

# CAWTAR

Center of Arab Woman  
for Training and Research

## **CAWTAR's strategic orientations**

2008-2013

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**CENTER OF ARAB WOMAN  
FOR TRAINING AND RESEARCH  
( C A W T A R )**

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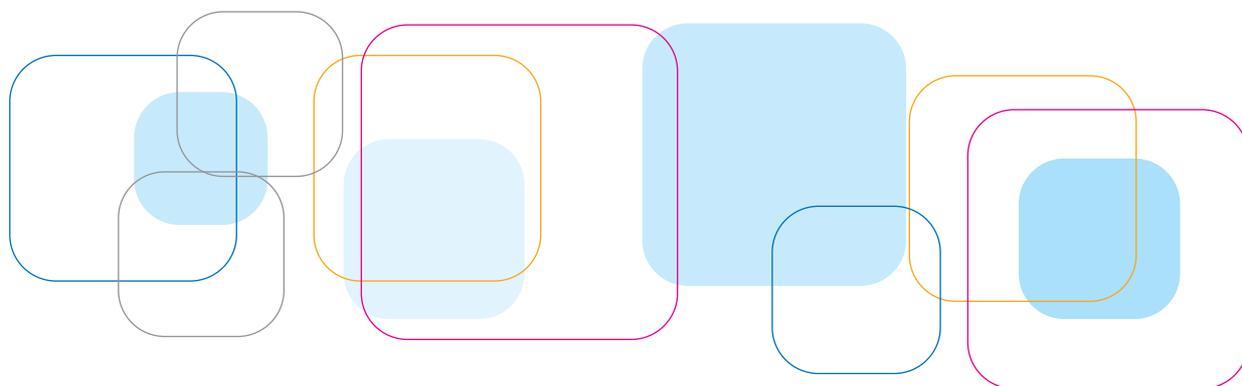


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## PREFACE

This design of this multi-year programme has benefited from the experiences of the last five years and from the recommendations of the meeting of experts that was held in July, 2007 in Hammamet, Tunis. The programme has also benefited from the continued support of HRH Prince Talal Bin Abdul Aziz, Founder and President of AGFUND and Chairman of CAWTAR's Board of Trustees, as well as that of other members of the Board: Government of Tunisia, UNDP, IPPF, UNFPA, UNIFEM and the World Bank. The direct and indirect support of AGUND should be highlighted since it is the support that AGFUND provides to UN agencies that has led to the development of different partnerships between CAWTAR and UN agencies. The business model of the programme maintains the successful practices of partnerships, local ownership of activities, outreach and capacity building. The fields of CAWTAR's operations require the pooling of resources and effective coordination and cooperation with international, regional and national institutions active in the area of women development and gender equity.



## Introduction

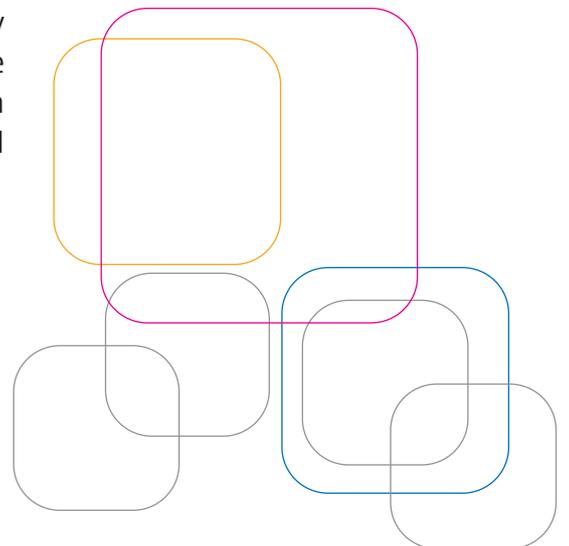
The Regional Programme Document is designed as a multi-year work plan covering a period of five years (2010-2015) for efficient planning and resource allocation. The programme is a living document that is reviewed annually by the Technical Committee and the Board of Trustees. The design benefits from the lessons learnt during the implementation of the last Programme 2004-2007 which was designed as a “project Document” following the UNDP format of 2003. Since CAWTAR is no longer a “project”, the programme planning has followed normal practices of consultation with stakeholders and regional experts to establish the strategic outcome pillars of CAWTAR’s work during the next four years. The multi-year framework approach is intimately linked to resources mobilization and the effective implementation of activities that usually go beyond the span of a single calendar year.

