GENDER ANALYSIS TOOLKIT

Section 4

How can I advocate for gender analysis?

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ADVOCACY AND OVERCOMING RESISTANCE[1]

Gender analysis challenges the status quo. It demands changes in thinking, beliefs and behaviour at the personal and organisational levels. These kinds of changes often require 'champions' of gender equality to advocate for action, including gender analysis. This may be met by cultural and organisational inertia, or by resistance. Identifying types of resistance and strategies to respond to them will help promote gender analysis and subsequent action.

Resistance	Responses
Denial and inversion Individuals in power completely deny the existence of gender gaps or discrimination against women. 'Women already have equality', 'it is their own fault if they don't take advantage of these opportunities' and 'gender analysis is not relevant to this topic/issue/program' are common arguments.	Present undeniable statistical evidence (see the gender statistics in Section 3 of this Toolkit). Present actual examples, including personal accounts of discrimination and the consequences.
Dilution and selection Power structures and individuals acknowledge women's issues but only in ways that will not threaten the control of resources or engagement. For example, they may acknowledge gender gaps but deny discrimination against women or any structural problem caused by resources and decision-making processes being controlled by men.	Do not be content with the identification of women's issues at the level of defining the problem. Insist that the program or project's design must feature women's participation throughout. Also insist on objectives that promote social and economic engagement by women.

Subversion

The leadership does not provide the resources for change.

For example, staff who do not support gender analysis may be appointed to the task, decisions may be constantly referred up or down the hierarchy, files may be lost and meetings not attended.

Be aware of these tactics and engage 'champions' internally and/or externally from various organisations (government, non-government, profit, non-profit) to further the issues.

Document the processes and raise the issues regularly and often.

Shelving and lip service

Leaders praise attention to gender issues but question the timing for action ('now is not the right time' or 'we've already done that'), or the actions of leaders do not match the enthusiastic words.

Engage champions at a high level within an organisaion to promote the issues and embed gender perspectives in strategic policies as an integral part of organisational activities, not as an 'add-on'.

Ensure a monitoring and evaluation system is in place formally or informally.

Set up a reference group around the project.

Compartmentalisation

The leadership passes all responsibility for gender analysis and action on equality to a designated women's policy officer or the Office for Women.

Repeatedly raise gender issues as core to the efficiency and organisational health of an organisation. Point out that addressing gender inequities and inequalities is relevant across the Queensland community.

Refer to the formal documents that support this approach (for example, the Queensland Women's Strategy).

Tokenism

One woman is given a position on a committee or board to give the 'women's point of view'.

Call out tokenism. Take steps to find allies and build support for the woman both within and outside the committee or board (for example, with a mentor, specific support person or a reference group).

Further investigation

When compelled to show some action on a gender gap or discrimination issue, leaders suggest a research project because 'we don't know enough about this problem' – effectively postponing any action.

Agree that we can always find out more about an issue, but assert that this is not a pre-condition for action.

Give examples of other issues where more research is needed but programs are under way.

Suggest an initial literature review to summarise the body of evidence.

Recommend research that is action-oriented and has delivery and review built in as a pilot phase.

Undervaluing gender statistics 1

Leadership claims that adding a statistical breakdown by sex will cost too much.

Point out the following:

- There is usually minimal cost in producing gender statistics with existing instruments. In some cases, it simply involves the addition of an extra question or column specifying sex.

- At analysis time, the main cost would be the time involved in running extra tabulations, but in many cases, sex can simply be added to existing tabulations.

- Significant cost is usually only incurred when a completely new investigation (such as a survey) is carried out.

Undervaluing gender statistics 2

Leadership claims that disaggregating data by sex will adversely affect the quality of the data.

Point out that the integration of a gender perspective will enrich the information available from the investigation and increase its value.

Stress that disaggregation by sex often results in more accuate data, as it allows for additional checks of data collection and recording.

ADVOCACY AND BEING ASSERTIVE[2]

The ability to be assertive is an important skill for overcoming resistance and helping build individual and organisational support for gender analysis. It is also useful for advancing gender equality in organisational cultures where women are taught not to act assertively. The following strategies will help you to advocate viewpoints and agendas, and manage resistance.

Identify allies

- Identify allies who can provide support, confidence and reassurance at various organisational levels.

- For example, senior management 'champions' can provide leadership, facilitating and rewarding efforts to bring gender perspectives to the centre of organisational activities. Other staff can contribute to cultural change and advocate for gender consideration in their activities.

