

# TOOL SUITE 1 INCREASING GENDER DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION FROM THE WORKFORCE TO THE BOARDROOM

Tools to help companies address gender gaps on boards,  
in senior management, and in the workforce



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## APPLICABLE IFC PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

### PERFORMANCE STANDARD 2. Labor and Working Conditions

PS2 covers working conditions, protection of the workforce, operational health and safety, third party workers, and workers involved in the supply chain. With regard to gender, it promotes non-discrimination and equal opportunity, health and safety of the workforce, and protection of potentially vulnerable workers. It applies to workers directly engaged by the client (direct workers), workers engaged through third parties to perform work related to core business processes of the project for a substantial duration (contracted workers), and workers engaged by the client’s primary suppliers (supply chain workers).

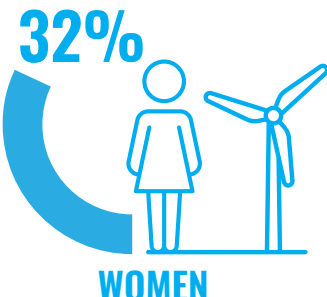
# OVERVIEW: Tools to Increase Gender Diversity and Inclusion in Infrastructure Operations

Why should companies care about increasing representation of women in their workforces? Can gender diversity make a difference in the services they provide and their bottom lines?

While the infrastructure sectors have traditionally been male dominated, this section highlights the myriad benefits of increasing women’s representation in the water, cities, power, and transport sectors across the board, senior management, and workforce. The evidence points to increases in efficiency, innovation, and quality of service delivery where companies have greater gender diversity.

At present, much work still needs to be done to realize these benefits across all infrastructure sectors. Globally, female participation in the renewable energy workforce remains low at 32%<sup>1</sup>, with only 28% of technical roles held by women.<sup>2</sup> In the conventional energy workforce, the IEA estimates the figure to be even lower, at just 22%.<sup>3</sup> For power sector senior management positions, the numbers shrink still further (15% of such roles are held by women), while the portion of women on the boards of power and utility companies globally is only 6%.<sup>4</sup> A World Bank study found that women make up only 18% of the water and sanitation workforce globally. The same story plays out in the transport sector: in Latin America, for instance, the participation of women in the construction and operations of transport systems does not exceed 15% of the labor force in the sector, even though women represent 50% of the total labor force in the region.<sup>5</sup>


**Female participation in the renewable energy workforce, global average**




**32%**

**WOMEN**

**The IEA estimates female participation in the conventional energy workforce even lower AT JUST 22%.**



**ONLY 15%** of power sector senior management positions are held by women, while the portion of women on the boards of power and utility companies globally is **ONLY 6%.**



1 IRENA [Renewable Energy: A Gender Perspective](#). IRENA: Abu Dhabi, 2019, 10.  
 2 Ibid, 10.  
 3 IEA, [Energy and Gender: A Critical Issue in Energy Sector Employment and Energy Access](#), cited Feb 12, 2021.  
 4 EY, [Could Gender Equality be the Innovation Boost Utilities Need?](#) 2019.  
 5 IDB, [Relationship between Gender and Transport](#), 2016.

## Benefits of Increased Gender Diversity and Inclusion on Boards

**Improved board performance:** At the board level, EY found that utilities with a larger share of women board directors have a higher return on equity than those with less diversity.<sup>6</sup> Increasing gender diversity on boards is correlated with improved company performance, profitability, and rising investor confidence.<sup>7</sup>

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Boards themselves perform better when they are more gender diverse. Studies show more gender-diverse and inclusive boards are more accountable, better governed, and operate more collaboratively. One recent study found a “positive significant effect” on ESG reporting when women account for 22-50% of board members.<sup>8</sup> A 2020 study in Jordan found that companies with greater board diversity were more likely to comply with corporate good governance practices and engage in CSR activities and reporting.<sup>9</sup> This performance difference may stem from the differences in men’s and women’s leadership styles, and/or from different ways in which women and men come to hold board positions. While men are often hired through social networks that are formed in academic, social, and professional settings, women have historically lacked access to these networks. Embeddedness in, and accountability to, such networks may make men less likely to hold colleagues accountable or confront them for performance issues, while women may have fewer reservations.<sup>10</sup>

This not only illustrates the importance of enhancing board diversity, but also of increasing transparency and widening the scope and methodologies for board candidate recruitment searches. Ensuring that the underlying systems of elitism and exclusion themselves change, not only the gender of those present in them, will help to create companies with a culture of meritocracy, equality, and accountability.

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<sup>6</sup> Inka Schomer and Alicia Hammond, [Stepping Up Women’s STEM Careers in Infrastructure: An Overview of Promising Approaches](#), ESMAP Paper. Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2020. 12.

<sup>7</sup> Catalyst, [Why Diversity and Inclusion Matter: Quick Take](#). 2020. Cited Feb 12, 2021.

<sup>8</sup> Buallay, A, Hamdan, R, Barone, E, Hamdan, A. [Increasing female participation on boards: Effects on sustainability reporting](#). Int J Fin Econ. 2020; 1– 14.

<sup>9</sup> Amer Al Fadli, John Sands, Greg Jones, Claire Beattie, and Dom Pensiero, [Board Gender Diversity and CSR Reporting: Evidence from Jordan](#), Australasian Accounting, Business and Finance Journal, 13(3), 2019, 29-52.

<sup>10</sup> Rebecca Walberg, [“How to Improve Boardroom Diversity without Resorting to Quotas and Tokenism?”](#) Financial Post, October 6, 2014.

**Increased attractiveness of the sector to women:** There is a positive correlation between the number of women at the board level in an industry and how attractive women find that industry. Having more women on the board can thus help companies reap the benefits of greater gender diversity.<sup>11</sup> This may be because of the presence and availability of women mentors, and because women feel greater potential for recognition and advancement when the example of gender diversity is set publicly and prominently at the board level.<sup>12</sup> It may also be because women on boards can be instrumental in steering company culture and operating practices to become more welcoming to those from non-diverse backgrounds.

**Increased investor interest and growing requirements for gender-diverse boards:** Increasingly, global investors are requiring companies to be more transparent in showing their efforts to build gender-diverse boards and in disclosing gender-related information. Since 2010, the Australian Stock Exchange (ASX) Corporate Governance Council has called on companies to outline their boards' gender objectives, progress towards these objectives, and the proportion of female board directors and senior managers in annual reports, or to provide an explanation for why this information is missing. By 2019, the proportion of women on the boards of ASX 200 companies had reached the council's voluntary 30 percent goal.<sup>13</sup> The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) now requires companies to disclose whether and how directorships consider diversity among nominees, and, going further, as of December 2020, the NASDAQ is requesting approval to ask its listing companies to disclose more specific diversity statistics regarding the composition of their boards of directors.<sup>14</sup>

## The Value of More Gender Diversity in Senior Management

As with more gender-diverse boards, there are a number of reasons for companies to work towards greater diversity among senior managers. A report by EY found that utilities with more women in leadership ranks performed better than their peers. Its analysis showed that "the top 20 utilities for gender diversity, with a combined average return on equity (ROE) of 8.5%, significantly

The bottom line, according to Dow Jones: **"A company's odds for success increase with more female executives at the vice president and director levels."**

<sup>11</sup> Center for Women in Politics and Public Leadership, ["The Pathway Forward: Creating Gender Inclusive Leadership in Mining and Resources,"](#) Ottawa: Carlton University, 2012, 30.

<sup>12</sup> American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) in France and BIAC, "Putting all our Minds to Work: Harnessing the Gender Dividend," Paris: BIAC, 2012, 15.

<sup>13</sup> International Labour Organization, ["Improving Gender Diversity in Company Boards,"](#) 2019..

<sup>14</sup> NASDAQ, ["NASDAQ to Advance Diversity through New Proposed Listing Requirements,"](#) Dec 1, 2020.

outperform the lower 20, with a combined average ROE of 7%.” As the EY report notes, “Given the asset-heavy nature of this industry, a 1.5% difference in ROE between the two groups can translate into millions less in profit.”<sup>15</sup> Increased gender diversity in senior management is associated with improvements in sales revenue, customers, market share, return on equity, operating profits, and share price.<sup>16</sup> The bottom line, according to Dow Jones: “A company’s odds for success increase with more female executives at the vice president and director levels.”<sup>17</sup>

Furthermore, improved diversity at senior (and all) levels is correlated with better performance on such metrics as fostering greater innovation. In municipal management, research from the 100 Resilient Cities project highlights that “smarter decisions are made when more women are at the decision-making table—making them critical actors in securing a resilient future for ... cities.”<sup>18</sup> A study published in the *Harvard Business Review* found that managers who listen to and act on women’s ideas enable a “speak-up culture” that capitalizes on women’s creativity. “Leaders who are willing to change direction based on women’s input are more than twice as likely to tap into winning ideas. And leaders who make sure each female member on the team gets constructive and supportive feedback are 128 percent more likely to elicit breakthrough ideas,” the study notes.<sup>19</sup>

## The Value of a More Gender-Diverse Infrastructure and Cities Workforce

Infrastructure companies benefit not only from gender diversity and inclusion on boards and in senior management, but also among employees.

**Deeper and wider talent pool:** While the infrastructure sectors are largely male dominated, companies that increase attractiveness to both women and men can draw from often-untapped resources of potential female employees. Hiring more women can help ease labor shortages, expand the talent pool, and help companies to recruit more locally. Snel Transport, a logistics company in the Netherlands, for instance, has avoided the driver shortages that afflict 78% of Dutch

**Hiring more women can...**



**help ease labor shortages**



**expand the talent pool**



**help companies to recruit more locally.**

<sup>15</sup> EY, [EY report: Gender diversity is good for energy companies, but happening at a ‘glacial pace’](#), Aug 30, 2016.

<sup>16</sup> AmCham France and BIAC, 2012, 8.

<sup>17</sup> Workplace Gender Equality Agency, [“The Business Case for Gender Equality,”](#) 2018, 4.

<sup>18</sup> 100 Resilient Cities, *The Power of Women’s Leadership in Building Urban Resilience*, New York, NY: 100 Resilient Cities, 2018.

<sup>19</sup> Sylvia Ann Hewlett, Melinda Marshall, and Laura Sherbin, [“How Women Drive Innovation and Growth,”](#) Harvard Business Review, August 2013.

logistics companies through women-friendly recruitment policies and practices. While the average company with Snel's profile would typically have around 10.5 driver vacancies, a recent study showed that Snel had none, in large part due to its women-friendly policies.<sup>20</sup>

**Improved innovation, performance, and organizational culture:** According to the OECD, workforce diversity can bring benefits to public service employers and service users, including qualitative improvements in public service delivery and efficiency. Gender diversity in the workplace can also help strengthen policy effectiveness and social mobility.

**Safer operating environments:** Numerous studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between female employees, adherence to safety protocols, and the treatment and safe operation of equipment.<sup>21</sup> Evidence suggests that women are not only safer drivers than men but also more fuel efficient and take better care of vehicles. Dublin Bus found that employing more women can result in safer driving, fewer accidents, and a lower incidence of violence.<sup>22</sup> Another case study from Sofia Electric indicated that women take better care of vehicles and are less risky as drivers, which in turn leads to reduced repair and maintenance costs.<sup>23</sup> In part, this trend may be due to socialized differences between women and men: men may have a greater tendency towards bravado and the desire to seem infallible, which can make them operate less safely, while women are often more receptive to coaching or instruction and more likely to react cautiously or deliberately to dangerous or potentially hazardous situations. As a result, in many sectors, women operators are increasingly in demand, because their behavior yields better safety outcomes, reduced equipment maintenance and repair, and a more safety-conscious operating environment.<sup>24</sup> If this creates pushback from male staff, it is even more important to build an understanding that gender diversity and inclusion—and the related benefits—are good for the whole company. At the same time, it is important to emphasize to any detractors that the company's objective is not to exclude men but rather to favor and encourage a culture of safety, and that hiring will follow that priority.

**Improved community relations:** Gender diversity in the workforce is also correlated with improved community and user relations. In Ireland, Dublin Bus's women drivers had 38% fewer client complaints, on average, than the average male driver.<sup>25</sup> Women form a fourth of Lima's traffic agents and were found to be more effective in enforcing law and traffic management because of a reputation for being incorruptible<sup>26</sup>. When

<sup>20</sup> Giannelos et al., ["Business Case to Increase Female Employment in Transport,"](#) European Commission, 2018, 77.

<sup>21</sup> Inka Schomer and Alicia Hammond, [Stepping Up Women's STEM Careers in Infrastructure: An Overview of Promising Approaches,](#) ESMAP Paper. Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2020,14.

<sup>22</sup> Giannelos et al., ["Business Case to Increase Female Employment in Transport,"](#) European Commission, 2018, 77.

<sup>23</sup> Giannelos et al., ["Business Case to Increase Female Employment in Transport,"](#) European Commission, 2018, 77.

<sup>24</sup> Women in Mining Canada, [Welcoming Women: An Action Plan for Canada's Mining Employers,](#) Toronto: WIM Canada, 2016, 7.

<sup>25</sup> Giannelos et al., ["Business Case to Increase Female Employment in Transport,"](#) European Commission, 2018, 77.

<sup>26</sup> Heather Allen, [Approaches for Gender-Responsive Urban Mobility.](#) GIZ. 2018.



conducting community consultations and engagement activities (for instance, where major infrastructure works are being built, where communities are being resettled, or where compensation needs to be discussed), a gender-diverse community engagement team gives companies a greater ability to internalize and respond to community concerns, which can lead to more gender-sensitive community engagement programs.

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## Reasons for Lack of Female Representation in the Infrastructure and Cities Sectors

Given all of the advantages gender diversity brings to the workforce as outlined above, why are women still underrepresented in the infrastructure and cities sectors?

### BOX 1A | Connecting with Women in Brazil

In Brazil, IFC has invested in Desenvolve SP to support increasing household linkages to sewage treatment systems. However, Desenvolve found a particular challenge in convincing female-headed households to allow local construction, given the lack of related jobs or income-earning opportunities for women connected with the work. To create buy-in, as well as increase opportunities for women, sewage treatment companies (WESCOs) deliberately hired local women to help convince their communities about the need for the work and to connect their houses to the new sewage system. This creates improved communication and trust between the communities and the WESCOs while also generating income for the women, which allows them to pay for the connection and sewage services.<sup>27</sup>

**Bias inside and outside the sector:** Many infrastructure sectors have traditionally been seen as ‘men’s work’ due to the physical labor required and scheduling (for instance, work in transport sectors often requires long periods of time away from home). Of course, the

<sup>27</sup> Internal IFC report.

more time that passes while these fields are dominated by men, the more entrenched the belief will become that they are exclusively male domains which are 'inappropriate' and unsafe for women. This view may be shared by women themselves, or by families and teachers, who can be influential in implicitly or explicitly guiding young women towards different careers. This can contribute to what is often termed the 'leaky pipeline,' the phenomenon where girls and boys perform similarly in math and sciences in primary and secondary school, yet girls' representation in STEM fields drops off in tertiary education.<sup>28</sup> Of course, as sectors change and become increasingly mechanized, many of the historical justifications for male-dominated sectors that were made on grounds of physical strength are increasingly baseless. For instance, in the Moscow Metro, part of the justification for a longstanding legal prohibition on women train drivers was that men had to do physical work switching tracks, which required significant physical strength. Track switching has long since been automated, but women were only legally allowed to become train drivers in early 2021.<sup>29</sup>

**Bias in recruitment:** Given longstanding male dominance in many infrastructure and urban sectors, the process of attracting and recruiting applicants can further contribute to ongoing bias in the sector. For instance, overreliance on educational, social, and sectoral networks of current, often male employees can lead to continuing bias in applicants and recruitment. Companies which develop recruitment materials featuring photographs of current (male) employees and use pronouns reflecting an implicit, unintentional bias towards male employees (male pronouns and terms like 'foreman,' for example) can discourage female applicants from even applying.

**Inhospitable workplaces:** Predominantly single-sex work environments can breed a culture of unconscious or overt sexism that can make it difficult, intimidating, or discouraging for employees or potential employees of the opposite sex to feel welcomed and perform productively.

**Sexism within the workforce:** Globally across industries, women earn less than men for the same jobs and typically earn fewer promotions during their careers than their male counterparts. This can make male-dominated sectors even less attractive to women.<sup>30</sup> The disparities can be caused by a number of factors, including differences in negotiation tactics and the fact that women are more likely to work part-time or to have taken time off for family commitments, which may result in their being viewed as less committed to careers or discriminated against as part-time workers.

<sup>28</sup> Inka Schomer and Alicia Hammond, [Stepping Up Women's STEM Careers in Infrastructure: An Overview of Promising Approaches](#), ESMAP Paper. Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2020, 2.

<sup>29</sup> Rachael Kennedy, ["Women can drive the Moscow Metro for the first time in years as Russia overturns job ban,"](#) Euronews.com, 2021.

<sup>30</sup> McKinsey and Lean In, [Women in the Workplace 2016](#), 2016, 3.

**Lack of mentors and female role models:** Male-dominated sectors with fewer women employees, especially at the top, may not have enough women mentors, role models, or gender-informed training to guide women seeking to rise in the sector.

**Lack of professional development opportunities for women:** With male-dominated workplaces and a lack of female senior managers, women may feel excluded from informal networking activities and from professional development opportunities. In addition, individual career counselling and career workshops may be (or appear to be) less accessible to women, especially when women lack the same social networks that men have, and in situations where women in the workplace are fewer in number.<sup>31</sup>

**Lack of support for flexible work arrangements and parental leave policies:** In communities where cultural expectations and/or legal or corporate regulations around parental leave assume that women are the primary caretakers, leave policies in traditionally male-dominated industries may not provide the flexibility that parents need. When most employees are male, policies may not be designed to support reentry and career progression for women who return after parental leave. Similarly, such environments may discourage men from taking advantage of flexible work arrangements.<sup>32</sup>

As sectors change and become increasingly mechanized, **many of the historical justifications for male-dominated sectors that were made on grounds of physical strength are baseless.**

**Inappropriate uniforms and ergonomics:** Lack of consideration of women as employees can actually make workplaces less safe for women and contribute to the perception that certain industries are not open to them. This lack of consideration can be manifested by ill-fitting, inappropriate, or unsafe uniforms, personal protective equipment (PPE), and other gear, such as overalls that do not accommodate pregnancy or equipment that is ergonomically challenging for women. In the UK, Transport for London (TfL) recognized that ill-fitting PPE was creating a workplace hazard for women working in its construction fields. TfL identified new suppliers who could provide PPE specifically tailored for women. Interestingly, for some of the most specific equipment needs (boots free from specific metal fixtures suitable for working on electrified tracks), there were only two suppliers—one had a name that some found offensive, and the other made boots with pink stitching and glitter laces. TfL was able to contract a supplier to make footwear specifically for it, footwear which fit women's feet without drawing on gender stereotypes.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Jonathan Dunlea et al., [“Developing Female Leaders: Addressing Gender Bias in Global Mobility.”](#) Melbourne: PwC 2015, 5.

<sup>32</sup> Melanie Sanders et al., [“The Power of Flexibility: A Key Enabler to Boost Gender Parity and Employee Engagement.”](#) Bain and Company, 2016.

<sup>33</sup> Transport for London, [“Personal Protective Equipment for Women,”](#) and [“TfL Reveals Its First Ever Women's Safety Clothing Range.”](#) 2015.

**BOX 1B | Maersk Reduces Turnover By Supporting New Parents**

Shipping giant Maersk implemented a policy for employees returning to work after parental leave that gives male and female onshore employees the opportunity to work 20% fewer hours at full pay within the first year of childbirth or adoption for up to six months after returning to work. As a result of this policy, its post-maternity retention rate rose from 85% to 100%, and turnover of female employees fell from 16% to 10%, between 2015 and 2017. In practical terms, this saved the company from replacing 54 employees each year over this period, which saved up to 270 monthly salaries per year.<sup>34</sup>

**Strategies to Address Gender Gaps**

Infrastructure companies and municipalities that want to narrow their gender gaps will need to take a multi-pronged approach to accomplish this goal. Below are several key strategies to keep in mind, along with the applicable tools that can help guide your company's approach.

- Assess the causes of gender inequalities in the workplace:** Without understanding constraints on gender equity, employers cannot make improvements. Gender assessments, to understand where the company is currently, are key for establishing a baseline and understanding constraints and bottlenecks. **TOOLS 1.3 and 1.4 (Gender Audit)** provides sample questions for understanding the current situation. A key means for employers to improve retention and the promotion of women in the workforce is to ask their employees about their experience. Women employees particularly, but men as well, are a company's most important resource for understanding constraints and barriers to, and opportunities for, women's retention and promotion. **TOOL 1.5 (Employee Scorecard)** outlines procedures for an employee scorecard, a process designed to encourage employees to outline concerns and come up with ideas for addressing issues. **TOOL 1.6 (Pay Gap Survey Guidance and ToR)** gives guidance and a terms of reference (ToR) to identify any pay inequities, and help address perceptions of unfairness. **TOOL 1.7 (Gender Diversity Board Assessment)** can help identify gender inequality issues in the board.
- Create an inclusive physical work environment:** Consider the physical infrastructure of the company's premises and workplace: what accommodations are made to ensure that both women and men can work safely and effectively? **TOOL 1.3 (Gender Audit)** includes questions for determining the safety and appropriateness of the physical work environment and equipment.

<sup>34</sup> Giannelos et al., "[Business Case to Increase Female Employment in Transport](#)," European Commission, 2018, 77.

- **Develop an organized gender equity strategy, including targets, monitoring, and accountability:** Progress on gender diversity requires frameworks for accountability, empowerment, and monitoring and evaluation. Are there strategies and policies in place that clarify expectations and outline how managers and staff will be held accountable for their individual and organizational behavior (recruitment, promotions, etc.)? Are expectations clear enough that managers can take proactive action in trying to ensure gender equality? Are there clear targets and monitoring systems to track progress and keep advancing? Is there someone responsible for moving the process forward and holding various teams accountable for progress? **TOOL 1.8 (Guidance and Sample Gender Policy)** and **TOOL 1.9 (Establish a Gender Equity Strategy)** provide insight on developing strategies and policies; **TOOL 1.10 (ToR for Gender Equity Champion)** gives guidance on how to appoint a point person for gender issues.

### BOX 1C | Gender Equity Policies Lead to Less Sick Leave in Valencia

The introduction of gender equality policies at the Port of Valencia led to a reduction in sick leave usage from 5.9% to 1.7%—a more than 70% decrease—over 8 years. This could mean saving as much as €2,240 per employee per year in terms of productivity, or €1.0 million for the company as a whole.<sup>35</sup>

- **Create a more inclusive, gender-supportive worksite culture:** To attract and retain female staff and reap the benefits of a diverse workforce, companies need to cultivate an organizational culture that is inclusive of both women and men. Creating a gender-inclusive work environment isn't just about policies to hire more women. It's also about creating an environment in which women and men alike recognize the benefits of gender diversity and of enacting policies that ensure gender-equitable promotion possibilities, foster women's leadership and career development, support flexible work arrangements, address and penalize sexual harassment or discrimination, and help employees to balance work and family commitments. **TOOL 1.11 (Develop Human Resources Policies and Programs to Support a Gender-Diverse Workforce)** helps companies to identify and address barriers to an inclusive workplace culture and create a more inclusive work environment. **TOOL 1.12 (Set Gender Recruitment Targets)** discusses setting targets, and **TOOL 1.13 (Checklist for Building a Gender-Diverse Board)** builds on **TOOL 1.7**, with concrete steps for improving representation of women on the board.

<sup>35</sup> Giannelos et al., "[Business Case to Increase Female Employment in Transport](#)," European Commission, 2018, 79.

- Support flexible work arrangements:** Flexible work policies should support full engagement in family life for both male and female employees. This includes creating opportunities for shorter shifts, reduced schedules, more home-based or office work, and job-sharing. It also includes establishing return policies for employees who have gone on parental leave and providing or supporting childcare resources. **TOOL 1.11 (Develop Human Resources Policies and Programs to Support a Gender-Diverse Workforce)** provides strategies for developing flexible work schedules and supporting work-life balance.
- Create structures to support and implement gender diversity and build staff capacity:** Alongside the development of the policies and programs to support gender diversity, companies need to build capacity and corporate structures to support implementation of gender initiatives. Where men dominate the leadership structure, men may also be the gatekeepers to the positions of power. This can mean that effective gender mainstreaming relies on leadership from the CEO and the entire management cadre. **TOOL 1.14 (Checklist for Senior Leadership to Demonstrate Commitment)** provides guidance on how senior managers can support gender diversity. Establishing a staff task force on gender (**TOOL 1.15: Creation of a Gender Task Force and ToR**) to support the gender equity champion can help create a two-way information flow between staff and the gender champion and management and help disseminate information on gender initiatives, as well as creating an opportunity to hear and address concerns.

The COVID-19 pandemic made many workplaces explore opportunities to go virtual, but even though this flexibility can provide benefits, evidence shows that working from home is particularly hard on women and mothers. **TOOL 1.16 (Supporting Gender Equity in Virtual Workplaces)** provides guidance to HR and managers on how to address some of these challenges and support gender equity in virtual workplaces. **TOOL 1.17 (Reducing Implicit Bias in the Workplace)** discusses how to reduce implicit bias in the workplace.
- Revise recruitment policy materials to target women and men:** In male-dominated industries, recruitment campaigns often feature men as employees or male-centric descriptions of the job, which may send implicit messages that discourage women applicants. If you want to encourage diverse applicants, you will need to work harder to explicitly communicate that there are opportunities for all. Print or media advertisements should feature inclusive imagery and voices—for example, showing both women and men in leadership positions and in non-traditional roles. Of note, job descriptions that use inclusive language,

If you want to encourage diverse applicants, you will need to work harder to **explicitly communicate that there are opportunities for all.**

such as “foreman/forewoman” can be more appealing than gender-neutral language such as “foreperson”.<sup>36</sup> See **TOOL 1.18 (Guidelines for Building a Gender-Diverse Talent Pipeline and Workforce)** for insight on recruitment strategies to attract female applicants and **TOOL 1.19 (Job Description Template to Reduce Bias and Attract Diverse Applicants)** for guidance on key components to include—and those to avoid—in job descriptions to attract diverse job applicants.

In addition to hiring women, companies that want to support women’s advancement can develop **mentorship and sponsorship programs** to create more connection between management and more junior staff. **TOOL 1.20 (Sample Mentoring/Mentee Agreement)** includes a sample mentoring/mentee agreement to support development of mentorship programs.

- **Support career development opportunities for women and men: TOOL 1.21 (Guidelines for Developing Women’s Careers and Leadership)** provides strategies for career development activities that support more gender-equitable career development and create a more attractive workplace for potential candidates.

## Realizing Gender Diversity Gains Takes Effort and Commitment

Companies that recognize the potential benefits of creating equal opportunities for women and men, and take actions to target, recruit, and retain both women and men, stand to benefit from a wide range of performance, innovation, and profitability gains.

Among the factors that inhibit gender diversity in the infrastructure and municipal workforces, some are issues that can be addressed by changes in work schedules, equipment, and by proactively reaching out to attract more gender-diverse candidates. Others are based on gender bias and stereotypes. Approaches to tackle these various challenges will require both incremental changes in policies, accountability, schedules, and equipment, as well as training and changes in organizational culture.

Realizing these gains will require companies to examine and address their policies surrounding recruitment, performance management, work schedules, and compensation to draw women into management and the workforce and, importantly, to keep them there. Tool Suite 1 provides concrete guidance that will help you to better understand your company’s gender diversity challenges, ways to address the challenges, and guidance on how to monitor and sustain progress.

<sup>36</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission, *Women in Male-Dominated Industries: A Toolkit of Strategies*, Australian Government, 2013, 16.

## TOOL SUITE 1: Tools to Increase Gender Diversity and Inclusion in Power, Water, Transport, and Cities

This tool suite includes tools to help your company to recruit, attract, and retain women so that you can achieve better gender balance at all levels of your workforce, from field-based operational staff, up through and including senior-level management and the board. Tool Suite 1 features 23 tools aimed at reducing gender gaps on boards, in senior management, and in the workforce. Because of the complexity of the effort, the tool suite is organized in three sections.

The tools presented in this tool suite can be used individually to complement existing gender interventions, or in a combination of select tools as needed, to create a comprehensive gender program. Companies do not need to implement all of these tools, and they are not presented strictly chronologically, because companies may choose to implement activities in different orders.

TOOL	TARGET UNIT	GOAL
↓ <b>TOOL 1.1:</b> Road Map for Using Tools in Tool Suite 1	All Readers	Introduces how all the tools in this Tool Suite work together
↓ <b>ASSESS AND PREPARE:</b> The first section helps establish a baseline on company-wide gender diversity. The tools will lead you through assessing your company's ability to understand and act on gender gaps in your workforce, and put in place staff, structures, and plans to address these issues.		
↓ <b>TOOL 1.2:</b> Develop a Business Case for Gender Equity	Executive Board, Senior Management, Gender Champion	Builds support for gender-smart solutions through identifying their business benefits
↓ <b>TOOL 1.3:</b> Gender Audit: Introduction, Process, and Tools	Executive Board, Senior Management, and Human Resources	Provides a baseline on gender diversity in the workforce
↓ <b>TOOL 1.4:</b> Terms of Reference for Gender Audit	Executive Board, Senior Management, and Human Resources	Provides a pro forma terms of reference for hiring a firm to conduct a thorough gender audit
↓ <b>TOOL 1.5:</b> Employee Scorecard	Executive Board, Senior Management, and Human Resources	Outlines process for conducting participatory employee monitoring and goal setting around gender



↓ <b>TOOL 1.6:</b> Pay Gap Survey Guidance and Terms of Reference	Human Resources	Provides a pro forma terms of reference for conducting a study to identify any gender bias in compensation
↓ <b>TOOL 1.7:</b> Gender Diversity Board Assessment	Executive Board, Major Shareholders	Assesses board gender diversity

↓ **ADDRESS:** The next section focuses on tools to take specific practical actions to increase gender diversity, inclusion, and gender-equitable opportunities through recruitment, retention, and promotion.

↓ <b>TOOL 1.8:</b> Guidance and Sample Gender Policy	Executive Board, Senior Management, Human Resources	Provides guidance and a template for developing a corporate gender policy
↓ <b>TOOL 1.9:</b> Establish a Gender Equity Strategy	Executive Board, Senior Management, and Human Resources	Sets corporate goals and strategy for gender diversity and prioritizes tools and action on gender diversity
↓ <b>TOOL 1.10:</b> Terms of Reference for a Gender Equity Champion	Human Resources and Senior Management	Provides pro forma terms of reference for a nominated person to lead and coordinate company gender mainstreaming efforts
↓ <b>TOOL 1.11:</b> Develop Human Resources Policies and Programs to Support a Gender-Diverse Workforce	Human Resources	Provides guidance to develop policies that promote retention of both male and female employees
↓ <b>TOOL 1.12:</b> Set Gender Recruitment Targets	Human Resources and Senior Management	Provides guidance to develop a gender-equitable hiring process and increase gender diversity and inclusion in the workforce
↓ <b>TOOL 1.13:</b> Checklist for Building a Gender-Diverse Board	Executive Board	Provides a checklist on actions to maintain board gender diversity
↓ <b>TOOL 1.14:</b> Checklist for Senior Leadership to Demonstrate Commitment	Senior Management and Human Resources	Offers a checklist to assess commitment to creating a gender-equitable work-environment for both women and men across the company

↓ <b>TOOL 1.15:</b> Creation of a Gender Task Force and Terms of Reference for a Gender Task Force	Human Resources and Senior Management	Provides guidance and a template for creating a coordinating body on gender within the company
↓ <b>TOOL 1.16:</b> Supporting Gender Equity in Virtual Workplaces	Human Resources	Provides guidance on supporting parents, particularly during virtual work
↓ <b>TOOL 1.17:</b> Reducing Implicit Bias in the Workplace	Human Resources and Senior Management	Offers guidance on how to reduce implicit bias in the workplace
↓ <b>TOOL 1.18:</b> Guidelines for Building a Gender-Diverse Talent Pipeline and Workforce	Human Resources and Senior Management	Offers guidance on how to promote gender diversity in recruitment and retention
↓ <b>TOOL 1.19:</b> Job Description Template to Reduce Bias and Attract Diverse Applicants	Human Resources	Provides a template for HR departments to follow, with key components to include—and those to avoid—to attract diverse job applicants
↓ <b>TOOL 1.20:</b> Sample Mentoring/Mentee Agreement	Human Resources	Offers guidance and a draft agreement for establishing mentorship arrangements to support staff development
↓ <b>TOOL 1.21:</b> Developing Women’s Careers and Leadership	Training	Offers guidance on supporting gender equitable career development and mobility

↓ **MONITOR AND SUSTAIN:** The final section includes tools for monitoring progress and institutionalizing mechanisms to ensure continued improvement and sustained progress.

