



# WATER FOR WOMEN, WOMEN FOR WATER



## DEVELOPMENT THROUGH EMPOWERMENT

UNESCO Chairs on Water and Gender



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



International  
Hydrological  
Programme

## Water for women, women for water

The access to sufficient, safe and affordable water is a basic human right. It calls for governments, institutions, corporations and public and private organizations involved in the water sector to eliminate various forms of discrimination in the access, management and decision-making processes involving water resources.

Within the framework of the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme, UNESCO has established five Chairs seeking to promote the engagement of women in sustainable development and water resource management. These Chairs integrate the UNESCO Water Family, consisting of the International Hydrological Programme (IHP), water-related Centres, the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education, the World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP), and a total of 35 UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks.

Located in Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco, Togo and the Dominican Republic, the Chairs are based in institutions of research and higher education, working actively to develop human resources, build solutions, and share scientific and practical knowledge. They work in partnership with other academic institutions, as well as public and private organizations. They also pave the way for the research and higher education communities to join forces with UNESCO in an effort to achieve internationally agreed Development Goals and targets. With a high appreciation for the Chairs' great potential for impact, IHP has strongly encouraged their projects and initiatives, as well their involvement in other focal areas of the Eighth Phase of IHP, in order to strengthen water security, enhance tertiary and technical water education and respond to the needs of communities, with a special focus on women's needs.

With their inception in 2006, the UNESCO Chairs on Water and Gender have built a remarkable combination of knowledge and experience in their area of expertise. Through their actions, the Chairs have successfully fostered cooperation and exchange of information among different institutions of higher education; conducted research and training activities on gender-related issues, water and natural sciences; established networks between professionals, governmental, non-governmental and private organizations; created new approaches to deal with the water-related needs of local communities and succeeded in increasing participation, leadership and the role of women in the water sector.

As a general goal, the Chairs strive to enhance women's capacities through motivation, engagement, development of skills and education. They have been active in organizing learning courses, training sessions, workshops, conferences and a diverse range of research and community projects. The following pages present a detailed overview of the five Chairs and their goals, activities, and initiatives.

"Women must have the chance to do more than just carry water. We need women in decision-making. They see problems from a different angle and bring a complementary set of solutions."

**Blanca Jiménez-Cisneros**  
Director of the Division of Water Sciences of UNESCO,  
Secretary of the International Hydrological Programme

# UNESCO Chairs on Water and Gender



UNESCO Headquarters



UNESCO Chair on Water, Gender and Governance, established in 2014 at the Global Institute on Higher Studies in Social Sciences



UNESCO Chair on Water, Science and Reasoned Water Management in West Africa, established in 2009 at the University of Lomé



UNESCO Chair on Water, Women and Decision-making, established in 2006 at the University Al Akhawayn



UNESCO Chair on Water, Women and Decision-making, established in 2006 at the Ivorian Center of Economy and Social Research (CIRES)



UNESCO Chair on Water, Women and Development, established in 2006 at the Federal University of Ouro Preto



**Dear readers,**

We are glad to introduce you to the UNESCO Chairs on Water and Gender. While you may enquire as to why a set of Chairs on this topic is necessary, water-related issues are closely linked to poverty, violence, as well as to health, food security, the access to education and a host of other matters. The challenges associated to issues such as poverty eradication (one of the main axes of global development) cannot be addressed without taking into account fundamental values such as equality and equity.

Women are very often in a position of disadvantage when it comes to water-related issues, even though they are key managers of this precious resource and are well aware of the consequences associated to its mismanagement. Despite playing a key role in the supply of water worldwide, women are often left behind when it comes to decision-making processes, at the local, national and international levels.

In 2006, during the 9th Water Symposium held in Cannes (France), three countries (Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire and Morocco) decided to create a network of Chairs on Water and Gender. In 2008, the UNESCO Chair on Women, Science and Reasoned Water Management in West Africa, Togo, joined the network, and since then the Chairs have collaborated closely.

