



# GENDER BALANCE **GUIDE**

Actions for UAE Organisations | September 2017







مجلس الإمارات للتوازن بين الجنسين  
UAE GENDER BALANCE COUNCIL



# **GENDER BALANCE GUIDE**

## **ACTIONS FOR UAE ORGANISATIONS**

AUTHOR:

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

PREPARED FOR:

UAE Gender Balance Council

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

About .....	06
President’s Message .....	07
Vice President’s Foreword .....	08
DSG - OECD Foreword .....	09
Preface .....	11
Acknowledgements .....	13
Background .....	15
Vision 2021 and Levels of Progress .....	18
1. Actions to implement commitment and oversight for gender balance.....	23
2. Actions to integrate gender into policies and programmes .....	27
3. Actions for engaging personnel towards gender balance .....	36
4. Actions to implement gender balance in leadership positions .....	39
5. Actions to implement gender sensitive communication .....	43
Summary .....	45
Conclusion .....	48
Annexes .....	49
Bibliography .....	61

## ABOUT THE UAE GENDER BALANCE COUNCIL

Established in 2015, the UAE Gender Balance Council is a federal entity responsible for developing and implementing the gender balance agenda in the United Arab Emirates. The Council is chaired by Her Highness Sheikha Manal bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, President of Dubai Women Establishment and wife of His Highness Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Presidential Affairs. The Council's objectives are to reduce the gender gap across all government sectors, enhance the UAE's ranking in global competitiveness reports on gender equality and achieve gender balance in decision-making positions, as well as promote the UAE's status as a benchmark for gender balance legislation. The Council launches pioneering initiatives and projects to enhance gender balance throughout the country and contribute to achieving its vision of positioning the UAE as a world model for gender balance.

## ABOUT THE OECD

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international body that promotes policies to improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world. It is made up of 35 member countries, a secretariat in Paris, and a committee, drawn from experts from government and other fields, for each work area covered by the Organisation. The OECD provides a forum in which governments can work together to share experiences and seek solutions to common problems. We collaborate with governments to understand what drives economic, social and environmental change. We measure productivity and global flows of trade and investment.





## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Gender balance has always been an integral part of the UAE's social fabric and continues to be a key priority for the future. The strong emphasis on promoting gender equality has been one of the strands of our nation's remarkable development success story, which has earned the world's respect and admiration. Today, we all enjoy the fruits of our country's efforts to enhance gender balance in various spheres of life.

As the UAE makes steady progress towards realising its vision of becoming one of the top 25 countries for gender equality by 2021, there naturally comes a need to develop clear procedures and adopt concrete action plans to entrench gender balance practices in the workplace. The Gender Balance Guide: Actions for UAE Organisations has been developed to meet this objective. It serves as a vital resource to advance gender balance across government and private sector institutions.

Aligned with the goals of the UAE Vision 2021, international standards and UAE legislation, the Gender Balance Guide sets out best practices and policies to embed gender balance more deeply into the culture of our organisations. It addresses key issues such as work conditions, merits and rights and responsibilities, with the aim of enhancing women's participation in society and their contribution to economic development.

There is no doubt that narrowing the gender gap will require the commitment of all sectors and a strong collaborative approach.

We are confident that the implementation of this guide will be instrumental in establishing the UAE as a gender balance leader. It will support the UAE's objective of providing women with equal career advancement opportunities, which will encourage them to take on leadership positions and empower them to be true partners in national development. Adopting the principles of the Gender Balance Guide will also play a crucial role in fulfilling the UAE's commitments to the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which in turn will advance the nation's position as a global role model for gender balance.

**Manal bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum**

President of the UAE Gender Balance Council

## VICE PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD

Created in collaboration with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Gender Balance Guide: Actions for UAE Organisations strongly reflects the UAE Gender Balance Council's efforts to build meaningful partnerships with global organisations working to advance gender matters.

The first initiative of its kind in the region, the Gender Balance Guide is based on many principles of the OECD Council's 2015 Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life (GEPL), the 2013 OECD Recommendation of the Council on Gender Equality in Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship, as well as the results of the OECD's 2010 report on gender balance across the UAE, and best practices of OECD member countries.

This guide provides clear frameworks and standards to help employers establish a supportive environment for gender balance. It addresses the gaps affecting both men and women, and provides an overview of the opportunities available to promote gender balance within an organisation's management, performance and policy structures. It also includes human resources management tools and good practice indicators, as well as policy guidelines, which can contribute to mapping a national approach that both government and private sector entities can use to actively instill gender balance across their organisations.

The Gender Balance Guide will help the UAE Gender Balance Council achieve its objectives of ensuring equal opportunities for both men and women to contribute to the country's sustainable development, while establishing the UAE as a role model for gender balance locally, regionally and internationally. This guide will also support the UAE in meeting gender balance indicator targets by helping entities to launch or develop initiatives that will drive improvement in this field.

We would like to thank the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development for their support on developing this guide as well as local public and private entities for their contributions, and all UAE Gender Balance Council members for their valuable input and support.

**Mona Ghanem Al Marri**

Vice President of the UAE Gender Balance Council

## DSG - OECD FOREWORD

Gender equality in public life is a global challenge. Although governments across the world have implemented a range of innovations to advance gender equality, significant gaps remain. Women still lag behind men in access to decision-making and leadership positions in public and economic life, from community to global levels. Gender equality thus remains elusive, particularly at the professional level in both the public and private sector.

However, maximising the use of talent in economy and society is critical for achieving inclusive growth and fostering national competitiveness. Equal access of both men and women to public and economic opportunities is part of a more equitable and sustainable economy and society. Indeed, achieving gender equality in the public sector is found to contribute to reduced inequality rates and considerably improved public confidence in government institutions. Greater empowerment of women in public leadership positions often leads to higher living standards plus positive developments in health, education and infrastructure, with potential long-term growth effects. In the private sector, greater gender equality is also found to increase the competitiveness of the labour market, boost productivity gains, and expand the talent pool from which employers can draw. In fact, in OECD countries, reducing the gender gap in employment in both the public and private sector was strongly correlated with an average GDP increase of 12% over 20 years.

To address this global challenge, the OECD adopted the 2013 Recommendation on Gender Equality in Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship as well as the 2015 Recommendation of the OECD Council on Gender Equality in Public Life. These tools, developed on the basis of extensive evidence and good practices in OECD and MENA countries, call on institutions to promote gender equality and enable gender diversity for better and more gender-responsive policies, programmes and services. In its effort to achieve gender equality at all levels, the OECD is aiming to work with governments, institutions and organisations to deepen the exchange of good practices and to provide expertise and tools to address the questions of gender balance and gender equality in a broader sense.

Importantly, gender equality has also been recognised as a priority issue for engagement with countries in the MENA region. The OECD-MENA Women in Government Platform aims to assist governments in the MENA region to empower women to participate fully in public life, strengthen legal frameworks and public institutions in promoting gender equality, and mainstream gender in policy, budget and service delivery processes.

This guide, prepared in collaboration with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Gender Balance Council, lays out the roadmap for the UAE and its organisations to harness the untapped potential that women represent. Building on OECD expertise, it provides a list of practical actions that can be taken by UAE organisations, in both the private and the public sectors, in order to achieve gender balance and work towards gender equality. These actions cover five distinct areas, namely commitment and oversight, policies and programmes, personnel engagement, leadership and communication. Because we know that changes will be incremental and that UAE organisations are diverse and will develop the implementation over time, the guide has designated these concrete actions along a three-level ladder (Bronze, Silver, Gold), deepening level after level commitment to gender balance. This allows leaders, managers and

employees to keep track of their progress and select the actions that are relevant and useful to their organisations in order to effectively produce positive outcomes. Although gender balance only represents one step towards gender equality, the implementation of these actions can help organisations become true gender champions and benefit from increased productivity, enhanced performance and improved competitiveness. Most importantly, it will set the path of a more inclusive and cohesive professional environment, where individuals thrive in their aspirations, count on each other to fight inequality, and look forward to their common future with the certainty that no one will be left behind.

Our overall aim at the OECD is to advance the global debate on gender equality and to support political leadership in taking the equality agenda forward. We would like to commend the UAE Gender Balance Council in taking a decisive step forward in making gender balance a reality.

**Mari Kiviniemi**

OECD Deputy Secretary General

## PREFACE

The Gender Balance Guide: Actions for UAE organisations serves as a tool for organisations across the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to help advance gender balance and work toward greater equality, to support the overall goals of the UAE's Gender Balance Council and more broadly, the UAE's Vision 2021. This guide highlights mechanisms that can be employed to accelerate more balanced representation within a variety of organisations in the UAE: government, semi-governmental enterprises and private companies. The term "Gender balance" used in this guide refers to "an equitable distribution of life's opportunities and resources between women and men, and/or the equal representation of women and men."

Closely tied to the realisation of gender balance too, is the concept of "gender equity" which refers to the fair treatment of women and men. To ensure fairness, "measures are often needed to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from otherwise operating as equals." Both gender equity and gender balance are foundational to gender equality which concretely requires "equality under the law, equality of opportunity, and equality of voice (the ability to influence and contribute to policy making)". Gender equality encompasses the concept of gender equity in terms of women's and men's fair and equal access to information, services, justice, resources, benefits and responsibilities (See 'Glossary' in Annex 8). Given the differences between men and women, equal treatment may not always result in equal outcomes. Consequently, there are occasions when special, affirmative action is needed to ensure everyone in an organisation — both men and women — can achieve their full potential. It also examines ways in which men and women can be equitably supported in the workplace so that everyone benefits from equal outcomes without gender discrimination.

This guide aims to support the UAE in working towards becoming a world model in gender balance in the workplace by achieving full, equitable participation of both women and men in UAE organisations, including in decision-making and leadership positions.

Working toward closing gender gaps is not new in the UAE. In fact, there are many examples of the UAE's achievements. According to the World Economic Forum's 2016 Gender Gap Report, the UAE is now one of the leading nations in terms of the educational attainment and health of women. Strong performance in these areas provides a solid foundation to address remaining challenges and gaps in other areas, and to leverage existing opportunities.

The actions discussed in this guide are premised on the OECD Council's 2015 Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life (GEPL). The Recommendation provides a comprehensive overview of how countries can accelerate gender equality and balance, and sustain gender initiatives based on input from member and partner countries (including some in the MENA region).

There is no single recipe for achieving gender balance. However, to support implementation, this guide proposes a roadmap for improvement, focusing on an incremental approach using levels of progress. A tailored approach enables organisations to select specific actions which are meaningful and useful to them and effectively chart a path toward change.

This guide offers a framework that can help policymakers and organisations within the UAE implement results-oriented, concrete actions to become gender champions. It also highlights linkages between the key concrete actions and the three levels of progress – Bronze, Silver and Gold – that mark levels of gender balance maturity and achievements.

This guide provides information on how the UAE Gender Balance Council can support organisations in reaching their gender equality targets. It also provides a description of the requirements that organisations must meet in order to qualify for the varying levels of gender balance certification.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In order to create this guide, it was essential to gather current information from UAE organisations and conduct extensive background research. In December 2016, 25 meetings were held in Dubai between the OECD, the UAE Gender Balance Council and organisations from different levels of government, private and state-owned companies, and academic institutions. The OECD and UAE Gender Balance Council are grateful for the contribution and participation of the organisations that were essential for the creation of this guide.

