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Guidelines for promotion and implementation of gender equality and women's empowerment

Lignes directrices relatives à la promotion et à la mise en œuvre de l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes et de l'autonomisation des femmes

ICS: 03.100.02

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

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This document was prepared by Project Committee ISO/PC 337.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

Introduction

This document provides guidance on gender equality and women's empowerment.

Gender equality means the achievement of equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys, such that no one is disadvantaged.

Despite the real progress that has been made, gender inequalities and gender-based discrimination still remain very prevalent globally, in all walks of life and in every country.

Societal gender role expectations towards female and male behaviour are reflected in the very functioning of organizations, including organizational cultures, processes, and hierarchies. Persistent gender inequalities in organizations mirror the structural discrimination women and girls experience in society. By way of example, five out of ten women worldwide are integrated in the labour market, compared with nine out of ten men¹⁾. Still, once employed, women, worldwide, only make 77 cents for every dollar earned by men²⁾. Women remain in the minority in governing bodies³⁾ and other position of power. Concurrently, the paid and unpaid labour is unequally distributed, women and girls dedicating more time than men and boys to unpaid care and domestic work⁴⁾. Finally, according to the estimates of the World Health Organization, almost one out of three women worldwide declares having been the victim of physical or sexual violence during their lives, not to mention the psychological, economic and social forms of violence⁵⁾.

The purpose of this International Standard is to provide guidelines, definitions, procedures and tools to public and private organisations in an effort to encourage, support and direct them to make sustainable progress in promoting and achieving gender equality, both internally and externally. It aims to provide support in the fulfilment of their legal obligations regarding gender equality by proposing an approach, methods and operational tools. It is intended to promote a common understanding on the issue of gender equality, and to complement other instruments and initiatives on this subject.

While women are primarily affected in fields such as the labour market, unpaid care work and sexual and gender-based violence, gender-based discrimination can also affect men and boys in certain aspects of life and primarily when they do not conform to typical recognized masculinity roles. Stereotypical masculine role perceptions can have negative impacts on the lives, health, including mental health, of men and boys. This is why, in order to address gender inequality, it is important to identify how a particular organisational action or omission affects gender equality. Only once this has been done can the gender imbalance be identified, and the appropriate action to address that imbalance be determined. This is an underlying principle of this standard.

Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern everyone and every organization. It is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development. All organisations are in a position to take action for gender equality, taking into account the organization's maturity, nature, size and objectives.

In this document, the gender equality objectives follow the understanding that gender is a social construct. The inequalities targeted are not based on biological criteria, but are the result of the social norms and constructs learned by or imposed on every individual through socialization processes.

While recognizing the existence of other gender identities, this document specifically focuses on the inequality resulting from the hierarchical organization of the gender-specific roles assigned to women and men, girls and boys, due to their prominently structural character on a society-wide scale.

1) ILOSTAT 2020.

2) UNWOMEN

3) Ranking of the feminization of executive bodies in SBF 120 companies – 2019 / HR Convictions – Secretary of State for Gender Equality and the Fight against Discrimination.

4) International Labour Organization, 2019.

5) <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women>

Guidelines for promotion and implementation of gender equality and women's empowerment

1 Scope

This document gives guidance on how to promote and implement gender equality and women's empowerment. It offers guidelines for organizations to develop the capabilities to achieve a culture of gender equality and women's empowerment. The guidelines include the framework, resources, policies, tools and good practices enabling contextualization, promotion and implementation of gender equality.

This document focuses on the inequality resulting from the gender specific roles assigned to women, girls, men and boys and is applicable to all types of organisations - public or private, regardless of their size, location and field of activity.

This document does not address the specific aspects of relations with labour unions or work councils, countries specific compliance and legal requirements on gender diversity.

NOTE Please refer to [3.5](#) (*now*) definition of gender and [3.21](#) (*now*) definition of diversity.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <https://www.electropedia.org>

3.1

workforce

people who provide a service or labour to contribute to business or organizational outcomes

[SOURCE: ISO 30400:2016, 10.1]

Note 1 to entry: service or labour comprises paid, voluntary, or legally compulsory contributions, irrespective of their contractual status

Note 2 to entry: workforce includes people defined as workers in ISO 26000, as well as volunteers and persons in training

3.2

gender-based discrimination

the intentional or accomplished unfavourable treatment of a person, social group or an organization on the basis of gender.

- Direct discrimination: the intentional or accomplished less favourable treatment of a person, social group or an organization on ground of gender than another is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation;
- Indirect discrimination: an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice putting a person, social group or an organization at a particular disadvantage on grounds of gender than another is,

unless that provision, criterion or practice is objectively justified by a legitimate aim, and the means of achieving that aim are appropriate and necessary.

Note 1 to entry: gender based-discrimination can intersect and be cumulative with multiple forms of discrimination

Note 2 to entry: within organizations, gender-based discrimination can be systemic, which involves that whereby the policies, procedures, practices, routines and or organisational culture of any organization, or combination thereof, whether with or without intent, contribute to less favourable outcomes within and by the organization for persons in grounds of gender, more often for women and girls than for men and boy

3.3

gender-inclusive language

language not perpetuating gender stereotypes and making women and men in all their diversity visible by proactively using all available syntactic rules, lexical fields and choices of word enabling the use of feminine and masculine forms when they differ and gender-neutral terms

3.4

gender equality

equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys

Note 1 to entry: gender equality does not mean that women and men, girls and boys, will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female

Note 2 to entry: gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and girls, men and boys, are taken into consideration, recognizing them in all their diversity

3.5

gender

the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context or time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context. Other important criteria for socio-cultural analysis include class, race, poverty level, ethnic group and age

Note 1 to entry: gender in this definition may refer to gender as defined by national legislations or self-identified by individuals

Note 2 to entry: gender does not refer to sexual orientation which is an other important criteria for socio-cultural analysis

[SOURCE: UN Women]

3.6

intrapreneurship

act of behaving like an entrepreneur while working within an organization

Note 1 to entry: this approach consists in encouraging employees to think, act and create in their professional environment as if they were entrepreneurs themselves

3.7**organization**

person or group of people that has its own functions with responsibilities, authorities and relationships to achieve its objectives

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2015, 3.2.1, modified]

Note 1 to entry: the concept of organization includes, but is not limited to sole-trader, company, corporation, firm, enterprise, authority, partnership, charity or institution, or part or combination thereof, whether incorporated or not, public or private

3.8**gender parity**

relative equality in terms of numbers and proportions of women and men, girls and boys, and is often calculated as the ratio of female-to-male values for a given indicator

3.9**gender balance**

a proportional representation and participation of women and men, girls and boys, between 40% and 60% of either

3.10**stakeholder**

individual or group that has an interest in any decision or activity of an organization

Note 1 to entry: an individual, group, or organization who may impact, be impacted by, or perceive itself to be impacted by a decision, activity, or outcome of a project, program, or portfolio, or organization [*A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK(R) Guide) -- Sixth Edition*]

[SOURCE: ISO 26000:2010]

3.11**social responsibility**

responsibility of an organization for the impacts of its decisions and activities on society and the environment, through ethical and transparent behaviour that:

- contributes to sustainable development, including inclusiveness, health and the welfare of society;
- takes into account the expectations of stakeholders;
- is in compliance with applicable law and consistent with international norms of behaviour;
- is integrated throughout the organization and practised in its relationships.

Note 1 to entry: Includes activities on members and workforce of organisations

Note 2 to entry: Social responsibility includes gender equality

Note 3 to entry: Activities include products, services and processes

Note 4 to entry: Relationships refer to an organization's activities within its sphere of influence

[SOURCE: ISO 26000:2010]

3.12

sexism

any conscious or unconscious act, gesture, visual representation, spoken or written words, practice or behaviour based upon the idea that a person or a group of persons is inferior because of their gender, which occurs in the public or private sphere, whether online or offline, with the purpose or effect of: violating the inherent dignity or rights of a person or a group of persons; or resulting in physical, sexual, psychological or socio-economic harm or suffering to a person or a group of persons; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment; or constituting a barrier to the autonomy and full realisation of human rights by a person or a group of persons; or maintaining and reinforcing gender stereotypes

Note 1 to entry: sexism can include forms of indirect violence (hints, jokes, inappropriate and insistent comments or looks, etc.) or forms of exclusion (informal discussions about work that are not accessible to everyone, etc.)

Note 2 to entry: sexism and sexist behaviour are perpetrated at the individual, institutional and structural levels, and experienced with detrimental effect at all three levels. At the structural level, sexism constitutes a barrier to gender equality and to the empowerment of women and girls; whereas men and boys are also restricted in their capabilities by sexist stereotypes. Gender stereotypes and inherent biases shape norms, behaviour and expectations, and therefore lead to sexist acts

Note 3 to entry: sexism is a part of a continuum of violence, it contributes to create a climate which may constitute favourable ground to violence against women or gender-based discrimination

3.13

stereotype

shared beliefs about personal characteristics, usually pertaining to personality traits and the behaviours of a group of persons

3.14

gender stereotype

socially or culturally preconception ascribing to an individual specific and limited attributes, characteristics or roles by reason only of membership in the social group of women and men or girls and boys

3.15

gender responsiveness

outcomes that reflect an understanding of gender roles and inequalities and encourage equal participation, including equal and fair distribution of benefits. Gender responsiveness is accomplished through gender analysis that informs inclusiveness.

[SOURCE: UNPP Gender Responsive National Communications Toolkit]

3.16

gender budgeting

application of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process of public and private organizations. It involves conducting a gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process, and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equality

[SOURCE: Council of Europe (2005), Gender Budgeting: Final report of the Group of Specialists on Gender Budgeting, Council of Europe]

3.17

gender equality-based public funding

attributing public funds (public contracts, subsidies) with conditionality based on gender equality and actions to promote and achieve gender equality

3.18**equal remuneration**

(a) the term remuneration includes the ordinary, basic or minimum wage or salary and any additional emoluments whatsoever payable directly or indirectly, whether in cash or in kind, by the employer to the worker and arising out of the worker's employment; (b) the term equal remuneration for women and men workers for work of equal value refers to rates of remuneration established without discrimination based on sex

[SOURCE: C100 - Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100) - ILO]

3.19**bias**

unconscious, conscious or systematic tendency, inclination or opinion that is preconceived or unreasoned that hinders impartial judgement. [ISO 30400, definition of bias]

Note 1 to entry: Gender bias is one of its specific form.