In Brazil, the Chair has become an academic centre carrying out research, education, community and social entrepreneurship activities, with the common denominators of education for the environment and women's empowerment. In Côte d'Ivoire, the Chair is working towards a society where women and men share the same rights and opportunities. Through its actions, it has transformed the lives of thousands of women by integrating gender perspectives in the management of drinking water in rural areas. This improved water management has enabled women to acquire a better quality of life, also improving their social participation. In Morocco, the Chair has reinforced women's capacities, especially the capacities of women from rural areas, enabling them to carry out an integrated management of water resources, through science, technology and innovation. In Togo, the UNESCO Chair on Women, Science and Reasoned Water Management in West Africa also works to strengthen women's capacities in the sub-region (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Niger). In 2014, we also welcomed the UNESCO Chair on Water, Gender and Governance from the Dominican Republic. This Chair supports the participation of men and women in the sustainable and equitable management of water.

We are certain that the network of UNESCO Chairs on Water and Gender has the potential to grow further, through the addition of new partners. We are also certain that our work will continue to contribute to the improvement of women's quality of life, by promoting education for sustainable development.

We now invite you to read about our work in the pages that follow. As in the proverb "Little strokes fell great oaks", we hope, through our actions and the mobilization of our networks, to continue fostering positive change .

**The UNESCO Chairs on Water and Gender**



The Water and Gender Chairholders in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, during the meeting of the Chairs and workshop on Integrative Approaches to Water Security and Management (December 2014). From left to right: Mr Alexis Tchiakpe, representing the UNESCO Chair on Water, Women and Decision-making (Ivory Coast); Mrs Adolé Isabelle Glitho, UNESCO Chair on Women, Science and Reasoned Water Management in West Africa (Togo), Mr Ahmed Legrouri, representing the UNESCO Chair on Water, Women and Decision-making (Morocco); Ms Vera Lúcia de Miranda Guarda, UNESCO Chair on Water, Women and Development (Brazil); Mr Francisco T. Rodriguez, UNESCO Chair on Water, Gender and Governance (Dominican Republic) © IGlobal.

# UNESCO Chair on Water, Women and Development

Federal University of Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais, Brazil

Chairholder: Prof. Vera Lúcia de Miranda Guarda

## Mission and objectives

The mission of the UNESCO Chair on Water, Women and Development in Brazil is to encourage the construction of a sustainable society through environmental education and the empowerment of women. The Chair actively works towards becoming a Center of Excellence for preserving water resources, promoting sustainable development and encouraging women's participation in all water-related activities.

The Chair undertakes its projects through teamwork with individuals from multiple fields and disciplines, volunteer services and networking with different partners. The Chair primarily aims to create synergies between local actors and projects already being undertaken in its area of focus, in order to enhance their integration and sustainability. As a Chair on water and women, other major objectives include the promotion of education of women in all areas related to water, enhancing women's entrepreneurial skills, and encouraging women to invest in themselves and achieve decision-making power on equal terms with men. In addition, the Chair also seeks to train and qualify men and women as conscious peers, striving to live in a balanced and sustainable environment.



Women in Brazil during a session with the Chairholder

## Main Projects

- **NúCat**, a research and teaching center and an extension of the UNESCO Chair on Water, Women and Development.
- **Post-Graduate course** in the Management of Water Quality with an emphasis on gender equity.
- **Sanitizing factory programme**, the flagship product of which is handmade soap from used oil, produced by women in the District of Antonio Pereira. This programme won the Santander University Solidarity prize in 2012 and was one of eight national prize winners among 1,200 applicants.
- **A Social Entrepreneurship Programme**, helping women to apply appropriate management techniques in their social initiatives in the fields of child and elderly care, tourism and food services.
- **Scientific research group** within the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq, agency of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation).