Relevant information was collected through interviews of the following UAE officials, experts and executives:

- Moza Al Aamri, Head of Family Development, Ministry of Community Development
- Aisha Al Ali, Director of Strategic Planning and Corporate Performance, Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government
- Ahlam Al Amiri, Payroll and Employee Relations Manager, Road and Transport Authority (RTA)
- Reem Al Awabed, Human Resource Director, Community Development Authority (CDA)
- Amal Al Azzam, Social Expert, Family Development Foundation
- Asma Al Baloushi, Executive Policy and Research, Federal Authority for Government Human Resources
- Dr. Kalthoum Al Baloushi, Director of Hospitals Administration, Ministry of Health
- Mansoor Al Baloushi, Chief Executive Strategic Planning, Ministry of Youth Affairs
- Dr. May Al Dabbagh, Assistant Professor of Social Research and Public Policy, New York University
- Shaikha Al Hadad, Chairperson ENOC Women Committee, ENOC
- Mona Al Hashmi, Researcher, Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood
- Aseela Al Kalbani, Family Relations Section Head, Family Development Foundation
- Ahlam Al Lamki, Director of Research and Development, General Women's Union (GWU)
- Jinan Al Madfai, Head of Human Resources, General Pension and Social Security Authority
- Ayesha Al Mansoori, Head of Women and Child Affairs Section, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
- Turkeya Al Marri, Audit Manager, General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs (GDRFA)
- Aisha Al Midfa, Manager – Programmes and Research, Dubai Foundation for Women and Children (DFWAC)
- Fatima Al Nuaimi, Conferences Specialist, Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies and Research
- Rashed Al Sadiq, HR BAM Finance and Accounting AP/HR Site Operations Leader, Procter and Gamble
- Ahmed Mohammed Jabir Al Suwaidi, Knowledge Specialist, Ministry of Youth Affairs
- Shaikha Al Shafoori, Head of Women Happiness Section, General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs (GDRFA)
- Muna Al Shehhi, Social Support Specialist, Family Development Foundation
- Nouf Al Suwaidi, Director of Strategy Planning and Performance, Community Development Authority (CDA)
- Rashid Al Tuneiji, Deputy to the Minister of Tolerance
- Reem Al Zarouni, Social Policy Expert, Ministry of Cabinet Affairs and Future
- Nasser Bin Kherbash, Divisional Vice President – HR Development and Customer Services, Emirates Airlines

- Fatima Deemas, Senior Manager – Internal Communication, Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA)
- Ali Hamdan Ahmed, Director of International Financial Organisations Department, Ministry of Finance
- Eman Harib, Acting Director of Social Security, Ministry of Community Development
- Saleh Hejleh, Corporate Development Advisor, Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood
- Maha Khamis, Chief Legal Consultations Researcher, Federal Authority for Government Human Resources
- Dr. Noorah Mohammed, Head of Professors, Zayed University
- Rasha Saleh, International Relations Expert, Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation
- Hala Salem, Advisor – Social Development, The Executive Council - Dubai
- Hessa Tahlak, Consultant, Ministry of Community Development

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- Ms. Rósa Guðrún Erlingsdóttir, Senior Advisor - Gender Equality, Ministry of Welfare, Iceland;
- Dr. Eun Kyung Kim, Ph.D., Research Fellow, Research Centre for Gender Equality Society, Korean Women's Development Institute; and
- Dr. Faye Schmidt, Senior Advisor, HRM and Organisational Excellence, Canada.

This project was led by Roula Sylla, Coordinator of the Gender Equality in Public Life – MENA Portfolio, OECD, and Elena Gentili, Coordinator of the Gender in Governance portfolio, OECD. Support was also provided by Fianna Jurdant, Senior Policy Analyst of the Corporate Affairs Division. Strategic direction was provided by Tatyana Teplova, Head of the Gender Policy Delivery Unit within the Public Governance Directorate. Martin Forst, Head of Governance Reviews and Partnership Division, and Rolf Alter, Director of the Public Governance Directorate, provided guidance throughout the project.

The guide greatly benefitted from the editorial support and drafting contributions of Kate Brooks, Addie Erwin and Guillaume Biganzoli, from the OECD Public Governance Directorate and Dr. Faye Schmidt from Organisational Excellence in Canada.

## BACKGROUND

### Why is gender balance important to the UAE?

The UAE's Vision 2021 reflects the commitment of the UAE government and leadership to improve gender balance as a means to achieving the empowerment and equal participation of both men and women.

The UAE's overall goal is "to be among the best countries in the world by 2021." Part of this means achieving full, equitable participation of both women and men in UAE organisations including in decision-making and leadership positions.

Vision 2021 is a call to action for building a cohesive society and preserved identity; a safe public and fair judiciary; a competitive knowledge economy; first rate education system; world class healthcare; and a sustainable environment and infrastructure. To support this, national key performance indicators (KPIs) define what is important by indicating what will be measured and what targets need to be achieved. Gender balance is a key component of two KPIs aimed at the promotion of a Cohesive Society and Preserved Identity (see *Annex 6*):

- 1. Social Cohesion Index:** this KPI concerns "the level of social cohesion among the people in the UAE based on the following themes: family cohesion, education and culture, equality, justice, security, participation and national belonging". Progress made toward gender balanced organisations can contribute to a sense of national belonging for both men and women. These factors can have a positive impact on the different themes identified under social cohesion.
- 2. Happiness Index:** This KPI is measured in terms of "an individual's assessment of their standards of living and life satisfaction, using a survey to assess the extent to which individuals feel happy and satisfied with their lives. It includes perspectives such as income level (GDP per capita), average healthy life expectancy, social support, generosity, absence of corruption, and freedom to make life choices". Gender balance enhances the support and happiness of all employees in the workplace and gives men and women the freedom to make decisions that direct their lives.

For monitoring gender balance, there are two kinds of indicators that play a role: (1) those touched up on in Vision 2021 (social cohesion and happiness indices); and (2) the newly created national Gender Balance Indicators (GBIs).

The focus of the GBIs is to advance and measure progress in three key areas:

1. Women in senior leadership positions
2. Women in specialised and technical fields
3. Building workplaces that support gender balance.

An indicator has been specified for each GBI area. Each indicator has a measurement range and shows levels of improvement for target subjects (*see Annex 7*).

The GBIs can and will be applied to both public and private sector organisations. They will first be implemented within Federal Authorities, next in Local Authorities, and lastly in private sector organisations. Leaders of each organisation will be responsible for reporting on progress made and hitting specific targets relative to each GBI and the organisation itself.

While women are over-represented in some occupational areas, their participation has lagged in many others and within leadership positions. Many women also face challenges in balancing work and family responsibilities. Addressing these types of issues is key to gender balance success. Women are often the central focus when working toward gender balance given their disproportionate representation in the workforce in comparison to men. Nevertheless, the inclusion of men, especially in classically female dominated fields (e.g. nursing, elementary education, social work etc.) is also an important part of ensuring gender balance. This is paramount to fostering a diverse, inclusive and competitive working environment.

As such, this guide seeks to support organisations to empower both men and women to actively participate in all sectors — including those that are traditionally female or male-dominated — in a more balanced manner.

By working on gender balance, the needs and priorities of all employees across the UAE can be met. Yet doing so requires robust policies, laws, programmes, services, practices, and measures that are gender sensitive. Ensuring the aforementioned will yield better organisations that are more capable of contributing to national development, as well as increased societal wellbeing.

## **To whom does this guide apply? How can it support enhanced gender balance across UAE organisations?**

This guide describes actions and approaches that can be taken to fully realise the UAE's national KPIs and GBIs. The recommendations in this guide apply to all staff, but should especially be employed by:

- Senior public officials such as Director Generals and Under Secretaries
- Chief Executive Officers, senior managers and board members
- Human Resource Managers in public and private institutions

This document is not a report. Rather, it is a practical guide for how the promotion of gender balance can be advanced across the UAE. It contains practical examples of methods and approaches undertaken by other countries to advance

gender balance. It also identifies possible resources that can be exploited in support of the UAE's own work and recommended approaches to attain gender balance in the UAE context.

There are five key levers for achieving gender balance:

1. Commitment and oversight
2. Integrating gender into policies and programmes (e.g. Human Resources Management policies, Gender Responsive Budgeting etc.)
3. Promoting gender sensitive engagement of personnel
4. Improving gender balance in leadership
5. Gender sensitive communication (*see Figure 1*).

The pre-requisite for addressing each of these areas is the elaboration of a strategy for gender parity in the workplace that can either be linked to or incorporated within an organisation's overall strategy. It should align with the national vision and strategy of the UAE and elaborate how it does so.

*Figure 1. Key levers for achieving gender balance*



### **An important note on using this guide**

Achieving gender balance results seeks to bring about meaningful organisational change which requires action in many areas. However, it is important to highlight that not all the recommended actions need to be undertaken by all organisations, nor do all actions have to be implemented simultaneously. What matters is a planned approach, tailored to the needs of each organisation, that delineates which actions should be taken and in what order.

## VISION 2021 AND LEVELS OF PROGRESS

Creating gender sensitive workplaces and harmonising strategies and policies to enable doing so undergirds two of the UAE's Vision 2021 goals: social cohesion and a competitive knowledge economy. Figure 2 highlights an incentive system to encourage organisations to promote gender balance and what measures should be taken.

Figure 2. Levels of progress



Organizations that engage in gender balance initiatives begin at the Bronze Level and may progress to Silver and Gold over time. Each level builds on the work of the previous in ways intended to support organisations as they take on more comprehensive and in-depth approaches to gender balance.

All organisations should strive to achieve the Bronze Level as a minimum commitment, and should also be encouraged and supported in their efforts to reach the Silver and Gold Levels. The following section describes what is required at each level and how to ensure that organisations are taking the right approach.

### LEVEL ONE - BRONZE: GENDER BALANCE COMMITMENT

The Bronze Level recognises organisations for launching work on gender balance. To achieve this recognition, organisations must demonstrate success in each of the following areas:

#### 1. Awareness Building

The first step in strengthening gender balance is building awareness among employees of what gender balance is, why it is important, and how the organisation can align with the national goals for gender balance by



the year 2021 and beyond. There are many ways of building awareness across an organisation: communication campaigns, inclusion of information on gender balance in orientation programmes for new employees, inclusion of gender balance in supervisory/managerial training and development programmes, organisation-based recognition programmes for gender balance activities, and so on.

Regardless of the method (or, ideally, methods) used, the key is for an organisation to be able to demonstrate that it has taken steps to build awareness of gender balance among employees, both men and women, across all levels of the organisation.

This awareness will increase focus on individual knowledge and acceptance of gender balance. There is also a second kind of awareness that Bronze Level organisations also need to demonstrate: awareness of gender balance strengths and opportunities, as well as the challenges and weaknesses.

Bronze Level organisations should show they have used the standard tools of environmental scanning to conduct an assessment that has helped them identify opportunities and challenges (i.e., areas where they can make changes that will advance gender balance). This organisational awareness will position them to advance to the next level.

## 2. Organisational Commitment to Gender Balance

In addition to building awareness, organisations at the Bronze Level need to show they are committed to promoting and improving gender balance. At a minimum, they will show their commitment by:

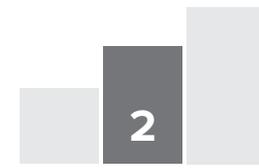
- Appointing a gender expert in a senior-level position as the organisation's gender balance champion. This person must not only be selected, but the organisation must also show that their champion is active (e.g. by producing a record of the actions the champion has taken to promote gender balance in the organisation).
- Taking concrete steps to advance gender balance. While organisations at this level are not required to have a Gender Balance Action Plan, Bronze Level organisations should be able to show they have used self-assessment to identify ways they can support gender balance. They should be able to demonstrate the steps they have taken to implement early, quick-win actions with at least one action or project fully implemented. The organisation should be able to show the extent to which this work has been resourced (supported with time, staff, etc.) and have data evidencing their results. For example, projects or actions might include measures to improve work-life balance by supporting flexible work options, establishing on-site child care, or instituting a mentorship programme to support female staff who wish to advance into senior leadership positions and so on.

## 3. Achievement of the National Gender Balance KPIs

Organisations at the Bronze Level will demonstrate they have procedures in place to monitor and report on each of the national gender related KPIs (see *Annex 6*).

## LEVEL TWO – SILVER: GENDER BALANCE DISTINCTION

Organisations can achieve the Silver Level by building on their Bronze Level success in more strategic, meaningful ways.



**SILVER LEVEL:**  
GENDER BALANCE DISTINCTION

### 1. Implementation of a Gender Balance Action Plan

At the Silver Level, organisations should have a fully developed gender balance action plan. This plan will identify comprehensive actions the organisation will take to promote gender balance and will incorporate all of

the elements of well-considered plans:

- Clear descriptions of what each action entails
- Why each action is important (i.e., its objectives)
- The milestones to be achieved during implementation
- Commitment to success
- Required resources (time, staff, funds, etc.)
- Needed support (i.e., change management, communication, stakeholder relationships)
- Measures to be used to assess progress.
- Delivery of the training needed to support actions in the plan will be incorporated.

While progress in implementing the action plan is the ultimate goal, to achieve the Silver Level, organisations need to show that they have created an action plan and undertaken gender balance initiatives beyond those implemented at the Bronze Level. Numerous actions are suggested in this guide and can be used to help organisations identify the kind of actions they can take.

### 2. Successful Use of Gender Impact Assessments (GIAs) for Policy and Programme Design

Silver Level organisations should undertake at least three Gender Impact Assessments (GIAs, discussed in later sections) of either policies or programmes. They should be able to demonstrate how the GIAs were conducted, what the findings were, and how the results were used to improve gender balance and foster a more supportive workplace.

