In this issue

Editorial..................................................................................................................3

Women and Geosciences for Peace
Fifth conference of the African Association of Women in Geosciences “CAAWG5”, Grand Bassam, Ivory Coast (11 - 17 April 2010).........4

UNESCO Earth Science Education Initiative for Africa workshop
Assiut University (Egypt), 28-29 October 2009........................................11

Women in Geosciences and Environmental Policies
YES Congress, Beijing, 25-28 October 2009.................................................12

Women’s careers in Mediterranean universities
This article was published in the “In Europa magazine” - Italy - issue 3/2010. Translation from Italian by Giovanna Badalassi.............14

AAWG member’s biography.................................................................15

AAWG upcoming events.............................................................17

A photo, a country.................................................................18

Acknowledgements.................................................................18

We are on the road but there is still a lot of work to do to reach our objectives, photos taken by Ezzoura Errami, 2009
Editorial

During geological meetings, the participation of women geoscientists was noticed and raised as a concern. In order to help to rectify this discrepancy, a decision was taken to form an association in order to encourage women geoscientists to participate in Earth Sciences related conferences and to inform about or become involved in gender issues related to the Earth Sciences. In 1995, AAWG was born in Nairobi, Kenya. Two of the main objectives of the Association are the publication and distribution a bulletin and/or other publications in the field of geosciences development in Africa and the organization of conferences, seminars, symposia, training courses and workshops in various areas of geosciences. Building on this, the AAWG is at its fifth biannual conference entitled “Women and Geosciences for Peace” which was held in Ivory Coast in April 2010.

It is important to note that during 2010, the number of countries represented in AAWG increased from 26 to 32 countries including non African countries (Algeria, Australia, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Germany, Ghana, India, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Norway, Republic Democratic of Congo, Republic Central Africa, Romania, Senegal, Sudan, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Tchad, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zimbabwe).

In order to reinforce the communication with our members and also with the international geoscientific communities, we created an AAWG electronic newsletter in order to inform about our activities and also to encourage our members to publish reports about their scientific and social activities. Our newsletter entitled “Women & Geosciences News” was born in 2009, we are now at our second issue.

Our hope is to have an International Standard Serial Number “ISSN” and a paper version of our newsletter. French and Arabic versions of the publication are under discussion. For that, a multilingual review committee is under creation. As soon as an ISSN obtained, our newsletter will be open to short scientific papers.

All scientists are invited to join us and participate to our newsletter by sending us their contributions accompanied by their full references and a recent photo.
Women and Geosciences for Peace
Fifth conference of the African Association of Women in Geosciences “CAAWG5”
Grand Bassam, Ivory Coast (11 - 17 April 2010)

The fifth conference of the African Association of Women in Geosciences “AAWG” was held at N’SAHOTEL (Grand Bassam, Ivory Coast) from the 11th to 17th April 2010. The official opening ceremony held on the morning of the Tuesday 13th April 2010 was attended by more than 300 participants coming from all earth sciences related sectors (education, universities, private sectors, government...etc). 12 countries were represented (Morocco, Tunisia, Ghana, Uganda, Kenya, Germany, South Africa, Cameroon, Senegal, Djibouti, Congo Brazaville, Nigeria and Ivory Coast). The opening ceremony was attended by representatives from the African Association of Women in Geosciences executive committee, members of Association of Women in Geosciences Cote d’Ivoire Chapter “AAWG-CI”, dignitaries and guests from Ivory Coast.

During the opening ceremony, the President the fifth congress and President of AAWG-CI, Dr. Juliette TEA, welcomed the dignitaries and participants and thanked the supporters and sponsors of the conference especially PETROCI Holding (Main sponsor), TOLLOW OIL, CANADIAN NATURAL, District d’Abidjan, CORE LAB, VANCO, ANADARKA, UNESCO Senegal, IUGS and UNESCO Nairobi office. Prof. Ezzoura ERRAMI, AAWG continental President, addressed a talk where she introduced the association, its objectives and its activities and she thanked the local organizing committee for the good work and for having making that event possible instead the political situation of country. Just before the closing of the opening ceremony, the AAWG representative of West Africa, Mme Marcelle GAULY read the Grand Bassam Peace Appeal coming out from the roundtable entitled “Women and Geosciences for Peace”. The ceremony was concluded by a representative of the Minister of Mines and Energy, who thanked the members of the AAWG EC for having chosen Ivory Coast as venue of the fifth conference of AAWG and launched officially the CAAWG5.

