



BETTER GOVERNANCE FOR GENDER EQUALITY

OECD 2017

WHY DOES GOVERNANCE MATTER FOR DELIVERING GENDER EQUALITY?

There is growing global awareness that **gender equality is the cornerstone of inclusive growth**. Providing equal access to public and economic opportunities to both men and women is vital to accomplishing a more sustainable economy and improving national well-being. Failing to do so means losing the human capital of approximately half the citizenry, thus heavily compromising countries' full potential for growth and national development.

Governance is key to delivering gender equality results. Meaningful changes on the ground require a coordinated, competent and powerful whole-of-government commitment, and clear and effective mechanisms in place within and across government institutions to be able to translate public policies, programmes, services and budgets into concrete benefits for men and women.

All institutions and policy areas count for gender equality as they all impact men and women, and yet in a different way due to their different circumstances. This is why mainstreaming gender considerations throughout government is a fundamental commitment of countries that aspire to eliminate gender-based discrimination across the board and realise a fully inclusive society.

Fair representation and participation of women and men in public life, including in leadership positions, is crucial to realising gender equality.

The composition of public institutions must reflect society if it is to be perceived as legitimate, capable of delivering just policies and upholding equality before the law. Ensuring gender balance in public decision making has been increasingly highlighted by OECD countries as a key governance issue related to fairness, transparency and inclusive policy outcomes. Only gender balanced and different policy-makers can have the know-how to tackle the different needs of citizens.

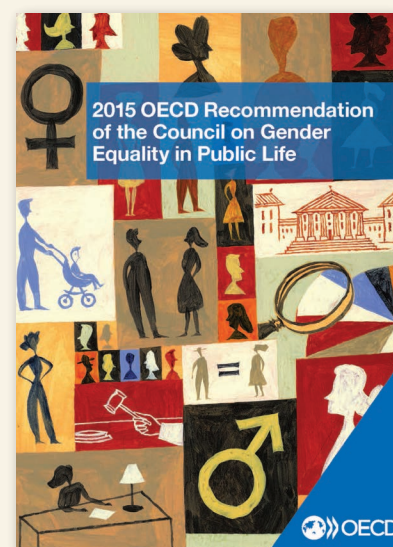
2015 OECD RECOMMENDATION ON GENDER EQUALITY IN PUBLIC LIFE

The **2015 OECD Recommendation**

offers a whole-of government approach to closing remaining gender gaps in public life, scaling up inclusive approaches to policy making and public service delivery, and monitoring continuous progress in gender equality.

It focuses on three thematic areas:

1. good governance and accountability for gender equality;
2. closing gender gaps in leadership in all branches of power; and
3. gender equality in public employment.



SOUND GOVERNANCE FOR GENDER EQUALITY REMAINS A DISTANT GOAL: WHAT CHALLENGES REMAIN?

OECD countries have made important progress in closing the gender divide in public life. However, much still needs to be done to equally include men and women in policy making and public governance, and to fully equip governments to effectively deliver gender fair policy outcomes. Women still lag behind men in access to decision-making and leadership positions.