### 3. Measurement of Progress

Silver Level organisations can demonstrate their progress through the data they collect and analyse. This will go beyond just measurement and reporting of national gender balance KPIs (required at the Bronze Level). These organisations will have more advanced measurement strategies in place and take clear steps to build in-house measurement capacity.

Silver Level organisations should collect and analyse data disaggregated by gender and conduct baseline assessments on gender balance. The data selected or collected should show the progress of gender balance across a continuum. For example, employee surveys or analysis of existing Human Resources data can be useful tools. Organisations should plan how data will be collected, monitored, and analysed over time, denoting data collection as a clear component of their Gender Balance Action Plan. Ideally, organisations should be able to show a plan for systematic and standardised monitoring of gender balance rather than refer to a one-off, point-in-time assessment (i.e., monitoring will be ongoing). Silver Level organisations should be able to demonstrate the validity of the data they collect or analyse, as well as how it will be used to support action.

### LEVEL THREE - GOLD: GENDER BALANCE EXCELLENCE

The Gold Level is for organisations deemed as best practice sites for gender balance. These organisations should have met the tenets of both the Bronze and Silver Levels and gone on to achieve success in each of the following:



**GOLD LEVEL:**  
GENDER BALANCE EXCELLENCE

#### 1. Implementation of Advanced Gender Balance Practices

Gold Level organisations will continue to improve and apply the Gender Balance Action Plan created at the Silver Level and show successful implementation of their plan. In addition, they should demonstrate how they will review their plan over time and expand the types of actions they will take in support of gender balance. While these actions may be in many areas, to achieve the Gold Level, organisations' accomplishments should include each the following:

- Demonstrate the consideration of gender balance in procurement by ensuring the vendors or service providers they select have a strong commitment to gender balance.
- Have a well-established approach to gender balance training with the ability to show completed training and development activities. These organisations can show how they are integrating gender balance across the organisation's learning programmes (e.g., incorporating it into managerial and leadership training, etc.).
- Demonstrate that they regularly conduct and act on the results of employee surveys using gender disaggregated data. They can show that they use this kind of employee input to build better workplaces that are supportive of both women and men.
- Have strong representation of both women and men in senior positions and an active plan to ensure that they have good representation of both in candidate pools and among employees that will be promoted to meet future needs (i.e., gender balance will be incorporated into all succession planning efforts).
- A system to receive, document, and act on gender balance issues identified by employees.

## 2. Successful Use of Gender Impact Assessment for Budgeting

While Silver Level organisations will demonstrate the use of GIAs for policies and programme designs, Gold Level organisations should go a step further. They can show how they are actively using GIAs in the creation of their budgets (i.e., they can demonstrate the steps taken and describe how GIAs impact the way they establish their budget and allocate resources).

## 3. Actions Taken to Support Other Organisations and Share Lessons Learned

Gold Level organisations are “best practice” organisations that have accomplished a significant level of success in their gender balance efforts and have demonstrated an outstanding level of commitment to it. Given this success, these organisations have the potential to be role models and sources of learning for other organisations.

This can be done in many ways:

- Presenting the organisation’s work on gender balance at conferences or other learning events
- Writing a case study on their gender balance work and making it available for the UAE Gender Balance Council to incorporate into learning materials for use across the UAE
- Being available for study tours by other organisations seeking to learn from their approaches
- Serving as a mentor to leaders who are facing challenges

By doing so, Gold Level organisations will move the UAE toward implementation of the OECD GEPL Recommendation which calls on organisations to “strengthen international co-operation through continuously sharing knowledge, lessons learned and good practices on gender equality and mainstreaming initiatives in public institutions.”

## 1. ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT COMMITMENT AND OVERSIGHT FOR GENDER BALANCE

Commitment and oversight mechanisms for gender balance refer to the actions organisations take to set standards, spell out responsibilities, and make sure staff members comply with them. Establishing these mechanisms is a fundamental part of organisational strategy. As a first step, leaders and their roles should be identified.

### Why is it important?

All leaders (supervisors, managers, senior leaders, executives, etc.) can support gender balance by embracing it in their day-to-day work. The messages they send to their staff, how they work to promote gender balance within their sphere of responsibility, the expectations they set for their employees, how they embrace gender balance in making key decisions, etc. can all be used to positively influence gender balance. Leaders need to ensure both vertical and horizontal coordination. Clear commitments should be established for leaders and managers at all levels.

To support effective commitment for gender balance, appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are essential. Monitoring gender balance is a continuing function that aims primarily to provide the management and main stakeholders with early indications of progress, or lack thereof, in the achievement of results related to overall organisational and national GBIs.

### LEVEL ONE - BRONZE

- Clarify the role(s) and responsibilities of each leader and decision maker within the organisation in supporting gender balance.

The important overall role leaders play in gender balance needs to be described in their job description, yearly objectives and evaluations. The OECD GEPL Recommendation encourages organisations to strive to “secure leadership and commit at the highest political level, at the appropriate level of government, to the development and implementation of a whole-of government strategy for effective gender equality and mainstreaming” and that they “establish an institutional framework to ensure the effective implementation, co-ordination and sustainability of the gender equality and mainstreaming strategy”.

- Leverage the contribution of all leaders and decision makers at all levels of the organisation by supporting them to work in a coordinated way.

To advance gender balance and gain better insight into gender based issues, the OECD GEPL Recommendation calls for:

- Clear, coordinated leadership roles and responsibilities
- The assignment of accountability
- Allocation of resources in support of gender balance
- Development of capacity to support gender balance activities (e.g., by appointing gender balance champions)

or focal points within organisations, building awareness, providing training, etc.)

- Collecting and using data that are disaggregated by gender.

#### **Other indicators:**

- Coordination of efforts across all points of senior leadership and ideally, across all national leadership entities.
- Encourage leaders to convey positive messages about gender balance and help understand its importance in communications and through leading by example.
- Integrate positive messages about gender balance into key communications within and across all organisations, including in the private sector.
- Create opportunities to showcase government leadership as a role model in this area.
- Ensure gender balance projects are adequately resourced (staff, budget, etc.) and coherently supported by decision makers.
- Ensure the organisation has procedures in place to monitor and report on each of the national gender balance KPIs.
- Ensure leaders of the organisation encourage staff to reflect on how they can play a role in advancing gender balance.

### **LEVEL TWO – SILVER**

- Ensure that gender balance is one of the objectives of the organisation's leaders and that it is part of their yearly evaluation.
- Incorporate gender balance into the requirements set for organisations (e.g., periodic review of policies to identify any gender-based discrimination or negative externalities for women or men, ensuring budgets support gender balance, reviewing submissions to Federal Entities to ensure gender balance has been addressed, requiring that statistics be disaggregated by gender, etc.).
- Build resilient gender balance champions within leadership by supporting leaders individually and at the organisational level.
- Support leaders, employees and officials in the organisation to understand how to work on gender balance and hold them accountable.
- Create Gender Balance Action Plans to define what will be done and celebrate progress as it is accomplished.
- Define clear indicators for implementing gender balance within the organisation that can be used to facilitate measurement and evaluation of progress.

## LEVEL THREE - GOLD

- Ensure action is taken by integrating gender balance into all strategic and operational plans and budgets developed and implemented by organisations in the UAE.
- Develop the organisation's capacity to deliver disaggregated data by gender, type of work and position.

Please refer to Annex 1 for self-assessment questions on Actions for commitment and oversight.

Figures 3 and 4 lay out the different actions and steps which need to be taken in order to effectively support commitment and oversight for gender balance.

Figure 3. Actions for commitment and oversight for gender balance

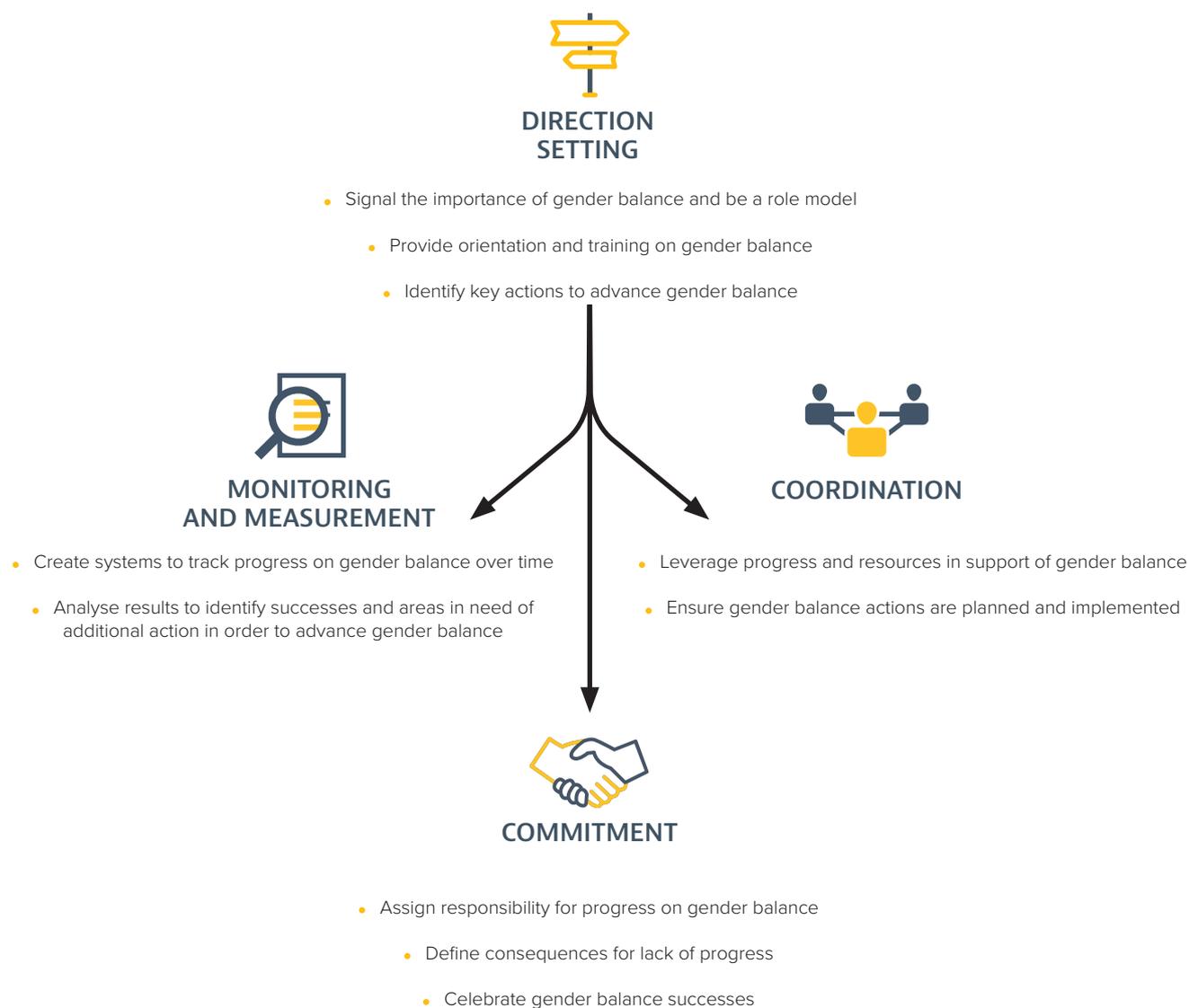


Figure 4. Steps to implement gender balance in an organisation



## GOOD PRACTICE

EQUITY AND INCLUSION LENS HANDBOOK  
CANADA

Leaders can benefit from reflecting on the kinds of questions posed by other countries striving towards gender balance in their organisations. In 2015, the Canada's City of Ottawa developed an "Equity and Inclusion Lens Handbook" that lists straightforward questions about inclusion, such as: Who is not included in the work you do? Who could contribute to this exclusion? What can you do differently to ensure inclusion? While these questions are used to promote reflection on all forms of diversity, they can also be applied to gender and used to promote reflective thinking on gender balance.

Based on this experience, the UAE Gender Balance Council could:

- Study and cascade questions relevant to the national gender balance indicators (GBIs) to the federal and local government authorities so that they can work more effectively toward achieving the national gender balance goals.
- Define mechanisms and techniques that can support organisations in the implementation process of initiatives that promote the gender balance agenda.

Organisations can support the above by:

- Adhering to the mechanisms and techniques defined by the UAE Gender Balance Council
- Promoting a workplace culture that embraces gender mechanisms by appointing internal staff to monitor progress

Source: City of Ottawa (2015), "Equity and Inclusion Lens Handbook," City of Ottawa and City for All Women Initiative (CAWI) 2nd ed., [http://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/documents.ottawa.ca/files/documents/EL\\_Lens\\_Handbook\\_2015\\_FINAL\\_EN\\_WEB\\_2.pdf](http://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/documents.ottawa.ca/files/documents/EL_Lens_Handbook_2015_FINAL_EN_WEB_2.pdf).

