

Gender Equality Training

Designing effective gender equality training

1

The existence of a legal framework and policy commitment to gender mainstreaming.

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This should set concrete gender competence development goals and be combined with an organisational strategy for gender equality competence development that sets a clear framework for action (goals, target groups, resources, responsibilities, timeframes, etc.).

The development of gender competence (for example, through training) should be embedded in both national strategies for gender equality and organisations' gender-equality plans. This signals collective acknowledgement of the importance of gender knowledge and the readiness of senior staff to facilitate the learning process. If the policy framework defines the roles and responsibilities for action on gender at different levels, managers become responsible for supporting, sharing and promoting the commitment to gender equality.

Where gender training is optional, attendance rates are usually low. Moreover, optional training is most often attended by individuals who are already gender-equality aware rather than those who need it the most. A strong commitment could include obligatory gender-mainstreaming training for new employees, particularly those in decision-making positions. Where relevant, knowledge of gender-mainstreaming issues could be added to civil servants' job descriptions.

2

The availability of sufficient resources for the fulfilment of the organisational strategy.

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Adequate resources must be directed at gender training. Both human and financial resources are necessary to ensure that initial training and follow-up activities take place. Staff should be encouraged to participate in the sessions, with a consistent allocation of time and an adequate budget in place to allow them to attend.

3

Staff being actively encouraged to attend gender-equality training, either through introducing attendance requirements or adopting innovative engagement strategies.

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Once responsibilities have been defined and resources have been allocated, the success of gender training relies on accountability mechanisms. Bodies should be identified that can monitor whether gender issues are being integrated into the full policy cycle (planning, implementation and review). Ideally, it should be mandatory for bodies to judge the level of gender awareness within the organisation on a regular basis and to propose action to improve gender competence.

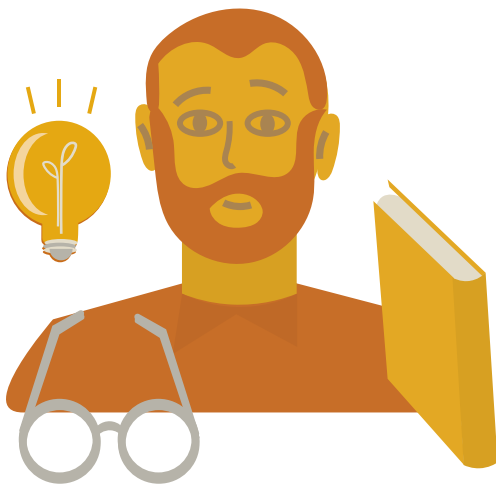
4

Existence of an adequately resourced accountability system to monitor and evaluate implementation.

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Regular training should be part of a broader strategy for ongoing monitoring and evaluation. Ensuring follow-up is a crucial, yet often overlooked, aspect of gender mainstreaming if it is to be effective in the long run. Behavioural change can be measured, even if this involves a degree of subjectivity. Organisations should involve relevant staff both before and after training, to make sure that the actual needs are met and to give the employees a sense of ownership over the process of capacity development.

How is the effectiveness of GET defined?



At the **individual level**, gender-equality competence development initiatives – such as gender-equality training – can increase gender-equality awareness, reduce knowledge and capacity gaps, and encourage a process of change. Such initiatives can provide civil servants with the **theoretical and practical tools necessary to understand why and how they can mainstream gender in their work**. They can demonstrate the practical relevance of gender equality and make staff members more willing to work on related activities.



At the **organisational level**, benefits go beyond simply encouraging greater gender-equality competence (1). Gender-equality competence development can lead to changes in the organisation's work, such as:

- The implementation of new policies, practices and activities to mainstream gender;
- Changes in the outputs and public image of the organisation; and
- Clearly formulated performance indicators that can be used to plan future initiatives.
- Greater gender-equality competence can also lead to changes in the institution's culture in favour of a more gender-equal environment, such as:
- Changes in the internal decision-making process or changes in the organisation's internal procedures.

More generally, by promoting gender competence development, commissioning authorities strengthen the analytical skills of policymakers, enabling them both to create and contribute to a more gender-aware policy process. This feeds into the long-term achievement of the goal of gender equality.

In order for these benefits to be realised, the quality of gender-equality competence development initiatives needs to be ensured to guarantee they are of high standard. **Quality assurance mechanisms** in competence development initiatives have been [acknowledged](#) as a necessary requisite for effective gender mainstreaming.

However, gender-equality competence development comprises a broad range of activities, each one of them responding to different needs and producing different outcomes. Thus, policymakers at national and local level, civil servants responsible for competence development, and gender-equality bodies willing to commission training activities need to be able to choose the right form of training, select a good gender-equality trainer and contribute to the sustainable development of training.