3.20**work-life balance**

outcome of organizational processes and practises which promote the satisfaction of, but not limited to, personal needs, unpaid work, domestic work, care work, leisure time and social activities, supporting a healthy lifestyle and balanced participation of all in public and private life

3.21**diversity**

characteristics of differences and similarities between people

Note 1 to entry: diversity includes factors that influence the identities and perspectives that people bring when interacting at work

Note 2 to entry: diversity can support the development of in workplace environments and practices that foster learning from others by implementing inclusiveness (3.12) measures

Note 3 to entry: diversity dimensions include the demographic and other personal characteristics of the workforce, such as – but not limited to – age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, as well as characteristics related to socio-economic context. These are often identified and agreed upon dimensions, which can be associated with legal requirements in different jurisdictions

[SOURCE: Reference_id-d44f2acc-0bd8-4f81-bbb6-807ISO 30415:2021]

3.22**inclusion**

process of including all stakeholders (3.10) in organizational contexts

Note 1 to entry: organizational policies, processes and practices that are fair and impartially applied can support an inclusive workplace

Note 2 to entry: this involves the entire workforce having equal access to opportunities and resources to enable their contribution to the organization

Note 3 to entry: this involves stakeholders from different groups being accepted, welcomed, enabled to use their voice and get involved, and to develop a sense of belonging

[SOURCE: modified ISO 30415 – Definition and Notes 1 and 2 to entry revised and Note 3 to entry added]

3.23**sexual and gender-based violence**

any harmful act, including sexual harassment, that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life, that is perpetrated against a person's or a group of individuals' consent based on gender

3.24

sexual harassment

any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature, with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment

[SOURCE: Istanbul Convention, Council of Europe - adapted]

3.25

labour practices

all the policies and practices relating to work performed by or on behalf of the organization, including subcontracted work, that affect the workforce: recruitment hiring, retention, promotion and retirement, remuneration, turnover, disciplinary action, complaint response system, transfers and reassignment, termination of employment, human resources development, occupational safety and health, and working conditions (working hours, discrimination and safety)

[SOURCE: Adapted from ISO 26000:2010, [6.4](#)]

3.26

top management

person or group of people who directs and controls an organization ([3.9](#)) at the highest level

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2015 without Notes to entry]

3.27

gender mainstreaming

process of systematically assessing the implications for women and men, girls and boys and incorporated a gender equality perspective in the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, regulatory measures and spending programmes, in all areas and at all levels

Note 1 to entry: gender mainstreaming is a strategy intended to incorporate a gender equality perspective in all policies, which ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality

3.28

governing body

person or group of persons who have ultimate accountability for the whole organization

Note 1 to entry: Every organization has one governing body, whether explicitly established or not

Note 2 to entry: A governing body can be explicitly established in a number of formats including, but not limited to, a board of direction, supervisory board, board of trustees.

Note 3 to entry: Top management plays a role that, depending on the context, reports to and is held accountable by the governing body. [Source : ISO 37000:2021]

4 Overall approach and issues

4.1 Approach to the document

This document provides guidelines on how to address gender equality in organizations with the following areas:

- Internal operations: governance, labour practices, raising awareness among internal stakeholders and support for internal stakeholders
- Financial operations: sustainable procurement and gender budgeting
- Stakeholder relations: involve stakeholders and setting up partnerships
- Internal and external communication: editorial content and communication action

These strategic priorities are addressed through the following goals:

- Preventing and ending all forms of gender-based discrimination and promoting women's and girls' rights
- Abolishing gender stereotypes and gender bias in the organization
- Preventing and ending sexual and gender-based violence
- Educating and improving access to education and training, including vocational training
- Protecting health and especially sexual and reproductive health and rights
- Enhancing women's empowerment, especially economic empowerment
- Increasing participation and equal opportunities for leadership in political and institutional, professional and corporate life.

Each strategic priority includes specific matters that organizations should take into consideration when striving to further the cause of gender equality. Also, each strategic priority and issue has a varying degree of relevance to each organisation.

The guidance on each issue includes a number of actions that an organization should take and expectations of the way in which an organization should behave. When an organization attempts to promote gender equality, it should identify each one of the issues in relation to its activities.

Realizing gender equality within an organization is a journey of transformation. Initially organizations tend to focus on compliance and achieving target numbers. This is generally followed by trainings, seminars, and conversations giving voice to stakeholders. More mature organizations implement new initiatives that focus on systemic gender inequalities. Fully mature organizations practice gender equality within and across all aspects of the organization. Through the journey, gender equality has become an organizational priority and fully integrated into the organization.

The actions recommended in this guideline should be considered in the context of the maturity or how advanced an organization is in terms of gender equality. The recommended actions may be utilized by an organization to facilitate the gender equality journey. The strategic priorities and actions recommended in this guideline require prioritization according to an organization's maturity, nature, size and objectives. The details of the specific implementation methods are left to the discretion of the organization.

The identification of relevant issues is followed by an assessment of the significance of the organization's impacts. An approach is described in [subclause 4.2](#) that helps to identify the issues and to manage priorities. The significance of an impact should be considered with reference both to the stakeholders concerned and to the way in which it affects the matter of gender equality.

[Annex D](#) provides supplementary guidance, best practices or illustrative examples from different countries and organizations.

Application of this document presupposes awareness of applicable legal requirements.

4.2 Steps in the implementation of the approach

The following methodology is proposed to organizations wishing to adapt and implement the document:

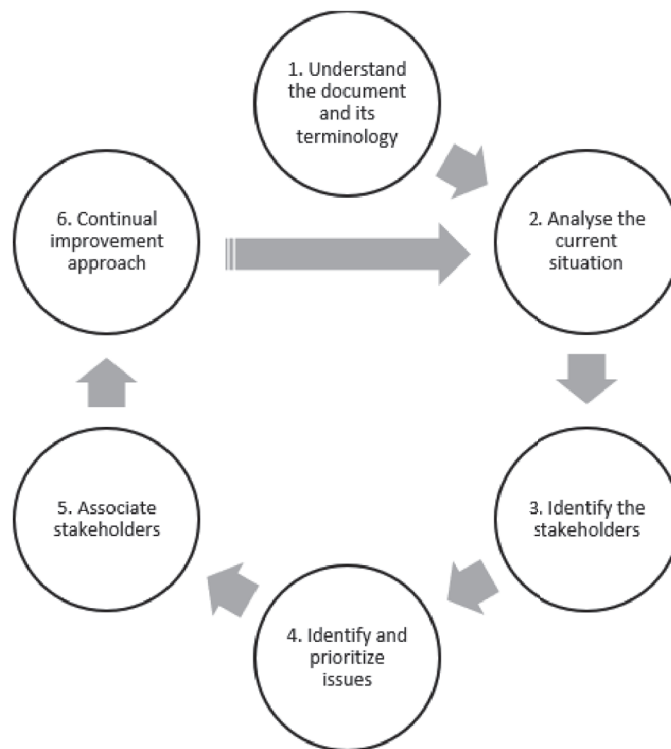


Figure 1 — The steps to implementing the initiative

[Annex A](#) describes a voluntary initiative to prevent sexual and gender-based violence and illustrates the steps of the proposed approach.

4.2.1 Step 1 - Understanding the document and its terminology

[Clause 3](#) of this document introduces the terms and definitions that need to be understood. The [Annex D](#) also contain best practices and concrete examples of applications.

4.2.2 Step 2 - Analyze the current situation in regard to gender equality

When an organization decides to implement this document, analysing the current situation is needed in order to decide how gender equality can be incorporate in its strategy. A methodology is proposed in [clause 5](#).

4.2.3 Step 3 - Identify the stakeholders

Once the current situation has been analyzed, it is essential to involve the most relevant stakeholders in order to identify and prioritize the actions. A methodology is proposed in [subclause 5.2](#).

4.2.4 Step 4 - Identify and prioritize issues on gender equality

Identifying and prioritizing the issues enable them to be ranked according to their level of priority (the strategic and chronological nature of their implementation). The following methodology may be applied:

- Step 4.1: Identify the potential issues, listed by strategic priority in [clause 6](#) of this document;
- Step 4.2: Identify the relevant issues and assess the positive or negative impact of the issue on the stakeholders;

- Step 4.3: Prioritize the issues by assessing the corresponding threats, opportunities, strengths and weaknesses;
- Step 4.4: Draw up the action plan by aligning the organization's strategic priorities and these priority issues.

4.2.5 Step 5 - Associate stakeholders with issues

For each of the chosen core subjects and issues, the organization identifies and associates the corresponding stakeholders.

4.2.6 Step 6 - Implement a continuous improvement approach (PDCA cycle)

To help organizations implement this document, adopting a continual improvement approach based on the universal PDCA cycle (Plan, Do, Check, Act), described in standard [5]ISO 9001, is recommended.

4.3 Integrating the approach into the organization's sustainability social responsibility policy

The positive link between gender equality and economic and social development has been demonstrated. Promotion of gender equality in organization's activities and internal and external advocacy is an important component of corporate social responsibility. It can be perceived as a lever and a source of better outcomes for the organization.

Numerous studies suggest that there are organizational benefits to promoting gender equality: reduced employee turnover, quality recruitment, a stronger and more productive and innovative work environment among the workforce, effective collaboration, ultimately performing better and achieving more accurate results. Equitable leadership improves decision-making, and for-profit organizations can boost profitability, e.g. by expanding the customer base, identify new markets and decrease retention costs.

5 The current state regarding gender equality

5.1 General information

To promote the cause of gender equality, the organization should evaluate and leverage the stakeholders' knowledge of the issues and practices pertaining to gender equality. For an organization committed to achieving it, gender equality should be construed as a methodological framework. Gender equality should be considered as transverse and strategic to the organization. It is embedded within its culture, above and beyond actions such as gender parity within top management, setting targets and monitoring indicators.

The organization should:

- identify one or more person(s) inside or outside the organization to take charge of the analysis of the existing situation. They may be the gender focal point for questions related to gender equality [reference to [Annex D](#)], a member of an employee representative body (e.g., the works council), someone who works in the human resources or corporate social responsibility department, or a person from a specialized organization. The number of people, committee or specialized organization that is agreed upon or contracted for this activity should be in accordance with the size of the organization. Top management and governing bodies of the organization should be actively involved. Findings of the analysis should directly be reported to them.
- conduct this analysis periodically and define its frequency in order to implement a process of continual improvement;
- determine the scope of the analysis and identify the themes, strategic priorities and stakeholders, in accordance with the recommendations in [clause 4](#);

- keep up to date with the latest qualified publications or news feed with the latest findings in gender equality;

Close attention should be paid to the appropriateness of the samples of stakeholders (gender parity, etc.).

5.2 Identifying stakeholders

Stakeholders are individuals or groups that has an interest in any decision or activity of an organization. Understanding how individuals or groups are or can be affected by an organization's decisions and activities will make it possible to identify the interests that establish a formal or informal relationship with the organization. Therefore, the organization's determination of the impacts of its decisions and activities will facilitate identification of its most important stakeholders.

Organizations may have many stakeholders. Some stakeholders are internal to the organization. They should include, but are not limited to, the organization's members, workforce, contractors or governing bodies. They may also include workers' committees, internal to the organization, and trade unions, external to the organization. Other stakeholders are external to the organization. They could include, but are not limited to, customers, suppliers, the public or local authorities and the associations with which the organization interacts.

To identify stakeholders and better understand their ecosystem, the organization should consider the following questions:

- To whom does the organization have legal obligations? To whom are there no legal obligations?
- Who might be positively or negatively affected by the organization's decisions or activities?
- Who is likely to express concern about the decisions and activities of the organization? Who are likely to be impacted, but does not raise concern?
- Who has been involved in the past when similar concern needed to be addressed? Who were not involved who likely have these concerns?
- Who can help the organization address specific impacts?
- Who can affect the organization's ability to meet its responsibilities?
- Who would be disadvantaged if excluded from the engagement?
- Who in the value chain of the service and/or product is affected? Are they affected differently?
- Who can help the organization address specific impacts?
- Who can affect the organization's ability to meet its responsibilities?
- Who would be disadvantaged if excluded from the engagement?
- Who in the value chain of the service and/or product is affected positively or negatively?

The organisation should consider the gender parity within the group of identified stakeholders.

