

NEA WORKING PAPER

Best Practices to Retain and Support Women in the Nuclear Sector

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Foreword

In the evolving landscape of scientific and technological advancements, the issue of gender balance within the nuclear sector stands as both a challenge and an opportunity. This best practices document is a preliminary collaborative effort undertaken by the Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) High-Level Group on Improving the Gender Balance in the Nuclear Sector (HLG-GB). It serves as an initial resource for organisations in adhering countries and others aspiring to fulfil the commitment to implement the 2023 OECD Recommendation of the Council on Improving the Gender Balance in the Nuclear Sector.

The OECD Recommendation was adopted on 8 June 2023 at the OECD Ministerial Council Meeting, representing member countries' political commitment towards women in the nuclear sector. It builds on several prior OECD policy instruments, including the 2013 OECD Recommendation of the Council on Gender Equality in Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship and the 2015 OECD Recommendation of the Council on Gender Equality in Public Life.

A key goal of the 2023 Recommendation is to establish a single, comprehensive set of principles and policy recommendations to assist governments, other public authorities and relevant stakeholders in their efforts to design and implement policies that increase the representation of women in the nuclear sector and enhance their contributions, especially in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) roles and leadership positions. The OECD Ministerial Council instructed the Steering Committee for Nuclear Energy to support adherents and monitor implementation of the Recommendation through collecting and mapping data, facilitating the exchange of information and best practices, and developing practical guidance and tools. To that end, in January 2024 the Steering Committee chartered the HLG-GB to co-ordinate, support and monitor implementation of the 2023 Recommendation.

To support operationalising the 2023 Recommendation and the HLG-GB's mandate, this best practices document is a high-level, preliminary resource towards concrete changes for the retention of women within a variety of organisations across the nuclear sector. The document lays out definitions for key concepts and groups the best practices into three broad topical areas: elimination of harassment (including elimination of gender-based violence and creation of safe spaces); development of high-level, strategic policy directives supporting inclusivity and accessibility goals; and building an inclusive work environment.

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

CSN	Spanish Nuclear Safety Council
GBV	Gender-based violence
NEA	Nuclear Energy Agency
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
STEM	Science, technology, engineering and mathematics
WiN	Women in Nuclear

1. Overview

1.1. Introduction

In 2023, the OECD Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) published the first international data on gender balance in the nuclear sector in NEA member countries. The gender-disaggregated data illustrated workforce representation, career trajectories and challenges facing women in the sector, especially in STEM and leadership positions. While women such as Lise Meitner and Marie Skłodowska-Curie helped establish the field, women constitute only 24.9% of the nuclear workforce today, with even lower representation in STEM (20.6%) and senior leadership roles (18.3%). The current recruitment, retention and promotion rates of women are insufficient to improve this situation any time soon (NEA, 2023).

The report included data-backed insights on the retention and support of women in the nuclear workforce. The recruitment, attrition and promotion rates indicate little progress towards gender balance, and hurdles persist in retaining and supporting women, especially in STEM roles. The 8 000 women across 32 countries who participated in the NEA's survey responded that pregnancy and family responsibilities have negatively impacted their careers.

Other STEM fields show similar trends, but in the case of the nuclear sector there are unique factors: Some aspects of the sector's culture arise from the Cold War and its early ties to military programmes. Nuclear facilities are often sited in remote locations and characterised by shiftwork, both of which can hinder female participation.

The nuclear sector therefore requires specific policy interventions to remove any barriers to women entering the field and to enable their participation and advancement. Unlike other high technology fields, governments are uniquely placed to influence the culture of the nuclear sector because of their extensive funding of nuclear technology at all stages of its life cycle. For this reason, OECD and NEA member countries adopted the 2023 Recommendation of the Council on Improving the Gender Balance in the Nuclear Sector (OECD, 2023), building on previous international policy instruments to articulate the specific priority of change in the nuclear sector and to develop the tools and co-ordination mechanisms to fulfil the commitment.

