The current level of participation of women in basin councils ranges from zero to 20%. (CAREC, 2020)

Governments set policy and develop regulations, but non-state entities are increasingly providing the actual water services. (Finger and Allouche; and Kjellén, 2020)

Resilient water management is firmly rooted in the multi-stakeholder approach, involving citizens, the private sector and civil society in the process of water governance. (GWP, 2021)

Effective water governance calls for:
- Greater public participation
- Building adaptive capacities at multiple levels
- Prioritizing risk reduction for socially vulnerable groups

Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development stresses the need for citizen participation in environmental issues. (UNGA, 1992)

The Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, has published the updated guidelines on “Gender Mainstreaming in Aarhus Centres Activities”, in collaboration with OSCE Secretariat Gender Issues Programme to assist Aarhus Centre staff effectively integrate a gender perspective into their work and to realize national and international commitments on gender equality, strengthening good governance overall.
When women and men equally decide on how to use water, decisions are better targeted and more representative of the needs of the entire population. The Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, has developed this guide to gender mainstreaming in water governance in Central Asia in collaboration with OSCE Secretariat Gender Issues Programme for the benefit of water practitioners in the region.

Based on the manual, the OSCE has developed an e-learning module as an introduction to gender mainstreaming in water governance in an engaging manner.