5.3 Conducting an overview of the situation within the organization

The assessment of the current state of gender equality of an organization is the starting point for developing a tailored gender action plan with clear targets and a strategy for continuous improvement. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches are useful for making this assessment and setting goals:

- Quantitative data, which lends itself to numerical analysis, and qualitative data, which lends itself to non-numerical analysis can identify what barriers and opportunities to gender equality exist within the organization, and address why those barriers and opportunities exist.

Analysis of quantitative and qualitative data together allows for a clear understanding of an organization's current status on gender equality.

Quantitative and qualitative data collection may be conducted in parallel or sequentially.

The goal of this overview is not only to collect data on the activities undertaken to promote gender equality but also on the efficacy of the measures taken to allow an organization to set goals and clear time-lines for gender equality, to identify strategic actions required to achieve them, and to monitor status and progress.

The organizations should apply best practices in data collection storage and use, including ensuring the anonymization of the data they collect.

Finally, the data analysis and reporting should be disaggregated by gender and other relevant demographic factors such as age, etc., where possible, to identify differential experiences.

The data collection can be conducted by parties from within the organization itself or an independent third party. Roles and responsibilities should be clearly defined by identifying who is responsible for the data collection, the data analysis and the reporting activities. Those parties not directly involved in the data collection, analysis and reporting activities may contribute, if desired, to the data collection by being participants for interviews, focus group discussions, etc.

5.3.1 Data collection

In this paragraph ([5.3.1](#)), data to analyse the current status of gender equality of an organization is identified independently of the quantitative or qualitative approach and assumes mixed methods.

Standard qualitative data collection techniques include inter alia, interviews, focus groups discussions, review of written material, observations, and surveys. These techniques are useful in soliciting stakeholder attitudes, perceptions, and behaviours to determine the efficacy of organizational activities and initiatives.

The [subclause 5.3.2](#) focuses specifically on the quantitative data to be collected.

The organization should collect relevant data, including:

- Data on who is working on issues related to gender equality. Identify internal and external stakeholders already working for, those tasked with, and those accountable for promoting gender equality (top management, gender focal point(s), human resources, employee representative bodies, occupational health and safety manager, external organizations that interact with the organization, procurement, persons in charge of ethics and compliance, health and safety committee, etc.).
- Data on status of gender responsiveness of existing material within the organization (general engagement, policies, human resources specific processes and procedures (see ISO 30415:2021 for guidance on diversity and inclusion in human resources processes), feedback survey, annual review of the gender focal points, dedicated e-mail account, employee engagement survey, organization's internal and external communications and their content, etc.).
- Data on status of gender responsiveness of external stakeholders (policy statements by public bodies, communications, reports and research papers by associations and NGOs, etc.).
- Data on the performance of the reporting and advice unit(s), if any, with respect to gender responsiveness.
- Data indicating the internal stakeholders' perceptions on the current status of barriers and opportunities on gender equality (work-life balance, relationship between private life and career development, recruitment, retention, promotion, remuneration (salary, bonuses, profit share..), training, external organizational activities such as procurement, communication, etc....) and their appetite to encourage gender equality.

- Data indicating external stakeholders' experiences and perceptions of barriers and opportunities on gender equality.
- Data on the current status of barriers and opportunities to gender equality (work-life balance, relationship between private life and career development, recruitment, retention, promotion, remuneration (salary, bonuses, profit share...), training, external organizational activities such as procurement, communication, etc....).
- Data on gender based-violence to include: the statistics of gender based-violence within the organization, the internal stakeholders' experiences and perceptions of gender based-violence, and the status and efficacy of any tools used by the organization to prevent and combat gender-based violence.
- Data indicating the impacts of gender biases, gender-based violence risks, discrimination, and prejudice on the activities for which the organization has regional and jurisdictional influence and its external stakeholders, as well as possible benefits of gender equality existing policy if any.

Based on the aforementioned collected data listed, identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats pertaining to the existing status of gender equality based.

The effectiveness of these actions is conditional on the establishment of sound dialogue with all the stakeholders.

The organisation can base its indicators on those listed in [Annex B](#).

NOTE The data elements listed here are not exhaustive

5.3.2 Quantitative elements

To analyse the existing situation, the organization should:

- compile the breakdown of professions (jobs, categories, levels, types of contracts, etc.);
- identify the number of gender focal point person(s) in the organization;
- identify the number of training sessions delivered on questions related to gender equality;
- identify the number of stakeholders trained in questions related to gender equality;
- break down the number of workers participating in training by gender (see [4]ISO 30415:2021 for guidance on diversity and inclusion in training);
- analyse gender balance within jury panels, HR recruitment teams, internal project teams and on consultancy and assessment services;
- identify the number of awareness-raising actions and workshops conducted in the organization on this subject;
- quantify the number of *[reporting and advice units]* in the organization;
- identify the complaints, alerts and reports received about gender-based discrimination and sexual and gender-based violence, including sexual harassment;
- break down current organizational roles, promotions and turnovers by gender;
- identify and compile the existing internal procedures pertaining to equality;
- assess gender budgeting and quantify financial resources allocated to actions for achieving gender equality
- identify the existing services provisions dedicated to maternal, paternal and other care leaves, and other related services applicable within the organization;

- identify the existing services provisions encouraging and supporting personal work-life balance;
- identify the existing percentage of wage, compensation and benefits differences by job category, level and same job position, by gender, on a regular basis (see[4] ISO 30415:2021 for guidance on diversity and inclusion in remuneration); *[see Annex D.6 for an example of national legislation]*
- identify the communication actions towards external stakeholders related to gender equality.

The organisation can base its indicators on those listed in [Annex B](#).

NOTE This is not an exclusive list.

The organization should give priority to reaching out to and collaborating with a gender-balanced representation of their stakeholders (internal and external) to establish a data-based gender equality assessment of the organization.

This assessment should include an analysis of the methodology applied to collecting, processing and presenting gender equality data. The assessment should also include research on correlation and causation links between gender equality data points as well as reliability levels of these links. The quality and transparency of gender data issued by the organization to gender balanced stakeholders should be evaluated by the organization and be monitored in a systemic approach that should encompass data on employment, work life cycles, health at work and working conditions.

5.4 Conclusions

Following the analysis of the existing situation, the organization should follow the steps described in [subclauses 4.2.3](#), [4.2.4](#) and [4.2.5](#) in order to define and implement a time-bound gender action plan, based on the issues presented in [clause 6](#), in the objective to improve its gender responsiveness.

The analysis of the existing situation should be distributed to all the identified stakeholders. It may be a document in its own right or an annex of an existing document (e.g., the comprehensive risk assessment).

6 Guidelines on gender equality

6.1 The organization internal dimension

6.1.1 Issue 1: Governance

6.1.1.1 Description of the issue

Organizational governance is the system by which an organization makes and implements decisions in pursuit of its objectives. An organization aiming to be socially responsible and sustainable should have an organizational governance system enabling the organization to provide oversight and to put into practice the principles of gender equality. All organizations should put in place processes, systems, structures, or other mechanisms that make it possible to apply the principles and practices of gender equality.

Effective governance is based on incorporating the principles of gender equality into decision-making and implementation. In addition to these principles, it is advisable that an organization considers the practices and the issues of gender equality when it establishes and reviews its governance system.

The organization should fulfil and formally define this commitment and adopt an integrated approach to implementing it in all its activities and missions.

Meaningful promotion and implementation of gender equality requires active involvement of the leadership of the organization.

6.1.1.2 Related actions and expectations

The organization's decision-making processes and structures should enable it to:

- demonstrate its commitment through a gender equality policy that is reviewed annually and made available to the stakeholders;
- ensure active involvement of the leadership of the organization in promotion and implementation of the gender equality policy
- appoint one or more points of contact on questions related to gender equality (“gender focal point(s)” - [Annex D](#));
- allocating and using financial and human resources to implement the gender equality policy and the corresponding action plan;
- creating and nurturing an environment and culture in which the principles of gender equality are practised;
- setting up a non-discriminatory recruitment *and promotion* policy that *foster* gender equality in activities;
- offering the same opportunities to women and men to occupy positions of responsibility in the organization;
- balancing the level of authority, responsibility and capacity of people who make decisions on behalf of the organization;
- keeping records of the implementation of decisions related to gender equality;
- periodically reviewing and evaluating the organization’s governance processes;
- adjusting processes according to the outcome of the reviews and communicating changes throughout the organization;
- establishing prevention, grievance and dispute resolution mechanisms in a timely manner regarding sexual and gender-based violence, including sexual harassment, at an organization level;
- setting clear and specific gender equality targets to all units of the organization and establish a realistic timeframe, accountability and incentives for the achievement of the target
- setting up indicators of gender equality according to the actual situation of each organization to provide input for the organization’s periodical reviews and the strategic directions
- reporting periodically to top management on the status of the organization in terms of gender equality (see [5.1](#) and [5.3.2](#)) including information on past achievements, demonstrating awareness of legal and regulatory changes, with the aim of getting management inputs and their commitment to new improvement actions. The content of the management review document can be:
 - degree of achievement of targets for the previous reporting period
 - Gender equality performance indicators (aligned with those listed in [Annex B](#))
 - list of non-compliances and situations of sexual and gender-based violence, sexual harassment, ...
 - changes in the reference standard
 - legal changes affecting gender equality
 - proposals for new objectives and actions for continuous improvement, including deadlines and the persons responsible and resources needed to achieve them

- performance indicators of gender equality to provide input for the organization's periodical review and the strategic directions, including quantitative elements (described in [clause 5.3.2](#)) that directly contribute to each gender equality objective

6.1.2 Issue 2: Labour practices

6.1.2.1 Description of the issue

The labour practices of an organization encompass all policies and practices relating to work performed within, by or on behalf of the organization, including subcontracted work.

Labour practices extend beyond the relationship of an organization with its direct workforce or the responsibilities that an organization has at a workplace that it owns or directly controls.

Labour practices include the recruitment and promotion of workers; disciplinary and grievance procedures; the transfer and relocation of workers; termination of employment; training and skills development; health, safety and industrial hygiene; and any policy or practice affecting conditions of work, in particular working time and remuneration. Work relations and conditions also include the recognition of employee organizations and employer organizations.