## 2. ACTIONS TO INTEGRATE GENDER CONSIDERATIONS INTO POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

Organisational policies and programmes should be analysed through a gender lens to address latent differences that may negatively impact men or women. This includes internal organisational policies, services and programmes for employees, as well as those that concern external clients and actors. Utilising a gender lens in everyday operations and planning ensures a gender-sensitive approach and development of policies, programmes and services that meet the distinct needs of women and men.

This should be done even for policies, services and programmes that are not explicitly related to gender.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Organisations articulate an array of external programmes and policies, as well as funding decisions that impact their employees and citizens.

While efforts are made to design external policies, programmes and budgets (government level legislation, regulations, and laws) that are fair, it is common that they still have differential impacts on men and women. Negative outcomes that may disproportionately affect one sex over the other are generally not intended, but result due to organisations not using tools like Gender Impact Assessments (GIAs) or gender disaggregated data to inform decisions. As such, it is of prime importance for both public and private organisations to systematically and periodically review their policies and programme designs through a gender lens. This will help to ensure an understanding of how they may impact male and female staff in advance of implementation. This applies whether the policy or programme is new or undergoing change.

The UAE Gender Balance Council could review existing legislation in the United Arab Emirates through a gender lens to identify problem areas and propose amendments that can help to narrow gender gaps. The UAE Gender Balance Council can also provide guidance to organisations in the process of reviewing existing policies, regulations and budgets or developing new ones.

A common approach in applying the gender lens is by using GIAs or gender-based analyses, which help incorporate a gender perspective into policies. GIAs can be defined as “the evaluation [...] of a law, policy or programme that makes it possible to identify, in a preventive way, the likelihood of a given decision having negative consequences for the state of equality between women and men.” The overall question one should seek to answer is: Does a policy reduce, maintain or increase the gender inequalities between women and men?

Ideally, this should be done at an early stage in the decision-making process so that policies can be changed — or even abandoned — if necessary. Another area where GIAs can be used is when setting budgets; a process is usually referred to as gender responsive budgeting (GRB).

## UTILISATION OF GIAs KOREA

Korea used GIAs in 2013 to increase the participation of women in the government's Information and Communications Technology Committee. Membership initially required ten years of experience, and after evaluation, was changed to five years. This still ensured that committee members were experienced while also offering greater opportunities for female appointments to the committee by expanding the pool of eligible women.

This is a good example of how Human Resource (HR) policies — and specifically recruitment criteria — can directly affect gender balance. Private companies and public organisations in the UAE may similarly analyse their HR regulations through a gender lens to make sure that they foster gender balance.

*Source: KWDI (2014), "For a Gender Equal Society: 100 Examples of Gender Impact Assessment," Korean Women's Development Institute.*

This section discusses actions which can be taken in two specific sectors: (1) Gender sensitive Human Resources Management and (2) Gender Responsive Budgeting.

### 2.1 Gender sensitive human resources management

Gender sensitive human resource management (HRM) refers to the administration of all policies, initiatives and programmes related to employees' career entry and evolution. This encompasses recruitment, promotion, training and pay while considering the difference in circumstances and outcomes that methods used may have depending on the recipient's gender.

For instance, organisations can use HRM policies such as parental leave, flexible work options, and family-friendly work policies to improve the ability of parents to balance their work and family obligations without having to exit the workforce.

#### Why is it important?

HRM's capacity to implement gender sensitive reforms and increase gender balance in the workplace is core to attaining the UAE's KPIs and GBIs. Ensuring the gender sensitivity of HRM practices across all levels sets the tone for an organisation. It has the effect of increasing the gender sensitivity of the organisation's overall policies, initiatives and programmes, in addition to those specifically targeting the improvement of gender balance in the workplace.

The ability to successfully balance work, family commitments and personal life is not only important to employees, but also for the well-being of all household members. Supportive and flexible working practices can have positive impacts on gender balance — especially for women.

## LEVEL ONE – BRONZE

- Encourage both mothers and fathers to take the parental leave time available to them and to use this time to be with their children.

Parental leave is long-term leave available to parents to allow them to take care of an infant or young child for a period of time. Parental leave in general and paternity leave in particular, is important for gender balance in the workplace. Nevertheless, the experience of some countries shows that simply having a leave policy is not enough. Steps will need to be taken to encourage parents to take the time available to them and to use this time with their children. Research by the Australian Institute for Family Studies found a positive relationship between fathers' involvement in early child care and their baby's cognitive development. Early involvement of both parents also has long-term effects on a child's academic performance in later years. Similarly, the OECD found that "Fathers who care for children early tend to stay more involved as children grow up. Where fathers participate more in childcare and family life, children enjoy higher cognitive and emotional outcomes and physical health. Additionally, fathers who engage more with their children tend to report greater life satisfaction and better physical and mental health than those who care for and interact less with their children.

### GOOD PRACTICE

#### ENDORSEMENT OF PARENTAL LEAVE KOREA

In Korea media celebrities, leaders and managers act as role models to encourage working parents to spend their parental leave with their children.

To change the cultural perception regarding women's traditional role in providing family care, male leaders in the UAE can serve as role-models and influence a shift in attitude. They can use social media to showcase their family involvement and sharing of family responsibilities with their partners. The portrayal of men as active fathers and equal partners is effective in encouraging fathers to use available paternity or parental leave. In the long-term, it buttresses the country's goals of social cohesion and happiness.

Currently, paternal leave is 3 days in the UAE. In order to encourage shared parental responsibility, increasing the length of paternity leave is strongly encouraged.

Ensuring a woman's smooth transition back to work following maternity leave is also of prime importance. An evaluation of female staff members' experience in this regard should be undertaken to identify any barriers they may face and to inform effective remedies to eliminate those barriers.

- Incorporate gender-disaggregated data collection within the strategic framework of the monitoring and evaluation processes of the organisation

Data collected on employees should include the raw numbers and percentages of men and women who serve on boards or in executive positions, as well as the level and position of all employees. Further information should also track the progression of female and male staff in their careers including salary levels, promotions, and their participation in any leadership or HRM-related programmes.

## LEVEL TWO – SILVER

- Provide gender champions and employees in lower levels of the organisation adequate time and opportunity to participate in the review of HRM related policies, workplace management, and agenda-setting.
- Create family-friendly policies

Providing on-site childcare for either fathers and mothers, special rooms for nursing mothers, and special parking spaces for pregnant employees can make workplaces more family-friendly. Organisations should also support the application of leave for elderly or disabled family members.

- Train staff to use GIAs to review how policies and programme designs impact men and women.
- Provide options and implement flexible working hours and methods.

There are many ways of making work flexible: part-time, variable starting and ending times (i.e., non-standard work hours), working from home (flexible work environments), phased retirement, the ability to work additional hours and bank payment for unused holiday time in order to take paid leave at a later date (called temporary work deferral), and job sharing.

Giving women and men options on where and when they work can support greater participation in the workforce and create a better environment for families. Given that flexible work options are more often used by female staff as a way of managing familial responsibilities, flexible work conditions can sometimes lead to gender imbalance and women being disadvantaged (e.g., in terms of promotions, career progression, earnings and training) unless they are properly supported.

### GOOD PRACTICE

#### WORKPLACE FLEXIBILITY CANADA

“Leading Workplace Strategies” is a public initiative in the Canadian Province of British Columbia (BC) that has been created to encourage workplace flexibility. It categorises employees into three types:

- Resident employees: These employees work a minimum of 60% of their time on a computer and need a specialised, dedicated workspace to support what they do.
- Internally mobile employees: These employees need space in an office, but not one that is dedicated to them.
- Externally mobile employees: These employees only need to spend short periods of time in an office as they can work from home or some other external location. For this group, mobile technologies are their main point of contact.

The UAE’s federal laws on Labour and Human Resources can integrate provisions that create the possibility for workers to benefit from flexible forms of employment such as teleworking. The Human Resources Federal Decree Law of 2008 (as amended in 2016) guarantees that “The Chairman of a Federal entity may make necessary arrangements for flexible working hours as needed and within the limits of normal working hours per week.”

Adding legal provisions and internal regulations to this effect may increase workers’ productivity and help male and female employees maintain a work-life balance that supports them in successfully managing their occupational and familial responsibilities.

*Source: Province of British Columbia. Workpoint – Rethinking How and Where We Work in the BC Public Service.*

Furthermore, giving employees the freedom to work from home is an approach that can help increase productivity, and improve employee morale. For example, an employee with a sick child may still be able to contribute some productive work hours if given the option of working from home in order to be close to his or her child. It can also have a positive impact on the environment when fewer people are required to commute to their workplace.

- Limiting the use of work-related technology outside of working hours

Men and women who have family responsibilities can feel torn between time spent at work and at home. As both sets of responsibilities increase — they may sacrifice career opportunities and progression to afford time with family, or may do the opposite by sacrificing time with family to meet the demands of work. This is especially the case for those in leadership or managerial roles, which come with increased responsibilities and often require long hours. In today's fast paced technological environment — it can be hard to “unplug” and there is a looming expectation that employees should answer emails, calls and requests right away — even after normal work hours. This reality can make it difficult for employees to balance work and family life. Instituting uniform measures to set boundaries and provide some protection for employees can reduce pressure and enable parents (especially women who tend to be primary caregivers) to stay within the workforce and comfortably accept career promotion. In many OECD countries, there are policies and regulations that forbid meetings after a certain time (e.g. 6p.m.).

## GOOD PRACTICE

### WORK-LIFE BALANCE FRANCE

In France, a “right to disconnect” law was passed at the start of 2017 with an aim to help employees cope with work-related stress and balance work-life balance. The law requires organisations to create policies banning work emails, texts and messages outside of normal working hours.

In a similar vein, both public and private organisations in the UAE could benefit from adopting a similar approach to encourage greater work flexibility. The UAE could review its HRM policies to assess the degree of their family-friendliness and explore ways for providing better support for both male and female employees, at all hierarchical levels. This should be done with the support of leaders in each sector and organisation.

*Source: Wang, A. (January 2, 2017). The 'right to disconnect': French employees can now legally ignore work emails outside of office hours. National Post.*

- Ensure sound, comprehensive, disaggregated HRM data is available to support operational and strategic planning within the organisation.

Updated, quality data is important for information sharing, training and development in support of gender balance. It will be useful to collect data on the number and types of sessions HRM holds (conferences, lectures, training programmes, etc.) and the gender of the presenters, trainers, and participants to understand the needs and capacities of both male and female employees and any limits they face. Data can also inform future HRM initiatives.

## LEVEL THREE - GOLD

- Incorporate gender balance into plans that direct HRM activities, policies and programmes within the organisation (including training, hiring, etc.).

All HRM departments within organisations need to ensure gender balance is a key component of their activities. HRM must operate in a way where services, policies and support provided to employees allows both men and women to fully participate in the workplace and have equal opportunities to succeed and build their individual careers.

- Incorporate gender balance into the organisation's HRM programmes and policies by conducting Gender Impact Assessments (GIAs).

HRM professionals have another key role: monitoring what is done within the practice of HRM to ensure the messages sent and the tools used are effective in supporting both men and women and that there are no unintended negative consequences, messages, or biases.

HRM professionals need to conduct GIAs on HRM policies such as: flexible work options, parental leave, and others discussed earlier in this guide, which are areas that warrant HRM's involvement – in their creation, review, implementation, and evaluation. GIAs should not be limited to policies specifically geared toward support of gender balance, but regularise the process to examine other policies too – like direct hiring, promotions, pay, etc.

- Report on and strengthen use of work-life balance measures for male and female staff.

Figure 5. Incorporating gender balance into the organisation's HRM programmes



### Who is responsible within the organisation?

Leaders and HRM officials within the organisation are responsible for ensuring that selected staff receive the training needed to effectively conduct GIAs.

All high-level leaders and HRM staff in each organisation will need to ensure that those tasked with conducting programme evaluations and audits of policies and their implementation are trained on GIAs. Further, that they are endowed with the necessary resources to extend their analysis to cover gender and determine to what extent gender balance has been achieved. They also need to ensure that baseline gender disaggregated data is gathered in advance of a policy or programme's implementation so there is a basis for comparison when the programme is evaluated at a later date.

## DID YOU KNOW?

In 2016 the UAE extended maternity leave from 60 days to 90 days in the public sector.