The lessons that guided the planning of this Programme Document were drawn from an internal review of CAWTAR’s past practices and institutional performance during the last planning period. These lessons are:

single focus approach on either thematic or functional basis is less effective than an integrated approach where research feeds into training and both feed into advocacy. Themes in development work should be conceived as interdependent and mutually supportive. It is difficult to perceive that advocacy of the rights of women can be effective without adequate institutional environment to change the culture and practices in the institutions that can facilitate women’s exercise of their rights.

“Partnership” is the new paradigm in development work. Since many organizations could be interested in or simultaneously working on the same or similar theme, bringing them together in a partnership saves time and energy; the synergy of joint planning; funding and implementation increase the effectiveness of resource allocation and the achievement of desired results.

Multi-stakeholders participation and engagement may lead to increased commitment through effective communication. It may also develop a common vision through shared learning and exchange of views and experiences.



Completed activities may lose their value and produce less than desired impact unless a follow up process is built into their design and financial planning. Since the value of an activity may not be reaped immediately, follow up nurtures that value, renews commitment and strengthens ownership.

Thematic choices and related activities have a better chance of being effective if they are coherent and logically interdependent. Activities have more value and increased relevance if they are based on field research and case studies.

These lessons will reinforce that the value of work planning, activity design and implementation.

The activities are therefore designed to enlighten and inform, renew commitment, engage relevant stakeholders, advocate rights, raise awareness, build capacities, support partner organization, ensure continuing outreach, contribute to building the knowledge society and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. They also ensure CAWTAR's own institutional development and renewal.

## Part I:

### Regional Context:

Since the beginning of the last programming period (2004-2007), there have been some encouraging prospects in the Arab region despite persistent disparities in progress achievement particularly in the least developed parts of the region: Comoros, Djibouti, Mauritania, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen<sup>(1)</sup> : these may not achieve the targets set by the MDG's by the year 2015. Poverty reduction has succeeded more in the Gulf States<sup>(2)</sup> and to some extent in the middle income countries but poverty has increased in some more than others in the region's LDC's (37%-47%). Poverty among female-headed households was about 15 percentage points higher than those of men-headed household in the rural areas, while they were equal at 12% in urban areas. Labor Force participation in the region (males and females) rose relatively slowly from 26% in 2000 to 28% in 2005 with only 30% of total employment for women <sup>(3)</sup>

The Micro Credit institutions, NGOs and the Banks of the poor initiated in the Arab region by AGFUND<sup>(4)</sup> have played a major role in creating gainful employment opportunities and increasing the share of women in the labour force by providing them with seed funds to start their projects. CAWTAR has organized training activities to develop entrepreneurship skills to enable the trainees to develop innovative projects. Training was also designed to enlighten the trainees on the requirements of the market place and the policies and rules that govern small and micro business operations.

CAWTAR's partnership with both ILO and UNIDO have led the development and testing of training kits for training the trainers to ensure sound multiplier effects for skills development<sup>(5)</sup> among women entrepreneurs. Female owned enterprises have helped increase the share of women in the labour force since they tend to employ more females. World Bank data show that in 2006, 14.5% of firms in the Middle East and North Africa were owned by females<sup>(6)</sup> .

