

GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GENDER EQUALITY PLANS



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D 3.1 GEP Implementation Guidelines

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Introduction and General Guidelines

The objective of Work Package 3 is to ensure the institutional buy-in to tailored GEPs. This requires consultation in the Gender Equality Plans construction phase for localised and coordinated action plans.

The first stage has been for mentor institutions (TCD and QUB) to formulate and agree a GEP template for ‘newbie’ institutions and, following testing, provide a blueprint for post-SAGE project RPOs to follow. This template draws upon the analysis and findings of the data collection and audits to inform and guide the construction of localised Gender Equality Plans that include: success criteria, timescale and responsible person(s)/body.

The SAGE Wheel Model for Gender Equality Plans provides the concept and template from which specific and tailored GEPs can be produced, following the necessary and in-

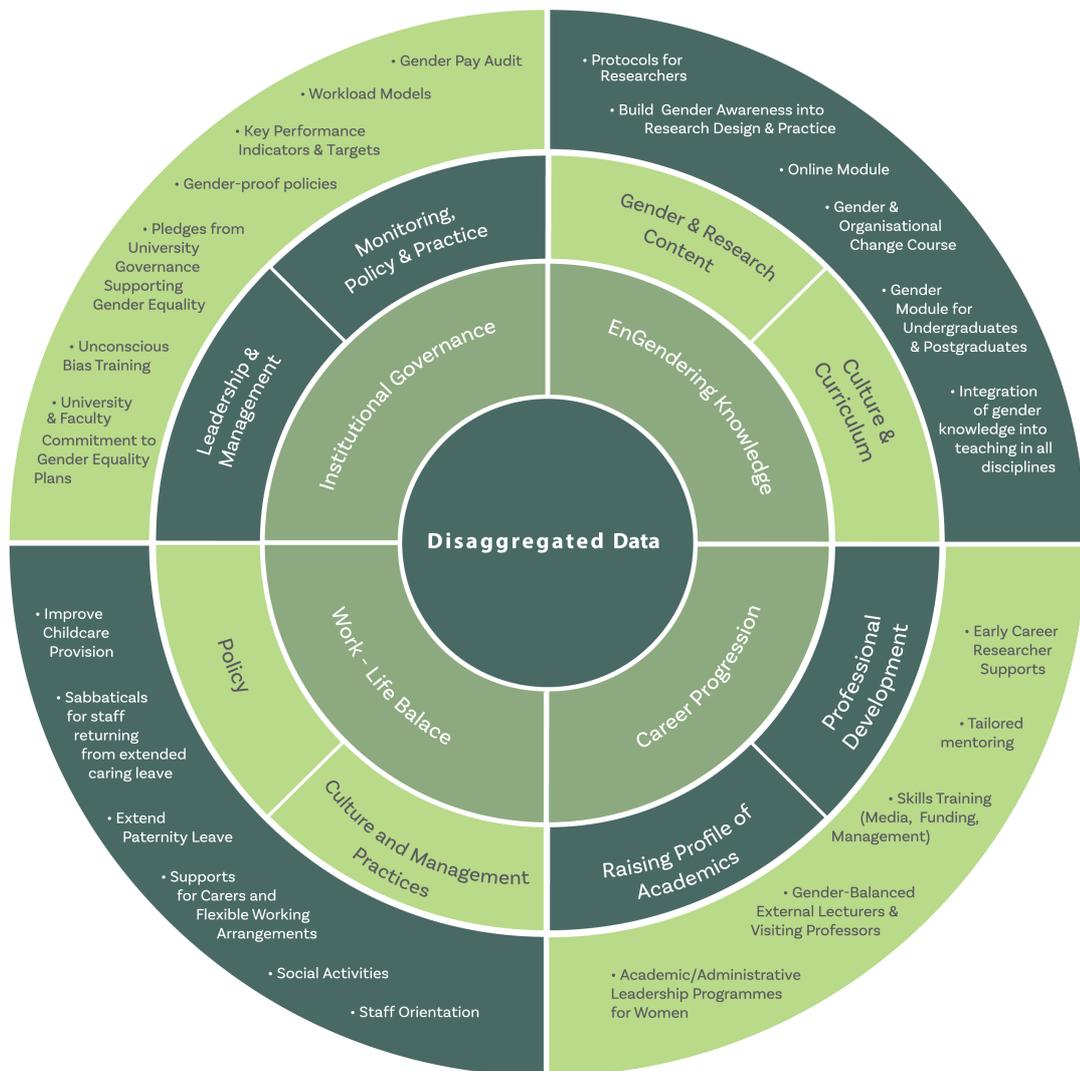


Figure 1: SAGE Wheel

depth data collection and analysis that has formed the first phase of SAGE activity.