↓ <b>TOOL 1.22:</b> Monitoring and Accountability	Human Resources and Senior Management	Provides key points for monitoring progress
↓ <b>TOOL 1.23:</b> Monitor and Sustain Training Programs for Gender Equitable Career Development	Training	Offers guidance on monitoring and sustaining career development programs

## TOOL 1.1

### Roadmap for Using Tools in Tool Suite 1

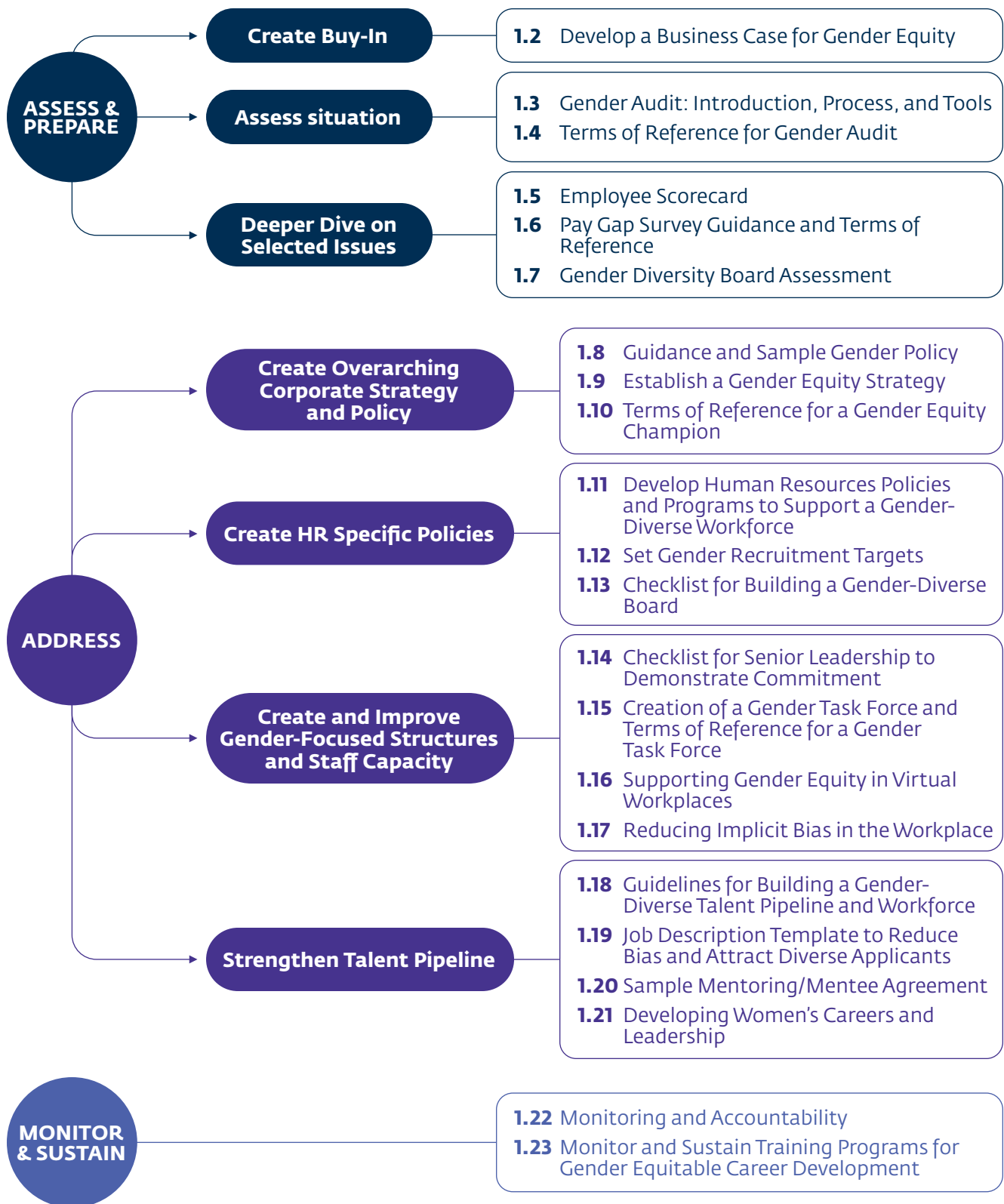
- » **GOAL:** Introduces how all the tools in this Tool Suite work together
- » **TARGET UNITS:** All readers

The tools in Tool Suite 1 all support efforts to increase representation of women in the workforce. **Companies do not need to use all of these tools in order to improve gender dynamics in their company.** This roadmap provides an overview of the tools and provides suggestions on how to combine them into effective approaches. While the number of tools may look daunting, even a small selection can provide valuable information and opportunities to change. In most cases, companies should start with what is feasible from a time and money perspective—doing something is better than doing nothing.

1. **ASSESS AND PREPARE:** The first stage of the gender journey in any company is to understand what gender issues exist in the company. The starting point can depend on the level of buy-in in your company.
  - If you need to educate and convince colleagues, including managers, on the importance of investing in a gender approach, developing a **Business Case (TOOL 1.2)** will provide structure for demonstrating the business benefits of investing in gender equity.
  - Once management is on board and willing to invest in a more in-depth understanding of the issues, a **Gender Audit (TOOLS 1.3 and 1.4)** can be conducted.
  - An **Employee Scorecard (TOOL 1.5)** is an excellent complement to an audit—it can be used to drill down and further clarify issues raised during an audit. A scorecard can also be used on its own, but it is better at identifying top priority issues and developing an action plan than giving a more nuanced understanding of gender issues throughout a department or organization.
  - A **Pay Gap Survey (TOOL 1.6)** can also complement an audit or scorecard (but has a much narrower focus, so is best used to complement a broader assessment).
  - A **Gender Diversity Board Assessment (TOOL 1.7)** can also complement a broader assessment to identify issues specifically at the board level.
2. **ADDRESS:** Once you have identified key gender issues, the next set of tools can be applied to proactively address these gender issues.
  - **Create an Overarching Gender Strategy and Policy:** To make sustainable progress on gender, an overarching strategy, bolstered by clear policies and dedicated manpower, is essential. **TOOL 1.8** provides a sample gender policy to help companies clearly state their approach to gender and ensure that all employers

and shareholders have a common understanding of expectations. A **Gender Equity Strategy (TOOL 1.9)** will help companies develop a strategic approach to addressing identified gender issues and meeting gender goals. **TOOL 1.10** is a terms of reference for a gender champion or focal point; having someone accountable and empowered to lead gender initiatives can greatly boost the chance of success.

- Ideally, companies should implement all three of these tools, although the breadth and depth of the strategy and policies can vary based on resources and capacity. Similarly, while not every company will have a full-time gender champion, every company should have someone who is accountable for progress.
  - **Create Specific HR Policies:** In addition to a general gender policy, a comprehensive gender approach also benefits from updating other gender policies (leave, flex work, recruitment policies, etc.). **TOOL 1.11** outlines how to make existing gender policies more gender inclusive and develop new gender-inclusive policies. **TOOL 1.12** provides guidance on setting gender-inclusive recruitment targets. **TOOL 1.13** outlines how to examine the board for gender equity and inclusiveness and address identified gender issues.
    - Any company committed to improving gender equity in the workplace should review policies and set at least some gender targets. How extensively policies are revised and how ambitious targets are can depend on company resources.
  - **Create and Improve Gender-Focused Structures and Staff Capacity:** Tools in this section provide guidance for changing the workplace environment with regards to gender. **TOOL 1.14** provides a checklist for senior management to demonstrate its commitment to gender equity by sending a message from the top that gender equity is important. A **Gender Task Force (TOOL 1.15)** can give HR and management feedback on how gender issues are perceived, as well as create a tool for disseminating information on policies and programs related to gender. **TOOL 1.16** can help companies to understand how remote work, an increasing reality for many companies, can affect women and men differently and how to make sure both are equally supported, while **TOOL 1.17** highlights ways to reduce implicit biases around gender.
  - **Strengthen the Talent Pipeline:** These tools provide guidance on attracting and retaining the best talent by ensuring that your company is attractive to both women and men. It includes guidelines for attracting and retaining talent (**TOOL 1.18**), a job description template to reduce bias and attract diverse applicants (**TOOL 1.19**), and guidelines for developing female talent particularly through mentorship (**TOOL 1.20**) and career development (**TOOL 1.21**).
3. **MONITOR AND SUSTAIN:** Finally, the last section of this Tool Suite focuses on monitoring, evaluating, and sustaining gains in gender equity in the workplace (**TOOLS 1.22 and 1.23**).



## ASSESS AND PREPARE: TOOLS 1.2–1.7

This section includes tools that will help develop a baseline understanding of where your company stands on gender equality and equity. It also offers guidance on creating a gender strategy based on this understanding. These steps are critical to determining your overall approach to improving gender balance in your workforce.

Tools 1.2–1.7 provide guidance on these critical first steps. Companies do not need to implement all of the tools completed here, but select from among them as appropriate. If a company is at the very beginning stages of the gender journey—for instance, if interest is limited to select individuals within the company or there is low general knowledge or interest—begin with developing a business case (**TOOL 1.2**) to build understanding and buy-in of why a gender approach could be beneficial. Once key managers support the process—and are willing to commit resources to going further—consider a gender audit (**TOOL 1.3** and **TOOL 1.4**) to identify challenges and opportunities to improve gender equality. A gender audit can be as broad or specific as required—our tool includes a wide range of questions to consider, but it can form the basis for understanding challenges and opportunities to gender equality. The gender audit provides a baseline, which can then lead to additional deeper-dive tools to delve further into specific issues or to incorporate different types of assessment—for instance, to foster a more open, accountable, and participatory conversation on gender, some companies may implement an employee scorecard (**TOOL 1.5**). Companies may choose to conduct a pay gap survey (**TOOL 1.6**) where employees have concerns that women and men are differently remunerated for the same work to create transparency around the topic. Some companies which come to this toolkit with gender programs already in place may start with the specific assessments, such as the scorecard, or a board gender diversity assessment (**TOOL 1.7**).

The gender business case tool can easily be conducted by company staff; however, the gender audit and deep-dive tools are often best conducted by impartial outside consultants who can bring independence and transparency to the process.

## TOOL 1.2

### Develop a Business Case for Gender Diversity

- » **GOAL:** Build support for gender-smart solutions
- » **TARGET UNITS:** HR, Gender Champion, or other relevant staff<sup>37</sup>

A strong business case for gender diversity—presenting a clear picture of how increasing gender diversity will improve business outcomes as well as support women employees and strengthen community relationships—is key to unlocking corporate support and resources. Gender diversity business cases are not static. An initial outline of the business case can help to unlock resources for gender-focused assessments, the results of which can then be used to refine and strengthen the business case. But even as a live document, a clear, evidence-based argument for how increased gender diversity and equality can make your company better is essential for getting buy-in from both senior management and more general staff.

The business case should build initially on any evidence available—both drawn from within the company, or if that is not yet available, from comparable companies. Highlighting known areas where gender could improve outcomes in your company or showing how other companies are benefitting from increased gender diversity can help to galvanize support for gender equality activities.

The business case can include the operational reasons that gender diversity will make the company more profitable, innovative, and better integrated into the community. It can draw on industry and legislative commitments or requirements, such as the Women’s Empowerment Principles,<sup>38</sup> corporate social responsibility commitments, and any applicable local and national laws and regulations.

The following steps are based on the IFC publication, *Investing in Women’s Employment: Good for Business, Good for Development*.<sup>39</sup>

Companies may develop business cases at different stages of engagement on gender equality. For companies at the earliest stages of trying to mobilize funding to begin work on gender equality, Step 1 will help to present the benefits that can come from gender diversity, customized for your specific corporate environment. For companies who have already conducted a gender audit (**TOOLS 1.3** and **1.4**) or other assessments (**TOOLS 1.5**, **1.6**, and **1.7**), these findings can provide valuable information on how gender inequities

<sup>37</sup> At the very beginning of a company’s gender journey, work like developing the gender business case may be undertaken by a wide variety of people, depending on who is spearheading these efforts within the company. There is no ‘correct’ person—the work should be initiated by whoever has recognized and is acting to address a company’s gender equity issues.

<sup>38</sup> The Women’s Empowerment Principles are a set of principles, developed by UN Women and the United Nations Global Compact, that provide guidance to the private sector on empowering women. More information on the WEP can be found [here](#).

<sup>39</sup> IFC. *Investing in Women’s Employment: Good for Business, Good for Development*. 49-50

are impacting the company and opportunities for improving gender equity. Steps 2 and 3 provide additional guidance on how to use this information to develop a business case.

## Step 1. Identify the drivers for gender diversity and equality.

What are the key drivers for improving gender diversity and equality in your company? Here are several common reasons for undertaking a gender diversity improvement initiative:

- **Performance and profitability opportunities:** A more gender-diverse workforce has been shown to increase innovation, productivity, and the condition of equipment and materials. Enacting policies that help to bring more women into the workforce and incentivize them to stay there (reducing turnover and building an experienced workforce) by providing equitable opportunities for advancement, benefits, capacity building, gender-responsive equipment and workplaces, and flexible work are essential to achieving a strong, diverse workforce.
- **Sustainability:** Has the company made commitments to diversity in the workforce or for local hiring? Increased gender diversity can help meet these commitments and improve company integration within the community.
- **Industry commitments:** Has the company signed on to industry or other initiatives with commitments on gender diversity, such as the Women's Empowerment Principles? Developing a gender diversity strategy and targets will help companies meet these commitments and improve their competitive ranking compared to other industry players.
- **Legislative requirements:** Do the laws in the host country require a certain level of gender diversity or local employment? A proactive gender diversity strategy can help companies stay on top of both required and voluntary commitments.
- **Comparability:** Presenting what other similar companies are doing to increase gender diversity and equality, especially where there is evidence of how these measures have caused or even been correlated with improved performance, can be effective in highlighting the importance of acting on gender equality.

## Step 2. Develop a business case.<sup>40</sup>

For companies that understand the general need for gender equity, but where gender champions are now proposing specific initiatives and need to catalyze support and resources, a more specific business case is required. The following steps outline how to develop an intervention-focused business case, by presenting how changes in specific gender metrics could impact core business outcomes.

<sup>40</sup> The information in Step 2 draws on IFC, Investing in Women's Employment, 49-58.



For some initiatives, showing a causal and specific relationship between a specific gender activity and business outcomes can be difficult, especially when other variables are in play, such as expanding or contracting markets or commodity prices, or changes in resources or the operating environment. It can be particularly difficult to make short-term attribution (for instance, that a change in senior management or expanding the number of female hires had an immediate effect on profit), or to demonstrate longer-term impacts (for instance, how a strengthened gender diversity policy impacts reputation). And yet, developing a strong business case is important both for building buy-in and for demonstrating the importance of making gender equity a core business principle rather than a standalone initiative.

Of note: Demonstrating the value of women's participation should not be about comparing men's and women's performance. Rather, it should focus on the benefits of gender equity and diversity—how creating equal opportunities for women and men can benefit the company.

To develop an effective business case focused around a specific intervention or suite of interventions, the following process is recommended:

- **Identify the intervention:** Based on the gender assessment, identify specific areas or initiatives to be considered. This could include, for instance, increasing the recruitment of women, improving workplace safety, or changes in family leave policies. The more specific the initiative being examined, the easier it will be to determine the potential impact of changed policies.
- **Develop a baseline:** For each initiative, develop a baseline—where the company is now—and determine how the business case will be presented. Options include a before-and-after approach looking at a change in performance over time or a with-and-without approach that looks at the performance of various business units that have adopted the proposed initiative compared to those that did not. If such initiatives have not yet been trialed within a company, comparable companies with similar experiences can also provide useful data.
  - Developing the baseline and collecting relevant data will require the buy-in of various business units. Depending on the intervention, this could include finance and HR, among others.
  - Determine how the initiative will be measured, using employment and business metrics. For instance, an initiative focused on increasing gender diversity in employment should feature employment metrics on the number of women and men employed in various job families and at various levels. Business metrics will be determined based on the company's core business objectives but should be tied to quantitative or qualitative indicators that demonstrate a change in its ability to meet key business targets. Part of this effort involves identifying the availability of relevant

information, such as gender disaggregation of jobs at various levels—or whether work to gather data is required.

- Identify relevant costs and benefits. Determine the anticipated costs of implementing an intervention compared to doing nothing, as well as the potential benefits it may bring. For instance, for a proposed intervention to provide on-site childcare, identify the costs of not implementing it, such as loss of productivity when staff need to care for their children, potential attrition as employees who need to care for children quit, and the cost of recruiting and training replacement staff. Compare these implications to the costs of implementing the initiative, such as the cost of facilities and childcare staff, as well as the benefits of the proposed intervention, including improved productivity, increased employee satisfaction, and reduced turnover.

*“Companies with the best record of promoting women to high positions enjoy 18–69% more profitability.”*

—ROY ADLER, “Women in the Executive Suite Correlate to High Profits”

- **Develop an evaluation methodology and conduct analysis:** Determine how costs and benefits will be measured. Options include using currently available data and conducting staff surveys or interviews, among others.
- **Compare costs and benefits:** Once costs and benefits have been identified, collected, and quantified, determine the return on investment of a particular initiative:

$$\frac{\text{Benefits} - \text{Costs}}{\text{Costs}} \times 100 = \text{Return on Investment}$$

A positive—or even neutral—return on investment can be a powerful tool in negotiating for gender diversity and equality initiatives.

- **Compile the business case:** A presentation-ready business case should include discussion of the proposed intervention and its objectives, any assumptions or estimates for the proposed program, discussion of methodology, ROI analysis, and any case studies or examples to support the case for proposed interventions. Also include recommendations on ways to move forward, whether additional assessments might be needed, and implementation options.

### Step 3: Use the business case to mobilize support.

Once the business case has been developed, it should be shared and used to gain management and stakeholder commitment and buy-in for the next steps in the process.

- **Mobilize management support:** Support from the CEO and the senior management team is essential for a successful gender diversity strategy. They will set the tone for how the strategy is received and implemented. It is important that they share their commitment publicly. They must send the message to all staff that gender diversity is both the right thing and the smart thing to do for the business. They also must let everyone know that managers and all staff will be held accountable for gains in gender diversity. In addition, the management team has to back up this verbal commitment with tangible engagement in the gender diversification process.
- **Communicate strategy to stakeholders:** Ultimately, CEOs and executive boards answer to their shareholders. The support of shareholders and other stakeholders (such as the community and local unions) is therefore critical to the success of gender diversity initiatives. Once the business case for gender diversity has been developed, the process of communicating with stakeholders can begin. News about upcoming activities such as the gender audit and progress on the gender diversity strategy and targets will keep them informed. Be sure to include tie-ins to ways these initiatives will help the company meet its performance, profit, legislative, and industry objectives.

## TOOL 1.3

### Gender Audit: Introduction, Process, and Tools

- » **GOAL:** To help companies conduct an initial benchmarking exercise to identify institutional strengths and weaknesses with regards to gender equity
- » **TARGET UNITS:** HR and Senior Management and/or designated Gender Champion

#### What is a Gender Audit?

A gender audit is a broad review of how a company has integrated gender equity into policies, activities, capacity-building, organizational culture, and workplace. Gender audits can help companies better understand where they currently stand on all of these issues, as well as to identify gaps and opportunities. Depending on the company's objectives, metrics can include:

- Gender diversity among staff
- Potential for women and men to be promoted
- Retention of both male and female staff
- Suitability of the physical work environment for women and men
- Extent to which gender diversity is a demonstrated priority in recruitment
- Extent to which women and men are equitably consulted in community engagement

Gender audits are highly customizable, meaning that all companies can use this audit tool to establish a baseline, identify gaps, and suggest potential measures for improvement on gender diversity and inclusiveness. Gender audits can be conducted for a whole organization or for particular business units. They are essential for starting or improving on gender diversity efforts. For companies conducting their first gender audit and developing their baseline, or starting point, for gender performance, a gender audit of the whole company is recommended. It can be repeated periodically, with more frequent repetition in specific business units as necessary.

#### Why Conduct a Gender Audit?

Gender audits are useful to gain a thorough understanding of your gender diversity challenges, develop a strategy for action, and prioritize key interventions.

Baseline audits—and follow-up monitoring (see [TOOL 1.22](#) for more on monitoring)—are important for a number of reasons:

1. An initial baseline and stock-taking will help you identify areas of focus for your gender-sensitizing efforts: Where are the most noticeable gaps? Where is the most

work required? Are there areas where gender performance is already strong? Where is there still progress to be made?

2. Baseline and follow-up audits will help you track the impact of policies and programs. This information will help you identify areas where you should aim to set targets and invest resources, such as activities to boost recruitment and retention of women employees. In addition, this data will ultimately help companies to evaluate whether activities and initiatives are bringing them closer to their goals or if modification is needed. Data from follow-up audits can help you to see the impact of gender-equity programs on broader business metrics—for instance, does increased gender equity correlate with to any positive changes in productivity or reduction in HR issues?
3. Follow-up audits, in particular, can help determine how employees feel about programs. Such audits offer insights on whether programs are having the desired effect of creating a more inclusive workforce. They also provide an indication of how well employees are responding to efforts to change the corporate culture.
4. Surveys and audits can help employees feel engaged in the corporate change process, feel that their concerns and opinions are being heard, and feel invested in affecting change.<sup>41</sup>

## Who Conducts a Gender Audit?

Ideally, gender audits should be done by external assessors, who can provide an independent perspective on progress towards gender equity. The EDGE gender audit and certification is the leading global independent gender audit, which includes a baseline audit, benchmarking, and certification.<sup>42</sup> Where an independent audit is not possible, internal audits can be conducted with the understanding that assessors need to be given as much independence as needed. Internal assessors also need to be given sufficient time away from regular duties to conduct a comprehensive audit, and they should report directly to senior management on the outcomes.

## When Should a Gender Audit be Conducted?

A discussion at the board and/or senior management level to identify key gender diversity objectives and desired changes is the first step in developing a gender audit. By identifying key objectives such as “gender diversity in the workforce,” “inclusive work environment,” “safe and inclusive physical work environment,” the audit can then identify progress, opportunities, and bottlenecks.

<sup>41</sup> IFC, *SheWorks: Putting Gender Smart Commitments into Practice*, 85.

<sup>42</sup> More information on the EDGE Certification is available [here](#).

With these recommendations, audits can become a first step toward developing a gender diversity strategy. In addition, they can serve as a monitoring and sustainability tool by repeating them periodically and focusing on particular priority areas as identified in the gender diversity strategy.

Audits should be the first step in a larger gender diversity process, in which the corporate board and senior management commit to following through on audit recommendations. Be sure to include a budget for follow-up activities based on audit recommendations, as well as monitoring and review, to assess progress.

Audits should be well publicized internally. They should be communicated as an opportunity to understand challenges and bottlenecks and create improvements towards business outcomes that will benefit the whole company. Results and planned follow-up activities and changes should be communicated to all staff.

### What Types of Data are Collected in a Gender Audit?

Gender audits rely on data sources such as staff surveys, focus groups, and key informant interviews with staff; reviews of corporate policies/manuals; quantitative analysis of metrics around recruitment, retention, and promotion; stakeholder reports and other communications; performance evaluations; and available gender compliance reports (for instance, Australia's Workplace Gender Equality Agency compliance reports). Audits can and should be conducted at the corporate level as well as at the site level, although the scope can be modified depending on available resources.

Gender audits also can include a participatory design phase, such as gathering information from staff to identify an initial set of key issues which can then be more specifically explored through the audit. This enables staff to identify issues of greatest concern to them before the survey is rolled out more widely for data gathering across the entire organization.

The gender audit tool provided here features a non-exhaustive list of questions that might be included in a company gender audit. It includes yes/no questions, open-ended questions, and questions that can be ranked on a scale from 1–5. It can be deployed by way of interviews, surveys, or focus groups. And it can be customized depending on your company's unique circumstances.

This list is a good place to start, although, as noted above, you should consider a participatory pilot process to solicit issues of key importance to employees, which could then be included as part of your final gender audit.

Note that the tool's focus is on how the company prioritizes and implements gender diversity. It does not measure how well gender is integrated into supply chain policies or community engagement activities. These issues are addressed specifically in **TOOL SUITES 2 and 3**.

## Gender Audit in Three Steps<sup>43</sup>

A gender audit typically requires several key steps, summarized here.

### 1. Organizational buy-in and readiness.

As the first step in developing and implementing a gender strategy, gender audits require a degree of internal political will to commit resources and communicate the priority to the company. If a gender champion has already been recruited, this is the person who should spearhead efforts and develop momentum for a gender diversification initiative. If the gender champion has not yet been recruited (see [TOOL 1.10: Terms of Reference for Gender Equity Champion](#) for more on gender champions), committed senior staff must bring senior management on board to recognize the importance and potential value of improving gender balance even before the initial audit has been conducted. In many companies, where a gender champion is not yet in place, HR is the organizational ‘home’ for a gender audit.

### 2. Conduct staff survey and organizational audit.

Once a gender audit has been initiated, the auditors will conduct various layers of staff surveys, likely including written surveys, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews. Duration and scope will be determined by the company size, geographic scope, and the breadth of the audit agreed upon with the gender auditors. A phased approach is recommended, starting with a participatory process in which staff can provide input on gender equity issues and indicators of greatest importance to them, which can then be explored through broader data collection.

### 3. Follow-up with concrete action plan.

A key aspect of the gender audit is how it will be used. How will findings be translated into recommendations and action? How will actions be implemented? How will there be accountability for action? Guidance on how to interpret gender audit results and translate them into action are provided in the coming pages.

<sup>43</sup> Steps adapted from Jeannie Harvey and Patricia Morris, *The Gender Audit Handbook*, Washington, DC: InterAction, 2010.

**TABLE 1A | Sample Questions to be Included in a Gender Audit**

The majority of these questions can be posed to a company's human resources team (with the exception of section 9 on health and safety, which may need to be posed to specific health and safety teams.)

**1. CORPORATE GENDER PRIORITIES:**

These questions will help determine the extent to which the company already proactively supports gender equality. Is there a policy framework in place which needs to be supported in implementation, or are there not yet even any formal corporate statements about gender equality? While individual ad hoc gender initiatives can be helpful for specific employees, creating systemic and sustainable change requires a unified approach that demonstrates leadership commitment. Understanding where a company stands in terms of a policy framework and corporate leadership is important for determining where to start with gender interventions.

- » Is there a gender equity strategy—i.e., a corporate strategy including goals for gender equity and a plan for how to achieve these goals? Such a strategy should include budget and accountability structures.
- » Is there a gender equity and/or diversity policy (i.e., a policy that outlines how the gender equity strategy will be operationalized)?
- » Does the gender equity policy include explicit prohibition of discrimination based on gender in hiring, salary and benefits, promotion, discipline and termination, layoffs, or retirement benefits? (Policies should prohibit discrimination based on race, religion, sex, ancestry, age, marital status, sexual orientation, and gender identity/expression)
- » If there is such a policy, does it apply to HQ as well as to country/field offices?
  - Is implementation/enforcement of this policy monitored at the HQ level?
  - Is implementation/enforcement of this policy monitored at the country and site level?
- » Does the company mandate that gender be a consideration in policy/project/program development and monitoring for all projects/programs? (For instance, is it mandated that gender be considered in new HR policies and in community engagement activities such as social impact assessments or consultations, supply chain development activities, and other relevant documents?)
- » Are staff informed about the gender strategy and/or polic(ies)? What opportunities do staff have to learn about corporate gender priorities?



## Gender Focal Points

- » Is there a gender focal point or focal point team at the corporate level? Does the focal point have a clear terms of reference (ToR) and the resources to support them to fulfill this ToR?
- » Where there are multiple job sites, is there a gender focal point at each site?

## Trainings on Gender

- » Have any staff ever taken an implicit bias/associations test? If not, have staff take the test and record scores (for instance, Harvard Implicit Associations Test).

## 2. DATA COLLECTION AND MONITORING:

The following questions will help determine whether the company has the necessary tools for gathering gender data: for instance, what information is currently available about men's and women's representation in applicants, new hires, and promotions? Is this sort of information collected, and if so, is it systematic? Are there targets established? This data is important for determining how well equipped a company is to implement the policies explored above.

- » Is there an ombudsperson or other conflict resolution service, and is it designed in a way that is accessible and safe for both women and men?
- » Does your company collect gender-disaggregated data in terms of hiring, promotion, retention, and turnover data? If not, why not? Are there technological issues that may hinder this kind of data gathering? This data would include, for instance, male/female ratios in applicants, shortlists, new hires, promotions and upgrades, and resignations/dismissals (including circumstances such as tracking retention in the years after parental leave).
- » Is the data above collected systematically and routinely?
- » Have targets been set and communicated for gender diversity in recruitment and staffing at all levels?
- » Do HR staff feel that they have the knowledge, expertise, and resources on gender and diversity to be able to implement these targets? If not, are staff able to identify gaps and training needs?
- » Is there an organization-wide monitoring and evaluation system for measuring progress against gender targets?
- » Has a pay gap assessment been conducted across the organization, including all offices?
  - If yes, what actions have been taken to address any identified gaps?

- » Is progress on gender equity measured in key performance indicators (KPIs):
  - At the board level?
  - In senior management?
  - Among staff with management authority?
- » Is there any baseline gender training required for all staff? If so, what percentage of staff have completed it? Is it incorporated into onboarding?
- » Is there a leadership development program and/or a mentorship or sponsorship program focused on developing female leaders and managers?

### 3. RECRUITMENT PRACTICES:

The following questions, directed to the human resources department, will help identify how to make hiring practices more supportive for a variety of applicants. Infrastructure sectors often struggle with lack of female applicants for a variety of reasons, which can include the fact that women may feel that traditionally male-dominated sectors are not welcoming to women applicants or employees. The questions below can help determine the extent to which recruitment processes or materials may be inadvertently discouraging women applicants and lead to suggestions to actively encourage more diverse applicants.

- » In job advertisements, how often are female images and/or voices used compared to male images?
- » How often do job advertisements use language that specifically encourages female applicants?
- » Do job descriptions describe required skills, rather than a type of person to fill vacancies?
- » Do you ask interview questions related to marriage or family status of applicants?
- » Have you briefed recruitment partners on the need to provide gender balanced long-lists?
- » Do you advertise roles as open to flexible work patterns?
- » Do you have diverse interview panels/interviewers?
- » Do you include unconscious bias in your interview training?
- » Are you open to candidates from non-traditional industries/sectors?

#### TIPS:

- *For any given position, monitor progress of female candidates at each stage of selection process.*
- *Conduct focus groups with women on the recruitment process: What made them apply to the company? Did they perceive gender bias in the recruitment process? What would have made the process more attractive for female candidates?*

## 4. LEADERSHIP AND STAFF COMPOSITION:

These questions aim to identify the extent to which there is gender diversity and equity in the board, management, and general staff of the company to identify bottlenecks and opportunities to create targeted gender equity strategies.