The opening ceremony was marked by special artistic shows given by Kiyi N’Bock, an artistic Ivorian group, dedicated to the theme of the conference. These choreographies showed the importance of women in the society and their capacity to restore and preserve peace.

One exiting moment of the journey was the peace walk of most of the participants to the opening ceremony to the Peace Place located in the centre of Grand Bassam. This march aims in addition to the support of Ivorian women who marched for peace in 1949 to put item on the close relationship between sustainable peace and scientific progress on the African continent.
Advertizing the conference at national level was one of the priorities of the LOC. The conference and through it Earth Sciences were also advertizing in national TV and radio.

77 scientific abstracts were retained. They were programmed in 4 oral scientific sessions and one parallel poster session (Tuesday the 13th afternoon, Wednesday the 14th morning and afternoon and the Thursday the 15th morning). 3 abstracts were presented during the roundtable dedicated to geo-education.
Adding to the scientific session three roundtables were organized during the conference. Two took place on the 12th April 2010, one day before the official opening ceremony:

1/ the first roundtable entitled “Women & Geosciences for Peace” was moderated by Prof. Ezzoura ERRAMI and reported by Dr. Marcelle GAULY seconded by two young geoscientists Banna Tabaski SAMBOU and Bator SENE. The main question raised during this roundtable which was attended by 45 participants is how women and Earth Sciences could participate to establish a sustainable peace on the continent.

After a long discussion, it was recommended that a well management of natural resources in Africa is necessary to establish a sustainable development which is directly related to a sustainable peace on the continent. Natural resources which are supposed to be a source of richness are however a source of conflicts in many African countries. To avoid conflicts, local population should directly or indirectly benefit from the income of these natural resources (petrol, mines...etc). African governments should think about a close regional cooperation in order to exploit themselves their natural resources and make them a lever of local and regional sustainable development. For that, Africa needs more schools and universities dedicated to earth sciences and related disciplines.

It was also mentioned during that roundtable that most of African authorities are negligent concerning earth sciences education especially near women because that field was during a long time dedicated to males. Education and capacity building are the only ways to help promote African women. Well educated women should participate in decision making for that African government should be confident and give women more chance to serve and to show that they have the potential and the courage to transform the institutions they are inheriting and to make them more human and more just as said by Desmond Tutu (2004). It was also recommended that women geoscientists should be involved in politic which is the best way to make politic interested in Earth Sciences and the role that these sciences and the related disciplines could play for the wealth of our societies.

Environment is a big issue in Africa, in order to preserve it, it was recommended that it is very important to institute laws in order to evaluate the impact of the activities related to the exploitation of natural resources on our environment and try to minimize it.

At the end of the roundtable, an appeal of Peace was launched, read during the opening ceremony of the conference and was communicated to the president of the Ivory Coast who invited the AAWG executive committee
and some AAWG members for lunch during which the registration of the association in Ivory Coast was discussed and also the project of creating a geopark in Fresco escarpment.

2/ the second roundtable entitled “Geosciences, education and employment” took place on the 12th April 2010 afternoon from the 14h 45mn to 18h15mn. The roundtable was attended by more that fourthy participants. It was moderated by Prof. Kmar Ben Ismael Lattrache from Tunisia and reported by two young geoscientists Ndeye Maguette DIENG and Mariama KABA from Senegal. The main question discussed during that roundtable was how to improve geosciences education in Africa in order to make it a lever for sustainable development.

Three presentations were given during that roundtable. The first one entitled “Education of Earth Sciences in Morocco: Challenges and perspectives” by Prof. Ezzoura ERRAMI from Morocco. The second presentation, entitled “Conceptions and obstacles faced by Tunisian students in Earth Sciences: Case of petroleum genesis” by Prof. Kmar Ben Ismael LATTRACHE. The third presentation entitled “Earth Sciences in Ivory Coast” by AKPA You Lucette on behalf of Dr. OGA.