6.1.2.2 Related actions and expectations

The organization should:

- ensure equal opportunities for all employees and for the whole workforce and not discriminate either directly or indirectly in any labour practice. Temporary special measures aimed at improving the position of women may be taken to correct historical discrimination and overcome systemic barriers.
- actively seek out workforce candidates, prioritizing the least represented gender, specially promoting the access of women to labour opportunities in the same proportion or, when this is not possible, include at least one candidate of the least represented gender
- promote, *and use* gender-responsive in *the descriptions of positions on offer*, interviews and the overall selection and promotion process, avoiding unconscious bias
- implement a selection and promotion procedures where decisions are oriented to gender balance, [preferably taken by a committee with equal representation of women and men], based on objective criteria,
- implement career plans that take into account care, paternity and maternity leaves and favour a successful return to work analyse on a regular basis if there is a pay gap and take corrective measures when needed
- provide non-discriminatory work relations and conditions with regard to recruitment, pay, access to training, promotion, geographic or professional mobility, working hours, weekly rest periods, holiday time, health and safety, protection and parenthood and the work-life balance. Work relations and conditions also include the recognition of employee organizations and employer organizations, and the value of inclusive workforce participation and collective bargaining where it exists^[4]. (see ISO 30415:2021, clause 8.3.2)
- promote work-life balance and flexible work options, when possible, guaranteeing women and men equal access to reconcile personal, family and work time without disadvantaging the professional career;
- respect the domestic and family responsibilities of all women and men, in particular by guaranteeing leaves, including parental, maternal and other care leaves, a suitably adapted return to work after these leaves, and, if possible, child-care and other provisions that can help them to organize their private lives and their work;

- investigate and share results about outcomes on gender equality of digital transformation, hybrid forms of work as well as global society, environment and climate challenges. The report should include narratives on how identified negative outcomes can be addressed through mechanisms of prevention of primary occupational risks.
- maintain ties with workforce on parental leave;
- eliminate any arbitrary or discriminatory dismissal practices;
- address the specific risks to occupational health and safety according to the special needs of its male and female workforce and strive to eliminate psychosocial risks due to gender-based discrimination, sexual and gender-based violence, including sexual harassment;
- set up confidential and anonymous [*reporting and advice units*], offering guidance and raising alerts with regard to all questions pertaining to sexual and gender-based discrimination and violence;
- encourage other organizations that are active in its sphere of influence to provide responsible work relations and conditions on questions pertaining to gender equality;
- provide suitable training for its gender focal point, management teams, field managers, occupational health and safety managers, recruitment officers and employee representative bodies in all questions pertaining to gender equality, sexual and gender-based violence, including sexual harassment, gender-based discrimination, sexual and reproductive health and rights, professional gender equality, the detection and support of victims of discrimination or violence and gender budgeting;
- provide all workforce at all stages of their work experience with access to skills development, training and apprenticeships, and opportunities for career advancement, on an equal and non-discriminatory basis. However, this does not preclude the provision of opportunities, etc. specifically for women or men in situations of actual gender inequality.
- implement mentoring programs to encourage women to occupy positions of responsibility and guarantee equal career development
- promote the visibility of women in organizations, who have reached leadership positions supporting women networks.

6.1.3 Issue 3: Raising awareness among internal stakeholders

6.1.3.1 Description of the issue

Raising the awareness of internal stakeholders encompasses all the actions undertaken within the organization aiming to inform them on their rights regarding gender equality, strengthening their knowledge on the subject and communicating the gender equality policy and actions of the organization to further this cause.

6.1.3.2 Related actions and expectations

The organization should:

- create a virtual or physical space where the rights and responsibilities of its workforce with regard to gender equality are set forth, and the numbers of the specialized associations and any other information on the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence are provided;
- organize regular workshops to reiterate gender equality, discuss gender-based discrimination and raise awareness of actions pertaining to entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship, leadership and participation in public life. The organization should guarantee equal representation, or, when this is not possible, gender-based participation that is representative of the workforce based on gender ratios;

- organize events, in particular on national or international days dedicated to subjects related to gender equality;
- appoint a gender advisor to organize the raising of the awareness of internal stakeholders;

NOTE 1 This gender advisor may be the gender focal point mentioned in [subclause 6.1.1.2](#).

NOTE 2 The gender advisor should have competencies and skills needed to support such initiative.

- ensure that questions pertaining to rights and combating stereotypes, discrimination and violence are addressed by the employee representative bodies (e.g., the works council, the health, safety and working conditions committee, etc.). The organization informs the internal stakeholders of the civil and criminal legal risks;
- promote the development and signing of gender commitment within top management and all workforce;
- inform all new arrivals about in the organization of its internal gender equality policy;
- establish good practice how the organisation communicate and promote to all levels of the organisation
- present its gender equality policy and the state of progress of the corresponding actions taken to all personnel once a year.

Organizations are encouraged to team up with specialized associations (see [subclause 6.3.2](#)) in order to raise awareness amongst internal stakeholders.

6.1.4 Issue 4: Support for internal stakeholders

6.1.4.1 Description of the issue

Supporting internal stakeholders extends beyond raising the awareness described in [subclause 6.1.3](#) and also includes resources for reporting concerns and caring for those who have experienced discriminatory practices. It should include training sessions dedicated to developing the internal stakeholders' knowledgeability and skills related to digital interaction - as well as hybrid forms of interaction - with external stakeholders.

6.1.4.2 Related actions and expectations

The organization should:

- appoint a gender advisor capable of:
 - directing any internal stakeholder towards external cause or purpose driven organizations;
 - alerting the competent bodies of any discriminatory or dangerous situations;
 - listening to victims of sexual and gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.

NOTE This expert may be the gender focal point mentioned in [subclause 6.1.1.2](#). Furthermore, another advisor may be appointed to work specifically and trained on listening to victims of sexual and gender-based violence (e.g., psychologist).

- set up one or more [*reporting and advice units*] to provide guidance and keep track of requests
- protect victims/survivors of sexual or gender-based discrimination or violence within the organization
- set up internal charity and trade union volunteer programmes that contribute to gender equality, encourage equal participation or, when this is not possible, gender-based participation representative of the personnel and reward the engagement of internal stakeholders in these programmes;

- deploy an internal grievance mechanism for persons who are victims of sexual and gender-based violence [refer to [Annex A](#)];
- contact external public services, associations or other organizations which tackle sexual and gender-based violence [and provide assisting programs for perpetrators of such violence];
- promote gender equality in the workforce by helping people who want to retrain for other job areas that lack gender equality, as part of the company's career development or professional retraining policy;
- guarantee equal opportunities for career development
- support women accessing managerial positions in the organization, seeking appointments at board or supervisory authority level of the organization and aspire to shareholding for organizations with share capital;
- guarantee equal access for women and men to opportunities of funding within their organization.

The organization should collect and analyse data to monitor the organization's performance against these indicators and expectations. [See also [5.3](#) for recommendations on data collection.]

6.2 Activity and investments of the organization

6.2.1 Issue 1: Sustainable procurement

6.2.1.1 Description of the issue

Sustainable procurement is a powerful instrument when organizations include the need for gender equality. Sustainable procurement consists of purchases whose environmental, social and economic impacts are as positive as possible throughout the life cycle and that aim to minimize the negative impacts. The concepts of fair trade, transparency and responsibility along the supply chain are part of sustainable procurement.

[6]

6.2.1.2 Related actions and expectations

The organization should:

- avoid preconceptions and prejudice in all purchasing decisions. All suppliers, including local organizations and small and medium-sized organizations, should benefit from fair trading conditions;
- respect, consider and defend the interests of stakeholders that are affected by its procurement activities;
- apply purchasing criteria pertaining to gender equality;
- ask suppliers to share their gender equality policies and support those suppliers who don't have such policies. The objective is not to change but to challenge the supplier by the client to evolve, which can be the main motivation for suppliers. [See^[2] ISO 26000:2010, *Guidance on social responsibility, clause 2.19 sphere of influence*; and^[4] ISO 30415:2021, *Human resource management — Diversity and inclusion, section 11 External stakeholder relationship*]
- invest in goods and services that meet the needs of all the stakeholders, without any discrimination;
- raise the awareness of suppliers on the question of gender equality by including clauses in its contracts that may be applied as criteria used to assess bids (condition of execution);
- promote training and interaction with the organization's supply chain on the benefits of adopting gender equality practices.

6.2.2 Issue 2: Gender budgeting

6.2.2.1 Description of the issue

Taking gender and gender equality objectives into account can be reflected in the management of the organization's budget, its spending and the funding of its grants to public and economic organizations and NGOs. In concrete terms, this consists in examining the ability of women and their projects to gain access to this funding on the same terms as men and ensuring that the organization's income and expenditure do not result in any bias against women, in which case corrective actions have to be taken.

6.2.2.2 Related actions and expectations

The organization should:

- include gender-related specifics in its budget planning process, in particular for public organizations, in every entity of the organization, especially by using gender equality-based public funding;
- train employees in charge of the budget planning and funding processes and raise their awareness of gender-related questions, in order to eliminate any stereotypes and bias;
- ensure that women have the same opportunities as men to benefit from funding in equivalent situations, and take corrective action and launch proactive programmes whenever unequal access for women to funding is detected;
- pursue an equal remuneration policy that does not produce any unexplained salary gaps between women and men;
- ensure that its orders and procurement policy, including calls for tender, are not biased against women and take into account criteria related to gender equality-based public funding;
- use and promote public aid in favour of gender equality, such as funding guarantees or subsidies, for example;
- monitor gender ratio in the committees and bodies in charge of allocating funds, subsidies, financing and investments;
- support networks and organizations that aim to help and support women to build and fund their projects;
- encourage women and men who approach it for help and funding to seek support from specialized networks in order to guarantee the viability and development of their projects, overcome any structural obstacles and, thereby, increase their chances of success (box D.25 describes an example of women's network);
- sign charters and declarations of commitment in favour of gender equality;
- have an information system and internal statistical data broken down by gender;
- broadly use indexes and barometers containing gender-based indicators that can help to guide the actions taken in favour of equality.

6.3 External relations of the organization

6.3.1 Issue 1: Outreach to External Stakeholders

6.3.1.1 Description of the issue

Raising the awareness of external stakeholders covers all the actions taken in an organization to inform the external stakeholders of the rights and to make them think about and express themselves on the subject of gender equality.

6.3.1.2 Related actions and expectations

The organization should:

- *monitor* the actions taken by external stakeholders in favour of gender equality;
- analyse gender inequality risks and gender equality possibilities when engaging with external stakeholders, take appropriate actions to avoid and/or mitigate risks, and to promote gender equality possibilities;
- inform external stakeholders of its gender equality policy, strategies and/or other relevant documents that express commitment for gender equality and prevention of stereotypes, discrimination and sexual and gender-based violence;
- reflect organisational gender equality commitments also in contractual arrangements with external stakeholders as relevant;
- in engagement with/investments into actors in a dependency situation to the organisation (such as local communities, supply chain actors), set-up grievance mechanism for external stakeholders to prevent/protect, detect and respond to gender-based violence in relation to the organizations operational work;
- communicate gender equality commitments and grievance mechanism, in a manner which reaches intended users;
- promote role models that go beyond gender stereotypes and expand traditional roles assigned to women and men ;
- discuss and raise awareness of all relevant external stakeholders (such as schools, higher education establishments, etc..) of the gender equality, diversity and inclusion in its professions and activities.

6.3.2 Issue 2: Setting up partnerships

6.3.2.1 Description of the issue

Partnerships include all the informal, formal, occasional or long-term agreements between two or more organizations. Partnerships can be established with local, national or international organizations that work to promote gender equality and supply chain partners. There are various forms of partnerships: tacit agreements, charters, conventions, sponsorship, etc.

A partnership reflects the shared vision of the organizations and their desire to work together to achieve the same goal. Partnerships also demonstrate the commitment of an organization and its capacity to involve other external stakeholders.

Partnerships are one of the keys to the successful implementation of an action plan on gender equality in an organization.

6.3.2.2 Related actions and expectations

The organization should:

- analyse the existing situation of its external stakeholders and environment (see [subclause 5.2](#))
- identify any existing local resources, actions and networks involved in gender equality;
- identify the stakeholders capable of providing the gender equality knowledge and skills that the organization does not possess, in line with the identification and prioritization of its issues;
- determine the strategic benefits achieved by the partnership;

- provide the human, financial and organizational resources required to set up, develop and monitor the partnership;
- draw up the specifications of the actions and expected achievements of the partnership;
- conduct an annual review of the partnership and an analysis of the actions taken.

