



# GENDER EQUALITY IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR: A TOOLKIT FOR MALE ALLIES IN THE ARAB STATES



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AUC</b>	American University in Cairo
<b>CEO</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>C-Suite</b>	Chief Suite
<b>Co.</b>	Company
<b>COVID</b>	Corona Virus Disease
<b>CSR</b>	Corporate Social Responsibility
<b>ESG</b>	Environmental, Social and Governance
<b>GEWE</b>	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
<b>ICT</b>	Internet and Communication Technologies
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organisation
<b>MENA</b>	Middle East and North Africa
<b>NDI</b>	National Democratic Institute for International Affairs
<b>PWC</b>	PricewaterhouseCoopers
<b>ROI</b>	Return on Investment
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>WEPs</b>	Women's Empowerment Principles
<b>UAE</b>	United Arab Emirates
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>US</b>	United States



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The private sector plays a key role in constructing, maintaining and shifting social norms in society. It can influence public narratives and shift social behavior for the benefit of gender equality and women's empowerment. Cultural beliefs and deeply embedded patriarchal masculinities continue to dominate workplaces, preserving a power imbalance in workplace policy and culture that continues to prevent more women from having successful careers and leadership roles across sectors.

Unequal care responsibilities can further slow down women's career advancement. Bias in the workplace and a lack of awareness are another roadblock that underscores why only 11 % of women comprise manager positions in the Arab region.<sup>1</sup> Gender-inclusive workplaces and strategies to mitigate bias – supported by strong male allies – are needed to drive the private sector's efforts in eliminating bias from process like the hiring, recruitment and promotions.

This toolkit begins by introducing workplace bias, and some of the opportunities and challenges for addressing it using a practical strategies and approaches. It then takes the reader through what we define as a robust framework and checklist for true male allyship in action, and gives guidance and best practices on both identifying patriarchal workplace culture and shifting behaviors. Finally, the toolkit ends by highlighting a few key priority areas for male allies to focus their support and energy to pave the way for more inclusive workplaces for men and women alike.

The private sector has a responsibility to shape this new landscape through gender-equitable leadership and leadership choices by male allies that advocate for gender equality and women's empowerment. We invite the private sector to utilize this manual as it continues to build modern organizations with cultures and policies that allow all of their people to thrive.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/regions-and-countries/ilo-arab-states/areas-work/gender-equality-and-non-discrimination-arab-states#:~:text=Only%2011%20per%20cent%20of,for%20men\)%20\(4\).](https://www.ilo.org/regions-and-countries/ilo-arab-states/areas-work/gender-equality-and-non-discrimination-arab-states#:~:text=Only%2011%20per%20cent%20of,for%20men)%20(4).)

# 1

## INTRODUCTION



## a. Background

Women continue to be underrepresented in the workforce in the Arab region with only 23.7 % of adult women participating and only 11 % holding managerial positions. While many companies have made deliberate efforts to recruit and retain women, especially in leadership roles, their role in business across sectors remains a challenge. Any effort within a company to address these issues requires intentionality and support from the highest levels of leadership. With men still comprising the majority of corporate decision-making positions, they play a pivotal role in creating a more gender-inclusive workplace where everyone can thrive.

Patriarchal Masculinities are the ideas and practices that emphasize the superiority of masculinity over femininity and the authority and power of males over females. They put men at the center of normality and rationality.<sup>2</sup> Patriarchal masculinities exist because of long-held biases that women are of less value and have less to contribute to the workplace.

Patriarchal masculinities still dominate the workplace. The behaviors that are often rewarded are those defined by men in power and preserve the existing hierarchy. Social and cultural norms put pressure on men to provide for their families financially which plays out in their role both at work and at home. Simultaneously this puts pressure on women to take responsibility for all aspects of home care work.

Many of the actions related to patriarchal masculinities are explicit, however by and large they are embedded within organizations where there is an appearance of equal access to opportunities when there is not.<sup>3</sup> Because of these structural barriers and associated practices, men maintain power and women are prevented from advancing in their careers.<sup>4</sup>

Private sector plays a key role in building public narratives and influencing social norms on gender equality and women's empowerment in society. These public narratives are constructed through the company's public image, advertising practices, support for women-owned businesses within their ecosystems, and their advocacy and lobbying roles. When companies leverage their influence for gender equality, social norms can change. For example, it is important that communications, marketing and advertising strategies do not contribute to or reinforce gender stereotypes but instead offer positive images of gender equitable men and empowered women. Men who take responsibility for creating a more gender-responsive workplace recognize these cultural influences and understand that gender roles are socially constructed, putting men in privileged positions of power and marginalizing women. They recognize that professional spaces were built by men for men and need to be reformed to be inclusive of women, having a ripple effect that goes well beyond the workplace.

Male allies for gender equality work to change harmful gender stereotypes and power relations. Male allies recognize their own social privilege, eliminate sexism from their own behavior and make active efforts to address gender inequities at home as well. Even if men never commit an act of discrimination or harassment, men have a different type of responsibility: a responsibility to speak out, as colleagues, as concerned citizens, as caring men, and thoughtful fathers.<sup>5</sup>

We need more men to be courageous and publicly advocate for gender equality to accelerate progress. Men have the influence needed to bring others on board to help reshape our workplaces. Additionally, we know from research that gender-equitable and diverse workplaces are more innovative and competitive in the global marketplace. They are companies that retain top talent because people want to be part of their workforce. Diverse companies are also better able to connect with a wide range of consumers.

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2 <https://www.coe.int/en/web/gender-matters/masculinities>

3 [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228144670\\_Masculinities\\_at\\_Work](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228144670_Masculinities_at_Work)

4 [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228144670\\_Masculinities\\_at\\_Work](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228144670_Masculinities_at_Work)

5 UNDP Gender Journeys Course, 2015



Gender equitable masculinities<sup>6</sup> can be integrated through everyday practices as well as through policy which together, over time, will lead to a change in a company's work culture. Business leaders have a responsibility to lead this culture change because of the impact it will also have on shifting social norms beyond the workplace. It is important to build a pool of male allies to model gender equitable masculinities and work alongside women to prioritize policies such as flexible work for men and women or paternity leave, because they help to spread care work across families while expanding economic opportunities.

## b. Toolkit Purpose and Use

### Purpose

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide companies with a comprehensive guide to creating a gender-inclusive workplace, with a focus on the engagement of men. It is designed to encourage and provide men guidance to take leadership on this important effort through the lens of gender equitable masculinities. It facilitates companies' ability to fulfill their commitment to the Women's Empowerment Principles which support the business community to foster practices to support gender equality and deliver on gender equality dimensions of the 2030 agenda and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

The toolkit is designed to:

- Explain what implicit bias is.
- Explain how gender discrimination and patriarchal masculinities fit within implicit bias.
- Provide tools for identifying and addressing these and a range of other common workplace biases.
- Explore male allies, gender-equitable masculinities and communications tools for male allies with the support of best practices from the Arab World.
- Provide a framework for creating gender-inclusive policies and shifting workplace culture to allow women and men to contribute fully and thrive professionally. This framework will be aided by self-reflection questionnaires, strategies and checklists for the toolkit.
- Highlights essential policy areas for male allies to have the greatest impact in driving an agenda for a gender-inclusive workplaces and priority actions for them to lead by example and galvanize other men to cultivate a gender-inclusive workplace.

### Use

This manual is intended for companies to use on their own to become more gender-responsive. It is therefore prepared for business leaders and employees, including human resource managers. It is relevant for those managing a team and those who aren't. While senior executives and managers have more opportunity for influence, building organizational culture comes from everyone. An organization is its people.

The manual is built to ideally use from start to finish, in order, as each section builds on the last. It begins with concepts and moves from awareness building to application related to bias and patriarchal masculinities, and the second half focuses on male allyship and strategies to promote a gender-inclusive workplace. It is designed to be adaptable to be used for training. Components can be used independently for facilitation (or training of facilitators).

The manual was designed to be used by everyone in a company, at any level. The manual includes some recommendations related to policymaking, however users should assume that they can apply most of the strategies in the manual, regardless of their position. Users should take an inclusive view when using the manual and consider how they would apply all scenarios personally.

**Individuals** - Build awareness and gain strategies to implement immediately, with self-reflection exercises throughout that allow for practical application.

**People Managers** – Can use the manual as a facilitation tool, for awareness-building for their teams or to help them develop strategies. In this case, managers should select questions from individual exercises and use them as a spring board for discussions with their team. Prior to this, it will be important for the manager to determine their goal for working with their team (i.e. awareness building, strategies to reduce bias) and pick the exercise to use accordingly. The following section outlines the exercises and tools throughout the manual.

**Human Resources Teams** – Can use the manual as a facilitation tool (see manager instructions) or as a training tool by converting the self-reflection exercises into training activities. Train on the section and use the questionnaire as the activity for the session.

<sup>6</sup> Gender equitable masculinities are the roles, behaviors and practices associated with men and boys that pursue equality between men and women, boys and girls.

## c. Exercises and Tools

**The following is a summary of the exercises and tools:**

**Section 2:**

Your Truth – Bias Test (tool)  
Common Forms of Gender Bias in the Workplace

**Section 3:**

Strategies to Reduce Implicit Bias (tool)

**Section 4:**

QuickTok Assessment: How Gender Equitable and Inclusive is Your Company/Team? (tool)

**Section 5:**

Steps for creating a Proactive Communication Culture  
Reflection Framework for Male Allies: Everyday Actions (tool)  
Ways to Invest in Career Growth

**Section 6:**

Sexual Harassment Checklist for Male Allies  
Expanding Care Policies and Services Checklist for Male Allies  
Equal Pay Checklist for Male Allies  
Recruitment Checklist for Male Allies  
Hiring Checklist for Male Allies

# 2

## UNDERSTANDING & CHALLENGING WORKPLACE BIAS



## a. Implicit Bias

### Step 1: Awareness

(Design suggestion: add image – person with a bubble showing a woman as an administrative assistant, male pilot..).

### What is implicit bias?

Bias is a proclivity toward something. Implicit bias is the attitude or internalized stereotypes that unconsciously affects our perceptions, decisions and actions<sup>7</sup> leading to gender discrimination at workplaces and in all other domains of society.

### How does it work?

The human brain can process 11 million bits of information per second, but the conscious mind can only handle 40-50 per second. Bias happens because of cognitive shortcuts that our brains make.<sup>8</sup> Our brain looks for patterns based on past experiences to inform our behavior and to keep us safe. However, these patterns can have detrimental effects on how we treat people because they use stereotypes and templates to make decisions.<sup>9</sup>

### How does implicit bias impact the workplace?

The workplace requires everyone to take an open view and a learning posture in order to be inclusive, but unconscious bias is a hindrance to that. In the absence of this open view, assumptions are made. Thus, people are not evaluated on individual characteristics but as a member of a group, making them vulnerable to discrimination.

Everyone has a responsibility to model gender-inclusive behavior and foster an environment where everyone feels valued. Recognizing how bias might impact so many areas of a working relationship will allow leaders to better navigate new interactions and encourage mindfulness of relying on assumptions to build meaningful connections.

The short checklist **YOUR TRUTH – BIAS TEST** below is a simple tool to use when meeting a new colleague(s), to identify whether bias has affected your initial opinion of someone. Later in this section, it will become evident that biases emerge immediately upon meeting some-

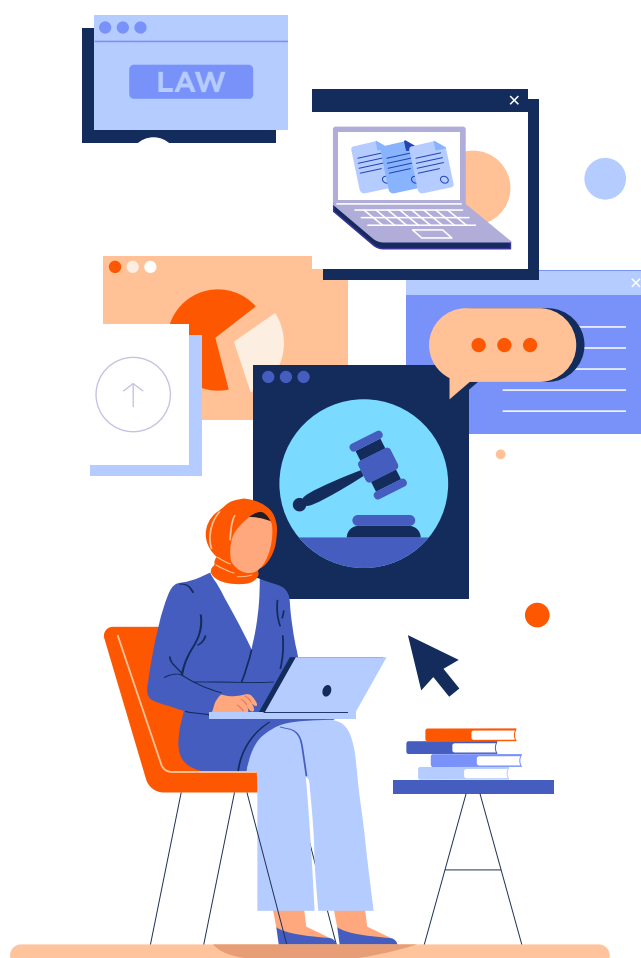
one and the first opinion of someone can influence your professional relationship which could lead to favoritism or inequality which can have a long-term impact on someone's career if you are making decisions about hiring or promotions, for example.



#### BOX 1

#### YOUR TRUTH - BIAS TEST: DID YOU MAKE IT UP?

- Unpacking Your Own Biases: Questions to ask yourself for relationship-building
- Am I aware of a person's individual characteristics? Have I been inquisitive about them to get more information about who they are personally?
- Do I identify them as a member of a group? Do I have bias against this group?
- What assumptions have I made about them? Did I make this up or is it based on facts?
- If I take away my assumptions, do I need more information about them to make the decision at hand?