After a long discussion, it was recommended that it is very important to demonstrate to scholars and to their parents the importance that earth sciences could play in their lives, the job opportunities offered by theses disciplines...etc by inviting them to participate to Earth Sciences congresses, forums and exhibitions which will allow to increase their awareness. It was retained also that regular meetings should be organized between specialists in earth sciences, scholars and their teachers in order keep them informed and also to teach them to be creative in their way to transmit their knowledge. It was also recommended that Africans should have a solidarity spirit in order
to improve their laboratories equipments, rocks and fossils collections, educational material...etc. AAWG should work in order to improve earth sciences education in Africa by improving partnership between universities, private companies, existing structures (Association, NGO’s...etc) and medias in order to organize field trips, activities to promote earth sciences especially near scholars, to build the capacity of teachers and also try to provide enough didactic means. Earth Sciences programs should be improved by introducing more practical work. It is better to have separate teachers for Life sciences and Earth Sciences. The creation of geoparks through the African continent was encouraged to increase the awareness of the importance of protection of the African geological heritage.

At the end of the roundtable, Pr. Errami, AAWG President, proposed the creation of a task group on geo-education in Africa. The roundtable ended by an atmosphere of gaiety under African dance steps.

3/ The third roundtable entitled “Geological patrimony and geotourism” took place the 13th April afternoon. It was moderated by Pr. Ezzoura Errami. In order to sensitize young people from Ivory Coast, students were involved in that project. A group of students was given as a task the preparation of a short presentation entitled “Geoparks concept” which was presented and discussed at the beginning of the roundtable. The students were very motivated and at the end of the roundtable they decided to create an association in order to promote the geological heritage of Ivory Coast. We hope that the project will be established soon. It was decided that the Fresco Escarpment (Ivory Coast) should be the first geopark in the country. The AAWG EC was invited by the president of the country and after a deep discussion with the cabinet director and cabinet chef, it was decided that the creation of a geopark in fresco escarpment will be a project of the president. A follow up is going on in order to establish that geopark.

During the congress a gala dinner was offered by CNR international to the participant to the conference.
The day ended with a presentation of the AAWG and its activities. During the AGM, it was decided that the 7th conference will be organized in Djibouti in 2014. The sixth will take place in Cameroon in 2012.

The post conference field trip took place the 16th and 17th April 2010. The visited geological sites were the sedimentary Fresco escarpment of Maastrichtian to Eocene age and Grand-Béréby Archean rocks, situated in the south of Ivory Coast. 110 participants took part to that field trip which was mainly sponsored by TULLOW OIL.
Outcomes of the CAAWG5

The outcomes of the conference can be summarized as follows:

1/ A new scientific cooperation was born between the Geology Department of the Faculty of Sciences of Tunis (Tunisia) and the Cocody university (Ivory Coast). Prof. P. Kmar Ben Ismail-Lattrache, AAWG assistant general secretary, invited Prof. DIGBEHI Zéli Bruno, the chair of the scientific committee of the CAAWG5, for a scientific stay from the 11th June to the 31th August 2010. This scientific work which consists of a micropaleontological and sedimentological study of samples coming from the Fresco Escarpment sedimentary formations will provide information necessary in the establishment of a geopark in that region.

The results coming out from this collaboration will be published in international revues. A cooperation project was initiated between the two universities. Ivorian students expressed their will to do their PhD in Tunisia.

2/ A multidisciplinary regional scientific project is under discussion.

3/ A publication special volume in order to encourage the participants to the conference to publish their work is under discussion.

AAWG conferences are strengthening scientific cooperation between our members and African geoscientists coming from different countries.

Acknowledgments

We would like to reiterate through this report our deep appreciation and thanks to all our sponsors and supporters PETROCI Holding (main sponsor), TOLLOW OIL, CANADIAN NATURAL, District d’Abidjan, CORE LAB, VANCO, ANADARKA, UNESCO Senegal, IUGS and UNESCO Nairobi for their moral and financial support for the fifth conference of the African Association of Women in Geosciences organized from the 11th to 17th April 2010 at Grand Bassam (Ivory Coast).