6.4 Internal and external communication

6.4.1 Issue 1: Editorial content

6.4.1.1 Description of the issue

Language can accentuate gender stereotypes or, quite the opposite, favour inclusion. Gender-inclusive language offers a means of oral and written expression that is non-discriminatory by excluding stereotypes and perpetuation of gender bias. It includes all the graphic and syntactical notions required for the equal representation of women and men, girls and boys. Since language has the power to change cultural and social attitudes, the use of gender-inclusive language is a means of promoting gender equality and combating prejudice.

Editorial content includes all the organization's means of communication: printed and digital materials (web sites, magazines, practical guides, presentations, etc.), internal and external communications, oral communication, etc.

6.4.1.2 Related actions and expectations

The organization should:

- alternately use gender-inclusive language, non-sexist (generic) language and gender-neutral terms (for which words do not vary according to gender) and gendered articles specifically in all kind of internal and external communications related to promotion, hiring and research of work positions equally opened for women and men ;
- prefer the use of lists of persons in alphabetical order rather than hierarchical order, and present the person's complete identity (first name, name, job position, etc.);
- ensure gender parity in communication and gender balance representation among speakers ;
- use images that respect and promote gender equality;
- allow equal speaking times or, when this is not possible, guarantee gender-balanced participation
- promote role models that go beyond gender stereotypes and expand traditional roles assigned to women and men in all its forms of communication.

6.4.2 Issue 2: Communication action

6.4.2.1 Description of the issue

An organization's communication actions include all the internal and external content and events produced or organized by the organization. Organizations can make their commitments and values known to their stakeholders through communication actions.

6.4.2.2 Related actions and expectations

The organization should:

- set up an editorial review committee to guarantee communications that are free of stereotypes and train the members of this committee in these questions, or train the communication unit in gender-inclusive communications free of gender biases;
- define regular intervals suitable to the organisation's contexts (preferably every year), for its internal and external communications plan on gender equality, or include issues related to gender equality in the existing communications plans;
- develop a non-sexist and without stereotypes communication in accordance with the organization's gender equality policy;
- inform all the internal and external stakeholders of the organization's gender equality policy, through accessible media and formats;
- disseminate and communicate the initiatives and results among stakeholders and the general public, creating awareness and valuing good practices on gender equality;
- organize events and workshops, in particular on national or international days dedicated to subjects related to gender equality;
- highlight the variety of the internal and external stakeholders on a regular basis (e.g., in an information newsletter);
- take part in events in which the audience and the speakers are at least diverse, and preferably equal;
- give a gender equality welcome kit to all new stakeholders (e.g., the internal policy in favour of equality, information on specialized organizations, the support provided by the organization that enables the stakeholders to fulfil their family responsibilities, etc.);
- create a virtual or physical space where the rights of its employees with regard to equality are set forth, and the numbers of the specialized associations and any other information on the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence are provided;
- guarantee the parity of the names given to its physical and virtual spaces;
- organize or participate in awards and competitions that reward persons or organizations whose work or personal initiative promotes gender equality;
- take actions to encourage women's empowerment to work in professions and activities that are predominantly masculine, and men who work in professions and activities that are predominantly feminine. *NOTE: Research indicates that men employed in traditionally feminine fields average higher salaries than their female colleagues and are often promoted more quickly and with less experience than their female colleagues. A requirement to promote men in traditional women's industries may be redundant in its effects.* <https://doi.org/10.1177/09500172004042773>http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/tables/sass1112_2013313_p1s_002.asp<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-014-0419-z>

Annex A

Guideline for the development of a grievance mechanism to prevent, detect and respond to gender-based violence (GBV), including sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (SEAH) internally as well as in engagement with external stakeholders

NOTE See definitions for different types of Gender Based Violence

An organisation should have a grievance mechanism in place to prevent, detect and respond to risks of gender-based violence, including sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (hereafter referred to as gender-based violence or GBV). Depending on organisational activities such mechanism may be put in place to deal with both internal and/or external cases.

In the following paragraphs, one can find a guidance on what such grievance mechanisms are about, why they are useful, and how to develop and implement them.

A.1 What is a grievance mechanism?

A grievance mechanism is an accessible procedure or process that provides a clear and transparent framework for addressing grievances related to the organization and its workforce.

A well-defined and communicated grievance mechanism contributes to the detection, prevention, and resolution of GBV, and the establishment of a safe work environment.

An organization may require an internal grievance mechanism for its own workforce and possibly one for external stakeholders. Grievance procedures should be tailored to meet the needs of each organization, according to the sector, country, culture, workforce composition and its activities. There is no prescribed form or blueprint solution for grievance mechanisms.

A.2 Why is a grievance mechanism necessary?

There are several positive outcomes that a GBV grievance mechanism can bring about.

- Identify, manage, and monitor potential adverse impacts and risks in a timely manner, as well as positively address internal and external concern.
- Provide a platform to raise concern and communicate through an established and formal process and receive a formal response of the organization.
- Clarify organizational arrangements to record, review, escalate and resolve complaints and grievances through a systematic and transparent process.
- Provide a safe and inclusive working space where everyone can thrive regardless of their gender.
- Build and maintain a social license in areas where it operates.
- Avoid the potential for issues to escalate, be repeated or result in conflict or legal disputes.
- Strengthen performance and ensure compliance with codes, policies and principles as applicable to workforce and contractors.
- Ensure alignment with international principles and standards.

- Refine and strengthen existing processes and agreements, for example, with partners and business relationships, to ensure they are in line with organizational expectations on protection against GBV.
- Integrate GBV grievance management reporting systems with other reporting systems (when in place).
- For small organizations, where resource constraints make it difficult to run a self-standing grievance mechanism, participate in an effective external mechanism led for example by an industry association or a multi-stakeholder group, such as a commodity roundtable which has developed its own GBV grievance mechanism, is a potentially useful step.

A.3 Approaches

A) Victim/survivor-centred approach. A survivor-centred approach entails to detail information about a variety of safe and confidential spaces for workforce and bystanders to have access to information and support, to raise concerns and make complaints that assures confidentiality and protection (ILO Convention 190, Article 9e⁶⁾). Cases are to be recorded, investigated/acted upon by a trained individual, follow-up support provided and monitored. Victim/Survivor-centred approach – an approach in which the victim/survivor's wishes, safety, and well-being remain a priority in all matters and procedures.

B) By-stander intervention. In a study on grievance mechanism on sexual harassment by Harvard Review it was found that SHPs should include bystander interventions as a required response to predatory sexual behaviour. Most policies place responsibility for reporting harassment exclusively on the target, which puts them in a vulnerable position. Mandating bystander intervention can relieve the target of their sole responsibility of creating a healthier organizational culture on all members of the organisation.

C) It is crucial that penalties and discipline are proportionate to the identified misconduct.. Extreme penalties and disciplinary measures can reduce people's willingness to report GBV. Similarly, minor penalties or disciplinary responses to large breaches of the policy can undermine the workplace message on preventing SEAH.

D) Set up a referral mechanism. This can include a predefined list of organisations or institutions who can provide psychosocial, legal, financial, and medical support services for the victim/survivor of GBV. Women's organization often have a good overview of what types of support exist and where to get it, sometimes women's organisations provide such support mechanism. What is central is that the organisations have a victim/survivor-based approach.

A.4 Actions to set up a grievance mechanism

A.4.1 General principles

When it comes to setting up a GBV grievance mechanism it is particularly important to acknowledge the barriers to reporting. Culture and context often hinder survivors/victims from reporting but also fear of retaliation, which makes the victim/survivor-based approach the most important feature of a GBV grievance mechanism, it is therefore highly important to have several channels of reporting such as (but not limited to) in-person reporting, digital, anonymous etc.

Some of the key principles which provide an effective grievance mechanism are

- transparency,

6) The International Labour Organization is a United Nations Agency with a tripartite structure (Governments, workers and employers) that was established for the purpose of setting International Labour Standard. These minimum standards are legal instruments setting out Universal Basic Principles and right to work and are intended to prevent unfair competition based on exploitation and abuse. The ILO seeks to promote opportunities for women as well as men to obtain decent and productive work, which is defined as work performed in the conditions of freedom, equality, security and human dignity.

- impartiality,
- confidentiality,
- accessibility and/or predictability (timely/clear time frame),
- legitimacy,
- equity.

When it comes to setting up a grievance mechanism some organizations suggest separating the function for internal grievances and those that are external.

A.4.2 Analysis of the existing situation

As part of the global analysis of the existing status of the organization (refer to Chapter 5), a specific assessment regarding gender-based violence is necessary in order to identify risks of GBV.

A.4.3 Identifying and prioritizing stakeholders

Various internal stakeholders may be involved in an initiative to prevent/protect against GBV within an organization:

- male and female members of the workforce,
- management teams,
- members of the works council if any,
- experts in GBV, including sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment,
- the occupational health and social services when existing in the organization,
- union representatives,
- etc...

External stakeholders may be involved in an initiative to prevent/protect against GBV in the sphere of influence of the organization:

- Representatives of organizations with whom the organization is engaging (such as service providers, sub-contractors, business partners, etc...),
- Representatives of local decision-makers,
- Representatives of local communities,
- Etc...

A.4.4 Clarifying roles and responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of internal and external stakeholders need to be clarified in relation to the GBV grievance mechanism.

The primary responsibility of the implementation of a GBV grievance mechanism is with the top management. However, the initiative can also be driven by any or all the stakeholders.

A.4.5 Identifying and prioritizing the issues

Several issues have to be identified and prioritized in order to highlight the subject of sexual and gender-based violence and to create a common culture:

- risk assessment,

- awareness-raising,
- training,
- communication and information,
- creation of a whistleblowing, reporting and investigation procedure (see ISO 37002:2021 for guidelines on whistleblowing management system),
- a procedure to address the claims made.

A.4.6 Steps for a grievance mechanism for internal stakeholders

The following 4-step process is suggested:

1) PLANNING

- 1) Consult with workforce (e.g., focus group discussions on how such grievance mechanism should look so it is accessible, confidential, easy to use etc. and how it should be communicated, where and using what tools).
- 2) Decide on the best model.

3) CREATING CONTENT

- 1) Write protocols (e.g., step by step approach, from report received, how an investigation is carried out and by who, ensuring a victim/survivor-based approach).
- 2) Offer support services (e.g., a referral mechanism is in place, with pre-identified support services).
- 3) Manage information (e.g., who will get access to what information at what time and how is information safely stored, considering a victim/survivor-based approach).

4) IMPLEMENTING

- 1) Build workforce knowledge (e.g., what is, why it is important to identify, act and proactively counter GBV, what is the grievance mechanism, and how it works).
- 2) Build key players capabilities (e.g., members of the workforce who receive complaints and investigate). Refer to paragraph [A.4.2](#) for specificities of training.

3) MONITORING

- 1) Measure attitudes and practices (e.g., with surveys)
- 2) Measure effectiveness (e.g., use focus groups, track cases and how they are solved).
- 3) Consider business benefits,
- 4) Measure workforce satisfaction (e.g., workforce satisfaction surveys)
- 5) Etc...

A.4.7 Steps for grievance mechanism for external stakeholders

The following 4-step process is suggested:

1) PLANNING

- 1) Hire a GBV specialist (e.g., consider locally based expert).
- 2) Conduct a GBV/ context assessment (e.g., to understand contextual specific risks and solutions).