7 Ncbi.nlm.nih.gov

8 <https://www.npr.org/2020/07/14/891140598/understanding-unconscious-bias>

9 <https://www.npr.org/2020/07/14/891140598/understanding-unconscious-bias>

## b. Patriarchal Masculinities

### What are Masculinities?

Masculinities refers to the attributes, behaviors and roles that are considered acceptable for men and boys in a particular society.<sup>10</sup> For example, in many cultures men are expected to be strong or not to cry or show many emotions, particularly those expressing weakness. Both women and men reinforce masculinities.<sup>11</sup> We see this among women in the workplace in their use of transformational leadership, which blends masculine traits of leading – top down, command and control style – with a more communal style that invests in others.<sup>12</sup>

Masculinity is defined by a cultural and organizational location, so it is not universal. On its own, it is not positive or negative, but it is how we define masculinity in our individual society that is important.<sup>13</sup> Does it limit the role or feelings men can exhibit? Does it provide more or less opportunity for men to live their lives based on their own choices and identity? Throughout much of the world, we continue to see the dominance and acceptance of patriarchal masculinities in our societies which are limiting, exclusionary and harmful. An example of this is the expectation that women are responsible for care work and domestic responsibilities.

Masculinities should reflect the importance of men in unpaid domestic and care work. Women and girls continue to shoulder the main responsibility for caregiving roles in around the world, especially for childcare.<sup>14</sup> The Arab States have the lowest rates of women's participation in paid work and men's participation in unpaid care work.<sup>15</sup> "The rate of reported work hours for men compared to women, measured at 80:100, compared to the global average of 90:100. In addition, the number of hours for men and women in the region is lower than any other regions."<sup>16</sup> Deeply rooted values and percep-

tions related to masculinities underly the difficulty in expanding sharing care work across families, despite the modernization of society and changes to families and how people live.<sup>17</sup> A survey conducted in 2023 by UN Women across Egypt, Morocco, Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan and Tunisia found some changing attitudes, however it is critical that the private sector use its leverage to promote equal childcare between men and women and shared unpaid care work if it is committed to expanding economic opportunity and advancing gender equality.<sup>18</sup>

### What are Patriarchal Masculinities?

Patriarchal Masculinities are the ideas and practices that emphasize the superiority of masculinity over femininity and the authority and power of males over females. They put men at the center of normality and rationality.<sup>19</sup> They continue to dominate the workplace and lead in the reasons why women and men experience the workplace differently.

Patriarchal masculinities exist because of long-held biases that women are of less value and have less to contribute to the workplace. Many of the actions related to patriarchal masculinities are explicit, however by and large they are embedded within organizations where there is an appearance of equal access to opportunities when there is not.<sup>20</sup>

In the workplace, the patriarchal mindset comes with a set of structural barriers and associated practices that keep men in power and prevent women from career advancement.<sup>21</sup> The common thread is power over women. Power should not be "over" someone else, yet patriarchal masculinities requires it because it's about control.<sup>22</sup> Power can be shared – power "with" - or one can have the power "to" change something, for example.<sup>23</sup> Patriarchal masculinities create an environment in the workplace that is exclusionary to others, ostracizes those

10 [https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/ACFrOgAZ9X\\_S2BI-K9iPv3XhiQ140Fw6QWeUNSQwJwuNXzShO1b\\_Wv9-Vbsw1KX0rkmdxRZ-nlwzPhL-WIQLh1agPgzn5s70jFg-wYO0clafAvyfqfNvFQQX\\_UYSZKGjzuPLlyl2J\\_UFqRjaCxNs.pdf](https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/ACFrOgAZ9X_S2BI-K9iPv3XhiQ140Fw6QWeUNSQwJwuNXzShO1b_Wv9-Vbsw1KX0rkmdxRZ-nlwzPhL-WIQLh1agPgzn5s70jFg-wYO0clafAvyfqfNvFQQX_UYSZKGjzuPLlyl2J_UFqRjaCxNs.pdf)

11 [https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/ACFrOgAZ9X\\_S2BI-K9iPv3XhiQ140Fw6QWeUNSQwJwuNXzShO1b\\_Wv9-Vbsw1KX0rkmdxRZ-nlwzPhL-WIQLh1agPgzn5s70jFg-wYO0clafAvyfqfNvFQQX\\_UYSZKGjzuPLlyl2J\\_UFqRjaCxNs.pdf](https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/ACFrOgAZ9X_S2BI-K9iPv3XhiQ140Fw6QWeUNSQwJwuNXzShO1b_Wv9-Vbsw1KX0rkmdxRZ-nlwzPhL-WIQLh1agPgzn5s70jFg-wYO0clafAvyfqfNvFQQX_UYSZKGjzuPLlyl2J_UFqRjaCxNs.pdf)

12 [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/27403973\\_Gender\\_and\\_Leadership\\_Style\\_A\\_Meta-Analysis](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/27403973_Gender_and_Leadership_Style_A_Meta-Analysis)

13 <https://www.coe.int/en/web/gender-matters/masculinities>

14 [https://arabstates.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/digital-english\\_24-9-2023-b.pdf](https://arabstates.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/digital-english_24-9-2023-b.pdf)

15 [https://arabstates.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/digital-english\\_24-9-2023-b.pdf](https://arabstates.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/digital-english_24-9-2023-b.pdf)

16 [https://arabstates.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/digital-english\\_24-9-2023-b.pdf](https://arabstates.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/digital-english_24-9-2023-b.pdf)

17 [https://arabstates.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/digital-english\\_24-9-2023-b.pdf](https://arabstates.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/digital-english_24-9-2023-b.pdf)

18 [https://arabstates.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/digital-english\\_24-9-2023-b.pdf](https://arabstates.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/digital-english_24-9-2023-b.pdf)

19 <https://www.coe.int/en/web/gender-matters/masculinities>

20 [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228144670\\_Masculinities\\_at\\_Work](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228144670_Masculinities_at_Work)

21 [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228144670\\_Masculinities\\_at\\_Work](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228144670_Masculinities_at_Work)

22 [https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/RESOURCES\\_LIBRARY/Resources\\_Centre/masculinities%20booklet%20.pdf](https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/RESOURCES_LIBRARY/Resources_Centre/masculinities%20booklet%20.pdf)

23 [https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/RESOURCES\\_LIBRARY/Resources\\_Centre/masculinities%20booklet%20.pdf](https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/RESOURCES_LIBRARY/Resources_Centre/masculinities%20booklet%20.pdf)

who do not conform, or disciplines them, impacting their career in the short- and long-term. In other words, patriarchal behavior is embedded in the way everything is done and accepted as standard behavior – including by many women – so there are various negative consequences that come from straying from the norm.

Short term punishments such as being excluded from important meetings, missing an opportunity to work on a high-profile project can lead to lack of a promotion, for example. In the aggregate, being left out because one refuses to ‘fit’ in’ to a toxic culture can have a significant impact on their career in the long term.

 **TABLE 1**

**PATRIARCHAL MASCULINITIES**

**GENDER-EQUITABLE MASCULINITIES**  
(QUALITIES ANYONE CAN POSSESS)

Conforming to gender-based stereotypes at the workplace – adhering to the cultural norms and stereotypes society gives to men and women that discriminate against women and girls, and against men and boys who deviate from conventional gender norms	Confident
Power and dominance	Collaborative
Competitiveness, such as using a winner-take-all attitude	Humble
Aggression – in making all decisions, insisting to speak or always needing to be the final decision-maker. Physical intimidation.	Supportive
Using anger and a loud voice	Emotionally intelligent
Using physical violence	Give credit where it’s due
Emotional repression such as not showing weakness	Empathetic
Belittling emotions of others	Respectful
Building exclusive alliances with other men that keep women from decision-making opportunities	Curious
Giving unfair promotions such as based on potential vs. merit, and learning opportunities	Culturally competent
Making decisions after hours at a time/place hard for women to attend	Attentive listener
	Courageous

### How does this impact the workplace?

Patriarchal masculinities have been coined “masculine defaults” because of how embedded they are in institutional culture – policy, processes and behaviors – and because they are accepted as the norm, making them difficult to extricate.<sup>24</sup> The structures in place that reward these behaviors reinforce the hierarchy and power of men over women. In other words, the acceptance of the way teams are managed, incentives are structured, or hiring is conducted allow for patriarchal leadership which maintains bias and blocks women systematically from opportunities to lead. Leadership and professional success is associated with characteristics like competition and ambition.<sup>25</sup> By approaching work and teams with this dominant approach undermines the value of women who do not conform to this approach; creates a double standard and penalizes those who do; and puts pressure on men, affecting their performance and creating reluctance to speak out against sexism at work.

Both women and men are evaluated through the lens of patriarchal structures and the behaviors that drive them. Therefore, women that do not adopt these dominant, competitive behaviors are seen as having less value from the start and struggle to have their voices heard day-to-day. This contributes to why they experience the workplace differently from men.

When women adopt masculine traits like being competitive or aggressive, however, they are more harshly criticized because they are stepping out of their socially accepted gender role and therefore become less likeable which is an important factor in hiring.<sup>26</sup> When women are punished for exhibiting behaviors outside of the stereotypical norms to be assertive, for example, it’s called gender backlash.<sup>27</sup>

These points underscore the fact that women are being evaluated professionally using a lens that is rooted on practices that are exclusionary to them. They enter hiring and promotion scenarios at a disadvantage when their behavior is held to a different standard based on societal expectations related to gender roles.

An overly masculine culture puts pressure on men as well which curtails progress toward equality. A US study by Catalyst surveyed more than 1,000 men across job levels about male anxiety, combative workplace cultures and sexism. They defined masculine anxiety as “the distress men feel when they do not think they are living up to society’s rigid standards of masculinity.” They found that men feeling high levels of masculine anxiety at work are the most reluctant to interrupt sexism in the workplace, a critical part of male allyship.<sup>28</sup> Using data from 7,000 men in 13 countries, Catalyst also found that “when masculine expectations in the workplace are high, 69% of men experience low psychological well-being—compared to only 38% of men in organizations with low masculine expectations”; and 34% of men experience high workplace withdrawal (e.g., neglecting tasks, being late for work, making excuses to get out of work)—compared to only 5% of men in organizations with low masculine expectations.<sup>29</sup> All of this underscores the strong influence of masculinities on corporate culture and its strong impact the rigidity and pressure has on their ability to show up and perform their jobs well.



#### BOX 2 MASCULINITY CONTEST CULTURE

“Harvard Business Review research coined the term ‘Masculinity Contest Culture’, which ‘endorses winner-take-all competition, where winners demonstrate stereotypically masculine traits such as emotional toughness, physical stamina, and ruthlessness. It produces organizational dysfunction, as employees become hyper-competitive to win.’ It’s found in male-dominated industries and puts anyone who does not fit into this culture at ‘an immediate disadvantage’ – including the risk of sexual harassment, commonly found in this type of workplace.<sup>30</sup> Employees face other types of gender discrimination, lack of work/life balance, depression, and low psychological safety, which can lead to higher turnover which is costly for companies.<sup>31</sup>

24 <https://www.catalyst.org/reports/masculine-anxiety-workplace/>

25 <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/gender-bias-work-assertiveness-double-bind-felicity-menzies-fca/>

26 <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/gender-bias-work-assertiveness-double-bind-felicity-menzies-fca/>

27 <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/gender-bias-work-assertiveness-double-bind-felicity-menzies-fca/>

28 <https://www.catalyst.org/media-release/masculine-anxiety-workplaces/>

29 <https://www.catalyst.org/research/masculinity-rigid-flexible-infographic/>

30 <https://hbr.org/2018/11/how-masculinity-contests-undermine-organizations-and-what-to-do-about-it>

31 <https://thereproject.org/masculinity-in-the-workplace/>

**BOX 3****OCCUPATIONAL SEGREGATION**

Occupational segregation is “the systemic overrepresentation or underrepresentation of a demographic group in a particular occupation or field of employment.”<sup>32</sup> Across the region, women’s participation in the labor market is affected by factors such as traditional and cultural beliefs, child-bearing and child-rearing, employer discrimination, family pressure, safety and working limited hours.<sup>33</sup> The Arab world also faces more strict gender occupational segregation with more than two-thirds of women concentrated in agriculture, education, health care, or public administration.<sup>34</sup> This type of segregation is not based on essential talents or preferences of men/women, but rather historical and current power dynamics that dictate our expectations about where it is appropriate for women and men to work.

While it is rare for women to work in male dominated sectors, the region has some women bringing gender diversity to non-traditional sectors for women. These women face significant challenges from their peers, the community and the broader public and rely on deep personal fortitude and often support from a select few, to work against the criticism and lack of support they continue to encounter, in order to push through to become successful.

*Reimagining gender norms,  
transforming non-traditional labor sectors*

**KHAWLA AL SHEIKH:  
JORDAN’S FIRST WOMAN PLUMBER  
Al Nashmeyah / Arms for Maintenance  
Jordan**

Khawla Al Sheikh became the first woman plumber in Jordan and began to inspire and train women to work in her country and the region eventually in other non-traditional sectors for women. Her journey to become a trained plumber began in 2002 with an expertise installing water-saving apparatus to address the country’s water shortage when she urged the Business and Professional Women’s Association of Jordan to add a basic plumbing course. This would enable her to respond to requests she was getting when she was in the homes of women who needed plumbing help when installing the conservation apparatus when their husbands were away. She wanted to both empower women to help themselves in their homes – and build a cadre of women plumbers.

It was in 2006 after working alongside her husband, an electrical engineer, that she got her first level plumbing license which she built upon with advanced certifications over the next several years. Only one year after her basic license, Al Sheikh partnered with aid organizations to create a cooperative where she trained women in plumbing out of her living room. The women, who mainly came from poor areas, many of whom had never worked, faced challenges in trying to work in a non-traditional sector, as did Al Sheikh, encountering harsh criticism from the public and lack of support from their communities and even their families, sometimes unable to attend training.

32 <https://www.nelp.org/explore-the-issues/anti-discrimination/occupational-segregation/>

33 <https://www.thinkglobalhealth.org/article/womens-labor-force-participation-middle-east#:~:text=Women%20in%20the%20Middle%20East%20have%20entered%20the%20labor%20force,women%20are%20unpaid%20and%20overrepresented.>

34 <https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/women-at-work-in-the-arab-world-trends-gaps-and-effects-on-the-region/#:~:text=or%20public%20administration.,More%20than%20two%20thirds%20of%20women%20in%20the%20region%20work,as%20is%20the%20global%20norm.>



However, with her advocacy and persistence, male family members were persuaded and eventually gained pride in seeing the women in their family work, learn water saving techniques and earn money, and their children were impacted by the role modeling of their mothers' economic independence.