Prof. Ezzoura Errami
AAWG President
Geology Department, Faculty of Sciences
Chouaib Doukkali University, El Jadida, Morocco
Email: erramiezziour@yahoo.fr

Dr. Juliette Tea
AAWG general secretary and chair of the CAAWG5
PETROCI Holding, Abidjan, Ivory Coast
Email: jtea@petroci.ci

Dr. Oga Marie Solange
Secretary of the CAAWG5
Université de Cocody, Abidjan
Email: oga_oms@yahoo.fr

Dr. Marcelle Gaully
AAWG West Africa representative
PETROCI Holding, Ivory Coast
Email: mgauly@petroci.ci
The 28th and 29th October 2009, I have attended as representative of the African Association of Women in Geosciences the workshop organized by UNESCO in Assiut University. The aim of that workshop is to try to decipher the strengths and the weaknesses of Earth Sciences Education in Africa and try to make recommendations to improve it. To break the cycle of vulnerability that is weakening the level of African students and graduates and make them unqualified for the geoscientific research and the market labor, it is becoming urgent for Africa to solve that problem, especially, because it is a natural resources rich continent where there is still a need and an opportunity to learn from past mistakes in the management of these resources.

During that workshop, it was recommended to introduce Earth Sciences since the primary school; to use advanced technologies and modern teaching techniques in order to improve Earth Sciences education; update and renovate the scientific material and the educational system, which relies heavily on the theory; show the importance that Earth Sciences can play for the society and also jobs opportunities offered by Earth Sciences through an outreach program; promote Earth Sciences through field works; create museums and collections in schools and universities; focus on the practical training from the first year in the university stage; determine and identify outcrops and itinerary of pedagogical geoscientific interest through Africa and conduct geoscientific expeditions through the African continent which will strengthen scientific cooperation and cultural exchanges for a socio-economical development of the continent; increase the communication between universities, private sectors and governments in order to have a close collaboration and to raise enough funds; elaborate Earth Sciences related projects among the African continent which will allow the involvement of numerous earth scientists; promote and diversify Earth Sciences disciplines and high level scientific research; reinforce the partnership between the Arabian universities, African universities, and the international earth sciences communities; develop and orientate towards integration rather than competition in the scientific field at the local, continental and international levels; provide supplementary courses online and in the main languages used on the continent in order to prepare the African geoscientists to the labor market needs; strengthen the exchange of experiences between Arabian and African countries; establish centers of excellence through the African continent in order to promote south-south cooperation, to create a certain geoscientific autonomy; and standardized and prepare a guide of the Earth Sciences terminology used among the Arabian countries.

At the end, I want to assure that Africa needs qualified African geoscientists to participate to sustain the socio-economical development of their continent. For that, Earth Sciences educational system should be unified in all African countries in order to allow African students to acquire the same competence which will reinforce exchange, partnership and cooperation.

Enas Abed El Hady Ahmed
PhD student, Geology Department, Faculty of Science
El Mansoura University, Egypt
Email: enas_ahamed@yahoo.com
FOR YOUTH

The world is yours, as well as ours, but in the last analysis, it is yours. You young people, full of vigour and vitality, are in the bloom of life, like the sun at the eight or nine in the morning. Our hope is placed on you - Mao Zedong

The First World Young Earth-Scientists Congress, held in Beijing on October 25-28 2009, was opened with a famous Mao Tze Tung sentence addressed to young people saying: “The world is yours”. A bright head to head among young politicians and young students coming from more than 60 countries, for a path to walk together based on dialogue among generations and governments. But don’t forget that this dialogue and this sentence by Mao with which the Congress opened, belongs also to them, women. “Women in Geosciences Workforce” is the title of one of the roundtable co-organized by Prof. Ezzoura Errami from the African Association of Women in Geosciences and Dr. Leila Gonzales from Young Earth Sciences Network. This symposium highlighted the challenges that women face as geologists, whether during their specialisation or as experts. A strong and clear statement came from a young Indian scientist: “women are underrepresented in all sciences”. Unfortunately, this is a well established fact. But be careful! When one talks about sciences, he never talks about Geosciences where there is still a great work to do in order to minimize the discrimination faced by women. In 1995, the conference of the United Nations Organisation on Women held in Beijing established for the first time in an international context the concept of gender mainstreaming and empowerment. This has been fundamental to encourage and motivate women to participate in policy. In history, women in geosciences haven’t been recognised enough. May be because it is a relatively young science? May be because it is a cultural problem? During that roundtable, it has been pointed out that the representation of women at the honorary speakers table during the YES congress official opening ceremony doesn’t exceed 6%. A recent report published in the journal “Sciences” by Helsinki Research Group of the European Commission promoting scientific research of women in general, emphasizes the lack of women in scientific research. Portugal occupies the head of the list with 48% of women involved in natural sciences including geology and Netherlands comes last with 8%. But what comes out is that women in geology are still underrepresented at high level expertise. What it is the situation in Africa and in Asia? This minority is much more evident in those countries especially in Africa, because there is no doubt that sex stereotyping and discrimination still exist especially in under-developed and developing countries where women together with children are the more vulnerable segment of human society and are the first people to get distressed from poverty. At “Women in Geosciences Workforce” symposium spokesperson of the African continent is Ezzoura Errami, the president of the African Association of Women in Geosciences “AAWG”, professor at the Geology Department at the Chouaib Doukkali University (El Jadida, Morocco) and councillor of the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) since 2008. Under her leadership, the AAWG which count twenty countries is organizing in 2010 in Ivory Coast its 5th conference entitled “Women and Geosciences for Peace”. The challenges of the AAWG are the build capacities of African women geoscientists in terms of proposal development, writing and presentation of scientific papers, project preparation...etc; the promotion of geosciences through
development of educational and public programs; and the enhancement of network opportunities among AAWG members. To make Women and Geosciences a lever for socio-economic development in order to participate to establish a sustainable peace on African continent and to enhance fundraising in order to cover a wide range of activities on the continent are the main AAWG challenges. The association created in 2009 the African Geoparks Network in order to meet one of its objectives which consist of the promotion, the identification and the advice on the importance and the preservation of geological sites in Africa.

