

Gender Equality Organizational Assessment Tool

**WORLD CUSTOMS
ORGANIZATION**



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Introduction

Customs in the 21st Century requires administrations to play a wide range of roles for the benefit of the country they serve. Whether they are required to focus on revenue collection, trade facilitation, supply chain security or the protection of society, Customs administrations need also to achieve a high level of performance and commitment to service. Customs development requires considerable efforts, whether these efforts go towards the implementation of technical international standards and best practices or towards very important cross-cutting organizational development aspects. WCO Members continue to devote significant resources and energy to building their capacity with the aim of creating Customs administrations that best respond to their environment and meet the objectives set by their government.

All partners in the Customs community agree that people are an organization's most important asset and, in this respect, careful attention must be paid to ensure the most favourable conditions are created for people to work in. A working environment free of harassment and discrimination remains a key element of staff performance, and as such the WCO believes its Members must consider addressing gender equality issues as part of their respective ongoing reform and modernization programmes.

A good case can be made for the link between gender and performance. Organizations today must capitalize on all available qualified persons, regardless of their gender. Encouraging diversity and gender equity in the workplace has been shown to encourage innovation and improve individual and organizational performance. To take full advantage of everybody's skills and competencies, the workplace should therefore present equal opportunities and internal policies in place should eliminate discrimination and unfair advantages to anyone in the organization.

Customs administrations also have a direct impact on the trading community, and as such the operational policies and procedures in place should consider the impact on minorities. By way of example, much of the small-scale trade in border communities is conducted by women, and so Customs administrations should examine how their general policies could unfairly disadvantage these traders, compared with larger business, and identify remedies to balance this.

The assessment tool will guide Customs administrations in these efforts, and examines five key principles related to organizational development which contribute to gender equality. For each key principle, a series of elements and specific indicators are provided to guide the assessment. Some of the indicators may not be applicable in some cases, or may be contrary to national law in some countries and may therefore be set aside.

The five key principles are:

- Principle 1 – Employment and Compensation
- Principle 2 – Work-life Balance and Career Development
- Principle 3 – Health, Safety, and Freedom from Violence
- Principle 4 – Governance and Leadership
- Principle 5 – Customs Administration and Stakeholder Relations

Objective

The objective of this document is to provide a tool for Customs administrations to assess their current policies, practices and activities to address gender equality issues. As a complement to ongoing reform and modernization, this tool can also serve as guidance and suggestions for organizations in defining some of the changes they wish to bring about. The indicators offer insight into the many aspects that can have a direct impact on people and on the performance of the organization.

To obtain the best results from this tool, it is recommended that an administration set up a small team of officials from various operational and central functions, and that together they evaluate each of the indicators to determine how closely the administration has achieved implementation. The assessment team should include officials from all relevant areas of the administration, namely: Human resources management, Senior management, training, operations, modernization, strategic planning, and others as appropriate.

In many cases, the indicators will not have been considered previously and may seem ambitious, but in such cases they should serve to create some reflection by the team on how the issues can be approached by the administration.

The assessment will first and foremost serve to establish a baseline, the current situation of the administration in terms of policies and actions geared toward the creation of a gender-neutral environment. The assessment process will also provide an opportunity to identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement. The process should result in the identification of specific concrete goals and objectives to strengthen gender-related policies, practices, and organizational culture. These should subsequently become an essential part of the Customs reform and modernization objectives.

In countries where women have limited legal rights and protection, the administration can use this tool to advocate changes in national law, and may also take any administrative measures available to it to improve the situation of women working in the organization.

Acknowledgments

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Assessing the Organization based on Gender Equality Principles

For each of the indicators, the assessment team should determine the level of implementation. For ease of qualification, the following implementation scale may be used:

5	Full implementation	Policy and implementation plan in place, widely accepted and utilized.
4	Moderate implementation	Policy and implementation plan in place, but not yet widely accepted or utilized
3	Beginning implementation	Policy in developmental phase, or pilot program, and/or minimal implementation.
2	Ad hoc arrangements	Ad hoc arrangements made for specific cases
1	Square one	No policy or plan in place; need information to get started.
0	Not applicable	Particular key element is not relevant to organization's operations.

