

SANBI POLICY DOCUMENT

DIVISION: Human Resource

POLICY NO:

EFFECTIVE DATE: November 2015

LAST AMENDED: New

Gender Mainstreaming Policy

Preamble

The South African society has been undergoing a process of transformation which commenced with the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1996, particularly the Bill of Rights which prohibited discrimination on various grounds including gender. Subsequently the South African Government introduced a number of policies and legislative instruments aimed at addressing imbalances of the past, including the issue of gender. These policies and legislation included the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995; White Paper on Affirmative Action in the Public Service, 1998; and the Employment Equity Act of 1998. The development of policies and legislation has ensured at a minimum the establishment of employment equity targets as the indicator for gender mainstreaming. However, equity targets are not sufficient to address gender mainstreaming.

Similarly, SANBI has also been undergoing a process of transformation emanating from an expanded mandate under the National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act of 2004. The institute has also embarked on a sustainable transformation initiative which included the development of the SANBI U-GREAT values (Ubuntu; Growth; Respect and tolerance; Excellence; Accountability and Togetherness). The SANBI Sustainable Transformation Initiative, as well as the Public Service Commission Report of 2006 on the Gender Mainstreaming Initiative in the Public Service, informs this policy statement. Within this context, SANBI pledges a commitment to gender mainstreaming in the workplace to address gender issues raised by the SANBI staff during the diagnostic phase of the Sustainable Transformation Initiative.

Purpose

The purpose of this Gender Mainstreaming Policy is to provide principles that SANBI can adopt and implement to promote equality between genders.

Knowledge and Understanding of Gender Mainstreaming

The Public Service Commission report on gender mainstreaming defines “mainstreaming” as a process that brings what is considered as marginal into the core business and main decision-making process of an institution. Gender mainstreaming is described as the process which entails weaving into the consciousness and actions of individuals and organizations an impulse to promote equality between genders. An important element in mainstreaming is to give attention to gender equality by influencing goals, strategies and resource allocation, and is about real changes in policies, programmes and activities.

Gender mainstreaming is an essential part of good governance to ensure that institutions’ policies and programmes respond to the needs and interests of all employees and distribute benefits equitably between men and women. At the same time, while gender mainstreaming is a move away from women-specific projects and programmes, it is important to recognise that women have different needs and priorities from men and are therefore affected differently by policies and development interventions.

Scope This Policy applies equally to men and women employed by SANBI on a permanent, contract or temporary basis and must be considered in the design of programmes and/or projects to be implemented by SANBI.

Statement This Policy spells out the gender mainstreaming principles that will inform all relevant policies and practice within SANBI. These principles are:

1. Gender representivity in recruitment and promotion

SANBI is committed to equal opportunities in the workplace. The proportion of women in positions across the organisation should be aligned to the Employment Equity Plan. However, numerical targets are not sufficient for gender mainstreaming. SANBI recognises that perceptions exist with regard to traditional roles and responsibilities of men and women e.g. secretarial roles traditionally dominated by females; foreman positions traditionally dominated by males. In recruitment and promotion SANBI will be mindful of historical gender biases.

2. Empowerment of women

SANBI is committed to empowering all members of staff, especially women. Empowerment initiatives need to be conducted in a meaningful way. Special attention will be given to areas of work where women are under-represented. Where appropriate, empowerment initiatives should be aligned with the Human Capital Development strategy for the biodiversity sector.

3. Gender-sensitive and family-friendly policies

SANBI policies must adopt language that is sensitive to gender. Where appropriate, policies should also avoid being gender-neutral, through assuming that men and women are the same. Rather, policies should recognise and equally value the similarities and differences between women and men. SANBI recognises the importance of balancing family-work life. Family responsibility leave is provided for through the SANBI leave policy. Flexi-time will be considered for parents and care-givers to carry out their family responsibilities.

4. High-level leadership for gender mainstreaming

The Public Service Commission Report indicated a significant finding that in Departments where gender mainstreaming was receiving greater attention, the head of the department was often a woman. Staff ascribed the commitment to gender mainstreaming to women in leadership positions. Gender mainstreaming must be championed at the highest level in the organisation.

5. Raise awareness of gender issues

It is important to practice the U-GREAT values (Ubuntu; Growth; Respect and tolerance; Excellence; Accountability and Togetherness). SANBI will celebrate national Women's Day, Women's month and the 16 days of activism against child and women abuse and use these events in an inclusive way to create awareness of gender relationships in the workplace and the home.

6. Recognition of the different needs of men and women

The way in which men and women relate to each other in the organisation is often informed by their values. There is therefore recognition that men and women have different needs. Recognition would be given to these different needs in the organisation e.g. during field trips, praying or breast-feeding.

7. Zero tolerance for sexual harassment

SANBI is committed to providing a working environment that is free from sexual harassment and will not tolerate sexual harassment in the workplace. The lack of knowledge and understanding of sexual harassment could result in ambiguity of interpretation. Therefore, the Human Resources Division conducts road-shows that include SANBI's policy on sexual harassment to sensitise and empower staff on the issues of sexual harassment and what constitutes sexual harassment. Sexual harassment matters will be treated sensitively, with confidentiality and guard against any forms of victimisation. The necessary support for staff affected by sexual harassment will be provided through the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP).

8. Mainstreaming gender into programme and project design

SANBI will mainstream gender into the design of its programmes and projects.

The abovementioned principles will be used to guide the drafting and review of SANBI policies. The matrix below provides a guide to the indicative policies and other organisational frameworks that should be aligned with this Policy. This list is intended to be illustrative and not exhaustive.

Principles	Policies/Management Frameworks													
	R&S	EE	FTC	ER	FS	T&D	HEP	CC	DPP	EAP	Travel	TAU	Leave	Anti X2
Gender representivity in recruitment and promotion	✓	✓	✓									✓		
Empowerment of women	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		
Family-friendly policies	✓											✓	✓	
High-level leadership for gender mainstreaming	✓	✓										✓		
Raise awareness of gender issues				✓				✓				✓		
Recognition of the different needs of men and women		✓						✓			✓	✓	✓	
Zero tolerance for sexual harassment				✓				✓	✓	✓		✓		✓

Key: **RS:** Recruitment & Selections, **EE:** Employment Equity, **FTC:** Fixed Term Contract, **ER:** Employee Relations, **FS:** Further Study, **T&D:** Training and Development, **HEP:** Horticulture Exchange Programme, **CC:** Code of Conduct, **DPP:** Disciplinary Policy and Procedure, **EAP:** Employee Assistance Programme, **Anti X2:** Anti-Discrimination and Harassment

Annexure A: Guidelines for implementation

Structures for “recourse”

- a. MANCO will provide a mechanism for staff to inform management of policies that require alignment to this Gender Mainstreaming Policy.
 - b. During the policy development and review processes, MANCO will provide oversight and ensure alignment of SANBI policies to the Gender Mainstreaming Policy.
 - c. MANCO and EXCO will consider incorporating action items for gender mainstreaming into the Transformation Action Plan.
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Roles and responsibilities

It is the responsibility of each SANBI staff member to uphold and reflect the SANBI U-GREAT values (Ubuntu; Growth; Respect and tolerance; Excellence; Accountability and Togetherness).

Line managers are responsible for implementation of all SANBI policies and the principles of this policy should be viewed in the same light as other SANBI policies.

The Human Resources Division will include the Gender Mainstreaming Policy in their road show programmes.

MANCO will provide ongoing oversight and ensure gender mainstreaming into all relevant SANBI policies.

EXCO will provide leadership in implementing the Gender Mainstreaming Policy.