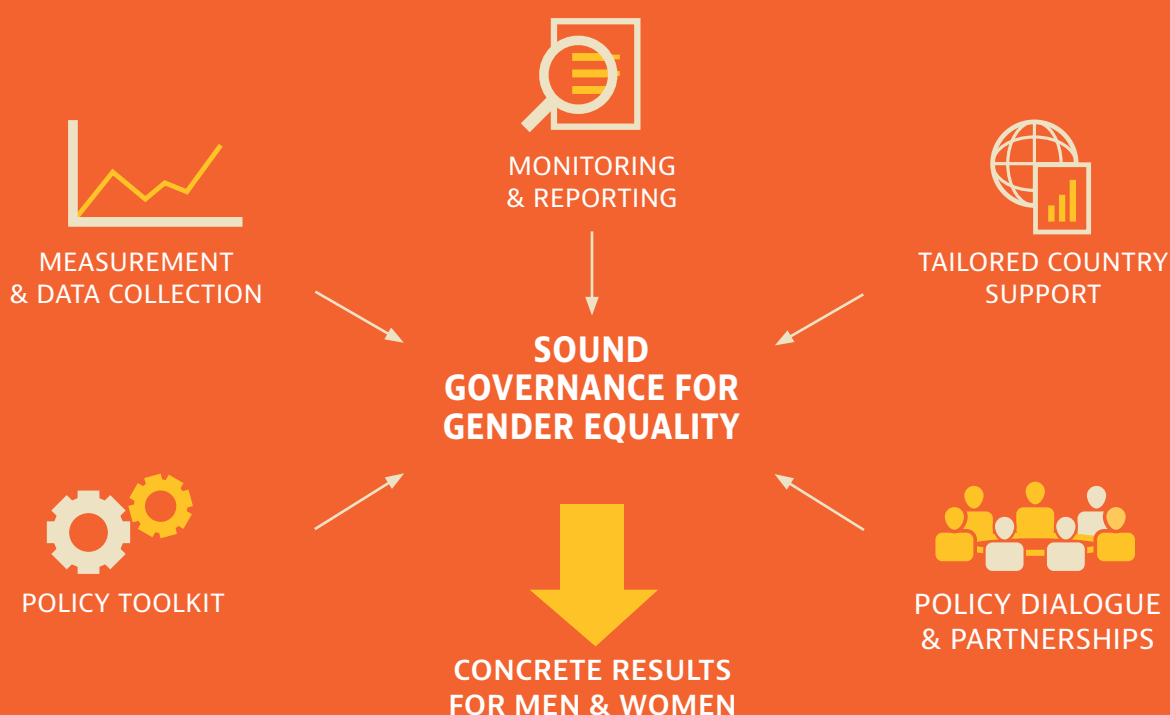
- How can men and women equally participate in decision making and access political and public careers?
- How can governments be better equipped to deliver meaningful agriculture, security, infrastructure policies – just to mention a few - for men and women?
- How can governments measure the gender-differentiated impact of their policy efforts on men and women?
- How can national statistics systematically inform gender sensitive reforms?

These are some of the crucial questions the OECD aims to help countries answer within the framework of the **2015 OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life**.

TOOLS FOR SOUND GENDER EQUALITY GOVERNANCE

The OECD has developed an implementation strategy and road map to support member and partner countries in upholding the standards of the 2015 OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life. The strategy reflects an integrated and comprehensive approach to analysing, strengthening, benchmarking and monitoring public sector policies and performance vis-à-vis gender equality. Policy dialogue is always a key element of OECD support and is generally integrated into all our tools.

TOWARDS AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO IMPLEMENTING THE 2015 OECD RECOMMENDATION ON GENDER EQUALITY IN PUBLIC LIFE



THE OECD POLICY IMPLEMENTATION TOOLKIT ON GENDER IN GOVERNANCE (2017- ON GOING)

The OECD produced a **policy implementation Toolkit on Gender in Governance** to provide countries with concrete guidelines in the implementation of the 2015 OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life. The Toolkit aims to unpack the dense provisions of the Recommendation, indicating more concrete priorities, assessment questions, key actions and pitfalls to avoid, with compelling good practice examples per topic. The Toolkit is intended to be a living document, also available online, where countries can continue to contribute with updated practices, insights and lessons learnt.



OECD “GENDER IN GOVERNANCE” SURVEY TOOLS (2017)

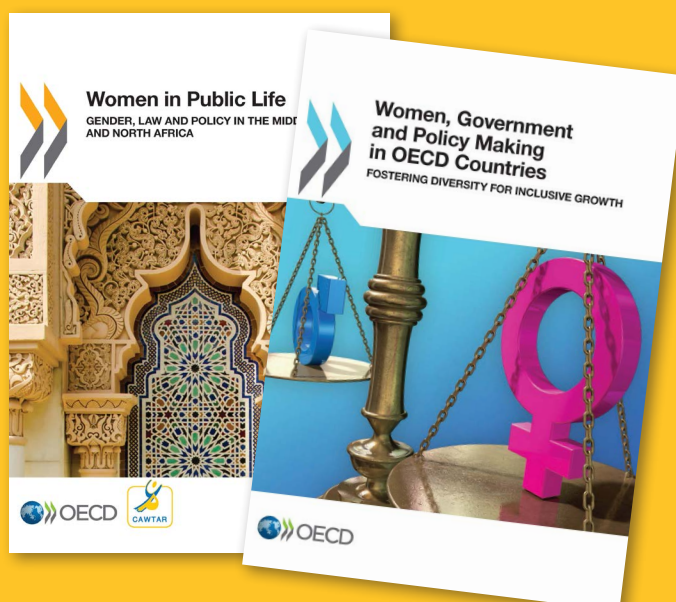
The OECD has developed four Gender in Governance Survey Tools for systematic and tailored data collection: the OECD Survey on Gender Sensitive Electoral and Legislative Practices; the OECD Survey on Gender Sensitive Practices in the Judiciary; the OECD Survey on National Gender Equality Frameworks and Public Policies; and the OECD Survey on Gender Equality in Public Employment. The Surveys are being circulated in 2017 and they will be regularly submitted to countries every five years to measure progress on the implementation of the 2015 OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life.