- Having identified possible allies, spend some time talking with them about the issues and developing a strategy, as well as soliciting their support in tricky situations.

Return to the issues

- If no resolution is immediately forthcoming, return to the issues regularly and often.

- Think of a variety of settings in which you can raise and address the issues.

- For example, setting up a special meeting to discuss the issue with relevant colleagues, using an opportunity to raise it in different meetings, talking about it informally with colleagues when the opportunity arises, following up on informal or formal meetings.

- Be on the lookout for potential favourable occasions to raise issues. Don't let an opportunity go by.

Anticipate resistance

- Try to anticipate the types of resistance that are likely to arise.

- Develop appropriate responses before resistance occurs.

- Allies can be helpful in developing these responses. For example, role-playing with allies to practise how to deal with resistant people or business units.

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE:
Towards Gender Parity: Women on Boards Initiative

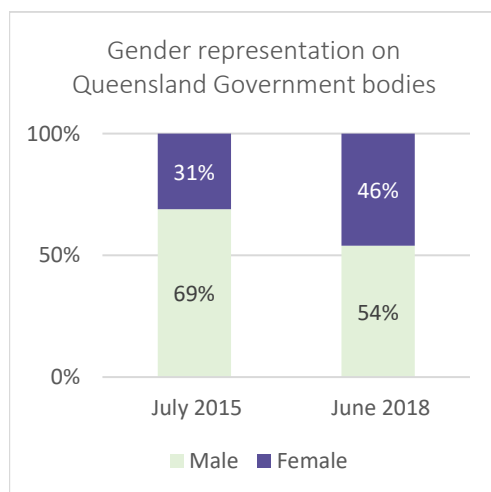### Gender diversity targets

In July 2015, the Queensland Government established gender diversity targets[3] to increase the representation of women on Queensland Government boards and other bodies:

- 50 per cent of all new board appointees to Queensland Government bodies are to be women

- 50 per cent representation of women on Queensland Government bodies by 2020.

The government also established the *Towards Gender Parity: Women on Boards Initiative* to provide support to achieve the targets. The initiative provides:

- government, business and community sectors with practical supports, including an online suite of resources and tools to drive inclusion and cultural change and support an increase in women's representation on boards

- women seeking board appointments with tools and information to assess their board readiness, prepare and apply for appointments, and connect to mentoring, education and board matching services.

Gender diversity target results as at 30 June 2018

Gender representation on Queensland Government bodies

	July 2015	June 2018
Female	31%	46%
Male	69%	54%

Male ■ Female

All appointees to Queensland Government bodies

Male 51%
Female 49%

Male ■ Female

Women's representation on Queensland Government bodies increased from 31 per cent in July 2015 to 46 per cent in June 2018.
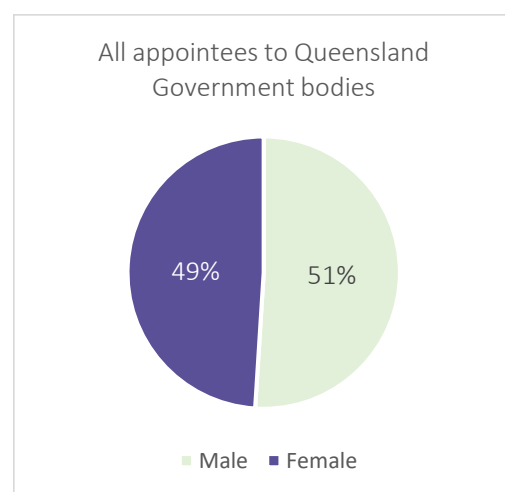
Women comprised 49 per cent (or 1,141) of all appointees (including re-appointees) to Queensland Government bodies between July 2015 and June 2018.

[1] Acknowledgments to United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and World Bank Institute, 2010, *Developing gender statistics: a practical tool*; and United Nations Development Programme, 2001, *Learning & Information Pack – Process and Advocacy Skills for Gender Mainstreaming*.

[2] Acknowledgments to UNDP, *Draft Learning & Information Pack – Process and Advocacy Skills for Gender Mainstreaming.*

[3] The target applies to 239 boards designated by the Queensland Government as "in scope". The target does not apply to the following government bodies/ roles on the Queensland Register of Appointees: (i) courts and tribunals (as the target is directed at board or committee appointments); (ii) Government and Non-Government ex-officio positions (as these appointments are by position); full-time or part-time statutory office holders (as the target is directed at board or committee appointments); and bodies established to meet inter-jurisdictional agreements (as appointees are decided with the agreement of another State or the Commonwealth).