

GENDER GAPS



IN THE WATER-ENERGY-FOOD AND ECOSYSTEMS NEXUS

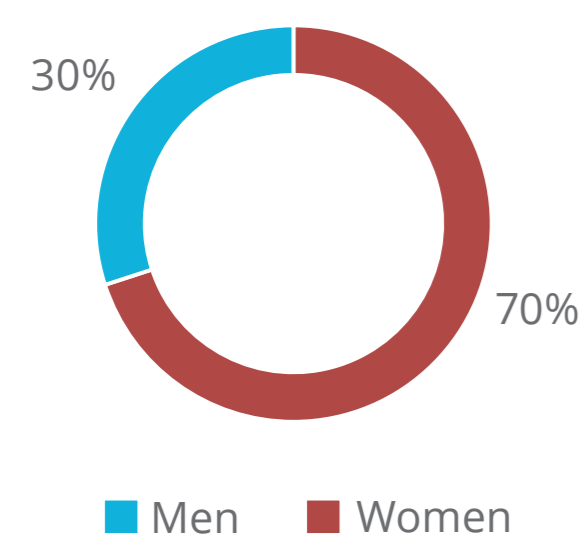
Introduction

Water, energy, food, and ecosystems are four elements of paramount importance in achieving global human well-being leading to poverty reduction and sustainable social and economic development. New global challenges brought about by increasing resource scarcity, climate change, and environmental degradation are leading to an ever-increasing tightening of living conditions for men and women.

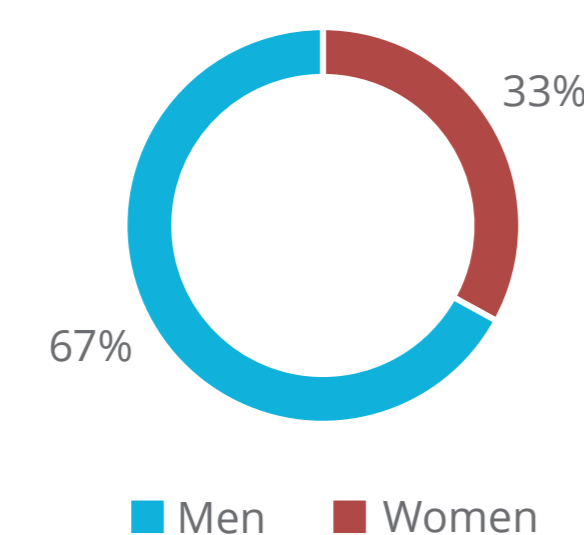
These difficulties exacerbate conflicts, damaging economic development and leading to millions of people's death and forced displacement each year. Women are the most affected by all these dramatic situations because they exacerbate gender inequalities and reinforce gender gaps. At the same time, it is widely recognized that there is a strong relationship between gender and sustainability in consumption, food production, and ecosystem management.

Adopting a gender lens in the WEFE nexus will allow the implementation of activities tailored to the specific needs of women and men, considering social and cultural norms that in each context affect the use and management of the resources. Gender roles and the division of labour based on gender norms need to be taken into account to understand decision-making processes and the different impacts that the lack of resources may have on women and men.

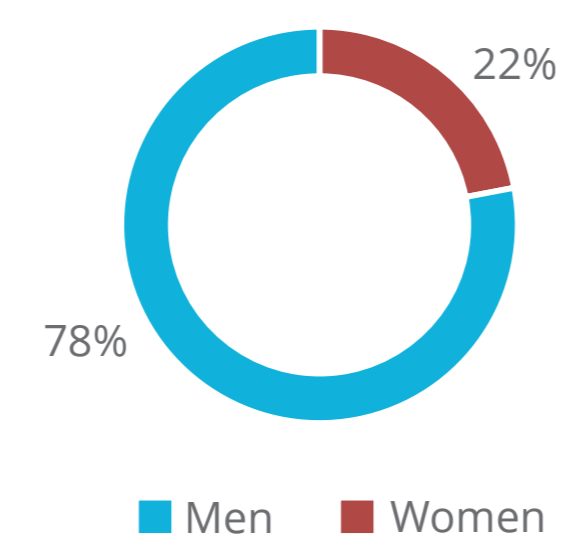
Responsible for domestic activities involving water