The OECD Recommendation is organised as a framework consisting of three pillars (Figure 1) and supported by a robust regime for data and accountability:

- (1) **Attract** women into the nuclear sector;
- (2) **Retain** and support women in the workforce (including addressing impacts related to the conduct of family responsibilities); and
- (3) **Advance** and develop women as leaders and enhance their contributions.

Together, these three pillars provide a strategic framework through which organisations in the nuclear sector can develop and/or improve their policies and programmes. Each pillar contains targeted recommendations developed from the report's data findings to address the needs and challenges of women in the nuclear sector.

The Framework: **Attract, Retain and Advance**

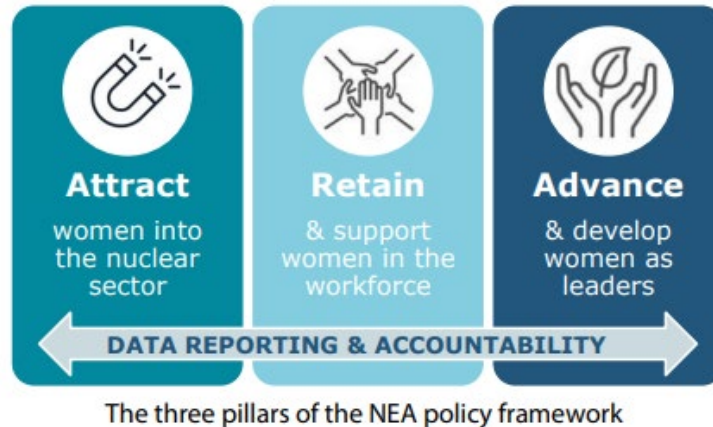


Figure 1. Framework depicting the three pillars of the NEA policy framework on achieving gender balance in the nuclear sector.

This document focuses on the “retain” pillar. Specific to the “retain” pillar, the 2023 NEA report identified the following challenges to women’s retention in the sector:

- Retention and attrition trends are insufficient to improve gender balance in senior leadership roles.
- Women stated that pregnancy, family responsibilities and/or accommodating a spouse’s career have negative impacts on their careers.
- Women experience hostility in the nuclear workplace, including sexual harassment.
- Approximately two-thirds of women surveyed believe that gender stereotyping, micro-aggressions, unconscious bias and/or male-dominated work cultures negatively impact women’s careers in the nuclear sector.
- Although over half of women surveyed indicate their workplace culture is inclusive, there is significant regional variation.
- Women report a lack of management commitment to improving gender balance in the workplace and insufficient institutional support. There are regional variations, and women aged 25-44 poll more negatively. (Employees in regulatory organisations poll more positively.)
- Women highly rank improving workplace inclusivity through training, development of collaborative leadership models and monitoring of workplace culture.
- Women highly rank comprehensive solutions to balance family life (such as workplace flexibilities), increased visibility of women, mentoring and cultural change as necessary to improve gender balance in the sector.

In recognition of these challenges, the 2023 OECD Recommendation committed adhering countries to direct, incentivise or encourage nuclear agencies, contractors and public funding recipients to undertake the actions listed below under the “retain” pillar to better support women in the nuclear sector workforce.

1. Address impacts related to the conduct of family responsibilities, including by:
 - a. Providing flexibility that may support employees with family responsibilities outside work, such as flexible teleworking for all staff;
 - b. Analysing the need for off-normal hours in nuclear positions (particularly those related to the operation of nuclear facilities) and their relationship to career advancement, clearly explain their necessity where required, and develop accommodations or alternate career progression pathways;
 - c. Offering or facilitate access to childcare, lactation facilities and other dependent care in the workplace;
 - d. Offering attractive parental and family leave policies and encourage all employees to take full advantage of these benefits;
 - e. Developing policies and programmes to support employees returning from parental or family leave to re-integrate into the workplace and to mitigate impacts on career and pay progression;
 - f. Regularly reviewing the above policies and publish assessments of their impact, including plans to remedy any gaps.
2. Develop appropriate institutional measures to eliminate gender-based harassment in the workplace, to create inclusive work environments and cultures, and to address gender stereotypes and unconscious bias, including to:
 - a. Provide regular, organisation-wide inclusivity training;
 - b. Implement targeted strategies promoting allyship and maximising diverse participation, including by men, to foster inclusive work cultures;
 - c. Conduct independent assessments to identify any patterns of harassment and bias, as well as workplace culture strengths and weaknesses with regards to inclusivity;
 - d. Develop plans to remedy any adverse assessment findings and build inclusive workplace practices;
 - e. Encourage other organisations with whom the agency, contractor, or funding recipient engages (such as licensees of nuclear safety regulatory agencies) to promote all appropriate measures to ensure working environments free of harassment and to foster inclusive work cultures.
3. Regularly and independently assess policies and programmes for unequal gender impacts, including but not limited to human resource policies and career development programmes, for example through gender impact assessment tools.
4. Link performance and compensation of executives and managers to implementing measures to promote gender equality and to build an inclusive work culture.
5. Participate in and promote qualitative national surveys with a clearly defined periodicity on workplace experiences, including regular surveys on perceptions in the nuclear sector regarding:
 - a. Gender-based harassment;

