

# MINUSMA'S IMPLEMENTATION PLANS ON GENDER PARITY AND EQUALITY

## Introduction

MINUSMA, as a UN entity, is committed to achieving and sustaining gender parity and equality across all its components and at all levels, in conformity with the System-wide Gender Parity Strategy endorsed by the Senior Management Group on 23 August 2017 and announced by the Secretary-General on 12 September 2017.

MINUSMA is strongly committed to achieving gender parity and equality and has given its overall agenda priority. This is demonstrated through strengthening the Gender unit and the November 2019 appointment of six (6) Focal Points for Women in a bid to promote gender parity and equality within the Mission, as well as offering women more opportunities and better conditions conducive for their employment. To succeed, the Mission has developed an implementation plan to improve its overall gender parity and equality.

## Implementation Plan on Gender Parity and Equality

MINUSMA's implementation plan of the System-wide Strategy has been developed around specific objectives aimed at strengthening the recruitment and retention of female staff. Emphasis has been given to improving the working culture and living conditions, recruitment timelines, monitoring and reporting mechanisms, as well as the development of a communication plan. Of paramount importance is to ensure the commitment and accountability of Mission leadership.

### 1) Objectives

The implementation plan is structured around the following objectives:

1. Creating a conducive working environment to attract and retain female staff.
2. Ensuring that the Mission sets realistic goals and assesses its success accordingly.
3. Continuous monitoring of trends to identify possible challenges and how to overcome them.
4. Providing guidance tools and training to all hiring managers (HM).

### 2) Leadership and Accountability

In his Leadership Compact, the Head of Mission (HOM) is committed to substantially increasing the number of female staff in MINUSMA to reach gender parity and equality aligned with the set target. As such, the HOM has the overall accountability on the implementation of the Mission's strategy, which is in line with the objectives of the System-wide Strategy.

Hiring managers are as accountable as the HOM in reaching the Mission's gender parity and equality targets set forth in the System-wide Strategy for MINUSMA. To strengthen this accountability, the HOM has instructed all hiring managers to include at least one SMART (Specific; Measurable; Achievable; Relevant; Time-Bound) goal in their personal workplans, along with an action plan, that contributes to reaching gender parity and equality in their respective divisions/sections/units. The goal and action plan will be assessed at the end of the hiring manager's performance cycle to identify what has worked and what needs to be improved. The Gender unit and Human Resources section (HR) shall inform each HM of the efforts expected from their respective division/section/unit each year.

### 3) Communication and Awareness of Mission Gender Parity and Equality Progress

The HOM uses internal communication tools to regularly update hiring managers on the mission's gender parity and equality progress:

- ✓ Job opening broadcasts are sent to all Mission staff, as well as to targeted stakeholders outside of the Mission (e.g., internal and external outreach).
- ✓ Inter-office memoranda are sent for the attention of programme managers and/or targeted stakeholders.
- ✓ Townhalls and meetings are organized with gender experts to inform staff, as well as to receive feedback.
- ✓ Information is made available on Mission SharePoint for reference.

### 4) Monitoring and Reporting

The Chief of Staff (COS), the Director of Mission Support (DMS) and the Senior Gender Advisor monitor the Mission's gender parity and equality progress, prescribe remedial actions when necessary, and report quarterly to the HOM on performance. The DMS and the Senior Gender Advisor are also being encouraged to report on additional and innovative measures that Mission Support Division takes to improve both gender balance and the work environment.

The COS and the DMS work closely with the Senior Gender Advisor to facilitate the implementation of this plan. The Senior Gender Advisor also serves as the Technical Expert and assists the HOM in tracking Mission progress in achieving gender parity and equality and assessing measures taken to develop a gender-sensitive work environment. The Gender Focal Points of the different Mission components (civilian, police and force) and MINUSMA's Women Focal Points assist the Senior Gender Advisor in coordinating the implementation of the monitoring and related reporting requirements.

HR uses dashboards to facilitate analysis prior to making any staffing decision and makes gender data available to the HM for an informed decision.

Within the Delegation of Authority (DOA) framework, Gender representation is a Key Performance Indicator (KPI). The Mission's compliance to the KPIs is included in the monthly report provided to the Gender unit, as well as the monthly report sent to DMSPC at UN Headquarters.

## 5) Special Measures

MINUSMA has actively applied special measures to strengthen the Mission's recruitment, staff retention and talent management in line with the UN policy and guidelines of "ST/AI/2020/5 on the Temporary special measures for the achievement of gender parity".

