



# The Gender and Youth-Friendly Code of Conduct

**FOR STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTICIPANTS  
IN WES PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

(version Sept 2021)



## **WATER AND ENVIRONMENT SUPPORT IN THE ENI SOUTHERN NEIGHBOURHOOD REGION**

The "Water and Environment Support (WES) in the ENI Neighborhood South Region" project is a regional technical support project funded by the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI South). WES aims to protect the natural resources in the Mediterranean context and to improve the management of scarce water resources in the region. WES mainly aims to solve the problems linked to pollution prevention and the rational use of water.

WES builds on previous similar regional projects funded by the European Union (Horizon 2020 CB/MEP, SWIM SM, SWIM-H2020 SM) and strives to create a supportive environment and increase the capacity of all stakeholders in the Partner Countries (PCs).

The WES Project Countries are Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, (Libya), Palestine, [Syria] and Tunisia. However, in order to ensure the coherence and effectiveness of EU funding or to promote regional cooperation, the eligibility of specific actions can be extended to neighbouring countries in the Southern Neighborhood region.

**DISCLAIMER:**

*This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the WES Project and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*



## 1 INTRODUCTION

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While the WES Project mainly aims at protecting the natural resources and at improving the management of scarce water resources in the Mediterranean region, it has pledged to strengthen the **involvement and empowerment of women and young adults** in the wide range of its activities, both at regional and national level. At the same time, WES activities aim to also **influence the regional and national gender and youth agendas**.

The overall objective is to **be as inclusive as possible and take into account the needs of those who are often left behind** when it comes to shaping the agendas and being actively involved in crucial topics such as natural and water resources management, by **ensuring a fair balance and broad diversity of stakeholders and participants in the WES project's activities**, be it from a gender, age, or social, ethnic or religious (faith) point of view. All of the WES "community" needs indeed to consider, know, develop, comprehend, accept, integrate and implement into all its activities a **culture of respect, gender equity and appreciation of what women and youth represent for our present and future world**.

Therefore, it is of importance that when taking part in WES activities, **all parties, whether organizers, moderators, speakers or participants and other stakeholders, feel comfortable and respected in the same manner**, regardless of their gender and other background characteristics. To encourage these gender- and youth-mainstreaming efforts, the present **Code of Conduct** lays out a **few basic gender- and youth-friendly principles and rules** that WES team members, stakeholders and participants in WES activities are expected to comply with.

## 2 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

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### A. Ensure that every person is treated in an equitable and respectful manner:

- Pay attention to **not differentiate between women and men**, nor between **younger and more senior persons**.
- Show the **same respect to female and male members** within each of the groupings involved (e.g. among officials, fellow participants, students, etc.).
- **Be the example to follow** in encouraging a respectful and positive attitude.

### B. Use an adequate, neutral language<sup>1</sup>:

- **Keep language both gender and youth-neutral and inclusive:**
  - **Use gender and youth "neutral" expressions** (e.g. «humanity» instead of «mankind»).
  - **Use inclusive language** (e.g. omit the masculine reference word; use plural forms for both nouns and reference words; use «they»/ «their» or use the passive voice).
  - **Use both feminine and masculine forms** (e.g. use slashes [/] and write both the feminine and the masculine forms of words, for instance: "**she/he**", "**his/hers**" etc.).

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<sup>1</sup> UN-Women "Gender-inclusive language guidelines"  
<https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/gender-inclusive%20language/guidelines-on-gender-inclusive-language-en.pdf?la=en&vs=2633>

- **Pay special attention** to the use of proper **vocabulary referring to titles, stereotypes in roles/attributes**, as well as **professional occupations regardless of gender or age**.
  - **Titles: Use courtesy titles that promote gender equality regardless of marital status** (e.g. avoid «Miss» or «Mrs.» and prefer «Ms»; prefer «The Smiths» of «Mr. and Mrs. Smith»).
  - **Professional occupations:**
    - **Favour, when alternatives exist, the use of generic occupational titles** (e.g. chairperson instead of chairman/chairwoman, business people, entrepreneur, manager, etc.).
    - **Use, when feasible, gender-neutral forms**, especially for professions that are still male-dominated, or those that are typically female-dominated (e.g. legislator, farmer, fisher).
    - **Avoid the unnecessary references to gender**.
- **Consider**, when feasible, **linguistic specificities** since **each language has its particularities**, which need to be considered when communicating with the **different stakeholders across the WES countries**, remembering that, apart from English, French and Arabic are also used.

### 3 PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

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#### A. When preparing for your participation in WES activities:

- **Use gender and youth-inclusive/-neutral language, if you plan to prepare a document, presentation or intervene verbally** (see above section for details).

#### B. During your participation in WES activities:

- Strive to **facilitate inter-generational and inter-gender exchange** by **inter-acting with fellow participants of different gender and age** during conference sessions, meals, or other gatherings.
- Pay attention to **fair seating arrangements**, reflecting **equality of participation** (e.g. female or young speakers should not sit at the corners or at the back by default).
- **Make sure women and men are equally visible** in your **conversations, speeches or other interventions. Acknowledge, value women's and young persons' qualifications /skills** in the same way as you would for male or more senior participants, speakers, etc.
- **Be inclusive in information sharing and group involvement when collaborating** with women and young people. **Encourage women and young people** to actively participate and share their views when working with them in the same group.
- **Avoid stereotyping women and men of all ages** and refer to them without assuming typical roles or attributes related to their gender or age.
- **Respect any gender or youth-relevant protocols/procedures** in place for an activity or event, and follow related instructions or guidance provided by the organizers.
- When discussing problems or obstacles related to the topic at hand, **explore in which way people of different gender, age, culture, ethnicity, faith could be or become positive agents of change.**<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> "Working with and for Youth –Guidelines for youth mainstreaming", OSCE, 2021  
<https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/8/7/487267.pdf>