### Board Composition

- » What is the ratio of women to men on the board?
- » What is the ratio of women to men in executive positions on the board?
- » How long have current board members been in their positions?  
*TIP: Map board tenures in relation to gender.*
- » Is there a policy for gender diversity on the board?

### Management

- » What is the ratio of female to male managers?
- » How are managers held accountable for attention to gender diversity in:
  - Recruitment?
  - Promotions?
- » Do incentives exist for managers to support gender diversity?
  - What type of incentives?
- » Have senior staff received gender diversity training?

### General Staff

- » For each job family, what is the ratio of male and female employees?  
*TIP: Disaggregate between HQ, country, field offices.*
- » For each job family, what is the ratio of pay between women and men in equivalent positions?  
*TIP: Disaggregate between HQ, country, field offices.*
- » What is the percentage of female managers compared to male managers?  
*TIP: Disaggregate between HQ, country, field offices.*
- » What is the percentage of profit and loss-related positions held by women compared to men?  
*TIP: Disaggregate between HQ, country, field offices.*
- » Have promotions been analyzed for gender trends, compared to candidates potentially up for promotion?
- » How do you use succession planning to improve gender diversity in more senior roles—for example, ensuring a gender-diverse talent pipeline is being developed?

- » Within the company, is the ratio of women to men in job families above or below industry averages?
- » What is the number and rate of turnover of employees by gender and age per year?  
*TIP: Disaggregate by HQ, country, and field offices.*

## 5. FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE ACCOMODATIONS:

These questions identify the extent to which the company supports employees who are parents—of both sexes—in balancing the demands of work and family. They also explore whether lack of support may create specific challenges, especially for mothers.

- » Is there a parental leave policy? Does it apply to both parents?
- » What percentage of male and female employees return from parental leave?
- » What support is available to assist women and men who are re-integrating into the workplace after parental leave?
- » What percentage of male employees and female employees receive promotions after parental leave?
- » Are there flex-work options, and are they equally available to men and to women?
- » Have flex-work options been communicated to all staff?
- » What percentage of male employees make use of flex-work compared to female employees?
- » Does health insurance include coverage for pre- and perinatal care, fertility treatment, and contraception (including emergency contraception)?
- » Are policies in place to ensure the safety of pregnant employees?
- » Do these policies consider how to ensure appropriate work (i.e., of an equivalent grade, with equivalent career prospects) for pregnant employees during pregnancy?

## 6. SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE POLICIES:

To what extent does the company proactively try to prevent and address sexual harassment and gender-based violence? Does the company have a clearly communicated behavioral expectation that all employees are accountable for knowing and upholding? How are survivors of sexual harassment or violence supported, and how are perpetrators sanctioned?

- » Is there a specific gender-based violence policy, including a clear set of steps for employers to take when notified of gender-based violence issues?
- » Is there a Respectful Workplace (or similar) Code of Conduct, in which employees sign and pledge to follow certain behaviors in the workplace?

- » Is there a confidential complaints mechanism for sexual harassment and gender-based violence? Does this require reporting to one's manager or to an alternate focal point? (Many sexual harassment complaints mechanisms require reporting to a manager, but when the manager is the cause of the complaint, such mechanisms can make it harder for staff to report.)

*TIP: Conduct focus group discussions to determine employees' level of comfort with using sexual harassment/gender-based violence complaints mechanisms and their degree of satisfaction with how these issues are resolved.*

- » Are HR staff and anyone else receiving harassment and/or gender-based violence complaints and concerns specifically trained in responding to sexual assault allegations, and are they able to provide referrals to locally available support services?
- » What are the most common sanctions for employees who have committed sexual harassment or gender-based violence?
- » Are staff given training on expected behaviors and the definitions of sexual harassment and gender-based violence?
- » What support is offered for survivors of sexual harassment/gender-based violence?

## 7. WORKPLACE/ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE:

To what extent does the workplace culture support and foster gender diversity and equitable advancement for women and men?

- » Have surveys on male and female employee perceptions of organizational culture ever been conducted?
- » Do women and men feel that they have equal opportunities for advancement?
- » Do women and men feel that they are equally supported in taking/returning from parental leave?
- » Do women and men feel that they are supported in utilizing flex-work?
- » Is there an employee voice/grievance mechanism? If so, are both women and men involved?
- » Do women and men feel that they have equal voice in employee voice/grievance mechanisms and that men's and women's concerns are given equal weight?

## 8. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:

To what extent is the company doing all that it can to support and foster gender equitable leadership?

- » Where there are mentorship programs, are these programs specifically targeting women to connect junior women with more senior staff?

- » Are there leadership development programs that specifically target both women and men?
- » Is there a women's network within the company?
- » Does the company participate in any industry mentorship or networking programs to promote women's professional development in the sector?

## 9. HEALTH AND SAFETY:

These questions identify the extent to which health and safety measures recognize men's and women's different needs and vulnerabilities.

- » Has a gender-sensitive health risk assessment been conducted for all employees, including in all positions (for instance, including offices as well as vehicles/trains/boats and any field operations)?
- » Have results of health assessments been analyzed and used to modify facilities and operations?
- » Are there on-site health facilities and if so, is there at least one female staff member?
- » For any safety audits regularly conducted, are women and men given equal opportunity to define and identify health and safety concerns?
- » Does the department responsible for health and safety employ both women and men?
- » If there are committees that deal with health and safety, are women and men represented on all of them?
- » When women's health or safety issues are raised by the safety committee, are they heard respectfully and taken seriously?
- » Do you feel that senior management understands men's and women's different health and safety concerns?
- » If you have received health and safety training, did it include a discussion of the different issues facing women and men?
- » Do the following policies/assessments include recognition of gender differences?
  - Health and safety assessment?
  - Health and safety policy?
  - Health and safety implementation plan?
  - Health and safety training plan?
  - Sexual harassment policy?
  - Bullying policy?
  - Diversity policy?
  - Equal opportunity policy?

## Physical Gender Audit

Companies can conduct an additional physical inspection to complement their gender assessment. This inspection assesses the extent to which infrastructure is appropriate, safe, and adapted for both male and female employees. Such considerations are important for the comfort of both women and men on staff. In addition, they are part of addressing operational health and safety for a changing workforce. Safety is a key consideration on all work sites, and ensuring that safety applies equally for all staff is critical. These assessments should be conducted across all operational sites, as well as headquarters.

As with the rest of the gender assessment, companies are advised to include a participatory design phase before the assessment to allow employees to raise their own concerns and metrics for a gender-inclusive workplace. With physical risks, this is equally important: employees may raise aspects of risk that assessors or employers might not have identified previously. They also might have innovative ideas on ways to mitigate these risks.

**TABLE 1B | Sample Questions to be Included in a Physical Gender Audit**

### OPERATIONAL FACILITIES<sup>44</sup>

- » In locations where uniforms are required, are there options for two-piece uniforms for women, or other accommodations that might be required to make women's uniforms appropriate but still similar to men's?
- » Are maternity uniforms available?
- » Where required, are single sex changing and shower facilities available?
  - If gender-segregated facilities are available, do they comply with international standards (for instance, one shower per six women)?
  - Do facilities include shower barricades?
  - Do toilets, changing rooms, and shower facilities include locks on the doors?
  - Do they include sanitary bins for women?<sup>45</sup>
- » Are separate toilets available and accessible for women and men? If there are gender-neutral restrooms, do they provide sufficient privacy for the comfort of all users, including locks on the doors?
  - Do women's toilets or gender-neutral restrooms have facilities for the disposal of sanitary waste?

<sup>44</sup> IFC and Lonmin, [Women in Mining: A Guide to Integrating Women into the Workforce](#), Washington, DC: IFC, 2009, 21.

<sup>45</sup> IFC and Lonmin, [Women in Mining: A Guide to Integrating Women into the Workforce](#), 21.

- » Are there lactation rooms and refrigerators?

*TIP: Disaggregate by HQ, country, and field offices.*

- » Has an ergonomic assessment been conducted to ensure that equipment is appropriate and safe for female staff?

*TIP: If no surveys have been done, conduct a survey and focus groups with female staff by job family to identify safety and comfort issues with equipment or facilities and adjustments to ensure safe, appropriate, and comfortable workplaces and operations.*

## OPERATIONAL RISKS

- » Do health and safety risk assessments include the following considerations?
  - Exposure to radiation, certain chemicals, and hazardous gases can impact health outcomes for women and cause miscarriage or severe developmental conditions in fetuses.
  - Exposure to high noise levels has been associated with pre-term labor, low birth weight, and some congenital anomalies in some studies.<sup>46</sup>
  - Prolonged exposure to high temperatures can be associated with developmental abnormalities in babies, miscarriage, or fetal distress.
  - Exposure to heavy equipment vibrations can damage a women's ability to conceive and may be associated with miscarriage and preterm delivery.<sup>47</sup>
  - Work environments that are designed for the male body may be ergonomically unfit for many women.
  - Ill-fitting uniforms can create an unsafe work environment for women, leading to health and safety risks.
  - Unsafe travel to and from the worksite might be an even greater concern for women. Of particular concern is the potential for sexual harassment and gender-based violence.
- » Are there programs to enable transition to equivalent-grade positions for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers so they can avoid hazards such as those listed above?

## WORKSITE ACCOMODATION (as necessary)

- » Are accommodations segregated by gender?
- » Is there sufficient lighting to ensure staff feel safe going to and from accommodation?
- » Are there locks on all bedrooms/personal rooms?

<sup>46</sup> Committee on Environmental Health, "[Noise: A Hazard for the Fetus and Newborn.](#)" Pediatrics, Volume 100 Issue 4, October 1997.

<sup>47</sup> Sandra C. Dorman and Céline Boudreau-Larivière, [Guide to Healthy Pregnancies in the Mining Workplace](#), Sudbury: Laurentian University, 2012, 6.



## FEMALE PERSONNEL

- » Are there women security personnel?

## TRANSPORTATION

- » Does the company sponsor secure transport for community-based employees?

## How to Use the Results of a Gender Audit

The gender assessment should return a wealth of information that can be used to identify potential areas for strengthening and improvement, in turn enhancing performance and profit. Table 1C outlines some of the ways to use the results of the gender assessment in designing potential interventions.

Results from the gender assessment should be cross-referenced against other corporate metrics to understand the impact of gender equity initiatives on other corporate goals. For instance, does an increase in gender equity in the workforce lead to changes in productivity? Do increased family-friendly work policies lead to decreased turnover? Does ensuring that physical work environments are appropriate for women reduce injuries in the workplace?

**TABLE 1C | Turning Gender Audit Results into Action**

AUDIT AREA	POTENTIAL FINDING	POTENTIAL INTERVENTION
Corporate gender priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Lack of coordinated action/ understanding on gender across the organization, which may lead to ad hoc gender mainstreaming, inability to maximize benefits of gender mainstreaming and diversity</li> <li>» Lack of uniformity in action/ understanding on gender between HQ and field offices, which may create unequal treatment of women and men across the organization, resulting in lack of benefits from gender diversity and creation of different employment classes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop business case for gender equity and diversity to highlight importance of comprehensive, cohesive strategy and target interventions accordingly (<b>TOOL 1.2</b>)</li> <li>• Develop a gender strategy (<b>TOOL 1.9</b>)</li> <li>• Appoint gender equity champion (<b>TOOL 1.10</b>)</li> <li>• Establish a gender task force (<b>TOOL 1.15</b>)</li> </ul>

AUDIT AREA	POTENTIAL FINDING	POTENTIAL INTERVENTION
Human resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Lack of gender training, meaning an inability to identify implicit gender bias in HR policies, recruitment, and other areas. This may lead to biased working conditions and failure to maximize benefits of gender diversity and equity in the workforce</li> <li>» Lack of gender-trained ombudsperson, meaning that the company could be unaware of gender-related issues in the workplace</li> <li>» Lack of gender-disaggregated data or pay gap analysis, making it more difficult to address and improve retention, promotion, productivity, and job satisfaction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop HR policies and programs to support gender-diverse workforce (<b>TOOL 1.11</b>)</li> <li>• Conduct a pay gap analysis (<b>TOOL 1.6</b>)</li> <li>• Conduct training on how to reduce implicit bias in the workplace. (<b>TOOL 1.17</b>)</li> <li>• Develop human resources policies and programs to support gender equality (<b>TOOL 1.11</b>)</li> <li>• Set gender recruitment targets (<b>TOOL 1.12</b>)</li> <li>• Support gender equity in virtual work (<b>TOOL 1.16</b>)</li> </ul>
Recruitment practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Implicit bias in outreach may reduce diversity of candidates who apply</li> <li>» Lack of awareness that gender bias may be woven into recruitment materials and could deter female candidates from applying</li> <li>» Lack of gender diversity on interview panels may create obstacles for diverse hiring</li> <li>» Implicit bias in hiring criteria (for instance, requiring a certain number of years of experience) may inadvertently disadvantage women</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and revise recruitment materials and procedures to attract a more gender-diverse candidate pool through human resources policies and programs (<b>TOOL 1.11</b>) and guidelines for building a gender-diverse talent pipeline and workforce (<b>TOOL 1.18</b>)</li> </ul>

AUDIT AREA	POTENTIAL FINDING	POTENTIAL INTERVENTION
Gender-sensitive HR policies and practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Lack of family-friendly policies such as maternal health coverage, parental leave, and on-site childcare or a perception that taking advantage of such policies is discouraged, leading some employees to conclude that the workplace might not be conducive to parental leave. In turn, this could increase turnover, reduce retention, or put parents at a disadvantage in professional development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and revise HR policies (<b>TOOLS 1.11, 1.12</b>)</li> <li>• Conduct cost/benefit analysis for family-friendly workplace policies</li> <li>• Conduct training with managers on flex work and benefits of family-friendly workplace policies</li> </ul>
Sexual harassment and gender-based violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Lack of written policy on sexual harassment and gender-based violence, meaning a lack of established expectations, consequences, and accountability for upholding behavioral standards</li> <li>» Non-existent or unviable processes and/or lack of ombudsperson for reporting on sexual harassment and gender-based violence, meaning lack of information on incidence and costs of gender-based violence and sexual harassment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop written gender-based violence and sexual harassment policy (<b>TOOL 4.12</b>)</li> <li>• Identify and assess available data and potential legal obligations involving sexual harassment and gender-based violence to develop a business case for additional interventions and services (<b>TOOLS 4.2, 4.3, 4.4</b>)</li> </ul>
Board composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Lack of awareness about the dimensions of board composition, which may lead to inability to maximize benefits of gender diversity and equity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a gender assessment of board composition and how board members are selected/appointed, and update operating procedures (<b>TOOL 1.7</b>)</li> </ul>
Senior management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Lack of accountability for gender diversity in the workforce</li> <li>» Perceived/real barriers for women to enter senior management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide gender diversity and equity training for senior management</li> </ul>

AUDIT AREA	POTENTIAL FINDING	POTENTIAL INTERVENTION
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Lack of information on gender diversity in various job families and/or levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institute gender disaggregation of workforce data, including recruitment, retention, and promotion, further divided by HQ, country, and site offices (<b>TOOL 1.22</b>)</li> </ul>
Workplace/ organizational culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Perception that women and men have unequal access to opportunities and less support (including lack of support for flex-work, parental leave, return from parental leave)</li> <li>» Perception that men’s and women’s voices are not heard equally in corporate decision-making processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct cost-benefit analysis on specific aspects of non-supportive corporate culture; enable men’s and women’s voices to be heard in decision making and accountability mechanisms</li> </ul>
Leadership development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Inequitable mentorship, leadership development opportunities for women and men or a perception of inequality negatively impacting career development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost-benefit analysis on benefits of gender-inclusive leadership development programs</li> <li>• Improve/develop leadership development programs for women and men (<b>TOOL 1.21</b>)</li> </ul>
Health and physical safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Inadequate attention to gender-specific employee health and safety needs, creating hazards and increasing potential liability while reducing employee’ effectiveness and negatively impacting safety and job desirability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with male and female employees to better identify perceived health and safety risks (<b>TOOL 1.3</b>).</li> </ul>

## Additional Considerations when Conducting a Gender Audit

### Gender-Sensitive Health and Safety Risk Audits

Included in the gender audit are questions about physical safety and the health risks associated with certain jobs, job families, and the work environment. Questions also explore how health and safety risks are identified and addressed. Assessing and understanding the differences in male and female physical capabilities and vulnerabilities also helps ensure a safe and productive work environment for all.

Such audits also contribute to a better understanding of the ways in which women and men identify, define, and perceive risks. They can improve risk reporting and help distinguish between presumed and genuine health and safety risks. Physical risk audits can help to combat bias in hiring by ensuring that job descriptions and evaluation criteria focus on the specific physical skills required for a job rather than relying on traditional assumptions and biases.

In addition, the use of health and safety risk audits can give employees greater comfort in reporting health concerns. For instance, women of reproductive age, pregnant women, and breastfeeding women may have certain acute health and safety risks about which they would be more forthcoming in reporting if such an audit was part of the workplace culture. Health and safety risk audits also serve as a tool to clarify actual risk factors to avoid overly stigmatizing pregnant women or discouraging them from reporting pregnancies.

Women and men may have very different perceptions of risk, for instance with regards to sexual harassment or the potential for gender-based violence. Women may feel vulnerable in different situations than men (or vice versa), and in different cultural contexts women and men may feel differently able to report misconduct to managers. In instances of sexual harassment or assault, for example, it could be more challenging for men to report misconduct, particularly in environments that stigmatize homosexuality. At a male-dominated worksite, it might be assumed that women are more frequently the victims, and there may be clearer avenues for women to report misconduct. For this reason, it is important that both women and men are involved in identifying areas of concern or risk, as well as in evaluating these risks and developing recommendations for solutions.

**Women and men may have very different perceptions of risk**, for instance with regards to sexual harassment or the potential for gender-based violence. Women may feel vulnerable in different situations than men (or vice versa).

In addition, it is important to note that in a male-dominated workforce, women may be underrepresented in health and safety departments and therefore have fewer opportunities to identify female health and safety risks—including preventative measures to mitigate potential risks. Women also may believe that their jobs are less secure than those of male coworkers, so they may feel less empowered to report health and safety issues. In some cultural contexts, reporting issues to male colleagues could represent another problem. Finally, in some situations reporting arrangements might not be conducive to disclosing highly sensitive information. For instance, inappropriately designed sexual harassment reporting mechanisms that require employees to report issues in person to a male manager who may or may not be trained in appropriate response mechanisms may make women less likely to use those mechanisms.

Gender-sensitive health risk and safety audits should be participatory to allow women and men to identify health and safety risks, which can then be assessed for prevalence and degree of risk.

What follows are the steps in a gender audit, a sample gender audit terms of reference, and a guidance note to help companies consider how to translate audit findings into recommendations and action.

### Conducting a Gender Audit in a Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations (FCS) Context

Risks posed to women and men will not be the same from industry to industry, or context to context. This will be particularly true where companies are operating in environments impacted by conflict and fragility. In these environments, the audit should be particularly mindful of how fragility and conflict risk may impact worker safety at work and in the community—including transport to and from work, safety on the worksite, and interactions with the community. Risk of conflict may impact the workforce demographic—and while this should never be an excuse for low gender equity in the workforce, security concerns may differently impact how, at what, and where women and men feel safe working. If an audit reveals this to be the case, companies can take this opportunity to make a clear and demonstrated response to safety concerns, as well as to inform communication around recruitment.

## TOOL 1.4

### Terms of Reference for Gender Audit

- » **GOAL:** Assess gender equity and environment across company
- » **TARGET UNITS:** Human Resources, Senior Management

This tool is designed as a model terms of reference for an independent consultant who can conduct a gender audit. The ToR is highly customizable to your company's needs, as is the audit itself, which can be modified to include other types of potential bias or discrimination, such as against employees with disabilities.

### Model Terms of Reference for a Gender Assessment

#### Introduction

*[Outline reasons for [Company] to conduct a gender audit. Introduce what has occurred thus far, the business case for gender diversity, the key objectives for a strengthened gender diversity strategy and approach, policies and initiatives already in place. Detail the internal support for the gender audit and gender diversity program.]*

#### Objective

The objective of the gender audit is to provide a baseline for gender equity and gender diversity in the workforce for [Company]. This includes a thorough audit of:

- All workforce policies, such as recruitment, leave, flexible work, and workplace safety, including policies on gender-based violence.
- Recruitment, wages, promotions, career development support, and benefits to identify gender-related trends and identify any potential areas of bias or discrimination.
- Assessment of the physical work environment, including transportation to and from the worksite, equipment, uniforms, work sites, and offices.
- Assessment of the organizational culture: Do women and men perceive themselves to be equally included in the workplace? Are there instances of bias, discrimination, or ways in which men or women may feel unsafe or discriminated against based on their gender? This audit also assesses the extent to which women and men feel that gender diversity and gender equity are prioritized, and the extent to which it is a corporate priority.

## Scope of Work

The gender audit consultant will be responsible for:

- Developing a detailed gender audit methodology, which includes detailed sets of questions and intended approaches, such as key informant interviews, focus groups, surveys, and policy and analysis review.
- Physical audit: Review physical facilities, services, and equipment, including uniforms and workplaces, to determine safety and appropriateness of use by female staff, including pregnant staff. Review personal protective equipment, job testing facilities, and medical facilities.
- Recruitment procedure review: Are there explicit or implicit indicators of bias or discrimination? Are recruitment efforts inclusive, or do they send signals discouraging female applicants? Are selection panels gender-balanced? Have they received gender bias training? Are interview procedures standardized and transparent? Are candidate audits conducted impartially and transparently? Are managers accountable for increased gender diversity in teams? Evaluate gender bias in corporate recruitment and opportunities for improvement.
- Policy review: Does the company have a gender diversity and/or equity strategy? Does it have non-discrimination policies covering wages, promotion, flexible work, and benefits? Does the company have flexible work policies? Are staff encouraged to utilize flexible work? Does the company have a gender-based violence policy? Identify what policies exist, how they are communicated, and how staff are supported in applying policies—for instance, ways in which staff are encouraged/discouraged from taking parental leave.
- Governance and corporate culture: Is corporate culture inclusive? Do male and female staff feel equally valued, able to advance, and protected by policies? Do male and female staff feel equally comfortable holding colleagues and managers accountable for any perceived gender bias or discrimination? What services exist for holding staff accountable?
- Performance management: Have performance evaluations been reviewed to identify any gender bias—for instance, bias against staff who take parental leave or utilize flexible work? Do staff performance evaluations include gender integration in their KPIs?
- Where work is taking place in a fragile or conflict-affected situation, examine how this may impact staff and their ability to work (safety on the job site and/or coming to the job site, conditions in staff homes, etc.), and how this may differently impact women and men, to ensure these factors are understood and accounted for.



*“Some leadership behaviors which are more frequently applied by women than by men in management teams prove to enhance corporate performance and will be a key factor in meeting tomorrow’s business challenges. Hence, promoting gender diversity and leadership variety is of strategic importance for companies.”*

Source: McKinsey & Company, Women Matter 2.

## Deliverables

- a. Gender audit methodology
- b. Gender audit draft: The draft should include the following components:
  - i. Introduction: Introduce company, business case for gender equity, context for the gender audit, initiatives and programs already underway, management support, and plans for follow-up and implementation based on the audit.
  - ii. Summary of staff interviewed and their business units, along with the methodologies used.
  - iii. Summary of findings and recommendations: Summary of key findings and recommendations for addressing main challenges and opportunities.
  - iv. Results by business unit and priority area, as outlined in the scope of work, along with additional findings.
  - v. Detailed evaluation and proposed follow-up steps
- c. Finalized gender audit: After incorporating company feedback during review process, provide a revised finalized version of the audit.

## Reporting

*[Identify a contact person within the company to whom the gender audit will report and who will serve as point person for questions.]*

## Timeline

*[Identify the timeline for the entire job and for each of the specific deliverables.]*

## TOOL 1.5

### Employee Scorecard

- » **GOAL:** To gather staff perspectives on and empower staff to make changes to workplace gender issues. (Scorecards can be used to evaluate other issues, employees, or services, for instance, in the community.)
- » **TARGET UNIT:** Human Resources

For more information on scorecards, please also see the IFC's new toolkit on community scorecards.

Scorecards (SC) are participatory monitoring mechanisms that can help companies to facilitate a participatory dialogue between staff and management. Scorecards are a process for gathering perspectives, as well as empowering participants to make suggestions for improvement and how to implement those suggestions.

Scorecards can be an effective tool in the private sector to help management and staff **better understand each other's perspectives and priorities**, and to develop collaborative, often low-cost solutions.

Scorecards were developed in the public sector to support dialogue between public service providers and users, but they can be an effective tool in the private sector to help management and staff better understand each other's perspectives and priorities, and to develop collaborative, often low-cost solutions.

In a private sector context, scorecards can:

- Give staff and management an opportunity to reflect on a given workplace issue
- Give staff and management an opportunity to identify what an improved workplace would look like, and ways to achieve those improvements
- Provide a forum for discussion and exchange between staff and management, and an opportunity to use this forum to agree on changes
- Provide a forum to monitor the extent to which changes have been implemented, and to assess and feedback on the change process
- Strengthen buy-in, transparency, communication, and accountability between staff and management

## What do Scorecards Involve?

Generally, the scorecard process involves a series of focus group discussions (FGDs) in which different groups discuss and evaluate a set topic (for instance, ‘gender equality in the workplace’) by discussing and identifying what good performance on this issue means to them, coming up with their own specific indicators, and then rating their workplace accordingly. Once a range of FGDs have been conducted, participants from different groups come together to compare and discuss findings and come up with a final agreed rating and plan for improvement.

Scorecards have traditionally taken place in person, but in 2020, the IFC began piloting virtual scorecards. This included a mix of virtual ‘rooms’—including some participants who were able to gather in person, a remote facilitator, and some additional participants participating remotely from quarantine.

Scorecards are a good alternative to traditional surveys because they allow participants to define the metrics, rather than being limited to the questions being asked by assessors. Not only do they give management a more authentic view of what matters to employees, but they also invite participants to come up with solutions. This can lead to more innovative ideas, as well as inviting employee investment in implementing their own suggestions. Scorecards are meant to be an iterative process that gets repeated at six-month or yearly intervals to track improvements and make any necessary adjustments.

Scorecards can be conducted as a complement to a gender audit or independently. Where they are conducted in complement to a gender audit, it is recommended to do the gender audit first for several reasons. First, the information gathered from the gender audit can create jumping-off points for discussion and help facilitators work to address issues that surfaced during the audit. Secondly, scorecards bring up perceptions and allow staff to raise questions—some of which will require collaborative work to address, but others may reflect simpler information gaps. Conducting a gender audit first will give facilitators more data with which to answer questions and concerns, address issues related to information gaps, and redirect action planning towards more substantial issues.

## Detailed Guidance on Implementing a Scorecard:

Below are detailed steps on implementing a scorecard. Additional resources providing detailed implementation guidance can be found at the end of the section. The following steps are adapted from World Bank guidance.

### 1. Preparation:

- a. Identification of facilitators: Trained facilitators are an important component of a successful scorecard. Facilitators may be external to the company, or internal

facilitators may be trained. But it is important that facilitators are perceived to be impartial and able to conduct an objective and confidential (non-attribution of what happens within any focus group) scorecard process. Some companies may choose to have an external facilitator conduct the initial scorecard process, while simultaneously training internal facilitators for follow-up scorecards. To promote impartiality, internal facilitators should include both women and men, from both staff and management, working together for balanced facilitation.<sup>48</sup>

- b. Identification of subject and scope: What will be the specific subject and scope of the scorecard exercise? It is important that the scope be clearly defined—too broad a mandate, and it will be difficult to narrow down criteria and recommendations. In the case of gender, a sample subject could be ‘How to make [company name] a more gender equitable workplace?’ This clearly defines the question around gender and limits the scope to questions related to workforce and workplace (rather than also including, for instance, issues of community engagement or procurement, which may have different stakeholders).
- c. Select sample groups: Once the topic has been defined, identify key participant groups. In assessing gender equality in the workforce, for instance, it would be important to speak with both women and men, from all staff levels, to understand differences in perspectives at various levels and to get both men’s and women’s perspectives.
- d. Preliminary information gathering: Facilitators should make sure that they have current, up-to-date information regarding gender equity policies and programs, and if possible, gender-disaggregated data on the current gender equity status within the company. Having this information at hand will help facilitating discussions.
- e. Awareness raising: Facilitators should coordinate communication with staff to ensure that staff are aware and informed about the upcoming scorecard process.

## 2. Focus Groups:

- a. For each focus group, facilitators will ask participants to discuss and evaluate the company (or selected aspect of the company—for instance, workplace) for the selected question. For instance, in the case of the workplace, facilitators would invite participants to have a focused discussion around what gender equality in the workplace means to them and how they define it. Participants will suggest criteria, and then vote to identify their five to eight most important criteria upon

<sup>48</sup> The IFC has developed several additional tools on how to ensure that training and learning programs are gender inclusive. For additional reading, please reference IFC, [Gender Supplement: Guide to Training: Setting the Standard for the Design, Delivery, and Evaluation of Learning Programs in Emerging Markets](#), Washington, DC: IFC, 2020.

- which to evaluate the company. In the case of gender equality, for instance, sample criteria might include:
- i. Availability of training opportunities
  - ii. Women’s opinions are solicited and listened to
  - iii. Women’s leadership is encouraged
  - iv. Women are promoted as often as men
- b. Once criteria have been proposed and selected, participants evaluate how well the company is doing on each of these criteria, on a scale of 1 (Very Inadequate) to 5 (Very Good). For in-person scorecard exercises, participants can write their vote for each of the criteria on a slip of paper to maintain anonymity as to how individuals rated their employer. For virtual scorecards, facilitators may choose to have participants submit their votes through private chat messages or using a web-platform polling tool. Scores will be tabulated, and an average score for each criterion calculated.
  - c. Once scores have been identified for each criterion, facilitators should encourage a discussion about potential solutions or ways to improve each issue. Ideally, solutions should focus on low-cost solutions where feasible—for instance, identifying ways to change processes and policies, rather than big infrastructural actions like building new facilities. Of course, recommendations should reflect employee priorities and needs, but a range of suggestions, including lower and higher cost items, can increase the likelihood that employees and management can agree on a range of recommendations to implement.
  - d. Focus groups will be replicated among various employee groups and among management. Among management, the discussion—identifying criteria and voting on corporate performance—will serve as a reflection and evaluation of their own performance, as well as a broader discussion about the topic—for example, what makes a gender-equitable workplace.

**FIGURE 1A | Sample Scorecard Focus Group Recording Template**

Criteria	Scores					Strengths/ Weaknesses	Proposed Actions for Improvement
	5 V. Good	4 Good	3 OK	2 Inadequate	1 V. Inad.		
1. Training opportunities							
2. Encourage women’s participation							

### 3. Exchange Meeting

- a. Once both staff and management focus groups have been conducted, the next step is to bring together representatives from both sides. In an ‘Exchange Meeting’, representatives from each focus group should have the opportunity to present their criteria and ratings, as well as proposed recommendations.
- b. The Exchange Meeting discussion should lead to a final recommended action plan that can be agreed by representatives of both staff and management. A sample action plan is included below.

**FIGURE 1B | Sample Scorecard Exchange Meeting Action Plan**

Proposed Actions	Who should lead on making changes?	Who should support work on changes?
1. Promotions should consider job experience and positive work appraisals (not only educational degrees, formal certificates and qualifications, and interview skills).	HR	» Employee Union » Staff Association
2. More opportunities for training/study leave for women and for general staff.	HR	» Line managers » Women’s Association » Employee Union » women’s representative
3. Assign tasks to allow women to prove leadership capacity.	Line managers Supervisors	» HR
4. Narrow salary gap between general and senior staff.	HR	» Employee Union » Legal Department
5. Review leave rotation arrangements (increased flexibility, shorter rotations).	HR	» Executive Committee » Employee Union

### 4. Follow Up

Following the scorecard, it is key that clear lines of accountability and action are established to ensure that the recommendations are followed up and acted upon. Scorecards should be followed up at agreed intervals, for instance, every six months or year. The power of the scorecard is in the participant ownership and its ability to change corporate environment, as well as participant satisfaction by giving them a voice and stake in improvements. To capitalize on this, there needs to be clear and sufficient follow-up on the recommendations, as well as a follow-up scorecard to capture change over a prescribed period of time.