The SAGE Wheel is the starting point, which is transformed by each university into a practical, detailed plan with measurable outcomes, specific timelines and responsible actors.

The SAGE goal is to promote GEPs, particularly in RPOs and RFOs that do not yet have them. The GEPs will incorporate ambitious, realistic and achievable goals, drawing upon the experience of SAGE partners and from experience at EU and abroad, matched with a detailed awareness of the situation at local/national level.

GEP design builds on the experience of the SAGE coordinator, TCD, in the FP7 INTEGER Project, as well as learning from other FP7 projects involving institutional transformation for gender equality, Athena SWAN Charter principles and practices and international good practice, including NSF ADVANCE in the United States.

All implementing partners have engaged in drafting GEPs tailored to their own institutions to ensure that each can implement their GEPs in a way that works within their institutional context, optimises time/energy and minimises any risks of low compliance, while aiming to increase the benefits from the GEPs.

This guide seeks to help partners plan and manage their GEP implementation projects, to realize increased gender equality and minimize organisational and compliance problems associated with the implementation of the GEP.

The component actions of the GEPs will incorporate gender in:

- Policies, Procedures and Practices
- Decision-making and Leadership;
- Core Values and Respect

This will be done along four key themes (represented in the four quadrants of the SAGE Wheel):

- Engendering Knowledge
- Career progression
- Work Life balance
- Institutional governance

The GEP implementation phases include each of the following steps, to be addressed by all implementing partners in the SAGE project, and are recommended to anyone embarking upon institutional transformation for gender equality:

- Identification of negotiation strategies within relevant offices of partners' Universities

- Detailed and localised GEP specifications, including scope, activities, milestones, and resources involved
- Risk assessment and risk mitigation plan
- Establishment of GEPs Core Implementation Team
- Identified GEP processes, including workflows, improvements, and changes
- Defined roles and responsibilities in GEP implementation
- Formalised presentation of GEPs to the senior decision-makers in each partner organisation

Implementation Strategy: Ensuring Sustainability

Building a structure for implementation of GEPs will help to ensure that they continue to be enacted beyond the short term, which is particularly important in the context of structural change for gender equality – by its nature a long-term process.

This section outlines some key considerations and strategies for developing a sustainable structure within an institution.

Context

In order to ensure that GEP implementation is conducted in a sustainable manner, which is essential to achieving lasting advancements in gender equality, it is vital that the approach taken is responsive to the specific cultural and structural conditions within the operating environment. Where possible, GEP actions and themes should be aligned with and influence institutional strategic plans and policies, and national and relevant EU policies.

For example, in Trinity College Dublin (TCD)¹ gender equality actions formed an essential element of institutional strategic plans, mission and vision statements: The university is committed to “advancing a structural change process to incorporate gender-balanced representation at all stages and levels, thereby enhancing the quality of Trinity’s institutional decision-making” GEPs can also highlight, strengthen or lead to the introduction of new equality related policies as in the case of TCD’s: *Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy*². GEP activities can assist RPOs and RFOs to comply with national policy initiatives. In Ireland, the Higher Education Authority³ that funds all RPOs and some RFOs now requires them, as stakeholders, “to develop a tailored implementation plan, specific to the particular stage that each organisation is at in addressing gender inequality. This plan will include a robust system of follow-up evaluation and performance monitoring linked to funding through the HEA’s strategic dialogue process”. At EU policy level, the Treaty of Rome, adopted in 1957, led to subsequent revisions to combat gender discrimination on grounds of sex, namely the principle of equal pay between men and women for equal work or work of equal value. This principle has been invoked within Trinity College Dublin to support the conduct of a Gender Pay Gap Audit in 2017, a potentially powerful component of any institutional GEP.

