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ENGENDERING INDUSTRIES: SETTING STRATEGIC GENDER EQUALITY TARGETS

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DISCLAIMER

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TARGET SETTING AND GENDER EQUALITY: WHY IT MATTERS

Target setting allows organizations to articulate the incremental steps that will be taken over a period of months or years to realize gender equality goals. Target setting also allows organizations to evaluate progress toward their stated gender equality goals. This guide is intended to be used alongside *Delivering Gender Equality: A Best Practices Framework for Male-Dominated Industries* to support organizations to prioritize actions and benchmark success on the journey to gender equality.

SUCCESSFUL TARGET SETTING FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Change takes time and requires a series of deliberate actions and interventions. Setting and articulating clear milestones enables an organization to define the steps that will be needed to achieve longer-term impact. It also allows an organization to monitor, evaluate, analyze, and determine whether gender equality initiatives are on track to create impact. In order to strategically set targets and ensure resources are being used efficiently, it's important to monitor progress toward each target to determine whether or not gender equality initiatives are helping the organization achieve its overall vision.

Setting short-, medium-, and long-term gender equality targets helps organizations prioritize actions and measure progress toward gender equality at time-bound intervals.

- **Short-term targets** are milestones that build momentum and support organizations to reach a longer-term impact. For example, signing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with five universities or technical schools to promote internships or scholarships for girls and women.
- **Medium-term targets** are also milestones that allow an organization to reach its longer-term vision, but may be measured or produce results on a regular or recurring basis. An example would be ensuring that 25 percent of interns are female each year.
- **Long-term targets** are milestones that represent a more significant organizational change and illustrate clear impacts. An example would be strengthening the talent pool by increasing the number of young women interns who are hired in full-time technical positions.

For more examples of targets, see [Annex A](#).

SMART TARGET SETTING

An organization's targets should be SMART: **specific, measurable, achievable, practical, relevant, and time bound.**



Specific: provides answers to the following questions:

- What do I want to accomplish?
- Why is this goal important?
- Who is involved?
- Where will activities take place?
- Which resources or limits are involved?

Measurable: sets the metrics to determine whether the target has been achieved, answers questions such as *How many?* and *How much?*

Achievable: determines how realistic it is to achieve the target within a specific time frame and with the resources available.

Relevant: ensures the target will help achieve the overall goal and also answers the following questions:

- Does this really help to reach the ultimate goal? Is it worthwhile?
- Is this the right time and are the right people involved?
- Does this match our other efforts/needs?

Time-bound: determines the target date/deadline for achieving the target. This is especially important in complex projects in which one milestone or achieved target builds on the next.

More guidance on defining SMART targets can be found [here](#).¹

USING SMART TARGETS TO ACHIEVE CHANGE

1. Establish a baseline: Conducting a thorough baseline analysis of the state of an organization helps define what needs to change for gender equality to become a reality. Review the data to identify gender differences at the organization. For example, is turnover higher among women than men? Are fewer women receiving promotions as a percentage of total female staff compared to men? Are women overly represented in certain job types but absent from others? Do women participate much less frequently in training and development opportunities? Additional factors to consider to ensure that realistic targets are set include:

- the degree of representation of women within the organization;
- the availability of qualified women within the organization and in the labor market;
- anticipated growth, reduction, or turnover of the workforce during the period covered by the targets; and
- the organization's financial status.

¹ "SMART Goals." n.d. Mind Tools. Retrieved from: <https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/smart-goals.htm>



Once the baseline assessment is completed, the findings should be discussed internally. Conclusions drawn about what the data should be validated by administering a sex-disaggregated survey and/ or holding informal focus group discussions with women and men at the organization.

2. Ensure buy-in and input: Establish gender-specific targets with buy-in and input from diverse teams and senior leadership.

- Convene a working group and action plan for the development of SMART targets. Involve senior leadership early and often to ensure their full buy-in and support. Involve and solicit perspectives from diverse departments and employees, and ensure women are fairly represented in the working group.
- Share survey data and the results of your analysis with the organization. For example, under Engendering Industries, partners often conduct a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats), supported by their Change Management Coach, the results of which should be shared.

Ensure that the working group is in agreement regarding **why** the gender-specific target is needed and **how** it can be accomplished. Once the target is identified, it is important for stakeholders to agree on a realistic time frame and specific steps (and interim targets) for achieving it.

3. Plan to monitor the target: Establish who is accountable for achieving the target and how progress will be measured.

- Make accomplishing the target a key performance indicator for senior leadership and those responsible for achieving the target.
- Encourage the board to formally adopt the target.
- Communicate the target widely both internally and externally.
- Clearly assign accountability and outline responsibilities for achieving the target. Monitor and report (internally and externally) the progress on achieving set gender equality targets.
- Publicize successes internally and externally using a newsletter, email updates, or other communication platforms.
- Ensure that the organization's policies include measures to handle disputes or grievances related to achieving gender equality targets.

Check if there are national targets or quotas related to your target and meet or exceed them.

Example: Complying with quotas in Malawi

Malawi's Gender Equality Act, which was passed in 2013, now requires that all public sector employers achieve a gender parity of at least 40% of each sex in any department or place of employment. To comply with this quota, Malawi's Electricity Generation Company (ENGENCO) has set an interim target of achieving **at least 30% gender parity by 2022 with the overall, long-term target of achieving the national quota of 40%.**

CHECKLIST FOR SUCCESS

- Does the target specify how it supports the overarching goal of gender equality?
- Can the target be achieved in a reasonable time frame and with the resources available?
- Do the organization and senior management team support this target? Are departments aligned to achieve these targets?
- Does this target support the organization's business case for gender equality?
- Is there a person/team responsible for ensuring these targets are met? Is the target included as a performance indicator for the individual/department?
- Is there a method/process to measure progress, evaluate impact of changes, and shift tactics as necessary?