## TOOL 1.6

### Pay Gap Survey Guidance and Terms of Reference

- » **GOAL:** Outline policy guidance and steps to correct imbalances regarding equal pay for equal work
- » **TARGET UNIT:** Human Resources

To attract and retain a gender-diverse workforce, potential candidates need to be confident that they are being paid fairly for their work. “Equal pay for equal work” means that women and men will receive the same pay and same work conditions for the same or similar job descriptions, and/or for jobs requiring similar levels of skill or qualification.<sup>49</sup> But globally and across many industries, pay gaps persist between women and men performing the same jobs.

Pay equity is not only the right thing to do—it also makes good business sense. Paying all candidates equitably is important for retaining high performers and developing a strong senior management pipeline.<sup>50</sup> Furthermore, transparency can motivate workers and encourage cooperation when colleagues know they are being fairly remunerated.<sup>51</sup>

Pay and related compensation should be set by the job function, not by the individual performing it. Bonus pay should be awarded according to a clear and transparent system so that all staff understand the basis and metrics for bonus pay.<sup>52</sup>

#### BOX 1D | Defining the Gender Pay Gap

The International Labour Organization has developed a definition to describe gender inequalities in pay. According to the ILO:

The gender pay gap measures the difference between male and female average earnings as a percentage of the male earnings. Overall, features such as differences in educational levels, qualifications, work experience, occupational category, and hours worked account for the “explained” part of the gender pay gap. The remaining and more significant part, the “unexplained” portion of the pay gap, is attributable to the discrimination—conscious or unconscious—that is pervasive in workplaces.

For more, see the ILO publication, [Pay Equity: A Key Driver of Gender Equality](#).

<sup>49</sup> International Training Centre of the ILO, [Break Gender Stereotypes: Give Talent a Chance](#), Brussels: European Commission, 2008, 54.

<sup>50</sup> ILO, [Pay Equity: A Key Driver of Gender Equality](#), Geneva: ILO, 2015, 1.

<sup>51</sup> Kristin Wong, [“Want to Close the Pay Gap? Pay Transparency will Help.”](#) New York Times, January 20, 2019.

<sup>52</sup> ILO, [Break Gender Stereotypes: Give Talent a Chance](#), 54.

## How to Ensure Equal Pay for Equal Work

### 1. Identify equivalent jobs, screening for gender bias

Use job evaluation metrics to determine which jobs should be paid equally. Be sure to review these metrics for hidden gender bias. For instance, two jobs that are similarly physical, such as cleaning and janitorial, might be rated differently. The stereotypically male job of janitor could be deemed more physically intensive than stereotypically female jobs of cleaning. Use the following criteria to review job classifications to ensure that equal work is rated for equal pay:

- **Skill:** What training and skills are required to conduct this job?
- **Effort:** What is the physical or mental effort required to do this job?
- **Responsibility:** What responsibility does this job have over physical, financial, human, or technical resources?
- **Working conditions:** What are the physical, psychological, or other pressures associated with this job?

### 2. Conduct a Pay Gap Survey to Understand the Situation in Your Company

Once you have conducted a review to determine which positions should be paid equivalently, the next step is to survey your own employment practices to understand where pay gaps actually exist. A pay gap survey can help you identify differences in the ways in which women and men are being compensated for equivalent work. Companies may not even realize that they have a gender-related imbalance in pay, so pay gap surveys can be valuable tools for identifying and addressing issues. These surveys also can help to uncover other biases, such as lower wages for minority or local women. Pay gap surveys and follow-up actions are a straightforward way for companies to ensure that they can:

- Recruit and retain a diverse workforce
- Demonstrate a commitment to addressing gender imbalance
- Highlight their commitment to transparency, gender equity, and diversity

As part of planning an assessment, consider ways to make information available to employees and actions to take if pay gaps are revealed. Some countries are moving towards mandating transparency around pay gaps: Australia, Germany, Austria, and Belgium have passed laws requiring companies of a certain size to publish pay gap information. The U.S. adopted a similar law in 2016, and starting in 2017, the UK started requiring companies with more than 250 employees to publish pay gap information.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>53</sup> UK Government, "[Gender Pay Gap Reporting: Overview](#)," updated 25 March 2020.



Pay gap assessments can be complex and difficult. They require a look at multiple factors to identify areas in which women and men receive unequal pay for equal work. The model terms of reference provided here details the specific steps required to undertake such an assessment, which can be used for both internal and external purposes. The proposed approach divides the work into two main tasks as follows:

- Conduct a quick baseline on pay equity: This can be incorporated as part of a broader gender audit or can be conducted independently. Use these questions to build this baseline of the company's status on pay equity:
  - Is there a policy on equal pay for equal work?
  - How have staff been informed of this policy?
  - Is someone within the organization responsible for implementing this policy?
  - Has the job evaluation metric been reviewed for gender bias?
  - Has a pay gap review been conducted in the past to identify gaps in pay for equivalent work?
- Conduct a pay gap survey: The survey is a deeper dive to identify jobs or job families where women and men are not earning equitably. It helps uncover challenges or bottlenecks getting in the way of equal pay for equal work. The survey should identify target areas for improvement and potential actions to take. See below for a model terms of reference for a consultant who could conduct the survey, with the goal of identifying jobs or job families within the company in which women and men are not earning equal pay for equal work.

### BOX 1E | Are Your Male and Female Employees Earning Equal Pay for Equal Work?

Not sure? Here are two methodologies to help you find out:

- ILO's Gender-Neutral Job Evaluation for Equal Pay provides a step-by-step guide for companies to compare jobs and evaluate their value, based on a number of gender-neutral qualifications. This objective assessment of positions is a necessary step in the gender audit to ensure that jobs typically held by women are not undervalued. For more, see the ILO publication "Promoting Equity."
- Logib: The Swiss Federal Office for Gender Equality has developed the Logib statistical tool for company self-assessments. To complete the assessment, you will need to input pay, qualifications, and employment profile data for all employees. The tool is available for free download [here](#).

## Model Terms of Reference for a Pay Gap Review

### Introduction

*[Outline rationale for conducting a pay gap review. Introduce steps taken thus far to develop a business case for gender equity, as well as other actions such as gender audits, management support, education, and staff awareness-raising. Explain the context for the pay gap review and how results will be used.]*

Consultants retained to conduct the pay gap review will be called the “consultants” for the purposes of this ToR.

### Objective

The objective of the pay gap review is to identify gender-based disparities in compensation—including salary, benefits, and bonuses—awarded to women and men who hold equivalent jobs in the company. The review will identify gaps, try to identify the drivers of the disparities, and make suggestions for addressing the disparities.

### Scope of Work

The assessment will involve the following activities:

- a. Evaluate jobs across the organization to determine jobs with same or similar job descriptions, and/or jobs requiring similar levels of skill or qualification, so that jobs and salaries can be compared.
- b. Based on the job’s assessment, develop a methodology for evaluating salary data between and across job families to analyze salary by job and by gender to identify trends and pay disparities. Data should be controlled for years at the company, but findings should be analyzed by gender, age, and role. If the company wants to assess race-based pay gaps, data can also be analyzed for ethnicity, race, and other relevant metrics. Where relevant, data should be disaggregated between local and international hires and among work sites to highlight potential differences between headquarters and country/regional offices, and from country/regional office to country/regional office.
- c. Analyze findings to identify pay biases or trends based on gender.
- d. Identify areas of gender bias versus gender-correlated trends: For instance, is there a trend towards lower salaries for women because of gender bias or because many women have taken time out from working for family reasons, meaning fewer years of experience? The analysis should explore the extent to which such trends are justified, as well as identify situations in which there is truly unfair bias with no basis in a business rationale.
- e. Identify challenges and opportunities for addressing gender-based pay disparities.

## Deliverables

- a. Pay gap review methodology
- b. Pay gap review draft, to include the following components:
  - i. Introduction: Introduce the company, business case for gender pay equity, context for the gender pay gap study, initiatives and programs already underway, management support, and plans for follow-up and implementation based on the study.
  - ii. Summary of interviews conducted and business units reached, as well as methodologies used.
  - iii. Summary of findings and recommendations: Key findings and recommendations for addressing main challenges and capitalizing on opportunities.
  - iv. Results by business unit and priority area as outlined in the scope of work, and any additional findings.
  - v. Detailed evaluation and proposed follow-up steps.
- c. Finalized pay gap review: Provide a final, revised version of the review that incorporates company feedback gathered during the review process.

## Reporting

Identify a contact person within the company to whom the consultants will report and who can respond to questions they may have.

## Timeline

Identify timeline for the entire job, as well as for each of the specific deliverables.

## TOOL 1.7

### Gender Diversity Board Assessment<sup>54</sup>

- » **GOAL:** Assess board gender diversity
- » **TARGET UNIT:** Executive Board

A stocktaking of gender representation at the executive board level can help determine what action is necessary to strengthen gender diversity. This exercise should examine the board's current gender composition. It should also look at the ways in which new board members are selected and the frequency with which new directors are chosen. In addition, it should examine the board's operational policies and procedures to evaluate women's ability to participate in board activities.

An independent consultant should conduct the stocktaking exercise and present the results to the board. The company and its shareholders should have access to the results, as well as to action plans that address issues identified.

Here are some suggested questions to include in a board stocktaking exercise on gender.

#### On Board Composition:

- What is the ratio of women to men on the board in executive and non-executive positions (including chair, deputy chair, treasurer)?
- What is the ratio of women to men in decision-making positions on the board?
- What is the ratio of women to men on the board?
- How long has each member been on the board?  
*TIP: Map change in gender diversity over time (for instance, at five-year intervals). Compare with board performance and company performance over time.*
- What are the individual qualifications/backgrounds of board members?

#### On Board Operating Procedures:

- Is there a policy on board gender diversity?
- How often is board performance assessed?
- How are board members' performance measured?
- Does the nominating committee (or the committee responsible for ensuring gender diversity) have a clear reporting obligation to the board?

<sup>54</sup> This tool was adapted from a range of existing board checklists, including the Australian Institute of Company Directors' Checklist for Assessing Board Composition, Sydney: AICD, 2016, and draws on resources including International Corporate Governance Network, [ICGN Guidance on Gender Diversity on Boards](#), London: ICGN, 2013.

## On Protocols for Replacing Board Members:

This is a qualitative assessment of how the board is composed, whether there is impartiality in board member selection, and how key skills are evaluated.

- How often are new board seats available?
- Are there term limits?
- If there have been any changes, such as moving from no term limits to term limits, how has this changed board composition and impacted company performance?
- What is the protocol for selecting new members?
- How diverse are the networks and mechanisms through which new candidates are considered and selected?
- Is there gender bias or imbalance in the networks/avenues through which potential candidates are identified?
- Does the board have in place a skills matrix to identify and address any skills gaps through board member recruitment?
- If the skills matrix exists, how often is it updated?

By gathering responses to these questions, companies will have a better overview of the level and extent of the current board's gender diversity and whether there are policies or board self-assessments in place to support increased gender diversity. Analysis of the results will highlight gaps and reveal areas to address, monitor, and sustain.

## ADDRESS: TOOLS 1.8–1.21

This section includes tools to help companies address the gaps and opportunities that they identified through the assessments included in Tools 1.2–1.7. This includes:

1. **Guidance on creating an overarching corporate strategy and policy:** A corporate gender strategy that lays out a company's goals, intentions, and plans for achieving them is the bedrock of any gender program. A gender policy lays out the practical rules and expectations for achieving that policy. This section includes information and all the required materials to develop a concrete gender policy (**TOOL 1.8**), as well as an equity strategy (**TOOL 1.9**). It also includes guidance and terms of reference for hiring a gender equity champion (**TOOL 1.10**). A gender champion will be the point person for all gender-focused activities, manage the program, and ensure that it has the attention and commitment required to keep the program going.

The **Terms of Reference for the Gender Equity Champion (1.10)** occurs after the guidance on strategy and policy because some companies may need those in place to mobilize funds for a gender champion. But where possible, the earlier that a gender champion can be brought on board, the easier it will be to develop the strategy and policy.

2. **Guidance on Creating Specific HR Policies:** This includes guidance on specific HR policies and programs that can help companies become more gender inclusive and equitable (**TOOL 1.11**), including guidance on identifying and eliminating pay gaps; promoting work-life balance (including flexible work policies, family leave, support for breastfeeding mothers, and employer-supported childcare); ensuring gender-appropriate personal protective equipment and workplace safety; and a review of gender-based violence programs. This section also includes guidance on how to set specific recruitment targets (**TOOL 1.12**) and a checklist for building a gender-diverse board (**TOOL 1.13**).
3. **Guidance on Creating and Improving Gender-Focused Structures and Staff Capacity:** In addition to having a robust gender policy and gender strategy, and associated HR strategies, companies need to have additional structures in place to support the creation of a more gender-diverse workplace. This can include having senior leadership visibly demonstrate commitment to gender diversity (**TOOL 1.14**) and creating a gender task force representing and giving voice to staff across your institution (**TOOL 1.15**). This section also includes guidance on supporting gender equality in virtual workplaces (**TOOL 1.16**) and providing support for pregnant women and new parents (**TOOL 1.11**).
4. **Guidance on Strengthening the Talent Pipeline:** This section includes specific guidance for promoting gender diversity in recruitment and retention (**TOOL 1.18**) and a job description template to reduce bias and attract diverse applicants (**TOOL 1.19**), as well as guidance on how to develop a mentorship program (**TOOL 1.20**) and how to support the continued development of women's careers as leaders (**TOOL 1.21**).

## TOOL 1.8

### Gender Policy Guidance and Sample Gender Policy

- » **GOAL:** To state corporate goals, standards, and expected behaviors around gender diversity
- » **TARGET UNIT:** Human Resources

#### 1. Why have a gender policy?

This tool provides guidance on a key building block for any company's gender strategy: an overarching gender policy. While the strategy is like a team's plan for how to win a game, the policy is akin to the rules of the game. It is essential to have clear policy, to make a clear commitment, and to ensure that all staff are familiar and accountable for a gender-equitable corporate culture. This policy should not operate alone, but complement other HR policies to communicate a comprehensive commitment to gender equity.

The policy should communicate why a company thinks gender diversity and equity is important, i.e., why working towards gender equity is a corporate goal, and how the company anticipates that gender diversity will help the company. The policy should also outline what the policy itself is meant to achieve (for instance, support gender equity, increase equity in promotions, etc.) and what measures the policy authorizes to achieve these ends. Companies should also consider, and state clearly, to whom the policy applies. The policy should apply not only to full-time staff, but also to part-time staff and contractors and suppliers.

#### 2. Key Components of a Gender Policy

- a. Context/Introduction:** This should include brief background on gender issues in the company, and why a gender policy is being developed now.
- b. Purpose:** This section should outline what the policy aims to achieve—for instance, to communicate the company's goals with regards to gender equity, the measures the company commits to in order to realize those goals, and who will be held accountable for adhering to the policy.
- c. Values statement:** The values statement should communicate why the company has a gender policy. This should be a clear signal to staff that gender equality is a core corporate value—and why. For instance, a values statement could outline that gender diversity is important to the company because equality and diversity are core company values, and also out of a recognition that gender diversity (among other types of diversity) are integral to supporting peak company performance. Measures to be used

to achieve gender diversity could include recruitment, retention, and promotion policies that seek to ensure equal opportunities for women and men, as well as respectful workplace policies to ensure that women and men feel safe, comfortable, and valued in the workplace. The gender policy can also outline measures that will be taken to support gender equity in procurement, and in community engagement activities.

- d. Applicability:** To whom does this policy apply? Companies need to decide if the policy will apply to all staff, including contractors. It is recommended that the gender policy apply to all contractors and staff to maintain consistency and standards throughout the organization.
- e. Definitions:** This section can define any key terms used in the policy, including but not limited to:
- i. Gender: Gender refers to cultural, social, cultural, or behavioral norms associated with being male, female, transgender, intersex, and gender diverse, and the relationship between people based on these norms.<sup>55</sup>
  - ii. Employee: Define who is included in the policy (and under the term ‘employee’). It is recommended to say that the term ‘employee,’ as used in this policy, includes all full-time and part-time staff, and all contractors.
  - iii. Gender equality in the workplace: Gender equality in the workplace is the goal that all employees are treated equally, and have the same access to opportunities, compensation or other reward, and resources, regardless of gender.
  - iv. Gender equity in the workplace: Gender equity means fair treatment for all. “It may include equal treatment or treatment that is different, but which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations, and opportunities.”<sup>56</sup>
- f. Commitments:** This section should outline specifically what the company plans to do to achieve the values statement. Commitments may be organized around the following themes:
- i. Broadly supporting a gender-aware and gender-responsive workplace culture that all employees and contractors are expected to understand and uphold
  - ii. Commitment that all recruitment, promotions, performance evaluation, and dismissals will be done regardless of gender, and that materials—including recruitment materials and hiring, promotion, and dismissal criteria will all be gender-inclusive and aware. Specific mechanisms could include (but not limited to):
    1. Gender-inclusive language in recruitment materials

<sup>55</sup> Drawn in part from Western Sydney University (WSU), [Gender Equality Policy](#), WSU, 2017.

<sup>56</sup> [WSU 2017](#).



2. Minimum standards for participation in shortlists and as interviewers in interview panels. For shortlists, targets for representation of women should reflect a reasonable goal for the context. Interview panels should always include at least one woman, and where the panel is more than four people, it should include at least two women.
  3. Job descriptions and KPIs that do not specify gender or inadvertently disadvantage women applicants
  4. Standards for job interviews that include prohibiting questions regarding gender, family situation, or future family plans, but also include providing information on family-friendly benefits
  5. Regular gender pay gap audits
  6. Gender disaggregation of all HR data, including shortlists, hiring, upgrades, and promotions
- iii. Coordination with the family leave policy, which should outline opportunities for parental leave for both primary and secondary parents, including in situations of adoption, and which can be used before and/or after birth/adoption, as necessary
  - iv. Provisions for workplace gender inclusivity and equity, including zero tolerance for sexual harassment or violence, to be supported by a gender-informed grievance mechanism
  - v. Specific support for staff experiencing domestic violence
  - vi. Provisions to ensure that equipment, PPE, and workplaces are appropriate for staff
  - vii. Support for breastfeeding and/or pumping mothers
  - viii. A code of conduct regarding gender-based violence and sexual harassment
  - ix. Activities to create more equity in procurement, such as reviewing procurement policies for unintended bias, unbundling large contracts, shortening payment intervals, and providing community trainings to increase opportunities for small and local suppliers.
  - x. Integration of gender into all community engagement activities, including increasing inclusive participation in community assessments, decision-making, and monitoring and evaluation.
- g. Responsibilities:** This section should outline who will be responsible for implementing the policy and what their roles will be.
- h. Related Policies:** The gender policy does not operate in a bubble. It may influence other related policies. The gender policy can include a list of related policies and notes on how it should influence them. Related policies may include:

- i. Family leave policy: Family leave policies should allow for adequate time off for employees after the birth or adoption of a child. Policies should allow for leave for both parents, i.e., both primary and secondary parents, even if the other parent works for a different employer. For instance, if a couple has a child and the mother works for a different company, a comprehensive family leave policy would allow the father time off to participate in the early months of the child's life. These policies should apply for both parents, regardless of gender, and should also apply for adoption, where families will also need time to adjust and settle in. This is for the benefit of the family, but also for the company by ensuring that following such major events, employees are able to focus on their families and have the best chance to return to the job able to focus on work.
- ii. Equal opportunity and diversity policy: Many companies have policies speaking more generally to diversity and equality in the workplace. These policies should be coordinated with the gender policy for continuity and complementarity
- iii. Respectful and inclusive workplace policy: Many organizations have respectful and inclusive workplace policies, which often outline the company stance on harassment, bullying, language, and conduct. These policies should complement the gender policy and be updated to ensure that they include and differentiate sexual and gender-based violence and harassment.
- iv. Recruitment and selection policy: The recruitment and selection policy can be updated to reflect gender equity priorities, including a proactive modification of language in recruitment notices and advertisements to be gender inclusive, as well as setting standards for gender equity on shortlists and interview panels.<sup>57</sup>
- v. Procurement policies: Procurement policies address, among other things, how suppliers compete and are evaluated and selected, and payment policies. All of these can impact how well smaller local firms are able to compete with larger firms, and so may impact how well women-owned businesses are in securing contracts.
- vi. Community engagement policies: Community engagement policies outlining how companies engage with the host community should also include specific provisions for how to ensure that consultations, decision-making, and monitoring and evaluation are inclusive, including ensuring women's equal involvement.

### 3. Sample Policy Template

- a. **Introduction:** *[Background of the company, what has been done on gender, why this is being implemented now]*

<sup>57</sup> List of complementary policies draw from [WSU 2017](#).

- b. Purpose:** This policy represents [*Company's*] commitment to having a robust and comprehensive approach to gender equality. The policy outlines [*Company's*] dedication to gender equality and outlines [*Company's*] specific commitments towards the goal of a gender-aware, inclusive, and equitable corporate environment. The purpose of this policy is to:
- i. State and communicate [*Company's*] commitment to gender equality
  - ii. State and communicate the measures that [*Company*] is taking to achieve a gender-aware, inclusive, and equitable corporate environment
  - iii. Define and communicate the behavioral standards to which all employees and contractors will be held in pursuit of a gender-aware, inclusive, and equitable corporate environment.
- c. Value Statement:** [*Company*] recognizes and values the diverse skills and perspectives that its employees bring to the workplace. These diverse skills and perspectives are informed by our employees' differences, including their gender. In order to support a diverse staff, and to benefit from these differences, our employees must feel that their workplace is a place of security and fairness, and that all staff are equally valued and have equal opportunities for recruitment, retention, and advancement.
- [*Company*] is committed to realizing gender diversity through informed recruitment, retention, and promotion practices that attract and support a diverse and high-quality workforce. These measures are meant to help [*Company*] to attract, motivate, and retain a diverse, qualified, and motivated workforce, reduce staff turnover, improve productivity, foster innovation and creativity, and build a cohesive, inclusive workforce that allows [*Company*] to operate at peak performance and growth.
- d. Applicability:** This policy applies to all contractors, part-time staff, and full-time staff.
- e. Definitions:**
- i. Gender: Gender refers to cultural, social, cultural, or behavioral norms associated with being male, female, transgender, intersex, and gender diverse, and the relationship between people based on these norms.<sup>58</sup>
  - ii. Employee: Define who is included in the policy (and under the term 'employee'). It is recommended to say that the term 'employee,' as used in this policy, includes all full-time and part-time staff, and all contractors.
  - iii. Gender equality in the workplace: Gender equality in the workplace is the goal that all employees are treated equally and have the same access to opportunities, compensation or other rewards, and resources, regardless of gender.

<sup>58</sup> Drawn in part from [WSU 2017](#).

iv. Gender equity in the workplace: Gender equity means fair treatment for all. “It may include equal treatment or treatment that is different, but which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities.”<sup>59</sup>

**f. Commitments:** In order to meet the values stated above, [Company] commits:

- i. [Company] will actively support a gender-aware and gender-responsive workplace culture which values gender diversity, works towards gender equality, and practices gender equity in all elements of policies, operations, and workplace. Towards this end, all of [Company’s] employees will be supported and expected to understand gender and gender issues, and will be expected to uphold this policy.
- ii. Hiring, advancement, performance management, retention criteria, and promotions will all support equal opportunities regardless of gender. Recruitment, evaluation, and interview materials and promotion and advancement criteria will be gender-inclusive (for instance, in the language used). Recruitment and performance management criteria will not discriminate, implicitly or explicitly, on the basis of gender. Gender will be integrated in all HR reporting, including on gender balance in staffing, corporate governance, and average pay. Specific mechanisms that will be put in place to achieve this goal will include, but not be limited to:
  1. Gender-inclusive language in recruitment materials
  2. Minimum standards for participation in shortlists and as interviewers in interview panels
  3. Job descriptions and KPIs that do not specify gender or inadvertently disadvantage women applicants
  4. Standards for job interviews that include prohibiting questions regarding gender, family situation, or future family plans
  5. Regular gender pay gap audits
  6. Gender disaggregation of all HR data, including shortlists, hiring, upgrades, and promotions
  7. To be coordinated with the family leave policy, improved gender equity in parental leave, including [xxx] days of parental leave for the primary parent and [xxx] days of leave for the secondary parent, regardless of gender. Leave would apply in cases of natural birth or adoption and could be used before and/or after birth/adoption, as necessary. Leave will apply for secondary parents, even if the primary parent does not work at [Company]
- iii. [Company’s] workplaces will be gender inclusive and gender equitable, and all staff will be made to feel valued, fairly treated, and safe. [Company] will have zero tolerance

<sup>59</sup> [WSU 2017](#).

for behavior that detracts from this environment and will strive to ensure that all workplaces, including accommodation, are safe for all staff, regardless of gender.

- iv. [Company] will have a grievance mechanism with specific training and support for staff experiencing sexual harassment or violence.
- v. [Company] will make provisions to support any staff who are experiencing domestic violence, including up to [x] days of supplemental leave for the purpose of attending court proceedings, consultations or appointments, relocation, or other related activities [potential options might include low interest corporate loans, security support, emergency accommodation for staff and dependents].
- vi. [Company] will aim to ensure that all workplaces, including equipment, PPE, and infrastructure such as changing rooms, toilets, etc., are appropriate and equitable for all genders.
- vii. [Company] will provide paid breaks for breastfeeding and/or pumping and will provide a dedicated space for both, including refrigerator, sink, and electrical access.
- viii. All staff will be expected to sign a code of conduct committing to defined standards of behavior with regards to bias, discrimination, and sexual harassment and violence.
- ix. [Company] will collect gender-disaggregated data to monitor gender diversity of supplier ownership and review procurement policies to ensure that they do not inadvertently disadvantage based on gender.
- x. Community engagement programs will be designed to equitably compensate, support, and empower both women and men.

**g. Responsibilities:** The following outlines responsibilities for implementing this policy:

- i. All employees, including all full-time and part-time staff, are responsible for upholding this policy and the associated code of conduct
- ii. All contractors doing business with [Company] are responsible for upholding this policy and the associated code of conduct
- iii. Managers, senior managers, and all corporate leadership are responsible for upholding and implementing this policy and the associated code of conduct. They are also responsible for ensuring that staff have the appropriate training and support for implementing this policy.

**h. Related Policies:** This policy is complementary to the below policies, which also support gender-inclusive and gender-aware measures to reach gender equity across [Company's] operations: family leave policy; equal opportunity and diversity policy; respectful and inclusive workplace policy; recruitment and selection policy.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>60</sup> This tool draws from several sample gender policies, including [WSU 2017](#) and CARE International "[Final CARE International Gender Equality Policy](#)," June 2018, cited Nov 6, 2020.

## TOOL 1.9

### Establish a Gender Equity Strategy

- » **GOAL:** Develop a strategic roadmap for how your company will create a gender-equitable work environment across the company
- » **TARGET UNITS:** Senior Management, Training, Human Resources, Gender Equity Champion

### Gender Strategy and Gender Policy: Setting the Scene for Gender Equity

This tool provides guidance on developing a gender equity strategy that builds on the gender policy outlined in **TOOL 1.8**. The gender strategy is a programmatic document, outlining how your company will achieve its gender equity targets; the gender equity policy is an important piece of this strategy and is the set of corporate rules that will guide corporate decisions and employee action. The strategy is a dynamic document which can be updated and adapted, but includes the guiding plan for how to meet gender targets, including specific steps such as setting targets, outlining the common set of rules and expectations for all staff regarding gender equity (the policy), as well as any other programs that will be implemented (training, communications, monitoring, etc.) to help the company achieve its goals. The policy, on the other hand, should be established as a fixed set of principles that the company and staff rely on to guide decisions.

### Establishing the Gender Equity Strategy

The gender equity strategy is the foundation for any gender diversity improvement initiatives. It provides the structure for gender equity commitments, actions, and progress monitoring. The strategy should be a flexible, dynamic document that lays out a company's goals for gender equity, identifies how those goals will be met, coordinates activities, and clarifies accountability. It should frame clear targets, time-bound goals, and the pathway towards those goals, based on the findings from the gender audit. The strategy should be linked to the business case by detailing a concrete set of actions and the associated theory of change that will help the company address shortcomings identified in the gender assessment and realize the gains outlined in the business case. A comprehensive gender strategy can help companies to achieve:

- **Unified vision:** A strong gender strategy provides a clear set of objectives and values that the company can aim for. A clear, common, and communicated vision facilitates actions towards that goal, accountability for progress, and coordination between different parts of an organization. This can help ensure that all units are working towards the same goal and hold to the same standard. It also enables teams to learn from others' experiences.

- **Consistency of approach:** A defined strategy ensures that teams are adopting the same goals and techniques. When several approaches are being piloted, all units can learn from the experience.
- **Motivation and momentum:** A strategy that includes incentives and monitoring can help motivate organizations to meet their goals.
- **Identify progress:** A strategy that includes specific goals provides a framework to measure progress and determine needed course corrections. Such information is especially important for companies required to report to investors and stock exchanges.

## Developing a Gender Equity Strategy

What follows is a step-by-step guide to developing a gender equity strategy.

### Step 1: Appoint the gender champion and develop a gender task force.

The first step in developing a gender strategy should be to get the human resource infrastructure in place to develop and implement the strategy. This should include the gender champion and a gender task force. More details on the roles and responsibilities of the gender champion and the gender task force are in **TOOLS 1.10 (Terms of Reference for a Gender Equity Champion)** and **1.15 (Creation of a Gender Task Force and Terms of Reference)**, but the gender champion should take the lead on development and implementation of the strategy if the role is a full-time one. Where a dedicated position such as the gender champion is not feasible, the part-time gender champion should still work closely with HR and senior management on the development and implementation of the strategy. The gender task force should provide input on the strategy, as well as support communication and dissemination of the strategy to general staff.

### Step 2: Set company-wide goals for gender equity and diversity.

Based on the gender audit, the employee scorecard, and any other assessments conducted, the next step in developing a gender strategy is to identify the priority areas and related goals, which are a precursor to more specific gender targets and should focus on the company's vision for gender diversity. The goals should reflect the key issues that staff identified through the audit and scorecard. Where staff ideas outstrip capacity for action, management may prioritize by using the business case to identify priority areas with the greatest business impact. To further help prioritize goals, there are several additional key considerations to keep in mind. First, identify priority areas for your company. While all are important, rank them in order of importance. Several factors could influence this prioritization, such as which areas require the most improvement, or where improvement will have the greatest business impact. Use Table 1D to help you rank priorities: High (H), Medium (M), or Low (L).<sup>61</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Adapted from: Australian Government Workplace Gender Equality Agency, [Gender Strategy Toolkit](#), Sydney: Australian Government, 40.

Next, rate company progress. Rate each area, on a scale of 1–5, in terms of how well gender-equity principles have been integrated.

Finally, examine the table to compare priority areas with areas of greater or lesser progress. Are there high-priority areas with poor performance to date? Are there unexpected gaps or areas that need improvement? Discuss with the task force how to prioritize key areas.<sup>62</sup>

**TABLE 1D | Ranking Gender Diversity Priorities**

POTENTIAL PRIORITY AREAS	PRIORITY RATING	PROGRESS TO DATE
Gender Equity throughout the Workforce		
Gender Equity in Recruitment		
Gender Equity in Promotions		
Women’s Representation in Leadership and Management		
Gender Pay Equity		
Gender Inclusive Culture		
Equity of Training and Professional Development Opportunities		
Family-Friendly Work Environment		
Management Accountability for Gender Equity		
Gender Inclusion in Monitoring and Reporting		
Gender Mainstreaming in Policies and Processes		
Gender Equity in Procurement/ Supply Chain		
Gender Inclusion in Community Engagement		
Investment in a Diverse Talent Pipeline		

<sup>62</sup> Ibid, 39.