Principle 1: Employment and Compensation

Key Element A – Wages, Benefits & Pay Equity

While paying the legal wage and benefits should be basic and mandatory, it cannot be assumed that this is the case. The wage gap is defined as the difference in men's and women's average earnings, usually reported as either the earnings ratio between men and women or as an actual gap in wages. It is the result of a variety of forms of gender discrimination in the workplace, intentional and unintentional. These include discrimination in hiring, promotion and pay, occupational segregation, bias against mothers, and other ways in which women workers are undervalued. The wage gap exists, in part, because many women are still segregated into lower paying jobs. Pay equity evaluating and compensating jobs based on an individual's skill, effort, responsibility, competencies, merit and working conditions, and not on the people who hold the jobs, is a solution to eliminating wage discrimination and closing the wage gap. Comparable worth is often defined as "**equal pay for work of equal value**". Pay equity rests on the premise that the work being compared is "equal."

Indicator 1

We pay nationally competitive and equitable wages and other benefits to all staff including apprentices, casual workers/trainees, and employees on probationary status. To do so, the administration should compare its own pay scales against similar positions in the public and private sectors job market.

Indicator 2

We conduct, on a regular basis, an audit of job classifications, compensation policies, and total benefits packages analysis to avoid both bias and adverse impact on women.

Indicator 3

We pay comparable wages for comparable work and the wages take into consideration the relative risks and hardship of certain operational posts.

Indicator 4

We have written HR policies, available to all employees, that address the way decisions on compensation and merit-based promotions are made .

Indicator 5

We conduct a periodic review of compensation to determine whether practices are consistent with a non-discrimination policy.

Indicator 6

We have leave policies and reasonable flexible work arrangements in place that provide opportunities for parents (either mother and/or father) to be involved in childcare.

Key Element B – Discrimination

In addition to gender-based discrimination, women and men also face discrimination based on many other factors including race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or cultural stereotypes. A combination of identities can create complex barriers and negatively affect women's access to opportunity and advancement within the workforce.

Discrimination based on marital status occurs when employees are treated differently based on whether they are married, widowed, divorced, single, or unmarried with a same-sex or opposite-sex partner. Parental status discrimination occurs when employees are treated differently solely because they do or do not have children. Where family responsibilities are taken into account, assumptions about an employee's lack of ability or willingness to work long hours, travel, or otherwise perform at a level consistent with other employees can undermine her or his opportunity to advance, and prevent her or his performance from being judged fairly. In a number of countries, law prohibits discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. It is also often illegal to discriminate against employees based on their health status, including HIV/AIDS. Pregnancy discrimination comes in many forms beyond refusing to hire a pregnant applicant or firing or demoting a pregnant employee. It can also include denying the same or a similar job to a pregnant employee when she returns from a pregnancy-related leave, and treating a pregnant employee differently from other temporarily disabled employees.

Indicator 1

Our HR policies and procedures consider the various gender equity and diversity dimensions. We prohibit discrimination in hiring, promotion, salary, benefits, discipline termination, and layoffs. We have established written HR policies that address placement, transfer, layoff, discipline, discharge, and complaint mechanisms, that ensure everyone has equal chances and take into consideration the needs and circumstances of personnel.

Indicator 2

We have data in our HR database on gender and diversity that allows us to compare the organization's workforce data with most recent labour pool data, in order to identify gaps and target recruitment and promotion efforts.

Indicator 3

We have implemented a non-discrimination policy that protects on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, sex, reproductive status (including pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions), national origin, socio-economic background, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, medical condition (including HIV status), caregiver status, veteran status, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, and gender identity and/or expression. We monitor its application and ensure compliance with its principles.