## Recent Activities

### Research projects

- Use of macrophytes in the treatment of water contaminated by mercury.
- Drinking water used at home. Who decides what kind of water to use, men or women?

### Training

- Training programme consisting of two 20-hour modules. The first focuses on gender and water issues while the second targets organizational psychology, with the aim of raising women's self-esteem and confidence.
- In 2014 the Chair proposed a post-graduate course (using Moodle platform) to target water quality management with an emphasis on gender equity.

## Main Partners

- Cooperative Foundation of Novelis employees (FUNACOOP);
- Reference Center on Social Welfare of the Municipality of Mariana (CRAS, Minas Gerais);
- Foundation for Research Support of Minas Gerais (FAPEMIG);
- Mineração S/A (SAMARCO).



Participants celebrating the first day of the water and sanitation project organized through the Santander University Solidarity Prize (awarded to the Chair in 2012)



Woman participating in an activity organized by the Chair

## Main Staff

Prof. Vera Lúcia de Miranda Guarda, Chairholder, Department of Pharmacy. School of Pharmacy — UFOP;

Prof. Diego Luiz Nunes, ICEB deputy coordinator, Department of Chemistry — UFOP;

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Prof. Carolina Maranhão, Marketing Coordinator, ICESA— UFOP.

# UNESCO Chair on Water, Women and Decision-making

The Ivorian Center of Economy and Social Research (CIRES), Côte d'Ivoire

University of Félix Houphouet-Boigny, Abidjan

Chairholder: Mrs. Euphrasie Hortense Yao Kouassi



## Mission and objectives

The Chair aims to promote an integrated system of research, training, information and documentation in the fields of water, women and natural and social sciences, to enhance the implementation of internationally agreed development goals. It strives to contribute to the struggle against poverty by improving access to safe drinking water in a sustainable way, advancing women's status and involving local people in the management of resources and community issues.

Through its various projects, the Chair facilitates the collaboration between globally recognized researchers, the teaching staff of the CIRES and the international network of UNESCO Chairs, specifically in Argentina, Sudan, Burkina Faso, Morocco and Brazil. As an international reference center for gender issues in the region, the Chair undertakes different activities relating to water and women and provides project development and consultation services.



Members of the Chair during an activity

## Main projects

- **Diatokro Water Project:** a pilot project involving women and men in village hydraulic pump management, aiming to improve the monitoring of drinking water in rural areas (Diatokro, Boisson community). As a successful experiment, this project has also been extended to other communities in the country.
- **PAVIOS women project:** a center of excellence for support and prevention for victims of sexual violence in the community of Abidjan. The center provides rehabilitation for victims and fights against impunity.
- **Compendium of Women's Competences:** a project supported by the President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire with the objective of assuring women's visibility, participation and leadership in their social milieu, and to improve their representation in decision-making positions.
- **Research paper** on the "Social value of water" presented by the Chair during the "Values of water" forum, organized in Abidjan by the Ministry of Culture and several francophone countries.
- **Technical support** to the water coordination department of the Ministry of Economic Infrastructure and to the Ministry of Water and Forestry: formulation of the Water Code and implementation of a monitoring and maintenance mechanism for hydraulic pumps in Côte d'Ivoire, in connection with the Diatokro Project.
- **Organization of a regional seminar** on gender and integrated water resources management (IWRM).

## Recent activities

- Developed a **gender committee** in nine Ministries of Côte d'Ivoire.
- Reviewed the new **Family Code** and a new **Law on Marriage**.
- Reinforced female representation as regional administrators for social affairs, as well as in regional and town councils.
- Trained female entrepreneurs and executives: **Gender, a tool for analysis and programming**.
- Supported non-governmental organizations working in the field of water to participate in organizing the forum **Access to Water in all Africa: a fundamental human right**, in partnership with UNESCO.
- Established a **university master's programme** in collaboration with the University Felix Houphouët-Boigny, the Ivorian Center of Economic and Social Research and the UNESCO Chair to develop a pedagogical model: **Gender, economy and sustainable management of water**.
- Launched a **triennial strategic plan** based on three axes:
  - (1) Promoting gender as a tool for analysis, for diagnosis and decision making;
  - (2) Integrating sustainable solutions to development problems such as water and health;
  - (3) Research and capacity building.