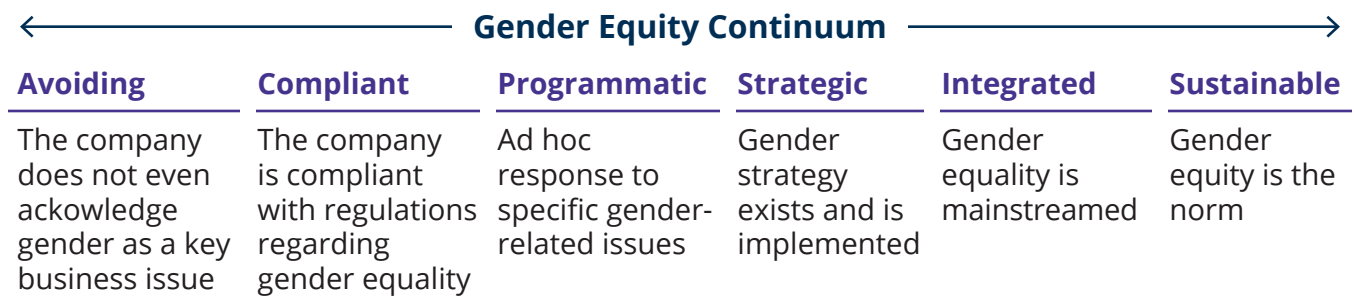


### Step 3. For priority goals, set specific targets.

Based on Step 2, identify key gender equity targets for each priority goal (see **TOOL 1.12** for guidance on target setting). Develop draft targets to align with key corporate goals.

Figure 1C below is a “Gender Equity Continuum.” It can help you set targets as well as measure the integration of gender issues and the extent to which they are considered. By identifying your current spot along the continuum, you can set targets to move from one stage to the next—for instance, from *Compliant* to *Integrated*—over a set time period.<sup>63</sup>

**FIGURE 1C | Gender Equity Continuum**



### Step 4: Validate goals and targets.

Goals and targets should be discussed and validated with management and relevant business units to ensure widespread understanding, support, and buy-in for the goals.

Here is a set of indicators to guide your implementation of a gender equity strategy. Originally developed by IFC in collaboration with Lonmin for the publication *Women in Mining: A Guide to Integrating Women in the Workforce*, they are reprinted in Table 1E.<sup>64</sup>

A gender equity strategy is a dynamic document that includes the **guiding plan for how to meet gender targets**, outlining the common set of rules and expectations for all staff regarding gender equity (the policy), as well as any other programs that will be implemented (training, communications, monitoring, etc.) to help the company achieve its goals.

<sup>63</sup> Australian Government Workplace Gender Equality Agency, [Gender Strategy Toolkit](#), 39.

<sup>64</sup> IFC and Lonmin, [Women in Mining: A Guide to Integrating Women into the Workforce](#), 17.

**TABLE 1E | Model Gender Equity Strategy Targets**

	MANAGERS	ENGINEERING	MEDICAL	HUMAN RESOURCES	TRAINING/ CULTURE CHANGE/ COMMUNICATIONS
<b>Outputs</b>		» # of change houses built » # of underground toilets installed » # of appropriate safety equipment issued	» # of jobs assessed for women	» # of policies developed/ updated » # of women assisted with childcare	» # of hours training provided on gender bias » # of participants in trainings and workshops » # of people reached through communications efforts
<b>Outcomes</b>	» # of women employed by the company » % of women employed by the company » Female vs. male attrition rates				
<b>Anticipated Impacts</b>	» Compliance with government legislation » Increase in income of women, thereby impacting community wellbeing » Improved safety record due to hiring of women » Improved machinery care record due to hiring of women				

**Step 5. Outline gender equity strategic action plan.**

Based on the key goals and targets identified, identify key categories/types of activities that will be undertaken to meet the stated targets. At this stage, the action plan does not need to be in final detail, but it should follow a theory of change model—this can incorporate the targets set in Step 4 and should outline the issue, the action, the expected outcome, and the expected impact. This outlined plan will state what the company’s key gender priorities are, what it intends to do about them, and how these actions are anticipated to bring about the desired results. In addition to this theory of change as the ‘meat’ of the plan, the strategy document should include the following sections:<sup>65</sup>

- **Introduction/context:** This section should outline the key gender mainstreaming goals, the business case behind these objectives, a summary of diagnostics, and the company’s current status on meeting these goals.
- **Key focus areas:** For each focus area, identify the goals that have been set, anticipated actions to reach these goals, roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities for key activities, factors that would support or threaten success, and how progress will be measured. See Table 1F for an example of how to structure action planning for each focus area.

<sup>65</sup> Australian Government Workplace Gender Equality Agency, *Gender Strategy Toolkit*, 42.

- **Consolidation of approaches by business unit:** Different teams within an organization may have different roles to play across various focus areas. For instance, while HR may be the primary actor on increasing gender in recruitment, the communications team may also have a role to play in shaping how recruitment messaging is put out to potential applicants. In addition to organizing the strategy by focus area, also include an outline of specific tasks by business unit, which may cross multiple focus areas.
- **Monitoring, consultation, and timeline review:** Ensure that business units are aware of how and when progress will be monitored, as well as when the plan will be reviewed, tweaked, and updated to support continued progress. Strategies should be living dynamic documents, with set periods for review and adjustment.
- **One-page summary of the gender equity strategy:** This will enable easy dissemination. Share the summary with all teams and make sure that they understand their responsibilities, accountability, and opportunities for input and revision. Based on the overall strategy, individual business units can develop their own implementation strategies.

Once the strategy is complete, the company's gender equity champion should develop and implement training on the strategy for all staff across the organization. This will familiarize staff with the strategy and reinforce corporate objectives and commitments, as well as the role each business unit is expected to play.

**TABLE 1F | Example of a Gender Equity Strategy Outline**

<b>KEY FOCUS AREA</b>	Recruitment
<b>PROBLEM TO ADDRESS</b>	Too few women applicants
<b>ANTICIPATED ACTIONS</b>	Coordinated outreach to local training institutions, improve gender inclusiveness of recruitment materials, provide coaching for potential female job applicants
<b>DESIRED OUTCOME</b>	Increased number of female applicants
<b>DESIRED IMPACTS</b>	At least 20 percent of job shortlist candidates are women
<b>RESPONSIBLE UNIT</b>	Human Resources and business units
<b>TIMEFRAME</b>	Effective immediately
<b>MEASURING PROGRESS</b>	Quarterly review of total applicants, shortlists, and final candidates
<b>STRENGTHS AND THREATS TO SUCCESS</b>	Strengths: Improved outreach activities, and gender-inclusive recruiting can support success; Threats: Lack of female candidates
<b>RESOURCES NEEDED</b> <i>(such as financial, staff time)</i>	Budget, staff time, consultants

## TOOL 1.10

### Terms of Reference for a Gender Equity Champion

- » **GOAL:** Lead and coordinate gender mainstreaming efforts
- » **TARGET UNITS:** Human Resources and Senior Management

### About the Gender Equity Champion

The gender equity champion is the company's lead on gender diversity and equity initiatives. The champion directs some activities and serves in a coordinating role for others. This individual—preferably a person with a decision-making role—is responsible for implementing the business case and the gender strategy. The role of the champion includes:

- Gaining buy-in from senior management and other key players in support of the gender equity messaging
- Working with business units such as HR, procurement, and community engagement to develop unit-specific gender action plans
- Helping teams to implement their gender strategies
- Providing organization-wide coordination, including by chairing and coordinating the company's gender task force (if applicable)
- Assisting with external messaging on the company's gender commitments

This tool outlines the main responsibilities of the gender equity champion in a ToR. While certain in-house staff might qualify for this position, be sure to allot time to do the job rather than adding the role to existing full-time responsibilities. At a minimum, the champion's job should be considered a half-time position, and there is a strong argument for designating it as a full-time position.

The champion role is not meant to substitute for subject-matter gender expertise in business units (i.e., gender expertise among community development experts or gender-based violence and harassment experts to conduct GBVH assessments). Rather, the intent is to designate an individual to lead and coordinate implementation of the gender strategy across the organization.

In terms of seniority, the champion should rank in upper/middle management at a minimum. If the champion is not a senior manager, a board director should be designated to provide senior-level support and traction for the champion's proposals and work.

## Sample Terms of Reference for a Gender Equity Champion

### Introduction

Outline the reasons [Company] wants to hire a gender equity champion. Introduce steps taken to date on laying the groundwork for a gender equity strategy or program. Describe the gender equity commitments that underpin the hiring of a gender equity champion—for instance, commitments to increase recruitment of women, engage with more women-owned businesses, or ensure equitable consultation and engagement with male and female community members. Provide the corporate context and reporting lines: Will the champion have a team or an office? To whom does the champion report? Has the champion's work program been defined or are plans in place to do so?

The objective of the gender equity champion position is to have a corporate focal point who can provide leadership and coordination to help [Company] improve equity of opportunities for women and men within [Company] as well as in [Company's] interaction with suppliers and the community. The champion will be responsible for developing [Company's] gender equity strategy, securing buy-in within the company, and working across business units to support the implementation of the strategy.

### Scope of Work

The gender equity champion's responsibilities will include the following

1. Facilitate corporate agenda-setting for gender:
  - a. Identify drivers for gender diversity and develop a business case for gender equity:
    - Identify key drivers for improving gender diversity within the company, such as performance and profitability, corporate social responsibility, industry commitments, or legislative requirements.
    - Explore and consolidate these drivers into a company-specific business case for gender equity. This business case should outline ways in which improvements in gender diversity and progress toward gender equity will—or have the potential to—create business benefits for [Company].
  - b. Cultivate senior leadership support for gender equity:
    - Meet with senior leadership to present the business case for gender equity
    - Work with senior management to secure their commitment to support gender equity
  - c. Form a gender task force: The company's gender task force will act as a sounding board for corporate gender initiatives, help aggregate staff ideas, concerns, and questions, and support information campaigns to inform staff on gender activities.

For more information on the gender task force, see [TOOL 1.15 \(Creation of a Gender Task Force and Terms of Reference for a Gender Task Force\)](#). Depending on the size of the company, country-level and departmental task forces can be developed to support implementation, which should include representatives from all job grades. The task force itself should include male and female members.

- d. Assume the lead role in the task force. Duties include:
    - Convening and managing task force meetings
    - Recording and sharing proceedings
    - Coordinating presentations with management and human resources to keep the task force updated on gender-focused activities
    - Work with the task force on ways to best invite, collect, and communicate staff concerns, ideas, and questions, as well as how to support communication campaigns to general staff.
  - e. Lead the development of the gender equity strategy, in collaboration with HR, senior management, and the gender task force:
    - This strategy should provide the structure for commitments, actions, and monitoring progress towards gender equity. The strategy should lay out objectives, coordinate activities, clarify accountability, and frame clear targets, time-bound goals, and the pathway towards those goals.
    - This strategy should establish company-wide goals for gender equity and diversity. These goals are a precursor to more specific gender targets and should focus on the company's vision for gender diversity. They should be discussed and validated with management and relevant business units to ensure widespread understanding, support, and buy-in for the goals.
    - Work with HR and management on the development of specific gender targets, that complement the gender strategy, map out proposed activities to meet those targets, and frame them in a theory of change that outlines how specific activities will help [Company] to meet its targets.
    - Develop a monitoring and evaluation plan for measuring progress against stated targets.
    - Work with HR on a corporate-wide campaign to address sexual harassment and gender-based violence if this does not yet exist.
2. Disseminate the gender equity strategy to all business units and support implementation across [Company]:
    - a. Identify operational champions in various business units. The gender task force can support this effort by providing an embedded gender 'spokesperson' to support the operational champion.

- b. Work with senior management and business units to implement the gender equity strategy:
    - Presenting the strategy to teams
    - Working with teams to identify where they fit into the strategy
    - Helping teams develop unit-specific gender plans
    - Supporting implementation of unit-specific gender plans
  - c. Provide input as HR and business units conduct assessments on relevant topics, such as women in the workforce, the supply chain, and community engagement, to help teams consider gender dimensions, ensure continuity of corporate messaging and priorities across activities, and ensure as much coordination between departments as possible.
  - d. Support HR in identifying independent teams to conduct gender audit and pay gap studies, where required.
  - e. Work closely with supply chain and community engagement teams to develop a business case for engaging with women-owned businesses and supporting a gender-equitable approach to community development.
- 3.** Serve as internal and external point of contact for questions or support regarding [Company's] gender equity strategy:
- a. In addition to serving as the internal point person on gender equity, the champion may be called on to represent [Company] publicly on matters related to the gender equity strategy.
  - b. Document progress on gender equity initiatives for corporate storytelling.
  - c. Work with the communications team to ensure that progress is shared with employees, management, and stakeholders.

In addition to these tasks, the champion will be responsible for developing additional activities as needed to support training on and implementation of [Company's] gender equity strategy, as well as ensuring that individual business units can apply and act on the strategy.

## TOOL 1.11

### Develop Human Resources Policies and Programs to Support a Gender-Inclusive Workforce

- » **GOAL:** Develop policies and programs that attract, support, and advance female employees
- » **TARGET UNIT:** Human Resources

To maintain a gender-inclusive workforce, you will need to identify and develop policies and associated guidance that can help to make your workplace more attractive to both women and men. While many companies have high-level policy frameworks outlining gender equality and diversity, more specific policies and implementation guidelines that clearly state how the company expects to support gender equality are important for attracting and retaining a gender-diverse workforce. Policies that can help attract and retain a more gender-diverse workplace can include, for example:

1. Equal pay for equal work (especially in countries where this is not legislated)
2. Policies to support balancing work and family life, including
  - a. Flexible work policies
  - b. Family leave policies
  - c. Support for pregnant employees
  - d. Support for nursing mothers
  - e. Guidance on employer-supported childcare
3. Sexual harassment and respectful workplace policies and codes of conduct (See **TOOL SUITE 4**)
4. PPE and physical workplace safety
5. Review of employee benefits programs

In addition to making an employer more desirable for potential employees and more accommodating to current employees, these policies can also make the workplace more attractive to returning employees. Maternity leave can represent a key juncture for employees, and supportive policies can help determine whether they choose to return to the workplace after maternity leave. A study in New Zealand estimated savings of \$75,000 for each employee returning to the workforce after maternity leave, highlighting how important it is for companies to have policies that support new families.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Office on Women's Health, [Business Case for Breastfeeding](#), 2014.



While these policies may reflect longstanding corporate values, it is important to have explicit and clear rules and guidelines that are communicated to and available for all staff in order to have clear expectations, rights, implementation, enforcement, and accountability.

Below is an overview of several key gender policies. Note that this is not a comprehensive list. Rather, the examples highlighted here serve to underscore important attributes of policy options to consider.

## 1. Policies to Support Equal Pay for Equal Work

In many countries around the world, equal pay for equal work is not yet legally mandated. Where there is no legal requirement for pay equity, companies can still demonstrate their own corporate commitments to equity by enshrining pay equity in their own policies through remuneration and/or gender policies. For more information on implementing pay equity, see [TOOL 1.6 \(Pay Gap Survey Guidance and Terms of Reference\)](#).

## 2. Policies to Support Work-Life Balance

Companies that have introduced policies and programs to support balancing work and family obligations report lower turnover, less absenteeism, and improved rates of return from maternity leave.<sup>67</sup> Policies that help employees balance their professional and family responsibilities can improve an employer's desirability and reduce attrition and turnover. Replacing salaried workers can cost employers as much as 50% to 60% of the worker's annual salary, rising even higher for more senior employees (replacing a top executive can cost around 213% of annual salary).<sup>68</sup> Policies to help employees balance competing demands in their lives over the course of their employment can therefore create substantial benefits both to employees as well as employers.

### 2a. Flexible Work Practices

Flexible work practices can take many forms, and policies can include a range of flexible work arrangements, such as:

- Flexible hours (may be based around set core business hours)
- Compressed work week
- Telework, where appropriate
- Annualized hours
- Shift-swapping
- School-term work schedules

<sup>67</sup> Sodexo, [Why You Should be Supporting Working Parents and How You Can Do It](#), cited June 2022.

<sup>68</sup> Alison Moodie, [Why Employers Efforts to Support Pregnant Employees can Backfire](#), The Guardian, 7 Nov 2016.

- Flexible route/assignment length for work that requires extended absences from home (shipping, some transport jobs, etc.):
  - Giving employees choice of route length
  - Accommodating ad hoc requests for short-term route changes for personal needs
  - Reviewing annual rotations to ensure employees do not miss special events in consecutive years
- Leave (with or without pay) for family or parental reasons

Flexible work policies allow employees to structure their time and/or location in a way that makes their work more compatible with family or care responsibilities. Since more care and family labor are undertaken by women globally, these policies can help companies increase their attraction and retention of women.

Flexible workplace policies should apply equally to male and female employees. Allowing and encouraging men to use flexible work policies can further improve gender equality by sharing the burden and career disruption. It also can incentivize companies to see family leave not as a downside to hiring women, but as a standard employee entitlement. Women and men should be equally encouraged and supported to take advantage of these policies. In evaluations of flexible work programs, companies should be sure to look at both male and female uptake.

Companies also should take note of any legislative guidelines for flexible work. For instance, in Australia, the Fair Work Act 2009 requires companies to allow requests for flexible work arrangements for employees with children under school age who provide care for a family member (as per the 2010 Carer Recognition Act), who have a disability and/or dependents under the age of 18 with a disability, or who care for a family member experiencing intimate partner violence.<sup>69</sup>

Flexible work should be used as a business arrangement to support qualified employees and make it easier for them to juggle multiple roles. Of course, flexible work arrangements will depend on the nature of the job. For instance, telework is clearly not feasible for all types of employment (for instance, meter readers in the power and water sectors, transport drivers, road construction, etc.), but employers could consider other types of flexible work, such as job sharing and rotations<sup>70</sup>. Employers can maintain discretion over granting of flex time, but requests should be seriously considered because doing so can help improve job satisfaction and retain staff. It is of critical importance that guidelines for requesting and granting flexible work arrangements are clear and transparent, with well-defined criteria.

<sup>69</sup> Tara Diamond, "The Rise of Flexible Work in the Resource Industry," Carlton Victoria: AusIMM, 2016.

<sup>70</sup> The ILO defines job-sharing as "a voluntary arrangement whereby two persons take joint responsibility for one full-time job and divide the time they spend on it according to specific arrangements made with the employer. A common form of job-sharing is to split one full-time job into two part-time jobs." International Labour Organization, "Work-sharing and job-sharing."

In addition to using such policies to spell out provisions for granting flexible work, they can also be deployed as a way to help employees transition back to full-time work following maternity/paternity leave or sick leave.

## 2b. Family Leave Policies

Paid family leave policies are another opportunity for companies to support employees, as well as improve the attraction and retention of women. Most countries (the United States, Papua New Guinea, and a number of island nations being the main exceptions) require paid leave for new mothers, funded either by companies or a combination of government and company funding. Such policies often include a mix of dedicated leave for mothers to have the baby and recover from birth as well as parental leave available to either parent for childcare during the first few months. A [study by the U.S. Center for Economic and Policy Research](#) found either a positive or non-negative effect of parental leave programs on profitability and performance, productivity, turnover, and employee morale for nearly 100% of respondent businesses.<sup>71</sup>

Even where parental leave regulations are more conservative or focused primarily on the mother, or where they are unpaid, companies can use their own policies to go beyond legal mandates by providing paid leave for both parents. Doing so not only improves the opportunity for gender equality by encouraging both women and men to take time off to share parental responsibilities, but can also support gender equity in the workforce. Allowing both women and men to take time off around the birth of a child can reduce hiring biases against women and the extent to which taking maternity leave slows down women's career progression.

Companies should review their own policies to ensure that they are equally available to women and men, as well as consider any incentives or disincentives to taking parental leave. These can include, for instance, considering how positions are filled during parental leave, how employees are evaluated or disadvantaged for time off in their career progression, and options available to employees when they return from family leave.

Parental leave policies should include:

- Length of paid leave for new mothers and fathers, and options for any additional unpaid leave
- Notice period: Timeframe for notifying employers of intent to take leave, responsibilities in informing employers, and steps for managers to take to accommodate pregnant employees and parental leave

<sup>71</sup> Sodexo, [Why You Should be Supporting Working Parents and How You Can Do It.](#)

- Measures employers must take to find alternative job placements for pregnant/breastfeeding staff: This will depend on physical risk/health risk profile of the pregnant employee's job.
- Starting point of leave: For example, at birth or prior to birth?
- Notice requirements to extend parental leave
- Protocol for communication/engagement during the leave period
- Timeline for discussing return to work
- Job coverage protocols: This includes assurances that staff can return to the same position and contingency planning when staff cannot return to the same position.
- Protocol for adoption of children and staff eligibility for parental leave<sup>72</sup>

Employees also have a responsibility to learn about their options and rights when requesting parental leave. Consider periodic activities and events aimed at raising awareness.

### *How to Encourage the Uptake of Flexible Work and Parental Leave Policies*

This involves effort on multiple fronts:

- Set the tone at the top. Managers should lead the way and demonstrate behavior that supports the uptake of flexible work policies. They should be trained in flexible work policies, including understanding the benefits of these programs to staff and to business units, and there should be oversight across units to ensure that programs are being implemented equitably.
- Develop informational campaigns about flexible work programs, targeting both women and men.
- Review performance evaluation criteria to ensure that employees who take flexible leave arrangements are not disadvantaged for promotions—for instance, by focusing performance reviews on outcomes rather than on hours worked.

## 2c. Guidance on Supporting Pregnant Employees

Research shows that pregnant women and mothers face biases and discrimination. They are often stereotyped as 'warm but incompetent' and are frequently passed over for opportunities and promotions, forced to take leave, or even dismissed.<sup>73</sup> **TOOL 1.17** gives guidance on how to address bias against women in the workforce, but this tool provides suggestions on how employers can proactively support pregnant employees to continue working effectively during their pregnancy.

<sup>72</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission, Tool 4: Parental Leave Checklist for Employers, Canberra: Australian Human Rights Commission, 2015.

<sup>73</sup> Judy Clair, Kristen Jones, Eden King, and Beth K. Humberd, "[The Right and Wrong Ways to Help Pregnant Workers,](#)" Harvard Business Review, 2016.

A note on providing support for pregnant employees: there are many ingrained societal biases around pregnant women, which can impact both employers and employees. Employers may be concerned that pregnant employees may not want to work on particularly challenging assignments, while pregnant women may be concerned about their ability to handle pregnancy or motherhood and the demands of the workplace. Employers which make assumptions—even well-meaning ones—about what pregnant employees want or need can inadvertently undermine women and create more insecurity, which has been linked to women’s workforce attrition. While trying to provide accommodation and support for pregnant employees, employers should be aware of the potential for signaling lack of confidence in pregnant employees.<sup>74</sup> For instance, when employers assume a pregnant employee would not want to be staffed to a particularly challenging project or travel, etc., this can undermine employees and even contribute to failure to return from maternity leave.<sup>75</sup>

To navigate this situation, employers should focus on providing practical help and creating a widely understand framework of options and benefits that employees can determine for themselves if and how to take advantage of them. Specific offers of support are most useful and constructive when they are provided in response to requests, negotiated with the employer, and support the employee’s autonomy.<sup>76</sup> Examples of such specific types of support include flexibility to attend doctors’ appointments or even to rest during the workday. Employees should be consulted on the type of support they need, how to ask for additional support, and how to best empower themselves to speak up if they need to change something about their work environment.

Suggestions for how employers can support pregnant employees include:

- **Communication:** Make sure employees are informed of all maternal health and childcare benefits, support structures for pregnant employees and new parents (resource people in HR, employee resource groups, etc.), flexible schedule options, leave options, performance management options, etc. related to pregnancy and parenthood.
- **Consider Workplace Health Visit:** Especially for remote workplaces, consider having an OB-GYN visit the workplace to provide independent advice on everything from prenatal care to testing and safe medications.<sup>77</sup> In urban areas, ensure that employees understand entitlements with regards to leave for medical visits. Clarify what this covers (for instance, only doctor’s appointments, or are visits to acupuncturists, lactation consultants, pre/post-natal massage covered? What is the difference in coverage for the pre- and post-natal periods?)

<sup>74</sup> [Harvard Business Review](#), 2016.

<sup>75</sup> Alison Moodie, [“Why Employers’ Efforts to Support Pregnant Employees can Backfire.”](#) The Guardian, 7 Nov 2016.

<sup>76</sup> [Harvard Business Review](#), 2016.

<sup>77</sup> Carole Khalifé, [How to Support your Pregnant Employees](#), LinkedIn 2016.

- **Support system:** Create staff meetups for pregnant employees and new parents.
- **Naps:** Consider creating a rest room where women might be able to get rest as needed, and discuss how to create flexibility to allow napping.
- **Provide flexibility and specific logistical support:** For instance, clearly communicate about working hours flexibility to attend doctor's appointments, take rest during the day, etc.
- **Proactively check in on performance management:** Managers should take the opportunity to check in with staff to set performance management goals and ensure staff are empowered to speak up if or when they require support. Arrange for a performance management check-in immediately prior to parental leave, and come up with a flexible structure for re-entry.

## 2d. Guidance on Accommodation for Breastfeeding and Pumping Mothers

Supporting return to work for nursing mothers not only helps them transition back into the workplace, but can also be good for businesses. Support for breastfeeding mothers increases employee retention, reduces employee absenteeism, and lowers health care and insurance costs. While breastfeeding support is typically only required for the first six months to one year (some employees may choose to breastfeed longer), support during this time can be impactful for employees, families, and companies over a much longer term (see Box 1F).

### BOX 1F | A Family-Focused Approach to Lactation Support

While many companies implement lactation support programs targeting female employees, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power recognized that decisions around breastfeeding involve the whole family: breastfeeding is time and labor intensive for mothers, and health benefits for breastfed babies translate into benefits for the whole family. Although 80% of its workforce is male, the LA DWP initiated a lactation support program for mothers, fathers, and partners, which led to a dramatic reduction in turnover and absenteeism for both male and female workers. As a result of the program, 83% of employees were more positive about their employer and 67% felt that it contributed to their intention to stay with the department as a long-term employer. (Cohen R, Lange L & Slusser W. 2002; [A description of a male-focused breastfeeding promotion corporate lactation program](#). *Journal of Human Lactation*, 18(1), 61–65.)

**Reducing Absenteeism:** Breastmilk-fed babies are sick less frequently than formula-fed babies, which means fewer missed workdays for parents of breastmilk-fed babies. In a study of breastfed and formula-fed babies, the incidence of one-day absences for mothers to care for sick infants was more than twice as high for mothers with formula-fed babies.<sup>78</sup> In a two-year study by U.S. insurer Cigna, mothers' participation in workplace lactation support programs was correlated with \$60,000 in savings in employee absenteeism.<sup>79</sup>

**Reducing Healthcare Costs:** Correlated with reduced illnesses among breastfed babies, breastfed babies require fewer doctor visits. In countries with employer-paid healthcare, this means fewer insurance claims placed through employers. The same Cigna workplace lactation program cited above led to an annual savings of \$240,000 in healthcare costs over two years.<sup>80</sup>

**Reduced Turnover:** Companies which support employees who choose to continue breastfeeding and pumping support employee retention, saving significant costs associated with employee turnover. For instance, U.S. firm Mutual of Omaha saw a retention rate 24% above the national average for returning mothers due to its lactation support program.<sup>81</sup>

Employers can support nursing mothers through several key initiatives:

- 1. Appropriate facilities:** Where employees do not have private offices, companies should provide private secure spaces for mothers to express milk. This can be a small single-person room or a room with curtains or partitions to allow multiple women privacy to express milk. Rooms should be lockable, have accessible electrical outlets for each user and a small refrigerator for milk storage, and ideally a sink for washing bottles and pumps. Many companies choose to supply hospital-grade pumps, which can be used onsite and can make pumping faster and more efficient, reducing the time needed. Employees should not be asked to express milk in bathrooms, utility closets, or other non-sanitary and non-lockable places. Breast milk is food, and women should not be asked to pump in places that would not be sanitary for food preparation. As a rule of thumb, expressing milk should also be assumed to require as much privacy as would be provided for using the restroom. Pumping rooms should be locked, but women using pumping facilities should be provided with keys or keycode access. Depending on the needs of the workforce—if employees use multiple worksites, for instance—keycode access can provide employees easy access to multiple pumping rooms.

<sup>78</sup> Rona Cohen, Marsha B. Mrtek, and Robert G. Mrtek, [Comparison of Maternal Absenteeism and Infant Illness Rates Among Breast-feeding and Formula-feeding Women in Two Corporations](#). American Journal of Health Promotion: November/December 1995, Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 148-153.

<sup>79</sup> Office on Women's Health, [Business Case for Breastfeeding](#), 2014.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

- 2. Flexible scheduling:** Lactating mothers typically need to pump every two to four hours; with efficient pumps, pumping may take between 15 and 30 minutes per session. All managers should be given sensitivity training on the flexibility needs of pumping mothers, and employees should be allowed flexibility in their schedules for pumping, with the understanding that this time may come out of lunches or other breaks, or employees may be expected to come early or stay late.

In addition to scheduling during the day, HR, managers, and employees should work together to ensure that lactating mothers are returning to work in roles that can accommodate breastfeeding. This should include ensuring that breastfeeding mothers are not in contact with any chemicals, radiation, or other safety risks. Furthermore, HR and managers should consult with employees on whether any job-specific accommodations need to be made—for instance, for women public transport drivers, plan routes and breaks that will enable women to access pumping facilities as needed.<sup>82</sup>

- 3. Training for managers:** HR and all managers should be provided with training on breastfeeding and the needs of breastfeeding mothers so that they can work with returning employees to plan effectively. When managers understand the needs of breastfeeding mothers—both in terms of the day-to-day time-management requirements, as well the fact that breastfeeding is typically a temporary accommodation—this can help managers and employees work together to find solutions that work for everyone.
- 4. Clear communication and planning:** When employees are discussing their maternity leave and plans for returning to work, plans for breastfeeding should be a part of the conversation to help managers plan with employees how to accommodate scheduling and flexibility requirements.
- 5. Support:** Consider creating a support and advocacy network for lactating employees to create opportunities for support and discussion within the workforce. Employers can also provide information to pregnant employees and partners, providing information on the benefits of breastfeeding and informing them of support offered. As noted in Box 1F, offering this support to male and female employees can create benefits for families as well as employers.

## 2e. Guidance on Employer-Supported Childcare

For many families, access and costs of childcare, balanced against the demands of benefits of a job outside the home, can be critical factors in whether potential employees

<sup>82</sup> Maternity Action. Accommodating breastfeeding on return to work. Cited January 2022. See [Maternity Action's website](#) for many resources on supporting pregnant and nursing mothers and new parents.



are able to join the workforce. According to one research study, 23% of employees—including three times more women than men—have said that childcare challenges have led them to consider leaving their jobs.<sup>83</sup>

The IFC has developed extensive guidance on the benefits of employer-supported childcare for employers as well as employees, including case studies and detailed guidance for employers. (For more information, please see the full report [A Guide for Employer Supported Childcare](#)). The report highlights that providing childcare for employees' children can lead to improved employee retention, productivity, job satisfaction, and employee loyalty. Employee-supported childcare can make an employer more attractive and in particular help increase women's participation in the workforce.<sup>84</sup>

*“Many businesses find that increased profitability from family-friendly workplace benefits—such as daycare services, fee subsidies, breastfeeding support, and paid parental leave—makes them worthwhile investments.”*

—IFC Guide for Employer Supported Childcare, 17

Employers that want to offer childcare options for employees have numerous types of arrangements to consider. Childcare could include subsidies for parents to secure their own childcare, making arrangements with existing private childcare, organizing an employer-supported daycare, providing support during school holiday periods (such as children's camps), etc. The choice of childcare should be based on the needs of employees in the company's particular situation. Some countries may have legal mandates for employers to provide childcare, which should underpin any company decisions about the type of care to offer.