Encouraging and important has been the testimony of Juliette TEA-Yassi, the first woman geologist in an Ivorian petroleum company and now she is the director of the Analyses and Research Centre of Petroci Holding. “Get ready to work more than men who will directly minimize you as woman geoscientist and accept the decision of your boss whatever it may cost you. You are not allowed to say that I don’t like or I am not able to do that because I am a woman” suggested Mrs. Yassi at the Roundtable, reminding that in the 70s the choice of a girl to be geologist recovered from the utopia in Ivory Coast. Today, the laboratory directed by Juliette is of international recognition and its equipments are also at the disposal of researchers operating in others fields such as Universities, Mining, Agriculture, Environment and Medicine. During her career, Juliette encountered a lot of problems which caused her a lot of frustrations. Today, she participates as Director to the negotiations of the production sharing contracts of the petroleum blocks, in missions of information and economic promotion with the delegation of Ivory Coast Prime Minister and she even received State Honours.

Soumaya Ayadi, expert geologist in the Tunisian Society of Environment, states that in Tunisia women represent 36% of the staff of the Ministry of Environment and regional development where 19% of them hold managerial positions. Due to their distinctive sensibility towards environmental problems women are playing an active role on familial, academic and social levels contributing to increase awareness about dangers and measures to be taken daily for an upstream better management. Their participation in environmental policies now exceeds their educational role beginning at home and at school. In Tunisia, women are participating actively as geologists, engineers and experts in the decision-making and in the execution and implementation of many environmental projects.

According to Mrs Errami, the co-organizer of the roundtable, women should not wait for positive discrimination. For the benefit of our societies, it is very important to have women in leadership in order to allow them to participate to the sustainable development of their respective countries. For that, a good education and capacity building are needed. Finally, an appeal came out from this roundtable: “We would like to invite all stakeholders to contribute to help us to participate to rectify this discrepancy for the benefit of the society”.

Will they be able to let the walls of distrust and hostility fall down just in the name of science? One is in the service of everyone or better “everyone” in the service of Science?

Sandra Moscone
ISPRA (Italian Institute for Environmental Protection and Research)
Email: sandra.moscone@isprambiente.it
Women’s careers in Mediterranean universities
This article was published in the “In Europa magazine” - Italy - issue 3/2010. Translation from Italian by Giovanna Badalassi

If we think about the status of women in South Mediterranean countries, the general impression is that there is an albeit slow improvement. Civil rights and people’s freedom are growing with the social and the economic growth of these countries.

A deeper reflection on the level of women’s emancipation in these countries has led us to investigate the role of women in South Mediterranean universities as a significant indicator of their emancipation, and to look for personal insight offered by some “Career Women” in the universities. Starting from this idea, we tried to gather some testimonies through e-mail interviews. Seven professors/researchers from countries located at the opposite geographical ends of the Mediterranean - Morocco, Palestine and Turkey - participated in the project.