In a survey conducted by the UAE Federal Authority for Government Human Resources on the needs of working women respondents revealed that they favoured more time for paternity leave. The current three-day allowance for fathers was favoured by only 11.51% with 42.46% preferring one week, 14.96% seeing 10 days as appropriate, and 31.06% in favour of two weeks.



Source: UAE Federal Authority for Government Human Resources. Brief of Survey of the Needs of Women Working in the Federal Government Sector

## 2.2 Gender Responsive Budgeting

The OECD defines gender responsive budgeting (GRB) as the integration of “a clear gender perspective within the overall context of the budgetary process, through the use of special processes and analytical tools, with a view to promoting gender-responsive policies”.

GRB can be applied at multiple levels. While the term usually refers to the public sector-wide process of resource allocation, it begins from organisational practices that incorporate a gender lens into the budgetary decisions related to allocating resources to programmes that have an impact on both male and female staff. GRB can be considered as the process of conceiving, planning, approving, executing, monitoring, analysing and auditing budgets in a gender sensitive way. It involves analysis of actual expenditure and revenue (of public or private sector institutions) and actual or anticipated impact on women and girls as compared to men and boys.

For UAE organisations to succeed in meeting their gender balance goal, they will need to dedicate resources. These resources must include time as well as funds, all of which need to be part of the regular budgeting process.

### Why is it important?

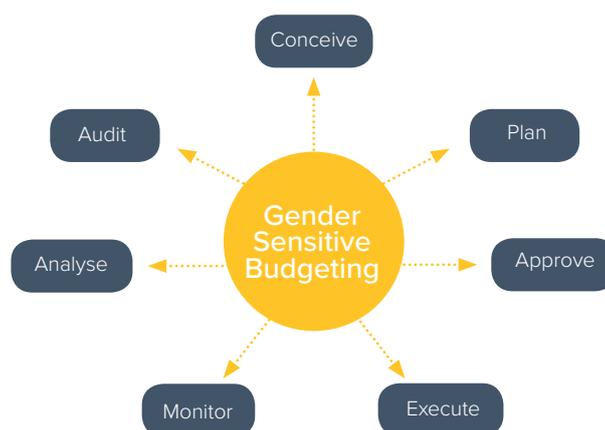
The OECD recognised the importance of allocating budget for gender balance initiatives in its GEPL Recommendation by calling for organisations to “mainstream gender equality in the design, development, implementation and evaluation of relevant public policies and budgets” and by “considering integration of a gender perspective in all

phases of the budget cycle, as appropriate, so that transparency regarding gender-relevant resource allocation decisions is maximised”.

There are two key ways of approaching GRB, both of which are important for all organisations:

1. **Dedicated budget allocations to correct gender imbalance:** Gender-related actions such as strategies to build awareness, develop skills, and change the way organisations operate require dedicated budget allocations if they are to succeed. An added benefit is that these allocations send a signal that gender balance is important.
2. **Incorporating gender considerations into the creation and use of budgets:** In addition to allocations dedicated to supporting work on the gender agenda, gender balance should be taken into consideration when creating budgets. Allocations within budgets have a significant impact on society as they determine the types of programmes and development services that will be offered. Ensuring that budget allocations do not create unintended consequences for female and male employees is an important way of advancing gender balance.

Figure 6. The process of gender responsive budgeting



## GOOD PRACTICE

### ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC BUDGETS FOR GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING UNITED KINGDOM

In the United Kingdom the not-for-profit Women’s Budget Group analyses public budgets. The process used for budget analysis is described by the group as:

- Analysing any form of public expenditure, or method of raising public money, from a gender perspective; and
- Identifying the implications and impacts for women and girls as compared to men and boys.

This will involve examining the impact of policy on individuals, as well as households and include consideration of impact on unpaid as well as paid work.

This analysis includes looking at how expenditures on programmes and services impact women and men to ensure that equitable, fair allocations are in place for everyone regardless of location, socio-economic status or gender.

As is the case for the use of GIAs in policy and programme design, using GIAs in budgeting and the creation and reporting process on GRBs are areas where organisations will need to implement training for budgeting officials and staff so the required skills and knowledge are developed. The UAE Gender Balance Council can play a central role in supporting the provision of this training.

Source: Women’s Budget Group (November 17, 2016). *What is gender budgeting?*

## LEVEL THREE - GOLD

- Ensure gender balance is supported in the organisation's budgets through:
  1. Allocating funds dedicated to the support of gender balance in the budget
  2. Considering gender balance in the creation and use of budgets (e.g. by utilising GIAs).

*Please refer to Annex 2 for self-assessment questions on integrating gender into policies and programmes.*

GIAs need to be a key part in all phases of budgeting: planning, allocation, spending, evaluations, and audits. Management and human resources officials should work with those responsible for budgeting and financial management to ensure GIAs are being utilised.

### DID YOU KNOW?

In 2016 the OECD conducted a Gender Budgeting Survey of member countries. The results offer rich insights into each country's gender budgeting practices. The survey has shown that the vast majority of OECD countries who apply GRB use tools such as ex-ante GIAs (conducted before the finalisation of budgets), gender indicators, regular monitoring, and reporting to parliament. This is done in order to assess the eventual gender impact of budgets.

Some countries have been able to show concrete impacts of GRB activities. For instance, in Iceland, GRB tools helped identify and avert tax proposals that would create a bigger gender income gap. In Mexico, GRB has appropriated funds for new scholarship programmes for women to pursue careers in classically male-dominated fields. However, significant barriers remain in a widespread application of GRB, mainly due to the limited availability of gender-disaggregated data.

*Source: OECD (2016). Gender budgeting in OECD countries. 37th Annual Meeting of OECD Senior Budget Officials, Stockholm, 9-10 June.*

### GOOD PRACTICE

#### NATIONAL FINANCE ACT ON GRB KOREA

In Korea GRB is a legislated requirement. The National Finance Act (2006) instituted a requirement for gender budgets and gender balance reports to be submitted from the 2010 fiscal year onward. The Act requires the government to draw up gender budget statements which analyse the budget's impact on women and men in advance, encompassing both spending and revenues. The government is required to produce a gender balance sheet, which assesses "whether the budget benefits women and men equally and remedies gender discrimination".

Government authorities in the UAE can follow this example. GRB techniques can be used to evaluate the needs of men and women within the society. The goals set via national KPIs that are related to gender can be incorporated in the process. After setting a gender-responsive budget, the government can assess its success by using existing KPIs and potentially other gender indicators to measure how GRB has contributed to fostering gender balance and gender equality, and more broadly, whether it impacted men and women equitably.

*Source: Chakraborty, L., International Monetary Fund (July, 2016). Asia: A Survey of Gender Budgeting Efforts. IMF Working Paper.*

### 3. ACTIONS FOR ENGAGING PERSONNEL TOWARDS GENDER BALANCE

Engaging employees in a gender balance agenda requires cultivating their ability and intent to actively improve organisational practice and support the implementation of gender balance initiatives. Employees and gender balance champions in particular, are a great resource for the mobilisation of gender balance initiatives and can provide valid ideas for their implementation and improvement. They can promote their organisation's gender agenda by monitoring progress and adapting national objectives into their specific organizational context. Actions can be specifically tailored to their organisation, needs and conditions. The internal acceptance of gender balance inside an organisation by its employees can be a determining factor on how quickly progress is made.

#### Why is it important?

Though the engagement of senior leadership is critical to the achievement of the UAE's gender balance goals, leaders and managers cannot be successful on their own – they need the involvement of their employees.

By building a broad base of awareness on the importance of gender balance in the workplace, providing employees with key messages and support for change, and providing ways for them to be involved, individual employees can contribute and help create an organisational culture that places a high value on gender balance. “Bottom-up buy-in” and support for gender balance can be an effective strategy, especially in areas where changing attitudes and beliefs will help promote gender balance.

The active participation of employees could involve them taking a role in policy-making, for instance, by proposing policy options as an advanced two-way relationship that builds trust, buy-in, and support based on the principle of partnership.

#### LEVEL ONE – BRONZE

- Identify opportunities to support a bottom-up approach: involving employees across the organisation to build awareness and contribute to promoting gender balance.

#### LEVEL TWO – SILVER

- Appoint a gender balance champion (a stand-alone appointment or integrated into the role of the Happiness and Positivity CEO or HRM personnel) and support them in fulfilling their role.

Another strategy that can spread involvement in gender balance is the appointment, training and provision of resources and tools to an employee (or a committee of employees) appointed to serve as a gender balance champion(s) within

**DID YOU KNOW?**

The appointment of gender balance champions aligns with the OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life (GEPL) which calls for governments (and private organisations) to ensure “the capacity and resources of public institutions to integrate gender equality perspectives in their activities, for example, by identifying gender equality focal points across governmental bodies”.

The UAE already has a successful example of this approach in the public sector where an environment of happiness and positivity is supported by officers called Happiness and Positivity CEOs . These CEOs are champions for the success of the happiness and positivity initiatives within their organisations. They could be well-placed to incorporate the duties of a gender balance champion in to their role.

Learn more about what other countries have done to support gender balance training by consulting the following resources:

- UN Women Training Centre (April, 2016). Compendium of Good Practices in Training for Gender Equality.
- European Institute for Gender Equality (2012). Mapping of gender training policies and practices in the European Union – Summary of findings.
- OECD (2017 - on going). OECD Toolkit for Gender Equality in Governance: Implementing the 2015 OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life.

the organisation. These champions will need to have a dual reporting link to the head of their organisation and to the UAE Gender Balance Council. This will keep their work anchored to the needs of their organisation and aligned with the overarching directions set by the UAE Gender Balance Council.

These local champions can promote gender balance and provide local expertise. They can support their organisation in setting directions, monitoring progress and achieving gender balance by using their roles to support the implementation of national approaches in ways that are adapted to each organisation’s different needs.

**LEVEL THREE - GOLD**

- Conduct regular surveys to understand the perspective of employees across the organisation.

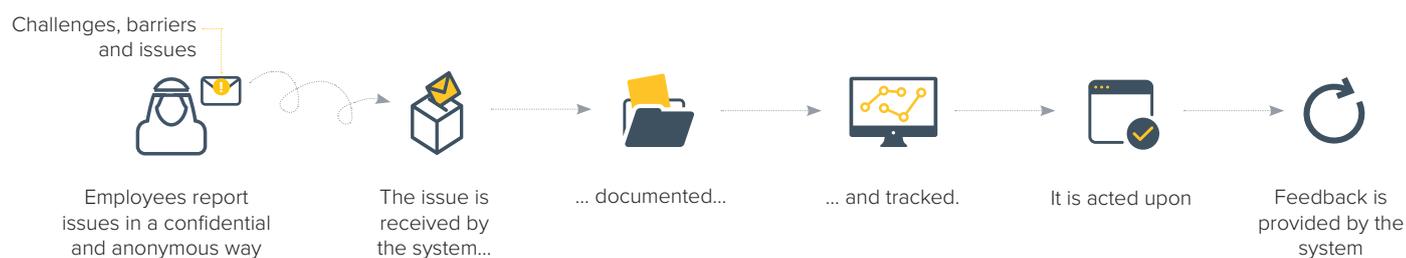
HRM should play a role in conducting and integrating the results of employee surveys in strategic organisational plans and initiatives. Organisations benefit from understanding employee perceptions. This requires regular, comprehensive surveys where results are: (1) presented in easy to understand reports, and (2) supported by improved planning and action. HRM professionals need to play a key role in every aspect of employee surveying.

- Create a system to receive, document, and act on gender balance issues identified by employees.

For gender balance to move forward, employees need to be able to report issues and challenges. HRM professionals need to create a system for receiving, documenting, tracking, and acting on gender balance issues identified by employees. This should include instances where barriers are encountered, where outcomes for female and male employees are not equal, where discrimination or harassment has been experienced, and so on. To be successful, the system must be confidential and ensure the anonymity of individuals bringing forward issues. In addition to receiving, reviewing, and acting on the input, the system must provide feedback, so that those raising the issues and senior leaders are aware of what has been done to address each issue.

- Create adequate consultation processes with employees and gender champions.

Figure 7. System to address gender balance issues identified by employees



## Who is responsible within the organisation?

It is essential that gender balance is not seen to be “owned” by HRM. Instead, progress on gender balance must be the responsibility of leaders in all organisations with HRM professionals making key contributions (e.g., by designing, implementing, supporting, advising on, monitoring, and evaluating many of the strategies that will be needed). Leaders and human resource managers should communicate the will to encourage employee participation and identify leaders within a given organisation.

