



The Gender Equality Seal: A Certification Programme for Public and Private Enterprises supported by UNDP



What the Gender Equality Seal is

about: Launched by national governments with support from UNDP, the Gender Equality Seal Certification Programme assists public and private institutions to ensure that their workplaces are fair and equitable, for a productive and innovative workforce, while enhancing efficiency and promoting accountability –with higher rates of women in non-traditional sectors and leadership roles. The seal was developed in collaboration with the private sector and governments to create certification incentives when commitments towards gender equality are met. Piloted in Latin America, with certifications for over 600 companies and 1,900 branches in 14 countries since 2009, a global roll-out of the programme has provided support and acknowledgement to actors working to close the gender gap.



From November 2018, UNDP Africa rolled out the Gender Equality Seal Programme to help professionals gain expert knowledge and implement policies, aimed at harnessing the benefits of the certification programme in public and private institutions. The Gambia, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Burundi, Tanzania, Rwanda, Uganda and South Africa are among the first cohort of countries to take part in capacity development for the Gender Equality Seal Programme, with support from UNDP.

Global Frameworks and International Standards

The Gender Equality Seal is founded on internationally accepted principles regarding human rights and gender equality, including the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions, The UN Global Compact Ten Principles, and Agenda 2030 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – signed by world leaders in September 2015 at the UN General Assembly in New York, with a focus on: ending poverty, reducing inequality, zero hunger, good health, quality education, decent work and economic growth among others.



The Benefits of the Gender Equality Seal Certification Programme:

Since 2009 and with support from the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean of UNDP, the Gender Equality Seal was originally pioneered in; Costa Rica, Uruguay, Brazil and Chile. To date, over 1,700 public and private companies are engaged in the implementation of the programme and 400 companies have been certified. These companies have reaped a number of benefits, including but not necessarily limited to:

1. A More Just and Equitable Work Environment.
2. Greater Efficiency and Staff Performance.
3. Enhanced Public Image and Brand Loyalty.
3. Enhanced Employee Competence and Commitment.
4. Reduced Staff Turnover.
5. Greater Accountability and Transparency in Institutions.

The Key Performance Areas of the Gender Equality Seal Certification:

1. The gender composition and competencies of the Board of Directors;
2. Eliminating gender-based pay gaps for higher job satisfaction and reduced turnover;
3. Increasing women's roles in decision-making for inclusive leadership and change teams;
4. Enhancing work-life balance for a better job environment and employee productivity;
5. Enhancing women's access to non-traditional jobs to nurture and retain talent;
6. Eradicating sexual harassment at work;
7. Using inclusive, non-sexist communication for brand and corporate image risk management;
8. Innovations for gender-appropriate product design and customer services; and
9. Networking with global companies that support the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Certification Levels and Awards

Level 1	Recognition	The institution has obtained a written commitment and has taken some visible actions.
Level 2	Bronze	The institution has complied with 60% of what is required under the key performance areas.
Level 3	Silver	The institution has complied with 70% of what is required under the key performance areas.
Level 4	Gold	The institutions has complied with 80% of what is required under the key performance areas.

NB the certification is valid for two (2) years.

How UNDP Assists Governments Implementing the Gender Equality Seal:

1. UNDP is an integrator and convener of key stakeholders from the government, the private sector, and civil society to work towards equality in the public and private sector.
2. UNDP provides knowledge, training and technical assistance to public and private companies that wish to develop and put into practice their own model of the Gender Seal.
3. UNDP promotes peer to peer learning amongst institutions at national level and South-South and Triangular Cooperation amongst countries.

The Gambia National Model for Piloting the Gender Equality Seal:

With support from UNDP and in partnership with government, The Gambia is piloting the Gender Equality Seal Certification Programme through the following steps:

1. Learning and Government Commitment through a Special Cabinet Session on the UNDP Gender Equality Seal Certification Programme.
2. Developing a Cabinet Paper on adoption and piloting the Gender Equality Seal Certification Programme in public and private institutions.
3. Setting up a Gender Seal Steering Committee (GSSC) and Technical Reference Team (TRT) to coordinate and oversee the piloting process, with representatives from government, private sector, academia, civil society and UN agencies.
4. Training and capacity development for the Gender Seal Steering Committee (GSSC) and Technical Reference Team (TRT).
5. Developing an action plan for piloting the Gender Equality Seal Certification Programme across public and private institutions.
6. Coordination and monitoring the piloting process and documentation of successes, milestones, lessons and challenges.
7. Setting up a Gender Equality Seal Certification Committee of external evaluators from the National Assembly, Academia, Gambia Bureau of Statistics and the Chattered Institute of Public Accountants.

DROP QUOTES:

"There is overwhelming evidence that investing in women is the most effective way to lift communities, companies and countries. Women's participation makes peace agreements stronger, societies more resilient and economies more vigorous. And that is why the empowerment of women and girls is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." **UN Secretary General, António Guterres'.**

"Transformative innovations don't have to be costly or flashy. Simple technologies, local innovations, and new practices that shift social attitudes, norms or biases can also make a difference. Just consider the financial independence that mobile banking has given to countless women," **Achim Steiner, UNDP Administrator**

"We have been privileged with positions that can set the tone for gender equality and transformative development in Africa. The Gambia is at a historic moment where all actors are in the mood for lasting positive change in people's lives, after decades of exclusion and insecurity, so let us join our efforts in changing perceptions towards gender equality through innovative practices at our workplaces, market places and in our personal daily lives." **Aissata De the Resident Representative UNDP-Gambia.**

"No industry or country can reach its full potential until women reach their full potential." - **Sheryl Sandberg, Chief Operating Officer of Facebook**

For more information contact:

UNDP in The Gambia | Plot 5, Koffi Annan Street, Cape Point, BaKau, The Gambia | P.O Box 553, Banjul - The Gambia | Tel: +220449 4762-69 | Fax: +220449 4758 | Email:registry.gm@undp.org



www.gm.undp.org | : www.facebook.com/undpgambia | : www.twitter.com/undpgambia