While enrolment in primary education has improved and may already have reached parity in the Magreb and GCC (92% females; 93% for males in 2004)<sup>(7)</sup>, almost 75% of out-of-school children are in the low income countries as unrest and instability continue. The general literacy rate among the 15-24 year old group in the region increased to 83.6% in 2006. With all the UNDP and UNAIDS up-scaling of efforts to combat HIV/AIDS, the region still needs to increase these effort further since the epidemic is accelerating at an alarming pace though more so in the poorer countries.

1- According to ESCWA's subregional groupings.

2- Data on income poverty in GCC countries is generally lacking.

3- Middle East and North Africa : Gender Overview, the World Bank, 2007.

4- CAWTAR produced a Directory of Micro Credit Organizations in the Arab Countries, 2007

5- This program will be enlarged during the next programming period.

6- North Africa and Middle East, Gender Overview, opt.cit, p.18.

7- Most recent year statistics unavailable.

The proportion of people having access to sustainable safe drinking water has slightly increased from 82% in 2004 to about 83% in 2006 while the rural areas were at 13 percentage points less than in urban areas. There has been a slight improvement in access to sanitation facilities in the region though the percentage of the population having access to sanitation services in the LDC was only 26% in rural areas (2004) compared to 60% in urban areas in the same year.

Progress in women's legal rights has seen some improvements: more countries (4) have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) albeit with some reservations (for some more than others): Egypt amended its nationality law to allow Egyptian women married to foreigners to give their nationality to their children, Bahrain passed a similar law, so did Iran, though only for children born in Iran. The reservation and provisions of countries ratifying the CEDAW undermine potential progress. Certain articles are rejected on the grounds of incompatibility with current local legislation. The challenges for women equality under the law still form a significant gap in the aspirations for achieving gender equality.

During the last programme period, CAWTAR has made efforts to reduce the bias against women's rights by demonstrating that recognition of women's rights should not be fulfilled only by words and lip service in public pronouncements. Its advocacy work aimed at drawing attention to the issues of gender equality benefiting from its country studies, its publications, media networking and training based on research results. Its programmes drew attention to the issue of women unfulfilled equality and rights and advocated that such seemingly supportive stance by public authorities need to be translated into policies and practical actions supported with funds to translate what is claimed into practice.

CAWTAR has made efforts to alert the responsible leadership in the region including government authorities and policy makers, civil society organizations and relevant NGO's about the plight of adolescents girls and young women on two important occasions: the first was when it launched its first Arab Women Development Report (AWDR) on the Arab Women and Globalization and the second was when it launched its second AWDR on the Arab Adolescent Girl: Reality and Future Perspectives: CAWTAR followed up these activities by establishing a girls' virtual forum on the subject of adolescent girls where questions are asked and answers provided on [adoonline@cawtar.org](mailto:adoonline@cawtar.org). These works were also followed up and will continue during the new planning period through organizing artistic competitions for youth to express themselves in artistic form or in news articles. Winners are recognized in CAWTAR's publications and the winning products are given wide publicity in the media.

There is an increased attention in the region to issues related to youth. With lower infant mortality, the region's population comprises 20.6% in the ages between 15 and 24. High unemployment is a major challenge to youth and it is sometimes addressed either with immigration which is no longer an easy solution; some may resort to undesirable behaviour. However, this should be taken by authorities as an opportunity rather than a challenge; opportunities can be created through better education, better response to the market demands through relevant skills development, market oriented aptitudes, more investment in entrepreneurship and increased sense of responsible citizenship.

Despite some progress, Women's access to public services continues to require serious attention particularly in favour of the disadvantaged groups in urban and rural communities. In addition, more attention is needed to increase knowledge on the issues of women suffering from violence in all its forms. To inform policies, break taboos and help women to speak out and claim their rights. CAWTAR has developed a training kit in collaboration with UNIFEM on the issues of violence against women; the photo gallery of women victims of violence feeds into the advocacy activities.