Indicator 4

We educate all employees on our non-discrimination, gender equity, whistleblower, and non-retaliation policies. All of our training products include some elements related to organizational values and whenever appropriate, also address gender equity and diversity.

Indicator 5

We take measures to ensure all those involved in HR-related decisions are aware of work-related privileges and activities including wages, hours, benefits, job access, qualifications, and working conditions, to ensure they are free from bias.

Key Element C – Recruitment & Hiring

Public administrations must play a lead role in promoting policies that are gender and diversity sensitive. External diversity initiatives, such as recruitment and outreach programmes, give organizations an opportunity to reach the broadest talent pool and build workforces reflective of the communities in which they operate and the customer base they serve. They also provide opportunities to increase women and minority representation in traditionally male-dominated occupations. Organizations that proactively seek diverse job candidates to mirror the increasingly diverse workplace and marketplace benefit from greater creativity and innovation in the workplace.

Indicator 1

We analyse recruitment data by gender and other demographics (e.g. age, educational background, ethnic group, etc.) to determine whether women are being disproportionately screened out at any stage. We identify gaps and develop targeted recruitment efforts designed to recruit more women or men, depending on the gap.

Indicator 2

We have implemented merit-based recruitment policies and procedures.

Indicator 3

We conduct interviews or focus groups with current female employees to gather suggestions for recruitment efforts and establish specific guidelines to include women and minorities as part of every recruitment pool.

Indicator 4

We seek out, establish, and maintain relationships (i.e., with academia, professional associations and recruitment firms who have a track record in diversity) to increase the number of under-represented groups of women, and help ensure a diverse pool of candidates.

Indicator 5

We create internships and apprenticeships, preferably paid, to encourage career exploration by women, particularly in non-traditional fields such as Customs operational work.

Indicator 6

We review job descriptions on a regular basis so that they focus on the required competencies and qualifications, and ensure they support gender equity by eliminating non-performance indicators and requirements.

Indicator 7

We regularly communicate a commitment to gender equality, and encourage women to apply for all vacancies in our job postings, for which they qualify.

Indicator 8

We provide training to all personnel involved in recruitment and hiring, including members of selection panels, to address barriers, stereotypes, and hidden biases related to women, including women returning to the workplace.

Indicator 9

We develop compensation and bonus programmes for recruitment professionals and hiring managers contingent upon the successful achievement of gender-specific recruitment goals.

Indicator 10

We provide career opportunities that allow both men and women the same opportunity to follow a career path and grow within the organization.

Indicator 11

We seek temporary staffing agencies and independent contractors with positive records on gender equality. We require these groups to adhere to our organization's non-discrimination policies.

Principle 2: Work-Life Balance and Career Development

Key Element A – Flexibility Policies

At times, due in part to the lack of flexible work arrangements, some organizations can experience a higher turnover of female employees . Not only do organizations lose valuable talent, but they lose continuity in projects and client relations, and incur extensive costs when replacing these employees.

Flexible work policies include flexible scheduling (e.g., compressed work week, variable start and end times, reasonable amounts of leave without penalty, etc.) and flexible work location (e.g., telecommuting, working off-site). The ability to take a temporary career break and then re-enter the workforce, also known as a sabbatical, is also key to ensuring that organizations retain and effectively use top talent.

Indicator 1

We create and promote a menu of flexible work options for employees focused on scheduling, location, leave, job sharing, shift changes and shift swapping, and workload that meet the needs of employees and the organization.

Indicator 2

We periodically assess employee needs and current use of flexible work options, through employee surveys or other means, noting employee demographics and their subsequent promotion and attrition rates.

Indicator 3

We allow time off from work for employees seeking medical care or treatment, for themselves or their dependents.

Indicator 4

We offer temporary and extended leave programmes. We help employees on temporary leave to stay connected to encourage re-entry.