## GOOD PRACTICE

### REPORTING GENDER BALANCE ISSUES IN ORGANISATIONS UNITED STATES

In the US, the Equal Employment and Opportunity Commission (EEOC) enforces laws addressing all forms of discrimination, including gender. It has established a process for employees to confidentially file formal complaints and for complaints to be addressed (e.g., hearings, mediation, etc.).

Organisations in the UAE can adopt a similar approach to address any gender-related barriers, issues or challenges employees may face in the workplace. Providing a safe space to report problems and mechanisms to remedy them can be an effective platform for both female and male employees to raise and address workplace concerns related to gender balance.

The creation of this platform will also align with the OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life (GEPL) which advises that organisations “establish or maintain effective, independent, impartial and efficient complaint and appeal mechanisms to protect rights for gender equality and consider complaints in an efficient, competent and impartial manner”.

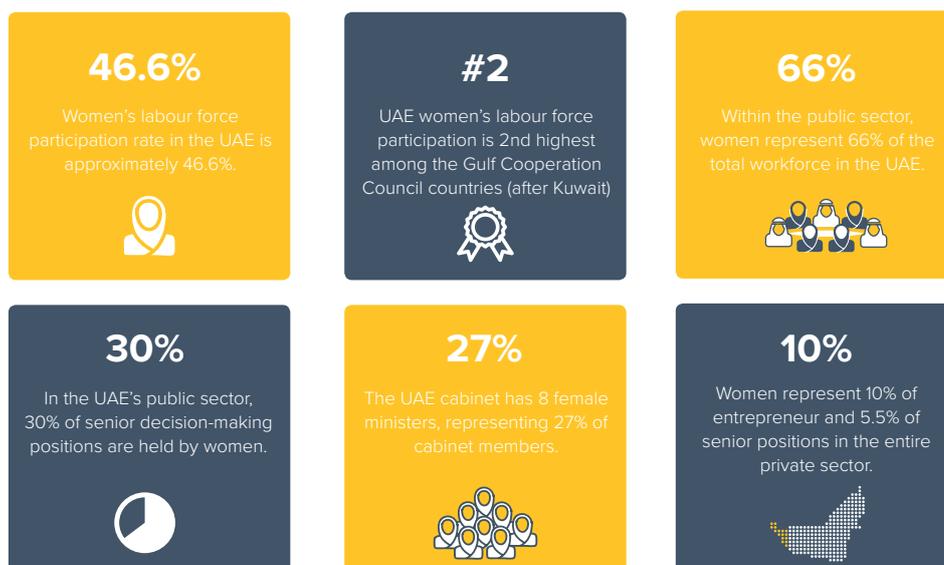
*Source: U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission*

Please refer to Annex 3 for self-assessment questions on gender sensitive human resources management.

## 4. ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT GENDER BALANCE IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Gender balance in leadership positions means enabling both men and women's equal access to top posts. This includes correcting imbalances in the participation of female and male staff in leadership roles at executive, board, and managerial levels. For the public sector, this would also include appointed positions at the ministerial level.

### DID YOU KNOW?



Sources: "UAE Gender Balance Council Concludes Participation in UN's 'Commission on the Status of Women' Meetings," March 2017. Retrieved from Emirates News Agency.

United Arab Emirates Government Website, Information and Services, Social Affairs – Women. <https://government.ae/en/information-and-services/social-affairs/women>

Kemp, L., Madsen, S. R., and El-Saidi, M. (2013). "The current state of female leadership in the United Arab Emirates." *Journal of Global Responsibility*, 4(1), p.105.

### Why is it important?

When male and female employees are included in all types of senior positions (boards, political positions, organisational leadership, and senior management) the perspectives of both genders are more easily incorporated into decision-making, and the different needs of both are more readily considered.

Having female staff in leadership positions is important for increasing diversity, innovation and competitiveness at the senior levels of management. At the same time, it has been demonstrated that female employees in leadership roles can promote good institutional practices to improve overall gender equality, increase awareness about gender balance and increase the probability that services delivered by the organisation are gender sensitive.

The representation of women in leadership positions continues to be a challenge for the public and private sector in the UAE as is the case in many other nations. Providing role-models of successful men and women showcases the capacity of both to make a difference and contribute to an organisation's success.

## LEVEL ONE - BRONZE

- Use social media and a range of other media outlets to create a positive image of successful women within organisations.

Social media and other forms of media (e.g. magazines, news, and television) may impact how women who pursue senior positions are perceived. Negative reactions (including public criticism) sometimes occur when women seek positions of power or try to negotiate for a promotion as these actions may be perceived as counter to how women are expected to act.

## LEVEL TWO - SILVER

- Monitor the organisation's senior positions using disaggregated data to track the numbers of male and female staff in leadership positions.

Traditional norms generally view men as better decision-makers who are more able to handle stress, making them better equipped to deal with the requirements of leadership. This can systematically exclude women from networking, mentorship and promotion opportunities. In addition, a tendency to hire those who are most like oneself can lead to a continuation of men hiring more men to fill senior positions as opposed to hiring women.

- Use Gender Impact Assessments (GIAs) to identify where policies may be negatively impacting the advancement of female employees within the organisation.

Family obligations can affect women in two ways: (1) require them to be absent more often than men to care for children or elderly or disabled family members; and (2) make it harder for them to respond to work issues that arise after hours. Both can create an image of female staff being less reliable or available to meet the demands of leadership.

At the same time, leave to address family obligations can remove women from the workplace for extended periods of time that may result in the depreciation of their skills and knowledge. This can make it harder for them to re-enter at the level they were previously at and harder to advance into more senior level positions.

Organisations can adopt training and mentorship programmes that help female employees accommodate to work demands on their return from parental, maternity, or family-related leave. Guaranteeing such support to mothers-to-be is one of many examples of actions that can help retain female employees and the experience and talent needed within the organisation.

Fathers are also valuable partners and play an important role in promoting the advancement of female leadership. Indeed, involving fathers in sharing family responsibilities and encouraging them to make greater use of paternal leaves and flexible work options helps alleviate the negative effects family obligations can have for women and supports their re-entry and advancement.

## GOOD PRACTICE

DEVELOPING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL  
NEW ZEALAND

In New Zealand, an independent professional body called Governance New Zealand, Inc. supports improvements in governance (through advocacy, professional development, etc.). In 2015, they established an association called "Women on Boards New Zealand" with a vision to "achieve equality by elevating women in governance and leadership". The mission of Women on Boards New Zealand is to "educate, develop, connect and support women in their governance and leadership journey". This is achieved through several key commitments:

"In support of growing the presence of women on the boards of New Zealand, and to bring through the next generation of board-ready women, Governance New Zealand is committed to:

- Promoting the Women on Boards brand via the Governance New Zealand website and marketing collateral;
- Providing professional support related to topical gender diversity issues through national events;
- Hosting an annual Women on Boards Conference and Women in Governance Awards event."

The UAE's Gender Balance Council shares many goals with the "Women on Boards New Zealand" association. This might serve as a good model for the UAE Gender Balance Council and the public and private sectors in the UAE to draw from in order to achieve greater gender balance in the upper echelons of power.

In the UAE the Women in Boards initiative was launched by the Dubai Women Establishment (a local government entity) in 2014 to identify policy barriers restricting women's representation at senior levels and to promote gender diversity in boardrooms. The initiative has been further strengthened through collaboration with local entities to pursue training, mentorship, and competencies that qualify women to be board members.

Organisations can support their female senior executives by organising training programmes aimed at providing leadership and career development training to women to promote female access to leadership positions.

*Source: Women on Boards New Zealand A Division of Governance New Zealand*

## LEVEL THREE - GOLD

- Identify barriers to female staff advancement and participation in leadership positions.

Some barriers to female employees' advancement are not easily identified. The difficulties some female staff experience when it comes to promotion can include gender norms that encourage women to place a high value on modesty, which can cause them to exclude themselves from promotion or cower away from asking for a salary increase. As a result, they may not put themselves forward for leadership positions even when qualified.

- Encourage female staff to participate in local and national networks of senior women in order to support their advancement.

There is a lack of strong networks of senior women leaders who can mentor and support female employees as they enter senior positions and help address the isolation some women feel. Creating networks or encouraging women to join existing networks to help them advance is an important step to accompanying women along their career development.

- Establish career development initiatives to help female employees develop the skills, knowledge and experience needed to advance.
- Use succession planning to support the advancement of female employees within the organisation.

## Who is responsible within the organisation?

All leaders and management level officials are responsible for ensuring that recruitment and promotion practices can help support the advancement of female staff into merit-based and appointee level leadership positions.

### DID YOU KNOW?

In the UAE, there are two areas where positive steps have been taken to support gender balance and where continued efforts will help the UAE achieve its national goal:

**Policing:** While policing is often viewed as a male dominated profession, the UAE Ministry of the Interior has encouraged more women to join law enforcement. Examples of how this was achieved include: (1) the formation of an Emirates Women Police Association; and (2) a 2016 conference exploring the role of women in policing.

**Courts:** In the Ministry of Justice, a law was changed in 2008 to allow women to become federal judges and prosecutors.

*Note: This information was obtained during the interviews conducted with UAE officials.*

*Please refer to Annex 4 for self-assessment questions implementing gender balance in leadership positions.*

## 5. ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT GENDER SENSITIVE COMMUNICATION

Gender sensitive communication refers to all types of external and internal messaging (public statements, internal communications including meetings and intra-office dialogue) that address issues and deliver messages in a way that considers the differences perceived by both genders, in an effort to ensure inclusiveness, diversity and maintain integrity.

### Why is it important?

The importance of strong communications cannot be over-emphasised – it is one of the most significant aspects of progress on gender balance within UAE organisations. Communication needs to be a central consideration in all aspects of what is done in support of gender balance.

Communication is pivotal as it plays a key role in building awareness and helps employees embrace the changes that are required. It is vital to equipping employees with the skills and knowledge they need. Overall, communication is a way of building broad support for gender balance which in turn helps to ingrain or institutionalise the concept within UAE organisations.

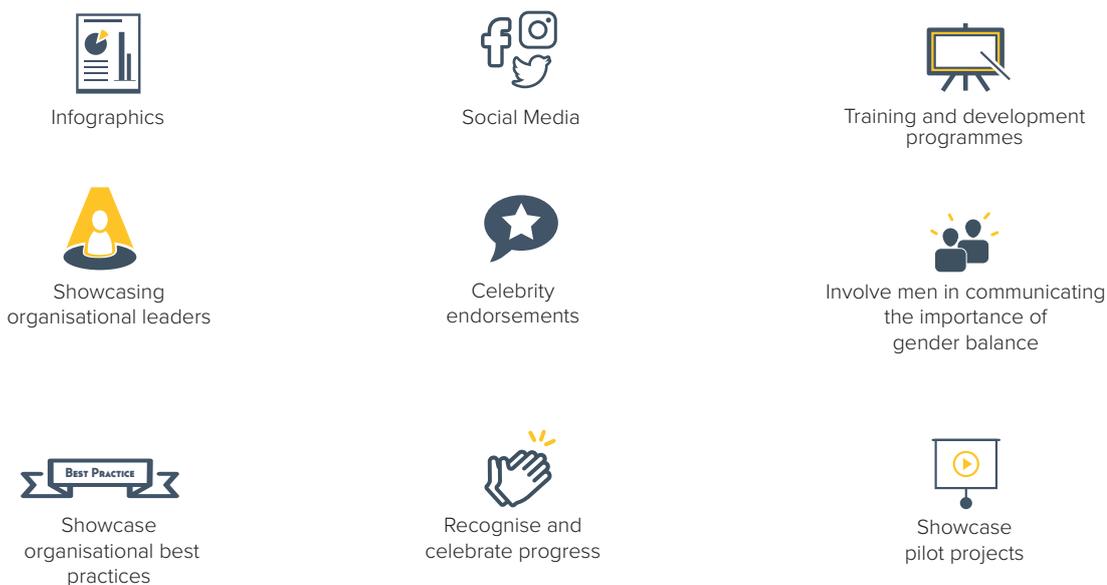
### LEVEL ONE - BRONZE

- Build awareness of gender balance and commitment to action by communicating: (1) what it is, (2) why it is important, and (3) the support for it by government leaders using tools such as:
  - Infographics
  - Social media
  - Training and development programmes offered within the organisation as part of employee orientation
  - Continuously showcasing organisational leaders as role models for gender balance
  - Celebrity endorsements
  - Involving men in communicating about the importance of gender balance
  - Showcasing organisational best practices
  - Recognising and celebrating progress
  - Showcasing pilot projects

### LEVEL TWO - SILVER

- Provide training for colleagues to improve perceptions of gender balance.
- Encourage review of all high-level statements and media related activities by a designated gender champion or HRM representative to ensure a gender balanced communication strategy.