The impact of conflicts in the region has exacerbated the plight of women living in areas of conflict. Women and girls have special needs as they are displaced from their homes as a result of insecurity and conflict; they also need rehabilitation and reintegration in the post conflict society. Institutional capacity building to provide such needed services is an integral component of any programme to address these issues.

The image of women in the media is still tainted and needs continuous work to improve the perception of women as equal citizens with equal rights. The national case studies and regional report issued by CAWTAR with support from UNIFEM: *The Arab Women and the Media*<sup>(8)</sup> have highlighted these issues and focused on discovering the reasons behind the negative portrayal of women in the media. The report aimed to draw the attention of decision makers in media establishments and researchers regarding the need to change rules and policies to ensure that media stories on women need to be factual, balanced and conducive to supporting women's claims for exercising their rights as equal citizens.

Women's role in decision making is still weak despite progress which is observed in some countries more than others. CAWTAR has espoused the cause of women for increased participation in local governance. It designed a programme to develop women's skills for leadership in their respective community, for participation in elections and for an increased role in public service agencies in local administration. Women representation in legislative assemblies has increased especially in Bahrain, Djibouti, Jordan, Iraq, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia. This was the result of direct appointments and the introduction of a quota system in some cases. However, major impediments against women holding positions at policy and decision making levels still persist.

CAWTAR's regional report on *Women and Decision Making*<sup>(9)</sup> produced with the support of UNFPA has analyzed the root causes of the weak role of women in decision making to build knowledge and drum up support for policies and actions to provide opportunities for women to contribute their full potential to social, economic and political development in their society.

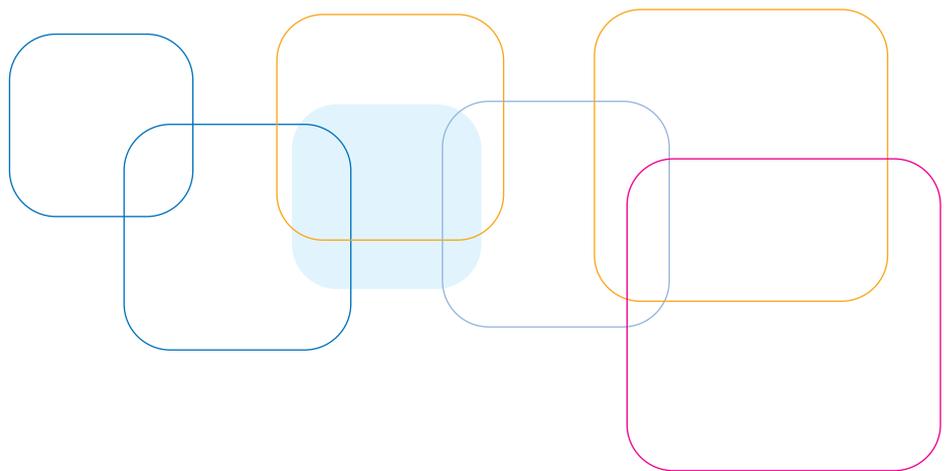
The report was followed by three country case studies in Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia on the role of women in decision making. These were used in training and advocacy activities. Economic empowerment of women has been steadily pursued in CAWTAR's programmes and activities. The programme initiated in collaboration with the World Bank International Finance Corporation (IFC) in 2004 xxx (more info).

*8- This is the Third Arab Women Development Report, 2006. The first AWDR (2001) dealt with the issues of: Gender and Globalisation: Participation of Arab Women in the Economic Order. The second (2003) AWDR addressed the issues of: The Arab Adolescent Girl: Reality and Future Perspective. The was followed by a companion book (2003) of male and female personal testimonies.*

*9- This is the Fourth Arab Women Development Report, 2007*

The economic research initiated in 2005 under the Gender Economic Research in the Arab region<sup>(10)</sup> (GERPA) contributes to building needed knowledge on women in the economic order and feeds into policy research and advocacy. The work on increasing the role women in the field of information technology aimed at empowering women through the use of ICT to gain access to the job market and build women's advocacy skills. CAWTAR's book on the Arab Women and the Information Technology<sup>(11)</sup> aimed at building and disseminating knowledge on ICT; it was also used to develop ITC skills, electronic journalism and the use of internet as a vehicle for advocacy.