- b. Gender-based discrimination;
- c. Unequal gender impacts in the workplace, including compensation and career advancement;
- d. Parental and caregiver leave, including organisational support, workplace culture and attitudes, and career impacts;
- e. Other gender-based workplace experiences.

Guided by these commitments, the HLG-GB established a task force to develop tools to support countries to work towards these goals. The task force decided to develop a set of foundational, concrete best practices that may be adapted to suit the diverse needs as well as the applicable legal and policy frameworks of different regions, countries and institutions to support the retention of women in the nuclear sector. These best practices centre around three key areas:

- Elimination of harassment;
- Development of high-level, strategic policy directives supporting inclusivity and accessibility goals; and
- Building an inclusive work environment.

The subsequent sections of this document discuss best practices in each of these three areas, with examples. Several key concepts inform this document are identified below.

1.2. Key concepts

For the purpose of this document, the following key concepts are useful:

Gender balance: Participation by women in all fields and at all levels of seniority in nuclear sector organisations in numbers reflecting an equitable distribution of opportunities and resources between genders without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles and prejudices, and with the different behaviours, aspirations and needs of people of all genders considered, valued and favoured equally.

Gender-based violence (GBV): Harmful acts directed at an individual or a group of individuals based on their gender. It is rooted in gender inequality, the abuse of power and harmful norms. The term is primarily used to underscore the fact that structural, gender-based power differentials place women and girls at risk for multiple forms of violence. Women and girls suffer disproportionately from GBV, but any gender can be a target. The nature and extent of specific types of GBV vary across cultures, countries, and regions. The term GBV is used to capture all forms of gender-based violence: physical violence, sexual violence, psychological violence, economic violence, sexual harassment, harassment on the grounds of gender, and environmental harassment in both online and offline contexts (UN Women, 2022).

Gender roles: Social and behavioural norms that, within a specific culture, are widely considered to be socially appropriate for individuals of a specific gender. These often determine the traditional responsibilities and tasks assigned to individuals. They are conditioned by locally relevant factors and can evolve over time (UNSDG, 2016).

Gender stereotype: A generalised view or preconception about attributes or characteristics, or the roles that are or ought to be possessed by, or performed by, women and men. Stereotypical characteristics about men are that they are competitive, acquisitive, autonomous, independent, confrontational and concerned about private goods. Parallel stereotypes of women hold that they are co-operative, nurturing, caring, connecting, group-oriented and concerned about public goods. A gender stereotype is

harmful when it limits a person's capacity to develop their personal abilities, pursue their professional careers and/or make choices about their lives. Whether overtly hostile (such as "women are irrational") or seemingly benign ("women are nurturing"), stereotypes perpetuate inequalities. For example, the traditional view of women as caregivers means that childcare responsibilities often fall exclusively on women. Further, gender stereotypes compounded and intersecting with other stereotypes have a disproportionate negative impact on certain groups of women, such as women from minority or Indigenous groups, women with disabilities, women from lower caste groups or with lower economic status, and migrant women (OHCHR, n.d.)