Indicator 5

We communicate support from senior management for flexible work options (e.g. working from home or part-time work) and encourage managers to disclose their flexitime use to encourage employees to use flexitime when needed.

Indicator 6

Where applicable, we have established a standardized written process for requesting and using flexible work options to ensure fairness throughout the organization.

Indicator 7

We train managers on how to effectively manage workers who are using flexible work options. We inform employees of their rights and obligations in terms of flexible work options.

Key Element B – Dependent & Family Care

Parents lose days of work every year because of childcare problems, and equally, employees who provide care for an elderly relative also report missing work. Unfortunately, these lost days can often add up to lost productivity. Dependent care programmes have been linked to decreased absences, lower turnover, increased employee loyalty, greater morale, stronger recruitment, and an enhanced public image, all of which leads to an improved organizational performance.

Indicator 1

We periodically assess employees' needs as regards childcare, care for elderly relatives, and care for ill family members. We develop an action plan to best meet employees' needs. We support access to childcare either by providing childcare services or by providing information and resources regarding childcare services.

Indicator 2

We offer dependent care benefits including leave, information, and support to new parents (including new adoptive and foster parents), domestic partners, and those caring for a family member who is seriously ill or has special needs. We provide an appropriate private space for breastfeeding mothers.

Key Element C – Career Advancement

Career advancement opportunities, such as skills training in non-traditional fields, and mentoring and coaching programmes, offer employees the opportunity to gain leadership skills, build networks, and strategically contribute to the organization. Lack of access to such programmes can hinder employees in their quest for advancement, whereas participation in these programmes often breaks down barriers in ways that allow women to develop and hone the skills needed to advance in the organization. Organizations benefit from career advancement initiatives in a number of ways, including early identification of leaders, building a pipeline of talented women employees, and reinforcing the organization's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Indicator 1

We periodically analyse overall promotion rates by gender and other demographics to identify disparities and determine appropriate career advancement programmes that may be necessary, including succession planning. We assess the demographics of existing career advancement programme participation, and address any disparities in participation based on gender.

Indicator 2

We support employee resource groups (ERGs¹) that meet the needs of the organization and support women's career advancement.

Indicator 3

We establish a mentoring and coaching programme for women that focuses on broadening networks, increasing visibility, and further developing leadership skills.

Indicator 4

We offer flexible training and professional development opportunities that account for childcare or elderly care responsibilities.

¹ Employee resource groups (also known as **ERGs**) are voluntary, employee-led groups that serve as a resource for members and organizations by fostering a diverse, inclusive workplace aligned with organizational mission, values, goals, business practices, and objectives.

Indicator 5

We implement a "registration of interest" system for determining the job interests and career goals of employees by providing relevant information about the career paths available at the organization, and consider qualified employees who have registered when openings occur.

Indicator 6

We address issues that may prevent women from attending organization and/or training events, including timing, venue, and security concerns.

Indicator 7

We provide gender equitable opportunities for and access to certified vocational and literacy skills, and information technology training.

Indicator 8

We provide training to all personnel involved in performance evaluations to ensure that the process is free from bias.

Principle 3: Health, Safety, and Freedom from Violence

Key Element A – Health Benefits

Some studies² have revealed that investing in employee health reduces worker absenteeism, improves worker morale, and increases employee job commitment and productivity. It is often illegal to discriminate against employees based on their health status. As women may plan to have children at a certain point in their professional life, they may have needs that differ from those of male colleagues. As a result, it is important for organizations to understand and address the different types of needs when developing administration policies and programmes.

Indicator 1

We provide comprehensive health coverage and insurance that are equitable for all employees and address the particular needs of women. We offer health plans that cover

² Investing in Prevention Improves Productivity and Reduces Employer Costs, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, US Government.

prenatal and perinatal care, fertility treatment, and contraception, including emergency contraception, without restrictions on the method of contraception.

