

Human Resources

The Issue



Gender equality in Human Resources policy and management should be a 'given' as Human Rights Law states that all human beings are 'equal in dignity and rights'. However, application of gender equality principles in human resources within organizations, companies and other types of entities remains a challenge. Gender-related inequalities in the workplace, including unequal career opportunities, gender insensitive institutional policies, gender discrimination in recruitment, gender inequitable staffing, and lack of development and mentorship, requires urgent attention from employers worldwide.

The 2020 Global Gender Equity Report urges: "Companies must treat people with dignity and respect and offer equal opportunities to all members of the society, leveraging gender diversity and investing in all of their talent through ongoing upskilling and reskilling. Governments must create policies that provide talent development, integration and deployment opportunities for all genders, diversify the leadership pool and provide support to families and caregivers, in both youthful and ageing societies alike. And business and government must work together on creating a new economic and social narrative for action and on coordinating and speeding up the process of change."

ARC's approach

The goal of ARC's gender strategy is to transform Disaster Risk Management (DRM) approaches to ensure gender equality for vulnerable women and men in ARC Member States. ARC has committed to a mainstreaming approach to ensure that gender issues are systematically integrated in its operations, both internally as an organisation, and externally, with its Member States. Human Resources policy and management is central to this integration.

Key entry points and checklists

The five core functions of Human Resources are recruitment, performance, development, benefits and entitlements, and health and safety. Each of these functions is an entry point for ARC to put its commitments to gender equality into practice, as described in the next sections. Gender Checklists help stakeholders ensure the crucial steps and checks are in place for Gender mainstreaming.

Key entry points and checklists



1 RECRUITMENT

Recruitment refers to the process of finding the right employee with appropriate qualifications or experience and recruiting them to fill a position, role, or job.

A gender equality approach in staffing means ARC should:

- ✓ Ensure all job descriptions include responsibilities for gender mainstreaming (to an appropriate degree) and gender-related competences.
- ✓ Screen all job designs and vacancy announcements for language or requirements that might imply that the job is only for men, or women. Ensure all documentation uses gender-sensitive language and states that ARC is committed to gender equality.
- ✓ Circulate vacancy announcements widely and seek to redress known imbalances through additional targeted circulation. For example, for roles that typically draw more male candidates, circulate to women's professional associations and women's rights associations to achieve a wider pool of qualified women candidates.
- ✓ Create selection committees that include women and men and engage them throughout the process, from CV screening to shortlisting and interview panels. Ensure that all of them understand the relevance of gender equality to ARC's work.
- ✓ Shortlist candidates considering gender parity in the specific job level. E.g. if women are under-represented, ensure they feature in the short list, and vice versa.
- ✓ Including people with gender expertise on interview panels to assess candidates' gender awareness and competencies. Re-iterate ARC's commitment to gender equality during interviews.
- ✓ Make selections based on competence and merit. Where gender parity is yet to be achieved, and where candidates are equally qualified and deemed equally competent, give preference to the under-represented sex.
- ✓ When an offer of employment is made, reiterate that ARC is flexible to candidates' needs within the parameters of WFP HR policies and procedures and where deemed feasible.
- ✓ Be prepared to discuss them and consider (among others) requests related to gender.
- ✓ Conduct exit interviews and use the information to improve the workplace for women and men.
- ✓ Set targets and communicate progress towards gender parity at all levels and across all functional areas. Keep HR dashboards up to date.
- ✓ Ensure succession-planning explicitly includes consideration of gender parity and gender competences.

2 PERFORMANCE

Performance refers to how well employees are carrying out their work, with regard to agreed responsibilities and expectations. As organizations are systems comprised of inter-dependent parts, performance management includes individuals, teams, divisions, and the organization as a whole.

A gender equality approach to performance means ARC should:

- ✓ Develop and use induction materials that clearly explain ARC's commitment to gender equality.
- ✓ Provide an induction session specifically on gender and the standards and behaviour expected from all staff (including gender-based violence, harassment and discrimination).
- ✓ All employees must be familiar with ARC's Gender Strategy and understand the relevance of gender to ARC's goals.
- ✓ Include gender equality in performance objectives. For example, if an employee's role is in HR, set objectives that include gender equality in recruitment; if their role is in Finance, include in their objectives, issues such as gender-responsive budgeting.
- ✓ Create regular, structured opportunities for feedback on performance on gender related issues, among others. Encourage staff to be open about challenges as well as successes and connect them with people with more gender expertise to help address the challenges.
- ✓ Assess performance on gender and relate it to succession planning in the same way as other criteria.
- ✓ At an organizational level, ensure that women and men are represented on standing and ad-hoc committees so that diverse views and voices are heard. Ensure committees' Terms of Reference include a requirement for gender parity.