Inclusive work environment: A working environment that embraces equality, eradicates bias and is inclusive of all staff. Sustainable change to achieve an inclusive work environment depends on transforming organisational cultures so that they foster a safe and respectful environment in which all have equal access to opportunities. An inclusive work environment involves different types of practices, including (but not limited to) flexible working arrangements between staff and their managers in which both parties agree on when, where and how work is executed; family-friendly policies that further enable staff to effectively balance personal, family and professional commitments as needed throughout the span of their career; and common standards of conduct to support a work environment free from discrimination, harassment and abuse of authority (UN Women, 2019).

2. Best practices for development of strategic policy initiatives

Development of high-level, strategic policy directives supporting inclusivity and accessibility goals (e.g. policy statements, strategic plans) is critical to creating a work environment supportive of gender balance and inclusivity. Best practices for the development of strategic policy directives supporting these goals include the following:

- Implementing an inclusivity and accessibility policy statement;
- Implementing an inclusivity and accessibility strategy for the organisation with short-, medium-, and long-term goals that promotes engagement at all levels;
- Establishing a monitoring framework to evaluate progress and impact; and
- Clearly conveying policies and strategies to all levels of the organisation.

Key features of strategic policy directives could include:

- Statement of the organisation's vision for a diverse workforce;
- Statement of principles and practices to enhance organisational inclusivity, including representation of women; and
- Specific organisational goals and associated actions (e.g. goals and specific actions associated with workforce inclusivity and accessibility, and sustainability of these efforts).

Example from Spain: CSN's First Equality Plan (2023-2026)

The Spanish Nuclear Safety Council (CSN) has drawn up its first equality plan with the aim of strengthening its commitment to the promotion of equal opportunities between men and women.

Objective: This plan complies with legal requirements, but above all with the institution's commitment to the promotion of equal opportunities between men and women.

Implementation strategy:

- The CSN Equality Plan will include an action plan aimed at helping implement activities and processes within the scope of the measures defined therein.
- An Equality Unit was created in February 2023 with the aim of collecting statistical data, elaborating reports, advising the rest of the organisation on gender equality, proposing training action, and ensuring compliance with equality legislation, etc.
- As a strategy for the dissemination of the Equality Plan, the CSN has published a summary brochure, which is more reader-friendly and easily shareable.

Example from the United Kingdom: Public Sector Equality Duty (s.149 of the Equality Act 2010)

Public authorities are required, in carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to achieve the following objectives:

- (a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010;
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not;
- (c) Foster good relations between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not.

Implementation strategy: To ensure transparency, and to assist in the performance of this duty, the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 requires public authorities to publish:

- Equality objectives at least every four years
- Information to demonstrate their compliance with the public sector equality duty

Whilst the public sector equality duty does not apply to all UK nuclear sector organisations, it provides a reference for those not under this duty.

3. Best practices for building an inclusive work environment

Best practices for retaining women in the nuclear sector also include supporting and implementing workplace flexibilities, like those implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic that have been, and can continue to be, carried forward. Such flexibility includes increased teleworking and schedule flexibilities during the day (e.g. split schedules); flexibilities and alternate pathways for shift workers; support surrounding parental leave and re-entry into the workplace following extended periods of parental/family leave, including accessible and affordable child care facilities; elimination of barriers associated with position management; and measurable staffing goals, where these are permitted by law.

Many possibilities exist for workplace flexibilities. Best practices include:

- Flexible work policies (e.g. increased teleworking, split schedules, job sharing, moving to part time);
- Consideration of workplace design (e.g. lactation rooms, appropriate changing facilities/restrooms);
- Ensuring accessible facilities, both through modifications to the physical environment and information technology;
- Schedule flexibilities and alternate pathways for shift and on-call workers. This can include raising awareness of laws specifically applicable to shift workers in some countries; and
- Measurable staffing goals, consistent with applicable law, that support gender balance and foster inclusivity and accessibility.

Best practices associated with parental and familial responsibilities may include:

- Gender-inclusive parental leave policies;
- Transition programmes for employees coming from and going on parental leave. These may include planned events, such as optional gatherings for employees on parental leave to stay in contact with their colleagues; and
- Childcare support (e.g. provision of onsite day-care facilities and provision of childcare at conferences).