Shared Learning

There is a considerable wealth of information and learning now available to institutions newly embarking on this process from those that have already undertaken such efforts. Similarly, several previous EU gender equality and structural change have

¹ <https://www.tcd.ie/strategy/strategic-plan-201419.pdf>

² <http://www.tcd.ie/about/policies/assets/pdf/Gender%20Identity%20and%20Gender%20Expression%20PolicyFINAL.pdf>

³ http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/04/hea_review_of_gender_equality_in_irish_higher_education.pdf

produced valuable resources which can inform current and future work. Good practices can be drawn from these and adapted to the needs of each institution.

Composition of Implementation Teams

An implementation team will drive the application of the GEP, setting targets, monitoring progress, and ensuring engagement and support from key stakeholders. It is thus important that the members of the team be representative of the institution/department/unit which it represents. It is furthermore critical that the team contain individuals with the capacity to ensure successful implementation, e.g. through their role within the institution (hence the need to engage critical actors in this process). Experience with the INTEGER Project highlighted the importance of drawing upon international best practice in the formation and composition of teams and the Equality Challenge Unit's⁴ guidance for Athena SWAN Self Assessment Teams was adopted in Trinity College Dublin:

“the team should include people from a variety of backgrounds and with different experiences, with consideration of intersectionality:

- *A proportion of men and women that reflects the gender profile of the institution or department. Where the numbers of women (or men) in a department are very small, it may be that one gender is overrepresented on the SAT due to small numbers, for example: if there are only four women in a department of 25 and two of them sit on an SAT of six, the SAT would be 33% women while the department is only 16% women. It is vital that the composition of the SAT does not lead to a disproportionate burden on underrepresented groups.*
- *A group of academics, professional and support staff, researchers, and students at different grades and levels that is representative of the submitting unit. This should include full time and part time staff, and staff on different contract types.*

In addition, members should represent a mix of experiences that can inform the working of the team, particularly with regard to experiences of different family backgrounds and experience of balancing work and domestic responsibilities (e.g. career breaks or part-time/flexible working) or dual-career couples, etc.

This gender, seniority and mix of academic/research/student representation worked very well for the INTEGER institutional Implementation Team, as well as the INTEGER Teams formed in the Schools of Physics, Chemistry and Natural Sciences. Nominations for the institutional team included key decision makers e.g. Faculty Deans and the Chief Operating Officer, Directors of HR/Diversity and Inclusion. Invitations to join the College INTEGER Team were issued by the University's Vice Provost responsible for Gender Equality. At School level, invitations were issued, to a cross-section of academic/research/administrative and technical staff along with student/post-doc reps, by the Heads of School.

⁴ <http://www.ecu.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/SAT-Guidance-July-2017-PDF.pdf>

Hence GEP implementation teams should strive for gender-balance; a mix of academic and professional staff; and senior and junior staff (though this may be more appropriate for School/departmental teams). Teams should have a Champion who will act as the key driver.

Set Priorities and Build Momentum

Once established, the implementation teams should begin working with/on the GEPs, and identify priority, achievable actions to target at the outset. This step helps build momentum by delivering 'quick wins' early on in order to demonstrate success and generate support for further action. Realistic targets should be set for short, medium and longer term actions.



Overcoming Barriers and Engaging Key Stakeholders

It is to be expected that efforts to orchestrate significant change will be met with at least some resistance. This resistance can take many forms and come from an array of quarters. Therefore when designing gender equality initiatives and GEPs it is important to anticipate barriers and plan strategies to overcome them. This section outlines some approaches which might prove useful.

Evidence based approach

A fundamental tool in persuading any stakeholders, particularly those for whom achieving gender equality is not a primary agenda, is therefore ensuring that actions are data-driven, and that this can be clearly demonstrated. Reliable, gender-disaggregated databases are not only fundamental to the task of gender equality planning, but also as a persuasive tool for engaging stakeholders and validating the argument for support of gender equality initiatives. This will feed into the decision-making process.