To disseminate information and build an alliance with media institutions and researchers, CAWTAR launched the Arab Network of Gender for Development @NGED. The network is also an effective vehicle for the Center's outreach. @NGED has about 150 member institutions from the Media and gender NGOs as well as individual specialists who assist in disseminating CAWTAR's advocacy messages, build knowledge and together create a living Forum for joint learning and exchange of experience. Member of the Network are major contributors to CAWTAR's quarterly journal: CAWTARYAT. The annual meeting of the Network is an occasion for renewing commitment to pursue the efforts for women social, economic and political empowerment, it is also an occasion for networking and joint activity planning by members needing to build synergies for their respective programmes.



10- GERPA is guided by an Advisory Committee of eminent scholars and representatives of civil society organizations.  
11- Arab Women and Information and Communication Technology, (Arabic) ,CAWTAR, 2007

### CAWTAR's Work Plan 2009-2013

#### Programme Strategy

A select group of experts and representatives of partner institutions met in July 2007 as an Advisory Committee to discuss the strategy and work plan for the period 2009-2013. The Committee took into consideration the lessons of programme implementation during the period 2004-2007 and the realities of the regional context and concluded that CAWTAR's programme should contribute to the achievement of three strategic outcome pillars

#### **Outcome Pillar 1: Enhance Women Social, Economic and Political Empowerment. This will include the projects and activities to:**

- Install and advocate the principles of gender equality and uphold women human rights, reduce poverty and gain further knowledge on the role of women in the economy and their contribution to economic development; build knowledge on the informal sector to devise strategies to increase women employment and entrepreneurship;
- Empower the young women and develop their skills to increase the ratio of women in the labour market ;
- Enhance the role of women in local government, in political participation and decision making ;
- Advocate the end of gender based violence and all forms of discrimination against women ;
- Increase knowledge and encourage women to speak out and break the silence on issues that have marginalized the role of women in the social, economic and political order ;
- Continue to build knowledge on women involvement in the economic order through the work of GERPA and advance the advocacy work of @NGED.
- Enhance gender mainstreaming in all areas of development, improve gender statistics in the areas of public health and education and advocate gender based budgeting.

Activities in these areas that began during the last planning period will continue as well as expand, for example the six country studies on the informal sector<sup>(12)</sup> will be complete a regional report on the subject will be launched and disseminated. The gender economic research will continue to build knowledge that feeds into advocacy and contribute to informed policy making. The work with ICTDAR on women rights in cases of divorce and the collection of alimony and child support under the WRCATI initiative will be maintained and replicated in other countries.

Two Arab Women Development reports will be issued : the first will be on the subject of Arab Women and Legislation and the second will focus on Arab Women and Local Administration. The main sponsors of these reports will be the UNDP and AGFUND.

## **Outcome Pillar 2 : Increase the Role of Women in Environment Sustainability with particular emphasis on water Resources Management :**

Projects and activities under this pillar will focus on the gender concerns that have so far received less attention in considering environment sustainability. Compared with the significant attention given to issues of pollution and climatic change, all are physical and technical dimensions of environmental sustainability, gender considerations have been given far less attention and seem neglected in the regional efforts for gender mainstreaming in the field of water resources managements.

The institutional and policy dimensions have also received relatively less attention in the programmes for achieving the MDG 7. Water resources management is an area that gives women the opportunity for empowerment by becoming active citizens in resource utilization planning and decision making, at least at the local community level. Gender considerations and women integration into the process of managing vital natural resources will be linked to other activities aimed at enhancing gender equality, human rights and social, economic and political empowerment.