Despite being statistically unreliable, such accounts showed us that, in these countries, women’s lives and careers are strictly linked to their communities’ social and economical growth process. These interviews, in fact, provide evidence of a general improvement in the university culture of Equal Opportunities, even if very often such conquests may be ascribed to women’s fights against men’s opposition. Only in recent times a better acceptance of women’s presence in the universities has been observed, but a lack of men’s sharing in Equal Opportunities values is still complained.

There are clear generational differences: compared to the younger female professors, the older ones admit that it took them a longer time to achieve/obtain career advancements. This was due not only to the lack of receptivity to Equal Opportunities rights on part of the universities, which has improved nowadays: younger professors are considered to have a better awareness of their rights, and therefore are stronger in protecting and exerting them. Moreover the awareness of younger women regarding their rights is very often linked not only to self-esteem and self-confidence, but also to their capability of better understanding power processes and the written and unwritten rules that manage them.

Men’s reaction to women’s careers is often contradictory. On the one hand, according to the perception of the women interviewed, within the academic context men’s resistances are slowly decreasing although several cases of discrimination still occur (obstacles to career advancements, problems with courses taught or with timetables, sexual jokes, problems for pregnant workers...etc.). A number of deans do support women’s careers within a wider process of modernization of the universities. On the other hand, male family members often play an important role in these women’s lives and in supporting their careers: fathers encourage daughters to pursue their education, or husbands help with domestic chores.

In general terms, the support of the family still appears of basic importance. Mothers and sisters are mentioned as key factors to sustain family and work balance, even if all professors/researchers with children strongly complain about the huge stress in balancing family and career needs. The problem regards not only lack of
time, but is also related to the management of priorities, insofar as these women have to undergo the social pressure that still strongly assigns the traditional role of “a good mum”.

Nevertheless, all the professors/researchers involved in our research/survey boast excellent curricula, several and multi-year periods of study abroad, in Europe and in the USA (for PhD or Master’s degrees). Moreover, they all consider the participation to European projects an important occasion for exchanging cultures, best practices and methods, as well as a good opportunity for them to gain visibility and career opportunities.

Despite difficulties and obstacles, it is possible to notice a very positive vision of the future and a strong hope in a slow but steady improvement in women’s condition thanks to a growing access to higher education.

If trust and hope in young women is strong, the only doubts concern the evaluation of public policies, where national peculiarities are inevitably involved. There are many expectations about legal reforms regarding family rights and personal freedoms, but there are also concerns about the political instability that may undermine the peace process and threaten everybody’s ambitions.

**Giovanna Badalassi**  
University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Italy  
Email: badagi@libero.it

---

**P.S. If you have any comments concerning the subject above or if you are willing to participate to that survey, please contact us on contact@aawg.org**

---

**AAWG member’s biography**

[Image of a man]  
**Dr. Monica A. Omulo** is the founder and the first President of the AAWG and the representative of East Africa in the GSAf.

Monica is a Lecturer in the School of Environment and Earth Sciences, Environmental Studies Programme, Maseno University, Teaches EIA, Environmental Audit, Energy and Environment, Meteorology and Pollution courses. Previously, She worked as a Research and Programs Officer with Climate Network Africa and Climate, Environment and Development Action Network’ Senior Research Officer with Ministry of Research Science and Technology’ and as a Geologist with Ministry of Water Development.

She holds a Master of Philosophy (M.Phil) (Environmental Management), Lancaster University, UK; MSc. (Environment Science), Lancaster University, UK; BSc. (Geology) University of Nairobi. Currently, she is perusing a PhD program in Environmental Studies at Maseno University. Attended many local and international courses,
conferences, seminars and workshops and has published in the areas of lake level fluctuations, environmental management and impact assessment, climate change issues, groundwater resources and water quality, gender and development.

She studies of lake Victoria water level fluctuations; Environmental Impacts and mining activities and other development activities; Wetlands; current research interest: Impacts of mining activities on environment; Leachates from Solid Waste Dumps and their effects on Groundwater Quality in Kisumu, Kenya; Wetlands as Buffer Zones for Pollutants in the Lake Victoria Basin.