Figure 8. Tools to build awareness on gender balance



## LEVEL THREE - GOLD

- Share successful gender balance initiatives with relevant stakeholders (such as senior public servants and cabinet offices, board members, stockholders, managers and employees, etc.).

### Who is responsible within the organisation?

All levels of leadership are needed to support communication efforts. The Human Resources division should take an active role in leading by example, and providing training on gender sensitive communications to improve progress.

## GOOD PRACTICE

### SUPPORTING THE CONCEPT OF GENDER BALANCE THROUGH CONFERENCES ICELAND

In 2015, Iceland and Suriname co-convened a two-day “Barbershop Conference” at the United Nations’ Headquarters in New York. The event focused on ways of changing how men and boys think and talk about gender equality. It encouraged men to join in on discussions about gender equality, women’s empowerment, and become active champions for change.

The Barbershop Conference aimed at reflecting the casual setting in which men get their hair cut, while delving deeper into gender stereotypes perpetuated by social norms, and helping dispel the fallacy that women and girls cannot be equals in the economic, social or political life. The event also highlighted that while historically women and girls have led the fight against gender inequality, discrimination and gender-based violence, the recent UN HeforShe initiative encourages men and boys to stand at forefront of the global discourse.

This example illustrates the importance of engaging men in communicating support for gender balance. Involving men in the promotion of gender balance in the UAE and serving as ambassadors for the cause can drive progress and encourage acceptance by other men of the importance of women’s empowerment and parity in leadership.

*Source: UN News Centre (2015). UN ‘barbershop’ conference aims to dispel stereotypes, promote gender equality.*

## SUMMARY

This guide outlines a preliminary set of recommendations for the improvement of gender balance in the workplace in line with the UAE's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Gender Balance Indicators (GBIs).

The directions highlighted in this guide are based on international best practices, standards, and recommendations drawing heavily on the work of the OECD as the main framework for action. By acting on what is suggested, the UAE can take advantage of the learnings and experiences of other nations and use this to advance toward attainment of the KPI and GBI goals. The results will benefit both men and women in organisations across the UAE.

Achieving goals set in the KPIs and GBIs is key to ensuring that both men and women can participate fully in the workforce, make a strong contribution to the success of the UAE, and realise their personal potential. Those fashioning workplace policies should thus be mindful to create a supportive and friendly workplace for all employees.

To further highlight what is recommended in this guide, the following summarises the suggestions that have been presented. This is not intended to capture all of the detailed actions that are described in the full guide. Instead, this is a summary of actions and recommendations that will help the UAE to successfully enhance gender balance in all organisations. By working to achieve success in all five of these areas and sub-areas, the UAE will be well positioned to become a gender balance world leader.

### **1. Take action to encourage commitment and oversight mechanisms to achieve gender balance objectives**

An important first action when establishing commitment and oversight mechanisms is to clearly identify who the leaders are and what role(s) they need to play. Clear commitments should be established for leaders and managers at all levels based on the KPIs and the GBIs. Overall, this area is composed of four major components:

1. Creating a roadmap for change by identifying areas in need of improvement and signalling the importance of gender balance for the organisation
2. Coordinating and allocating necessary resources to ensure effective implementation of gender balance programmes
3. Demonstrating commitment to assigning clear responsibility for progress on gender balance with defined outcomes in case of failures and successes
4. Tracking progress through monitoring and measurement, adjusting existing programmes and initiatives as needed.

### **2. Integrate gender into policies and programmes**

In both the public and private sectors, policies and programmes shape the way organisations operate. Given their importance, it is useful to examine how they can be used to promote or hinder gender balance.

There are two types of policies to consider:

1. Policies specific to gender balance (e.g., parental leave, work-life balance policies)
2. General policies for all other activities and programmes. These policies can be analysed — using GIA tools — to make sure that they promote gender balance and are inclusive to both men and women. In terms of programme design, organisations need to consider how programmes are influenced by policies and how specific elements in the design of programmes might impact people differently based on their gender. As such, actions need to be taken in order to support gender balance within human resource management (HRM) and when setting budgets.

#### *a. Actions to implement Gender Sensitive Human Resources Management*

Gender-sensitive HRM practices, including tools to implement gender sensitive reforms and increase gender balance in the workplace, are core to attain the UAE's KPIs and GBIs. For instance, organisations can use HRM policies such as parental leave, flexible work options, and family-friendly work policies to enable employees to balance their work and family obligations without having to exit the workforce. These types of measures can have positive effects on gender balance. Increasing the gender sensitivity of HRM practices across all levels within an organisation will also positively influence overarching organisational policies, initiatives and programmes.

#### *b. Actions to implement Gender Responsive Budgeting*

Just as budgets constitute the foundation for the sustainability of any given organisation, they are central to reaching gender balance objectives. Supporting gender balance in budgeting relies on three components which entail:

1. Dedicating a specific budget to gender balance programmes
2. Integrating gender issues and aspects in the elaboration of organisation-wide budgets
3. Ensuring that the allocation of resources (e.g. employees' salaries) reflect principles of gender balance (i.e. equal pay).

### **3. Promote the engagement of personnel in gender sensitive policies and the gender balance agenda**

HRM professionals need to proactively seek out ways of integrating gender balance across the services and employee support they provide in order to fully engage personnel in achieving gender balance within the organisation. In some instances, this will require activities specifically focused on gender balance (e.g., providing training courses on conducting GIA, creating succession plans targeting the advancement of female staff into leadership positions, developing strategies to encourage men to enter areas they have not traditionally worked in, etc.). In other instances, HRM's approach should focus on integrating gender balance into existing activities (e.g., incorporating gender balance awareness building into new employee orientation programmes and management training and development programmes).

The engagement of the staff in the promotion of gender balance can also be achieved through the creation of gender balance champions within the organisation in coordination with the UAE Gender Balance Council in order to foster good practice and provide essential expertise and motivation.

#### **4. Foster gender balance in leadership positions**

Achieving effective gender balance through a top-down approach is complementary to personnel engagement (bottom-up approach) and remains an essential tool in fostering organisational transformation. Visible and substantial commitments at the leadership level often trickle down to the lower levels and promote change throughout any given organisation. Using GIAs can help identify and correct possible barriers or obstacles that male or female employees may face in their career advancement. In sectors and within leadership positions where women are generally underrepresented, initiatives such as career development trainings and female professional networks should be adopted in order to help women advance and promote gender balanced leadership.

#### **5. Encourage gender sensitive communication**

The importance of strong communications cannot be over-emphasised – it is one of the most significant aspects of making progress on gender balance. Using a gender lens to screen communications and ensure messages conveyed are gender sensitive and non-discriminatory can positively impact the national and organisational gender agenda. This should be done for all forms of official communication (websites, statements, reports, advertisements, social media, etc.). Gender sensitive communication also entails sharing good practices and initiatives between the relevant actors and stakeholders in a given organisation, sector or country.

## CONCLUSION

This guide is a live document that should to be developed and improved over time. While the objective of creating a gender sensitive workplace in public and private sector organisations in the UAE remains steadfast, the implementation process and methods used can differ from one organisation to another. The type, size and purview of an organisation will determine the most suitable course for implementing a gender balance agenda, what actions are taken and in what order.

For this, each ministry or company is invited to take the time to discover this guide, create ownership and find the most useful and effective ways to apply it, with the possibility of it periodically developing and improving actions and planning.

The UAE Gender Balance Council serves as a partner to organisations in the elaboration and monitoring process of individual goals and encourages the use of national and international resources to achieve gender balance. The Council promotes dialogue on the concept of gender balance and what organisations need to do to achieve the gender goals they set. As a starting point, this guide serves as a fundamental resource for organisations in the implementation of gender balance strategies and plays a major role in aligning the actual implementation of these strategies to the UAE government's 2021 Vision, national KPIs and GBIs.

# ANNEXES

## SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

### ANNEX 1

#### ARE WE DOING “COMMITMENT AND OVERSIGHT FOR GENDER IN UAE ORGANISATIONS” RIGHT?

Actions to be implemented	Questions to consider
<p>Clarify the role(s) and responsibilities of each leader and decision maker</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does each leader and manager within the organisation know their roles and responsibilities in achieving better gender balance?</li> <li>Is this mentioned in their job description and do they report on this?</li> </ul>
<p>Leverage the contribution of all leaders and decision makers at all levels</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How are leaders at every level brought together to exchange information, share best practices, and work collaboratively to resolve challenges in implementing gender balance?</li> <li>How are the actions taken by all leaders in an organisation supported to ensure that there is no duplication of effort and the that the impact of all actions is enhanced?</li> </ul>
<p>Encourage leaders to convey positive messages about gender balance to lead by example</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What messages are leaders sending about gender balance?</li> <li>How are different communication channels being used to demonstrate leadership commitment to gender balance?</li> </ul>
<p>Integrate positive messages about gender balance into key communications within organisations and create opportunities to showcase leaders as role models</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What messages are leaders sending that help employees understand how they can contribute to improving gender balance?</li> <li>What steps have leaders taken to lead by example and visibly demonstrate commitment to gender balance?</li> </ul>
<p>Support projects that advance gender balance (staff, budgets and other resources)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What gender balance projects are underway or planned? How are these projects supported?</li> <li>Does each gender balance project have a clear project plan that identifies who is accountable for success, what the key deliverables are, and what resources will be assigned to the project?</li> </ul>
<p>Ensure there are procedures to monitor and report on each of the KPIs and GBIs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is the organisation doing to support its achievement of the national gender balance KPIs?</li> <li>How is progress toward the UAE National KPIs measured?</li> <li>Where have challenges in meeting the KPIs been encountered and what is being done to address them?</li> <li>How is the organisation reporting on its progress on each KPI?</li> <li>What can be done to further the organisation’s progress on each KPI?</li> </ul>
<p>Ensure that gender balance is a leadership objective and that it is part of yearly evaluations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How are gender balance objectives communicated to leaders in the organisation?</li> <li>How are these objectives incorporated into yearly evaluations of those in leadership positions?</li> </ul>

BRONZE LEVEL

SILVER LEVEL	Support and build strong gender balance leadership at every level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the organisation doing to help leaders at all levels understand what gender balance is and why it is important?</li> <li>• How are leaders being helped to identify actions they can take within their workplace to advance gender balance?</li> </ul>
	Support leaders and employees in the organisation to understand how to work on gender balance and accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What steps are being taken to help leaders and employees in the organisation see how they can contribute to improvements in gender balance? How are they held accountable for making a contribution?</li> <li>• How are they involved in gender balance projects within their organisation?</li> </ul>
	Create gender balance action plans to clearly define how initiatives will be executed and objectives met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will the organisation create a gender balance action plan? Who needs to be involved? What support is needed to create and implement an efficient plan?</li> <li>• Does the organisation's plan address the training employees will need in order to implement the actions?</li> <li>• How will the plan be rolled out and supported over time?</li> <li>• Does the plan clearly state what needs to be achieved and what milestones will guide the work?</li> <li>• Does the plan clearly assign accountability for progress and explain how and when progress will be monitored?</li> <li>• Does the plan describe all of the required resources?</li> <li>• Has the organisation identified challenges that might be faced and how they will be addressed?</li> <li>• Has the organisation identified where it has strengths and opportunities that can be used to support its progress?</li> <li>• How is the organisation's gender balance action plan monitored? How is learning from experience promoted?</li> </ul>
	Celebrate progress as it is accomplished	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is done to celebrate or reward those who achieve their objectives and support those who have not?</li> <li>• How is success celebrated?</li> </ul>
	Define clear indicators for implementing gender balance that can be used to facilitate measurement and evaluate progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have indicators of gender balance progress been identified for each project?</li> <li>• How are the indicators measured and reported?</li> <li>• How are project sponsors supported in taking corrective action when the desired levels of progress are not achieved? How is their success celebrated?</li> </ul>
	Integrate gender balance into organisational strategic and operational plans and budgets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are the plans for gender balance projects incorporated into the organisation's strategic plans, operational plans, and budgets?</li> <li>• Is gender balance a key priority in the organisation's strategic plan?</li> </ul>
GOLD LEVEL		