Indicator 2

We provide information on employee rights, benefits, and available resources to employees upon notification of pregnancy, adoption, medical situations, or illnesses requiring extended leave. We provide an appropriate private space for breastfeeding mothers.

Indicator 3

We have mechanisms in place to monitor absenteeism or higher turnover and to understand their cause, as they may be indicators of a highly stressful or unhealthy work environment.

Key Element B – Domestic Violence

Domestic violence finds its way into many workplaces; it is an equal opportunity offender that affects employees at all levels of an organization. It is a security and liability concern, putting at risk not only the worker who is the victim of domestic violence, but other workers in the workplace who are in potential danger from the perpetrator. Since domestic violence can be less obvious than other safety hazards in the workplace, education programmes for workers and employers are critical. Raising awareness about domestic violence in the workplace can go far towards ensuring that domestic violence and related threats are reported and that workers, not just the worker who is the victim of domestic violence, are protected from violence coming to the workplace.

Indicator 1

We audit workplace violence policies to determine if the organization has a comprehensive domestic violence policy.

Indicator 2

We include an immediate and effective action plan within the organization's domestic violence policy (or workplace safety policy) which guides employers when they become aware of a problem, including taking immediate action to ensure the security of both the affected employee and other employees.

Indicator 3

We provide awareness training on domestic violence, with specific training for managers and security personnel on the warning signs of domestic violence and how to manage such a situation.

Indicator 4

We have programmes and policies in place that address workplace wellbeing and support to victims of violence.

Key Element C – Workplace Violence

Violence in the workplace is a serious safety, health, and business issue that takes many forms, including verbal and physical abuse, sexual harassment and, in extreme cases, homicide. Workers impacted by violence have higher absentee rates, difficulty concentrating on their work, and are more likely to leave their job. The morale and performance of other employees watching the incidents or comforting the victim is impacted. Human resources costs can skyrocket if it becomes necessary to hire new employees and/or fire the perpetrators of violence. Finally, there may be resulting lawsuits and negative publicity for the administration.

Indicator 1

We have a platform and mechanisms in place to encourage victims of discrimination or harassment to come forward to report the incidents. We respond and act decisively to address such incidents.

Indicator 2

We periodically conduct an assessment of the physical security procedures in place, including the safety of female employees travelling to and from the workplace, and of work-related travel, and the safety of others visiting the workplace. We review history of past incidents of workplace violence to identify patterns. We note best practices and challenges in how incidents were addressed.

Indicator 3

We have written policies and procedures for preventing and addressing all forms of harassment, including protection from harassment based on ethnic background, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression and religion.

Indicator 4

We have a publicly displayed zero tolerance policy for violent words/actions, firearms, and/or other weapons in the workplace (except as required in the performance of workplace duties). We provide a means for reporting related incidents, conduct immediate follow-up investigations, and ensure that no reprisals will be taken against employees who report or experience workplace violence.

Indicator 5

We have an external workplace violence resource network for the organization that includes counsellors, security consultants, and local law enforcement.

Indicator 6

We conduct training for all employees on detecting, preventing, and addressing harassment, sexual harassment and abuse.

Principle 4: Governance and Leadership

Key Element A –Governance & Management

Studies³ have demonstrated a link between an organization’s performance and the proportion of women serving in its governing body. Organizations need to expand this process and ensure women are represented at key positions throughout the administration. Having women in these key leadership positions also sends a strong message to employees that the organization’s commitment to diversity is not just a marketing ploy, but an actual strategic corporate value. In a global marketplace, the ability to draw on a wide range of viewpoints, backgrounds, skills, and experience is critical to an organization’s success as it increases the likelihood of making the right strategic and operational decisions, encourages innovation, contributes to a more positive public image, and ensures a more balanced approach to risk management and risk oversight.

Indicator 1

We review the demographics of all executive positions, including the senior executive committee if applicable. We analyse the number of women promoted to management positions, including positions with budgetary decision-making.