Employers that want to provide childcare, in accordance with or going beyond legal requirements, should follow the following steps<sup>85</sup>:

1. Identify and state the objective of the childcare program. Understanding a company's objectives (to attract applicants, including more female applicants; to increase retention of female employees after parental leave, etc.) will help companies develop indicators to measure success of the program and make any necessary adjustments.

<sup>83</sup> Joanne Sammer, [Support for New Parents can Keep Employees Onboard](#), Society for Human Resource Management, 2019.

<sup>84</sup> IFC, [A Guide for Employer-Supported Childcare](#), IFC, 2019, 15.

<sup>85</sup> IFC, [A Guide for Employer-Supported Childcare](#), IFC, 2019, 26.

2. Understand the legal requirements in your company's context.
3. Assess what sort of childcare is desired, and feasible, in your company's context. This will include exploration of employee needs and interest, as well as understanding what services are locally available. Companies may consider doing key-informant interviews with community members, especially if one objective is to become a more desirable employer for potential female employees.
4. Develop a program proposal, including identifying costs as well as key indicators to measure success of the program. These indicators should be related to the goals of implementing the program, such as increasing rates of application by female employees (and the number of female employees who accept positions with your company), as well as retention rates of parents (disaggregated by sex).
5. Implement the childcare program, and measure and track success.

### 3. Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Harassment Policies

Sexual harassment and gender-based violence can be issues in many workplaces, and particularly in male-dominated infrastructure sectors. Infrastructure sectors can require work in remote locations, travel, and/or work at early and late hours, all of which can contribute to concerns or perceptions of the potential for gender-based violence.

Strong sexual harassment and gender-based violence policies and training that address the behavior of employees on- and off-site are important prerequisites for establishing a corporate culture that does not tolerate sexual harassment or gender-based violence. They also contribute to a supportive and empowered environment in which women and men can work effectively together.

Given the importance of this topic, **TOOL SUITE 4** is entirely focused on policies, activities, and interventions to address sexual harassment and gender-based violence-related issues. It features draft model policies on sexual harassment and gender-based violence, an outline of the types of services that companies should consider establishing, and a draft code of conduct for on- and off-site employee behavior.

### 4. Guidance on PPE and Physical Workplace Safety

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is a critical investment for many infrastructure sectors. It can include (but is not limited to) foot, hand, eye, respiratory, thermal, full-body, vibration, and hearing protection. However, PPE is often designed for men or made 'unisex'—this can include large design features such as one-piece overalls down to details about how items are cut and sized.

In many industries, the traditional rule of thumb has been for women to wear smaller-sized men's PPE. Women are not just smaller versions of men, and their cuts and sizes differ from how men's clothing is cut. While of course women and men both come in an infinite variety of shapes and sizes, clothes are tailored differently for women and men, reflecting different average shapes, including differently shaped chests, higher waists, narrower shoulders, smaller necks, shorter arms, and narrower fingers for women.<sup>86</sup>

When PPE does not fit properly, it can contribute to increased safety risks (too long sleeves can get caught, improperly fitting eyewear can allow debris to enter, ill-fitting boots can be a tripping hazard, etc.). Employees may feel discouraged from wearing it, further contributing to safety hazards. Women who have to wear one-piece overalls may find it challenging to go to the bathroom, potentially creating additional safety risks where they may feel exposed if they need to use the bathroom while wearing a one-piece overall. Some studies have also found that women employees with ill-fitting PPE are likely to use mitigation strategies such as thick wool undergarments which can actually increase the risk of certain infections.<sup>87</sup> This can be both a cause of absenteeism, as well as a health cost and potential liability issue for employers.

Not only does proper fit contribute to safety, but better fitting PPE is also more comfortable PPE, which can encourage staff to wear it. Studies show that appropriate PPE can increase women's job satisfaction and self-efficacy, with the implication that this could increase job retention.<sup>88</sup>

Some specific guidance for selecting appropriate PPE for women:

1. For earplugs, consider disposable foam earplugs, as these are more likely to fit women
2. Ensure hardhats have chin straps to help keep them from falling off
3. Safety goggles should be checked for fit, as 'one-size' goggles often too large for women's faces
4. Purchase PPE specifically designed for women, in a range of sizes. This should include gloves and boots as well.<sup>89</sup>
5. Avoid simply buying 'unisex' PPE, which is often too large for women. If companies do buy unisex PPE, at least buy several sizes to try to accommodate different body types.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>86</sup> Randal Fisher, [The Need for Unique Women's PPE](#), Safety and Health, 2020.

<sup>87</sup> Hogan Lovells, [Personal Protective Equipment for Women Miners](#), 2015.

<sup>88</sup> Relationship between Personal Protective Equipment, Self-Efficacy, and Job Satisfaction of Women in the Building Trades, October 2013, *Journal of Construction Engineering and Management* 139(10), DOI: [10.1061/\(ASCE\)CO.1943-7862.0000739](https://doi.org/10.1061/(ASCE)CO.1943-7862.0000739).

<sup>89</sup> Thomas Bukowski, [Women and PPE: Finding the Right Fit](#), 2014.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

Some governments have actually included provisions in industry-specific regulations requiring companies to develop mandatory corporate codes of practice addressing provision of PPE specifically for women.<sup>91</sup> For example, the South African government published guidelines for mining companies' code of practice (CoP) regarding the provision of PPE for women. The guidelines require companies to identify all potential health and safety risks, and then outline how all risks related to PPE will be addressed. Such guidelines should clarify the roles and responsibilities for ensuring that women have access to appropriate PPE:

1. **Employer:** The employer is responsible for ensuring access to sufficient quantities of PPE, training employees on how to properly use and care for PPE, ensuring that employees follow these instructions and have appropriate facilities to care for and transport PPE, and developing ways to monitor the condition and replacement schedule for PPE.
2. **Managers:** Managers are responsible for ensuring that employees are properly using and maintaining their PPE, and that proper information is being gathered on maintenance and care for PPE.
3. **Female employees:** Female employees are responsible for properly using, caring for, and maintaining PPE, and alerting supervisors of any issues or problems.
4. **Training:** The CoP should include guidelines on training employees on the use, care, and maintenance of PPE.<sup>92</sup>

## 5. Review of Employee Benefits Programs

In addition to developing policies to specifically support women's engagement and gender equality, consider conducting a review of your employee benefit programs to ensure gender sensitivity. Such a review might include:

- **Health insurance policies:** To what extent are women's health care needs (including but not limited to birth control, prenatal care, and post-natal care) addressed? When family members and dependents are eligible for care, are care options equally available for women and men?
- **Pensions:** For instance, are pension plans structured in such a way that women are not at a disadvantage because they take career breaks for family obligations?
- **Employer-supported elderly care:** Are childcare and elderly care policies gender-sensitized? Do childcare policies provide equitable parental leave for male and female employees?

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Government of South Africa, [Mine Health and Safety Act, 1996: Guideline for a Mandatory Code of Practice on the Provision of Personal Protective Equipment for Women in the South African Mining Industry](#), 2015, 11-16

## TOOL 1.12

### Set Gender Recruitment Targets

- » **GOAL:** Developing a gender-equitable hiring process to increase gender diversity and inclusion in the workforce
- » **TARGET UNITS:** Human Resources, Communications

### About Gender Diversity Targets

Gender diversity targets help companies measure progress towards gender equity goals. They increase coordination and strengthen the commitment to meeting these equity goals. Targets can focus teams internally and enable benchmarking with other industry players and provide incentives and accountability for reaching corporate goals.

While targets (and quotas) cannot address the underlying reasons for under-representation of women in particular parts of the workforce, they have been shown to be among the most effective means of addressing gaps in gender diversity.<sup>93</sup> “Targets with teeth” can significantly help companies increase gender-equitable representation, especially at entry level. A three-year McKinsey study of 118 companies found that firms with targets were much more successful in recruiting entry-level female candidates than firms without targets.<sup>94</sup>

Targets should be specific and challenging. In addition to quantitative metrics, they should include qualitative indicators of the ways in which people work together—for instance, targets that signal a more respectful workplace, more inclusive meeting practices, and more flexibility in work arrangements. Metrics also might include indicators like decreased absenteeism and turnover, and higher employee satisfaction.<sup>95</sup>

### Guide to Developing Gender Recruitment Targets

This step-by-step guide will help you create gender recruitment targets.<sup>96</sup> For examples of the kinds of targets to set, see Table 1G.

- 1. Secure leadership support:** Is senior management supportive of setting targets and involved in the target-setting process? To build broader support for meeting targets and create momentum for reaching the targets, senior managers must publicly endorse the effort. Including gender diversity gains in senior management performance evaluations can build momentum and buy-in from the top down.

<sup>93</sup> Catherine Macdonald, *The Role of Gender in the Extractive Industries*, Helsinki: UNU-Wider, 2017, 19.

<sup>94</sup> Women in Mining Canada, *Welcoming to Women: Action Plan for Canada's Mining Employers*, 23.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> These steps are based on: Australian Government Workplace Gender Equality Agency, *“How to Set Gender Diversity Targets,”* Canberra: Commonwealth Government of Australia, 2013.

2. **Develop a gender equity policy and strategy (TOOLS 1.8 and 1.9):** Targets cannot exist in the absence of a policy stating them and a strategy to help achieve them. Targets should be part of a broader gender equity policy, and the related strategy should include the steps that will be taken to develop a gender-diverse work environment and the specific actions to help achieve the recruitment targets.
3. **Establish targets:** Targets should be clearly defined (i.e., target gender ratios for particular positions). They can include immediate goals and longer-term targets, but they must be achievable, with small, incremental steps to enable effective progress. Targets should be discrete and measurable—for instance, retention rates for women following maternity leave, rather than trying to measure vague indicators such as “inclusive culture” or “diverse workforce.” Be sure that targets are:
  - a. **Accountable:** Ensure that managers and staff have the ability to advance progress towards targets and are held accountable for meeting them.
  - b. **Manageable:** Ensure that the targets relate to outcomes, strategies, and tactics that managers can actually control, so that they can realistically be held accountable for meeting goals.
  - c. **Realistic:** Goals should be reasonable and achievable.
  - d. **Specific to the organization:** Targets are a great way for companies to benchmark themselves within an industry and can be a way to demonstrate commitment and distinguish performance. Fundamentally, however, targets should be about the needs and goals of the company itself, so they should be based on the results of the gender assessment. They should incorporate the analysis of recruitment and turnover data and identified bottlenecks for gender-equitable recruitment and retention.
4. **Review and refine targets:** The target-setting process should include representatives from different business units, including staff and managers. After draft targets have been set, review targets with key staff to ensure understanding and buy-in.
5. **Publicly communicate targets:** In addition to external communication through annual and quarterly reports, targets should be shared internally with staff. Communications should include the business case for a gender-diverse workforce, a description of the target-setting process, and details on how they will be achieved.
  - a. **Establish accountability:** Identify the ways in which business units and individual managers will be held accountable for meeting recruitment targets. Specify training for selection teams to counter any bias.
  - b. **Create incentives:** In addition to accountability and incentives for managers, setting team incentives can contribute to organization-wide staff buy-in on the gender diversity front.

- c. Set up reporting systems: Ensure that reporting systems capture progress as well as the impact of changing gender diversity.
- d. Disaggregate reporting to the departmental and/or business unit level, and ensure reporting is publicized within the organization and to all stakeholders.
- e. Establish systems for routine review: Review findings on an annual basis and identify areas for change and improvement.
- f. Follow up with additional gender audits: Survey staff on issues of organizational culture, bias, and ways to increase opportunities for recruitment and retention of women.

**TABLE 1G | Setting Targets<sup>97</sup>**

TYPE OF TARGET	TARGET
<b>Gender equity in employment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Improve ratio of women to men in a given department from X to Y in the next two years</li> <li>» Increase ratio of women to men in senior management in the next two years</li> <li>» Bring retention rates of mid-career male and female staff to parity within the next two years</li> </ul>
<b>Review HR policies and physical infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Review all job descriptions and recruitment materials related to positions in all departments for gender-discriminatory or discouraging language with the current fiscal year</li> <li>» Review HR policies regarding ergonomics, PPE, workplace safety, and equipment to ensure that these consider differences in safety needs between women and men</li> <li>» Ensure that all departments on site comply with HR policies on ergonomics, PPE, workplace safety, and equipment</li> <li>» Renovate all toilet (and shower facilities, where applicable) to be code compliant within the current fiscal year</li> </ul>
<b>Gender-inclusive work environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» In employee engagement surveys, improve employees' perceptions of acceptability of taking parental leave by XX percent:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve parity in perceptions on career development opportunities between male and female employees</li> <li>• Reduce perception gap by XX percent</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>97</sup> Women in Mining Canada, [Welcoming to Women: Action Plan for Canada's Mining Employers](#), 76.

## TOOL 1.13

### Checklist for Building a Gender-Diverse Board

- » **GOAL:** Increase board gender diversity
- » **TARGET UNIT:** Executive Board

The checklist that follows can help improve gender diversity on boards by changing the way in which candidates are identified, selected, and held accountable for performance. Based on the findings of the gender diversity board assessment (**TOOL 1.7**), you can customize this list according to your needs.<sup>98</sup>

- **Develop a strategy for improving gender diversity on the board:** Activities can include any of the actions listed here, outlined with clear timelines and accountabilities. They should align with gender diversity policies in the company.
  - Formalize a commitment to achieving gender diversity on the board. This does not have to include a quota, but the chairman of the board should be encouraged to make a public or internal commitment to gender diversity and hold board members accountable.
  - Commit to minimum gender diversity targets in candidate pools.
  - Require search firms to meet minimum gender diversity targets in their proposed candidate pools.
  - Require the nominations committee to report on measures taken to address gender diversity in the recruitment process.
  - Adopt long-term strategies to support the development of a gender-diverse pool of candidates. This can include identifying mechanisms through which the board can proactively support the development of future female board candidates—for instance, by developing mentorship, training, and networking opportunities that reach out to female candidates.
  - Appoint a board-level champion for this work.
- **Monitor and modify board practices to support gender diversity:**
  - Maintain an up-to-date skills matrix for necessary board member skills, keep an updated record of how current board members' skills complement the matrix, and use this record to guide recruitment of new board members.
  - Consider term limits for board members to promote turnover and potentially disrupt social networks that often favor men over women in senior management and corporate governance positions.

<sup>98</sup> This checklist draws on guidance from International Corporate Governance Network (ICGN), *ICGN Guidance on Gender Diversity on Boards*, London: ICGN, 2013.



- Provide board member training to increase awareness of the importance of gender diversity and the benefits to the company at all levels.
- Include gender diversity as a key agenda item and in KPIs of the board as a whole and of individual board members.
- **Promote gender diversity throughout the company:** As noted, the board's gender diversity strategy should align with the company's organization-wide gender equity strategy. The board should also take responsibility for assessing gender diversity in senior management, as well as reviewing gender diversity measures across operations.
- **Collaborate for improvement:** Network with other companies to discuss successes and challenges with gender mainstreaming.
- **Develop metrics for board performance:**
  - Identify metrics to monitor performance of the board as a whole, as well as of individual members. These can include attendance, likelihood of sanction for non-performance, and company performance. Share the metrics and communicate results to shareholders.
  - Demonstrate public accountability for gender diversity on the board and commit to transparency.
- **Make a public commitment:**
  - It may take time to develop a pipeline and identify suitable candidates for a gender-diverse board. Still, boards can start the process immediately by adopting a commitment to gender diversity and communicating this commitment in board documents and other key corporate reporting formats.
  - Disclose current gender diversity status and action plans for improving gender diversity at the board level and in annual reports to shareholders as well as throughout the organization.

**TOOL 1.14****Checklist for Senior Leadership to Demonstrate Commitment**

- » **GOAL:** Demonstrate commitment to creating a gender-equitable work environment across the company and to shareholders
- » **TARGET UNITS:** Human Resources, Senior Management, Training

Effectively supporting and developing gender diversity requires buy-in throughout an organization. Leadership at the executive level is a must for organizational change. A large-scale McKinsey study found that companies with leaders who demonstrated the behavior and commitments they were asking of their staff were five times more successful in making the change. In addition, as commitment to gender diversity becomes more important to shareholders, senior managers have an important role to play in communicating to them about the ways in which the company is advancing gender equity goals.

Senior managers can demonstrate their commitment and support in a number of ways, from how they communicate their buy in and the incentives they develop to the internal and external programs in which they participate. This demonstrated commitment also includes putting in place accountability systems to ensure that staff throughout the organization are held responsible for organizational change. The checklist that follows provides a range of ways in which senior managers can use their own participation to demonstrate and encourage gender diversification throughout their organizations.

*“Leadership support and endorsement are critical to fostering gender diversity and equality in an organization, which impacts the bottom line. Leaders have the power to influence key decisions, ensure that gender-smart policies are implemented throughout the organization, hold staff accountable, and pave the way for addressing corporate gender gaps in attracting and retaining the best talent. Leaders can also lead by example internally and externally and build partnerships.”*

—AmCham France and BIAC, *Putting All Our Minds to Work: Harnessing the Gender Dividend*

## Senior Manager Checklist for Demonstrating Commitment to Gender Diversity

### Internal Commitment and Communication

- **Communication and culture change**

- In person and in writing, make a statement to all staff about the importance of gender diversity. Explain the business case and alignment with corporate priorities. The gender equity champion or gender equity task force could take the lead in this effort.
- Explain all measures to be taken to support gender equity in the workplace. Ensure that staff understand the reasons that gender equity is a corporate priority. Be clear that the efforts are part of a plan for a stronger, more effective business model, rather than a plan to prioritize women over men.
- Use corporate reporting materials to communicate the corporate position on gender diversity and the measures in place to all stakeholders.
- Lead the push for organizational cultural change by taking a prominent and visible role in addressing gender diversity complaints or concerns and supporting transparency in handling all complaints.
- Spearhead the development of gender equity policies and publicly encourage uptake of these policies. CEOs can take the lead in driving the development and adoption of equal pay for equal work, flexible work policies, and maternity and paternity care, for instance. Most important, managers must foster a work environment that encourages staff to access such policies without jeopardizing their advancement.

- **Incentives**

- Develop and support incentive programs for gender diversity, including financial incentives for managers and departmental awards for teams that meet gender diversity and work-life balance goals.<sup>99</sup>
- Personally present awards and highlight winners at company-wide events to demonstrate commitment and support.

- **Accountability**

- Appoint a senior executive point person for gender diversity, for example at the senior vice president level who is accountable to the CEO. The senior point person can be male or female, but should have time allocated specifically for this role. Too often, this is confused with simply adding these responsibilities to the duties of to the company's highest-ranking female executive.

<sup>99</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission, *Women in Male-Dominated Industries: A Toolkit of Strategies*, 2013 52.

- Appoint a gender diversity task force that includes heads of business units and other representatives of those units. The taskforce should work with the senior executive point person to identify challenges and opportunities, develop a common, organization-wide approach to supporting gender diversity along with goals and targets, and ensure monitoring and accountability for achievement of goals and targets.<sup>100</sup>
- Work with HR and senior management teams to set targets for increasing gender diversity in each business unit.
- Develop KPIs that include advancing gender diversity and establish accountability mechanisms to hold managers accountable for meeting targets.
- **Leadership development**
  - Work with HR to set up women’s leadership development programs, including mentorship, networking, and skills-building programs.
  - Play an active role in these programs to demonstrate commitment.
  - Create mentorship programs for junior staff, particularly female staff, with senior female staff where possible.

### BOX 1G | The Value of Mentoring

A 2006 study of Sun Microsystems by Gartner and Capital Analytics used statistical analysis to quantify the financial impact of mentoring. The study examined the progress of more than 1,000 employees. Among the findings:

- 25 percent of those who were provided with mentors had a salary grade change over a given period
- 5 percent of those without mentors had a salary grade change over the same time period
- 28 percent of mentors had a salary grade change compared to 5 percent in a non-mentor control group
- 72 percent of mentorship participants were retained compared to 49 percent in a non-mentorship control group
- Mentees were promoted five times more often than a non-mentorship control group
- Mentors were promoted six times more often than non-mentor control group

Source: Knowledge @Wharton, [“Workplace Loyalties Change, but the Value of Mentoring Doesn’t.”](#) University of Pennsylvania, May 16, 2007.

<sup>100</sup> Calvert Group Ltd, City of San Francisco Department on the Status of Women and Verite, “Gender Equality Principles,” 2008.

## External Commitment and Communication

- **International gender equality agreements and pacts**
  - Demonstrate support and commitment by affiliating with global partnerships. Among the prominent international initiatives are the Women's Empowerment Principles, EDGE gender certification, Male Champions for Change, and HeForShe. See Box 1H for more detail on these initiatives.<sup>101</sup>
  - Use tools and resources provided by these groups to meet the company's gender goals.
- **International gender equality forums and events**
  - Participate in events to share knowledge and discuss progress on gender advancement. Participation in these events can present an opportunity to convey your company's gender equality commitments and actions, learn from others, and generate new ideas and partnerships for supporting gender equality. Among the more prominent events are those organized by the Clinton Global Initiative, ILO, the World Economic Forum, and the United Nations.
- **Gender equity awards programs**
  - Support public relations efforts to recognize employees' gender equity efforts and enable the sharing of experiences by putting in place awards programs. Such awards also help position the company as an employer of choice for future employees. Here are a few examples of awards programs:
    - WEP CEO Leadership Awards: The awards program of the Women's Empowerment Principles initiative recognizes concrete and innovative actions by CEOs to advance the Women's Empowerment Principles.<sup>102</sup>
    - Catalyst Awards: These awards recognize efforts to support the recruitment, development, and advancement of all women, including diverse women. Qualifications for the award include a thorough examination of candidates' initiatives, including an onsite evaluation, to evaluate proven, measurable results that benefit women across a range of dimensions, such as race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, generation, nationality, disability, and indigenous or aboriginal peoples.<sup>103</sup>
    - Business in the Community: This is the UK's most comprehensive workplace award for gender diversity. Participants receive customized feedback and recommendations to support improved performance, peer comparison, and a confidential score.<sup>104</sup>

<sup>101</sup> It is important to note the potential issues that can arise with male advocates/champions programs. In some instances, work with male champions has inadvertently overly highlighted differences in traditional roles between women and men and the importance of women in the community specifically because of their important domestic roles. This can have the effect of reinforcing women's reproductive and domestic roles, rather than emphasizing the importance of equitable opportunities and equal rights. Male advocate/champion programs need to be designed carefully so that they do not overemphasize the difference in roles and responsibilities, but rather focus on the benefits of equality.

<sup>102</sup> Find out more at <https://www.weeps.org/>.

<sup>103</sup> Find out more at <http://www.catalyst.org/catalyst-award>.

<sup>104</sup> Find out more at <https://www.bitc.org.uk/>.

**BOX 1H | Global Gender Equality Compacts and Resources****UN Global Compact: Women's Empowerment Principles CEO Statement**

The Women's Empowerment Principles are a partnership initiative of UN Women and UN Global Compact (UNGC) to help the private sector promote gender equality in the workplace, marketplace, and community. As of 2020, over 2,700 CEOs have signed the CEO Statement of Support, committing to employing the WEPs to advance gender equality. For more see: UN Global Compact, "[Women's Empowerment Principles](#)."<sup>105</sup>

**EDGE Gender Certification**

The EDGE Certification scheme is a leading gender equality certification. It helps companies demonstrate their commitment to gender equality. EDGE currently works with 200 organizations in 50 countries and 30 industries. For more see: [EDGE Certification Program](#).

**Male Champions for Change**

Gender is often mistaken for a women's issue, but gender equality concerns and benefits both women and men. In male-dominated industries such as oil, gas, and mining, male participation and commitment to gender equality is essential. The Male Champions for Change (MCC) program started in Australia but has since been replicated in various countries and contexts. The program brings together influential male leaders to redefine the role of male champions for gender equality and to create a peer group of these leaders to support the work towards gender equality. The MCC Coalition now includes over 260 CEOs, board directors, and governmental, university, and military leaders, in 155 countries, representing over 1.5 million employees across more than 230 organizations. For more see: [Male Champions of Change](#).

**HeForShe Champions: Male Advocates for Gender Equality**

This initiative of UN Women provides a platform for men and boys to work as partners in achieving gender equality. The first HeforShe parity report was launched at the 2016 World Economic Forum, featuring key gender-related data from ten global companies whose CEOs have signed on to HeForShe's 10x10x10 program. The program is a pilot effort to engage global leaders from across government, the private sector, and academia in a commitment to advance gender equality. Participating companies included AccorHotels, Barclays, Koch Holding, McKinsey & Company, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Schneider Electric, Tupperware Brands, Twitter, Unilever, and Vodafone. The report included information on percentage of female employees, percentage of women in senior leadership roles and on the board, and the percentage of new hires who are women. For more, see [heforshe.org](#).

<sup>105</sup> Aditi Mohapatra and Lauren Gula, "[Women's Empowerment Principles: Turning a Decade of Lessons into Ambitious Business Action](#)," BSR, March 2020.

## TOOL 1.15

### Creation of a Gender Task Force and Terms of Reference for a Gender Task Force

- » **GOAL:** To create a consultative committee on gender, which can serve as a liaison between staff and management on gender issues
- » **TARGET UNIT:** Human Resources

For larger companies, a gender champion alone may be insufficient to lead gender equity initiatives. The creation of a gender task force (GTF), made up of representatives from all staff grades and teams, can provide input, reviews, and a staff voice, as well as support communication to staff. A gender task force can provide staff with easily identifiable focal points within their teams, who they can approach with ideas and concerns, and can generally improve communication around gender issues throughout an organization.

Where companies are operating in multiple sites, consider having one task force per site, or convene sessions virtually to aggregate between sites.

### Draft Terms of Reference for a Gender Task Force

#### A. Introduction

Evidence increasingly demonstrates that companies that invest in gender equity within the workforce and community improve productivity, reduce costs, and strengthen operations. [Company] has expressed its commitment to improving the enabling environment for women in the workforce and the interaction of its workforce with communities, including with regards to gender. These terms of reference define the objectives, scope of work, and reporting for a multi-stakeholder working group or gender task force (GTF), and outlines its objectives for a [period], at which time the GTF process will be evaluated and adapted as necessary.

#### B. Objective

The goal of the gender task force will be to represent staff perspectives, in consultation with human resources (HR) and senior management, on all activities aimed at creating a more gender-inclusive work environment. The GTF, which will include representatives from across [Company], will act as a sounding board for human resources and senior management for consultation on any proposed gender-related initiatives, provide HR with input on gender initiatives, and help HR and management to better understand staff perspectives and concerns. The overall goal will be to ensure that there is a staff voice, input, and review for gender-focused activities, as well as staff representatives that can participate and support activities around creating a gender-equitable workplace.

### C. Composition of the Gender Task Force

Membership in the task force will be voluntary and alongside regular job responsibilities. Members will be selected as representatives across all staff categories (i.e., general staff, senior staff, management, and leadership). [*Where possible, representatives can be elected.*] The task force will include two men and two women representatives from general staff and senior staff, and one man and one woman between management and leadership. The task force will also include a representative from HR, the gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH) focal point, and any other representatives deemed necessary.

### D. Scope of Work

Responsibilities of the gender task force:

The task force itself will:

- Help to evaluate, validate, assess, and improve key outputs such as the gender related policies, strategic documents, procedures, and future assessments;
- Support the development of information campaigns on gender topics (i.e., available trainings, opportunities such as mentorships, scholarships, etc.) and grievance mechanisms, and processes for reporting sexual harassment and other gender-related misconduct and policies (including GBVH);
- Participate in public communication of results.
- The task force will not replace the official company procedures for reporting instances of sexual harassment or other gender-related misconduct.
- The task force will act to complement and support HR and internal communications functions.

Responsibilities of members of the gender task force:

- Participation in monthly gender task force meetings;
- Serve as a liaison for their peers on issues related to gender by receiving recommendations/concerns about gender in the workforce and transmitting information to management through the gender task force meetings, as well as ensuring that other staff members are aware of who they are and making themselves available for staff concerns, questions, and ideas with regards to improving gender equality;
- Evaluate, provide comment on, and validate [*Company*] activities related to gender;
- Contribute to awareness raising activities to share what gender-related activities are happening (i.e., trainings, information campaigns, new policies and grievance mechanisms);
- Monitor progress on future gender actions agreed by [*Company*].

### E. Reporting

The gender task force will be managed by the gender focal point within the human resources department, who will report directly to the human resources manager and the CEO.



## TOOL 1.16

### Supporting Gender Equity in Virtual Workplaces

- » **GOAL:** Help HR teams support parents working from home
- » **TARGET UNIT:** Human Resources

During the COVID-19 pandemic, families around the world faced unprecedented challenges balancing work and childcare. With schools closed and parents working from home, research consistently shows that while there are increasing demands on both mothers and fathers, mothers are taking on even greater workloads in the home. According to UN Women, “the average woman now spends nearly the equivalent of a full-time job doing unpaid childcare—a full working day a week more than the average man.”<sup>106</sup> This means that women, and mothers particularly, are now trying to balance work against an unprecedented amount of domestic labor. As a result, women are “more than twice as likely as fathers to worry that their performance is being judged negatively because of caregiving responsibilities.”<sup>107</sup>

The pandemic has driven 400,000 more women than men out of the U.S. workforce.<sup>108</sup> But for those women who stay in the workforce, and the employers who want and are able to keep them, adapting to the new situation by supporting women particularly to be as productive as possible will be critical.

Beyond the drastically increasing workload in terms of housework and childcare that have become hallmarks of the pandemic for women, a number of challenges are emerging that impact mothers in terms of their ability to work from home. This tool looks at the particular challenges that are emerging around women’s work from home and provides recommendations to managers on how to mitigate these negative effects and support women’s productivity in the virtual workplace.

Among the specific challenges:

**Challenges to create a virtual workplace:** Women are more likely to be working at the kitchen table, while men are more likely to be working in the home office. Working from a home office makes it easier to focus and harder to be interrupted. Mothers are 50% more likely than fathers to be interrupted by children while working remotely, creating serious challenges to concentration, productivity, and the ability to have calls and meetings.<sup>109</sup>

<sup>106</sup> Alex Thornton, [COVID-19: How Women are Bearing the Burden of Unpaid Work](#), World Economic Forum 2020.

<sup>107</sup> McKinsey & Co and Lean In, [Women in The Workplace 2020](#), 2020.

<sup>108</sup> Kweilind Ellingrund and Liz Hilton Segel, [COVID-19 Has Driven Millions of Women out of the Workforce. Here’s How to Help them Come Back](#), Fortune.com, 2021.

<sup>109</sup> Alison Andrew, Sarah Cattan, Monica Costa Dias, et al., [“How are mothers and fathers balancing work and family under lockdown?”](#) Institute for Fiscal Studies, 2020.

**Challenges participating:** Women are more likely to be talked over in virtual meetings (and in live meetings) than men.<sup>110</sup> As noted in previous tools, women are already less likely to be given credit for their work, and their accomplishments are more likely to be devalued. Virtual meetings make it even more challenging for women to gain recognition, which can have an impact on future upgrades and promotions.

**Challenges in being seen:** With so many meetings moving to online video platforms, many employers encourage or pressure employees to use the camera to create more of an ‘in-person’ feel. However, research shows that women are typically judged more harshly than men for their appearance in virtual (and in-person) meetings, especially women of color and particularly Black women. The pressure to turn on the camera therefore carries with it an extra burden for women, who are then subject to biases based on their appearance.<sup>111</sup>

For parents with small children, there is often a fear that having children appear in the video frame will be perceived as unprofessional. Since women are 50% more likely to be interrupted by children while working from home, they bear this risk more substantially than fathers.<sup>112</sup>

**Challenges in time management:** When parents must juggle home school and childcare with work, many have to work more flexible hours—for instance, taking time off during the day and working more in the evenings after children have been put to bed. Rigid company operating hours create a significant challenge for parents who need increased flexibility to manage competing obligations.

