



Fostering gender diversity in water sector jobs

The Equal Aqua Platform was established to address women's underrepresentation in water sector jobs. The Platform offers a series of tools, resources, and services to support gender equality efforts among water institutions around the world.

DID YOU KNOW?

The water sector is an important source of job creation – directly as an employer in the provision and management of water, and indirectly through jobs in sectors that depend on water. **Studies find that water institutions that are gender diverse perform better** than those that are less inclusive – financially, and in their ability to deliver services and respond to the needs of their customers ([World Bank 2019](#)).

Yet, women remain heavily under-represented as employees, engineers, and managers in utilities and other water institutions:

ONLY

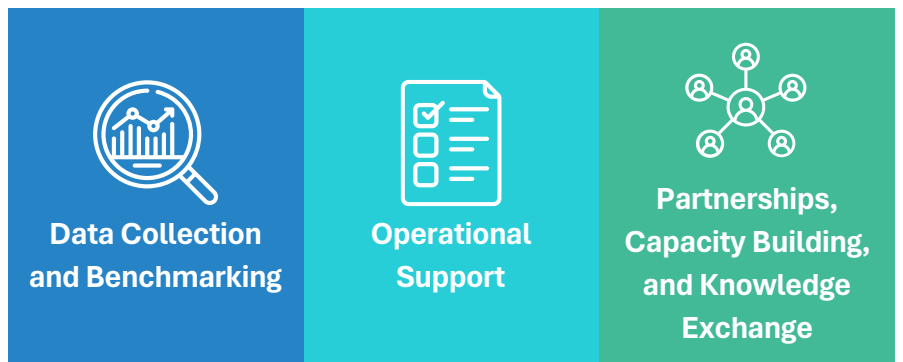
2 OF 10 EMPLOYEES

2 OF 10 ENGINEERS

1 OF 10 MANAGING DIRECTORS/CEOS

ARE WOMEN

**Source: Equal Aqua, World Bank*



200+
water
institutions
benchmarked

Diagnosing Gender Disparities to Inform Policies and Programs

Equal Aqua hosts **the largest [Global Database on Women in Water Jobs](#)**, relying on data from water institutions across the world.

Over 200 institutions have completed the **Equal Aqua human resources (HR) survey**, providing a snapshot of the global landscape on women's and men's work while enabling comparisons across countries and regions to inform policies and programs to promote gender inclusive water jobs. The database, available in multiple languages, builds on the

first round of survey data compiled for the [Women in Water Utilities: Breaking Barriers](#) Report (2019).



60+

World Bank operations benefited

Operations: From Diagnosis to Solutions

Operational support and country engagements are at the core of Equal Aqua’s work. Over 60 World Bank water operations have engaged with the Platform to date and benefited from **technical assistance**.

Equal Aqua has developed a **framework for gender equality in water employment** to guide its support to water operations. The framework covers gender equality challenges and solutions at four stages of the employee life cycle: attraction, recruitment, retention, and advancement. It can be applied by water institutions of all scales and scopes of operation.

Client institutions that complete the **Equal Aqua HR survey** (available in English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese), receive a confidential **scorecard** that benchmarks their performance on gender inclusion vis-à-vis other water institutions in their country, region, and the world. This diagnosis enables the design and implementation of **customized solutions** to address identified gender barriers. See [examples of effective interventions](#) at each employee life cycle stage. For **case studies, blogs, and other resources**, visit the [Equal Aqua Website](#).



100+

institutions trained

The “How-to” of Achieving Goals

Equal Aqua is comprised of various partners, including water utilities, private sector companies, international organizations and associations, non-governmental organizations, and academia. In a collective effort, **partners devise yearly action plans** for their respective institutions, with specific actions and targets to enhance female employment in water jobs. The collective progress achieved each year is documented and shared at the **Annual Equal Aqua Forum**.

Equal Aqua also provides **spaces for capacity-building, peer-to-peer support and knowledge exchange** on gender inclusion. Communication channels such as the Equal Aqua Infobites and [Open Social](#) facilitate this regular and systematic exchange among partners.

Over 100 water institutions have benefited from trainings conducted by the Equal Aqua team and partners, or by other World Bank Group networks and programs. For a list of **trainings and webinars**, [see here](#).

Other resources and services aimed at building capacity include an interactive [Database on Inclusive WASH Workplaces](#), hosted by Equal Aqua partner University of Technology-

Sydney, with examples of gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI) initiatives; and a [self-paced online course](#) on “Water, Women and Jobs” that showcases tools and approaches to addressing barriers to female employment (the course is also offered in [Spanish](#)).

OUR PARTNERS

The Platform was established by the World Bank’s Water Global Practice, with the support of Global Water Security & Sanitation Partnership (GWSP) and in collaboration with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and WaterAid. Equal Aqua is comprised of various partners who contribute to its mission.



For more information on how we can work together, please contact us: equalaqua@worldbank.org