INVESTMENT CLIMATE REFORM FACILITY

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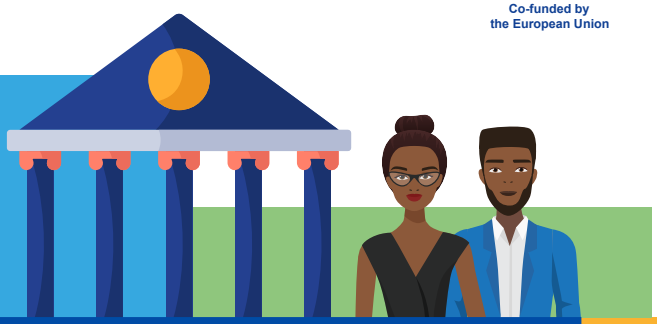
INSIGHTS FOR CCIs AND BMOs



HOW TO MAINSTREAM GENDER EQUALITY INTERNALLY AND AMONG MEMBERS?

As a Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) or a Business Membership Organisation (BMO), you play a crucial role in helping your members integrate gender equality into their businesses. By promoting inclusive policies and services, you can strengthen economic growth, improve business outcomes, and create a more equitable environment within your network.

Gender mainstreaming should be embedded internally (within your own organisation), externally (by supporting your members), and in public-private dialogues (by advocating for gender-responsive policies). This factsheet provides practical tips and insights to help CCIs and BMOs effectively mainstream gender equality at all levels.

1. ADOPT A SYSTEMIC APPROACH

- **Collaborate across sectors:** Collaborate with the private sector, government, and civil society to promote gender equality at all levels.
- **Focus on gender mainstreaming at all levels:** institutionally, with members, and in Public-Private Dialogues (PPDs).
- **Address diverse needs:** Support both women-owned businesses and companies looking to improve gender diversity in leadership and workforce.

2. PROMOTE GENDER-RESPONSIVE HR MANAGEMENT

- **Inclusive culture:** Beyond hiring and promoting women, foster a culture that welcomes diversity and build a diverse talent pipeline through mentoring and professional development.
- **Support policies:** Implement pay equity, parental leave, flexible work arrangements, work-life balance, and inclusive recruitment strategies that benefit both women and men.
- **Leadership commitment:** Guide management in making gender diversity a strategic priority with clear accountability. Encourage collaborative decision-making.

3. DEVELOP A GENDER STRATEGY

- **Start with a gender assessment:** Identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- **Align with goals:** Design a strategy that aligns with institutional priorities and includes clear objectives and measurable actions.
- **Provide adequate resources:** Ensure financial support and gender expertise.
- **Implement & monitor:** Establish Monitoring & Evaluation systems to track progress and adjust as needed.

Refer to the “Gender assessment” and “Gender strategy” practical tools for more information and guidance.

4. ESTABLISH INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES AND LEADERSHIP BUY-IN

- **Set a clear vision:** Create a roadmap for gender equality, with short, medium, and long-term actions.
- **Ensure accountability:** Hold leaders (at all levels) accountable for gender outcomes.
- **Recognise and celebrate success:** Promote best practices and gender champions within your organisation and member businesses.

5. MANAGE CHANGE EFFECTIVELY

- **Address resistance:** Promote gender equality by understanding barriers and proactively engage those who may be hesitant to adopt gender-inclusive practices.
- **Foster an inclusive culture:** Position gender equality as both a human rights issue and a business imperative.
- **Engage men:** Encourage male leaders and colleagues to support and advocate for gender equality. (Refer to the brochure "strategies for engaging men in gender equality").

6. BUILD THE BUSINESS CASE FOR GENDER EQUALITY

- **Use data to drive change:** Leverage gender-disaggregated data to demonstrate how gender diversity benefits economic growth
- **Highlight local success stories:** Showcase role models and gender equality pioneers within your network

Refer to the practical tool "Building the business case for gender equality" for more information.

7. DELIVER GENDER-RESPONSIVE MEMBER SERVICES

- **Understand member needs:** Gather gender-specific data on barriers and services required.
- **Design tailored services:** Offer gender-responsive training, mentoring, and support for different segments of women and men entrepreneurs.
- **Partner with women's organisations:** Support capacity-building initiatives through collaborations

8. STRENGTHEN GENDER CAPACITIES

- **Provide training:** Offer training, mentorship, and tools for integrating gender into operations.
- **Support gender strategy development:** Assist members in creating their own gender strategies and policies.
- **Monitor and evaluate progress:** Develop a gender-responsive M&E system to assess impact and refine approaches.

9. ADVOCATE WITH A GENDER LENS

- **Broaden advocacy:** Focus on underrepresented gender issues, such as affordable childcare, gender-responsive financial services, and increasing women's participation in fields of study and careers that are traditionally male-dominated such as Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)
- **Local context:** Tailor advocacy efforts to address the unique challenges in your local context, aligning with regional and national economic priorities.

10. MONITOR GENDERED IMPACT

- **Use sex-disaggregated data:** Monitor and report on gender-specific outcomes for example in business support services, policy advocacy, and internal HR practices.
- **Learn and adapt:** Celebrate successes, document challenges, and adapt strategies accordingly.

11. SUPPORT WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN BUSINESS AND POLICY

- **Create institutional support:** Advocate for women's leadership in business associations, policy discussions, and decision-making roles.
- **Increase visibility:** Promote women leaders as role models.
- **Support sponsorship & mentorship programs:** Support emerging women leaders gain access to networks, funding, and career growth opportunities—especially in male-dominated sectors like STEM.

FINAL TAKEAWAY

By adopting these practical approaches, CCIs and BMOs can help their members integrate gender equality into business operations, leading to stronger companies, economic growth, and more inclusive business environments.

ANY QUESTIONS? Contact us

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