



THE ISSUE

Despite progress and guarantees through constitutions, legal and institutional measures, gender, and youth inequalities persist in the Mediterranean region.

HOW WATER AND ENVIRONMENT SUPPORT (WES) ADDRESSES THE PROBLEM IN GENERAL

While the **WES Project** aims at protecting the natural resources and 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**, through which implicitly a part of the community is reached, both at regional and national level.

EDUCATION, ESD, GENDER AND YOUTH

Education contributes to breaking down gender and youth inequalities. Particularly Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) cultivates all aspects of sustainability, enhancing knowledge and skills, strengthening values, shaping attitudes and behaviours not only for the protection of the environment, but also for social cohesion and justice and for economic prosperity in a peaceful world. In the framework of #ESDfor2030, the international educational community is working throughout this decade (2021-2030) on all UN Sustainable Development Goals, among which SDG 5 is dedicated to Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls, while youth empowerment crosscuts most SDGs, with Goal 4 calling for inclusive and quality education for all.

WHAT CAN EDUCATORS IN FORMAL, NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL SETTINGS DO?

Accept, know, comprehend, consider, integrate, develop, and implement **a culture of respect, gender equity and appreciation of what women and youth represent for our present and future world**. The gender and youth dimensions don't have to be separate sections or subjects in teaching and learning endeavors but should be integrated and permeate everything that educators do.

HOW CAN ONE DEVELOP "GENDER AND YOUTH" LENSES IN ESD?

Educating for sustainable development, and therefore for gender equality, entails building knowledge, attitudes, and transferable skills to support girls' agency and empowerment, fostering reflection on existing norms and traditions, and encouraging students to challenge their own biases, addressing discrimination and gender-based violence, supporting healthy life choices, including sexual and reproductive health, and promoting gender equality. So, one can:

- seek gender and youth-sensitive training;
- increase critical reflection on gender norms amongst staff and students: Is your institution organized and managed in a gender sensitive manner?
- participate in the decision-making process of your institution to include gender equality-related topics in your curricula;
- aim to participate in a meaningful way in processes (school, university, local, national level) that introduce measures that forbid gender-based discrimination.



The WES Code of Conduct lays out a few basic gender and youth-friendly principles that encourage Gender and Youth mainstreaming efforts.

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 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.

USE AN ADEQUATE, NEUTRAL LANGUAGE¹:

- ✓ **Keep language both gender and youth-neutral and inclusive**.
- ✓ **Use the proper vocabulary referring to titles, stereotypes in roles/attributes**, as well as **professional occupations, regardless of gender or age**.



CONSIDERING GENDER AND YOUTH ASPECTS WHEN EDUCATING FOR SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION

As key managers of household budgets, women play an important role in promoting sustainable household consumption and investment. Their lifestyle and purchasing choices can have transformative implications for the lifestyle, food, etc.

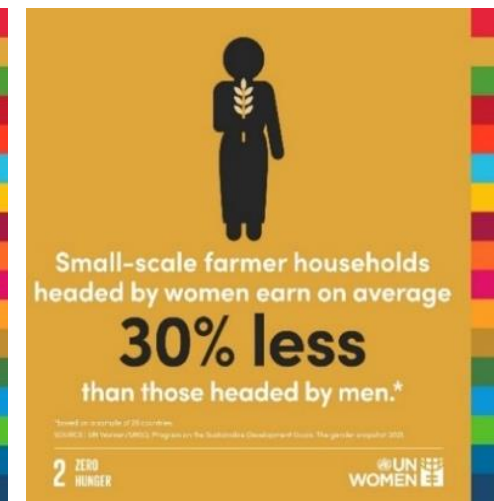
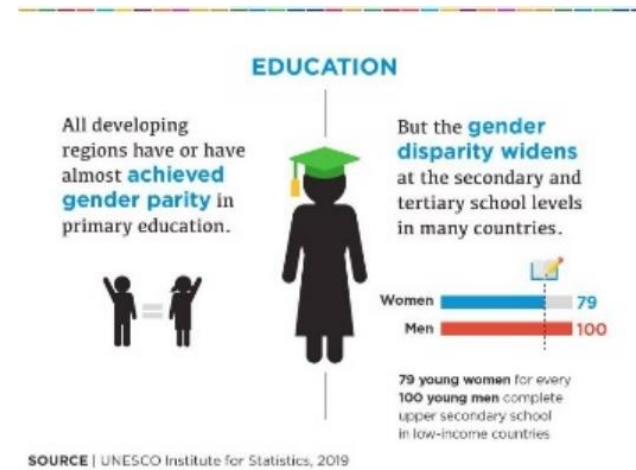
Youth, apart from being our future, are an important consumer group and the way their consumption patterns evolve greatly influences the sustainability trajectory of their countries and of the region as a whole.

Education for Sustainable Consumption aims to develop the necessary culture, knowledge, and skills to address sustainability challenges¹. It includes understanding the impact of our consumer choices and encompasses:

- Life-cycle analysis of products;
- Interpretation of products' labels;
- Avoidance of excessive packaging;
- Reduction of food waste.

CONSIDERING GENDER AND YOUTH WHEN DESIGNING WATER RELATED EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES OR CAMPAIGNS

The online educational resource “Non-Conventional Water Resources (NCWRs) in the Mediterranean”² is a concrete example where a gender and youth mainstreaming approach has been applied. Gender balanced visual material is used; it is inclusive and, pays due attention to the use of proper vocabulary while avoiding gender or age stereotypes in roles/attributes. The key aim is to raise awareness and sensitize youth and the educational community in general about Non-Conventional Water Resources; develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills and inspire responsible consumption habits in line with sustainability.



¹ UNESCO 2017 Educating for Sustainable Development Goals <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000247444>

² www.ncwr-edu.net