Example from France: Law n° 2018-771 for the freedom to choose one's professional future (2018)

The law requires companies with at least 50 employees to calculate indicators relating to equality between women and men, to publish their results, and to remedy inequalities in the event of insufficient results. Otherwise, a financial penalty will be imposed.

Objective: To provide equal pay and ensure equivalent career paths for women and men.

Implementation strategy:

- According to the Government, it is a matter of moving from an obligation of means to an obligation of **results** in terms of equal pay for women and men.
- The index, on 100 points, is calculated from the following 5 indicators:
 - The gender pay gap;
 - The difference in the distribution of individual increases;
 - The difference in the distribution of promotions;
 - The percentage of employee salaries increased upon their return from maternity leave; and
 - The number of persons of the under-represented gender among the 10 highest paid.
- Between 2019 and 2022, the average score for companies with more than 1 000 employees changed from 82/100 to 89/100. By measuring these indicators, companies have been able to take corrective action.

Example from Australia: Inclusive work practices

The Australian Nuclear Science Technology Organisation (ANSTO) seeks to create a culture of inclusion, where diversity of thought and differing perspectives are a source of organisational agility, resilience and renewal.

Objective: To provide empowering and effective work-based policies that support flexibility and the individual needs of employees, including flexible work practices and family-friendly programmes. An inclusive culture will enable the organisation to retain talent within a rewarding environment and attract the best talent in the future.

Implementation strategy:

- Inclusive policies that support flexible working arrangements to support work-life balance and carers' responsibilities.
- Parental leave provisions.
- Phased retirement provisions.
- Inclusive policies and practices that address gender, equity, inclusion and belonging.
- Inclusive work environment that provides staff with an onsite childcare facility, lactation rooms and meditation and multi-faith prayer spaces.
- Domestic and family violence policy and support programme.
- Network support groups, such as LGBTQIA+ and Ignite Network for early careers and young people across the organisation.
- Engagement survey data to measure results.

Example from Germany: Temporary Part-time Act (1 January 2019)

The law allows employees to reduce their hours of employment for an agreed period (1-5 years) and resume the original working time afterwards. It applies to companies with more than 45 employees. Additionally, if a part-time worker wants to extend his or her working time, the burden of proof to deny the request is on the employer.

Objective: The law aims at counteracting the “part-time trap”: when employees, typically women, face difficulties returning to full-time work after pausing for intensive periods of intensive periods of dependent care.

Implementation strategy:

- German employment law grants employees the right to work part-time under specific conditions, e.g. parental leave under the German Act on Parental Allowance and Parental Leave (2006) or care for relatives under the Caregiver Leave and Family Caregiver Leave Act (2015).
- In addition, the German Part-Time and Fixed-Term Employment Act (2000) provides for the right to reduce the working hours for an indefinite period of time. However, the employee had no right to return to his or her previous full-time work hours at the same employer in this case.
- With the Temporary Part-Time Act, employees working in companies with more than 45 employees now have the right to return to full-time employment after working part-time for a certain (limited) period of time (1-5 years), irrespective of any personal requirements.

Example from Spain: Regulation 6/2019, on urgent measures to guarantee equal treatment and opportunities for women and men in employment and occupation (1 March 2019)

This law recognised 16 weeks of maternity and paternity leave, 100 % covered, personal and non-transferable and the first 6 weeks of leave after the birth are compulsory for both, the mother and the father.

Objective: To achieve real and effective equality between men and women at work, promoting work-life balance and the principle of co-responsibility between both parents.

Implementation strategy:

- This law amends Article 48 of the Workers' Statute to incorporate these new provisions.
- The law was passed in March 2019 and, after a gradual entry into force, in January 2021 it fully recognised the mentioned rights.
- National public policies: The government had to increase the allocation to cover these new measures.

Example from the United Kingdom: The Flexible Working (Amendment) Regulations 2023

Objective: Allow employees to balance work with other parts of their life, improve health and wellbeing and open up more jobs to them.