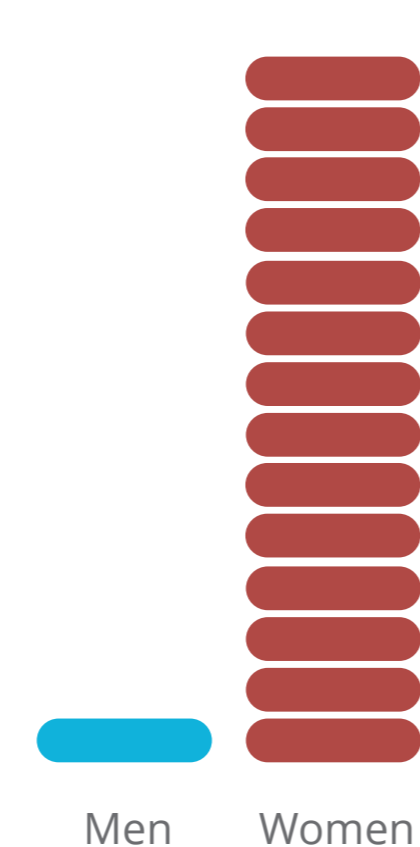
Participation in Policy and Management Water Processes



Managerial Position in the Energy Sector



Risk of death during extreme climatic events



Considering gender issues in the WEFE NEXUS approach

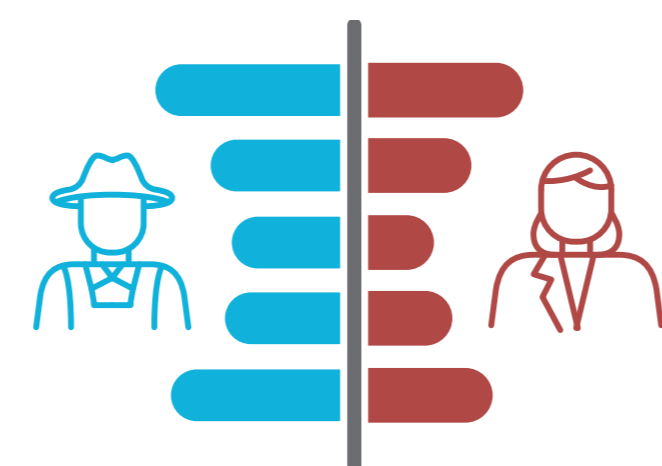
A Water-Energy-Food and Ecosystems Nexus approach which considers gender issues as important elements of the socio-economic environment is proposed here for sustainable management of resources. Men and women are affected differently by the lack of resources and have different roles in using and managing them, so it is crucial to have a gender perspective and to investigate gender issues while transitioning to WEFE Nexus.

Gender issues and women's participation in WEFE NEXUS policies

A thorough understanding of gender issues at various levels requires sex-disaggregated data. Only with this kind of data can policymakers be aware of the existing situation and can design gender-sensitive policies and strategies. In addition, gender-specific datasets linked to WEFE-Nexus are important to understand what differences arise from gender-specific productive roles, different perspectives of resources, access, and decision-making mechanisms with respect to resource management and use.

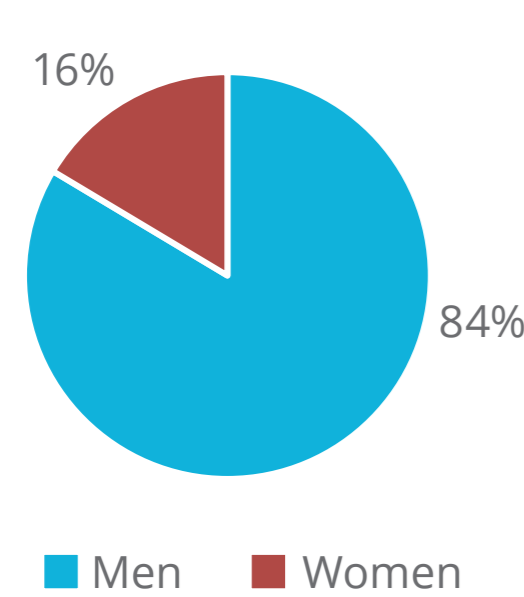
The preliminary analysis developed on the 4 NELs, reveals two main issues related to gender and WEFE with different degrees of intensity, but significant in each country.

1. The lack of sex-disaggregated data related to natural resources is due to a lack of indicators globally recognized to collect this kind of data, and the difficulty in collecting them. At the same time, it is widely known that being able to analyze sex-disaggregated data could improve the quality and sustainability of national and international policies.



2. According to what has been highlighted during the first workshops in the NELs, there is a significant gender gap in decision-making in the water, energy, food, and ecosystem sectors. All are dominated by men, especially in the most relevant job positions.