HELPFUL RESOURCES

- Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA), which is part of the Australian government, has a [guide](#) and [target setting calculator](#) to help you set targets.
- [Targets and Quotas](#), Women in Research
- [How We Set Diversity Targets](#), Versett

ANNEX I: EXAMPLES OF GENDER EQUALITY MILESTONES AND TARGETS

Employee Life Cycle	Interim Gender Equality Milestones and Targets	End Target Aligned with Gender Equality Goal
Attraction and Talent Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1: Sign Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with 5 universities or technical schools; Send female and male employees who can act as role models to speak to students • Year 2: Ensure that at least 25 percent of interns are women • Year 3: Ensure that at least 40 percent of interns are women 	<p>Develop a strong educational outreach program with 50:50 gender parity placements in internships by 2023</p>
Recruiting and Hiring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1: Develop an Equal Employment Opportunity statement, ensure all job advertisements are inclusive, and implement inclusive recruiting practices (<i>i.e.</i>, women are represented on hiring panels, structure-based interviewing techniques, train the panel on unconscious bias, <i>etc.</i>) • Year 2: Increase hiring of women by 25 percent • Year 3: Increase hiring of women by 40 percent 	<p>Increase hiring of women by at least 50 percent by 2025</p>
Onboarding and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1: Analyze current female participation as trainees and trainers; consider how current training can be more gender inclusive; train all staff on unconscious bias • Year 2: Ensure training programs have at least 15 percent female trainee participation • Year 3: Ensure training programs have at least 25 percent female trainee participation 	<p>Ensure all training and development programs have at least 30 percent female trainee participation within three years</p>
Performance Management, Compensation, and Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1: Conduct a salary gap analysis to identify gender differences within job types and functions; prohibit asking for previous salary history for all new hires • Year 2: Close the gender pay gap within job types and functions by 50 percent by increasing salaries during annual performance reviews • Year 3: Close the gender pay gap within job types and functions by 75 percent by increasing salaries during annual performance reviews 	<p>Ensure women and men are paid equally for equal work within job types and functions within three years</p>

Talent and Leadership Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1: Develop a mentorship program and job shadowing opportunities for female staff • Year 2: Ensure promotions include at least 25 percent women • Year 3: Ensure promotions include at least 40 percent women 	Ensure women comprise at least 30 percent of senior leadership within five years
Retention and Employee Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1: Administer a sex-disaggregated employee satisfaction survey and develop a gender employee retention and engagement action plan based on the results • Year 2: Implement 50 percent of the changes identified in the action plan • Year 3: Implement the remaining changes identified in the action plan and administer another survey to measure progress 	Ensure female employee satisfaction is at least 75 percent, as evidenced by employee satisfaction surveys, within three years
Succession Planning and Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1: Create a long-term succession plan to identify positions that will need to be filled; develop a pool of candidates that include at least 25 percent women • Year 2: At least 25 percent of succession candidates are women • Year 3: At least 40 percent of succession candidates are women 	Ensure 50 percent of succession candidates are women within five years
Separation and Retirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1: Collect sex-disaggregated data on participation in retirement/financial planning to understand potential gender differences • Year 2: Provide targeted financial education for female staff with target of increasing female participation in retirement/financial planning by 25 percent by year 2 • Year 3: Provide targeted financial education for female staff with target of increasing female participation in retirement/financial planning by 40 percent by year 3 	Increase female participation in retirement/financial planning by 50 percent within five years
Corporate Culture and Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1: Educate senior leadership on the importance of gender equality and conduct a gender assessment to identify gaps and opportunities to inform the business case • Year 2: Communicate the business case across the organization and develop ways to gather baseline and regular periodic data to monitor progress • Year 3: Senior leadership makes informed decisions related to gender equality that are rooted in the business case 	Strong business case for gender equality developed and adopted by the board within three years

Policies and Grievance Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1: Draft a sexual harassment and workplace gender-based violence (GBV) policy and train 40 trainers on the policy • Year 2: Send the trainers to train 100 percent of all male and female employees on the policy • Year 3: Training is embedded in new hire orientation, with 100 percent of new hires trained, and ongoing annual refresher trainings delivered to 100 percent of all current employees on the policy 	Comprehensive GBV and sexual harassment training program is in place, with 100 percent of employees trained within three years
Company Performance and Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1: Create a gender equality action plan based on a self-assessment of gaps and opportunities to improve gender equality • Year 2: Implement the gender equality action plan to improve gender equality • Year 3: Monitor progress in improving gender equality and apply for the gender certification, quantifying successes in closing gaps and remaining gaps to be filled 	Gender certification obtained, such as the UNDP Gender Equality Seal or IFC's EDGE within three years
Corporate Communication and Branding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1: Screen national, regional, and international awards to determine which would best showcase the organization's commitment to gender equality • Year 2: Track and document progress made toward gender equality to improve eligibility to apply for awards or competitions, with the goal of earning one in the first year • Year 3: Track and document progress made toward gender equality to qualify and apply for awards or competitions, with the goal of earning one additional award in the second year 	Earn three awards related to gender equality within four years