- 3) Build mutually beneficial GBV partnerships (e.g., consult with and cooperate with locally based women's organisations or groups).
- 2) DESIGNING
 - 4) Consult with local communities (relevant in particular for construction sites, e.g., engage in focus group discussions and undertake individual interviews with local leaders, formal and informal, women's groups, women's organisations).
 - 5) Decide on the best model.
 - 6) Write protocols (e.g., step by step approach, from report received, how an investigation is carried out and by who, ensuring a victim/survivor-based approach).
- 3) IMPLEMENTING
 - 7) Communicate policy and grievance mechanism (e.g., considering written/oral communication, language, pictures and similar)
 - 8) Build capacity (e.g., in local leaders (formal and informal), of own workforce involved in handling the grievance). Refer to paragraph [A.4.2](#) for specificities of training.
 - 9) Handle reports.
- 4) MONITORING
 - 10) Measure community satisfaction (e.g., focus groups, interviews).
 - 11) Check workforce awareness (e.g., focus groups questionnaire).
 - 12) Assess partner performance (e.g., subcontracted partners, organizations engaged).

A.5 Plan, Do, Check and Act

A.5.1 General

After carrying out the risk assessment and the actions described in paragraph [A.3](#), a Plan for the prevention and management of harassment at work should be implemented, evaluating the work environments also with respect to any sexist attitudes, behaviours or situations of lack of respect that may have occurred.

To identify the most effective preventive actions to be taken, the conditions of the workplace, the organizational context, the type of user, the activities and services provided should be assessed.

The organization can set up a "Working Group", which includes, for example, the company management and the personnel most at risk to allow the identification and implementation of actions and measures necessary to ensure program effectiveness

Possible actions that can be implemented are:

- 1 Structural and technological measures: e.g., installation of alarm systems, suitable lighting systems, systems for entering access codes to limit the entry of strangers to workplaces, maintenance of good condition of structures and equipment.
- 2 Organizational measures: interviews with all parties involved, and analysis of the cases that have occurred
- 3 Management of episodes of violence: data collection, event recording, analysis of the events that have occurred
- 4 Psychological management of episodes of violence: support activities for workers/planners, use of professionals

5 Training and information of workforce.

A.5.2 Training

Actions can be planned and taken on several themes:

- First, raising the awareness of male and female members of the workforce: this effort can take the form of conventional awareness-raising sessions with, for example, interactive quizzes, role-playing, establishing forum theatre within the organization, online modules, etc.
- Next, training is required for the key players who may have to deal with cases of sexual or gender-based violence, human resources managers, members of the works council, experts in sexual harassment and sexist behaviour and top management teams. This training may be extended to include the occupational health and social services. The training should address the legal obligations and propose models of actions.
- After the training, a whistleblowing, reporting and investigation procedure may be set up in coordination with the workforce representatives. This system may include the creation of reporting and advice units (depending on the size of the organization) managed by a trained and well-informed person or a trained and well-informed group of people, or the provision of a dedicated telephone number or e-mail account that guarantees the confidentiality of information provided by victims/survivors and witnesses. In addition, systematic questions on sexual and gender-based violence can be included in the template used for the organization's annual reviews with the workforce.
- Finally, a procedure should be defined to address the claims made. By way of example, it may use interview guidelines for the victims/survivors, the offenders and the witnesses, and a scale of sanctions depending on the event (sexual harassment = serious misconduct = dismissal).
- The organization should take measures to protect the victims/survivors during the internal investigation. For example, systematic consultation of the occupational health service and the transfer of the presumed offender to another department. The organization can also refer the victims/survivors to external resources to provide support with legal formalities and psychosocial care, e.g., psychologists or specialized associations. A "contact box" of external resources may be used.

A.6 Include the initiative in the organization's social responsibility policy

Providing information on the initiative to prevent sexual and gender-based violence allows it to be included in the organization's social responsibility policy. Internal tools can be used to communicate this information, such as the organization's rules and regulations, which contain the articles of law and the sanctions, the welcome handbook, which explains the policy on the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence, internal memos, the intranet site, etc.

Posters, videos, exhibitions, card games and board games can also be used and distributed. Media and formats used for dissemination should be accessible for all.

In addition, the organization can publish external communication materials based on, for example, information on the commitments made by the organization.

Special internal and external events can be organized, such as workshops dedicated to the subject.

Annex B

Indicators of the comparative situation of women and men

B.1 General conditions of use

B.1.1 Headcount

Figures by gender:

- Breakdown by professional category on the basis of the work contracts (permanent or fixed-term contracts)
- Breakdown by department, job position, level of responsibility and educational level
- Average age by professional category

B.1.2 Duration and organization of work

Figures by gender:

- Breakdown of the headcount by working hours: full-time, part-time (between 20 and 30 hours and other forms of part-time working)
- Breakdown of the headcount by the working organization: shift work, night work, variable working hours, unusual work, including weekend work
- Participation in unions activities, by gender.

B.1.3 Data on leave

Figures by gender:

- Breakdown by professional category
- According to the quantity and type of leave lasting longer than six months: time savings account, parental leave, sabbatical leave

B.1.4 Data on arrivals and departures

Figures by gender:

- Breakdown of recruits by professional category and type of employment contract
- Breakdown of departures by professional category and reason: retirement, resignation, end of fixed-term contract, (reason of end of contract: care giving tasks/domestic tasks; better job/position in another organization; gender-based violence situation), dismissal.
- Breakdown by job application and steps of selection process

B.1.5 Position in the company

Figures by gender showing the breakdown of the headcount by professional category.

B.1.6 Promotion

Figures by gender:

- Number of promotions by professional category
- Average length of time between two promotions

B.1.7 Years of service

Figures by gender:

- Average years of service in the company by professional category
- Average years of service in the professional category

B.2 Remuneration

Figures by gender and breakdown by professional category according to:

- The range of remuneration (including on complementary or variable components such as bonuses or payments in kind)
- Average or median monthly remuneration
- Amount of additional wage or benefits by gender
- Number of women in the 10 highest earners

B.3 Training

Figures by gender and breakdown by professional category according to:

- Average number of hours of training by male and female employee per year
- Average number of hours in training of employees in gender equality per year in topics such as inclusive language, gender bias, etc.
- Breakdown by type of training: learning a new job, retraining, skills-building

B.4 Working conditions

General data by gender and breakdown by job position according to:

- Participation in internal committees by gender
- Exposure to occupational risks
- Arduous work, including repetitive tasks

B.5 Leave

Indicators on the relationship between work and family responsibilities.

- Existence of additional income paid by the organization for maternal, paternal and other care leave
- Health and accident caring leave (by gender)
- Figures by professional category of the number of days of paternity, maternity and other care leaves taken in comparison with the theoretical number of days of leave

B.6 Organization of working hours in the company

Indicators on the relationship between work and family responsibilities.

- Existence of work organization options that make it easier to organize work and family life
- Figures by gender and by professional category:
 - » the number of female and male that work part-time
 - » the number of male and female employees who work part-time by choice;
 - » the number of male and female employees who worked part-time by choice, then returned to full-time work.
 - » the number of male and female workforce who work extra hours monthly.
- Local services:
 - » the participation of the organization and its committee in the provision of child-care services;

B.7 Sexual harassment

- Existence of procedure for the prevention of sexual harassment.
- Sexual harassment complaints/ investigations.

Annex C

List of textboxes

- Box 1 – Involving men and boys in the drive for equality
- Box 2 – WEPs 7 Principles
- Box 3 – Promotion of Gender Equality and diversity with an award
- Box 4 – Professional equality index
- Box 5 - Organization Salary Record
- Box 6 – Gender focal point persons
- Box 7 – Women-only job openings in organizations
- Box 8 – Installation of breastfeeding rooms in an organization
- Box 9 – Menstruation and period poverty: examples of possible actions
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- Box 20 – Example of networks that facilitate entrepreneurship and access to shareholding
- Box 21 – Responsible purchasing in a local authority
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- Box 24 – Example of gender budgeting in a local authority
- Box 25 – Promotion of scientific and technical fields to women, through:
- Box 26 – Diversity of persons taking part in round tables, meetings, conferences and debates

Annex D

Best practices and examples

Annexes are an optional element of the text.

For rules on the drafting of annexes, refer to the [ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2:2018, Clause 20](#).

To create new annexes, use the Insert Annex function in the ribbon above.

- *Specify whether the annex is normative or informative.*
- *All annexes need to be referred to at least once in the main body of the text.*
- *For an Annex to be considered normative, it needs to be referred to in a requirement in the main body of the text.*

D.1 Involving men and boys in the drive for equality

On 8 March, a high school in South Africa distinguished itself through its pupils' strong commitment to a movement that encourages men to get involved, declare their solidarity and call themselves into question with regard to gender equality, which is an indispensable step towards a common initiative in favour of equality. The school's pupils and staff produced a mural of their photos spelling out the movement's slogan, which was exhibited in the school and on its web site.

D.2 Practical example of the implementation and monitoring of the strategic plan

[Clause 6.3.1](#) of the Italian UNI/PdR 125:2022 gives Guidelines on the management system for gender equality which provides the adoption of specific KPIs (Key Performance Indicator) relating to gender equality policies in organizations: provides an example of implementation and monitoring of the strategic plan:

- a) written instructions on the implementation and monitoring, where applicable;
- b) general and specific training, at all levels, including those against prejudices and stereotypes related to gender

D.3 Practical example of internal and external communication

Clause 6.4.4. of^[7]UNI/PdR 125:2022 Guidelines on the management system for gender equality which provides the adoption of specific KPIs (Key Performance Indicator) relating to gender equality policies in organizations provides an example of internal and external communication: [...]

- a) prepare and disseminate to its interested parties (stakeholders) a communication plan relating to its commitment on gender equality issues (or more generally on DEI issues);
- b) base their internal and external communication (marketing, advertising) on responsibility (avoiding the gender stereotype in advertising actions, ensuring a periodic review of marketing materials and strategies, committing to spread a positive image of women and girls, using a language respectful of gender differences);
- c) identify the interested parties with whom to establish communication regarding gender equality issues, especially in the workplace;

- d) ensure that communication is consistent with the principles of the policy and with the objectives established and implemented by means of the strategic plan;
- e) align internal and external communication with corporate values and culture.

D.4 Practical examples in planning

Clause xx of the UNI/PdR 125:2022 "Guidelines on the management system for gender equality which provides the adoption of specific KPIs (Key Performance Indicator) relating to gender equality policies in organizations" provides an example in planning:

- a) identification of company processes related to the identified issues concerning gender equality;
- b) identification of strengths and weaknesses with respect to the issues;
- c) definition of objectives;
- d) definition of the actions decided to fill the gaps;
- e) definition, frequency and responsibility for monitoring the defined KPIs (see point 5).

The strategic plan shall be shared by the management and kept updated over time. Based on the size of the organization, the strategic plan may have greater or lesser complexity, ⁴¹ considering also the need to define the frequency of periodic monitoring of the applicable KPIs, as set out in point 5.

D.5 Women Empowerment Principles (WEP) 7 principles

Policy is about commitment, and the United Nations, through Global Compact and UN Women created the Women Empowerment Principles (WEP), a good framework that can be adopted by organizations. The principles are:

- Leadership Promotes Gender Equality.
- Equal Opportunity, Inclusion, and Non-discrimination.
- Health, Safety and Freedom from Violence.
- Education and Training.
- Enterprise Development, Supply Chain and Marketing Practices.
- Community Leadership and Engagement.
- Transparency, Measuring and Reporting.

