⋙ POLICY BRIEF

GENDER BALANCE MATURITY MODEL

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The Monitoring Research & Planning (MRP) Department
with the Human Resources Department (HRD)

WHY GENDER BALANCE

Gender balance refers to the fair representation and participation of all genders, ensuring no group is systematically advantaged or disadvantaged. It aims for meaningful inclusion and equal access to opportunities, leadership, and resources.

It fosters equality, inclusivity, and diversity within an organization, contributing to improved staff welfare, positive work attitudes, and better organizational outcomes. Key examples:

Executive Summary
This Gender Balance Maturity Model (GBMM) report presents the findings of an NRA self-assessment into Gender Balance at the NRA. The GBMM, developed by the OECD (FTA) in collaboration with ATAF is a structured framework for assessing gender balance across five key areas: Strategy, Governance, Culture, Data, and External Engagement. The assessment was conducted through a structured survey and working group discussions. The findings show that while the NRA has taken steps to promote gender balance, there is still significant room for improvement. The report provides ten actionable recommendations under five themes. .

Improved Decision-Making: Diverse perspectives enhance problem-solving, creativity and innovation

Fair Opportunities: Ensures equal access to resources and opportunities, such as training and leadership roles, thereby optimizing resources distribution.

Workplace Satisfactions: Creates a more inclusive and supportive environment, improving employee moral and retention.

Reflecting Society: Represents the diversity of customers and other stakeholders, leading to more relevant and equitable services.

Reputation and Compliance: Meets ethical standards while enhancing the organizations public image. Publicly promoting this diversity and equitability within the organization can improve public trust and increase compliance..
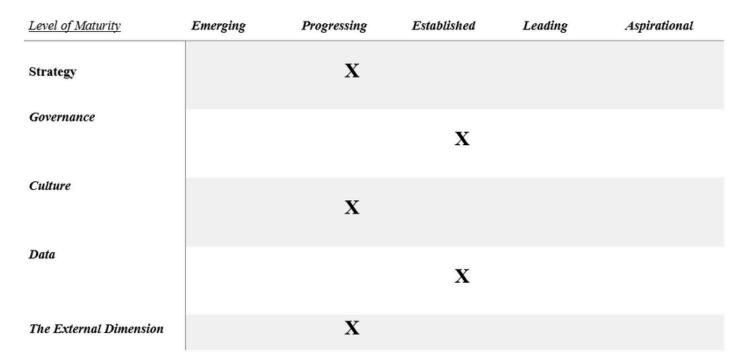
METHODOLOGY

This study utilized the **Gender Balance Maturity Model** (GBMM) to evaluate gender balance within the NRA and provide recommendations for improvement. The GBMM is the latest addition to the OECD's series of maturity models, developed in collaboration with the ATAF. These models serve as frameworks for organizational self-assessments and cover a variety of topics.

The GBMM outlines five organizational attributes to assess Gender Balance: i) **Strategy**, ii) **Governance**, iii) **Culture**, iv) **Data**, and v) **External Dimension**. To evaluate progress in these attributes, it defines five levels of maturity: i) **Emerging**, ii) **Progressing**, iii) **Established**, iv) **Leading**, and v) **Aspirational**. The model includes descriptions, allowing organizations to assign a maturity level to each attribute.

The MRP Department and HRD designed a survey based on these descriptions and conducted it in person with participants from various departments and seniority levels within the NRA. Each question required participants to provide explanations, and these comments formed the foundation of the results.

The survey responses were analysed, and each attribute was assigned a maturity level. The most significant and frequent comments were documented. Finally, a working group discussion was held amongst the GBMM implementation team to further interpret the survey results and gather additional insights.

SURVEY RESULTS

Level of Maturity	Emerging	Progressing	Established	Leading	Aspirational
Strategy		X			
Governance			X		
Culture		X			
Data			X		
The External Dimension		X			

KEY SURVEY COMMENTS

STRATEGY	The organization's strategy on gender balance appears unclear, with contradictory views on whether a policy exists. While some believe there is a policy and that it addresses various forms of discrimination, its lack of communication and focus on the underlying drivers of gender imbalance is evident.
DATA	Gender-specific data, such as recruitment and training statistics, is available in the HRD annual report, but its communication and follow-up actions are insufficient. The limited feedback from staff on gender balance data (e.g. recruitment and staff seniority by gender) likely reflects a lack of staff awareness of this data or a belief that a response will not lead to change.
EXTERNAL DIMENSION	While respondents recognize the need to consider gender balance in external-facing processes, there is no evidence of active efforts to address gender issues in interactions with taxpayers.
GOVERNANCE	Gender issues are taken seriously, but there is confusion over accountability, with differing opinions on whether responsibility lies with directors, HRD, or line managers. Discouraging staff from reporting gender balance issues.
CULTURE	A lack of surveys or even broad conversation on issues pertaining to gender has prevented a culture of gender awareness from developing. As such, existing communication channels such as notice boards and emails, which could play a role in raising awareness, are underutilized.

KEY WORKING GROUP COMMENTS

Drivers of Gender Strategy	Uncertainty about which NRA and national policies/laws, beyond labour laws and TACOS, guide the NRA gender strategy.
Training Imbalance	Noted gender disparities in training attendance.
Maternity and Paternity Leave	Discussed compliance with national laws, policy scope (e.g., relevance of marriage), and potential misuse of these policies.
Awareness Initiatives	Proposed campaigns and school visits to encourage female applicants to apply to NRA job advertisements.
Confidential Reporting	Suggested implementing gender officers and drop-boxes for anonymous reporting of concerns, potentially managed by HR or the welfare department
Mentorship Programs	Advocated for mentorship to support staff in career development and addressing discrimination, aligning with a prior CG recommendation

RECOMMENDATIONS

Communication:
- ·Introduce more frequent interaction and communication driven by senior staff, this will include activities such as periodic surveys and reports/memos on any actions taken.
- ·Increase lower seniority staff led communication by formalising communication channels, i.e. deciding and advertising which tools of communication, such as drop boxes/emails/WhatsApp's should be used for reporting issues of discrimination and which for general recommendations. Some of these tools must be made anonymous to encourage honest reporting and recommendations.

Training Sessions:
- ·Deliver periodic training sessions covering the importance of gender, policies, legislation and the resources available to staff

Data Collection and Analysis:
- ·Ensure that gender related data such as survey results and staff statistics are well advertised internally. This is particularly needed where actions are undertaken as a response to data. For example, if a survey identifies key concerns related to gender balance, a memo could highlight any actions that the NRA has taken in response. This will not only increase transparency but engender a culture of care within the organisation thereby promoting staff welfare and satisfaction and it will also encourage senior staff to act on these issues.

Responsibilities:
- ·Clarify and publicize who holds responsibility for gender balance at the NRA. This will include multiple parties, e.g. line managers may be responsible for advising and supporting their team members on specific instances of discrimination which can then be escalated to HRD if desired.
- ·Establish gender officer roles, suggested either 2 staff in each department or several staff centralized in HRD.
- ·Introduce mentoring scheme.

Inform Staff of Policies:
- ·Review and circulate all relevant policies to ensure staff are well-informed and understand the principles of gender-balance strategies.
- ·Ensure all internal policy documents refer to national policies where appropriate.
- ·Ensure that public engagement efforts highlight that gender-balance is taken seriously at the NRA.