Since 2006 when Al Sheikh first got her plumbing certification, she has played an instrumental role in influencing social norms through her own profile as a role model and for the families and communities exposed to the women she has trained – including some who have started their own businesses. The growth of Al Sheikh's public profile over time, including from a TV show, Fix Your House with Khawla, gave another level of visibility to women in non-traditional sectors. The business she launched in 2016, Al Nashmeyah / Arms for Maintenance, the first private vocational center in Jordan, also trains women in HVAC, carpentry, and automotive skills. Another course for hearing impaired participants provides training to repair smart phones. By continuing to add new trades to the vocational center, Al Sheikh's courage and innovation is shifting attitudes and breaking down gendered occupational boundaries.

## REEMA AL-SMEIRAT

Phoenix  
Jordan

Reem Al-Smeirat, a pioneer in automotive design in Jordan and the MENA region, is the founder and design director at Concepts 4 Automotive Design "C A D" the first transportation design studio in the Middle East. She got her masters degree in Transportation Design from Turin and clay modeling certification from Germany. She has been committed to bringing a gender perspective into the automotive field to make car designs more inclusive so that they serve and are safer for everyone.

Al-Smeirat is leading a cultural change and breaking barriers in regards to women's role in the automotive industry; in particular Al-Smeirat has established the WOMOTIVE Initiative in support of expanding the working and training opportunities for women in the auto industry by creating a network of companies and launching the Phoenix Center for Automotive Detailing; a women led business believing in education and training to lead a high end service in car care... "مطلع نم" "مطلع نم". Phoenix has officially been certified by the "IDA" the highest level of excellency in auto detailing. Phoenix is also Al-Smeirat's conceptual sports e-city car designed with the Jordanian consumer in mind, driven by cultural values and answering the locals' demands.

She gives credit to a male ally named Professor Laith Al-Qasem who served on a panel for one of her graduate school projects. He was one of 10 people on the panel and the only one to believe in her design. The confidence his support gave her based on his credibility within the automotive community in addition to a couple of other interactions she had with him over the course of her profession provided her with "a lifetime of advice" and fortitude to have confidence when everyone else told her that her ideas were absurd. Her quest to build cars that provided safety and usability for women went unappreciated – until they became a huge success and a powerful brand in Jordan and the region.



### c. Common Forms of Workplace Bias

Here are some specific biases that are frequently present in the workplace. Which of these have you experienced? Have you exhibited any of them?



**TABLE 2**

**COMMON FORMS OF GENDER BIAS IN THE WORKPLACE**

TYPE OF BIAS	DEFINITION	EXPLANATION/EXAMPLE
<b>Gender Bias</b>	Showing a preference for one sex over another.	Interviewing only men for a regional sales position because you think you need someone tough and aggressive.
<b>Affinity Bias/Similarity Bias</b>	Also known as similarity bias, it's the tendency people have to connect with others who share similar interests, experiences and backgrounds.	Hiring someone from your university, where you're from, or someone you relate to or connect with easily.
<b>Anchor Bias</b>	Also known as expectation bias, it's when someone holds onto an initial, singular piece of information to make decisions.  Often leads to fewer interactions because an impactful assumption was made initially.	We form our opinions quickly of people. Maybe we had a bad interaction from our first meeting with a new employee. Instead of being open to how they might behave on the team, we keep the opinion from the first experience even if we see new behavior.  Conversely, this can happen after seeing a behavior you liked.
<b>Benevolence Bias</b>	Making a decision or multiple decisions on another person's behalf that takes away their choices.  Often our efforts to be kind result in us making decisions on other people's behalf like assuming a parent might not want the job because of the increased responsibility or work life balance concerns. This often combines with other biases.	When someone is on maternity leave and about to return, a colleague may not give her an assignment upon her return, thinking the assignment would add too much stress to her newly busier life without asking the woman what she thinks.  Managers take away choices with good intentions, not realizing the consequences.
<b>Confirmation Bias</b>	The tendency to seek information that confirms pre-existing beliefs or assumptions.  Removes true curiosity because we don't ask questions to learn more; only to maintain our current level of awareness.	We seek out news sources from places that already think the way we do. We look for things that support the beliefs we already have.
<b>Group-think Bias</b>	When the desire for group harmony overrides rational decision making.  Can lead to incomplete understanding or misguided, shared values.	A team may launch a faulty product despite the fact that there were warning signs because an individual team member(s) rationalized moving ahead by participating in the flawed decision-making to avoid being ostracized.
<b>Halo Bias</b>	The tendency people have to place another person on a pedestal after learning something impressive about them.  Overall impression impacts your evaluation of that person.	Interviewing someone who goes to one of the very best universities, might taint your view of a qualified applicant from a less known university. We see this all the time with recruiting.

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#### d. Microaggressions against women

Microaggressions are another prevalent bias that consist of everyday verbal, behavioral or environmental insults, putdowns, offensive behavior or invalidations that are indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalized group.<sup>35</sup> Microaggressions are a form of bias that emerge from masculinities, when they are aimed at women. They sometimes come from well-intentioned people who are unaware that they have been demeaning or they are deliberate. Collectively over time they create a hostile work environment and poor culture that leads to attrition and pushes good talent away.



##### BOX 4

#### EXPOSE MICROAGGRESSIONS: CALL THEM OUT IN THE MOMENT

Be self-aware & alert to microaggressions against women in the workplace:

- Asking/assigning women to take notes
- Men interrupting women
- Talking about appearances (hair, clothing, weight)
- Suggestive language
- Suggestive visual images in the office/on computer screens
- Unwanted physical contact
- Taking credit for someone else's work, ideas in meetings/in general
- Leaving a woman out of a meeting as a punishment, such as for standing up for herself (i.e. took credit for her own work, called someone out for a microaggression/inappropriate behavior)
- Women expected to clean up after a gathering over tea/coffee or party in the office also known as "office housework"
- Lack of flexibility for doctor's appointments or short appointments
- Expectations to work consistently after work hours/during personal time off/vacation
- Threats to women for not carrying out a duty not relevant to their role
- Not inviting women to informal activities outside the office which consisted mainly of colleagues and where important business decisions are made
- Women employees being put in uncomfortable positions by other employees or superiors at work functions

Microaggressions are also targeted at other underrepresented groups.

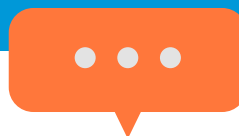
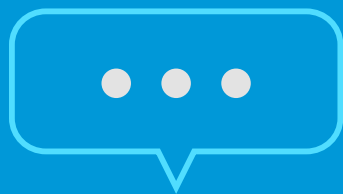


35 <https://healthmatters.nyp.org/what-to-know-about-microaggressions>



# 3

## STRATEGIES TO REDUCE IMPLICIT BIAS



## Step 2: Reflection

We all have bias. To mitigate all types of bias – from sex-based bias to microaggressions – there are thoughtful strategies that involve self-reflection and introspection. They require slowing down and asking oneself important questions. This chart defines seven strategies and an example of how you can practice the strategy, in the “reflection” column. Awareness of bias is the critical first step and this is how you address it. Ideally you will remember a few of these so that you can use them quickly.



With awareness and these powerful tools, you can make significant strides in mitigating biased behaviors. It takes practice and consistent use of these strategies to show up as a better employee and leader and to be able to build bridges across gender and other differences we find among colleagues in the workplace.

**TABLE 3****STRATEGIES & REFLECTION QUESTIONS TO MITIGATE BIAS**

<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>ACTION/APPROACH</b>	<b>REFLECTION</b>
<b>Practice constructive uncertainty</b>	<p>Ask questions from a non-judgmental place. This will prompt us to question our preconceptions and assumptions we have as stored as “truth” about others.</p> <p>Ask open-ended questions that challenge what you believe to be truths. Ask for feedback.</p>	<p>Understand your interpretation/viewpoint is yours alone. Listen for alternative viewpoints.</p>
<b>Practice Priming</b>	<p>Ask yourself questions to uncover implicit biases you might have that could impact someone positively or negatively.</p>	<p>You might ask yourself, “Who does this person remind me of?” Then analyze if this connection is positive or negative, and how might that impact your interaction.</p>
<b>Practice stereotype replacement</b>	<p>This process requires us to label the stereotype, evaluate the stereotype, and replace the stereotype. Taking time to reflect using this process slows down our implicit bias reaction and resets our behavior for next time.</p>	<p>Label: I think Generation Z<sup>36</sup> doesn’t work hard enough and is lazy.</p> <p>Evaluate: I think this because in my limited experience I had two Generation Z employees that were lazy. Perhaps I didn’t hire the right people, or I didn’t provide the direction they needed coming from their generation.</p> <p>Replace: There are many ambitious, talented and motivated Generation Zer’s in the job market. (I need to reconsider my approach to working with them.)</p>
<b>Practice Individuating</b>	<p>This involves going beyond social identity categories (gender, age, religion, etc.) by attending to the individual characteristics of others. Gathering this individual information allows you to get to know others on a personal basis instead of using group characteristics.</p>	<p>Have you ever asked someone’s gender or religion to understand more about who they are? Think about a circumstance. How was this limiting? What questions could you have asked if you wanted to know about the individual person? What more could you have learned?</p>
<b>Use structured processes</b>	<p>When making decisions about someone, evaluate them using structured questions and criteria. This creates consistency and removes the likelihood of making biased decisions.</p>	<p>Do you have a standard set of questions used for interviews? For performance reviews?</p>
<b>Perspective taking</b>	<p>Perspective taking involves imagining what it would feel like to be in another person’s situation.</p>	<p>Consider asking “How would I feel in this situation? How would I like to be treated so that I grow from this experience?” What is the best way for you to make a decision or provide feedback in a way that is constructive/supportive/grows your team?</p>
<b>Increase Opportunities for Contact</b>	<p>Seeking out interaction will allow you to meet people who disconfirm stereotypes and challenge your own biases.</p>	<p>Are there Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) with people different from you that you can join? Are there community organizations where you can spend time with people different from you? Events or activities?</p>

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36 “Generation Z (often shortened to Gen Z), also known as Zoomers,<sup>[1][2][3]</sup> is the demographic cohort succeeding Millennials and preceding Generation Alpha. Researchers and popular media use the mid-to-late 1990s as starting birth years and the early 2010s as ending birth years..”





# 4

## THE BUSINESS CASE FOR A GENDER-EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE



A significant body of research shows that a more gender equitable and inclusive workplace is better for business. It yields creativity, better decision-making and makes companies more competitive. With a workforce that skews greatly toward men in leadership, the Arab region is missing opportunities to tap into this talent. Despite the fact that the Arab region has more women than men enrolled in higher education, the regional labor force participation is 24.6% compared to the world average of 47.8%, the lowest in the world.<sup>37</sup> Many women in the region urgently seek technical and digital skills that can propel the region forward.<sup>38</sup> With the support of male champions, some industries and companies are finding creative ways to challenge social barriers to unlock professional leadership opportunities for women and pathways in male-dominated sectors.



#### BOX 5

#### PROCTOR & GAMBLE: ALIGNING WITH CUSTOMERS IN ADVERTISING

*MENA Region, (WEPs Signatory)*

Proctor & Gamble is prioritizing gender diversity in hiring for its internal marketing positions for advertising, media and content in the Arab region. Strategically hiring women for these roles will be important for both integrating a gender perspective and helping to end stereotypes in marketing and advertising in the region. By the end of 2024, the company plans to achieve equal representation of female directors 'behind the camera' for advertising for its brands in the region.<sup>39</sup> The company is aiming to ensure that its marketing materials and external-facing content reaches a broad audience that includes its women consumers, a large part of the company's customer base, and actually speaks to their interests and their modern lives rather than reinforcing social norms that undermine women. This follows their achievement of targets for 50-50 gender balance across management in the Arab region.

### a. Research: Gender Gaps

As there is a gender dimension to how women and men experience the workplace, policies must be designed to meet these needs. Research shows major gender gaps between employee expectations and the experiences they are having, as well as a gender gap between the perception of men and women in the same companies about the support women are getting in their careers. The first step to understanding the disconnect between employees and managers and the nature of the gender gaps is creating a plan to get more women in leadership positions which requires understanding our biases and making male allyship a priority in our companies. Male allies should be partners in helping to build a pipeline of women's talent and creating a culture where women want to work. Understanding workplace needs and regional dimensions that can play a nuanced role in office culture and preferences. Local feminist experts from academia, CSOs and relevant institutions can serve as resources related to gender bias in each country and a guidepost for acceptable protocols.

We all benefit from more inclusive workplaces and societies. Evidence of gender bias and patriarchal masculinities are seen in research among young women entering a workforce that doesn't come close to meeting their expectations. Yet this segment of the labor market is essential to recruit and retain. In a 2022 PWC survey of 1,500 young women aged 18 to 35 on attitudes to work across the following countries: Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, the top four characteristics that respondents reported as being most valued were work-life balance, training and development opportunities, fulfilling work, and opportunities for career progression.<sup>40</sup>

The survey showed a 31-23-point gap between what the young women expected from their workplaces in their four top priority areas, which were all ranked above 90, compared to what they actually experienced, which ranked all below 70 with two below 65.