OECD COMPARATIVE “GENDER IN GOVERNANCE” STUDIES (2009 – ON GOING)

Women, Government and Policy Making in OECD Countries: Fostering Diversity for Inclusive Growth (2014) identifies a range of policy recommendations related to closing the remaining gaps in gender equality in public life. This report served as a basis for the Recommendation and as our flagship will be updated on an ongoing basis.

Since its inception in 2009, **the MENA-OECD Gender Focus Group “Women in Government Platform”** has provided a forum for policy dialogue and capacity building. The platform has been successful in assisting governments in the MENA region to:

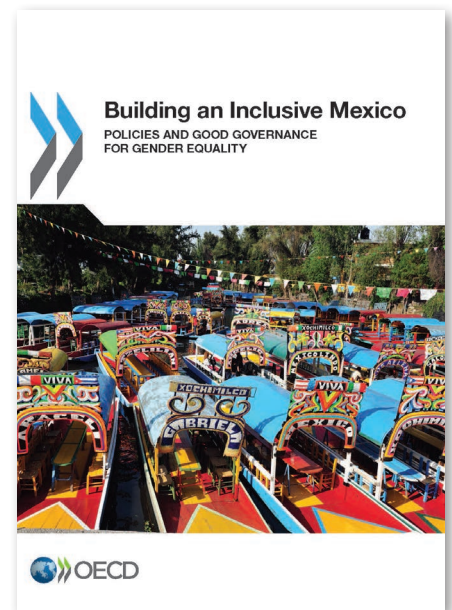
- establish legal frameworks for gender equality;
- strengthen institutions for adopting gender sensitive policies;
- develop policy tools and guidelines for gender equality;
- implement policies to promote equal representation of women in the Civil Service;
- implement policies for improved work-life balance; and
- foster women’s access to leadership in politics, judiciary and the civil service.



COUNTRY-TAILORED GENDER STUDIES

MEXICO (2017): the OECD conducted a study analysing key outcomes in education and employment in Mexico; examining gender equality frameworks and policies and ways and means to improve their effectiveness (including by strengthening institutional frameworks and government capacities); women's access to leadership across the public sector and measures to ensure gender-balanced representation.

KAZAKHSTAN (forthcoming 2017): the OECD conducted a Gender Policy Review of Kazakhstan which aims to facilitate the development and reinforcement of institutional mechanisms and strategic capacities in the Government of Kazakhstan to enable and sustain the full participation of women in society based on international best practices. The Highlights brochure of the Kazakhstan Review is available on line <http://oe.cd/gender-roundtable>.



To meet increasing country demands, the OECD is working towards developing innovative **“Gender in Governance” Case Studies** tailored to have a Sectoral, Territorial and/or Policy-Specific focus (such as gender and digital government; gender and access to justice; gender equality delivery at state level, etc). These practical studies will assist governments in delivering policies to their maximum impact.

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDES

The first **OECD “Good Practice Guide for Gender Balance”** was developed at the request of the UAE Government. The Guide provides an overview of opportunities in the effective implementation of gender equality within the management, performance and policy framework of public and private institutions in the UAE. The Guide was introduced at the 2017 World Government Summit in Dubai and will be launched internationally in the second half of 2017.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit <http://oe.cd/gender-gov>

Or contact: Tatyana Teplova, Deputy Head of Division - tatyana.teplova@oecd.org

Elena Gentili, Policy Analyst - elena.gentili@oecd.org

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