

### Tips for organizing gender-equal WASH meetings

PD WASH is leading a dedicated effort to promote gender equality amongst WASH staff, in line with global UNICEF commitments by the Executive Board in the Gender Action Plan (2018-2021) and UNICEF's Strategy for WASH (2016-2030), which commits us to address the continuing under-representation of women in positions of authority in the WASH sector by promoting women's leadership within UNICEF's WASH staff cadre and encouraging sector partners to do the same.

At the global, regional, and national levels, UNICEF WASH leaders can advance these goals by organizing gender-equal WASH meetings, such as WASH Network meetings and trainings.

Topic	Tips for gender equality
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include women in substantive roles like determining the objectives, content, and participants of the meeting.</li> <li>• Share the 'housework' of meeting organization between women and men, such as logistics and organization, venue inspection and preparation, agenda preparation, and other tasks.</li> <li>• In the administrative note, refer both men and women staff to family-friendly resources that might facilitate their participation, particularly if traveling with young children.</li> <li>• Avoid convening meetings during weekends, or holding meeting sessions after normal working hours.</li> </ul>
Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set a target of parity in the proportion of women and men attending the meeting, even if it means inviting more junior women, as such opportunities build the expertise, networks, and visibility of women.</li> <li>• Include gender parity as criteria in the invitations issued to country offices (for WASH Network meetings) or sector partners.</li> <li>• Include gender expertise in the meeting, by inviting regional or country office gender specialists or focal points.</li> </ul>
Themes and focus areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider objectives or thematic sessions that are relevant to UNICEF's gender action plan (2018-2021), such as gender integration in the WASH sector or menstrual health and hygiene.</li> <li>• Consider including extra sessions or training on topics that contribute to gender equality in UNICEF, such as implicit bias training.</li> <li>• Include a short report on gender balance in staffing in the region or country on the agenda.</li> </ul>
Speakers and panels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure gender balance in speakers and panellists.</li> <li>• Consider calling on women to ask a first question or comment, as this has been shown to encourage other women to speak up at meetings and evidence shows that women ask fewer questions than men at conferences<sup>1</sup>.</li> <li>• Be aware of and put an end to interruptions of women's contributions, either on panels or during question or discussion sessions.</li> <li>• Encourage men to take the '<a href="#">manel</a>' pledge: "At a public conference I won't serve on a panel of two people or more unless there is at least one woman on the panel, not including the Chair."</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Hinsley A, Sutherland WJ, Johnston A (2017) Men ask more questions than women at a scientific conference. PLoS ONE 12(10): e0185534. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0185534>

Group work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• During group work or at small tables, create gender-balanced groups, even if it means that some are comprised of all men. Ensure every subgroup is represented by at least three people, or makes up about a third of the total. If there are not enough women to include more than one in each group, instead create as many gender-balanced groups as possible and keep the rest homogenous to avoid creating token members<sup>2</sup>.</li></ul>
Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Disaggregate evaluation data by gender and other desired characteristics.</li><li>• Include the gender breakdown of participants in the meeting report.</li></ul>

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<sup>2</sup> Kanter, RM. (1977) Some Effects of Proportions on Group Life: Skewed Sex Ratios and Responses to Token Women. *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 82, No. 5 (Mar., 1977), pp. 965-990. The University of Chicago Press  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/2777808>