Implementation strategy:

- All employees have the legal right to request flexible working. Employees can request a change to the number of hours they work; when they start or finish work; the days they work and/or where they work.
- Employees have this right from their first day of employment.
- There are a limited number of business reasons that an employer may use to refuse the request and they must inform the employee of that refusal.
- The employee can complain to an Employment Tribunal if the employer did not handle the request or treat the employee in a reasonable manner (e.g. the reason for refusal was not a valid reason, or they treated the employee poorly because of their request).

Example from the United Kingdom: Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 sets out nine “protected characteristics”.

Objective: Equality Act 2010 aims to protect people from unfair treatment and promote a fair and more equal society.

Implementation strategy: Picking out the elements of particular relevance to gender equity and inclusion:

- The act protects women against direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- The “Pregnancy and Maternity” protected characteristic protects women from unfavourable treatment because they are pregnant, on maternity leave/can take maternity leave or have a pregnancy-related illness.
- The Act provides protection from discrimination resulting from association with someone who has a protected characteristic; for example, carers for those with disabilities (who are predominantly women) have protection from discrimination and harassment as a result of their caring responsibilities.
- Indirect discrimination provision covers situations where everyone is treated the same but those with a protected characteristic are at a disadvantage.
- The victimisation provision defines making a complaint of discrimination or harassment, supporting someone else's complaint, gathering information that might lead to a complaint, acting as a witness in a complaint, saying something or giving evidence that does not support someone else's complaint as “protected acts” and so protects both women as well as those who speak up in support of them.

The act also makes provision for equal work and equal pay claims, requiring men and women to be paid the same for the same and equal value work.

Example from Kenya: Supporting Inclusion and Accessibility Goals

Kenya has established a robust legal and policy framework to promote inclusion and accessibility across various sectors. These measures are grounded in constitutional mandates and are operationalised through legislation and policies.

The Constitution of Kenya (2010) has several provisions towards inclusion and accessibility:

- **Article 27:** Guarantees equality and freedom from discrimination, prohibiting discrimination based on race, gender, pregnancy, marital status, health status, ethnic or social origin, colour, age, disability, religion and other grounds. This section further allows affirmative action programmes to address past discrimination that redresses any disadvantage.
- **Article 10:** Mandates public institutions to promote inclusiveness, non-discrimination and protection of vulnerable and marginalised groups.

Policies and legislation:

Employment Act (2007)

Prohibits discrimination in recruitment, terms and conditions of employment, promotions and terminations.

National Gender and Development Policy (NGAD), 2017

The NGAD provides a framework for integrating gender concerns into the development process across all sectors. It aims to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in political, economic and social spheres.

Institutional frameworks:

State Department for Gender and Affirmative Action

This department is tasked with promoting gender equality, co-ordinating affirmative action programmes, and mainstreaming gender concerns into national development. Its 2023–2027 Strategic Plan focuses on reducing gender disparities and enhancing opportunities for women and vulnerable groups.

National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC)

The NCIC conducts ethnic and diversity audits to assess inclusivity in public service employment.

National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC)

Established under the National Gender and Equality Commission Act, 2011, it is mandated to promote gender equality and freedom from discrimination. It monitors compliance with constitutional values, including the rights of women, youth, persons with disabilities and marginalised groups.

4. Best practices for elimination of harassment

Best practices for retaining women in the nuclear sector begin with the establishment of a zero-tolerance anti-harassment policy and policies that address and protect women from all forms of gender-based violence. These policies may be supported and reinforced by best practices associated with the creation of safe spaces and through bottom-up initiatives. In all of these efforts, allyship and participation by men as well as women in the workplace should be encouraged.