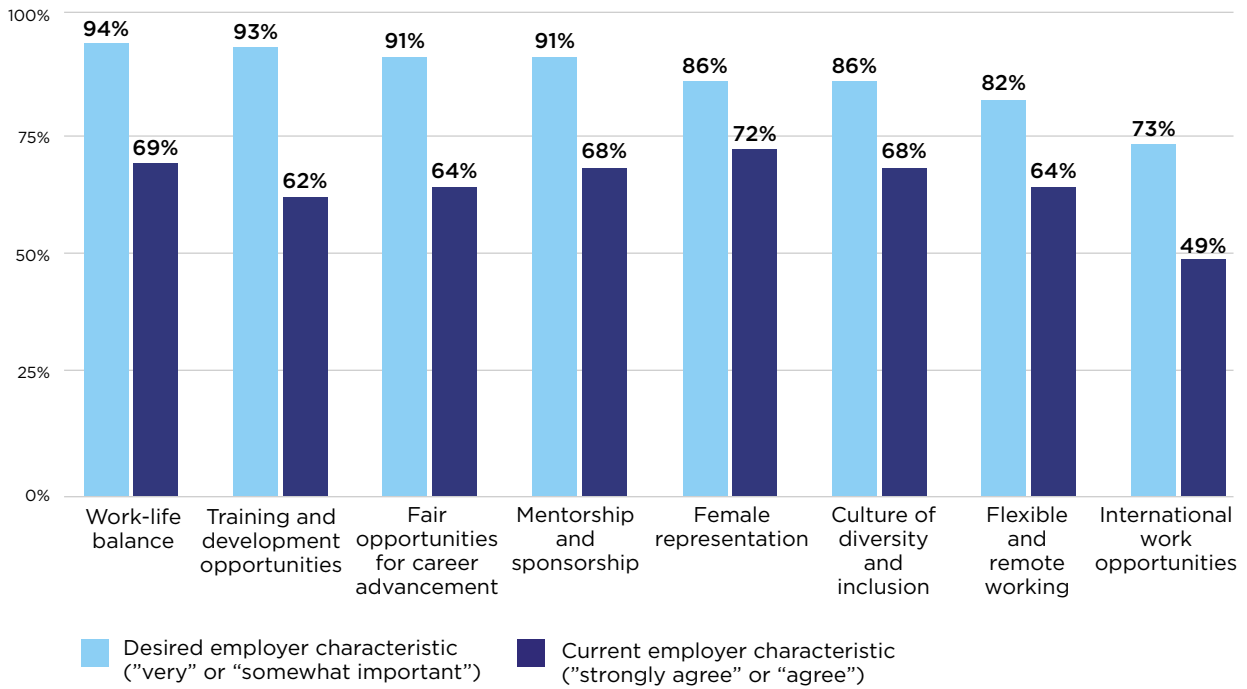
37 <https://www.mckinsey.com/-/media/mckinsey/featured%20insights/middle%20east%20and%20africa/women%20at%20work%20in%20the%20middle%20east/women-at-work-in-the-middle-east.pdf>

38 <https://www.mckinsey.com/-/media/mckinsey/featured%20insights/middle%20east%20and%20africa/women%20at%20work%20in%20the%20middle%20east/women-at-work-in-the-middle-east.pdf>

39 <https://businesschief.eu/sustainability/p-g-builds-on-equality-pledges-in-the-middle-east-africa>

40 <https://www.pwc.com/m1/en/publications/images-new/woman-in-work/mena-women-in-work-survey-2022.pdf>

Figure 4: The expectations and reality gap



We see that despite the policies in place by many employers, they are falling short of meeting the expectations of this population. This deep dissatisfaction among young working women implies a sizable need for corporate culture change. How will they engage young women to retain them and stimulate their career path? It's crucial for men to understand the nuances of these gaps and be proactive about changing the culture.

UN Women heard from women that included age ranges above 35 (top age of this survey) in the 2024 focus group discussions for this manual that policies designed to improve flexibility for working mothers are not far-reaching enough to alleviate the intended pressure caused by the tension between the disproportionate amount of their care responsibilities and careers. Policies that spread care responsibilities across the family rather than focus on women as the primary caregiver will create advantages for women's careers.

The perception of how men and women employees experience the workplace is a blind spot for managers. For example, in a survey of 3,000 participants in Gulf countries and Egypt, a perception gap emerged between women and men in how women are treated at work and how they are supported.<sup>41</sup> The survey found that when asked if "my employer treats females equally to males when it comes to promoting from within", 56% of women strongly agreed/agreed compared to 61% of men. When asked if their employer "supports women who return to work after taking a career break", 44% of women strongly agreed/agreed, while 55% of men strongly agreed/agreed.

Men in leadership positions have an opportunity to mitigate these blind spots as a first step by creating teams that are gender-inclusive. These examples show that it is incumbent on leaders and employees to better understand nuanced insights in these gender differences by leveraging tools like proactive communication, listening and seeking feedback.

41 <https://www.pwc.com/m1/en/publications/women-in-work-index.html>



**BOX 6**

**ESTARTA SOLUTIONS, RAPID RECRUITMENT OF WOMEN IN ICT JORDAN**

*(WEPS signatory)*

“I encouraged my younger sister to take up a job in the security team. It’s not easy to find such a safe, supportive and healthy environment.”

*Esraa Altamimi, team leader*

Estarta, an engineering and ICT company based in Jordan, was intentional about recruiting women for non-traditional roles in management, technical positions and nightwork. The company did this between 2015 and 2020 to expand its technical capacity and meet the needs of its main client, Cisco, to whom they were outsourcing technical services. In a country where half of the computer science degrees were going to women but only 15% of the network and technical support jobs were going to women, Estarta was strategic about putting a policy framework in place and a deliberate effort to shift the culture of the company. It prioritized making it friendly for mothers, in order recruit and retain women, a huge talent pool it wasn’t previously leveraging. This unlocked a huge capacity to meet the pressing demands at the time.

The company first focused on recruiting women engineers and then created a more sophisticated, multipronged strategy that recruited women for a wider range of roles. This created a culture where they felt supported and mentored and saw a pathway to grow within the company. The company enhanced their night

security measures, expanding the hours when women could work, a key part of the initial recruitment strategy. Much of the security team became women and, as a result, women comprised 58% of the overnight security team before COVID.<sup>42</sup> The effort has been driven in part by the CEO of Cisco and later by the CEO of Estarta, affirming that it is critical to have support from the top for gender equality initiatives to be effective. In Jordan, Estarta has been called an “employer of choice.”

Some of the strategies to nurture women within the company included:

- identifying high potential women to move up;
- providing mentoring and training to support their career advancement;
- leadership training with rotations to different teams; and
- a communications strategy that showcased positive female role models.<sup>43</sup>

Estarta also reached beyond its own workforce to cultivate students for the sector with a technical skills incubator program and outreach to undergraduates. Company representatives help educate students and their families about women moving to the capital to work and to help change cultural norms around thinking of “male” and “female” jobs. The company provides 90 days of full paid maternity leave for women (20 more days than the law provides), 3 days for paternity leave which men are encouraged to take and a childcare allowance for women with children up to age 4.<sup>44</sup>

42 <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/625671621402102045/text/The-Business-Case-for-Investing-in-Women-s-Employment-in-Jordan-Case-Study-Estarta-Solutions-Supporting-Women-in-Non-Traditional-Roles.txt>

43 <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/625671621402102045/text/The-Business-Case-for-Investing-in-Women-s-Employment-in-Jordan-Case-Study-Estarta-Solutions-Supporting-Women-in-Non-Traditional-Roles.txt>

44 <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/625671621402102045/pdf/The-Business-Case-for-Investing-in-Women-s-Employment-in-Jordan-Case-Study-Estarta-Solutions-Supporting-Women-in-Non-Traditional-Roles.pdf>

## Business Case Research

Jobs in the region are expected to double by 2030, especially in tech and digital areas<sup>45</sup>. Yet, women aren't getting enough training in the type of jobs being added. A McKinsey study on the Arab region found that women are not prepared with the advanced technical skills to assume these roles, yet when surveyed by McKinsey, women ranked the ability to work online, training in digital skills (i.e. web design), and the opportunity to train in other technical/vocation skills among their top priorities for career training they want.<sup>46</sup> Other research that demonstrates the urgent and compelling case for a gender-inclusive and inclusive workplace include:



### BOX 7

#### EDUCATING MEN ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF WOMEN ON BOARDS, WOMEN ON BOARDS OBSERVATORY AT AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO

The Women on Boards Observatory at American University in Cairo (AUC) at the School of Business works to “improve the gender balance of corporate boards in Egypt and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region by sensitizing male board members to gender issues, qualifying women from different sectors to be appointed to corporate boards, and advocating for policy and legislative changes that institutionalize gender diversity on corporate boards.” It also monitors and reports on the number of women on boards, compiles profiles of board-ready women and has a board placement service.<sup>47</sup>

Teams become more competitive as they become more diverse.

Organizations with inclusive and diverse teams are:

- 70% more likely to gain new markets
- 36% more likely to outperform profitability targets
- 75% quicker getting goods and services to market<sup>48</sup>



### BOX 8 QUOTE

“Just one more woman on a company’s board, while keeping the board size unchanged, produces an ROI [Return on Investment] of 8 to 13...points.”<sup>49</sup>

More reasons for gender-inclusive workplaces and other kinds of diversity:

- They facilitate better decision-making, avoid group-think.
- They attract people with different competencies, life experiences, and leadership styles.
- They expand opportunities for creativity, innovation and different modes of problem-solving. “Diversity in gender, country of origin, career path, and industry background among managers are all highly linked to innovation.”<sup>50</sup>

They broaden opportunities to reach new markets.

- Corporate branding: Gender inclusion improves reputation. Companies must compete to show they are modern organizations that keep pace with consumer desires and the global landscape. A commitment to gender diversity conveys a company’s values and shows they recognize that customers have different needs and preferences.
- Consumer and employee expectations: Increasingly, consumers expect companies to play a role in caring about the world and their communities, from being environmentally friendly to using good labor practices to having gender-diverse leadership. Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) or sustainability practices show how the company’s practices align with social good. Gender is relevant to the impact of each element of ESG.
- Shareholders’ expectations are rising, and they are putting pressure on companies to have diverse boards and leadership.

45 <https://www.mckinsey.com/-/media/mckinsey/featured%20insights/middle%20east%20and%20north%20africa%20region%20-%20a%20new%20era%20of%20digital%20transformation>

46 <https://www.mckinsey.com/-/media/mckinsey/featured%20insights/middle%20east%20and%20north%20africa%20region%20-%20a%20new%20era%20of%20digital%20transformation>

47 <https://business.aucegypt.edu/research/centers/women-boards-observatory1#:~:text=The%20Women%20on%20Boards%20Observatory,advocating%20for%20policy%20and%20legislative>

48 Korn Ferry, <https://www.kornferry.com/insights/featured-topics/diversity-equity-inclusion/the-benefits-of-inclusive-leadership>

49 <https://www.egonzehnder.com/global-board-diversity-tracker>

50 <https://www.bcg.com/publications/2017/people-organization-leadership-talent-innovation-through-diversity-mix-that-matters>

Conversely, organizations without gender diversity can lead to poor culture which can lead to incidents that are costly in terms of turnover, legal fees, and reputation. Countless companies have experienced large public gaffs related to advertising campaigns or messaging, for example, due to a lack of women's perspectives at the decision-making table.

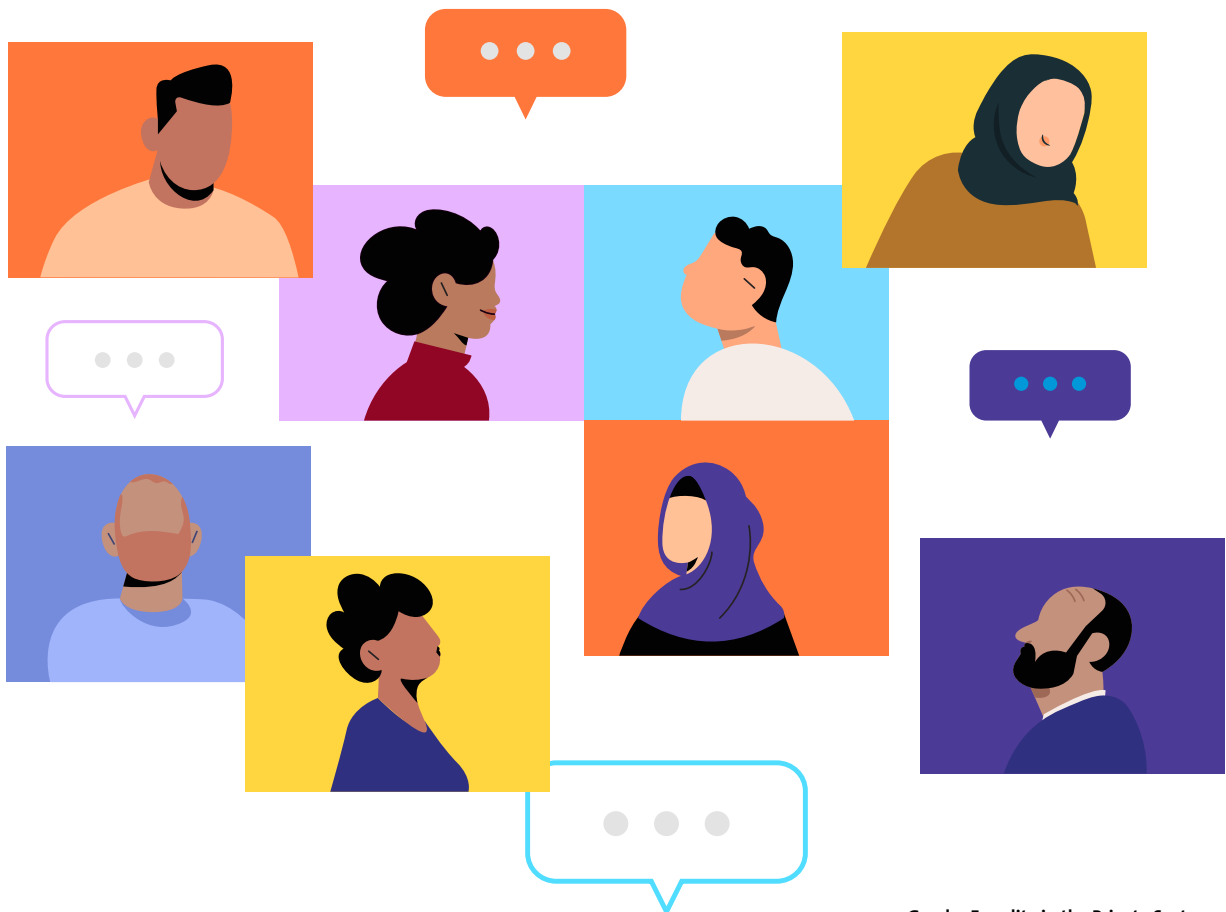
### **QUICKTOK Assessment: How Gender Equitable and Inclusive is Your Company/Team?: *Getting Started or Taking Stock***

One way to help men understand gender gaps in their organization is to get a baseline of knowledge about what is happening. Use this questionnaire to collect basic information. This is a tool anyone can use and is especially useful for leadership/management.