D.6 Example of a national "Professional equality index"

For example, all French companies with at least 50 employee should calculate and publish their professional gender equality index every year. This national "100-points professional equality index" is calculated according to four or five indicators (depending on whether the company has more or fewer than 250 employees):

- the pay gap between women and men;
- the difference in the breakdown of individual pay rises;
- the difference in the breakdown of promotions (only in companies with more than 250 employees);
- the number of female employees who receive a pay rise on their return from maternity leave;
- Gender parity amongst the 10 highest-paid employees

If the index is below 75 points, the company is required to take corrective measures to achieve a score of at least 75 points within three years.

The number of cases of discrimination and labour violence sanctioned with respect to those reported could also be an interesting indicator.

Other countries may have similar gender pay reporting processes.

D.7 Promotion of Gender Equality and diversity with an award

As an important component of corporate social responsibility, organizations can exhibit an organizational management of excellence to promote gender equality in their activities and internal and external advocacy.

For example, an award exists which has different categories: Directory management; Innovation; SME management; Management for digital transformation and Management of gender equality, diversity and care (MGEDC).

Regarding the MGEDC category, it aims to define an application framework, a guide that allows organizations to manage the elimination of gender gaps (with respect to opportunities to access and control jointly economic, social, cultural, and political resources) among other sources of discrimination.

The evaluation takes into consideration four criteria: 1) Leadership, 2) Culture, 3) Management system and 4) Results.

The objective is to highlight those organizations that implement and promote (on a voluntary basis) “Gender equality and diversity” could apply for the award and be recognized for their actions.

D.8 Organization Salary Record

All companies, regardless of their size, should record company remuneration of all employees, to guarantee the obligation of equal retribution for work of equal value.

Salary Record should include:

- All employees, including top management and governing bodies.
- Gender-disaggregated data for average and median values of base salary and other compensation and benefit components in each professional group, category or level in the company.
- The reference time period will generally be the calendar year
- It should be accessible for employees’ representatives, governmental authorities and for remuneration audits that check the obligation for equal pay.

Moreover, all companies with at least 50 employees, should be required to carry out a salary audit, including a job evaluation to secure equal pay for equal work and justify any wage gap higher than the legally established, if it applies.

D.9 Gender focal point persons

One or more gender focal points whose role consists in contributing to implementing the gender equality policy and its programs with the stakeholders on a day-to-day basis.

The mission of gender focal point also consists in:

- providing information and helping socialize the gender equality policy among internal and external stakeholders;

- providing gender expertise and advising the stakeholders;
- conducting the analysis of the existing situation;
- taking part in the deployment of the actions;
- taking awareness-raising actions;
- contribute to the continuous improvement of the organization's action plan on gender equality and development of policies and projects on gender topics;
- tracking the actions taken by their organization;
- reporting and take feedback to the top management;
- keeping up a strategic watch of the gender equality policies, both domestic and international.

NOTE: The gender focal point should have gender awareness and as far as possible training and experience as well as be advisor on sexual harassment and sexist behaviour in the workplace.

D.10 Women-only job openings in organizations

Companies whose workforce is predominantly male, often because they involve activities usually linked to men, such as engineering and technology companies, have reserved a percentage of vacancies for women, as a way of guaranteeing that part of their workforce is occupied by women. For example, an organization aimed or targeted 50% of its vacancies for the Trainee Program for women, after its recruitment team noticed that most of these vacancies were occupied by men.

D.11 Installation of breastfeeding rooms in an organization

A company offers a support programme for breastfeeding/expressing breast milk in the organization when they return to work after maternity leave. This programme involves a number of actions:

- the supply of breastfeeding rooms in accordance with the regulations in effect, and advice on which equipment to use;
- additional breaks for breastfeeding;
- an online schedule on the organization's intranet site to enable breastfeeding employees to book slots in the room;
- training the management teams in the benefits of the programme;
- documentation on breastfeeding for pregnant employees.

Organizations that have implemented this type of programme have observed a drop in absenteeism amongst women returning from maternity leave. Women who are able to benefit from this type of programme have expressed their satisfaction in being able to reconcile their family time and work time.

Organisations with external visitors can also provide breastfeeding rooms for them.

D.12 Menstruation and period poverty: examples of possible actions

The cost of period products is considerable. Students, people in insecure job situations and homeless often chose to spend their money on other essentials. Worldwide, nearly 500 million women cannot afford regular sanitary protection. This lack of sanitary protection can also lead women to limit their activities or even miss days at work or at school during their periods.

Organizations can combat this period poverty by providing sanitary products, organizing collections for other people or making donations to organizations that are active in this field. Three local authorities in France have launched actions:

- With the support of a specialized association, a city organized a collection and distributed the collected products to vulnerable persons in partnership with various NGOs. A bar in the town, which had already installed a sanitary product dispenser for its customers, also joined the action by providing a permanent collection box for donations.
- A collection campaign in another city also distributed almost 22,000 sanitary products through some 40 associations. The collection was supported by a number of events, including exhibitions and conferences that provided information on period poverty.

Employees who suffer from painful periods are entitled to one day of leave per month. This arrangement is based purely on trust, since the employees do not have to consult a doctor. In March 2021, five of the 17 women who work in the company took this day of leave.

D.13 Improving parental leave during and after the leave

As maternity is often perceived and documented as a disadvantage for women in recruitment and promotion processes, equalizing number of days of absence for maternity and for paternity leave can place female and male employees in similar positions with regards to impacts of parenthood on work life cycles.

- relax the rules on the return of maternity leave. For example, organizations allow their workforce returning from maternity leave to work part-time for up to 6 months after the returning and provide permanent reduced hours/part time working options for parental leave returners.
- propose psychological support programs for parents during and returning from parental leave, to ensure that mothers can feel welcomed by the company and safe with the return to activities.

D.14 Implementation of a mentoring program to guarantee equal career development

Due to social roles and cultural differences, men and women may have different opportunities and needs to develop their professional careers and be promoted. Thus, implementing specific mentoring for women may be effective.

For example, an organization has a mentoring programme where they manage a mentoring scheme, finding suitable mentors for employees are encouraged to find mentors for different career needs (sounding board; honest feedback; and technical advice, for example).

As part of the programme, mentors receive training and both mentors and mentees receive guidance booklets on their role and the nature of the relationship. Mentors do not necessarily have to be from within the organization. Mentoring programs such as these can encourage women to share difficulties, overcome insecurities in the work environment and ensure equal development among male and female employees. These programs can also address male employees' unpreparedness and resistance to welcoming and developing more women in the organization.

D.15 Good practices on remote working

Any organisational transformation (digital, ecological transition, remote working, etc.) can reinforce professional inequalities between women and men, or create new ones, but can also be a vector for more equality. The implementation of remote working shows how an organisation can be more sensitive to gender, by considering equality in a transversal way, as an element of method at each step of the process.

- a) Ensure that gender equality is mentioned as a main objective in the introduction of the remote working agreement.

- b) Promote gender equality in the decision-making authorities about remote working agreement. In order to make sure that the persons in charge of remote working agreement will consider gender equality, awareness campaigns may be organised.
- c) Ensure that gender equality is a key factor in every step of the remote working agreement creation:
 - Collect and analyse gendered data on the impact of remote working,
 - Ensure conditions to have access to remote working are based on the tasks achieved and not on the type of profession,
 - Ensure conditions to have access to remote working are not likely to discriminate against designated groups (i.e forbidding remote working for part-time work may result in an indirect discrimination as women are disproportionality represented in this group).
- d) Provide equal access to digital tools and equal training to remote working software.
- e) Ensure that the worker have suitable places to work, whether at home or from other places.
- f) Include in the remote working agreement additional allowance of remote working days for parental leaves and for menstruated people. This possibility should not interfere medical leave or other situation ruled by law, but could be used as an extension of pre-existing legal provisions.
- g) Create a specific training for stakeholders (i.e managers, union representative...) to ensure that the impact of remote working does not disproportionally affect worklife balance and gender equality.
- h) Provide training in order to raise awareness about gender-based violence at work and specific violence that may occur in remote working situation (i.e online sexual harassment, domestic violence, domestic work distribution among family members...).

D.16 Training program example - MICAELA

Micaela's Training Program was created in order to transform the historical and cultural dynamics that reproduce the patriarchal system and gender socialization, thus it is a key strategy that allows reviewing daily practices and the building of relationships within organizations and families.

This Program is addressed to the public sector (authorities and employees) of the federal and regional States, its Central Administration, Justice Administration, Parliaments and public enterprises with the aim of raising awareness about all kinds of gender-based violence established in national and international laws and conventions, also, to provide practical tools to tackle and accompany victims and to design policies and strategic actions to prevent gender based violence in the workplaces.

As the implementation of Micaela's Training Program raised interest among the general public, it was extended to the private sector: enterprises, associations, and other private organizations even when it was not mandatory for them. Since then, thousands of employees, leaders, enterprises owners, business women and men, and even interested citizens have been trained within this Program; this enabled them to elaborate Gender Policies and Action Plans within their organizations, create protocols to prevent and tackle gender based violence situations, and also, to review its practices and culture patterns towards a gender equality transformation. A real gender equality transformation implies an increasing involvement and action of all the citizens and organizations, reviewing the cultural patterns and conditions that sustain and reproduce inequality and gender- based violence.

D.17 Education in equality: from awareness-raising to training

Education plays an essential role in teaching gender equality between girls and boys. An educational approach must be developed to raise awareness and inform children of the importance of gender equality from the earliest age possible. Schools are places that develop knowledge of life, of which gender equality is a part. All those working in education should be trained in gender equality to ensure success. Curricular and extra-curricular activities should also enable girls and boys to integrate

knowledge and learning that are socially and culturally assigned to one sex or the other - for example, mixed sports activities in the early years, equal value given to sports practised by girls and boys (for example, football, ballet), manual work, workshop work, domestic work, among other activities. Parents should also actively participate alongside teachers.

Education in equality can offer a means of empowering girls and women and of teaching respect, and a means of prevention in the fight against sexual and gender-based violence. Learning how to respect gender equality should lead to the notion of gender parity and of sharing between women and men.

Raising awareness of and spreading information about gender equality are the key words for a more egalitarian development between women and men, girls and boys, for the current and future generations.

D.18 Gender parity through the election of class representatives in schools

Lessons in gender parity are given from the very earliest age. The election of class representatives in schools is the first democratic electoral exercise in which school pupils take part. Taking part in an election of equal numbers of girls and boys as class delegates, in which girls have the same chance as boys and the same speaking time and are judged according to their abilities, is an important step in the construction of their lives as citizens. This is the case in French schools or international high schools, where the elections of class representatives encourage students to reflect on gender parity in politics.

D.19 Examples of tools to teach gender equality to young children

The teaching of gender equality starts at the very earliest age by taking concrete actions in schools that apply fundamental principles: respecting and knowing one another and accepting differences.

The position of women and men at home, at work and in society in general is an essential subject that is at the very heart of all educational projects. It provides the means of learning about gender through family, the times they live in, traditions and the education system. In this way, young children can understand the importance of equality for all human beings, without distinction. They will gradually become able to describe different notions, such as violence and discrimination, by reflecting more and more objectively how to measure actions (insults, contempt, aggression, etc.). Teaching equality enables youngsters to understand that equality is not possible as long as any forms of discrimination and violence exist. Finally, as these children grow up, they will come to perceive equality as a social construct based on the responsibility of all.