Participation in the 1st NEL workshops



Stakeholder's Opinion- Decision-making in the Water sector

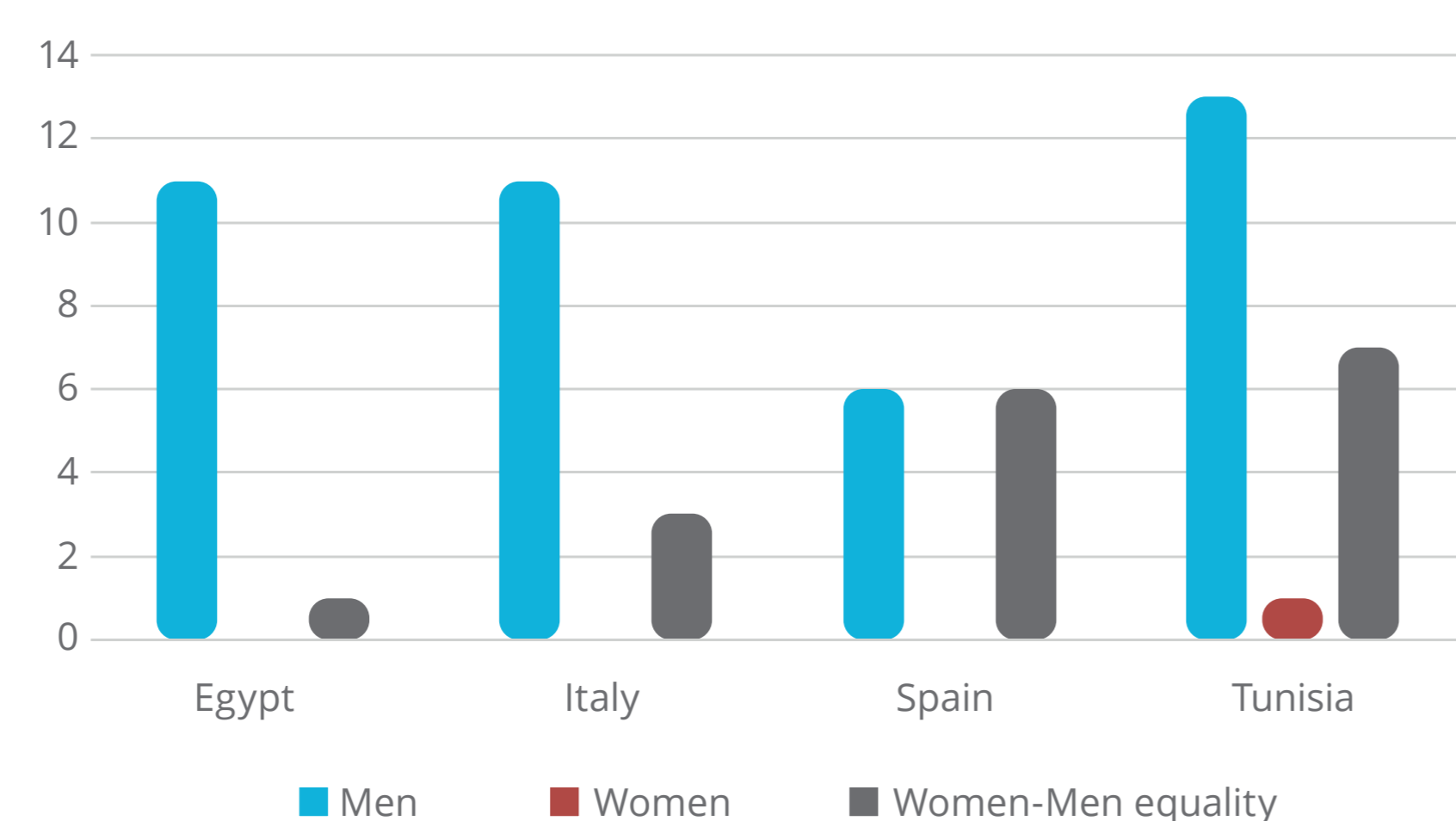
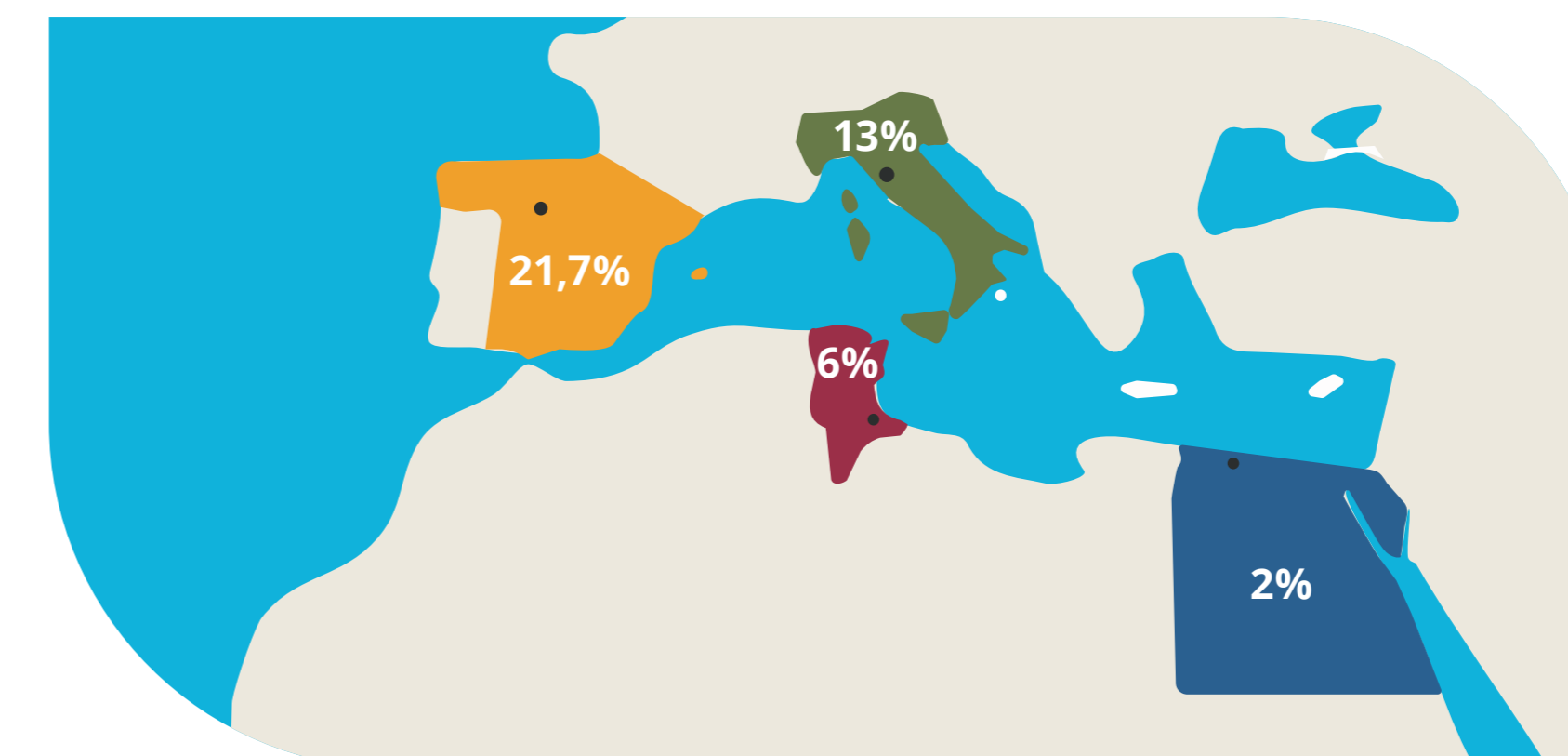