## ANNEX 2

## ARE WE DOING “GENDER INCLUSION IN POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES” RIGHT?

	Actions to be implemented	Questions to consider
BRONZE LEVEL	Encourage both mothers and fathers to take the parental leave time available to them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the use of parental leave monitored within the organisation with gender disaggregated data?</li> <li>What messages can be sent to encourage all parents to take the time they are entitled to and use this time to be with their children?</li> <li>How can senior leaders show their support for the involvement of men in caring for their children?</li> </ul>
	Incorporate gender-disaggregated data collection within the strategic framework of monitoring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is gender-disaggregated data collection a requirement within the monitoring and evaluation framework of the institution or company?</li> <li>Are there mechanisms to collect and track the progress of employees over the course of their career?</li> </ul>
SILVER LEVEL	Provide adequate time and notification to gender champions and employees involved in bottom up approaches so that they can participate in reviewing HRM related and workplace management agenda items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do gender balance champions and employees involved in bottom up approaches have appropriate notice to participate in reviewing HRM related and workplace management agenda items?</li> <li>Are the gender balance champions systematically included and informed ahead of these meetings?</li> </ul>
	Create family-friendly policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What gender balance supportive policies are currently being implemented in your organisation?</li> <li>What other organisational policies will help build a more supportive, family-friendly workplace?</li> <li>How can the organisation build on the national and Emirate level policies to enhance its workplaces and promote gender balance?</li> </ul>
	Train staff to use Gender Impact Assessments (GIAs) to review policies and programme designs that may have differential impacts on male and female staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How is the organisation building the required internal capacity to conduct GIAs?</li> <li>What policies or programmes will the organisation apply GIAs to?</li> <li>How will GIAs be implemented: Who will lead (i.e., sponsor or oversee) the GIAs efforts? How will approaches to the use of GIAs be documented? How will the GIAs findings be documented?</li> <li>How will the organisation demonstrate that it is using GIA results to improve gender balance?</li> </ul>
	Ensure availability of comprehensive disaggregated HRM data to support operational and strategic planning within the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What measurement strategies will help the organisation understand the current state of gender balance and identify where improvements are needed?</li> <li>Does the organisation have a plan for gender balance measurement? Who is responsible for its success?</li> <li>How can the organisation build the internal capacity it needs to support gender balance measurement and provide the HRM data it needs?</li> </ul>
	Provide options and implement flexible working hours and methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are flexible working hours and alternative work arrangements available for all levels of employees?</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are employees aware and supported in their decisions to use flexible work options?</li> <li>• Do line managers understand and support demands for flexible work options?</li> </ul>
GOLD LEVEL	<b>Incorporate gender balance into plans that direct HRM activities, policies and programmes within the organisation (including training, hiring, etc.)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are HRM professionals supported to understand their role in supporting gender balance within the organisation? What has been done to build their awareness of gender balance?</li> <li>• How is gender balance integrated into HRM planning? Is achieving gender balance a strategic priority for HRM professionals within the organisation?</li> <li>• Is gender balance integrated into training programmes?</li> </ul>
	<b>Incorporate gender balance into the organisation's HRM programmes and policies by applying GIAs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are GIAs being used to assess the organisation's HRM policies and programmes?</li> <li>• How are HRM professionals supported to understand when, where and why GIAs should be used? How are they supported to respond to the results of GIAs?</li> <li>• Are those involved in policy and programme design and review receiving GIA training?</li> </ul>
	<b>Report and increase use of work-life balance measures for male and female staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is HRM keeping records of those who are utilising family leave policies?</li> <li>• Do male and female employees have equal access to and make use of family leave policies?</li> <li>• Where relevant, does HRM support initiatives to encourage the acceptance and use of family leave?</li> </ul>
	<b>Ensure gender balance is supported in the organisation's budgets through the application of GIA to budgets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What has been budgeted in support of gender balance activities? How is the use of these resources tracked and reported over time?</li> <li>• How are GIAs applied to the creation and review of organisational budgets?</li> <li>• What has been learnt through the results of GIAs and how can these learnings be applied to the next budget?</li> </ul>

## ANNEX 3

ARE WE DOING “GENDER SENSITIVE PERSONNEL ENGAGEMENT” RIGHT?	
	ARE WE DOING “GENDER SENSITIVE PERSONNEL ENGAGEMENT” RIGHT?
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<b>BRONZE LEVEL</b>	<p><b>Actions to be implemented</b></p> <p>Identify opportunities to support a bottom-up approach to build employees’ awareness and make contributions to promoting gender balance</p> <p><b>Questions to consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What actions have been taken to build awareness about gender balance?</li> <li>• How does the organisation know that all employees understand what gender balance is and why it is important to them, to their organisation, and to the nation?</li> <li>• What actions have been taken to involve employees in gender balance improvements?</li> </ul>
<b>SILVER LEVEL</b>	<p><b>Actions to be implemented</b></p> <p>Appoint a gender balance champion and support them in fulfilling their role</p> <p><b>Questions to consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a gender balance champion been appointed within the organisation? If not, what steps will be taken to make an appointment?</li> <li>• How is the organisation’s gender balance champion supported? What resources do they need? What training will support them in their work?</li> <li>• What actions has the organisation’s gender balance champion undertaken? What impact did these actions have? How does the organisation know these actions have had a positive impact (e.g., what data demonstrates this impact)?</li> </ul>
<b>GOLD LEVEL</b>	<p><b>Actions to be implemented</b></p> <p>Conduct regular surveys to understand the perspective of employees across the organisation</p> <p><b>Questions to consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How is the organisation surveying employees to understand their perceptions of the workplace? How often is surveying done?</li> <li>• Is the data disaggregated by gender?</li> <li>• How is the organisation acting on its results and how will these actions impact gender balance?</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Actions to be implemented</b></p> <p>Create a system to receive, document, and address gender balance issues identified by employees</p> <p><b>Questions to consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What system has been developed to support employees in the resolution of issues related to gender balance?</li> <li>• Are employees aware of this system and how to use it? How are employees supported in their use of the system?</li> <li>• How is confidentiality maintained throughout all steps in the system?</li> <li>• How are leaders of the organisation informed about these issues? How do leaders of the organisation address issues in a way that is fair?</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Actions to be implemented</b></p> <p>Create adequate processes for consultation with employees and gender champions</p> <p><b>Questions to consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are specific consultations provided for employees active in gender balance and gender champions to participate in internal and external policy reviews?</li> <li>• Is there a mechanism for ensuring that employees who participate in these consultations are not discriminated against?</li> </ul>



## ANNEX 5

## ARE WE DOING “GENDER SENSITIVE COMMUNICATION” RIGHT?

	Actions to be implemented	Questions to consider
<b>BRONZE LEVEL</b>	Build awareness of gender balance and commitment to action through communication and support by leaders and government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What communications tools and strategies are currently in use to build awareness and understanding of gender balance?</li> <li>• How effective have these tools been? Are there opportunities to expand the organisation’s communication efforts?</li> <li>• How is the organisation ensuring that gender balance communications are ongoing?</li> </ul>
<b>SILVER LEVEL</b>	Provide training for colleagues to improve perceptions of gender balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are incidences of gender-biased communications brought to the attention of HRM managers and senior staff? If so, are they resolved in a way that aims to improve future internal and external communications?</li> <li>• Are public statements from the company and its executive officers reviewed for gender sensitivity?</li> </ul>
	Encourage review of all high-level statements and media related activities by a designated gender champion or HRM representative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do public statements from the company actively promote gender balance?</li> </ul>
<b>GOLD LEVEL</b>	Share successful gender balance initiatives with relevant stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has the institution or company displayed its positive actions to other members of the community?</li> <li>• Have good gender balance practices been communicated with senior public officials, executive officers, or board members?</li> </ul>

## ANNEX 6

## THE UAE NATIONAL KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS: HAPPINESS AND SOCIAL COHESION INDICES

INDICATOR	Happiness Index	Social Cohesion Index
DEFINITION	A composite indicator that measures an individual's assessment of their standards of living and life satisfaction, using a survey to assess the extent to which individuals feel happy and satisfied with their lives. It includes perspectives such as income level (GDP per capita), average healthy life expectancy, social support, generosity, absence of corruption, and freedom to make life choices.	A composite indicator that measures the level of social cohesion among the people in the UAE based on the following themes: family cohesion, education and culture, equality, justice, security, participation and national belonging (NKPI specific to UAE)
SOURCE	United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network – Gallup World Poll	Ministry of Community Development
2012 RESULTS	Rank 21 (2017 Report)	93.11% (2015)
2021 TARGETS	Among the top 5 countries	100%
KEY SPONSOR	Minister of State for Happiness	Ministry of Community Development

## ANNEX 7

## THE UAE NATIONAL GENDER BALANCE INDICATORS

AREA	Decision-Making	Education and Experience	Work Environment
MEASUREMENT RANGE	<p>Emphasis on equality and balance in women's access to leadership positions.</p> <p>The scope of this indicator for 2016 includes the following positions: ministers, secretary of states, assistant secretary of states, Director generals, executive directors and advisors, and other relevant positions.</p>	<p>Consolidate women's access to specialised and technical fields and provide them with the opportunity to work in specialised and professional positions (e.g. judges, doctors, engineers...) and not only in administrative or supporting jobs.</p>	<p>Strengthen a friendly and supportive working environment for working mothers in order to become a more attractive work place, characterised by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maternity leave and breastfeeding</li> <li>• Flexible working hours</li> <li>• Teleworking</li> <li>• Presence of a nursery at work, nursery allowances, etc.</li> </ul>
INDICATOR	<p>Proportion of female leaders out of the total leadership of the organisation</p>	<p>Proportion of working women in specialised and technical fields out of the total workforce (male and female) in a given sector</p>	<p>Proportion of female leaders out of the total leadership of the organisation</p>

## ANNEX 8: GLOSSARY

- **Empowerment:** the expansion of assets and capabilities of individuals to participate in, negotiate, influence, control, and hold accountable the institutions that affect their lives.
- **Gender awareness:** the state of being conscious of inequality arising from the dynamics between women and men.
- **Gender Balance:** an equitable distribution of opportunities and resources between women and men.
- **Gender Budgeting:** integrating a clear gender perspective within the overall context of the budgetary process through the use of special methods and analytical tools with a view to promoting gender-responsive policies.
- **Gender Equality:** equality under the law and equality of opportunity and voice. This encompasses the concept of gender equity in terms of women's and men's fair and equal access to information, services, justice, resources, benefits, responsibilities and the ability to influence and contribute to policy making.
- **Gender Equity:** means being fair to women and men. To ensure fairness, measures are often needed to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that prevent men and women from otherwise operating as equals. Equity leads to equality. (An Integrated Approach to Gender-based analysis, status of women in Canada, 2004. <http://www.international.gc.ca/development-developpement/priorities-priorites/ge-es/policy-politique.aspx?lang=eng>).
- **Gender Impact Assessments (GIAs):** “the evaluation [...] of a law, policy or programme that makes it possible to identify, in a preventive way, the likelihood of a given decision having negative consequences for the state of equality between women and men.” (EIGE (2016), Gender Impact Assessment Tool, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg. <http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/mh0416171enn.pdf>.)
- **Gender Lens:** a tool that can be used in regular operations, including planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the distinct needs of women and men (girls and boys), their similarities and differences using a gender-sensitive approach.
- **Gender Mainstreaming:** the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislations, regulations, policies and programmes in all areas and levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.
- **Gender Sensitivity:** refers to the aim of understanding and taking account of the societal and cultural factors involved in fostering gender-based inclusion and positive perception in the most diverse spheres of public and private life. (Adapted from Šriбар, R. 2015, “Glossary of common terms in gender equality and feminist theory,” in M. Ule, R. Šriбар and A. U. Venturini, eds., Gendering Science: Slovenian Surveys and Studies in the EU Paradigms, Vienna, Echoraum).
- **Gender:** socially constructed and socially learned behaviours and expectations associated with females and males. All cultures interpret and elaborate the biological differences between women and men into a set of social expectations about what behaviors and activities are appropriate and what rights, resources, and power women

and men possess. Like race, ethnicity, and class, gender is a social category that largely establishes one's life chances. It shapes one's participation in society and in the economy.

- **Whole-of-Government Strategy:** an approach or vision that stipulates that government institutions work across portfolio boundaries to achieve a shared goal and an integrated government response to particular issues.

These definitions were adapted from the OECD Toolkit for Gender Equality in Governance: Implementing the 2015 OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life, unless stated otherwise.

## ANNEX 9: ACRONYMS

- **GBC:** Gender Balance Council
- **GPIs:** Gender Balance Indicators
- **GDP:** Gross Domestic Product
- **GEPL:** Gender Equality in Public Life
- **GIAs:** Gender Impact Assessments
- **GRB:** Gender-Responsive Budgeting
- **HRM:** Human Resources Management
- **KPIs:** Key Performance Indicators
- **MENA:** Middle East and North Africa
- **OECD:** Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
- **UAE:** United Arab Emirates

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