- Do you know the number of women in your company/team? The percentage?
- Do you know the number of women in leadership in your company/team? The percentage?
- Is gender equality defined by the company/team?
- Is gender equality a stated priority of the company/team?
  - If so, how and where is it communicated?
  - Do employees know about it?
- Is the leadership of the company/team invested/supportive of the commitment?
- Do men take an active role in promoting gender equality? If so, how?
- Does the company promote gender-equitable masculinities? Are there specific policies, values or behaviors documented? How and when are they communicated?
- What are the specific goals for the company/team related to gender equality?
- Do employees have a responsibility for implementing gender equality efforts?
  - Where and how are these tracked?
  - Who is responsible for the tracking? What team are they on?
  - Is the tracking available to see/transparent and to whom is it available?
  - Are there accountability measures in place to monitor progress on the goals?
- Are employees' performance reviewed for metrics on the gender equality goals?
  - What are the key performance indicators?
  - Are there incentives or repercussions for not achieving them?
- Has the internal initiative produced results?
  - Have the metrics collected been sufficient to understand progress on gender-inclusion? Do changes need to be made?

# 5

## SHIFTING THE CULTURE: GENDER EQUITABLE MASCULINITIES & MALE ALLYSHIP



## a. Gender Equitable Masculinities

### What are Gender Equitable Masculinities?

Gender equitable masculinities are about the health and wellness of men and promoting their ability to live in their full potential as human beings and in a more egalitarian world. This means being able to tap into a range of emotions, rather than being limited by what society says is appropriate for males to reveal. Men who exhibit gender equitable masculinities are confident and not insecure, and not needing to undermine women to get ahead or get what they want. It is alright for men to exhibit qualities like empathy, gentleness and sensitivity.<sup>51</sup>



#### BOX 8 QUOTE

*“Tennis greats, Roger Federer and Serena Williams are both fierce competitors on-court but nurturing parents off. There is no rule that because he’s a male and she’s a female, they can’t both have masculine and feminine traits.” – Men’s Resource Center of West Michigan<sup>52</sup>*

Traits of gender equitable masculinities include leadership, courage, collaboration, respect, leveraging emotional intelligence or being supportive. Is there a common thread? They are traits that anyone can have.<sup>53</sup> A good guidepost for men to live in gender equitable masculinity is to be authentic. If men are being authentic in showing their feelings and true self and can have more meaningful relationships, in general, they are showing gender equitable masculinity – if they do not show signs of sexism and subscribing to patriarchal values.

### How do you integrate Gender Equitable Masculinities into the Workplace?

The most successful individuals thrive by bringing their fully developed “physical, emotional, intellectual, relational, and spiritual fitness” to every aspect of their lives.<sup>54</sup> High emotional intelligence is one of the strongest predictors of professional performance.<sup>55</sup> This requires being aware and able to manage one’s own emotions and aware of other’s emotions and able to manage relationships well.<sup>56</sup> This requires understanding a range of emotions and showing vulnerability, one of the hardest emotions to share and one to which people closely connect.

Gender equitable masculinities also mean sharing power and embracing inclusive leadership. A critical component of this in the private sector is sharing care and domestic work and ensuring men understand the importance of their involvement. This required corporate culture that embraces men’s caregiving and does not harass or create a negative environment or consequences for people who take advantage of these policies. As we’ll see later, this requires policies to support all employees’ flexibility and leave for family responsibilities and care.

An inclusive leader is someone who creates belonging and maximizes talent. Inclusive leaders understand that both diversity and an environment where people can show up as themselves and realize their full potential at work are needed. According to Catalyst, companies can mitigate male anxiety and sexism through improved transparency, by “clarifying expectations, sharing resources equitably, communicating inclusively, encouraging humility, and listening to employees.”<sup>57</sup>

51 <https://menscenter.org/toxic-masculinity/>

52 <https://menscenter.org/toxic-masculinity/>

53 <https://positivemasculinity.org.au/about-the-foundation-for-positive-masculinity/>

54 <https://menscenter.org/toxic-masculinity/>

55 <https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/emotional-intelligence-in-leadership>

56 <https://www.ccl.org/articles/leading-effectively-articles/emotional-intelligence-and-leadership-effectiveness/>

57 <https://www.catalyst.org/media-release/masculine-anxiety-workplaces/>



**BOX 9****WHAT IS AN INCLUSIVE LEADER?**

Inclusive leaders navigate an increasingly diverse world, customer base, and workplace and have a large effect on how employees experience their workplaces. There are many aspects to genuinely being an inclusive leader who makes everyone feel like they belong which in turn, helps them feel valued and contribute at a higher level. Research by Deloitte identified six traits of inclusive leaders:

- awareness of bias
- visible commitment to inclusion
- curiosity about others
- humility
- cultural intelligence
- effective collaboration<sup>58</sup>

**b. Male Allyship****What are Male Allies?**

Men who take responsibility for creating a more gender equitable and inclusive workplace with intentionality are male allies. Male allies for gender equality work to change harmful gender stereotypes and power relations. Male allies recognize their own social privilege, eliminate sexism from their own behavior, and make active efforts to address gender inequities at home as well, leading by example. Even if men never commit an act of discrimination or harassment, men have a different type of responsibility: a responsibility to speak out, as colleagues, as concerned citizens, as caring men, and thoughtful fathers.

**Why are male allies essential?**

Men continue to have the majority of decision-making roles which makes them essential advocates for a gender-inclusive workplace. Men have the influence needed to bring others on board to help reshape our workplaces. Male managers play an outsized role in hiring, firing and promoting employees which puts them in a place of power to influence the course of organizational leadership and development.

Yet, research has shown that male managers are not as supportive of gender equality initiatives as their superiors and have less time to reflect on the microaggressions that are happening day-to-day at their level and often by them. A guide by Elizabeth Kelan called *Linchpin – Men, middle managers and gender inclusive leadership*, was developed to help male middle managers, in particular, realize the power they have to change teams, offices and companies just by making small changes that encourage gender equality such as calling out bias or recognizing a gender champion.<sup>59</sup>

It's imperative that many more men publicly advocate for gender equality. Men are watching and taking cues from other men, which is why it is so important that men at all levels lead by example. They have the influence needed to send signals to other men that they should be using their privilege for good.

**BOX 10****CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE**

Originally started in 2010 by the Australian Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Elizabeth Broderick, in response to the lack of women in leadership in Australia, Champions of Change is now a globally recognized organization because of the innovative strategy it used to engage men to advance diverse women in leadership. Initially known as 'Male Champions of Change' the initiative called upon men with power and influence to form a high-profile coalition to lead and be accountable for change on gender equality issues in their organizations from every major sector of the economy and in their governments, communities, academic and not-for-profit organizations, from the local to the global level. The group works to create the conditions where women can thrive – by changing the culture of their organizations and ultimately “shifting the systems of gender inequality in the workplace.”<sup>60</sup>

58 <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/pages/about-deloitte/articles/inclusive-leadership-imperative.html>

59 [https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/417879/LD\\_Blog\\_Live\\_Site\\_Files/Infographic%20-%20Gated/G3\\_Linchpin%20Report%20October%202016.pdf?\\_\\_hstc=267793105.c0eba99cc87ce996d812415ef00625d1.1722976100248.1722976100248.1722976100248.1&\\_\\_hssc=267793105.1.1722976100248&\\_\\_hsfp=3741967887&hsCtaTracking=5e5570fa-4829-4571-b480-1c6a7d591df9%7Cd2e03f2d-74b8-480e-b0c5-3d39f2575aea](https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/417879/LD_Blog_Live_Site_Files/Infographic%20-%20Gated/G3_Linchpin%20Report%20October%202016.pdf?__hstc=267793105.c0eba99cc87ce996d812415ef00625d1.1722976100248.1722976100248.1722976100248.1&__hssc=267793105.1.1722976100248&__hsfp=3741967887&hsCtaTracking=5e5570fa-4829-4571-b480-1c6a7d591df9%7Cd2e03f2d-74b8-480e-b0c5-3d39f2575aea)

60 <https://championsofchangecoalition.org/about-us/>

## c. Creating a Proactive Communication Culture

### What is a Proactive Communication Culture?

Establishing a proactive culture means to create an environment that allows for frequent and approachable opportunities for employees and managers to discuss performance, get feedback in the moment and on a regular basis. It creates systems of shared power and dismantles the existing structures that reinforce power inequalities. A communication culture builds relationships – and more cross-gender relationships – which are key to helping women move up in their careers. It allows for informal guidance and mentoring that is hopefully cultivated as an outcome of the communication that is developed.

One of the core issues underlying the difference in how women and men experience the workplace is related to the deeply rooted acceptance of how patriarchal masculinities dominates our communication and gendered communication styles. Dominant masculine communication defines most workplaces. Many challenges to equality of opportunity stem from the understanding that women and men's communication styles differ, and women are either marginalized or penalized for not fitting into the status quo.

For example, men are more assertive in expressing themselves and their opinions in language and behavior.<sup>61</sup> This can translate to men being more forthcoming in articulating their professional goals and if women aren't doing the same, then they won't be front of mind for their managers when opportunities arise for a job or promotion. Another example is that women can lack confidence in communicating their ideas in meetings or with their managers. This, in combination with men frequently interrupting women, another pattern, can marginalize their contributions.<sup>62</sup> Yet an example of how we see women being evaluated differently is that when they interrupt, they are viewed more negatively than men.<sup>63</sup>

While these behaviors marginalize women from conversations or opportunities, in the aggregate they can have a very significant impact on their access to higher-level opportunities and their careers in the long run.

It's important for men to consider the role bias plays in evaluating these differences and understand the significance of our decisions on women's career opportunities. People want to hire likeable people, however if women communicate behaviors like confidence and assertiveness, they are stepping out of the role society gave them and thus they become less likeable.<sup>64</sup> How should these deeply ingrained perceptions as employees, managers and senior leaders be handled? How should the team's communication systems be set up? How can you create an environment that embraces a range of communication styles in addition to putting measures in place to standardize recruitment and performance review processes, for example, to eliminate bias?

### What do we need from Male Allies?

Men can take deliberate steps to create a proactive communication culture to avoid many of the pitfalls that become roadblocks to women's advancement over time. The first item for men to be concerned with is just their awareness of the role bias plays in influencing our decisions and judgements about others and use strategies to eliminate bias personally and systematically. They need to be able to replace a woman or man in a scenario in any given moment as a tool, for example, to determine if bias is at play.

Another critical area for supporting women is providing valuable feedback. Research shows women receive less and kinder feedback that is found to be less useful.<sup>65</sup> Women will benefit from more, direct and actionable feedback from men. It's also common that women receive less credit for their contributions which can contribute to them feeling a lack of importance or undervalued.<sup>66</sup>

Finally, building a proactive communication is creating an ease of information flow. By increasing interaction, comfort levels and transparency across levels and gender, it improves understanding and exposure for women who can be less assertive about getting in front of their

61 <https://www.womeninresearch.worg.au/being-assertive-and-proactive>

62 <https://www.advisory.com/daily-briefing/2017/07/07/men-interrupting-women>

63 <https://www.cmu.edu/news/stories/archives/2020/october/women-interrupted-debate.html>

64 <https://www.forbes.com/sites/carriekerpen/2019/02/26/whats-wrong-with-being-a-likeable-woman/>

65 <https://hbr.org/2023/01/women-get-nicer-feedback-and-it-holds-them-back#:~:text=Of%20course%2C%20kindness%20isn't,actionable%20feedback%2C%20than%20men%20are.>

66 <https://gap.hks.harvard.edu/no-credit-where-credit-due-attributional-rationalization-women%E2%80%99s-success-male-female-teams>

bosses or articulating their professional goals or needs. It allows for feedback both ways which can provide insight into gendered patterns of communication. More broadly, it builds important relationships that support women's career growth and can expand their access to feedback from men and male mentors. The steps below are additional efforts to fold in which will build relationships even further.

### **Steps for creating a Proactive Communication Culture**

**Reflect on biases, question assumptions:** Think about your perception of women leaders as well as women on your team and continue to ask yourself, 'Is this the truth or did I make it up?' Also think about how you are reacting to a woman's behavior and think about how you would react if a man did the same thing – is it the same? IS there bias?

**Facilitate feedback from team members:** Be vulnerable, keep open communication, and leave room for improvement. Ask your team – boss, peers and direct reports – how you are doing. If you get constructive feedback, you'll learn and improve yourself and recognize how the needs of female and male colleagues differ.

If you are in a management position you can do this in a structured way with a 360-review process for your team/department which allows everyone to evaluate each other and can be extremely insightful for career growth. It may also uncover insight into gender bias or gender dimensions of leadership or career performance. This can be a powerful way for women to see their strengths and overcome professional insecurities.

**Provide actionable feedback in the moment and often.** As we know, research shows women get less actionable feedback than men (claim your space vs. get along or set the vision vs. focus on delivery).<sup>67</sup> Feedback in the moment provides feedback while it's fresh in your mind and specific to an event or meeting or issue. More importantly, it can quell anxiety and lead to greater confidence which can support women.<sup>68</sup>

**Overcommunicate** (vs. under-communicate): Don't make assumptions that people have the information you want them to have. If you assume people know based on experience, this can marginalize people including women and young or new employees.

**Practice active listening:** Active listening is listening without judgment and without planning how you are going to respond. You should be able to repeat back what the person said to you. Gender can play a role in anticipating the conversation and your response. Pay attention to gender-related patterns in the conversations you have, employee needs and how you respond.

**Focus groups, surveys:** Use in-depth culture surveys and focus groups to understand employee satisfaction levels and potential gender gaps to provide an excellent tool to gain insight for your leadership and communication.

**Cultivate mentorship and sponsorship relationships:** Facilitate relationships that provide women with mentors and sponsors they can rely on to provide them with advice and guidance and serve as one. This creates deeper relationships in and across teams, facilitates communication and helps people understand and support one another.

Licensed by Mine The Gap, [www.minethegap.co](http://www.minethegap.co)

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67 <https://hbr.org/2021/02/research-men-get-more-actionable-feedback-than-women>

68 <https://www.talentguard.com/blog/understanding-the-benefits-of-continuous-feedback>

**Self-Reflection Framework for Male Allies:  
Everyday Actions**

In addition to proactively communicating and creating a culture where men and women can communicate with ease, there are several actions that men can take daily to create an environment that is inclusive and supportive and begins to break down negative norms associated with patriarchal masculinities embedded in workplace culture globally.