Key entry points and checklists



3 DEVELOPMENT

Development refers to providing staff with training and opportunities for growth. These are usually, a combination of knowledge and skills required to perform the tasks related to role efficiently and effectively, as well as to increase the overall effectiveness and impact of the organization. It also includes planning for staff movement and growth, otherwise known as 'succession-planning'.

A gender equality approach to development means ARC should:

- ✓ Establish gender competences and gender training requirements for each role/level.
- ✓ Ensure all staff receive basic training on gender. This may involve a combination of online and in-person training. Provide additional, level- and role-appropriate training on gender, online and in person.
- ✓ Assign a gender focal point to all staff. This person will enable them to address gender challenges and step in, if necessary, to support discussion on gender issues between employees and their managers.
- ✓ Ensure that criteria for use of funds for staff development include advancing gender equality.
- ✓ Provide opportunities for participation in external gender-related fora, events and training courses. At the same time, ensure that staff who have gender-related needs and obstacles to attending such events, courses and trips have access to support to enable them to do so. For example, if an employee is unable to physically attend a training event due to family commitments, virtual/ e-learning options could be explored.

4 BENEFITS & ENTITLEMENTS

The primary objective of the benefits and entitlements is to establish equitable and fair remuneration for everyone. This starts with setting clear policies and parameters for employee compensation and benefits and relies on their consistent implementation.

A gender equality approach to compensation and benefits means ARC should:

- ✓ Apply compensation scales and benefits equally for men and women employees. Ensure all employees understand the scales and benefits, and ARC's commitment to gender equality.
- ✓ Consistently provide maternity, paternity and adoption leave as applicable per the WFP HR Policy, while maintaining all other compensation, benefits and development opportunities to the employees who use it.

5 HEALTH & SAFETY

Health and Safety management systems enable organizations and companies to provide a safe and healthy work environment for all staff.

In line with WFP HR Policy, a gender equality approach to safety and health means ARC should:

- ✓ Ensure safe and private places are available for women who are breastfeeding.
- ✓ Offer flexible work arrangements that consider the needs of all employees and their families as applicable per the WFP HR Policy.
- ✓ Customize existing WFP policies on gender-based violence, sexual harassment, and discrimination in the workplace to ARC's needs, within the parameters of those policies. Include it in all inductions and trainings.
- ✓ Communicate clearly how staff can access counselling services if they have been victims of gender-based abuse.
- ✓ Provide feminine hygiene products in all washrooms in ARC's offices.
- ✓ Conduct a risk assessment of ARC's offices, using a gender-sensitive methodology and by a group comprised of men and women. Identify threats or hazards to which men and women are vulnerable and put in place gender-responsive measures that reduce risk and improve safety.



KEY MESSAGES

Human Resources policy and management are central to gender mainstreaming within ARC.

Gender mainstreaming is relevant to staffing, performance, development, benefits and entitlements, and safety and health. Each of these functions is an entry point for ARC to put its commitments to gender equality into practice.

Staff should use the Gender Checklists to ensure the crucial steps and checks are in place for Gender mainstreaming in Human Resources policy and management.

RESOURCES

1. WFP Gender and Human Resources Toolkit: <https://gender.manuals.wfp.org/en/gender-toolkit/gender-in-operations/human-resources/>
2. WFP Human Resources Manual: <https://hr.manuals.wfp.org/en/>
3. Gender Strategy: https://www.arc.int/en/sites/default/files/2021-09/ARC_Gender-Strategy_2019.pdf
4. Gender & DRM Online training: <https://arcademy.talentlms.com/learner/courseinfo/id:164> French at <https://arcademy.talentlms.com/learner/courseinfo/id:170>
5. The Gender & DRM platform: <https://www.arc.int/gender-platform>
6. ARC gender page <https://www.arc.int/en/gender-dimension>

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ARC: African Risk Capacity

CV: Curriculum Vitae

DRM: Disaster Risk Management

DRMF: Disaster Risk Management and Financing

HR: Human Resources

WFP: World Food Programme

For more information/ comments please contact gender@arc.int