³ Studies including: McKinsey & Company – “Women as a valuable asset” – April 2012.

Indicator 2

We review patterns to determine how many women are in training programmes, how many are offered jobs and promotions, and how many women may have refused management positions and why. We measure the impact of mentoring, sponsorship, and networking programmes on employee success.

Indicator 3

We conduct exit interviews to determine whether the reasons for the departure of women from the organization were related to gender equity issues

Indicator 4

We measure employee feedback on diversity practices and analyse results by gender.

Indicator 5

We have policies and undertake proactive efforts to recruit and appoint women to managerial positions. We provide specific internal guidelines to ensure female candidates are part of every management position recruitment process.

Indicator 6

We expand the executive and director search process to identify potential women candidates who may be leaders in the organization or outside the organization.

Indicator 7

We institute a full 360-degree review process for managers to determine the extent to which they are perceived as committed to gender equality and inclusion, and include progress in implementing gender initiatives as a factor in manager performance reviews.

Indicator 8

We examine potential adverse gender impacts of budget allocations on the compensation, training, recruitment, and professional development of women, and ensure sufficient resources for gender initiatives.

Key Element B – Leadership

An effective means for creating gender equality in an organization is to demonstrate this commitment through values, strategies, mission, and actions. A commitment from the top and visible monitoring of initiatives, in particular by the senior management, sets the tone for an administration's policies and practices. Studies conducted by Australia's Workplace Gender Equality Agency indicate that placing gender equality high on the organization's strategic agenda, and implementing and monitoring policies, make a big difference in influencing the organization's performance.

Indicator 1

We make gender equality a part of our overall corporate strategy, including our mission, values and strategic goals. We include a leadership statement on gender equality goals by the Head of the Administration in public materials such as our website, annual plans and reports. Our policies comply with the relevant international and regional agreements and conventions pertaining to gender equality⁴.

Indicator 2

We institutionalize oversight of gender equality performance by either integrating oversight into a committee of the board of management or electing a senior executive with responsibility for this issue. We establish organization-wide goals and targets for gender equality and procedures for monitoring progress.

Indicator 3

We ensure executive-level ownership of gender equality performance by developing and implementing organization policies, procedures, training, and internal reporting mechanisms to ensure accountability and implementation throughout the organization.

Indicator 4

We audit gender initiatives on a regular basis for adequate resources and a structure for full implementation, including identifying committed champions from across business units or divisions to spearhead these initiatives.

Indicator 5

We engage policy-makers to secure their support for the implementation of improved gender equity policies or programmes, whenever needed.

⁴ <http://www.unfpa.org/gender/rights2.htm>

Key Element C – Implementation

In order to fully embrace gender equality, administrations should implement policies, procedures, training, and internal reporting processes to ensure observance and implementation of this commitment throughout the organization.

Indicator 1

We have an action plan, including a change management plan and a strategy of communication to stakeholders, executives, and new and current employees, to implement gender equality, and we revisit it periodically. We provide a forum and conduct focus groups where employees can voice their opinions to determine whether the actions in the plan have affected their performance and the organization in general.

Indicator 2

We establish accountability for gender equality policies and plans by incorporating adherence to these policies in the performance evaluation of managers, and take steps to tie gender equality performance to promotions, compensation, and/or bonuses.

Indicator 3

We devote sufficient human, financial and technical resources to the implementation of measures aimed at ensuring gender equity and diversity.

Principle 5: Customs Administration and Stakeholder Relations

Key Element A – Customs Policies and Procedures

While the WCO Revised Kyoto Convention and the other WCO tools and standards are designed to simplify Customs policies and procedures, these procedures are neither fully implemented by Customs administrations as yet, nor understood by traders everywhere. Small informal traders, many of them women in border communities, are affected by this lack of knowledge of these standards. Relative to men, it has been shown that women's literacy is lower in developing countries, and because of this increased vulnerability, women bear a higher risk of being targeted by unscrupulous officials. Customs administrations must therefore make every effort to ensure they implement international best practices in terms of simplification and harmonization of procedures, as well as ensure they communicate the requirements for traders in a transparent way.