Use the following chart to identify actions that male allies can take regularly. An example of an initial action for each self-reflection question is provided for you.



**TABLE 4**

**REFLECTION FRAMEWORK FOR MALE ALLIES**

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

**EXPLANATION**

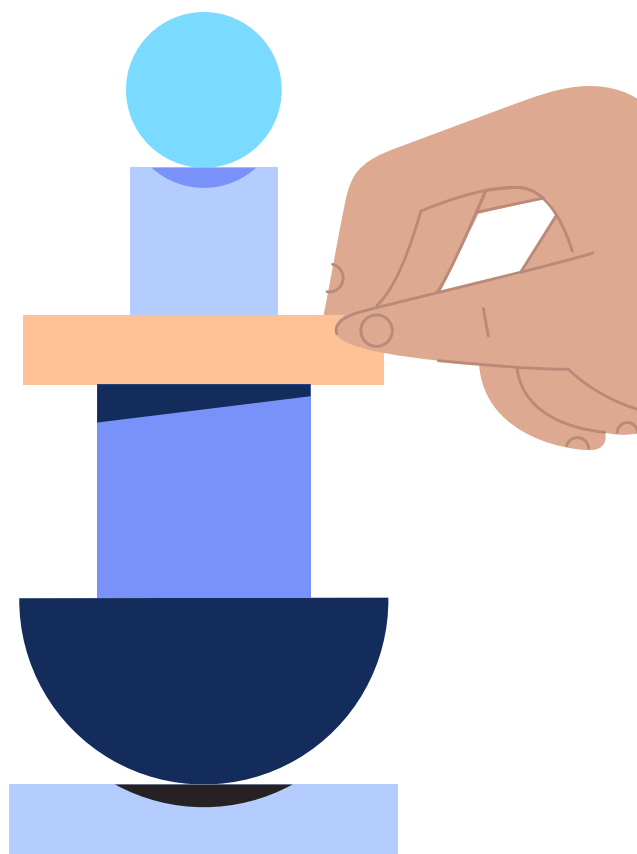
Do you create safe spaces?	Ensure that women have opportunities to share any issues/challenges/problems in the workplace in a non-judgmental, confidential space.
How may biases have influenced your career?	Understand that you may have reached your position in part because of access or relationships that were availed to you because you're a man. Because of barriers women had, it is important to create opportunities for them to access other ways to advance professionally.
Are you a vocal ally? Do you call out bias?	Sexist behavior and microaggressions are happening all the time. Be alert and ready to politely call out inappropriate behavior in the moment.
How well do you listen to the experiences of female colleagues?	Listen openly, without judgment and without rushing to find a solution.
Do you amplify women's voices in meetings?	Women and men often have different communication styles, with men being more dominant in meetings and women being interrupted or not speaking up. Encourage ideas and give space to women participating less frequently and give credit to good ideas. Understand that women don't always have the confidence or the same track record or professional experience with meetings or presenting.
Do you address gender representation? Do you address gender representation in leadership?	Take a leadership role in examining where there are gaps in representation of women and men at each level of your organization. Understand why and be deliberate about measures to improve it.
Do you advocate for and defend gender-inclusive initiatives?	Put action behind your commitment and be a visible and vocal gender champion so that others know how important the initiatives are.
Do you challenge workplace practices by making your family/household care responsibilities outside work visible?	Share the personal activities or decisions you make that model how you are challenging gender norms.

Designed with recommendations from Linchpin – Men, middle managers and gender inclusive leadership, Elizabeth Kelan

## d. Investing in Women's Career Growth

Investing in women's professional development is one of the most strategic moves men can make to support women's long-term career growth. Countless women and men credit mentors for their career opportunities as well as unique opportunities for leadership training. These came from intentional efforts by leaders to support their growth. Investing in women's career growth is also an efficient way to close gender gaps in companies, lift rising talent and create a pipeline of talented women with additional skills and training. It's a win-win for companies that benefit from improved performance capacity and the myriads of other benefits a gender-diverse workforce brings.

Considering actions men can take to invest in women's professional lives, it is important that they are aware of the gendered dimensions of communication related to women's career needs so they can maximize the investment. Through investments like these, companies are gradually dismantling visible and invisible patriarchal influences that consistently drive opportunities to men over women.



### BOX 11

#### **BANK AL ETIHAD: MALE DOMINATED SECTOR DRIVING GENDER EQUALITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN ITS BUSINESS MODEL**

*Jordan, (WEPs Signatory)*

Bank Al Etihad is a striking example of a company that reaped the financial benefits of intentionally putting infrastructure in place to create a gender-responsive company with accountability mechanisms to ensure that it was maintained. The financial sector is one of the most male-dominated sectors with a large male customer base. Bank Al-Etihad's effort to make the company more equitable was motivated by creating a stronger business and built into its model, making it transformative in the region.

In 2013, the company approached gender inclusion to build market share – it believed in the potential business value it could bring from the very beginning. More women in the company would help it better reach untapped women customers. As a result, the bank reports increasing its women's customer base eleven-fold over 10 years, more rapidly than it has built its male segment.

Unlike a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative, gender was integrated into the marketing and communications department, embedded in the company infrastructure. Additionally, gender equality champions were established throughout teams in the bank that would report to the marketing team on key metrics for their function, ensuring accountability.

Since 2014, Bank Al Etihad developed several programs for women in non-financial services as well. The Shorouq Career Comeback program for women who left the workforce for three to four years to start a family and face challenges reentering, has been globally recognized. The program onboards women back in one or two months and matches them with an internship from a roster of ninety partner organizations, thirteen of which are WEPs signatories. The success rate of the program at the very beginning was 50% job placement and 15-20% were able to open their own businesses.

### **Mentorship: Be a mentor & create mentorship opportunities for women**

Mentors provide career advice and inspire new opportunities or directions. It's a one-on-one relationship that can be organically picked by two people or part of a formal program. Ages and profiles of a mentor can range – it's about wisdom and a fit between two people. While people should seek out women and men as mentors, male mentors are important for women because they provide a perspective and experience based on their gender and typically have better access to power. Women are good at networking but do not always do it in a strategic way. Men can help them see how to be more transactional in leveraging relationships to deliver on their career goals.

Mentors are there to be a sounding board and can share the mistakes they've made. It's also important for women to get actionable feedback in a proactive context that will be valuable coming from the lens of men who hold most leadership roles, making the relationship an opportunity for men to grow as gender-inclusive leaders.

Ideas for a formal mentoring program: (Mine The Gap content starts)

- Build mentorship into the onboarding process.
- Establish a mentorship program that pairs women with more senior men for informal conversations about their career path or informal networking lunches or dinners can provide a similar opportunity in a different setting where people can pick their own mentor and meet with them over a set period.
- Create a 'bank' of men from every level of the company (e.g. analyst, senior manager, director, vice-president) that are open to mentoring, complete with profiles about their experience, background, and personal details to facilitate matches with new and existing employees (which could be part of the onboarding process).
- Create mentoring circles where a group of employees can learn from each other with the guidance of a manager.<sup>69</sup>
- Recognize exceptional mentors.<sup>70</sup>
- Include mentorship in job descriptions.<sup>71</sup>

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### **Sponsorship: Be a sponsor & encourage sponsorship**

Sponsors are advocates for a specific person or persons whom they believe in during their career and want to help get to the next level. They help open doors and confer power because they have access to opportunities others don't. The match typically happens more organically. Sponsors are usually more senior. Studies by *Harvard Business Review* and Catalyst have demonstrated that women who have sponsors are more likely to advance in their careers.<sup>72</sup>

Sponsors for women can have a dramatic impact on the speed and quality of their career trajectory. They use their influence and are invested in their colleague's professional growth and success. The more influence a sponsor has, the better. Male sponsors are important for women because women are more comfortable advocating for others than themselves.<sup>73</sup> A sponsor gives women access to power and the ability to be seen. This is essential for helping women break through the invisible, patriarchal structural barriers that perpetuate their lack of visibility.

69 <https://www.shrm.org/topics-tools/news/hr-magazine/male-leaders-mentor-women>

70 <https://www.shrm.org/topics-tools/news/hr-magazine/male-leaders-mentor-women>

71 <https://www.oliverwymanforum.com/city-readiness/2020/sep/why-men-should-mentor-women.html>

72 <https://www.shrm.org/topics-tools/news/hr-magazine/male-leaders-mentor-women>

73 <https://gap.hks.harvard.edu/negotiating-gender-roles-gender-differences-assertive-negotiating-are-mediated-women%E2%80%99s-fear-backlash>



TABLE 5

### WAYS TO INVEST IN CAREER GROWTH

#### ENFORCE A MERITOCRACY.

<p>Provide individual career pathing and focus on equitable, not equal, access to learning and training opportunities.</p>	<p>Example: You notice one of your reports struggles to be heard during meetings and convey authority.</p> <p>Advocate for them to attend a public speaking course and challenge them with a high visibility development opportunity to drive credibility, such as reporting out financials in regular team meetings.</p>
<p>Review performance evaluation language. Check if you use different language to describe people of different genders, ethnicities. Examples include using different connotations for similar behavior (Woman X receives negative feedback that she is “abrasive” while Man X receives positive feedback that he is “confident”) or highlighting team-oriented behaviors when evaluating women and leadership behaviors when evaluating men.</p>	<p>Example: To avoid bias, make it a habit to seek 360 feedback to include in performance reviews.</p> <p>Ask five people that work closely with your direct report to summarize their interactions with your employee. Ask them, “What are 1-2 things Employee X has done well this year?” and “What are the areas that can enhance their effectiveness and leadership further?”</p>
<p>Facilitate Leadership Track for “High-Pot” Women</p>	<p>Example: Identify high-potential women in the organization who could be future leaders and cultivate them with additional leadership skills that prepare them for management and skills areas to which they haven’t had access.</p>

#### RECOGNIZE THAT WOMEN AND MEN HAVE DIVERSE NEEDS.

<p>Be inclusive when scheduling meetings and team activities. Consider the venue and the times that you hold team building activities. Implement ‘no meeting blocks’ during mornings and afternoons to accommodate caregiver duties or long commutes.</p>	<p>Example: Discourage meetings at times when parents need to drop off or pick up kids, so they are not repeatedly excluded from meetings.</p>
<p>Ask - rather than assume - what women need to be successful at work. Ensure you regularly connect about all aspects of your employees’ lives.</p>	<p>Example:</p> <p>Cognitive needs - How do they learn and process information? This may impact how they prefer to receive material or feedback from you, for example verbal versus written.</p> <p>Personal needs - Can you make accommodations in their work environment that will help ease stressors in their personal life? Are they willing to share their personal values with their team?</p> <p>Professional development needs: for example, are they comfortable leveraging their network for mentorship opportunities or would they appreciate a formal mentorship program or facilitated introductions to leadership?</p>
<p>Educate your team about their benefits.</p>	<p>Example: Flexible work, leave policy, other benefits</p>
<p>Recognize the needs of working mothers returning to work.</p>	<p>Example: Identify ramp-back needs and create a program within the onboarding process specific to returning mothers based on this feedback.</p>

Licensed by Mine The Gap, www.minethegap.co (Mine The Gap - two charts above)





# 6

## PRIORITY POLICY AREAS: MALE ALLIES ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE



There are foundational areas where change to both policy and behaviors in the workplace by men will advance necessary culture change from a patriarchal environment to one that embraces collaboration, eliminates biases and uses equity as a guide for investing in its employees. These areas where men need to be leading advocates for change are:

- **Sexual Harassment**
- **Equal Pay**
- **Expanding Care Policies and Services, ensuring that both female and male employees take advantage of those.**
- **Inclusive Recruitment & Hiring**

Championing leadership on these issues is a long-term investment in the growth of an organization or team and in the advancement of a more gender-inclusive society.

## a. Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is part of patriarchal behavior and when it happens at the office, it is a symptom of poor workplace culture where patriarchal norms still dominate. They pervade the workplace making frequent verbal, physical, visual and emotional harassment toward women so common that it can appear as though they are acceptable. While all employers play a key role in preserving and promoting the physical and emotional health, safety and well-being of their employees, it is critical that men use every opportunity to model zero tolerance and to call it out as a bystander.

Men can reduce the frequency of sexual harassment which continues to plague workplaces by modeling good behavior and by being proactive about advocating against it. Twenty-three percent of workers globally reporting violence or harassment at some point at work in their life<sup>74</sup> and roughly 30% of women in the Arab region facing sexual harassment.<sup>75</sup> Sexual harassment and violence signify high costs to women in terms of lost earnings, missed promotions and overall wellbeing. Companies are impacted in the form of employee absenteeism, productivity and financial losses and a damaged reputation.

Men leading on these issues by “setting a strong tone at the top...empowering workers to raise concerns and treating everyone fairly, tackling “aspects of the corporate culture” that “perpetuate harmful gender stereotypes, making sure that putting an end to them becomes a fundamental part of the company’s functioning.”<sup>76</sup> It is also important for men to be aware that it is critical to take a “victim-and survivor-centered approach which places the rights, needs and wishes of victims at the center of the employer’s response” and “to ensure their safety and security to avoid further harm” and to protect their privacy.<sup>77</sup>

### **Sexual Harassment Checklist for Male Allies**

Use your power and privilege for good. Lead by example.

- **Zero-tolerance stance on sexual harassment and make this known to colleagues.**
- Be open, listen and understand internal policies and processes.
- Call out incidents immediately.
- Provide a safe space for anyone who confides in you (know internal policy for whether you must report incidents or can keep them confidential).
- Eliminate all personal behavior that could be deemed inappropriate (visual images on your desk/computer/personal area; language; etc.).
- Know that what you think is appropriate may not be considered so by someone else.
- Do not comment on clothing or someone’s appearances, personal choices, and behaviors unrelated to work.
- Avoid physical contact except for what is culturally appropriate (i.e. ways to greet each other).
- Take opportunities to speak out against sexual harassment at speaking engagements or other appropriate fora.
- Continue to build a proactive communication culture across levels and lines between women and men.
- Join an organization to advocate for ending sexual harassment.

Building an environment with open and proactive communication helps build a supportive culture where it’s harder for sexual harassment to take place and easier to report it when it occurs.

