mothers to take time off to breastfeed.

#### Not enough policies to protect Women and families

- Develop laws that prevent or penalize employers for firing pregnant women.
- Develop laws that require employers to ensure that female employees returning from maternity leave get the same job or what equals it.
- Develop maternity and paternity leave policies.
- Develop family leave policies.
- Develop communication plans to increase awareness of policies, laws, and arrangements among staff.

#### Unsupportive work environment for female employees

- Companies train managers on how to promote a supportive, family-friendly, and respectful work culture.
- The administration should adopt a strategy or action plan for sexual diversity.
- Establishing a steering committee concerned with diversity or inclusion between the sexes.
- Establishment of facilities for the Gender Coordination Authority.
- Allocate part of the budget for gender-related affairs.
- Conduct regular gender-specific staff reviews.
- Holding workshops on unconscious bias in the workplace, including workshops for managers.
- Gender awareness training for all staff.
- Developing managers' performance measures that include the gender equality index.
- Allocate resources to implement gender measures.
- Develop reward systems for all employees to incentivize the creation of a gender sensitive work environment.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem Area</th>
<th>Solution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lack of work facilities the needs of women</strong></td>
<td>- Water utility units and locations must provide the following:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Separate sanitary facilities for men and women - Sanitary facilities for women with</td>
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<td></td>
<td>additions to take care of personal hygiene during menstruation, including locks and litter</td>
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<td></td>
<td>boxes and hand washing facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Health and safety standards that take into account the needs of men and women</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Lactation rooms on site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Policies that allow breastfeeding mothers to rest for breastfeeding</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sexual harassment in the workplace</strong></td>
<td>- Utilities should put in place clear sexual harassment policies to protect employees.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Executives establish safe and fair procedures for reporting and responding to sexual</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>harassment.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Training all employees on the prevention of sexual harassment.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Providing safe means of transportation and accommodation for workers in the field sites.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Wage gaps between Male and females</strong></td>
<td>- Facilities conduct training on gender equality and preventing personal bias.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Succession plans that include women.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Transparency in promotion processes and criteria.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Performance systems that identify talented women who can be promoted.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Set targets for diversity between males and females in leadership positions.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Setting incentive systems for women to motivate them to aspire to continue working in the</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>company.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Awards honoring women leaders in the sector.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lack of training opportunities for women</strong></td>
<td>- Equal access to training, which enhances technical, leadership, administrative, and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>negotiation skills.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Training that addresses gender stereotypes, such as mandatory training on creating a</td>
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<td></td>
<td>male-friendly work environment and females, and educating employees and management about it.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Provide training at times and locations suitable for both men and women.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Lack of mentoring opportunities and communication for women

- Mentoring programs that bring together senior and junior employees.
- Provide formal care programs for men and women.
- Encouraging female-led professional networks.
- Monitoring to measure the effectiveness of mentoring and outreach programs.

### 5.5 Strategy Objectives and Tentative Implementation Plan (2023-2025)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Timeframe /output</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 1    | Build our organization’s capacity to advocate | **1A:** Develop internal working group and steering committee to direct advocacy  
**1B:** Deliver training/programs to develop skills in advocacy and encourage collaboration  
**1C:** Engage correct stakeholders, use decision makers and influencers as advocates, incorporate media and community engagement to support identified advocacy priorities. | Implementation of initial program FY 2023-2024 then annual reviews/updates  
Develop template for advocacy priorities identification and development |
| 2    | Build our community’s capacity to advocate | **2A:** Women Leadership Training Program  
**2B:** Women Awareness campaigns and development of toolkit/templates for advocacy | Develop toolkit for community groups/organizations and other stakeholders  
2024-2025 Deliver Community Leadership Training Program  
As required as part of a Communications & Engagement Strategy |
| 3    | Build on and strengthen our advocacy partnerships | **3A:** Develop effective communications and campaigns  
**3B:** Build trusted relationships with politicians and government representatives  
**3C:** Maintain effective | Ongoing |
relationships with communities of interest in region and develop key “influencers” or “champions”

3D: Empower our elected representatives to advocate for women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4</th>
<th>Monitor and evaluate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understand current related ministries policy, direction and target and respond accordingly</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understand and identify potential risks of advocacy activities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ongoing. Reliant on regular meetings with Decision makers and advocacy Steering</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Client
The Palestinian Hydrology Group

Beneficiary
Palestinian Women Water Practitioners Network (PWWPN)
Chapter 7: Review and Monitor Progress

Suggested review and monitoring steps;

- Regular review of the advocacy progress and ensure that the progress is in tune with the overall timelines.
- Monitor the implementation of communication channels to ensure that there is regular information sharing and communication within the advocacy partners and with other sector stakeholders.
- Ensure participation of PWWPN, PWA, and PHG members
- Advocacy issues to be considered as joint activities of stakeholders and beneficiaries.
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