To formulate and implement a **zero-tolerance anti-harassment policy**, the following best practices have been identified:

- Identify all applicable legal authorities;
- Integrate the organisation's commitment into organisational policies and procedures, such as the Code of Conduct;
- Define roles and responsibilities for managers, supervisors and all employees;
- Implement a dedicated reporting channel for staff to report confidentially, with the option of being anonymous;
- Designate one or more points of contact to oversee prompt, fair and impartial inquiries into allegations of harassing conduct;
- Define procedures for reporting harassing conduct, including a clearly described complaint process;
- Where applicable, consider requiring managers, supervisors and/or employees who witness or receive reports of harassing conduct to report such conduct through the defined procedures;
- Clearly explain whether and how confidentiality of the process will be maintained, ensuring the maximum level of confidentiality permitted by law where possible;
- Communicate regularly through campaigns, leadership messages and onboarding; and
- Provide and encourage training on the policy for all managers, supervisors and employees requiring such training where applicable.

Example from Australia: Respectful Workplace Behaviours Framework

The Australian Nuclear Science Technology Organisation (ANSTO) has established a Respectful Workplace Framework that is committed to fostering positive working relationships and practices, and will not tolerate any form of workplace harassment, bullying or discrimination.

ANSTO is committed to observing, and operating in accordance with, all relevant legislation and regulations.

Objective: To provide a workplace that is a safe, inclusive and respectful work environment, with zero tolerance towards workplace bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and discrimination.

Implementation strategy:

- The Respectful Workplace Framework highlights the benefits of respectful behaviour and sets clear standards, supported by strong leadership, a positive culture, early intervention and long-term strategies to promote respect across the organisation.
- The framework is reinforced by policies and procedures designed to drive lasting cultural change.
- There are multiple reporting pathways available to ensure that individuals feel safe and supported when raising concerns. These include formal and informal options, as well as the ability to report anonymously.
- The training helps employees and others understand their health and safety responsibilities at work, including ANSTO's policies and how to respond to inappropriate behaviour, complaints or disclosures.

For **policies addressing workplace violence, domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking**, the following best practices were identified:

- Identify appropriate legal authorities;
- Determine your organisation's capacity to address incidents;
- Develop reporting procedures that are effective, confidential and accessible. Credibility of the process will depend on the extent to which matters are handled promptly and efficiently;
- Develop incident response plans;
- Use existing staffing and workplace flexibilities to support employees (e.g. leave, teleworking, flexible work schedules);
- Maintain confidentiality to the extent permitted by law; and
- Provide and encourage training on the policies for all employees and management, requiring training where applicable.

Example from Argentina: Micaela Law No. 27499

The law establishes compulsory virtual and in-person training on gender and violence against women for all people who work in public service at all levels and hierarchies in the executive, legislative and judicial branches.

Objective: To provide consistent training on unconscious bias, microaggressions, gender mainstreaming and implicit awareness.

Implementation strategy:

- The National Women's Institute (INAM) of Argentina is the authority to apply this law and is in charge of training the highest authorities of the three branches.
- Significant efforts were made to ensure the federalisation of the law, which was achieved in 2020. Each jurisdiction has a governing body responsible for certifying the quality of the training provided and for offering training to top authorities. Consensus between the provinces and INAM on key guidelines to develop contents made it possible to establish a baseline from which to move forward progressively in order to ensure that 100% of civil servants and state officials are trained in gender perspective, thus positively contributing to the cultural transformation towards a just and egalitarian society.

Transparency: Progress reports on the training organisations, the number of trained people reached, etc. are provided by the provincial agencies.

Multiplier effect: This law has been a strategic tool to promote gender mainstreaming and to establish action plans in different organisations and institutions.

Example from the United Kingdom: Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act) Act 2023

This change in the UK law means that organisations must now proactively act to prevent sexual harassment rather than simply respond to reports of it. It covers sexual harassment from other people at work and third parties – for example customers and clients.

Objective: To better protect workers from sexual harassment.

Implementation strategy:

- Employers must now take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of their employees in the course of their employment.
- Employers are advised to consider the risks of sexual harassment happening in their organisation.
- Employers are advised to consider steps they could take to reduce the risks of sexual harassment happening.
- Employers are advised to consider which of those steps are reasonable to take and take those steps
- What is reasonable is considered to be situationally dependent, so there is a set list of steps that all employers must take.