Evidence from the INTEGER project underlined the importance of data-driven GEPS in making a convincing case for action, and has been used to inform the SAGE approach, drawing on the following experiences:

A common framework and an overall methodology for constructing the Transformational-Gender Action Plans [GEPs] can be shared by all implementing institutions, in order to foster a sustainable transformational change:

- **Undertaking primary data collection** (mostly quantitative, through an online survey on career paths, work environments and work-life balance issues for instance)
- **Collecting and analysing quantitative secondary data**
- **Reviewing national and institutional agendas**, policies, procedures and practices, as well as European recommendations
- **Carrying out quantitative and qualitative assessments** at the local level through site visits and/or focus groups.

Then, given the very different national settings, local cultures and types of institutions, diverse implementation strategies will need to be adopted for ensuring tailored, effective and sustainable T-GAPs [GEPs]. A systematic argument to support the case for gender equality in our institutions, accompanied by supporting evidence is presented in the comprehensive guide ‘Structural change in research institutions: Enhancing excellence, gender equality and efficiency in research and innovation’⁵.

⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/research/swafs/pdf/pub_gender_equality/structural-changes-final-report_en.pdf

Build alliances

Support can and should be sought from a variety of quarters, both inside and outside of the institution. An inclusive and transparent process is more likely to gain additional support, engage more people and reduce resistance, while having a greater number of individuals and offices involved in the efforts creates more ownership, increases commitment and helps ensure sustainability.

The following steps were developed and fine-tuned through INTEGER in Trinity College Dublin to overcoming obstacles and engage with key stakeholders:

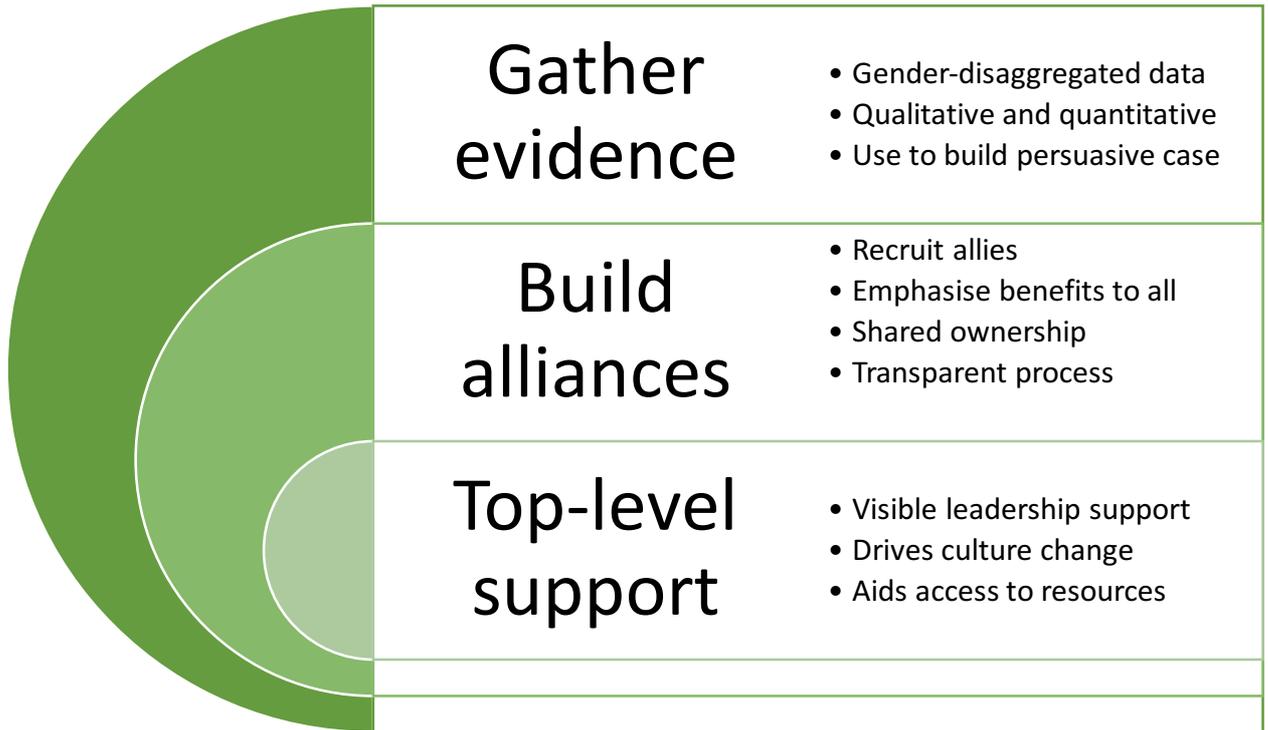
1. Engage, activate and get buy-in and support from key players
2. Organise and cascade Unconscious Bias awareness sessions
3. Establish Teams at local levels
4. Generate and refine GEPs by Teams: institutional/School/departmental levels
5. Capacity Building:
 - a. Leadership Development
 - b. Mentoring
 - c. Media Training
 - d. Presentation Skills
6. Dissemination Programme:
 - a. Public lectures – Distinguished speakers
 - b. Seminars
 - c. Exchange of Experience
 - d. Video production
 - e. Podcasts