## Main Partners

- United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund, UN-Women;
- Foundation for Professional Training Development;
- The University of Cocody;
- University of Nagui Abrogoua;
- University of Allassane Ouattara;
- Institut national polytechnique Félix Houphouët-Boigny.



Delivery of diplomas



Water access in Côte d'Ivoire

## Main Staff

Mrs. Euphrasie Hortense Yao Kouassi, Chairholder;  
 Prof. Jean Biemi, Co-Chair, Responsible for research and academic activities;  
 Mr. Alexis Tchiakpe, General administrator;  
 Dr. Valerie Konn, Responsible for education;  
 Mrs. Pr. Rose Nevry, Biochemist;  
 Dr. Francis Coffie N'Guessan, Economist.

# UNESCO Chair on Water, Women and Decision-Making

University of Al Akhawayn, Ifrane, Morocco

Chairholder: Prof. Asma El Kasmi



## Mission and objectives

The mission of the Chair is to strengthen women's capacity in IWRM, particularly through training and research. Activities target women as professionals in the water sector and women as beneficiaries of drinking water, sanitation and irrigation interventions. The Chair makes use of science, technology and innovation for integrated rural development with emphasis on all stakeholders' engagement. In addition, the Chair provides technical and policy advice in the areas of management and water governance and works to strengthen regional and international cooperation. The work of the Chair contributes to the protection of the environment, the empowerment of women, the improvement of living conditions of rural populations, and more generally, to achieving sustainable development.



Activities of the Chair



The Chairholder conducting fieldwork

## Main Projects

- **Research and development on gender mainstreaming in IWRM:** comprehensive technical study on the role of women in the implementation of IWRM in rural areas of Morocco. The project covers drinking water supply, sanitation, irrigation and water reuse.
- **Training programme on IWRM and Education for Sustainable Development:** introduction of innovative and culturally sensitive approaches for using science and technology to strengthen the capabilities of local actors in rural areas and for integration of gender aspects in the design, implementation and monitoring of water related projects.
- **Women's leadership in water management:** development of strategies to promote women's leadership in water sector institutions in Arab countries.
- **Integrated rural development project:** a pilot project in a rural village of the Middle Atlas, Dayet Ifrah, based on local needs and with a particular interest in women's contributions to local development. Activities aim to improve the conditions of access to drinking water and ecological sanitation, health education and awareness raising, as well as the set-up of a rural laboratory for water quality analysis and support in the creation of income-generating activities.

## Recent Activities

- **Founding Member of the UNESCO Network “ Women, Science, Technology and Development”** which includes Argentina, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Morocco, Pakistan, Sudan and Togo, with two main objectives:
  - (1) Implementation of a programme for training and research in science and technology, integrating a gender perspective;
  - (2) Training women and adolescent girls in the sustainable management of resources (notably water) within a scientific and technological framework (on-going activity).
- **Introduction of the EcoSan technologies for rural ecological sanitation** in the pilot village Dayet Ifrah in Morocco, in partnership with the German Development Cooperation (GIZ) and local actors.
- **Fieldwork Survey analysis on gender and IWRM implementation in rural areas of Morocco**, covering villages in the region of Ifrane in the Middle Atlas and the region of Tinghir in the South.
- **Advising and Teaching in Executive Training Courses:** “Water Governance for Future Leaders”, Abu Dhabi (UAE) and Amman (Jordan); “Water Diplomacy: Sharing Waters, Sharing Benefits”, Abu Dhabi, UAE.