Several examples can be given that demonstrate how learning to live together is of the utmost importance for children under six:

- Theme-based posters explaining the rules governing society and, by extension, the rules that apply in the classroom. Young children take part in several written or oral exercises that simulate situations from daily life. These exercises highlight key notions of gender bias such as physical differences, timidity, mockery, etc.
- Very simple mini-debates are organized to discuss the sensitive aspects of living together, differences and equality, using card games that represent scenes from life in a group. Under the teacher's supervision, the children discuss their perception of freedom, equality, and the absence of discrimination in their own words.

The organization of communal spaces and of the different areas in the school is another interesting example, such as the distribution of the youngest children in the school canteen, the room for afternoon naps, etc. This subject highlights the question of living in close proximity to one another and puts the notion of sharing at the very heart of the educational project. In this way, young children can discover values such as human dignity, freedom of choice, equality between girls and boys, solidarity, the spirit of justice and the rejection of discrimination.

D.20 Promoting gender equality in a local city through a multi-stakeholder approach

A local municipality takes a participatory, step-by-step approach to transform gender norms and practices in a conservative community:

- Political commitment made by Mayor and necessary resources were allocated, including budgets, staff, and external expertise. A goal of 100% utilization of maternal, paternal and other care leave was set as a flagship initiative;
- Partnership launched with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry to build capacities and raise awareness of the local businesses and develop a pipeline of female managers;
- A roadmap for eliminating the gender gap in household and community developed by a multi-generational committee representing business, community and education sectors;
- Awareness-raising of the local population by organizing roundtable discussions,
- Creating and disseminating animated educational comic (e.g. Gender manga), and providing gender education at school.

This is an example of how to involve diverse stakeholders of the community and generate a sense of ownership for the gender equality goal.

D.21 Examples of initiatives for International Gender Equality Days

Internal Gender Equality Days, such as International Women's Day (8 March), can be culminating points in the annual programme of gender equality activities for organizations, by organizing various events:

- Conferences on subjects related to women's rights and gender equality
- Theme-based exhibitions: professional portraits of women and men, exhibitions for younger audiences, retrospective exhibitions, artistic exhibitions, etc.
- Game-based awareness-raising actions: games, theatre forums, escape games, walking debates, cinema debates, etc.

Organizations can call on local specialized associations to organize these events (women's rights groups, cultural associations, sports clubs, etc.)

D.22 Implement an organization policy against sexual harassment and gender discrimination

To ensure that the organization has a commitment to gender equality and is against any type of discrimination, it can draw up a policy.

This policy can include:

- Relevant international and country-specific policy and legal bases,
- The goals of the policy,
- Core concepts that may include: the barriers, fears and beliefs that sexual harassment victims may have; unacceptable behaviors that are considered sexual harassment and sexism; how gender discrimination manifests itself in the workplace, ;
- The procedure for counseling, reporting, investigating and sanctioning,
- Preventive measures,
- Responsible for the implementation of this policy.

D.23 Addressing the impacts of gender-based domestic violence

People can be victim of gender-based violence at work but they can also be victim of other forms of gender-based violence outside of work. Gender-based domestic violence can have various effects on employment, productivity, health and safety. Therefore, it is necessary to provide useful and applicable guidance to organisations on how to address this specific situation. Organizations can help, as part of other measures, to recognize, respond to and address the impacts of this specific form of violence:

- Including provisions in the collective agreements to acknowledge and fight against the effects of gender-based domestic violence.
- Ensuring that there is a specific leave of absence due to this form of violence:
 - It provides up to 15 days in a calendar year of time off to be taken for specific purposes, and it can be extendable for the same period for a single time in case the situation persists.
 - Guarantying that HR process respect confidentiality and that this leave is referenced as medical leave or any other leaves that respect confidentially.
- Ensuring that victims can be informed about the existing NGO, social and judicial services that may help them to lodge a complaint or help them in anyway.

The person in charge of providing orientation and containment to informing the victims should be trained in order to understand the effects of gender-based domestic violence, in order to know the specific partners that can be reached when needed.

The organisation can inform and help the victims to find the right contact person but should never replace the competent authorities or specialized NGO.

- Creating partnership with local organizations and institutions fighting against gender-based domestic violence in order to support the victims and to train the organisation's staff.
- Proving training courses to organisation's staff and other related partners (managers, HR, medical and social teams, union representatives...) to understand the potential effects of gender-based violence occurring outside of work and to understand how the organisation can have a key role.
- Creating a protocol about how to act internally in case of gender-based violence in the workplace and also gender-based domestic violence.

Throughout these actions, the respect of confidentiality and the victim's will should be highly respected.

For better understanding, examples of gender-based violence, other than domestic violence, can be violence by romantic partners/ex-partners or friends not living together; as well as sexual aggressions by unknown persons, more often perpetrated by men/boys to women/girls. It can be physical, verbal and even digital, through social media.

D.24 Improving leadership in companies

A business organization created in 2013 a project in response to the concern of its companies and organizations about the low representation of women in senior management positions. The main actions are:

- To raise awareness of female leadership in companies: informing the business community of the benefits of having women in senior management positions and encouraging companies to identify female talent.
- To provide women the tools, skills and knowledge necessary to grow in their professional careers.
- To establish a mentoring program as an important empowerment tool to break the glass ceiling.

D.25 Example of networks that facilitate entrepreneurship and access to shareholding

In view of the small proportion of women amongst entrepreneurs who create or take over businesses, especially in new technologies, several networks, associations and collectives of female entrepreneurs and investors are taking action to promote equality in entrepreneurship and access to capital.

By way of example, one collective publishes an annual barometer of the conditions of access to funding for female managers of start-ups, and has invited both male and female investors to sign its charter. Increased gender equality in investment teams should result in easier access to capital for female entrepreneurs, thereby helping to increase economic parity.

D.26 Responsible purchasing in a local authority

A local authority included criteria related to gender equality in its sustainable procurement policy. The authority incorporated a social clause on “the fight against discrimination and the promotion of equality” that included gender equality as a criterion used to allocate contracts and to govern their conditions of execution. The commitments made by the supplier are assessed as part of the process to evaluate the bids. In keeping with the purpose and the duration of the contract, suppliers are required to take action to promote gender equality in their business activities, to favour access to operational management positions for women or to improve the working conditions of the employees assigned to the contract.

The scope and appropriateness of the commitments are measured on the basis of the analysis of the existing situation by the supplier, and assessed according to the terms of evaluation in the rules of the tender process.

Today, this experimental system has been applied to several service contracts (waste collection, distribution of local council magazines, removal of graffiti) and will be extended to other areas of activity.

D.27 Responsible purchasing: continuous and daytime work by cleaning service providers

While most buildings and healthcare facilities are cleaned during the daytime, the majority of office buildings are cleaned outside of usual business hours, causing prejudicial impacts on the personnel in terms of work-life balance, travel times between sites when public transport services are not running, the possibility of benefiting from continuous working hours and personal safety (travel at night, isolated workers, etc.).

A city launched an initiative to organize the delivery of cleaning services during the daytime and during continuous working hours that has since been extended on a nationwide scale.

The notion of daytime working reflects the goal of delivering cleaning services during normal office hours, which are compatible with social and family life.

The notion of continuous working hours reflects the goal of grouping working hours together so that employees can work longer continuous shifts.

This practice is beneficial for the employees, by reducing the above-mentioned harmful impacts, as well as for all the other stakeholders: cleaning service providers (improvements in recruitment and staff loyalty), customers (transparency of the services provided and optimization through the establishment of genuine dialogue between the persons working on site and the beneficiaries of the services, savings in terms of the lighting of premises, etc.), plus all the local players (mobility, reduced need for child care outside of school hours, etc.).

The pooling of the ideas and practices of the customers and the cleaning service providers, working with a governmental department, produced a tool kit containing a charter, examples, advice and a method to support organizations who want to join this initiative.

D.28 Supplier gender-inclusive programs

Less than 1% of global corporate or government spend is on women-owned businesses in any country. Supplier diversity means diversifying corporate supply chains to ensure the inclusion of women-owned businesses by increasing women vendors' business share in Women's procurement spending through establishing and implementing gender-responsive and ethical procurement practices.

Interest in promoting gender equality and women's economic empowerment is rapidly growing among companies, as well as governments, civil society, and multilateral organizations.

Public procurement represents a significant opportunity to build a more inclusive economy. Government policymakers and procurement leaders can advance gender-responsiveness and supplier diversity in policy and procurement processes, and support the infrastructure to enable women's economic empowerment through increased participation of women-owned and women-led businesses in public procurement and responsible business practices.

There are actionable steps that corporations can take with their strategic sourcing decisions to evaluate the diversity of their supplier base and to increase the share of women-owned businesses in their procurement.

These programs of gender-responsive procurement leave no one behind and create outcomes for gender equality and women's empowerment, not only opportunities. This vision would contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals³, especially Goals 5 and 8, which focus on gender equality and decent work respectively.

D.29 Example of gender budgeting in a local authority

For several years, an organization has been helping a group of local authorities in Belgium to implement a gender-responsive budgetary policy, which has been required under national law since 2007.

This organization helps the local authorities to analyse the impact of public funding on gender inequality, with a view to drawing up a budget in line with the categories defined under national law. For example, they should consider the impact on the respective situations of women and men of expenditure on investments in a new public lighting system, especially in terms of safety.

Other local authorities, which already have a strong command of this categorization, should optimize and implement this approach.

D.30 Actions to promote STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) fields to women and girls

Actions addressed to children and young people:

- Development of internships for secondary students, ensuring gender balanced participants;
- Setting up a mentoring programme with secondary schools close to the organization;
- Interventions in schools and in recruitment forums for women engineers,
- Communication campaigns on social networks via videos and podcasts highlighting the careers of inspiring women;
- Adoption of internal and external communication without gender stereotypes in all types of communication supports (pictures, texts, verbal communication);

- Avoidance of pictures and drawings conveying expected roles for women and men;
- Organisation of visits of the companies and worksites for primary school, high school, universities etc. ensuring to leave the floor to one or more women of the company having a “male” job so that she can explain it with her own words and voice (engineer, technician, programmer...);
- Organisation of “Shadowing Days” consisting in one day at the company for elementary school kids, following each one of them an employee having a technical job in order for them to learn and understand it;
- Participation at open days and forums of Engineering Schools and Universities, as well as at secondary education schools with women engineers and technicians sharing their professional careers’ path.

Actions addressed to women looking for a job, or in retraining and insertion programs:

- Setting up of technical alternating trainings over 6 months to 2 years periods for women in reconversion training, followed by recruitment in the company
- Partnerships allowing to recruit women with associations proposing technical trainings and mentoring for women in insertion or reconversion programs, or refugees, or with recruiting platforms
- Insertion construction projects based on technical trainings specifically addressed to women
- Communication campaigns on all media (TV, radio, internet) and also with classic posting of testimonials of professionally active women engineers, technicians, scientists... (Role Models).

D.31 Gender parity of persons taking part in round tables, meetings, conferences and debates

Following a call by public figures who refused to take part in public events or debates that did not include both women and men, an association was created to guarantee gender equality and the representiveness of women in public speaking.

The association is co-chaired by a woman and a man and includes leading figures from all areas of life. These public figures agree to not take part in round tables, conferences and debates unless the parity of the participants can be guaranteed. The goal is to prevent and avoid the absence of female speakers.

The association also labels events that guarantee the active presence of women on all their panels and in all their events, and that promote their competence, irrespective of the subject. Organizing bodies sign a commitment charter in order to receive this label. The organization should guarantee equal representation, or, when this is not possible, gender-based participation that is representative of the personnel based on gender ratios

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