**Challenges for fathers, but opportunities for all:** The COVID-19 pandemic may have shifted domestic tasks more equitably within the household. Fathers may now have the opportunity to play a more active role, even in families where there was a more traditional gender division of labor when the father worked outside the home. A positive externality of the crisis may be that not only are household tasks more evenly divided, but also that fathers request the required flexibility from their jobs as a result. Employers will need to reflect this new division of labor in the type of availability they expect and the flexibility that they provide to employees with families.<sup>113</sup>

How employers can adapt to the challenges of working from home to support gender equity:

- Create more flexible work options, including options to work from home, reduce or adjust hours, and/or take unpaid leave.
- Wherever possible, and as much as possible, provide staff clarity and certainty. For mothers, and particularly those who are taking on an outside role in childcare

<sup>110</sup> Alisha Haridasani Gupta, [“It’s Not Just You: In Online Meetings, Many Women Can’t Get a Word In.”](#) New York Times, April 14, 2020.

<sup>111</sup> Allison S. Gabriel, Daron Robertson, and Kristen Shockley, [“Research: Cameras On or Off?”](#) Harvard Business Review, Oct 2021.

<sup>112</sup> Alison Andrew, Sarah Cattan, Monica Costa Dias, et al., [“How are mothers and fathers balancing work and family under lockdown?”](#) Institute for Fiscal Studies, 2020.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

during the pandemic, uncertainty about job performance and security can take a serious mental health toll. Employers which communicate clearly about performance, expectations, flexibility, and timelines (for instance, the earliest anticipated date for a return to the office) can help employees plan and manage their own expectations.<sup>114</sup>

- Give guidance to managers on how to support staff working from home. Outline flexible work options that are available to staff and communicate proactively to foster understanding of options for managing these challenging situations.
- Create employee resource groups to enable staff to share experiences, tips, and resources for managing this challenging period. Support can range from connecting employees who are experiencing the same challenges with other employees in the same situation to sharing online resources for keeping kids entertained. A parents' group at LinkedIn became a global forum for parents, including sharing online scavenger hunts, providing tutoring between staff and children, and sharing other resources. These groups can improve morale, strengthen connections among employees, and help parents connect with others in the same situation.<sup>115</sup>
- Provide support for improved internet connections as needed. Many parents will be juggling working from home with online schooling at the same time, so they may need improved bandwidth to continue performing.
- Provide support for creating a more effective home office. For parents with children at home, it may be even more important to create a separate home office space. For mothers who are even more likely to be interrupted by children, this can lead to big gains in productivity.<sup>116</sup>
- Survey parents on the type of support they need. Asking can not only enable you as the employer to support your employees to be as productive as possible, but can also demonstrate support during these unprecedented times.<sup>117</sup>
- Take inspiration from companies like Vox Media, which has taken to hosting online 'virtual storytimes,' including one hosted by the CEO, to entertain employees' children during the workday.<sup>118</sup>
- Consider schedules that explicitly support working parents. Companies such as Skyscanner created a three-hour break for all employees in the middle of the day, including supporting parents to take care of their children during this period.<sup>119</sup>

<sup>114</sup> Dana Sumpter and Mona Zanhour, [3 Ways Companies can Retain Working Moms Right Now](#), Harvard Business Review, November 2020.

<sup>115</sup> Samantha McLaren, [6 Ways Companies are Supporting Parents Working from Home](#), LinkedIn, August 2020.

<sup>116</sup> Elizabeth Baskin, [Five Ways Companies Can Help Mothers Struggling with Remote Work](#), Forbes, March 2021.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Samantha McLaren, [6 Ways Companies are Supporting Parents Working from Home](#), LinkedIn, August 2020.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

## TOOL 1.17

### Reducing Implicit Bias in the Workplace

- » **GOAL:** Help HR teams understand implicit bias, implications for the workplace, and strategies to mitigate it
- » **TARGET UNITS:** Human Resources, Senior Management

While a number of tools in this toolkit provide guidance on policies and systems to put in place to reduce bias, this tool highlights some of the deep-seated biases that can disadvantage women in the workforce, how they can impact their ability to succeed and rise through an organization, and ways to address them. These biases are often called unconscious or implicit biases—biases that may be deep-seated and culturally ingrained, but of which we may not be entirely aware. Addressing these biases is critical for supporting women’s entry and progression on the corporate ladder. These biases are key aspects of the ‘broken rung’ theory—that women find it harder to climb the initial rungs of the corporate ladder, meaning they often remain concentrated in lower positions. For instance, only 72 women are promoted to manager for every 100 men who are made manager.<sup>120</sup> When few women rise to junior management, even fewer are able to rise to senior managers—which also then influences their ability to mentor and sponsor junior staff.<sup>121</sup> Understanding, naming, and addressing these biases can help people to counteract them. As employers, being aware of these biases—and ensuring that staff are aware and understand that even implicit biases will not be tolerated—is an important step towards creating an environment in which all employees are able to work to the best of their abilities.

The tool outlines five main types of implicit gender bias. Some of these biases are not necessarily against women (such as affinity bias), but they are likely to benefit men and disadvantage women, especially in male-dominated sectors. Others are based on common perceptions of and about men’s and women’s roles, intelligence, and expected behavior in society. While these biases are present globally, they may be more or less pervasive in different cultures, so readers should consider the extent to which these biases ring true in their cultural contexts. And it should be noted that even where deep-rooted stereotypes and expectations about women and men seem to advantage men and disadvantage women, assumptions that feed into overly normative views of men (for instance, expecting women to take parental leave, but not allowing for men to do the same) can contribute to damaging cultures of toxic masculinity. Efforts to break up these biases will benefit both women and men.

<sup>120</sup> McKinsey and Lean In, [Women in The Workplace 2019](#), 2019.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

**TABLE 1H | Types of Bias<sup>122</sup>**

Implications for the Workplace	Mitigation Measures
<h3>Affinity Bias</h3> <p>Affinity bias is the tendency to favor people who are like us in some way, and dislike or avoid people who are different.<sup>123</sup></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Interviewers are more likely to positively evaluate candidates similar to them. Where two candidates are similar but differ in certain traits, interviewers are more likely to value characteristics that they shared with the applicant as more important than the characteristics of the candidate to whom they are less similar.</li> <li>» Mentors are more likely to support protegees who are like them in some way.<sup>124</sup></li> <li>» Managers are more likely to give positive evaluations to employees who are similar.<sup>125</sup></li> <li>» In male-dominated workplaces, or where men dominate management positions, affinity bias can mean that men are more likely to be mentored and/or get positive evaluations than women.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Require mentors to have a gender-equitable mix of mentees, either at a time or in sequence.</li> <li>» Track distribution of positive performance evaluations and the gender bias of managers and staff to determine if there are specific or widespread issues.</li> <li>» Make evaluation criteria specific and easily measure-able to reduce possibility of bias.</li> </ul>

### Likeability Bias

Likeability bias is the expectation of women to be agreeable and likeable, and a negative reaction to women who are ‘too pushy’ or ‘aggressive.’

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» As a result of the likeability bias, women are more likely to be described as ‘bossy’ or ‘aggressive,’ which can mean poorer evaluations and create challenges for advancement.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Implement standardized criteria for performance assessments to reduce the potential for bias. The more specific and standardized criteria are, and the less room there is for subjective evaluation, the less room there will be for bias.</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

<sup>122</sup> This tool was developed drawing in large part from Lean In’s ‘50 Ways to Fight Bias’ Gender Bias Cards, which are a customizable set of training materials specifically focused on addressing implicit gender bias.

<sup>123</sup> McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Cook, “Birds of a Feather.” Annual Review of Sociology, 2001; Hebl, Foster, Mannix, et al., “Formal and Interpersonal Discrimination: A Field Study of Bias Towards Homosexual Applicants,” Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 2002; Rivera, “Hiring as Cultural Matching: The Case of Elite Professional Service Firms,” American Sociological Review, 2012.

<sup>124</sup> Tammy Allen et al., “The Mentor’s Perspective: A Qualitative Inquiry and Future Research Agenda,” Journal of Vocational Behavior 51 (August 1997): 70–89.

<sup>125</sup> C. M. Riordan, “Relational demography within groups: Past developments, contradictions, and new directions,” in G. R. Ferris, ed., Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management, vol. 19 (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 2000), 131–73.

## Implications for the Workplace

- » Women are more often described as ‘too aggressive’ or ‘bossy’ in the workplace than men.<sup>126</sup> While being seen as aggressive and not well-liked can make it difficult for women to succeed at work, so can being seen as too nice and not-assertive enough.<sup>127</sup>
- » This bias can be even more exaggerated for women of color, who often face specific racial stereotypes that further limit ‘acceptable’ presentations of themselves.<sup>128</sup>

## Mitigation Measures

- » Track gender and performance evaluations to identify patterns, and consider recommending staff for anti-bias training where there seems to be a pattern of bias.
- » HR should consider a collaborative process to identify key leadership traits which can help to support inclusivity.<sup>129</sup>

## Performance Bias

Performance bias is the tendency to overestimate men’s performance and underestimate women’s. Women therefore have to do more and better to be evaluated as equally competent as male counterparts.<sup>130</sup> As with the other biases listed here, this bias tends to particularly disadvantage women of color and those with disabilities, who are more likely to be underestimated and/or have their accomplishments met with surprise.<sup>131</sup>

- » Women have to work harder to be evaluated similarly to male counterparts. Women’s performance is often underestimated, which makes it harder for them to advance.
- » Make performance evaluation criteria as specific as possible to leave as little room as possible for bias and subjectivity.
- » Use specific criteria to ensure that both women and men are being equally evaluated in terms of their past accomplishments and future potential.

<sup>126</sup> McKinsey & Co and Lean In, [Women in the Workplace 2017](#) (October 2017); Madeline E. Heilman and Tyler G. Okimoto, “[Why Are Women Penalized for Success at Male Tasks? The Implied Commonality Deficit](#),” *Journal of Applied Psychology* 92, no. 1 (2007): 81–92; Madeline E. Heilman et al., “[Penalties for Success: Reactions to Women Who Succeed at Male Gender-Typed Tasks](#),” *Journal of Applied Psychology* 89, no. 3 (2004): 416–27.

<sup>127</sup> Lean In, [Welcome to the 50 Ways to Fight Bias Digital Program](#), cited June 2022.

<sup>128</sup> Negin Ghavami and Letitia Anne Peplau, “[An Intersectional Analysis of Gender and Ethnic Stereotypes: Testing Three Hypotheses](#),” *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 37, no. 1 (2012): 113–27; Justine Tinkler, Jun Zhao, Yan Li, et al., “[Honorary Whites? Asian American Women and the Dominance Penalty](#),” *Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World* 5 (April 4, 2019).

<sup>129</sup> Eric Luis Uhlmann and Geoffrey L. Cohen, “[Constructed Criteria: Redefining Merit to Justify Discrimination](#),” *Psychological Science* 16, no. 6 (2005): 474–80.

<sup>130</sup> Williams and Dempsey, *What Works for Women at Work*, New York, NYU Press, 2014; Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Glick, and Phelan, “[Reactions to Vanguard: Advances in Backlash Theory](#),” *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 2012.

<sup>131</sup> McKinsey & Co and Lean In, [Women in The Workplace](#) 2019, 2019.

## Implications for the Workplace

## Mitigation Measures

### MATERNAL BIAS

Maternal bias is the assumption that mothers—or women who are assumed to want to be mothers—are less committed to their work than non-parents.<sup>132</sup>

- » The maternal bias means that women who are, or might become, mothers are viewed as less committed, and even less competent than non-mothers. These women are given fewer opportunities—either because it is assumed they can not handle them or would not want them.
  - » Because mothers are seen as less committed, when they make mistakes, these mistakes are seen as a result of distraction and lack of commitment, and are viewed more harshly than other people’s mistakes.<sup>133</sup>
  - » Fathers who take time off for family reasons actually get lower performance ratings than mothers, indicating that the maternal bias cuts both ways: women are penalized for being mothers, but this is a role that is somehow more ‘acceptable’ than a man prioritizing family over work.<sup>134</sup>
  - » In the workplace, maternal bias can also mean that coworkers assume women are not interested in travel, projects that require extra commitment, or evening events. Failure to give parents the opportunity to make these choices for themselves can damage women’s advancement opportunities and mean that the company misses out on committed staff.
- » Ensure that hiring and promotions criteria focus on necessary skills and experience, rather than years on the job—criteria that prioritize years in a given role can unfairly penalize parents who took time off to raise children and may miss out on qualified candidates.
  - » Ensure that opportunities for travel and projects are fairly offered to all staff, rather than assuming parents of young children are not interested.
  - » Encourage all parents to take parental leave; the more parents who take it, at all levels, the more normalized and de-stigmatized it will be.

<sup>132</sup> Williams and Dempsey, *What Works for Women at Work*, New York: NYU Press, 2014; Correll et al., [“Getting a Job: Is There a Motherhood Penalty?”](#) *American Journal of Sociology*, 2007; Weisshaar, [“From Opt Out to Blocked Out.”](#) American Sociological Association, 2018.

<sup>133</sup> Williams and Dempsey, *What Works for Women at Work*, New York: NYU Press, 2014; Correll et al., [“Getting a Job: Is There a Motherhood Penalty?”](#) *American Journal of Sociology*, 2007; Weisshaar, [“From Opt Out to Blocked Out.”](#) American Sociological Association, 2018.

<sup>134</sup> Scott Coltrane et al., [“Fathers and Flexibility Stigma,”](#) *Journal of Social Issues* 69, no. 2 (2013): 279–302; Laurie A. Rudman and Kris Mescher, [“Penalizing Men Who Request a Family Leave: Is Flexibility Stigma a Femininity Stigma?”](#) *Journal of Social Issues* 69, no. 2 (2013): 32–40; Jennifer L. Berdahl and Sue H. Moon, [“Workplace Mistreatment of Middle Class Workers Based on Sex, Parenthood, and Caregiving.”](#) *Journal of Social Issues* 69, no. 2 (2013): 341–66; Adam B. Butler and Amie Skattebo, [“What Is Acceptable for Women May Not Be for Men: The Effect of Family Conflicts with Work on Job-Performance Ratings.”](#) *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology* 77, no. 4 (2004): 553–64.

## Implications for the Workplace

## Mitigation Measures

### ATTRIBUTION BIAS

Attribution bias means that we give women less credit for the good things they do and blame them more for mistakes.<sup>135</sup>

- » As a result of attribution bias, we don't value women's contributions as much—women are much more likely to be interrupted, both by men and other women. Women are also judged more harshly for mistakes and given less credit in collaborative projects.
- » Attribution bias can impact women's self-esteem in a vicious cycle. Women often predict they'll do worse on a task than men do, and research shows that women are more likely to apply to a job only when they possess 100% of the qualifications, while men are more likely to apply when they possess 60%.<sup>136</sup>
- » As with many of the mitigation measures listed above, ensure that performance evaluations and promotion/upgrade evaluations are done against as standardized criteria as possible, including criteria for collaborative projects.
- » Ensure that criteria for hiring and upgrades are only functionally necessary ones, cutting out criteria that speak more to duration of employment than quality of experience.

<sup>135</sup> Egan, Matvos, and Seru, "When Harry Fired Sally," NBER, 2017; Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Glick, and Phelan, "Reactions to Vanguard: Advances in Backlash Theory" *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 2012; Heilman and Hayes, "No Credit Where Credit Is Due" *American Psychological Association*, 2005; Victoria L. Brescoll, Erica Dawson, and Eric Luis Uhlmann, "Hard Won and Easily Lost: The Fragile Status of Leaders in Gender-Stereotype-Incongruent Occupations," *Psychological Science* 21, no. 11 (2010): 1640–42.

<sup>136</sup> Georges Desvaux, Sandrine Devillard-Hoellinger, and Mary C. Meaney, "A Business Case for Women," *The McKinsey Quarterly*, September 2008, 4.



**TOOL 1.18****Guidelines for Building a Gender-Diverse Talent Pipeline and Workforce**

- » **GOAL:** To help companies attract a gender-diverse field of candidates
- » **TARGET UNITS:** Human Resources, Community Affairs

A company's best hiring, retention, and promotion policies are built on having a strong, gender-diverse talent pipeline. Traditionally, infrastructure sectors have been heavily male dominated, and this can mean that women, as well as their families and communities, do not think that infrastructure sectors are appropriate places for women to work. This, in turn, can perpetuate the challenge of finding women qualified and interested to work in the sector.

The most gender-equitable hiring practices cannot lead to gender diversity if there are no qualified female applicants. This tool focuses on how to help create qualified candidates in the host community, how to encourage these candidates to apply, and ways to create more opportunity for female candidates to be considered.

**1. Create more qualified female candidates**

The first step to creating a stronger gender-diverse talent pipeline is to help more women in the community get the training and opportunities that will make them into viable candidates for employment. This is a step that should be undertaken in coordination between the HR and community affairs departments, and can include communication with education and training institutions, as well as with the community itself. HR should meet with community affairs to outline the positions available and the skillsets and qualifications required for successful applications. With this information, community affairs can communicate with local education and training institutions, as well as with the community in general, to encourage more gender-diverse applications. This can include:

- Direct investments to improve local educational and training opportunities
- Scholarships for female students to increase their opportunities to study
- Community outreach to inform the community about the potential for jobs for both women and men, provided that candidates get the training they need, as a way to encourage girls' participation in education/training programs
- Mentorship programs between female staff and female students
- Presentations to current and potential students about the opportunities that may await them.

## 2. Encourage female candidates to apply

Supporting the growth in the number of qualified female candidates is a necessary precondition, but the next step is encouraging women to apply. Efforts around this can be coordinated between HR and community affairs, and can include initiatives such as:

- **Improve local awareness of opportunities for women:**
  - Communicating with communities on how and where jobs are advertised and how to apply. Information sessions should be organized at times and in places where women are likely to be able to attend; providing childcare can make it more likely that mothers and young women with childcare responsibilities can attend.
  - Organizing webinars and in-person networking opportunities and company tours to give applicants an authentic understanding of how the company works. Creating relationships between the community and the company so community members understand what goes on in the company and the environment and types of jobs available can have multiple benefits beyond encouraging employees to apply.<sup>137</sup> In areas where there is cultural hesitance around women working in infrastructure industries, improved communication and understanding of what these jobs look like may demystify and help families support women's applications. And in communities where there is a sense that infrastructure companies have jobs but are not creating sufficient local benefits, improved transparency and communication of what the work looks like may help combat these perceptions.
  - Encouraging community members to follow the company on social media and using social media accounts to highlight opportunities for diverse employees.
  - Publicizing strategically: Depending on where work is being done and the host communities, women and men may have different access to certain public forums, different literacy rates, and different ways of sharing information. Thus, certain means of advertising job postings may favor men or women. For instance, public bulletin boards may not be located in areas frequented by men or women, or print advertisements may limit applicants to those who can read—which may not be a necessary job criteria.
    - **Recommendation:** Make sure you are familiar with information access patterns locally and advertise accordingly. Consider using non-text-based means, such as community radio or community forums, to spread the message more equitably.
- **Gender-sensitize recruitment materials:** Recruitment materials may be inadvertently exclusionary or discouraging for female applicants in a number of ways. **TOOL 1.19** offers a detailed job description template outlining strategies to reduce bias and attract diverse applicants, including:

<sup>137</sup> Samantha McLaren, [How to Create a Diverse Talent Pipeline: 4 Tips from Shopify, PowerToFly and Vrbo](#), LinkedIn 2019.

- **Remove gender-biased language:** Job advertisements that use more male wording are more likely to appeal to male applicants.<sup>138</sup> To encourage more female applicants, review recruitment materials to screen for gender-biased terms, images, or language. ZipRecruiter found that job advertisements with more gender-neutral language get 42% more responses.<sup>139</sup> Certain language has been shown to specifically appeal to different genders. For instance, while subtle, terms like ‘analyze,’ ‘competitive,’ and ‘determine’ are more often associated with males, while ‘support’ and ‘collaborate’ are more often associated with females.
- **Recommendation:** Review language to reduce gender-associated words. There are free online tools, often called ‘gender decoders,’ that can help employers determine whether job announcements include gendered language.<sup>140</sup>
- Specifically state that the job is open to all genders.
- **Be specific on essential criteria:** Review criteria listed for job postings and eliminate any criteria that are not essential for the position. Research shows that women are more likely to apply to jobs when they meet 100% of the required qualifications; men apply when they have 60%.<sup>141</sup> Women are more likely to assume that they won’t be considered without all of the qualifications described as essential, so many prefer not to waste their time by applying.<sup>142</sup> This correlates with research showing that men overestimate their experience and capabilities, while women underestimate theirs,<sup>143</sup> and a pattern in which women are more likely to be hired based on what they’ve demonstrated they can do, while men are hired on the basis of their ‘potential.’<sup>144</sup>
- **Recommendations:** Consider what criteria are genuinely essential, and only include those. Avoid requiring a specific number of years in a given position or experience, which can discriminate against women who took time off for family reasons, and focus instead on necessary skills and experience.<sup>145</sup> Describe job requirements, not the person who will fill the job (or previously filled it). For instance, for physically demanding jobs, describe the specific tasks, rather than describing a ‘physically fit’ candidate.

<sup>138</sup> Gaucher, Danielle, Justin Friesen, and Aaron C. Key. “Evidence That Gendered Wording in Job Advertisements Exists and Sustains Gender Inequality.” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 101.1 (2011): 109-28.

<sup>139</sup> ZipRecruiter, “Removing these Gendered Keywords gets you more Applicants.” Sept 19, 2016.

<sup>140</sup> One popular example is [available here](#).

<sup>141</sup> Bruce M. Anderson, [To Hire More Women – Make This One Simple Change](#), LinkedIn 2019.

<sup>142</sup> Tara Sophia Mohr, [Why Women Don’t Apply for Jobs Unless They’re 100% Qualified](#), *Harvard Business Review*, 2014.

<sup>143</sup> Williams and Dempsey, *What Works for Women at Work*, New York: NYU Press, 2014; Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Glick, and Phelan, “Reactions to Vanguards: Advances in Backlash Theory.” *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 2012.

<sup>144</sup> Williams and Dempsey, *What Works for Women at Work*, New York: NYU Press, 2014; Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Glick, and Phelan, “Reactions to Vanguards: Advances in Backlash Theory.” *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 2012.

<sup>145</sup> Bruce M. Anderson, [To Hire More Women – Make This One Simple Change](#), LinkedIn 2019.

- Clearly state required or desirable skills; state any formal trainings/qualifications required (but only require them when they are necessary for the job).
- **Diversify representation in print, radio, and television:** Ensure that both women and men's likenesses and voice are featured in a diversity of roles in print, radio, and television advertisements.
- **Recommendation:** Review recruitment materials to ensure that they present a gender-diverse and inclusive image, including women and men in operational and management roles, as well as in non-traditional roles for women.

### BOX 11 | Gendered Terms in Job Descriptions

The following words are classified as 'masculine' in job descriptions, meaning they subtly convey preference for male applicants:

- Strong
- Drive
- Lead
- Analysis
- Determined
- Driving
- Individuals
- Self-Reliant

Source: Talentfoot, "[How to Explain Gender-Neutral Job Descriptions to your Boss](#)," 2020.

- **Signal that you are an employer of choice for women:**
  - **Signal commitment to pay equity:** While concerns about pay equity may not keep women from applying to certain jobs, a demonstration of pay transparency can signal a company's broader commitment to gender equity since women are often paid less than men.
    - **Recommendation:** Include the salary range in the job announcement.
  - **Signal commitment to a family-friendly workplace:** Women may assume that certain employers are more or less flexible and supportive of family commitments. Employers which specifically highlight benefits that appeal to parents like parental leave, flex work, childcare, and health care can encourage parents to apply, especially women who often shoulder more of the family labor load.<sup>146</sup>
    - **Recommendation:** List family-friendly benefits associated with the position in the job advertisement.
  - **Include options for flexible work in advertisements:** Clarify whether jobs require standard on-site working hours, shift work, and/or the potential for flexible work arrangements.

<sup>146</sup> ILO, [Break Gender Stereotypes: Give Talent a Chance](#), 50.

- **Strengthen referral pathways:** Due to affinity bias, or our tendency to feel more positively towards people who are similar to us, men in male-dominated sectors tend to refer and hire other men. In the United States, for example, while white men are just 34% of the labor market, they represent 40% of successful referrals.<sup>147</sup> Some companies have taken proactive steps to break up this male monopoly on referrals—the social media company Pinterest specifically encouraged staff to refer more women and minorities and saw a 24% increase in women and even greater numbers of minority candidates. Computer giant Intel took a similar approach by increasing the referral bonus for candidates who represented specific under-represented groups.<sup>148</sup>
  - **Recommendation:** Consider providing staff incentives for successful referrals of women.

### 3. Reduce bias in considering applications

Once women have applied, do they have an equitable chance of being shortlisted and hired as male applicants? Several of the specific types of implicit biases described above often create particular disadvantages for women candidates when job applications are reviewed. To address this:

- **Review applicants equitably:** Due to ‘performance bias,’ women are often assessed to be less capable than they are, whereas men are assessed to be more capable. As such, women’s accomplishments are often undervalued, while men’s performance is overestimated. Where they perform similarly, or have similar experiences on their resumes, men are viewed more favorably than women. Studies show that in recruitment, women need to demonstrate more accomplishments and experience to be evaluated as qualified for a job, whereas men are more likely to be viewed as qualified based on perceived ‘potential’ to do a good job.<sup>149</sup> Several studies have confirmed this tendency: in one, women’s names were replaced with men’s names, and their chances of being hired rose by 60%. In another famous example, several major orchestras found that 50% more women made it past the initial audition round when reviewers could not see, but only hear, the musicians during their audition.<sup>150</sup>
  - **Recommendation:** Remove names and photographs from resumes prior to review.
- **Counteract maternity bias:** Due to a ‘maternity bias,’ expectations are often different for mothers than for non-mothers or men. Women often have to combat assumptions and stereotypes around motherhood that can start as soon as they’re engaged to be

<sup>147</sup> Bruce M. Anderson, [To Hire More Women – Make This One Simple Change](#), LinkedIn 2019.

<sup>148</sup> Bruce M. Anderson, [To Hire More Women – Make This One Simple Change](#), LinkedIn 2019.

<sup>149</sup> Williams and Dempsey, *What Works for Women at Work*, New York: NYU Press, 2014; Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Glick, and Phelan, [“Reactions to Vanguard: Advances in Backlash Theory.”](#) *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 2012.

<sup>150</sup> Claudia Goldin and Cecilia Rouse, [“Orchestrating Impartiality: The Impact of ‘Blind’ Auditions on Female Musicians.”](#) *The American Economic Review* 90, no. 4 (2000): 715–41.

married. Employers assume mothers—or newly married women who they assume will soon become mothers—are less committed to work, including that they wouldn't want to travel or take on challenging assignments. Because of this bias, mothers are also often more severely judged for small mistakes that seem to confirm this assumption of lack of commitment.<sup>151</sup> Some U.S.-based research also indicates that including 'motherhood signifiers' on resumes, such as holding a position on a local parent-teacher council, makes women 79% less likely to be hired. And research indicates that mothers are also paid less than non-mothers and men.<sup>152</sup> Men also face similar assumptions when they take time away from work for family reasons, often receiving lower performance ratings and steeper reductions in future earnings.<sup>153</sup>

- **Recommendation:** Ensure that all HR staff are trained on maternity bias in order to identify and address it in the hiring process.
- **Improve fairness in interview panels:** Where sectors or particular positions are heavily dominated by one sex, it can be difficult for other candidates to be considered. (The infrastructure sector is largely male dominated, but particular positions—for instance, certain administrative or lower-level positions—may be predominately female.) This is often due to 'affinity bias,' or the tendency to like and understand those who are similar to us in some ways, as mentioned above regarding referrals. In the interview stage of applications, this can mean that interviewers spend more time interviewing applicants who are like them—for example, male interviewers may spend more time interviewing men and find male candidates more appealing.<sup>154</sup> Having both women and men on interview panels can help significantly. Computer giant Intel started requiring at least two women on interview panels, which helped increase representation of women in new hires from 31.9% to 45.1% over two years, a change attributed to helping reduce unconscious bias in hiring.<sup>155</sup> In addition, developing specific criteria and a standard set of questions of all interviewees can reduce bias and the tendency for interview panels to evaluate candidates based on 'corporate fit' or 'gut feeling.'
  - **Recommendations:** Require that interview panels include women, for instance by requiring that all panels are no more than 75% of one sex (i.e., no more than 75% men or women on any interview panel).

<sup>151</sup> Williams and Dempsey, *What Works for Women at Work*, New York: NYU Press, 2014; Correll et al., "[Getting a Job: Is There a Motherhood Penalty?](#)" *American Journal of Sociology*, 2007; Weisshaar, "[From Opt Out to Blocked Out.](#)" *American Sociological Association*, 2018.

<sup>152</sup> "[Getting a Job: Is There a Motherhood Penalty?](#)" *American Journal of Sociology*, 2007.

<sup>153</sup> Scott Coltrane et al., "[Fathers and Flexibility Stigma.](#)" *Journal of Social Issues* 69, no. 2 (2013): 279–302; Laurie A. Rudman and Kris Mescher, "[Penalizing Men Who Request a Family Leave: Is Flexibility Stigma a Femininity Stigma?](#)" *Journal of Social Issues* 69, no. 2 (2013): 32–40; Jennifer L. Berdahl and Sue H. Moon, "[Workplace Mistreatment of Middle Class Workers Based on Sex, Parenthood, and Caregiving.](#)" *Journal of Social Issues* 69, no. 2 (2013): 341–66; Adam B. Butler and Amie Skattebo, "[What Is Acceptable for Women May Not Be for Men: The Effect of Family Conflicts with Work on Job-Performance Ratings.](#)" *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology* 77, no. 4 (2004): 553–64.

<sup>154</sup> M. Riordan, "[Relational demography within groups: Past developments, contradictions, and new directions.](#)" in G. R. Ferris, ed., *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management*, vol. 19 (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 2000), 131–73.

<sup>155</sup> Katherine Reynolds Lewis, "Diverse Interview Panels may be a Key to Workplace Diversity," *Working Mother Magazine*, Issue 45, June-July 2017.

- Develop a standardized and transparent recruitment process to reduce opportunities for bias and increase applicants’ confidence in the application process. This can not only increase confidence in hiring decisions, but can also improve relationships between companies and host communities, which may have more faith in how hiring decisions are made.
- Set minimum targets for the number of shortlisted female candidates. If you are using a recruitment firm, confirm that the firm is aware of targets and held accountable for meeting them.
- Develop a policy on appropriate interview questions. Avoid questions regarding marital status, children, intent to have children, or sexual orientation. Review job applications for any questions that may prompt gender bias:
  - Applications should only ask for relevant information and not request details such as pictures, marital status, or age. Where possible, applications should be stripped of gender-identifying details (as well as other factors that are common bases for discrimination) like first names, marital and family status, and age, as well as photographs, before review.
  - Applications should include opportunities for candidates to highlight previous formal and informal work experiences that support their ability to do the job.<sup>156</sup>

**TABLE 11 | Quick Guide Checklist for Companies**

	Recommendation	Implemented?
<b>INCREASING WOMEN APPLICANTS</b>		
<b>Job advertisements/ announcements</b>	Make pronouns inclusive (s/he) or replace with gender-inclusive terms (foreman/forewoman)	
	Include photographs that show women and men, including in non-traditional roles	
	Review job announcements for gender-biased terms. Consider running through ‘gender decoder’ software.	
	Trim ‘required’ qualifications to include only the most necessary qualifications	
	Include salary range in the job advertisement	
	List family-friendly benefits that the employer offers	

<sup>156</sup> International Training Centre of the ILO, *Break Gender Stereotypes: Give Talent a Chance*, Brussels: European Commission, 2008, 50.