Executive Training, Arab Countries (United Arab Emirates)

## Main Partners

- University Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane (AUI);
- Office National de l’Electricité et de l’Eau Potable (ONEE);
- UNESCO Network “Women, Science, Technology and Development”;
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ);
- World Bank Institute, Washington D.C.;
- Moroccan League for the Protection of Children;
- Ministry of Health of Morocco.

## Main Staff

### Al Akhawayn University:

Prof. Asma El Kasmi, Chairholder;  
 Prof. Ahmed Legrouri, Dr. Abdelghani El Asli,  
 Dr. Abdelkrim El Ouardaoui: School of Science and Engineering;  
 Dr. Wafa El Garah, School of Business and Administration;  
 Dr. Bouziane Zaid and Dr. Abdelkrim Marzouk, School of Humanities and Social Sciences.

### Experts at the National Office on Electricity and Safe Drinking Water (ONEE):

Mr. Belabes Belmamoun, Directorate for Communication and Cooperation;  
 Eng. Hajiba Bourziza, Directorate for Sanitation and Environment;  
 Dr. Leila Laraqi and Dr. Samira Benabdellah, Directorate for Water Quality Control.

“Our cooperation with the UNESCO Chair on Water, Women and Decision-making in Ifrane illustrates very well the connection that UNESCO has created with its Chairs. A connection stronger than a simple dialogue. A direct association of Chairs to the actions and thinking of UNESCO which undoubtedly leads to their mutual enrichment.”

Sonia Bahri  
 Natural Sciences Sector of UNESCO

# UNESCO Chair on Women, Science and Reasoned Water Management in West Africa



The University of Lomé, Togo

Chairholder: Prof. Adolé Isabelle Glitho

## Mission and objectives

The primary goal of the Chair is to contribute to the achievement of development goals and to the improvement of access to drinking water in Sub-Saharan Africa. For this reason, the Chair focuses on creating a regional team of experts on water management. The Chair develops activities in five countries — Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Niger and Togo — which actively collaborate on a two-year **international Master's programme on Environment, Water and Health**, as well as an elective course ("Women, Water and Health"), hosted at the University of Lomé. Two other countries, Senegal and Chad, also participate in this university programme, involving a total of 58 water management professionals (39 women and 19 men). Graduates of the programme are currently engaged in several projects, closely followed by the Chair, in connection to the sustainable management of water resources in West and Central Africa.

Besides training high-level specialists for the region, the Chair aims to create a course leading to a Certificate of Aptitude on Communication Techniques on Gender and Development. The Chair also promotes the education of young girls and women, their access to information and opportunities for training in water, health and environmental management. The Chair's activities target peri-urban and rural areas and the identification of problems and possible solutions in these two fragile zones.



Researchers of the Chair

## Main projects

The Master's programme on Environment, Water and Health offers two internships taking place during the first and second years of studies (for one and six months respectively). The internships offer an intensive fieldwork experience during which students are asked to identify specific water management problems in peri-urban and rural zones in order to propose solutions.



Students during a session with the Chair

## Recent Activities

### Training and education

- Organized seminars and on-site visits as a part of the master's programme.
- Created an online professional discussion forum on water related topics.
- Meetings and partnerships with other UNESCO Chair members.
- Evaluation of the first year of the master's programme.
- Conferences organized for registered master students.

### Publications

- Technical coursebook for the UNESCO Chairs' network trainings on water.
- Fifty-seven CDs based on graduate master's theses of students from five partner countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Niger and Togo).
- One CD on the topic of Water in Chad.
- Online release of all Master's theses.
- Twelve short video programmes created by students based on a survey on bottled water and waterborne diseases.



