



RAPID APPRAISAL

DRIVERS OF CHANGE FOR WORKPLACE GENDER EQUALITY

MAY 2022

This document was commissioned by IW's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) team with the purpose of identifying key drivers of change to achieve Workplace Gender Equality (WGE). It summarises existing donor literature associated with influencing WGE in South East Asia and assesses the alignment of these findings with the work of Investing in Women (IW) and the four Business Coalitions based in the Philippines, Indonesia, Myanmar and Vietnam.

OVERVIEW

The literature review identified seven key drivers of change that together play a critical role in achieving WGE. Leadership commitment and accountability are the most important factors for achieving WGE, however, long-term impact is mostly likely achieved when leadership commitment is coupled with strategies and policies informed and tracked through by data analysis.

THE KEY DRIVERS

1 SUSTAINED LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY



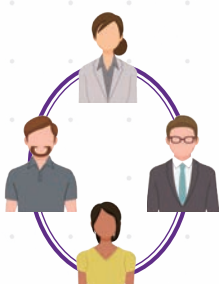
Leadership commitment and accountability, over time and at all levels of an organisation, are the most important factors for achieving WGE. When men and women at all levels are engaged, have a shared purpose, and see gender equality as a 'win-win' for all, progress towards WGE is likely to be made. Accountability comes from a clear articulation of roles and responsibilities to progress WGE and transparent reporting of progress against objectives and targets.

2 GENDER EQUALITY COMPANY STRATEGY



Having an evidence-based strategy, roadmap or action plan for achieving WGE, outlining the goal and targets, roles and responsibilities, key actions and timelines is important because it creates a shared vision and promotes accountability. It should include dedicated resources (human and financial) to ensure effective implementation of the strategy and associated policies.

3 GENDER EQUALITY HR POLICIES, PROCESSES AND PROGRAMS

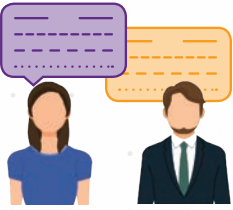


HR policies, processes and programs are needed to drive progress towards WGE. Paying attention to gender equity in pay, promotion and performance management, as well as supporting flexible work practices, are commonly highlighted as the most important HR processes and programs for achieving WGE. Other HR areas to consider focusing on include:

- increasing diversity/representation of women in senior management levels or improving the gender balance of the workforce;
- providing support for caring, such as childcare and paid parental leave;
- ensuring equity in recruitment, selection and promotion;
- preventing and addressing gender-based harassment and discrimination, sexual harassment and bullying; and
- providing support for employees experiencing domestic or family violence.

Data and analytics can help determine which areas to prioritise. Gender equality data and analytics can also help understand and address the bias in current HR practices.

4 GENDER EQUALITY EMPLOYEE PERCEPTIONS AND CONSULTATION



The data that is collected and analysed on a regular basis should include employee perceptions. Communicating and consulting with employees and giving confidence that their views are being heard and are informing decision-making is important for creating an inclusive workplace culture that promotes WGE efforts. The literature talks about opening a continuous dialogue about WGE within the organisation, drawing on research, analytics and learnings. Employees should have the opportunity to provide anonymous feedback and engage in discussion. All employee perception data should also be collected, analysed and stored in line with privacy laws.

5 GENDER EQUALITY DATA, INSIGHTS AND ANALYTICS



To be successful, efforts towards WGE need to be evidence-based, underpinned by data, insights and analytics on people, policies, programs and culture. It is important for the WGE Strategy to have clear objectives and targets, proposed ways to achieve these, and a monitoring system in place to track progress towards those objectives and targets. Firms should collect and analyse data on a regular basis, for example through anonymous staff surveys or sex-disaggregated HR statistics.

6 GENDER EQUALITY KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS



Having more committed, more knowledgeable and more skilled staff clearly helps in progressing WGE. Training can help build capacity, but it is important to remember that training in itself is not sufficient to bring about meaningful change in knowledge, attitudes and behaviours. There is strong evidence internationally to show that unconscious bias training is ineffective in changing entrenched biases, and may even lead to a backlash. It is important to use training carefully and purposefully, as part of a broader package of actions to promote WGE, and to monitor training outcomes closely to see whether it is actually effective or potentially harmful. Other capacity-building efforts, such as mentoring programs or shadowing opportunities targeted at women or other minority groups, are often more effective than diversity training or unconscious bias training. Data and analytics can again assist in determining the best approach in a particular organisational context.

7 GENDER EQUALITY COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPARENCY



Communications can help in building a culture of transparency and accountability for WGE reforms. Internal communications assist in communicating WGE strategy, leadership commitment, HR policies and progress towards WGE with employees, as well as allowing a diversity of voices to be heard inside the organisation. External communications can be used to publicly demonstrate a firm's commitment to WGE, communicate the progress it is making, and share successes and lessons with other firms seeking to improve WGE. It can also be used for external advocacy or coalition-building purposes. WGE communications need to be regular and consistent in their messaging to be effective.

The factors required to bring about organisational change and achieve WGE are contextual and will vary between firms. Each firm should select the most appropriate combination or sequence of actions, based on an analysis of their circumstances.

Additional factors that are identified in the literature and may also help to progress WGE within organisations include:

- dedicated resources for progressing WGE;
- increasing staff diversity or representation of women;
- partnerships and peer learning among firms; and
- an explicit focus on results and impact through strong MEL systems.

If leadership commitment is in place, a good starting point is a workplace gender equality assessment, together with an employee consultation. The assessment will pinpoint priority areas for the organisation to address, while employee consultation will help to engage staff in the process from the beginning.

Data and analytics can then be used to develop a WGE strategy, monitor progress and inform adjustments to ensure efforts to promote WGE are effective and sustainable



INVESTING IN WOMEN
SMART ECONOMICS
AN INITIATIVE OF THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT

