E&S Center at DU

Strategy plan of Gender Mainstreaming at Damascus University

Strategy plan of Gender Mainstreaming at Damascus University

Planning phase

Step 1 — Creating accountability and strengthening commitment

Step 2 — Allocating resources

Step 3 — Conducting an organisational analysis

Step 4 — Developing a gender mainstreaming strategy and a working plan

Implementation phase

Step 5 — Establishing a gender mainstreaming support structure

Step 6 — Setting gender equality objectives

Step 7 — Communicating gender mainstreaming

Step 8 — Introducing gender mainstreaming methods and tools

Step 9 — Developing gender equality competence

Step 10 — Establishing a gender information management system

Step 11 — Launching gender equality action plans

Step 12 — Promoting equal opportunities within the organisation's personnel

Evaluation and follow up phase

Step 13 — Monitoring and steering organisational change

Planning phase

Step 1 — Creating accountability and strengthening commitment

The commitment of all staff in an organisation is crucial to mainstream gender equality. Making gender equality a shared value and a standard way of thinking as well as something that staff members are accountable for helps to bring an organisation and all its activities in line with the objective of gender equality. Gender mainstreaming requires all staff members to integrate gender equality into their respective fields of responsibility. However, in reality, the idea that 'everybody is responsible' can easily lead to hardly anybody feeling responsible. Hence cross-cutting strategies like gender mainstreaming can evaporate swiftly if good intentions fail to be followed through in practice.

Key aspects:

- Making gender equality part of the organisation's general mandate.
- The university have an official statement on their goal for gender equality and their strategy for pursuing gender mainstreaming.
- Ensuring gender mainstreaming integrated in the regulations of the organisation and in both the formal and informal standard operating procedures.
- The executive staff members demonstrate their commitment to gender equality and the implementation of gender mainstreaming, in both formal and informal ways.
- the executive staff members exercise their responsibility for the implementation of gender mainstreaming, both by strengthening the commitment of all staff members and by adopting a gender equality perspective in their regular decision-making.

Step 2 — Allocating resources

Allocating sufficient resources for initiating and supporting organisational change is a key factor for success. It is the responsibility of an organisation's management to provide the necessary resources. Furthermore, allocating sufficient resources is a strong signal of the management's commitment

to implementing gender mainstreaming. When calculating the resources needed for the process of change, both financial resources and personnel resources, i.e. working time, should be taken into account.

Key aspects:

- the financial resources allocated for introducing gender mainstreaming realistically calculated and sufficient in order to ensure long-term success.

- the amount of working has time that staff members are to spend on the process of change been realistically calculated? Is it transparent and is it acknowledged as being a valuable part of the regular job.

- The assignment of new tasks to the gender equality staff accompanied by a corresponding increase in working time available for this purpose.

Step 3 — Conducting an organisational analysis

In order to provide all the information needed for the successful introduction or advancement of gender mainstreaming, an organisational analysis should cover all dimensions of organisational change.

Key aspects:

- Which organisational analysis approach (e.g. gender audit) and which methods are to be applied?

- Who is to conduct or facilitate the organisational analysis? Do the persons assigned to this task have the expertise and methodological skills needed?

- The results comprehensive and instructive are in order to identify the most promising way to implement gender mainstreaming with regard to the organisation in question.

- The results to be discussed with all stakeholders.

Step 4 — Developing a gender mainstreaming strategy and a working plan

Since there is no one-size-fits-all recipe for initiating organisational change and implementing gender mainstreaming that is guaranteed to work for all organisations, each organisation needs to develop its own approach, one that is best adapted its own specific structure.

Working plan

- Establishing a gender mainstreaming support structure

- Setting gender equality objectives

- Communicating gender mainstreaming

- Introducing gender mainstreaming methods and tools

- Developing gender equality competence

- Establishing a gender information management system
- Launching gender equality action plans
- Promoting equal opportunities within the University's personnel
- Monitoring and steering organisational change

Key aspects:
- All the necessary information is available in order to develop a suitable gender mainstreaming strategy.
- Who is involved in developing the gender mainstreaming strategy? Do the persons involved have the expertise needed in order to develop a sustainable strategy?
- The gender mainstreaming strategy is comprehensive and complete in terms of the steps for introducing gender mainstreaming.
- The working plan for implementing the gender mainstreaming strategy is complete in terms of planned activities, defined milestones, responsibilities, allocated resources and deadlines.
- Who is responsible for implementing the working plan and monitoring the introduction of the gender mainstreaming strategy?

Implementation phase
Step 5 — Establishing a gender mainstreaming support structure
To ensure that a gender mainstreaming support structure can fulfil its role and contribute to the successful introduction of gender mainstreaming, it is vital that the exact tasks that the structure is to fulfil are clearly defined from the outset.
Key aspects:
- The gender mainstreaming support structure's role, tasks and integration into the University's standard procedures are clearly defined.
- The precise organisational form of the gender mainstreaming support structure, and its position within the University is in accordance with the role and tasks that it is to fulfil.
- The support structure's resources and competencies (qualifications, time, financial resources, authority) are adjusted to suit the defined tasks.
- The support structure's role is clearly communicated to the staff, together with the respective responsibilities of all staff members, in order to avoid responsibility for implementing gender mainstreaming being left with the support structure.

- The support structure have both a direct link to the senior management as well as a good

connection to operative staff.

Step 6 — Setting gender equality objectives

The definition of clear-cut equality targets for an organisation creates accountability by specifying the exact focus of gender mainstreaming. These major objectives form a guiding framework for implementing gender mainstreaming within an organisation; they offer clear guidance for staff members, thus simplifying implementation.

Key aspects:

- The University have stated gender equality goals both for the University as a whole and for its different spheres of activity.

- These goals both ambitious and realistic are as well as defined in a precise way so that they can be

the driving force behind action and provide staff members with clear guidance.

- The University's gender equality goals are firmly anchored within its general target architecture.

- Goals are clearly communicated with the members of staff.

- How is the attainment of these goals to be monitored and evaluated? Have indicators been defined for this purpose?

Step 7 — Communicating gender mainstreaming

A communications strategy to support the introduction of gender mainstreaming primarily refers to internal communication. However, external communication is also a key aspect in terms of making gender equality part of an organisation's identity and culture, and establishing credibility.

Key aspects:

- All staff members are aware of the intended process of organisational change. Have they been informed about the planned activities, the reasons behind these and the aims of this process.

- Transparency is ensured during the entire process of introducing gender mainstreaming.

- Both formal and informal channels are used within the University to communicate the objectives and requirements of implementing gender mainstreaming.

- Gender equality is a visible part of the University's external identity and self-portrayal.
- The University's public relations work gender is sensitive in terms of language and illustrations. Staff members who are responsible for public relations work are trained in gender-sensitive language and avoiding gender stereotypes.

Step 8 — introducing gender mainstreaming methods and tools

Gender mainstreaming cannot be implemented with one single tool. Since it is a process whereby a gender equality perspective is integrated into a range of different tasks, a variety of methods and tools that support its implementation are used in the different operational work flows in a particular field of activities.

Key aspects:

- The University has gender mainstreaming methods and tools for all stages of routine procedures.
- The gender mainstreaming methods and tools are custom-made and suitable with respect to the functionality and regular procedures of the University. The tools have been tested and adapted.
- The gender mainstreaming tools are being systematically and continuously applied.
- The staff members who are to apply the tools have the gender knowledge and methodological skills needed to ensure a sound basis for the implementation of gender mainstreaming.

Step 9 — Developing gender equality competence

Building gender equality competence is a key component in introducing gender mainstreaming. However, it is important that competence development is embedded into a coherent gender mainstreaming strategy and that this is approached in a systematic manner.

Key aspects:

- All staff members are performing their respective tasks and following the rules of procedure in order to effectively implement gender mainstreaming.
- The human resources management tools that are typically used within the University are also being used to strengthen commitment and create accountability for gender mainstreaming.

- All staff members have the gender expertise and the methodological skills they need to fulfil their responsibility for implementing gender mainstreaming.

- The University has a competence development plan to help systematically develop gender equality competence. Have existing quality standards for gender equality competence development initiatives also been considered?

- The activities for developing gender equality competence are fully integrated into a coherent gender mainstreaming strategy and are they approached in a systematic manner.

Step 10 — Establishing a gender information management system

Every organisation has its own ways of collecting relevant data and distributing materials relevant to the tasks of the workforce; these can be built upon when setting up a gender information management system.

Key aspects:

- Comprehensive yet tailor-made information on gender issues is relevant to the University's policy areas and fields of activity available and easily accessible for all staff members.

- Relevant materials on gender issues are provided in a clearly structured manner. These materials are actively distributed among staff members.

- The gender information management system are supplemented and updated on a regular basis.

Step 11 — Launching gender equality action plans

Gender equality action plans serve to break down and set out an organisation's overarching gender equality objectives to suit the individual units within the organisation and the specific fields of activity that are involved.

Key aspects:

- All units of the University have gender equality action plans

- The gender equality action plans include a well-substantiated and comprehensive gender analysis of the respective field of activity, defined gender equality objectives, a clearly stated approach to addressing gender issues as well as monitoring indicators.

- Who is responsible for implementing and monitoring the gender equality action plans?

- There is a fixed date set for evaluating implementation and the achievement of targets.

Step 12 — Promoting equal opportunities within the University's personnel

There are various fields of activity that can have an influence on internal equal opportunities. The choice of which field to focus on depends largely on the state of existing provisions for equal opportunities within an organisation.

Key aspects:

- Measures are being implemented to improve the gender balance in staffing patterns and to increase the representation of women in decision-making positions.
- Recruitment procedures and performance appraisal criteria have been revised. Tools for job evaluation have been introduced that are free from gender bias.
- The University is engaged in reconciling the balance of work and family life for its staff members.
- The organisational culture provides a respectful and empowering atmosphere in the workplace. The University has clear procedures for preventing and dealing with sexual harassment in the workplace.

Evaluation and follow up phase

Step 13 — Monitoring and steering organisational change

In principle, monitoring the process of organisational change means nothing more than checking at regular intervals whether, or to what degree, the activities outlined in the working plan have been implemented and whether predefined milestones have been reached.

Key aspects:

- How is the process of organisational change towards gender mainstreaming steered, and progress monitored?
- The working plan is updated on a regular basis.
- The gender mainstreaming strategy is reviewed at regular intervals and adapted if necessary.
- Who is responsible for monitoring and steering the introduction of gender mainstreaming?

Reference:

- Institutional Transformation Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit, The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), Vilnius, LITHUANIA. http://www.eige.europa.eu