Flawed water management policies that exacerbate water scarcity; increase poverty and render women access to water resources more difficult will be addressed. Lack of gender-based statistical data will continue to be addressed in collaboration with the FAO under the AQUASTAT programme. CAWTAR will continue and expand its own work on mainstreaming gender in water resources management in collaboration with the Arab Integrated Water Resources Management Network (AWARENET) and in the activities of the project on Mainstreaming Gender Dimensions in Water Resources Management in the Mediterranean Region that CAWTAR is implementing. Activities will also build knowledge and increase gender mainstreaming in water management and sustainable environment policies<sup>(13)</sup>. The forthcoming regional UNDP project to be implemented by CAWTAR with the support of the Gender Water Alliance will provide a regional overview on gender and water management on the Arab region in addition to activities for advocacy and gender mainstreaming.

12- Country studies were conducted in six Arab Countries: Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen.

13- The Third Arab Water Regional Conference on : Research Advancement in Managing Limited Water Resources, Cairo, 2006, is a source of knowledge that CAWTAR knowledge Management activities will build on.

## Outcome Pillar 3 : Enhance Institutional Environment

While the overarching objective of the first two pillars is to contribute to achieving the MDG's 1, 3, 6 and 7, there is a need to enhance the institutional environment in which the activities will take place. Women and youth empowerment cannot take place. Women and Youth empowerment cannot take place in a vacuum, it is important to build institutional capacity, review legislations, work for the modification of legislation that contribute the impeding women's exercise of human rights and achieving gender equality. This will also require skills development through training trainers to replicate the training in several partner organizations.

Enhancing the institutional environment will also require the design and management of advocacy campaigns that drive the message. The use of ICT will need to be further developed to depend more on electronic media and relevant forms of communication in advocacy work. For building more alliances, networking and outreach, more sub-regional conferences and meetings will be organized. It is also necessary to develop and disseminate relevant policy briefs that may be inserted as self-standing messages inside the "CAWTARIYAT" to further draw the attention of policy makers, influential media and intellectuals. The use of @NGED and the websites of CAWTAR will be further increased and strengthened as advocacy tools. CAWTAR's Clearing House will further enriched to better respond to the needs of the Arab Region, other researchers and information seekers.

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### CAWTAR's Business Model

CAWTAR's operations will be guided by a business model that is built on the following premises:

- Strengthening and enlarging existing partnership arrangements and create synergies with UN agencies and UNDP regional programmes in the Arab region ;
- Seeking more strategic and structured longer term partnership ;
- Establishing cooperative networks especially to enhance South-South cooperation;
- Establish specialized networks engaging the private sector for supporting local entrepreneurship;
- Support national governments and provide advisory support in areas of gender mainstreaming, exercise of women's human rights a women empowerment.

### Partnership

The Center begins the new programming period with renewed strength and recognition of its role in the Arab region. New partnerships with international institutions have been developed and old ones reconfirmed with enlarged scope of activities. CAWTAR has been selected by the European Union as a leading gender institution in the Arab region to participate in an international consortium of NGO's to implement a women empowerment programme in the Mediterranean region.

This new partnership with the EU will also build capacity in institutions involved in activities to promote the status of women in 10 Mediterranean countries. The implementation office is located in CAWTAR's premises.

MEPI has recognized CAWTAR in the same manner and the programme on strengthening the role of women in local governance will continue during the forthcoming programme period. UNDP has done the same and CAWTAR will implement the UNDP Gender Strategy in the Arab Region with focus on water resources management, gender mainstreaming, capacity building and advocacy. UNFPA has decided to enlarge the scope of its partnership with CAWTAR and has entrusted the Center with the implementation of all its gender programmes in the Arab region. CAWTAR will also implement a UNFPA programme led by Harvard University in different regions in the world and CAWTAR will prepare and deliver a training of trainers programme on the human rights approach for Arab Countries. Cooperation with Johns Hopkins University has recently been established and activities will focus on the implementation of the Convention for Ending Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