Figure 2: How do men's and women's day-to-day decision-making roles differ?

The approach is based on the analysis of 1) factors that contribute to a situation of gender inequality and 2) gender issues that impair a holistic transition towards WEFE Nexus, i.e., a situation in which men and women do not have the same rights, responsibilities, and opportunities regarding the use and management of WEFE resources.

The NEXUS-NESS project developed this approach, which XPRO consulting Limited is applying in four different Nexus Ecosystem Labs (NELs), located in Egypt, Italy, Spain, and Tunisia, in which diverse stakeholders are contributing to the creation of holistic management of the resources. The NELs have to face different challenges both as regards resource management and gender issues. However, some common elements at countries level have been identified, such as the lower access of women to land property.

Female landowners (Spain, Italy, Tunisia, Egypt)



Data per se are not enough to understand the context, in fact even if the value in Italy is low, there isn't the same situation of Egypt, where cultural norms prevent women to inherit lands. Understanding the issues contributing to gender inequalities is crucial to avoid the Project's planned actions worsening these inequalities, negatively impacting women's lives. For example, in the Egyptian NEL, where Bedouins women are not allowed to stay in the same room with unknown men, and where women's participation during the first workshop was incredibly low, for the second workshop, it was decided to organise two different sessions one for female and one for male members of the community.



Figure 1: First participatory workshop in wadi Naghamish watershed, Egyptian NEL

Raising awareness of gender issues in WEFE domain: NEXUS-NESS project

The root cause of these gaps has been partially identified as a lack of awareness of the topic. Gender issues are considered irrelevant to the achievement of sustainable resource management. This often causes an underestimation of the effects that gender dynamics have on the achievement of this outcome.

For this reason, the NEXUS-NESS project stressed the importance of making all the project's participants aware of the different roles and labours carried out by women and men in relation to the WEFE nexus.

Having scientists who are aware of gender issues in their field and able to understand and analyze them in different contexts is the first step to having research that makes a real contribution to achieving gender equality by providing gender-disaggregated data and gathering the perspectives of all relevant actors and actresses.



Figure 3: Second participatory workshop in the Wadi Jir, Tunisian NEL

References

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