She has 29 publications in referred journals, book chapters, conference proceedings, workshop reports and articles in newsletters. She is life member of the Association of Geoscientists for International Development (AGID), a professional member and formerly Treasurer of the Geological Society of Kenya (GSK); formally a member of the Institute of Water and Environmental Management of UK; formally a Research Associate of the African Center for Technology Studies (ACTS), Chairperson of the Catchment Area Advisory Committee (CAAC) of Lake Victoria South-Water resources management Authority (WRMA), formally member of technical Committee (Professional) of the Sondu-Miriu Hydropower Project of the KENGEN, Chair of the Technical Sub-Committee on Environment of the Sangoro hydropower project of KENGEN; Member of the National Advisory Committee of SANREM-CRSP Project of the Kenya Forestry Research Institute; Member of the Kenya Professional Association of Women in Agriculture and Environment (KEPAWAE), Member of the Soroptimist Club of Kisumu, formally board member of Embakasi Girls School in Nairobi, formally board member of OSIENALA (Friends of Lake Victoria – an NGO).

Mme Kmar Ben Ismail Lattrache is the assistant secretary general of the AAWG (2008-2012).

Kmar is a full professor in the Department of Geology, Faculty of Sciences of Tunis, University of Tunis El Manar. She is micropalaeontologist. She has got her Bachelor of Science in 1969 and in 1972. She obtained her Master degree option Geology from the Faculty of Sciences of Tunis. She has got her PhD in 1981 and her Habilitation in 1997 from the Faculty of Sciences of Tunis. She has published numerous scientific papers and she has participated in numerous scientific events and contributed to many research programmes established between the University of Tunis El Manar and other Tunisian, Moroccan, and French universities. She is also member of the review board of Notes of the Geological Survey of Tunisia. She is also member of the Tunisian Association "Women and Science" and of the Alumni Association of School Street Russia (Tunis). She has published numerous scientific papers and she has participated in numerous scientific events and contributed to many research programmes established between the University of Tunis El Manar and other Tunisian, Moroccan, and French universities. She is also member of the
Review of the review board of Notes of the Geological Survey of Tunisia. She is also member of the Tunisian Association "Women and Science" and of the Alumni Association of School Street Russia (Tunis).

Sophie is an Engineer geologist. She had got a master degree in Sciences in 1992 from the Geology Department of the University Laval (Québec, Canada) and a thesis in applied geophysics in hydrogeology and isotopic geochemistry in 1997 from UCAD Dakar (Senegal) where she is lecturing. She occupied many political positions as councilor of the prime minister of Senegal and minister of telecommunication, post, technology of information and communication of Senegal. She is also a National coordinator of Humid Zone Network of Senegal « UICN », a former representative of West Africa in the GSAf and in the African Association of Women in Geosciences (2004-2008). Mme Aïssatou is responsible in the commission water and research of the follow up committee of Global Water Partnership.

AAWG upcoming events

1/ The first international conference on African and Arabian geoparks: The African Geoparks Network “AGN” was initiated during the pre-congress of the fifth conference of the AAWG held in Abidjan, Ivory Coast in May 2009. The AGN aims to identify, promote, and advise on the importance and preservation of geological sites in Africa in collaboration with other stakeholders. In that framework, the AAWG and the AGN in collaboration with UNESCO Cairo Office decided to organize the First International Conference on African and Arabs Geoparks in 2011 in Morocco. The conference also aims to launch the Arabian Geoparks Network. All researchers in the fields of geoheritage, geotourism, policy makers, economists, local community administrators and leaders, NGOs, business operators, Medias and individuals with interest in geoheritage development are invited to participate and contribute to make this event a success. For more information please consult the websites www.aawg.org or www.africangeoparksnetwork.org.

2/ The AAWG is organizing a workshop in April-May 2011 in Cameroon entitled “Géosciences au service de l’Afrique”. During that workshop, the AAWG Cameroon Chapter will be launched officially.

3/ The AAWG and the AGN in collaboration with the 6th Congress are organizing a panel discussion session entitled “Role of geoparks in promoting Earth Sciences and their importance in the society”. More information will be provided on the website of the congress www.6csws.org.
4/ The 6th AAWG conference entitled “Women & Geosciences in the service of the society” will be organized in 2012 in Cameroon. The first circular will be published soon on the AAWG website.

A photo, a country

Archean pegmatites, Baie des Sirènes (Grand Béréby, Ivory Coast)

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank, on behalf of the African Association of Women in Geosciences all international and national public and private organisms and individuals which supported and are supporting morally and/or financially our activities.

Special thanks go to Dr. Monica Umulo and to Charity Kisirisa for having participating to review some papers.