The new partnership with INSTRAW through the Spanish International Cooperation will lead to capacity building in three countries : Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia with focus on institutions involved in women empowerment. The partnership with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) will continue, the project involves developing a governance country profile, the case of Tunisia. The partnership with the World Bank continues with emphasis on economic empowerment of women and developing new knowledge on women's role in the economic order. The partnership with International Planned Parenthood Federation<sup>(14)</sup> (IPPF) continues and will expand. Partnership with the UNDP regional project on ICT for Development in the Arab region (ICTDAR) will continue; so will the partnership with the UNDP regional Programme on Governance in the Arab region (POGAR). A new partnership with the UNDP regional Programme on HIV/AIDS in the Arab region (HARPAS) will soon be established. The strategic partnership with the AGFUND<sup>(15)</sup> continues to be expanding with the implementation of AGFUND gender focused projects in the Arab region. The Government of Tunisia continues to extend its support to CAWTAR<sup>(16)</sup>

## **Integrated activity design : increasing the sense of ownership**

Gaining from the lessons of the last programme, activities will be designed into a cluster of integrated and interdependent elements feeding into each other: research, training and capacity building will all feeding into advocacy, follow up and evaluation. The results of evaluation will feed into the design of further activities in the same domain. This will have a positive impact on consultation with stakeholders and partners and will further enhance the sense of interdependence among CAWTAR staff and activity implementing partners.

*14- Together with AGFUND, the UNDP and the Government of Tunisia, IPPF is a founding member of CAWTAR and continues to lend its support to the Center and its activities.*

*15- AGFUND graciously continues to fund the salaries of core CAWTAR staff.*

*16- The Tunisian Government supports CAWTAR in many ways and contributes to funding the core staff*

To the extent possible the implementation of project activities will be anchored into a trusted local NGO wherever the activity may be. This will increase the sense of ownership and further build institutional capacity. It is also a way for increasing the efforts for outreach, strengthening activity relevance and serves the efforts of building a network of institutions able to develop their own activities and further advocate the message of CAWTAR in their community.

## **Strengthening and improving CAWTAR's own institutional performance**

During the last programme period (2004-2007) this goal was considered one of the pillars of CAWTAR's activities; it is now institutionalized and mainstreamed into CAWTAR's regular policies and activities. Despite successes measured by the increase of funding partnerships and implementing partners, increased number of implemented activities, the number of new websites and the significant increase in the number of website visitors, there is still much to be done. CAWTAR continues to need additional staff especially in the area of training, research, and resource mobilization and operations management. CAWTAR does not have a Deputy Executive Director to share the responsibility of internal management and allow the Executive Director to devote more time to developing new partnerships and resource mobilization. Staff limitations reduce the time that should be devoted to increase the quality of services rendered.

CAWTAR has introduced internal financial control and audit and an international external auditor will be appointed by the Board to ensure effective financial management; transparency and accountability. Attention to improve service delivery, follow up, monitoring and evaluation still need to be strengthened despite CAWTAR's on-going efforts to use its network of experts to review the quality of research, training and advocacy activities. These experts are not usually available for on-time review and advice, nor can CAWTAR continue to depend on the benevolence of the experts. More resources need to be mobilized to fund these activities.

CAWTAR has reviewed its Operations Manual with the help of a Certified Chartered Accountant and found that it no longer fits the size of current and future operations, a number of recommendations for updating and improving the Manual were made and CAWTAR will endorsement of the Board.

## **Work Plan presentation :**

The following tables explain the projects and activities under each outcome pillar, their outputs, output indicators, funding partners and amounts available, implementing partners as the case may be and the time line for implementation. As indicated at the beginning of this Work Plan Document, this is a living plan that will be subject of annual review both by the Technical Committee and by the Board of Trustees.



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