Indicator 1

We ensure that all clients, regardless of gender or background, are treated equally with respect to Customs policies and procedures. We automate Customs procedures in order to reduce the incidence of corruption, we make effective use of technology and we address the divergent impacts of technological reforms in Customs procedures on women and men.

Indicator 2

We ensure that women traders are provided with relevant information on Customs policies and procedures. We take specific steps to ensure that women, through various associations of women traders (where appropriate), are provided with up-to-date and straightforward information on Customs policies and procedures.

Indicator 3

We ensure that Customs procedures are simplified according to national legislation, to enable informal cross border traders, many of whom are women, to transact business with ease.

Indicator 4

We encourage small business to make use of exemptions and preferential tariff bands, whenever the national legislation offers such options. We provide fast-track processing for small traders, whenever possible.

Indicator 5

We organize training and familiarization workshops on all Customs policies and procedures for women traders.

Key Element B – Border Operations

Border areas are busy places, with heavy foot, automobile and truck traffic. The concentration of officials at the border, including Customs, immigration, police and military can be highly intimidating to women and to minority groups, especially those that may not understand the procedures. Furthermore, the high concentration of male transients in border areas creates particular risks for women, including harassment, theft and rape.

Indicator 1

We ensure that women and men are treated with equal respect and dignity at border crossings. We establish safe and confidential means for women and men to report wrongdoing at the border.

Indicator 2

We understand the particular risks that women face in border areas, including those from officials and those from other traders/players in the border area. We ensure that the Administration contributes to making the border a safe place for women and men. We ensure that when physical (body) inspections are carried out by Customs on women crossing the border, these checks are performed by a female Customs official, or an appointed substitute female official.

Indicator 3

We ensure that service standards and key information on Customs procedures is clearly visible at the border and elsewhere as appropriate. We ensure that information provided at the border does not contain any gender or diversity bias.

Indicator 4

We establish constructive and structured dialogue with the private sector for purposes of providing information on matters of common concern. Custom broker agencies are aware of our gender equity policies, programmes and activities.

Indicator 5

We provide tools to enable employees to undertake their functions including inspections in an efficient and gender sensitive manner, for example by creating a safe environment and making Customs uniforms suitable and comfortable for female inspectors.

Indicator 6

We provide appropriate infrastructure and access to public services at all borders to facilitate the deployment of female Customs officials in order to attain gender equity, including adequate accommodation, male/female changing rooms and toilets, etc.

Key Element C – Stakeholder Relations

In order to fully understand the needs of stakeholders, Customs administrations should consult a broad range of external actors, including Customs brokers, leading importers/exporters, industry/trade associations, logistics firms, and cross-border traders. In this undertaking, it is essential that women's interests be considered during consultation with trade associations/chambers of commerce, and as part of a broader stakeholder relations strategy.

Indicator 1

We consult with a broad range of stakeholder groups, including those representing the unique interests of women traders, such as associations of women traders. We take into account the divergent needs of women and men stakeholders.

Indicator 2

We ensure that relations between Customs and women's associations are frequently held and constructive. We support the work of women traders associations through information, education and communication campaigns. We actively promote compliance with Customs procedures among all traders.

Indicator 3

We establish an unbiased, non-retaliatory complaints policy and procedure that provide suppliers, customers, and third parties with 24/7 access and ensure anonymity to the greatest extent possible. We provide a breakdown of types of complaints filed using gender and diversity group disaggregated data.

Indicator 4

We address gender-related issues that emanate from interaction between the stakeholders and Customs to avoid harassment and intimidation of Customs officers, and/or by Customs officials.

Indicator 5

We actively engage and cooperate with other government institutions working at the border to foster an harmonization of gender and diversity related policies within border operations.