Support of senior management

Support from the leadership figures of the institution is critical, and will be essential to ensure necessary changes can be implemented. This support needs to be visible. It will therefore help to set the tone for how others in the institution respond, thus paving the way for easier adoption of new measures. Arranging for the head of the institution to speak publicly (e.g. via videos, interviews, statements, etc.) about the institutional commitment to gender equality sends a powerful message. Ultimately, support from senior leadership will also be required to access the necessary financial resources to implement identified actions.

A good example of this can be seen in: *“Driving Excellence through Gender Equality”* on the University’s web site⁶ in which International Women’s Day 2015 was celebrated through a video about Trinity’s commitment to gender equality featuring the Provost and the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer.

⁶ https://www.tcd.ie/news_events/articles/trinity-drives-excellence-through-gender-equality/5459



Adoption and integration of GEPs

Following the initial design of a GEP, and the early pilot implementation phase, attention must turn to sustainability and formal adoption within the institution. Having a well-designed and data-driven GEP will greatly assist this. For SAGE GEPs, designed within the context of a time-specific project, a challenge remains to ensure that gender equality work can continue beyond the lifespan of the project, and once the project funding is no longer available.

Therefore when designing the GEPs, responsibility for individual actions should be carefully assigned to key actors or offices that will continue to oversee them into the future.

A formal process of validation of the GEPs should be enacted, via presentation to, and endorsement by, key institutional committees (e.g. Human Resources, Finance, Governing Committees).



In Trinity College Dublin, the results of data collection, analysis and recommendations for action were presented and adopted by the University's Executive Officer Group (senior management team), HR and Equality Committees, followed by the University's Council and Board.

GEP Implementation Guidelines Template

The enclosed template (Support for Implementing GEPs Template) has been built using the SAGE GEP Template (Deliverable 8.1) in order to create a common working scheme for all the partners. When filling in the template, more inspiration can be taken from the Gender Action Plan of the Coordinators, Trinity College Dublin, p. 59-68⁷.

The headings used connect the SAGE wheel with the spreadsheet. A clockwise order has been followed to include all the themes and sub-themes.

When filling in the template it is important to remember that:

- More than one action may be required to address an identified issue, therefore lines can be added
- Responsibility should be clearly assigned to a named individual (or at least function)
- Measures of success need to be clearly defined
- Assessment of impact is meant to describe change due to actions taken

The first quadrant of the SAGE wheel, EnGendering Knowledge, is different from the one in the INTEGER Wheel⁸. Given that the EnGendering Knowledge quadrant is new, pre-existing documents are not available for use, and partners must keep in mind that the activities related to this quadrant will be incremental. A first step to fill in this section will be to build from existing course modules (inventory) and their extension and/or piloting of new modules. Later on during the SAGE activities, partners will collaborate on the planned SAGE MOOC and test it, and this will allow for more “material” to be added to the quadrant.

The two columns to the right are very important: “problems encountered during implementation” and “strategies to solve them”. The first column will be filled in by each implementing partner, the second will be filled in with the assistance of the more experienced partners.

The same structure for all the files will facilitate the merging of the problems/solutions for the use of everybody, and will lead to the next SAGE step, the final GEPs, facilitating the exchange of knowledge and resources among partners.