1. Each division/section/unit of the Mission is required to strive for gender parity and equality. When it does not exist, the special measure of selecting a female candidate on the list or roster is required. The female candidate(s) must meet the job opening requirements and her qualifications, skills and experience must be equal or superior to those of male candidates.
2. Hiring managers are required to consider the potential of a female candidate to perform at the higher level even though prior opportunities have not been given. In addition, due regard shall be given to women already working with the United Nations whenever qualifications and experience requirements are met.
3. Should gender parity and equality in a division/section/unit not exist and the selection does not include female candidate(s) who have met the job opening requirements, the HM will provide HOM with a written analysis of the selection. The analysis, together with supporting documentation, will provide clear explanation of how the qualifications and experience of the male candidate(s) are superior to the female candidate(s). The submission will also include completion of form P.401 for the HOM's approval.
4. When the HOM approves the selection of a male candidate over a female candidate in divisions/sections/units below par on gender parity, the HOM will submit to the Executive Office of the Secretary-General the written analysis of point 3 above, together with the duly signed P.401 form for review.
5. The HOM gives high regard to the advancement of women within the UN common system. Therefore, when filling a temporary job opening (TJO) in the Professional category and above and General Services and related categories from a pool of internal candidates that include female(s) who meet the requirements, a woman will be selected provided that her qualifications and experience are substantially equal or superior to competing male candidates. It is the responsibility of HR to document how internal women candidates for TJOs have been reviewed.
6. HM and HR should ensure that every recruitment fosters the widest possible pool of talented women and men who can perform the functions. This includes outreach to both internal and external candidates.
7. The COS and the DMS shall implement the following special measures within the Mission to achieve the set gender parity and equality targets:

- a) Heads of divisions/sections/units (HM) shall submit their respective recruitment/staffing plans to the Office of the COS (OCOS) indicating how they intend to meet the gender parity and equality target(s) in their division/section/unit.
- b) Inter-office memoranda for recruitment selection submitted for approval will be checked against the requesting office's gender breakdown data by the Office of the COS prior to submission for approval.
- c) The HM shall minimize restrictive requirements to all extent possible and conduct additional outreach when posting a JO in a traditionally gender-imbalanced occupational group or job level.
- d) The HM shall report at the end of each performance period on their achievements on gender parity and equality targets and submit corrective measures if the targets have not been met.
- e) The HOM requires all HM, including at the D-1 level and above, to complete the training "Unconscious Bias." In addition, all HM, including D-1 level and above are reminded to complete the mandatory training of "I know Gender" and "Prevention of Sexual Harassment and Abuse by United Nations Personnel."
- f) The Force Commander and the Police Commissioner, through UN Headquarters, will advocate that TCCs/PCCs comply with their own national quota for female staff and nominate female officers on senior management and leadership positions. Quarterly reports should be submitted to the HOM on progress made in that regard.

## 6) Outreach Efforts

Successful outreach begins with conscientious workforce planning. To the extent possible, HM are required to identify vacant or soon-to-be vacant positions well in advance of the need to promote early outreach for a strong pool of candidates with a particular emphasis on female candidates. If possible, outreach should begin several months before the vacancy announcement is launched.

The HM shall adopt proactive outreach measures, in coordination with HR, to attract female applicants in all job openings but especially in areas traditionally dominated by male candidates (e.g., information and communications technology, security, engineering, transport). The outreach activity should be aligned with the targeted gender goals of the division/section/unit.

The HR section shall step-up efforts to reach out to female candidates through various channels including social media and university career websites, with a focus on functions and roles where representation is low.



## 10) Building on recent successes

MINUSMA has exercised significant efforts in continuing to achieve gender parity and equality within the Mission.

The Human Resources section has put in place concrete actions plans such as:

- a) Seeking cooperation from HM to duly fill out the Suitability Review Form when female candidates are not recommended for professional positions (P-2 and above), including confirming no unconscious bias was involved in the recruitment process.
- b) Requesting HM to ensure that they execute outreach within their professional networks to attract female candidates. Examples of this outreach would be social media advertisements, publishing positions in magazines and notifying rostered candidates with generic email messages.
- c) Sharing gender and geographical balance data with HM once the JO is published and closed.

MINUSMA has fully implemented the breastfeeding policy for female staff, and gender-sensitive guidelines have been issued related to flexible working arrangements (FWA).

### Notable Challenges

- Female candidates apply for a position but once selected they decline the offer and explain that they only applied to be placed on the roster.
- Due to the prevailing and deteriorating security situation within the Mission area, it has been difficult to attract female candidates.
- Turnover is quite high among female staff for multiple social and environmental reasons.

### Conclusion

MINUSMA places high value on the concept of gender parity and equality and will continue to foster an environment that is inclusive and promotes stability. The implementation of the MINUSMA gender parity and equality strategy is reviewed annually to assess progress and factor in newly issued gender-related policies and procedures, as well as revised targets. The Mission implementation plan is a living document and continues to evolve as required.

[Endorsed by the Chief of Staff]