Master's students at the graduation ceremony

### Main staff

Prof. Isabelle Adole Glitho, Chairholder;  
 Prof. Sylvie Adote Hounzangbe, Vice-President of the Chair, focal point in Benin;  
 Prof. Chantal Yvette Kabore, Zoungrana, Focal point in Burkina Fasso;  
 Prof. Kadi Alzouma, Focal point in Niger;  
 Prof. Sidikou Ramatou Djermakoye Seyni, Deputy focal point in Niger;  
 Prof. Seri-Kouassi B. Philomène, Focal point in Côte d'Ivoire;  
 Prof. Kouassi Goffri Marie Chantal, Deputy focal point in Côte d'Ivoire;  
 Prof. Kpegba Kafui Jeannette, Responsible for the pedagogical activities of the master's programme;  
 Ms. Koudaya Massan Jocelyne, Administrative responsible for the activities of the master's programme;  
 Ms. Adamgba Ahoefa Françoise, Secretary;  
 Ms. Efua Sylviane Johnson, Administrative assistant.

### Main Partners

- University of Lomé (Togo);
- University of Abomey Calavi (Benin);
- University of Cocody (Côte d'Ivoire);
- University of Abdou Moumouni (Niger);
- University of Bobo Dioulasso (Burkina Faso).



Members of the Chair in Togo

# UNESCO Chair on Water, Gender and Governance

Instituto Global de Altos Estudios en Ciencias Sociales (IGlobal),

Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

Chairholder: Mr. Francisco T. Rodríguez.



## Mission and objectives

The overarching goal of the Chair is to promote the equal involvement of men and women in a better and more efficient governance and management of water resources. Serving this goal, the Chair seeks to enhance the development of institutional frameworks, strategies, policies, research, capacity building and communication. The Chair particularly focuses on the role of women within the water sector at the national and regional levels. It fosters research and training activities in water and gender studies, and reinforces active and productive exchanges between professors, lecturers and researchers in different fields and disciplines. The Chair also develops tools and provides advice to enhance capacity development in institutions responsible for water resources management and services, water users' associations, as well as teaching, training and research establishments.



The Chair during a meeting

© Chair on Water, Gender and Governance, Dominican Republic

## Main Projects

### Research projects:

- Analysis and assessment of public policies, development plans, gender equity plans, and water sector and water institution plans.
- Gender and legal frameworks in the water sector.
- Design and implementation of tools for training and data analysis on water and gender.
- Gender perspective in water management and the life cycle of projects – water supply and sanitation, irrigation, risk management.
- Design and production of teaching materials on gender perspective for the water sector.

**Educational programme on Water and Gender:** A radio programme is under development in coordination with the Office of the Vice-Presidency of the Dominican Republic. It will air through Community Technology Centres, located in different communities across the country, covering 94 radio stations, with an audience of 129,595 homes reaching an estimated 489,719 people. Weekly emissions will aim to educate women on the efficient use of water, hygiene, and participation of women in water users' associations.

**Establishment of a network** of existing UNESCO Chairs on Water in the Latin America and Caribbean Region.

## Recent Activities

- Workshop on water and gender.
- Research project on national policy on women and gender.
- Working sessions with authorities of public sector institutions responsible for water supply and sanitation services.
- Workshop with managerial and technical staff of the National Water Supply and Sanitation Institute (INAPA — Instituto Nacional de Aguas Potables y Alcantarillados) about the gender perspective in the water sector.
- Workshop on integrated approaches to water security and water management, in collaboration with IHP and the UNESCO Chairs on water and gender in Togo, Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco and Brazil.

## Main Partners

**IGlobal**, Instituto Global de Altos Estudios en Ciencias Sociales.



**INDRHI**, Instituto Nacional de Recursos Hidráulicos.

**CEHICA**, Centro para la Gestión Sostenible de los Recursos Hídricos en los Estados Insulares del Caribe.

**FUNGLODE**, Fundación Global, Democracia y Desarrollo.

## Main Staff

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Ing. Juan R. Chalas, Coordinator of the Centre for the Sustainable Management of Water Resources in Caribbean Island States (CEHICA), Project Assessment.



Santo Domingo, women using water  
© UNESCO photobank

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Conference on Women in Water Management (Ifrane, Morocco)

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