	Recommendation	Implemented?
Improve referrals	Offer incentives to staff for any women hires that come from referrals	
Increase women candidates from recruiters	Include explicit expectations for gender equity in briefs for all recruiters	
Ensure appropriate messaging	Review local information channels and adapt accordingly to ensure local women, including those who are illiterate, hear about suitable job opportunities  Have local staff do community outreach and briefings on job opportunities	
<b>INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN IN THE HIRING PROCESS</b>		
Review applications equitably	Remove names and photographs from applications for gender-blind review	
Counteract maternity bias	Conduct outreach to all HR staff and interviewers on maternity bias	
Overcome affinity bias	Require interview panels to include at least one woman, preferably two.  Create a specific set of questions and criteria for all candidates	

These recommendations are focused on bringing more women into the workforce, and so focus on pre-hiring stages. **TOOL 1.17** focuses on identifying and addressing implicit bias within the workforce among male and female employees.



## TOOL 1.19

### Job Description Template to Reduce Bias and Attract Diverse Applicants

- » **GOAL:** Provides a template for HR departments to follow, with key components to include—and those to avoid—to attract diverse job applicants
- » **TARGET UNIT:** Human Resources

#### Job Title

- **Use gender-neutral titles.** For example, name the position “foreperson” instead of “foreman,” or “chairperson” instead of “chairman.”
- **Do not request gender, age, or marital status, and do not require/accept photos.** Explicitly prohibit your company from listing a gender or age preference in job descriptions, and from requesting (or allowing) applicants to submit photos along with their job application. While the legality of these practices depends on the country or jurisdiction in which the company/job is located, following this guidance will help reduce bias in the recruitment process.

#### Company/Organization Description

- **Within the company description, consider including details about the company culture or values.** Additionally, if your company has taken proactive measures to create an inclusive work culture and to promote diversity, include those. Mention whether it has made specific commitments to promote diversity and equality, highlight progress towards gender equity (for instance, mention relevant HR statistics), or has achieved relevant standards, certifications, or awards, such as Human Rights Campaign Foundation’s “Best Place to Work for LGBTQ+ Equality” list<sup>157</sup> or EDGE Certification.<sup>158</sup>

#### Job Responsibilities

- **Avoid gender-biased language.**
  - Use gender-neutral language and avoid using gendered pronouns.
  - Avoid words that are traditionally seen as masculine to avoid discouraging women applicants from seeing themselves in the role and applying. For examples of words to avoid, see Box 1I and Table 1I and the sources referred to in **TOOL 1.18**. Consider using “gender decoder” software to analyze your word choices.<sup>159</sup>
  - List the job responsibilities rather than characteristics of the person who will fill the role.

<sup>157</sup> Human Rights Campaign, “[Best Places to Work for LGBTQ+ Equality 2022.](#)”

<sup>158</sup> Learn more about EDGE certification [here](#).

<sup>159</sup> Popular software to look for gender bias in job announcements includes the “[Gender Decoder](#)” website.

## Required Qualifications

- **Evaluate which qualifications and how many years of experience are really necessary.**
  - Double check the list of required qualifications to ensure that only those that are truly necessary to carry out the job functions are listed. Where additional desired qualifications are relevant, include these in a separate list of “preferred qualifications.”
  - Change required years of experience into required experience and capacity. For example, if a job announcement states that 10 years of experience are required, is that really true, or would an excellent candidate with fewer years of experience be able to succeed in the role? Listing fewer years of experience or not listing a specified number of years could encourage excellent applicants with less experience, including those who may have taken time off for family responsibilities. To take it one step further, consider explicitly mentioning that the company welcomes applications from individuals who have taken career breaks or who are returning to the workforce after taking time for family responsibilities.
  - If language requirements are listed, pay attention to whether “native” or professional fluency is needed—the former could discourage fluent candidates from applying, solely based on country of origin.
- **Evaluate what educational background is really necessary.**
  - Consider whether a bachelor’s or master’s degree is necessary, or just a “nice to have”? Listing educational requirements can unnecessarily perpetuate socioeconomic bias and gender gaps in countries or regions in which women have less access to higher education or STEM education than men.

## Physical Requirements

- **List whether there are any specific physical requirements for the job, but avoid including those that are not crucial. Doing so will avoid inadvertently excluding applicants with physical disabilities.**

A LinkedIn article highlighting inclusive job descriptions included this example: “[This role’s] work involves remaining in a stationary position most of the time in front of a computer, using a keyboard, mouse, and telephone. Regularly operate a computer and other office equipment. Occasionally move about the work site to access file cabinets, office equipment, etc. . . . Communicate or exchange information with co-workers and other individuals in person or electronically.”<sup>160</sup>

<sup>160</sup> Kate Reilly, “[6 Ways to Successfully Signal Your Company’s DEI Commitment in a Job Posting.](#)” LinkedIn.

## Working Hours & Worksite Conditions

- **Clarify the work schedule, location(s), whether the position will require working nights or weekends, and whether travel will be necessary (and what percentage of the time).**
  - Be sure to specify if the position will require working nights or weekends. For non-office positions, clarify what types of shifts are expected.
  - Including detail about options for workplace flexibility and whether remote work is encouraged or permitted will help candidates assess whether the position is a good fit.
  - If job sharing<sup>161</sup> is possible, be sure to mention this.
  - Consider mentioning whether lactation and milk storage facilities are provided onsite.
  - For male-dominated industries such as mining that can present security concerns for women employees, mention any facilities or measures to promote security and gender inclusivity, such as secure transportation to and from work, or separate bathrooms, changing areas, and sleeping accommodations.

## Salary

- **List the salary range for the job.** The movement for salary transparency is gaining momentum, with more and more employers listing salary ranges in job descriptions and some governments<sup>162</sup> now incentivizing or mandating that salaries be listed. Listing the salary range for each position shows respect for the job seeker's time, saves time for both them and the company, and helps to close the gender wage gap.<sup>163</sup> (Additionally, not asking candidates to disclose their previous salary helps to level the playing field and uphold wage parity.) If the job description is for an internship or fellowship, list whether it is paid or unpaid. Pay interns and fellows whenever possible.

## Company Benefits & Leave Policies

- **List company benefits in all job descriptions.** Although not all employers list company benefits and leave policies in their job announcements, this is a highly recommended way to set your company apart and attract top—and diverse—candidates in a competitive job market.
- **In this list, include benefits related to work-life balance and family-friendly policies.**
  - Listing benefits such as parental leave, flexible work schedules, numbers of vacation days, childcare options, and coverage or support related to fertility, adoption, and

<sup>161</sup> The ILO defines job-sharing as “a voluntary arrangement whereby two persons take joint responsibility for one full-time job and divide the time they spend on it according to specific arrangements made with the employer. A common form of job-sharing is to split one full-time job into two part-time jobs.” International Labour Organization, [“Work-sharing and job-sharing.”](#)

<sup>162</sup> Pequity, [“Pay Transparency Laws 2022: Is Your Team Ready?”](#); Growth Business, [“Salary transparency—is it happening in the UK?”](#); and Likumi, Legal Acts of the Republic of Latvia, as examples.

<sup>163</sup> National Women's Law Center, [“Salary Range Transparency Reduces the Wage Gap.”](#)

menopause<sup>164</sup> will help attract a diversity of candidates in terms of gender, age, and family status.

- Be specific: don't just say generous vacation time or parental leave—say how much. If your company provides parental/paternity leave, list these benefits—don't only list maternity leave.
- **List opportunities for career development, continued learning, and community service.**
  - If the company offers opportunities for career development through programs focused on mentorship, sponsorship, leadership development, continued education, tuition reimbursement, or even sabbaticals, list them. Company-sponsored programs for employees to participate in volunteering or giving back to the community can also be listed.

### Equal Opportunity / Inclusivity Statement

- **Include language that expresses your company's commitment to diversity.** For example, World Bank Group job descriptions currently include this text: "We are proud to be an equal opportunity and inclusive employer with a dedicated and committed workforce, and do not discriminate based on gender, gender identity, religion, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or disability."<sup>165</sup> Canada's Hire for Talent offers another example: "Our company values the diversity of the people it hires and serves. Diversity at our company means fostering a workplace in which individual differences are recognized, appreciated, respected, and responded to in ways that fully develop and utilize each person's talents and strengths."<sup>166</sup>
- **Explicitly encourage diverse candidates to apply, such as by saying that women and those from historically underrepresented groups are encouraged to apply.**

<sup>164</sup> Wellbeing of Women, "[Over 600 employers sign The Menopause Workplace Pledge.](#)"

<sup>165</sup> See the [World Bank Careers site](#).

<sup>166</sup> Hire for Talent, "[4.3 How to Write an Inclusive Job Posting.](#)"

## TOOL 1.20

### Sample Mentoring/Mentee Agreement

- » **GOAL:** Improve leadership and management development by creating mentorship relationships within the company
- » **TARGET UNIT:** Human Resources

### What is a mentorship program?

Mentorship programs connect junior and more senior staff, taking advantage of existing expertise, knowledge, and experience in a company and/or sector to provide guidance for more junior staff. Mentorship programs can demonstrate investment in younger staff, help them develop more fulfilling career trajectories, and help senior staff share knowledge and develop leadership skills. For companies, mentorship programs can improve communication, relationships, and learning across an organization; demonstrate investment in more junior staff; foster a culture of learning; and help staff to move more purposefully through an organization.<sup>167</sup>

### Why have mentors?

Structured mentorship programs that match more junior and senior staff can have myriad benefits for mentees, mentors, and the companies they work for. Mentorship programs not only offer junior staff the opportunity to learn from more experienced employees, but can also help reduce turnover, improve information flow between various parts of an organization, and increase employee satisfaction.<sup>168</sup> A 2019 LinkedIn study found that where companies invested in employees, 94% of those employees stayed in the company longer, and investment in employee learning, including mentorship programs, increased job satisfaction.<sup>169</sup>

For women in male-dominated sectors such as infrastructure, mentorship can be particularly important. In these sectors, there may be fewer women in senior roles, meaning that women may have fewer role models and fewer opportunities to connect with senior women to navigate their own career paths. Establishing mentorship programs that match young women staff with male or female senior staff can help them navigate their own career decisions, make important connections, increase personal investment in their company, and strengthen employee loyalty. However, women employees are less likely to have mentors, and are less likely to seek out opportunities to be mentors or mentees than men are.<sup>170</sup>

<sup>167</sup> Riia O'Donnell, [How to Create a Mentorship Program \(and Why You Should\)](#), Workest by Zenefits, 2019.

<sup>168</sup> Stephanie Voza, *Mentorship Programs for Women: Advancing Your Employees and Your Business*, Mastercard, 2019.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> Stephanie Neal, Jazmine Boatman PhD, Linda Miller, [Women as Mentors: Does She or Doesn't She?](#) DDI, cited June 2022, 5.

A case study of Sun Microsystems found that both mentor and mentee participants in their mentorship program were more likely to advance: mentees were five times as likely to advance, and mentors were six times more likely. Retention rates were also significantly higher among participants in the mentorship program—72% for mentees, 69% for mentors, and 49% for non-participants.<sup>171</sup>

Informal mentorship arrangements often evolve organically in organizations, but developing a formal program can have even greater benefits. Formally organizing a mentorship program can greatly expand who has access to mentorship arrangements. It can enhance the likelihood that appropriate mentors and mentees find each other, which is key to beneficial relationships. Furthermore, formal mentorship programs can be more effectively structured and monitored, and where they are established and developed by a company, they can include more formal learning opportunities, set aside more time for participation, and are more likely to contribute to a sense of corporate investment in employee learning and development.

## How can mentorship programs help promote gender equity?

Formal mentorship programs can help support women's advancement and contribute to gender equity within a company. In male-dominated industries such as the infrastructure and natural resources sectors, there are likely to be fewer women in leadership positions. Women in more junior positions may not see as many senior women, and so may not see as many avenues for their own advancement. Creating opportunities for communication, guidance, and conversation can help women understand how senior women got to where they are and how to anticipate and manage challenges to their own career development. Cornell University found that mentoring programs improved promotion and retention rates for minorities and women by 15 to 38% compared to non-mentored employees.<sup>172</sup>

## Tips for establishing a mentorship program

- Invite interested parties to be involved in a steering group to develop the program. Such a committee could include senior managers—women and men. The program should include goals and a plan for monitoring progress. Determine how gender will be addressed in the program—will there be an emphasis on female participants and/or mentors?
- If there is a corporate gender champion, include him or her. The more formal the program, and the more closely it is tied into a company's existing gender objectives, the more likely that the program may receive funding and traction to assure longevity.<sup>173</sup>

<sup>171</sup> Naz Beheshti, [Improve Workplace Culture with a Strong Mentoring Program](#), Forbes, 2019.

<sup>172</sup> Naz Beheshti, [Improve Workplace Culture with a Strong Mentoring Program](#), Forbes, 2019.

<sup>173</sup> Hire, [How to Create a Women's Mentorship Program in your Company](#), cited June 2022.

- Identify whether the program will include formal training for mentors, and if it will include any formal training opportunities for the cohort of mentees.
- Mentors should include senior level staff and should include the most senior female staff willing to participate. But do not limit mentee and mentorship to women; women can benefit from being mentored by men, and vice versa.
- Try not to have mentees mentored by their own boss. Where the objective is to help staff identify long-term goals and choices, mentees may not feel able to freely communicate with their current superior. If possible, encourage mentees to choose mentors who are not in their immediate reporting chain.
- Don't force the pairings: If participants—either mentors or mentees—are not enthusiastic about participating in a mentorship program, the program is not as likely to succeed. Facilitating some choice among pairings is helpful. One technique is to give mentors a choice of mentees, and then when each mentee has a selection of potential mentors, allow the mentee to select the mentor of their choice.
- Have mentors and mentees set out their expectations in a formal mentorship agreement, including how often they will meet, how long the arrangement will last, and what they hope to get out of the arrangement.
- Management should create space in people's work programs for participating in a mentorship program. Where management emphasizes that mentorship is a priority, this will reinforce investment in staff development and allow mentors and mentees to take full advantage of the program.

### Draft Mentorship Agreement:

This template is meant to be customized by mentors and mentees to suit their needs. It can also be updated throughout the mentorship as goals and needs change. The following questions should be discussed by the mentor and mentee and completed together.

1. What are your goals for this mentorship arrangement? If you have different (but complementary) goals, you can include them here as well. What do you hope to achieve?

**Mentor:**

**Mentee:**

2. How will you achieve these goals? (i.e., in-person or virtual meetings; projects you will collaborate on, etc.)
3. How often will you meet? If you cannot meet, how much notice will you commit to give each other?

4. How will you evaluate if you are meeting your stated goals, or whether you need to change something to improve the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship? What timeframe will you use to evaluate? This does not need to be a formal assessment, but it can be helpful to set a timeframe for discussing the mentorship arrangement and deciding, for instance, if more frequent/less frequent meetings might help, etc.
5. Do you both/either want your conversations to stay confidential? Are there certain topics that you wish to remain confidential, but others do not need to be? (For instance, you may ask your mentor for advice on career mobility, which you might not want your current manager to hear. Or you may ask your mentor for advice on job seeking and may benefit from your mentor helping your networking.)
6. Are there any topics that you wish to name as off limits in your mentoring relationship?
7. Conditions:
  - a. Agree that if either party decides to end the mentorship arrangement, this can be done without blame or questions.
  - b. Agree to a time period for the mentorship arrangement or decide that the relationship will continue as long as both want it.<sup>174</sup>

**Date:**

**Sign:**

*Re-sign and date this agreement at your agreed evaluation intervals.*

<sup>174</sup> Adapted from Global Women in Science, [Mentoring Agreement Template](#), cited June 2022.



## TOOL 1.21

### Guidelines for Developing Women’s Careers and Leadership<sup>175</sup>

- » **GOAL:** Support gender-equitable career development and mobility
- » **TARGET UNIT:** Training

While many tools in this tool suite focus on creating opportunities and an inclusive work culture, it is equally important to develop a cadre of leadership-ready women candidates who can take advantage of a more inclusive work culture. Investments in training and activities to support women’s career development will help ensure that your company will be able to take advantage of the gains from a gender-diverse workforce and management team—and that you will be successful in attracting and retaining women with management potential. Such efforts are particularly important in areas where gender gaps have been identified.

Actions to support women’s leadership development and advancements can include:

- Ensuring that women have equitable access to leadership development programs already being offered
- Offering programs specifically targeted at developing women leaders by helping women to step into leadership roles and take advantage of professional opportunities
- Creating programs that raise awareness about the challenges women face so that supervisors/ managers are equipped to proactively support training programs and women leadership candidates
- Offering company-wide inclusion training to create a more positive environment for diversity

Activities to support women leaders can be undertaken in-house or by external partners and can draw on successful examples piloted by other companies.

### Ensure High-Level Support and Management of Training Programs

For training and development to be successful, there should be clear, visible high-level support for the program. The gender equity champion should report directly to the company’s senior executive, preferably the CEO, signaling a clear commitment to the goals set out by the organization and removing bureaucracy that may impede programing. The board should also be kept informed and involved in the development and rollout of a women’s leadership program—ideally to complement gender-diversification efforts at the board level as well—to ensure buy-in from shareholders.

<sup>175</sup> This tool was developed for the [Unlocking Opportunities for Women and Business toolkit](#) by The Humphrey Group, a Canadian-based firm specializing in leadership communication training.

## Build Key Support Structures for Training

In addition to high-level support, leadership training and development initiatives require support across the company. In addition to support from the board and CEO as described above, and leadership from the gender equity champion, support structures should include:

- Executive leadership
- Human resources department
- Participants' supervisors

## Support Activities

Leadership development and training programs cannot succeed alone. Training women leaders and supportive male champions will only lead to changes in the face of corporate leadership when they are supported by:

- Consistent communication about initiatives within the company, using mechanisms such as companywide quarterly emails, annual progress reports, and town halls, among others.
- Continuous engagement/visibility in training programs, using techniques such as program kickoffs, welcome letters, conferences, and summits.
- Changes in incentive structures; for instance, creating manager KPIs that include gender-inclusive promotions and upgrades, support for staff development, and flexible work.

In addition to these general recommendations, companies should implement concrete activities to support women's participation in trainings, depending on the specific challenges associated. For instance, where training takes place in a different location than work or outside of work hours, women may face particular childcare challenges. To facilitate women's participation in leadership training, consider giving women time off work to participate in trainings during work hours or provide stipends for additional childcare.

## Specific Skill Focus for Women's Leadership Development

Training content should be developed to support leadership development for women, as well as training male champions to better support women leaders.

## Leadership Training for Supervisors and Leaders of Women (Often, Male and Female Champions)

In order to support women's leadership development, women's managers need to understand the importance, challenges, and ways to support the development of women leaders. While male champions are often the focus of programs to improve inclusive workplace cultures, female managers may also need capacity building. When women

overcome challenges to become managers, they may have a keener perspective for challenges other women face, but they may also have unique blind spots that prevent them from seeing challenges that they did not personally experience—or they may consider that they made it, so others can as well.

To help both male and female managers become allies for women's leadership, training needs to highlight both implicit and explicit challenges women may face to becoming leaders, as well as presenting the benefits of a more diverse and inclusive leadership pipeline. Challenges may include workplace culture and stereotypes, broader cultural constraints, and 'gender-intensified constraints'—issues that theoretically affect both women and men but typically weigh heavier on women (for instance, childcare). Supervisors also need to understand the ways in which their own leadership and communication styles impact others and whether under their supervision feel supported.

Among the areas to cover in such programs:

- How women's managers may have certain unconscious biases regarding female leaders
- Examination of the cultural context, and how this informs workplace culture
- Awareness-raising for 'gender-intensified constraints,' which managers may not recognize as overly burdensome on women
- Leadership communication training

## Leadership Training for Women

To create a corporate culture in which women have a strong leadership identity, women's leadership initiatives should be multifaceted and mutually reinforcing. Program design should be based on barriers and needs identified by women within the organization.

The activities proposed here focus on women already in the workforce. As part of these efforts, also consider reaching out to local communities to raise awareness about potential industry careers and to encourage younger women into STEM sectors.

Key features of leadership programs for women include:

- **Vertical and horizontal integration:** Leadership development programs should span the entirety of an organization, from senior to junior levels and across different business units. This approach contributes to retention, as well as recruitment when new hires can have immediate access to programs. The senior-most female leaders in business units should play an active and visible role in training programs—specifically in the context of delivery. In doing so, junior women will be exposed to senior female role models. This exposure will help them develop strong leadership identities within a given corporate culture.

- **Networking opportunities:** Development programs should include opportunities for women to formally and informally network. Networking opportunities provide women with the opportunity to connect with other women who may face similar challenges and can help them identify solutions. This could take the form of a formal organization-wide women's network, an annual women's leadership conference, or local women's chapters. Such networks should include an executive-level sponsor, country-level chapters, and yearly action plans.
- **Tiered training:** Typically, women are present at mid- and senior levels of leadership, in addition to a range of junior positions. As noted above, senior women should play an active and visible role in training; however, they too must be offered opportunities to develop their leadership competencies. Here, contracting for external training support is recommended, since professionals who specialize in leadership development can provide the greatest impact. This training should focus equally on leadership competencies for subordinates, peers, and more senior executives.
- **Mentorship and sponsorship:** Mentorships and sponsorships have proven an important element in the advancement of women in organizations. Your company's leadership development program should feature such opportunities as a component of the overall training initiative. Because mentorship serves as an important mechanism for retention, these opportunities should be made available to mid- to senior-level women in particular, since this is where attrition rates are typically the highest. Senior mentors should have accountability for progress of mentees, according to an agreed set of criteria. While these programs can be developed between senior and more junior women, also think about mentorship and sponsorship programs that work across gender to ensure that young women and men have equitable support in their career growth. Examples of successful programs include PepsiCo's Power Pairs, which teams up senior leaders with more junior women of color to increase racial and gender diversity in the leadership development pipeline.
- **Leadership opportunities:** Development programs also should include opportunities for high-potential women to showcase their skills and abilities to the executive leadership. Visibility is a critical component of career advancement. Many women, and mid-level female employees in particular, have little exposure to the upper echelons of leadership. Opportunities such as presentations to senior leaders heighten promising women's visibility while providing valuable experiences that build confidence.

Leadership training programs should cover a range of topics and subject matter. Communications and career management are among the key areas.

## Effective Communication Skills

Strong communication skills are a fundamental leadership competency. To navigate corporate culture, women must have the tools to advocate for themselves and their

ideas in a manner that resonates with those in power. Cultural norms—and the resulting socialization—often discourage women from doing so, either in the home or in the workplace. Leadership communication training gives women the tools to influence at all levels of an organization, from delivering presentations to chairing meetings. By developing effective communication skills, women are perceived as leaders. This training should include:

- An understanding of optimal ways to address diverse and often male-dominated audiences in an influential manner
- Tools to speak and write in an effective and organized fashion—for instance, how to avoid habits that position women as subordinates
- Vocal training that encourages women to speak more effectively when surrounded by men
- Tools to help eliminate minimizing behaviors that reinforce traditional dynamics of power, such as confident body language, conversational eye contact, measured pace, and confident expression

By encouraging the application of these skills on a daily basis, training can help reinforce positive leadership perceptions, which are critical to women’s advancement through the career ranks.

## Career Management

Career management is an important area of leadership development, and women should have access to formal training. Career management is often supported by the human resources department, but supervisors also should play an active role in helping women build their short- and long-term career plans, as well as developing strategies that balance work goals and personal responsibilities. This training also might include ways to communicate career goals to senior leaders. In addition to comprehensive career planning, women should have opportunities for out-of-office experiences, such as job shadowing.

Because women consistently cite tension between work and personal responsibilities as a barrier to advancement, the issue of work-life balance should be included in career management planning. Training in this area should include guidance on ways to navigate responsibilities and communicate effectively about personal and professional needs.

## Hard and Soft Skills

In rapidly changing technical industries, it is critical that women have access to technical training to keep them at the cutting edge of the sector. Training programs should consider cultural norms which may mean that women have a relatively low level of baseline knowledge. They also should involve creating opportunities for women to pursue additional technical education, in either internal or external settings—and supporting them as they take advantage of such continuing education programs.

If there is a gender disparity in the ways in which employees make use of such programs, consider undertaking an assessment to understand the reasons for the disparity. Following the assessment, you can design interventions to increase women’s participation, such as childcare subsidies to support women’s participation in continuing education. The training programs should be integrated into career planning and prioritized by supervisors. Integrating this type of training into annual objectives for women, tied to performance, is another way to ensure that hard skills development remains a priority.

Soft skills training also represents an important area of development, particularly in the context of leadership competencies. It is critical to ensure that those responsible for women’s development know how to support them and to ensure that women who have been identified for advancement can advocate for themselves and their abilities. Such training includes the leadership training for women and supervisors and leaders of women described above.

## MONITOR AND SUSTAIN: TOOLS 1.22–1.23

**TOOLS 1.22** and **1.23** include guidance for sustained monitoring of gender equity programs. This includes tools for monitoring and evaluation, and reporting on progress against gender objectives, as well as specific guidance on monitoring and sustaining training programs for gender-equitable career development

Setting targets and monitoring them is critical for not only tracking progress, but also for being able to show a narrative of why it pays to invest in gender equity. Whether a company chooses to start with limited gender interventions or with broader systemic change, being able to show not only how interventions have created changes for women in the company, but also led to broader changes—in productivity, reduced HR costs, improved team dynamics, etc.—is key to demonstrating the importance and value of gender equity initiatives.

## TOOL 1.22

### Monitoring and Accountability

- » **GOAL:** Track and support gender diversity progress
- » **TARGET UNIT:** Training

Developing strategies for monitoring indicators, rewarding growth, and promoting sustained progress will help ensure that you can effectively track your gender diversity gains and continue to improve.

### Monitoring

The first step in developing a monitoring strategy is to determine what is being monitored. With many gender interventions, there is a tendency to simply monitor how a given intervention is impacting women within the company. But gender initiatives are not only about increasing the number of women, for instance—they also support creating a gender-diverse and inclusive workforce that improves the company as a whole. Monitoring of gender interventions should include specific gender targets, but should also be linked to broader company goals to capture how changes in gender inclusion and diversity are impacting the company.

Indicators for gender programs should be SMART (specific, measurable, agreed-upon/accountable, realistic, and time-based). Everyone in the company should be aware of the targets and understand their role in helping to meet them, as well as their accountabilities and responsibilities.

Next, companies need to determine the monitoring approach and frequency. How will progress towards targets be reviewed? How often? What measurement instruments will be used? Many of these instruments can be used multiple times, from the initial assessment to subsequent monitoring and evaluation. Here is a suggested monitoring schedule:

### Quarterly Monitoring

Recurring data collection should include:

- Recruitment: Gender ratios of job applicants, shortlists, new hires
- Promotion: Gender ratios on promotions for positions with qualified male and female applicants
- Gender ratios in requests for telework and status of telework requests
- Percentage of women at each staff level, and in each job description



## Yearly Monitoring

This annual exercise should include:

- Abridged gender audit: Include a selection of questions from the initial gender audit based on corporate priorities, as well as a review of the physical environment
- Follow-up pay gap study: Use same metrics as in original and evaluate change
- Review recruitment materials and advertisements and review targets for women's representation on recruitment shortlists
- Review performance reviews: Track changes in KPIs on gender
- Track number, frequency, and attendance for gender-related training activities
- Track reports of sexual harassment, and use of ombuds services
- Review uptake of flexible work arrangements by gender
- Review uptake of mentorship and professional development programs by gender
- Conduct additional monitoring to comply with the Global Reporting Initiative

## Biennial Monitoring

- Repeat full gender audit

After determining your monitoring approach and setting a schedule, the next step is to decide on reporting responsibilities for each of the metrics. Assign appropriate units, designate specific measuring instruments to use, stipulate presentation format for results, and set a timeline for completion. Led by the gender champion, the gender equity task force should take charge of gathering all results.

After pulling together all the information, the gender equity task force should review and analyze data to identify ways to improve and sustain positive results. The task force might be able to handle this task on its own, or the group may decide to bring on an expert consultant to assist.

For all of the metrics examined above, review accountability: Are responsible team leaders aware of and trained on the progress they are trying to achieve? What kinds of specific accountability mechanisms are in place? For example, are results discussed during performance evaluations? Are results linked to bonuses?

In addition, the monitoring process should include a look at whether incentives are in place for teams and their managers to support continued investment in progress and foster a sense of shared benefit and accomplishment.

## TOOL 1.23

### Monitor and Sustain Training Programs for Gender-Equitable Career Development<sup>176</sup>

- » **GOAL:** Monitor and support training programs
- » **TARGET UNIT:** Training

Many companies will address challenges and opportunities to increase gender diversity by instituting training opportunities for staff. To ensure that these programs are successful, companies need to monitor the training programs to ensure that they continue to fit staff needs and contribute towards gender diversity goals. Regardless of the type of training being offered (whether hard or soft skills), the training should be evaluated as to whether and how it contributes to the organization's gender diversity goals.

#### Monitor

To monitor the effectiveness of training programs, companies should focus monitoring efforts in three ways:

- **Corporate-wide monitoring:** Qualitative and quantitative monitoring should take place throughout the duration of training. Training deliverables should be integrated into corporate KPIs. In some cases, this may mean redesigning KPIs or adding new KPIs to existing structures. By integrating these training deliverables into formal performance indicators, the monitoring process is made easier. Such monitoring systems make it easier to measure progress on gender goals, such as the number of females promoted to senior leadership within the year.
- **Informal, case-by-case monitoring of participant development:** Managers/supervisors of training participants should provide qualitative feedback on development, both formally and informally. At a minimum, managers should provide feedback on retention and application of training deliverables as they conduct performance reviews. This feedback will support the monitoring data captured by the human resources department. In addition, it holds managers more accountable for ensuring learning retention and application.
- **Program monitoring:** Continuous monitoring of the training programs themselves is important. This ensures that the training offered continues to meet the needs of participants— needs that can change over time. Comprehensive program feedback forms and monitoring of delivery systems enable better control over content and help identify the kinds of changes necessary to ensure continued relevance of learning modules.

<sup>176</sup> The Humphrey Group developed this tool.

## Sustain

Maintaining, internalizing, and building on skills learned is an essential investment in training. The easiest way to ensure skills sustainability is to create multiple and mutually reinforcing touchpoints.

- **Managers/supervisors:** They must play a central role in reinforcing new learning. This means understanding program content so they can support participants as learned skills are applied. Inclusivity leadership training helps sustain the gains from soft skills training.
- **Reinforcement systems:** Formal mentorship/sponsorship programs help reinforce the learning and contribute to sustaining gains. They give participants the opportunity to test out and review the skills learned. Such programs also provide valuable exposure to senior decision makers who could advocate on behalf of their mentees in the future.
- **Continuing networking opportunities at local, regional, and global levels:** These opportunities allow ongoing interaction among participants long after the training has ended. They are particularly important for both hard and soft skills development because they enable the sharing of best practices, lessons learned, and feedback. Summits for high-potential leaders provide similar opportunities to continue conversations around learning while acknowledging the accomplishments of successful women.
- **Community engagement:** Tension between personal and professional spheres can sometimes create barriers to women's advancement. Engaging the community through education in the types of programs being offered can reduce this tension. Emphasis here should be on hard skills training that falls outside traditional roles for women, leadership skills, and communication training. Engaging with the community on these themes can help ensure the appropriate framing, given the local context.
- **External feedback:** Engaging with the community helps create a feedback loop. In this way, community engagement is clearly linked to the bottom line, demonstrating the business case for investment. Companies can offer soft skills workshops on topics such as inclusivity, leadership, and communication training to local schools as a part of their community investment initiatives. In doing so, they empower potential employees with the skills needed to be successful if they are hired in the future.

## Selected Resources for Further Reading

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