74 <https://news.gallup.com/opinion/gallup/406793/global-study-workers-experience-violence-harassment.aspx>

75 <https://egypt.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/8655f498-85a0-434e-9396-bfa3b390f63e.pdf>

76 Tackling Sexual Harassment in the World of Work, Guidance Note, Principle 3

77 Tackling Sexual Harassment in the World of Work, Guidance Note, Principle 3

**BOX 12****HOLDAL ABOUT ADAL GROUP (“HOLDAL”):  
ENGAGING EMPLOYEES IN DIVERSITY POLICIES**  
Lebanon

In 2022, Holdal, a retail, distribution, manufacturing, and supply chain management company specializing in beauty, personal and household care, healthcare, lifestyle and luxury products created a new, comprehensive sexual harassment policy that sought employee input.

Steered by the company’s General Counsel, the comprehensive anti-harassment policy was intended to align with the company’s commitment to a safe work environment for all employees. At the time, of 650 people at the company, women comprised: 50% of all employees, 60% of the board of directors, 21% of executives/senior managers, 52% of lower middle management and 45% of lower management.

Holdal engaged employees in the design of the new policy through a multi-phased process of roundtables that gauged employees’ understanding and perceptions of the topic. By engaging staff in the process, the company gave employees a voice and an opportunity to be heard while giving leadership a chance to understand employees’ values, both of which contribute to building an inclusive workplace culture.

The final policy was clear and comprehensive and included all the key components of a ‘gold standard’ anti-harassment policy – a robust complaints mechanism, mandatory anti-harassment training for all staff, confidential procedures, a grievance policy, a code of business conduct, and a whistle blowing policy.<sup>78</sup> Staff received training on the new policy shortly after it was finalized. By giving the employees, a voice in the process, Holdal took an important step that deepens employee loyalty and trust and builds a culture with greater satisfaction that improves retention.

**b. Expanding Care Policies and Services**

As a result of patriarchal masculinities in the family, women continue to bear most care responsibilities in the home and thus their personal and professional lives are deeply intertwined. Women in the MENA region do 4.7 times more work than men.<sup>79</sup> These cultural expectations carry over to the workplace where new mothers report challenges in returning to work due to biases, lack of support structures and flexible policies.<sup>80</sup> Meanwhile, the same patriarchal norms put the heaviest burden on men for financial and budgetary responsibilities.<sup>81</sup>

UN Women’s groundbreaking research conducted in 2023 that captured the views on paternity leave and men’s involvement in childcare from decision makers from governments, private sector and civil society organizations from five countries in the MENA region (Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia) found that 86 per cent supported extending paternity leave duration and 62 % supported addressing men’s caregiving as a national policy priority.<sup>82</sup>

Policies that facilitate opportunities for families to share care work alleviate a tremendous burden for women who balance a dual workload at home and in their professional lives. Tension between the two sits at the crux of challenges related to women’s career advancement and is often blamed as the reason why more women are not in leadership roles today.

78 <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099520006282222290/pdf/P16815703aa6360c50970805e9545b3121b.pdf>

79 <https://www.arabbarometer.org/surveys/arab-barometer-wave-vii/>

80 <https://www.pwc.com/m1/en/publications/images-new/woman-in-work/mena-women-in-work-survey-2022.pdf>

81 <https://www.arabbarometer.org/surveys/arab-barometer-wave-vii/>

82 <https://arabstates.unwomen.org/en/stories/press-release/2023/09/longer-paternity-leave-in-the-middle-east-and-northern-africa-mena-region>

## Expanding Care Policies and Services Checklist for Male Allies:

- Address stereotypes and gender-based violence head-on to help shift norms and expectations around women's role of taking on most of the caregiving.
- On-site childcare or a stipend/financial support toward childcare costs.<sup>83</sup>
- Offer flexible work arrangements for the all employees, flex-time and remote work options. Determine what works for your company.
- Offer flexible leave policies for all employees to include caring for elderly and bereavement.<sup>84</sup>
- Establish mandatory paternity leave for male employees in the company (including at the time of birth).
- Take paternity leave where it is not mandatory.
- Establish mandatory family leave days for men (for something other than a new child).
- Share with colleagues how you're engaged with family life and care work and how it's being modeled for your children, contributing to eliminate gender stereotypes around the involvement of men in caregiving.
- Create an employee resource group for caregivers.<sup>85</sup>

Male advocates' ability to lift the limitations women face between work and home life by reducing cultural expectations in the workplace with flexibility policies that are not focused primarily on providing mother's more time for family responsibilities can shift power dynamics in society more broadly. It sends a message that women's professional work has equal value and that their financial contributions are significant for families. This requires not simply creating a paternity leave policy, for example, but instead designing policies with the long-term outcome of a more equitable society in mind and crafting all policies with flexibility that allows for more robust opportunities for families.



### BOX 13

#### **GENDER CHAMPION, AMINA MARI, MEHNA: EXPANDING FLEXIBILITY BENEFITS IN MANUFACTURING, RESHAPING FAMILIES**

*Jordan, (WEPS Signatory)*

Mehna is one company slowly helping to shift norms that will broaden the care responsibilities to both parents and expand economic opportunities for families and role modeling for children to see families connect in more meaningful ways. Amina Mari launched Mehna, a small social impact machine manufacturing company in 2018 because of her passion for safety and quality in industry. To this male-dominated sector, she brought a commitment to bringing in women and a vision for how to achieve values and culture through company policy. Mari has worked to develop a workplace culture that demonstrates value for the contributions that both women and men employees can play in their family with progressive practices for the region that encourage work-life balance for everyone.

Mehna is reshaping the idea of the family and masculinities by inviting men to see a different perspective on their role in the family and the value they can contribute. Mari is developing a culture that places value on time off for special family commitments and life events for both women and men. Specifically, Mehna provides three weeks of paid parental leave, beyond the three days mandated by Jordan's labor law. One week is provided for both parents to take together when they become parents, and another week is provided for other needs later such as doctor's appointments. Mehna provides other days off for all employees to spend with their children, such as on important occasions and encourages men to take advantage of the opportunity.

Mehna has seen positive experiences by male employees who have expressed gratitude for the flexibility and chance to engage in their personal lives at another level as well as higher than typical retention rates for its technicians. Mari is taking the long view with aim that more male employees will take advantage of these opportunities out of enjoyment and see the valuable role they can play in shaping their children's lives.

83 <https://www.ellequante.com/blog/5-ways-to-support-caregivers-in-the-workplace>

84 <https://www.ellequante.com/blog/5-ways-to-support-caregivers-in-the-workplace>

85 <https://www.onedigital.com/blog/strategies-for-supporting-caregivers-in-the-workplace/>



**BOX 14**  
**ARASCOPE**

Egypt

Media

Amir.waheed@arascope.com

Arascope, the Egyptian television programming, production house and media training company founded in 1987, is a pioneer in its policies that demonstrate value for work-life balance for all employees and the satisfaction of employees and their families is a long-term investment that makes companies more successful. For example, Arascope provided an on-site nursery long before others and now has a policy that gives 3 days of paternity leave – where the law does not mention it - with additional flexibility to parents at the discretion of their managers, which employees utilize. In 2012 the company adopted a remote work policy allowing employees to work from home one day a week and added additional flexibility as needed.

Taking a comprehensive approach to well-being, Arascope has aligned its policies on well-being, flexibility, safety and leave to prioritize an employee experience that enables both men and women to prioritize their personal and family lives while having robust careers, rather than reinforcing standard policies that reinforce mothers as the main caregiver and focus exclusively on easing their availability for household responsibilities. As a result, Arascope has created a culture where people with families feel safe and encouraged. Amir Waheed, Arascope's CEO, [add quote/requested – he will insert when you send this paragraph for review]...

### c. Equal pay

We know that treating all women and men fairly at work aligns with international human rights principles and translates to better talent acquisition, higher employee retention and satisfaction, increased productivity and better decision-making. Equal pay is fundamental to fair treatment and is critical for attracting and retaining the best talent. Equal pay is encompassed within the practices that companies must address as part of their commitment to the Women's Empowerment Principles.

In principle, most companies will agree with equal pay for equal work, however the global gender gap persists, with women still earning 23% less than men worldwide.<sup>86</sup> In the Arab region women earn 12.5% of the income of Arab men.<sup>87</sup> Both implicit bias and overt sexism play a role in these statistics. Gender bias is embedded in how women are recruited, interviewed and chosen for internal professional and training opportunities. While women are at a distinct disadvantage by taking time away from the workforce to have children and take care of their families, this is frequently overstated as the reason for their lower salaries and often used as an excuse for paying women less or giving them the low end of a pay band, perpetuating gender salary gaps.

A less apparent reason for the gender pay gap is the fact that, in many cases, gender bias leads to women being promoted based on their performance, whereas men are promoted based on their potential.<sup>88</sup> Also contributing is the assumption that men are credible and capable which provides opportunities for them to climb the professional ladder more swiftly. For example, research shows when people work in mixed gender teams and there is "ambiguity about performance, such as...no tangible work product or when the merit of the work is difficult to assess, women are evaluated as less competent than men."<sup>89</sup>

86 <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/csw61/equal-pay#:~:text=Take%20five%3A%20At%20the%20current,per%20cent%20less%20than%20men.>

87 <https://www.ilo.org/regions-and-countries/ilo-arab-states/areas-work/gender-equality-and-non-discrimination-arab-states>

88 <https://insights.som.yale.edu/insights/women-arent-promoted-because-managers-underestimate-their-potential>

89 <https://gap.hks.harvard.edu/no-credit-where-credit-due-attributional-rationalization-women%E2%80%99s-success-male-female-teams>

Putting in measures to ensure equal pay for women and men that eliminate opportunities for bias must be systematic and prioritized by men in leadership and management where hiring and promotion decisions are made. “Companies play an important role in addressing gender pay gaps and are increasingly taking action to remove discrimination in the workplace. Some actions emanate from stronger government regulations to neutralize gender pay gaps, requiring companies to track and report wages of their employees. Still, many organizations do not yet uphold the principle of “equal pay for work of equal value”.<sup>90</sup>

It is important for men to check their personal bias and that of the teams they manage when making financial offers and be very mindful in supporting women to get trained and credentialed as they come back to work after taking time with families. Meanwhile, it’s also important that “ramping off” temporarily not become a consistent financial penalty and prevent women from accessing good salaries. Utilize the checklists for recruitment and hiring in this manual to support unbiased processes that will also contribute to equal pay.

### **Equal Pay Checklist for Male Allies**

- ✓ Be vocal about your commitment for equal pay.
- ✓ Establish clear policies and conduct ongoing audits to ensure equal pay is maintained.
- ✓ Build a meritocracy to eliminate bias from decision-making.
- ✓ Performance-based pay: Evaluate work objectively using metrics.
- ✓ Use transparency for pay policies and salary structures to build trust and accountability.
- ✓ Use transparent and equitable performance review processes.
- ✓ Create equal access to advancement, training and mentorship opportunities and be thoughtful about the additional needs of women who have had less access and consider what will help them advance. Be thoughtful about designing internal programs or leveraging external programs that fill these gaps.
- ✓ Institute flexible work hours to allow people to balance their personal and professional lives.
- ✓ Create parental leave policies that move the burden of care exclusively off women to encourage the expansion of care work across families.
- ✓ Add family days to leave policy.
- ✓ Encourage colleagues and friends outside of your company to conduct equal pay review processes in their organizations.
- ✓ Publicly advocate for equal pay.

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90 <https://www.weps.org/sites/default/files/2021-09/CLOSING%20GENDER%20PAY%20GAPS.pdf>

**BOX 12****CATALYST CEO CHAMPIONS FOR CHANGE GLOBAL PROGRESS ON EQUAL PAY**

Equal pay audits (or reviews) are an important part of eliminating gender bias. In an effort to build allies for equal pay and women's career advancement, Catalyst created the "Catalyst CEO Champions For Change" which is a network of executives from their *Champions For Change* companies which represent more than 11 million employees and over \$3 trillion in revenue globally. They are a "community of more than 80 CEOs worldwide committed to advancing women across racial and ethnic groups into leadership roles and onto boards of directors."<sup>91</sup>

Research from their recent report, *This CEO Community Is Keeping and Advancing Their Best Talent. Are You?*, shows that the companies in the network "continue to outpace their global peers in pay equity measurement and action and advancing women into senior leadership."<sup>92</sup> 93% of Champion companies have conducted a pay equity review within the last three years, up from 82% in last year's survey, and 71% of Champion companies are adjusting pay based on the results.

## d. Inclusive Recruitment and Hiring

It is typical for people to have friends and spend time with people similar to themselves. In many cases, we use these networks to find candidates for jobs informally, however this can lead to a homogeneous pool of candidates. When men recommend other men for jobs, it maintains the status quo and perpetuates systemic inequalities. It reinforces power and dominance by men who then move into leadership positions, rather than looking beyond typical circles and using different outreach to reach women.

The language and approach used in the recruitment and hiring processes have also long been subject to biases that influence women's access to opportunities, ability to secure jobs and affects their long-term career path. Men can take leadership in reimagining how recruitment is done and in creating standard processes that eliminate bias and are used consistently with everyone as a policy, without exception. As in other areas, this requires elevating their level of self-awareness and team awareness about gender bias. The following checklists are designed to guide you through steps to develop objective tools for recruitment and hiring.

91 <https://www.catalyst.org/media-release/pay-equity-catalyst-ceo-champions-for-change-companies-outperform-global-peers/>

92 <https://www.catalyst.org/media-release/pay-equity-catalyst-ceo-champions-for-change-companies-outperform-global-peers/>

**TABLE 6****RECRUITMENT CHECKLIST FOR MALE ALLIES****GENDER-INCLUSIVE JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

	Have you evaluated job description verbiage for neutral, non-gender coded language? Studies show words like “dominate” and “competitive” attract more male applicants and words like “communal”, “patient”, and “interpersonal” attract more female candidates.
	Have you reviewed your job description to evaluate what activities are essential to the job and what is trainable?
	<p>Have you reviewed your job descriptions to replace personality traits with objective actions, specific experience, or required outcomes of the role? For example, instead of “dominant and competitive thinker”, focus on actions, like “drive sustained growth of brands”.</p> <p>Suggestions:          Prioritize experience that is required for the role rather than a lengthy wish list which can discourage talented women from applying to a role because they don't fit 100% of the desired criteria.</p> <p>Observe what skills current employees in the role demonstrate to determine what's necessary to include in the job description. Consider eliminating desired years of experience and instead, focusing on essential skills required.</p>

**GENDER-INCLUSIVE OUTREACH**

	Have you looked at your website, brochures and other external materials to make sure they reflect women?
	<p>Have you shared information about your employee resource groups (ERGs), if you have them?</p> <p>Suggestions:          Post photos (with permission) of your real employees, showcase employee testimonials from women about your company culture, and emphasize your company's commitment to gender equality. Consider quotes from men about this commitment and highlighting related programs.</p>
	What are your recruitment talent pipelines outside of your typical ones? Are you going to new places? Have you cultivated partnerships that will help feed women candidates to the company such as new graduates? Have you reached out to affinity groups such as women's groups?
	Are there opportunities for mid-to-senior women in the organization to speak to prospective candidates at events?

