



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

**11.5 Establish policies to promote reconciliation of work life and family life**

## **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 needs of staff for better reconciliation of work life and family life and adopt international good practice

Implement global best practices that are aligned with the national legal framework and local culture and support corporate culture change:

- Flexible work schedule
- Work from home and home office, including telework options
- Shorter workday for returning parents
- Longer lunch break for baby feeding/ breast pumping
- Return to work programs offering catch-up training on topics to enable competitiveness for job promotions
- Provision of facilities such as lactation rooms, on-site childcare, and family lunch options
- Support for external childcare (See Benefits best practices on childcare)
- Employee Assistance Program providing support for new parents and for better reconciliation of work life and family life (See Benefits best practices on EAP)
- Job-sharing for female talents and leaders (see Talent and Leadership best practice on job sharing)
- Online training in addition to in-class training, which might be difficult to attend
- Company benefits extended to family members
- Cooperation with high quality schools and financial support for tuition fees

Create and implement processes to maintain full staffing while reintegrating the returning employee

## **Challenges to Implementation**

Local employment laws may prohibit some options

Individual work units may have set hours, where flexible hours may create staffing difficulties

Field offices may not have the physical space to provide a lactation room or childcare facilities

Telework requires reliable internet, which is not always available

Some positions are staffed 24/7 and/or are on call for emergencies.

Managers may lack experience and be reluctant to grant flexible working or work from home options

Senior management and board must be willing to adopt practices beyond national legislation (e.g., granting paternity leave may not be a legal obligation)

#### **What Success Looks Like**

Provided options are well known and perceived as positive contribution of the company to generate better reconciliation of work life and family life

Image of working parents increased as can be seen through promotions and assignment of challenging tasks to women (and men) with childcare duties

Employees report in satisfaction or engagement surveys that they perceive leave policies as fair to all employees

Mothers feel comfortable making use of lactation rooms

Parents are using provided or supported childcare facilities and are satisfied with the quality

#### **Resources and Tools**

**Guide:** [Integrating Gender into Workplace Policies](#) (USAID)

**Guide:** [Returners: A Toolkit for Employers](#) (UK Government Equalities Office)

**Guide:** [Building a Workplace Flexibility Strategy](#) (Workplace Gender Equality Agency, Australian Government)

**Guide:** [Easy Steps to Supporting Breastfeeding Employees](#) (HRSA)

**Report/Study:** [Developing A Flexible Working Arrangements Policy](#) (Workplace Gender Equality Agency, Australian Government)

**Report/Study:** [Phase Back to Work Best Practices and Implications](#) (Diversity Best Practices)

**Report/Study (incl. Case Studies):** [Returner Programmes: Best Practice Guidance for Employers](#) (UK Government Equalities Office)

**Article:** [8 Ways to Retain Female Talent After Maternity Leave](#) (Forbes)