



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

**5.5 Provide sponsorship for both men and women, making both visible for possible promotions**

## **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**

Create high-quality mentorship and sponsorship programs for women at different career levels

Provide clear structure and dedicate sufficient resources including:

- Clear targets and quality standards with a transparent division between mentoring and sponsoring
- Information provided to potential sponsors on company objectives and strategies to increase gender equality, and to develop women for leadership positions
- Incentives provided for providing sponsorship, e.g., being active as a sponsor can be used as part of the individual performance management of the sponsor

**Challenges to Implementation**

Senior managers or supervisors may be reluctant to assume a sponsorship role for female employees and may find it difficult to identify suitable candidates due to overall lack of visibility of women

Difference between mentoring and sponsorship not clearly addressed

Corporate culture and local gender norms may be unsupportive of men and women establishing a sponsor relationship

Senior managers may use time and effort to promote protégés, but are not placed well enough in the organization or hindered by company politics to effectively support the success of the person sponsored by them

**What Success Looks Like**

Transparent company-wide sponsoring guidelines are established

Visibility of sponsored candidates increased

Increased number of women are perceived as good performers and/or get promoted to next level

Sponsors use professional capital to support careers of their protégés

Corporate sponsorship programs assign top leaders and have target goals to which sponsors are held accountable

Senior managers perceive involvement as a sponsor as supporting company targets and personally enriching

#### **Resources and Tools**

**Report/Study:** [Supporting Careers: Mentoring or Sponsorship?](#) (Workplace Gender Equality Agency, Australian Government)

**Report/Study (incl. Additional Resources and Readings):** [Mentorship, Sponsorship, and Networks: The Power and Value of Professional Connections](#) (Center for Women and Business, Bentley University)

**Report/Study:** [Why Men Still Get More Promotions Than Women](#) (Harvard Business Review)

**Article:** [A Lack of Sponsorship Is Keeping Women from Advancing into Leadership](#) (Harvard Business Review)

**Podcast:** [Women are Over-Mentored \(But under-Sponsored\)](#) (Harvard Business Review)

**Video:** [What Exactly Is Sponsorship in Business?](#) (Institute for Gender and the Economy)