Licensed by Mine The Gap, [www.minethegap.co](http://www.minethegap.co)

**BOX 12**

“When Made by Many, a digital product design company, changed its job ad for a senior designer from looking for someone who was “unreasonably talented” and “driven” to someone who was “deeply excited by the opportunity of creating thoughtful digital products that have lasting impact,” the percentage of women in the application pool went up from 15% to 35%.”<sup>93</sup>

93 <https://hbr.org/2022/10/rooting-out-the-masculine-defaults-in-your-workplace>





TABLE 6

### HIRING CHECKLIST FOR MALE ALLIES



#### STANDARDIZE THE INTERVIEW PROCESS TO REMOVE BIAS.

	Do you use a standard evaluation rubric and assess candidates privately to avoid group influence?
	<p>Suggestion: Create an interview guide with the same questions in the same order and distribute to interview panel in advance of the interview. Make the guide electronic with space for the interviewer to type their notes and select their rating on a numerical scale for each question, allowing interviewers to privately evaluate the candidate.</p>
	Do interview questions assess a candidate's capabilities rather than experience?
	<p>Suggestion: Instead of asking "Have you done x, y, and z?", ask "How would you approach doing x, y, and z?". This tactic can open the door to candidates with diverse backgrounds.</p> <p>Assemble a diverse interview panel that has both visible (ethnicity, gender) and non-visible diversity (skills, education, experience) to reduce bias and create a more inclusive experience for candidates.</p> <p>Consider removing names and photos from applications or resumes to reduce bias.</p>

Licensed by Mine The Gap, [www.minethegap.co](http://www.minethegap.co)



## 7. RESOURCES

Additional research and tools can be found here:

[Meaning of Masculinities, NDI](#)

[Advancing Gender Equity in the Middle East Workforce, Bain & Co.](#)

[Men's Resource Center of West Michigan](#)

[Linchpin – Men, middle managers and gender inclusive leadership, Elizabeth Kelan](#)

[Self-Learning Booklet: Understanding Masculinities and Violence Against Women and Girls](#)

[Women at Work: Job Opportunities in the Middle East, McKinsey & Co.](#)

[MENA Women in Work Survey 2022: Young Women, Powerful Ambitions, PWC  
mencare Resources, mencare](#)

[Research Series: Engaging Men in Gender Initiatives, Catalyst](#)

## 8. GLOSSARY

**Bias** – A proclivity toward one thing over another.

**Gender** – Gender “A social and cultural construct, which distinguishes differences in the attributes of men and women, girls and boys, and accordingly refers to the roles and responsibilities of men and women. Gender-based roles and other attributes, therefore, change over time and vary with different cultural contexts. The concept of gender includes the expectations held about the characteristics, aptitudes and likely behaviours of both women and men (femininity and masculinity). This concept is useful in analyzing how commonly shared practices legitimize discrepancies between sexes.”<sup>94</sup>

**Gender diversity** “is a term that recognizes that many peoples’ preferences and self-expression fall outside commonly understood gender norms.”<sup>95</sup>

**Gender equality** “implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women’s issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development.”<sup>96</sup>

**Gender-equitable masculinities** – Gender-equitable masculinities are a set of attitudes and behaviors that challenge gender norms and promote gender equality.

**Gender gap** “refers to any disparity between women and men’s condition or position in society. It is often used to refer to a difference in average earnings between women and men, e.g. “gender pay gap.” However, gender gaps can be found in many areas, such as the four pillars that the World Economic Forum uses to calculate its Gender Gap Index, namely: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival and political.”

**Gender norms** “are ideas about how men and women should be and act. We internalize and learn these “rules” early in life. This sets-up a life-cycle of gender socialization and stereotyping. Put another way, gender norms are the standards and expectations to which gender identity generally conforms, within a range that defines a particular society, culture and community at that point in time.”<sup>97</sup>

**Implicit bias** – The attitude or internalized stereotypes that unconsciously affects our perceptions, decisions and actions.<sup>98</sup>

**Male Allies** – Men who take responsibility for creating a more gender equitable and inclusive workplace with intentionality are male allies. Male allies for gender equality work to change harmful gender stereotypes and power relations. Male allies recognize their own social privilege, eliminate sexism from their own behavior, and make active efforts to address gender inequities at home as well, leading by example.<sup>99</sup>

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94 <https://www.unicef.org/rosa/media/1761/file/Genderglossarytermsandconcepts.pdf>

95 Gender Spectrum, Understanding Gender

96 UN Women, OSAGI Gender Mainstreaming - Concepts and definitions

97 UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women. “Gender Equality, UN Coherence and You”.

98 Ncbi.nlm.nih.gov

99 UNDP Gender Journeys Course 2015

**Masculinities** – “A gender perspective, or way of analyzing the impact of gender on people’s opportunities, social roles and interactions, allows us to see that there is pressure on men and boys to perform and conform to specific roles. Thus, the term masculinity refers to the social meaning of manhood, which is constructed and defined socially, historically and politically, rather than being biologically driven...”<sup>100</sup>

**Stereotype** – “A stereotype is an oversimplified belief or idea about a group of people, and gender stereotypes are a type of stereotype that can be harmful to women and men.”<sup>101</sup>

**Microaggressions** – Microaggressions are everyday verbal, behavioral or environmental insults, putdowns, offensive behavior or invalidations that are indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalized group.<sup>102</sup>

**Patriarchal masculinities** – Patriarchal Masculinities are the ideas and practices that emphasize the superiority of masculinity over femininity and the authority and power of males over females. They put men at the center of normality and rationality.<sup>103</sup>

**Power** – “Involves the ability, skill or capacity to make decisions and take action; physical force or strength. The exercise of power is an important aspect of relationships. The more power a person has, the more choices are available to that person. People who have less power have fewer choices and are therefore more vulnerable to abuse. When women’s movements, feminist groups and development organizations help people acquire “power” individually and collectively, they do not necessarily understand power in its traditional sense of domination or “power over.” Instead, they have agreed that there are several kinds of power involved in the empowerment process. These four dimensions are called: power over, power to, power with and power from within.”<sup>104</sup>

**Inclusive** – “Including many different types of people, who are treated fairly and equally”<sup>105</sup>

**Care work** – “Work of looking after the physical, psychological, emotional and developmental needs of one or more other people. Care recipients are generally identified as infants, school-age children, people who are ill, persons with a disability, and elderly people.”<sup>106</sup>

**Flexible work** – “...Flexible work arrangements are alternate arrangements or schedules from the traditional working day and week. Employees may choose a different work schedule to meet personal or family needs. Alternatively, employers may initiate various schedules to meet their customer needs.”<sup>107</sup>

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100 UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women. “Gender Equality, UN Coherence and You”

101 <https://www.hrw.org/report/2022/08/08/racial-discrimination-united-states/human-rights-watch/aclu-joint-submission>

102 <https://healthmatters.nyp.org/what-to-know-about-microaggressions>

103 <https://www.coe.int/en/web/gender-matters/masculinities>

104 <https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/mod/glossary/view.php?id=36&mode&hook=ALL&sortkey&sortorder&fullsearch=0&page=-1>

105 <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/inclusive>

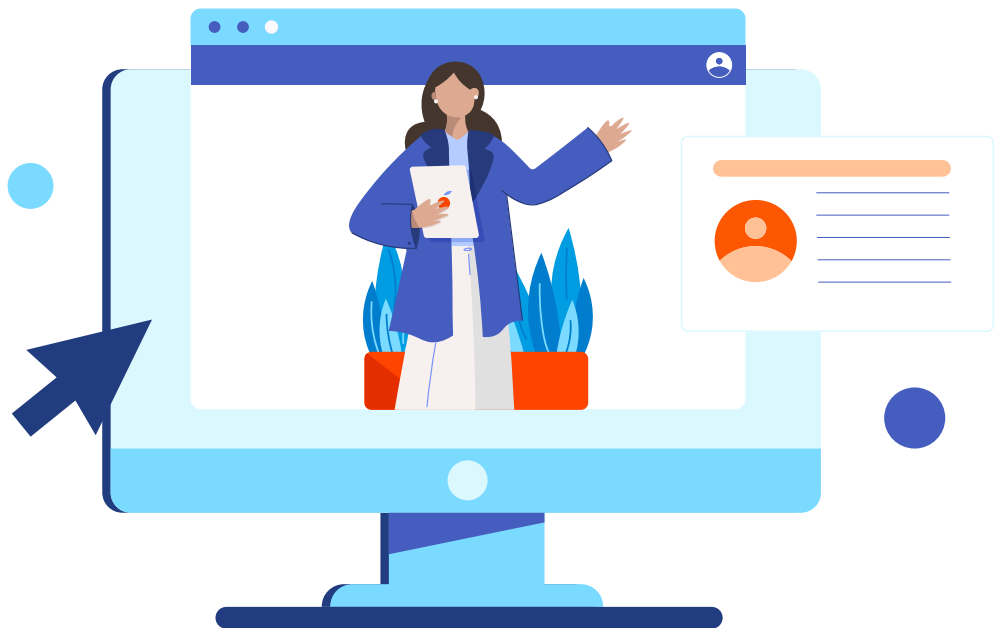
106 [https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1145?language\\_content\\_entity=en#:~:text=Description,to%20each%20of%20these%20categories](https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1145?language_content_entity=en#:~:text=Description,to%20each%20of%20these%20categories)

107 <https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/flexible.html>

## 9. ANNEX I

### **Bain & Co. Assessment Dimensions of the Gender Equity Opportunity Identifier**

As part of a 2022 study on gender equality in the workforce in the GCC, the consulting firm Bain & Co. created a holistic assessment tool “to better define what successful gender equity initiatives look like in practice by looking at organizations’ progress across five key pillars (see Figure 2): (1) establishing a DEI strategy, (2) creating women-focused training opportunities, (3) delivering equal compensation, (4) fostering inclusion, and (5) constructing clear corporate policies and external messaging related to gender equity. The framework for their assessment tool can be useful for identifying entry points for targeted male engagement across every core aspect of a company.<sup>108</sup>



108 <https://www.bain.com/insights/advancing-gender-equity-in-the-middle-east-workforce>

## ASSESSMENT DIMENSIONS OF THE GENDER EQUITY OPPORTUNITY IDENTIFIER



### 1. Strategy, vision, and leadership commitment

#### 1.1 Strategy and commitments

e.g., clear set of gender equity values, commitments, goals from leadership; goals are measurable, tracked

#### 1.2 Dedicated resources

e.g., dedicated lead to drive efforts; budget with sufficient resources

#### 1.3 Incentives linked with gender equity performance

e.g., employees' performance reviews, compensation tied to organization's gender equity goals

#### 1.4 Representation goals

e.g., women's representation across overall workforce, executive team; hiring, promotion rates

#### 1.5 Other tracked data

e.g., female applicant pipeline, reasons for voluntary exits

#### 1.6 Internal communication

e.g., goals and activities communicated to executive team/full workforce; in interactive Q&A sessions



### 2. Career journeys

#### 2.1 Recruitment

e.g., approaches to diversify talent source: partner with universities, clubs; remove bias in hiring; inclusive language; candidate slate includes women

#### 2.2 Onboarding

e.g., introduction to benefits, culture; access to buddy/affinity group for women

#### 2.3 Performance evaluation

e.g., consistent criteria for evaluation; input from various seniority levels

#### 2.4 Career pathways

e.g., clear skills-based pathways, requirements communicated to everyone

#### 2.5 Mentoring & sponsorship

e.g., formal programs, training for sponsors

#### 2.6 Upskilling & professional development

e.g., equal access to opportunities; tuition assistance

#### 2.7 Performance recognition & rewards

e.g., formal programs, clear criteria for rewards



### 3. Compensation and benefits parity for men and women

#### 3.1 Pay equity analysis

e.g., third-party analysis every 1-2 years, results shared with leadership/all employees

#### 3.2 Additional benefits

e.g., flexible work policies, maternity insurance coverage, childcare assistance, transportation benefits

#### 3.3 Supplementary leaves

e.g., paid leave for serious health conditions, parental leave, unpaid leave of absence

#### 3.4 Part-time work policies

e.g., formal programs, clear criteria for rewards



### 4. Workplace culture, inclusion, and belonging

#### 4.1 Employee sentiment & listening tools

e.g., focus groups, sentiment surveys; topics covered

#### 4.2 Affinity groups for women

e.g., presence of group, practices to support the group: budget, team

#### 4.3 Gender equity education & training

e.g., regular voluntary trainings; topics covered: bias, allyship

#### 4.4 Leadership sponsorship

e.g., participate in setting goals, host forums /discussions

#### 4.5 Employee feedback

e.g., regular feedback process, upward feedback

#### 4.6 Gender-related complaints/offenses

e.g., anonymous reporting portals, investigation team

#### 4.7 Recognition & celebration of diversity

e.g., field trips to cultural centers, discussion on women's perspectives



### 5. External community engagement and communication

#### 5.1 Engagement with customers/beneficiaries

e.g., female customers' inputs in product/service design, customer-facing employees trained on gender equity topics

#### 5.2 Practices to promote diverse suppliers

e.g., procure from women-owned businesses, build capabilities of women-owned suppliers

#### 5.3 Contribution to community causes

e.g., volunteering, donations; statement issuance, public advocacy on gender equity topics

#### 5.4 External reporting of gender equity metrics

e.g., share current and target workforce/ leadership representation data with general public or on website



