

## BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE EXPERIENCE

The extension course included seven modules focusing on gender relations and equality in water management. The course's approach follows a political pedagogical project. The course made use of the virtual learning platform (Moodle) offered by Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul. Methods employed included on-line sessions/ lectures, discussion fora, reading and audiovisual materials. Student experience was enhanced by a chat channel which has stimulated exchange and interaction between participants and tutors. Additionally, "reflection-action-reflection" activities and assignments were applied, where participants interacted with their own community in order to connect theory and practice. The course also included a face-to-face meeting in Mato Grosso do Sul's

capital city, Campo Grande, at the end of the course. While all participants were invited to attend, only those who had completed 75% of the course and had obtained a satisfactory grade obtained financial support to enable their attendance. This immersion meeting lasted for two days and aimed at exchanging experiences and building networks. During the meeting, participants presented the systematization of their experiences and reported on their interactions with their communities. The immersion sought to increase participants' feeling of belonging, the development of a network between them, and provided an opportunity to collectively evaluate the course according to its' guiding participatory principals.

### Outstandings:

- The involvement of both women and men in the course helped to initiate a process where men is placed as allies and active promoters of gender equality towards water management.

## Specific consideration of women or gender equity

Gender relations and equality in water management; and environmental education.

## General data

**ENROLLED IN:** Extension course - composing an initiative for "Training of Multipliers for Gender Incorporation in Water Resources Management and Environmental Education".

**IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD:** 2013-2014.

**PROMOTING ENTITY:** Mupan – Women in Action in the Pantanal.

**PARTICIPANT:** 150 participants (in which 76% were women and 24% men), from different localities in Brazil (mostly Mato Grosso do Sul State).

Participants were secondary and university-level students. The Extension course was organized in 5 online groups of 30 participants each, undertaken simultaneous classes.

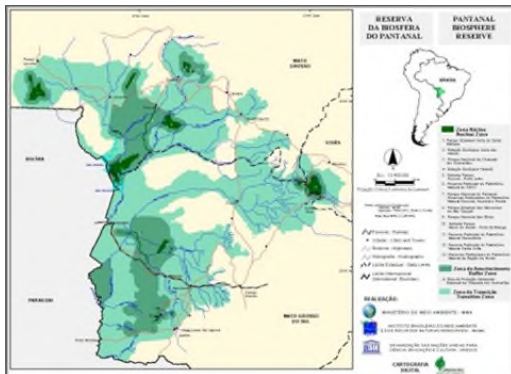
**FINANCING ENTITY:** Implementing NGO-MUPAN with financial support from the "Ecosystem Alliance Program" - IUCN NL, Wetlands International, Both ENDS.

**IS IT AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET?:** <https://www.gaea.inf.br/>

## Justification

Despite historical increase of participation of women at participatory spaces in our contemporary societies, a large part of the female population is still poorly represented at decision-making processes in relation to socio-environmental policies. Academic research on the area has shown that women's participation and decision-making organisms related to water management, as well as in the

political sphere in Pantanal area, is low. Women involvement at local citizens' participatory mechanisms is also limited. Public participation in the management of water resources is foreseen at national and state policies. In general, women participate at local debates, but are quite absent at the level of decision making.



*“women participate at local debates, but are quite absent at the level of decision making”.*

## Objectives

Capacity of women's participation at decision-making spaces concerning water management; while promoting gender equality and enabling opportunities.

## Results

To evaluate the results of this training, Mupan used a pre- and post-questionnaire. Participants were also invited to systematize their learning in the last module of the course. Evaluation revealed that participants were more knowledgeable about gender equality and recognized the importance of women's participation in water management. At least 10 participants also felt motivated to deepen their training under this subject, having engaged at university courses of graduation and post-graduation studies.

Other results include:

- Increased discussion on gender relations in participants' families and extended families, resulting in a greater sharing of domestic work between women and men, boys and girls.
- Enhanced participation by trainees in local decision-making spheres.

Participants are defending gender equality at various participatory bodies within water management.

- Participants formulated projects applying gender perspectives and are promoting gender equality within their institutions, most of which dealing with water management issues.
- Increased participation of women at local councils addressing water management. However, it is necessary to mention that women's participation, voice and decision-making power in these spheres continues to be a challenge. Therefore, it is important to continue advocacy work and to continue implementing courses such as this training for gender equality and women's empowerment
- Greater recognition by local governments/authorities of the importance of women's participation and voice in water management.

## Remarkable achievements on women or gender equity

A baseline research carried out by Mupan in 2007 showed that Women had less than 15% saying in decision making processes over Water and Natural resources. Local communities have little access to resources, are deprived of knowledge of their rights and on how to participate in decisions over their territory. With the knowledge of decision making spaces and respect to local knowledge at that spaces, more than 1000 women had gone through the GAEA and others formative processes, working at various sectors focus on women and

gender equity. Although GAEA and other efforts are proven to be successful in increasing women participation and contributing to gender equality, there is still a long road ahead. Women's participation and decision-making power at political spheres continues to be a challenge. Therefore, it is important to carry on continuous efforts to advocate towards gender equality initiatives and empowerment, including implementing courses such as GAEA. actividad.



## Evaluation

Women's increased participation and decision-making capacity in water management continues to be a challenge in what is still a male dominated sphere.

## Dissemination

With the completion of the Extension Course, the GAEA Training was registered in 2014 in the process of selecting the UN Women's Gender Equality Training Center. The selection resulted in the registration and analysis of the GAEA Training in the Compendium of Good Practices in Training for Gender Equality. The Compendium is a response to "Training for Gender Equality: Twenty

Years Later," based on the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) and its developments, to this day. The Compendium brings together practices from various regions of the world, especially the Southern Hemisphere, with presentation and analysis seeking to identify the transformative potential for gender equality.

## Durability

The pedagogical proposal of GAEA Training is being replicated in other activities, that way the experience is able to continue. Examples of ongoing application of the GAEA methodology are: State Environmental Education Programme of Mato Grosso do Sul (2017); training course for conservation unit managers of Mato

Grosso and Mato Grosso do Sul States (WWF, MUPAN and Wetlands International), training process for members of the Inter-institutional commission of Environmental Education (Brazil/ Ministry of Environment and IICA).

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### Pantanal Biosphere Reserve Brasil

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*“Women’s increased participation and decision-making capacity in water management continues to be a challenge in what is still a male dominated sphere”.*

## Monitoring

The direct monitoring happened during the period of the extension course 2013-2014; the selective process and monitoring by UN happened in 2014-2018, an annex of the progress of Best Practices will be

published. Since 2017 the GAEA Training has been used as research theme of the Doctoral Course in the Postgraduate Program in Science Teaching – UFMS.

## Replicable aspects in other Biosphere Reserves

Based on the already going applicability and adoption by other institutions and proven success of the methodology, the replicability in other

regions of the Biosphere Reserve is not only possible, but is already happening, as exemplified in the item above.

## Possible actions on women or gender equity that have been identified during the experience

- Transformative possibilities of the perception of men about the importance of women's participation in forums for discussion and decision-making.
- Empowerment of leaders and multipliers.
- Expansion of women's participation in decision making and political spheres.



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