For the creation of **safe spaces**, the following best practices were identified:

- Conduct organisational assessments to identify any patterns of harassment or bias;
- Encourage and support workplace training on unconscious bias, micro-aggressions, gender mainstreaming and implicit awareness;
- Implement an inclusive language policy/ “style guide” for written products;
- Implement a “respectful behaviour” policy that addresses both in-person and remote activities, including in non-physical spaces, such as email and online comment threads;
- Establish workplace guidance for managers, supervisors and employees regarding inclusion and accessibility; and
- Link performance and compensation of executives and managers to building an inclusive work culture.

Example from Spain: CSN Style Guide, approved in 2021, which includes a section on gender-neutral language

The CSN Style Guide presents style guidance for the organisation’s documents. The most recent revision to its style guide includes a focus on gender-neutral language, that is, bias-free language that uses expressions, words and terms that are likely to be perceived as neutral, understandable and welcoming by everyone, regardless of their gender.

Objective: The objective of the style guide is to make CSN documents more accessible to those for whom they are written and complies with legal requirements established in the Organic Law 3/2007 for effective equality between women and men. This law set up as a general approach for the actions of public authorities the implementation of gender-neutral language in the administrative sphere. In this way, the style guide specifically encourages CSN staff to implement gender-neutral language to convey respect to the reader, maintain neutrality in the message, and help woman feel included.

Implementation strategy:

- The style guide identifies tips for making writing more inclusive, provides suggested alternative language and provides gender-neutral language resources.
- The CSN held a webinar by its expert in gender neutral language to help all workers be aware of and apply the recommendations set out in the style guide.

Example from Kenya: Eliminating Harassment

Kenya has established a comprehensive legal and policy framework to eliminate all forms of harassment, with a particular focus on sexual harassment in workplaces, educational institutions and digital spaces.

The Kenyan Employment Act, 2007, section 6(d) mandates employers with 20 or more employees to issue a policy statement on sexual harassment. This policy must be brought to the attention of all persons under the employer's direction. The policy should outline a clear definition of sexual harassment, including both verbal and non-verbal forms, as well as quid pro quo harassment (harassment in exchange for employment or other benefits). A process for reporting complaints and steps for addressing such complaints must also be addressed in the policy.

The National Policy for Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence, 2014 aims to strengthen co-ordination mechanisms for effective programming, enhance enforcement of laws and policies, and increase access to quality support services for survivors of gender-based violence.

Objective: To eliminate all forms of harassment.

Implementation strategy:

- Develop comprehensive policies in organisations
- Conduct regular training to educate employees about harassment, reporting mechanisms and their rights.
- Establish reporting mechanisms by creating safe and confidential channels for employees to report harassment.
- Ensure accountability by taking prompt and appropriate action against perpetrators to foster a safe work environment.

Institutional oversight:

The Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR), an independent national human rights institution established under the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights Act of 2011, is charged with monitoring and investigating human rights violations, including harassment and providing redress for victims and advising the government on enhancing the promotion and protection of human rights.

The Commission on Administrative Justice (Office of the Ombudsman), established under the Commission on Administrative Justice Act, 2011, addresses maladministration in the public sector, including by investigating complaints of abuse of power, unfair treatment and unresponsiveness in public administration, among other issues.

For best practices associated with support of **bottom-up initiatives**, the following best practices were identified:

- Encourage participation in mentoring programmes at all levels;
- Encourage the establishment of affinity groups and promote employee participation in inclusivity and accessibility events and employee resource groups; and
- Encourage participation in women's networks such as Women in Nuclear (WiN) and Red Mujer, Talento y Liderazgo (Women, Talent, and Leadership Network).

Allyship and active participation in all of the above initiatives should be strongly encouraged.

5. Next steps

This preliminary high-level best practices document is intended to provide tools to empower women and their allies to serve as change agents within their organisations. In turn, these tools will enable organisations to promote substantive change that supports the retention of women within the nuclear sector.

Further best practices from countries adhering to the 2023 OECD Recommendation will be collected, documented and disseminated in the course of monitoring its implementation. The NEA continues to develop partnerships, mechanisms and tools to support countries to fulfil their commitment to improve the gender balance in the nuclear sector.

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