



# **USAID's Engendering Industries Best Practices Framework for Advancing Gender Equality in Male-Dominated Industries:**

**1.8 Offer supervision of master thesis or paid master thesis for both women and men**

## **About Your Gender Equality Plan**

The following Gender Equality Plan was generated using Engendering Industries' online tool: [The Best Practices Framework for Advancing Gender Equality in Male-Dominated Industries](#). The best practices listed in this plan were identified and included to fill gender equality gaps at your organization. The information included in your plan provides an overview of how to implement best practices, challenges to implementation, and markers of success. More information and resources for advancing gender equality at your company are available at [EngenderingIndustries.org](https://EngenderingIndustries.org).

**Description**

Identify topics of interest to the company that may be addressed through a master thesis project with a relevant cooperating university program with a focus on female students (require university to include a minimum participation of 50 percent women in the program)

Provide a well-trained and gender-aware mentor from the company who can serve as a role model while supporting the master thesis student during research and writing

Selected mentors should include a good proportion of women from the technical fields

Develop intro sessions or short trainings for master thesis mentors to ready them with mentoring soft skills and gender awareness to support young women

Create high-quality master thesis program with a clear structure and dedicate sufficient resources (see recommendations for mentorship programs)

**Challenges to Implementation**

May be difficult to find suitable topics for a master thesis, acceptable to both the company and university faculty

Mentors may be reluctant to interact with women students due to cultural norms and/or corporate culture

Universities' awareness on the importance of including women students may be low

Student may need intensive support and access to stakeholders within the company to be able to fulfil the assignment

Required non-disclosure of some data can interfere with the validity of the research

**What Success Looks Like**

Company establishes strong university relationships to source students from both genders with a minimum 50/50 sex ratio

Company establishes a positive image amongst students and especially young women - verified by higher numbers of students interested in having a master thesis contract

Increased number of female student participants get exposure to core business topics important to the company

Increased numbers of female student participants apply for open positions and are hired

Increased number of company personnel volunteers to mentor women master thesis students and proactively ask for students to support business topics

#### **Resources and Tools**

**Example:** [Students and Starters](#) (Vattenfall)