

# EXAMPLES OF GROUND RULES

- ▶ **Use respectful language:** Avoid making inappropriate jokes that are meant to diffuse the tension, such as sexist or racist jokes. These can oftentimes 'lighten the mood' in the eyes of participants, but also represent one of the big problems that women face in trying to work with men in political spaces.
- ▶ **Keep confidentiality:** Information of a personal nature that is shared in the group is not to be shared outside the group.
- ▶ **Avoid being judgmental:** Don't judge people on their opinions and avoid making judgmental comments. Don't make assumptions about other peoples' experiences.
- ▶ **Respect each other's experiences:** The goal is to create a learning environment together, in which everyone feels safe to reflect, discuss and ask questions. Remember that everyone in this room is learning. If someone doesn't know as much as you about something, help them get there.
- ▶ **Respect others when they are speaking:** Avoid interrupting or speaking over one another - one person speaks at a time. Raise your hand when you want to talk.
- ▶ **Disagree with the statement not the person:** Agree to disagree at times. Respectfully challenge one another (i.e. asking questions), but avoid making personal attacks.
- ▶ **Use "I" statements:** Speak from your own experiences instead of generalizing (e.g. they, we, you, it).
- ▶ **Be the change:** To create this safe and respectful learning environment, we must be the change we want to see in the world. Any kind of harassment and sexist, racist, or exclusionary behavior or statements, including those that are claimed to be 'jokes', are not acceptable. All communication should be appropriate for a professional meeting, which includes people of many different backgrounds.
- ▶ **Participate:** We encourage everyone to participate to your fullest ability. Share your thoughts/ideas with the group, but also to give others an opportunity to participate in the dialogue.
- ▶ **Take care of yourself and each other:** We will be discussing some sensitive, personal and at times difficult and painful issues. Some of these discussions may bring up uncomfortable memories and feelings. Take care of yourself, and keep an eye out for how everyone else appears to be doing emotionally. If need be, take a time out and step out of the room to take a break. Feel free to talk to the facilitators during breaks or at the end of the session.
- ▶ **Have fun:** This topic can bring up various emotional reactions for different people, so be respectful of that. Be open to the idea of positive and healthy interactions as it relates to this topic and help make this fun!