



# WHAT WILL IT TAKE: EQUALITY IN LEADERSHIP BY 2030

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Politics & Policy Action Plan

*The Transforming Women's Leadership Pathways event and the development of Plans took place online and on Gadigal and Bidjigal land (Australia). We recognise the peoples of the Eora nation as the traditional custodians of the land (Australia). We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging and extend this respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We acknowledge that this land has long been a place of teaching, learning, and creating. Sovereignty has never been ceded.*

*Arizona State University's four campuses are located in the Salt River Valley on ancestral territories of Indigenous peoples, including the Akimel O'odham (Pima) and Pee Posh (Maricopa) Indian Communities, whose care and keeping of these lands allows us to be here today. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.*

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# POLITICS & POLICY WORKING GROUP ACTION PLAN

## Aspiration 2030

To transform and build women's leadership pathways in order to facilitate and accelerate the progression of women into decision-making and leadership positions at all levels of government and policy making.

## The current state of politics and policy - key findings and power statistics

To date, not a single country in the world has closed the gender gap in terms of political empowerment - the equitable representation of women in decision-making structures, both formal and informal, and their voice in the formulation of policies affecting their societies. Despite being one of the most improved dimensions (as reported in the World Economic Forum 2022 Global Gender Gap Report), the gap for political empowerment remains significant. Current projections suggest that the gap will not close until 2117, almost a century from now, even with recent acceleration. Intersectional women face even greater marginalisation. Intersectional data as it relates to, for example, multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, ableism, classism and homophobia), is rarely reported and unavailable in many jurisdictions, thus making it even more challenging to address this gap.

Almost all countries have policies that discriminate against women. Women have only three-fourths the legal rights of men on average. More than 95% of UN countries still have laws that discriminate against women. Women in government positions can influence policy and drive meaningful change. Women in local government are diverse and typically redefine local priorities to be more inclusive and family-friendly.

Women in politics, while still underrepresented, are growing in proportion. Worldwide, countries with legislated quotas have a higher representation of women in local government (by 7% on average) compared to those without quotas. Even when women achieve political office, they tend to be assigned to less influential cabinet positions.

At the current rate, gender equality will not be achieved until 2117.

## Barriers and opportunities



### BARRIERS



Many overt and covert barriers exist that prevent women from entering leadership, including: societal and cultural expectations; the existing political apparatus; heightened harassment and aggression; higher poverty rates and lack of access to capital. Global gender equality is prevented by “legal discrimination, loopholes and inadequacy, as well as weak law enforcement and deeply entrenched acceptance of discriminatory social practices by communities, including women.”



### OPPORTUNITIES



Four principles for change are highlighted:

1. Accept responsibility for gender diversity
2. Demonstrate transparency and accountability
3. Establish pathways, and
4. Embrace diverse leadership.

Implementing these four principles across politics and policy – at all levels – is likely to result in structural reform given women are more likely to challenge established conventions and policy agendas when they make up a critical mass of legislatures – around 25 to 30%.

Research suggests that, “[I]n the aggregate, women’s leadership promotes bipartisanship, equality, and stability”. More women entering politics tends to raise the overall quality of candidates and female politicians are more likely (but not always) to advocate for policies that support education, health, sustainability, and gender equality. Political gender quotas can increase women’s political representation, but it may still take around 3-4 years to close the gap.

# Recommendations

## PUBLIC AND ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT TO GENDER EQUITY

*Government, Industry and Universities*

- Establish a lead role/position in charge of ensuring responsibility for gender equity.
- Make public pledges to increase diversity and support equality.
- Establish specific quotas or targets.

## TRACKING AND PUBLISHING DATA/SETTING SPECIFIC GOALS

*Government, Industry and Universities*

- Track, interpret, and publicise data on equality metrics and goals.
- Create and deploy customised data dashboards that integrate metrics most important to a jurisdiction or sector.
- Conduct a review of existing equality metrics data.

## INCREASING THE PIPELINE

*Government, Industry and Universities*

- Enhance existing leadership pathways programs through collaborative alliances between higher education, industry and universities (e.g., low cost, on-demand micro-certification programs).
- Establish pathways by establishing substantive and demonstrable mentoring, training, support, and succession for women in leadership (including in early education).
- Ensure gender diversity and parity in decision-making arenas and practice commitment to gender diverse succession.

## TRAINING AND MENTORING

*Government, Industry and Universities*

- Develop political leadership training programs for K-8 girls to foster civic engagement.
- Develop and coordinate non-partisan training for women in the community who are contemplating pursuing political office or changing policy.
- Establish and implement quotas for women in senior roles and decision-making bodies.

## INCREASING VISIBILITY OF FEMALE LEADERSHIP

*Government, Industry and Universities*

- Incentivise co-roles to promote diverse succession and flexibility.
- Illustrate diverse views of leadership in news coverage and the media.
- Change the narrative of what leadership looks like.

## Working Group Leads



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## Student Ambassadors

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