⁷ <https://www.tcd.ie/diversity-inclusion/assets/pdfs/TCD%20Institutional%20Bronze%20Final.pdf>

⁸The INTEGER Wheel was a starting point for the SAGE CSA and Partners draw on the learning recorded in the INTEGER outputs to perform their activities.

Further reading

GEPs are currently implemented in numerous organisations all over Europe. Resources to help organisations in supporting GEPs are available on the Internet, and they may be vital for organisations not yet expert in the field. In the SAGE CSA, partners will work under the guidance of the two expert organisations, TCD and QUB, and their assistance combined with additional good practice examples will assist the Partners in building their own GEPs.

We recommend in particular:

- The GEAR action toolbox can be read or downloaded at <http://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gear>. The tool is provided by EIGE, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), an autonomous body of the European Union, established to contribute to and strengthen the promotion of gender equality.
- The Study: *Gender Equality Plans in the private and public sectors in the European Union*, released in March 2017 for the DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR INTERNAL POLICIES, POLICY DEPARTMENT C: CITIZENS' RIGHTS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIR. This research paper was requested by the European Parliament's Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality. The study aims to map existing Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) in the public and private sectors in the EU Member States, as far as data are available. It aims to analyse how GEPs impact the economic situation of women in the EU, as well as analysing the impact of the economic crisis and subsequent austerity on GEPs.

([http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2017/583139/IPOL_S TU\(2017\)583139_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2017/583139/IPOL_S TU(2017)583139_EN.pdf))

- The lessons from the INTEGER Project led to the compilation of INTEGR Tools for Action, based on good practices for adoption by RPOs seeking to improve the position and progression of women researchers through the implementation of gender action plans:

(<http://www.integer-tools-for-action.eu/en>)

Appendix - Support for Implementing GEPs Template

Please refer to D8.1 – Gender Equality Plan Template. This table reproduces an excel document which is an accompanying tool to Deliverable 3.1 GEP Implementation Guidelines. See p11, above, for details on how to use it.

N°	SAGE quadrant	SAGE theme	Macro action	Issue to be addressed/evidence	Planned action(s)	Start/end date	Person responsible	Measures of success	Assessment of impact	Problems encountered by the Partner during implementation	Strategies to solve the problems (TCD, QUB)
1	EnGendering Knowledge	Gender & Research Content	Protocols for researchers								
2	EnGendering Knowledge	Gender & Research Content	Build Gender Awareness into Research Design & Practice								
3	EnGendering Knowledge	Gender & Research Content	Online Module								
4	EnGendering Knowledge	Culture & Curriculum	Gender & Organisational Change Course								
5	EnGendering Knowledge	Culture & Curriculum	Gender Module for Undergraduates & Postgraduates								
6	EnGendering Knowledge	Culture & Curriculum	Integration of gender knowledge into teaching in all disciplines								
7	Career progression	Professional development	Early Career Researcher Supports								

8	Career progression	Professional development	Tailored mentoring								
9	Career progression	Professional development	Skills Training (Media, Funding, Management)								
10	Career progression	Raising profile of academics	Gender-Balanced External Lecturers & Visiting Professors								
11	Career progression	Raising profile of academics	Academic/Administrative Leadership Programmes for Women								
12	Work-Life Balance	Culture & Management Practices	Staff Orientation								
13	Work-Life Balance	Culture & Management Practices	Social Activities								
14	Work-Life Balance	Culture & Management Practices	Supports for Carers and Flexible Working Arrangements								
15	Work-Life Balance	Policy	Extend Paternity Leave								
16	Work-Life Balance	Policy	Sabbaticals for staff returning from extended caring leave								
17	Work-Life Balance	Policy	Improve Childcare Provision								

18	Institutional Governance	Leadership & Management	University & Faculty Commitment to Gender Equality Plans								
19	Institutional Governance	Leadership & Management	Unconscious Bias Training								
20	Institutional Governance	Leadership & Management	Pledges from University Governance Supporting Gender Equality								
21	Institutional Governance	Monitoring, Policy & Practice	Gender-proof policies								
22	Institutional Governance	Monitoring, Policy & Practice	Key Performance Indicators & Targets								
23	Institutional Governance	Monitoring, Policy & Practice	Workload Models								
24	Institutional Governance	Monitoring, Policy & Practice	Gender Pay Audit								