

Women into Leadership programme



Women into Leadership programme

The programme addresses two important challenges faced by female leaders within the statistical system

Firstly, it looks at the need to develop the skills required to lead their organisations on a programme of statistical modernisation. The programme focuses on upskilling statistical leaders to deal effectively with the range of challenges faced by all statistics organisations.

Secondly, it gives women the opportunity to address the challenges they face—developing their leadership skills and careers in, frequently, a male dominated environment.

The programme is offered to women who have been selected for their potential to develop as leaders within their organisations. The core of the programme is a focused, five-day, face-to-face classroom-based workshop delivered by an experienced leadership trainer, supported by a female statistical leader from a national statistics office and other successful female leaders from a range of environments including private organisations, government departments and statistical organisations.

It is designed and delivered by the UK's Office for National Statistics in collaboration with the African Centre for Statistics (ACS) at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).

“This programme has offered me an opportunity to engage with other women leaders, increase my support network and further define my leadership style and mindset”

Course participant



Why does the statistical system need a Women into Leadership programme?

Strong statistical leadership is required to fulfil the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as initiatives such as the African Union Agenda 2063.

An important element in achieving these objectives is the advancement of opportunities for women in statistical organisations. This will be greatly enhanced by the provision of leadership training for women within these organisations.

All leaders need to develop and communicate clear strategies, lead and inspire change, and delegate work appropriately. Leaders who understand how to use their personal power to build relationships will motivate and inspire their teams. This programme aims to provide that understanding and to address the unique challenges faced by women in statistical organisations today.

The programme is developed from the Statistical Leadership Programme to address the challenge of under representation of women as leaders in national statistical organisations.

Fewer than a quarter of top leadership positions among national statistical organisations worldwide are occupied by women¹. This indicates that there is a great deal of untapped potential available to improve the quality of statistical work. This programme is an attempt to begin to redress the balance and improve the quality of statistics

The programme is practical, flexible and totally focused on the needs of the individual participants. The programme allows participants to reflect on their personal and professional challenges beforehand and to work on them during the course. Discussions will focus on the unique challenges women have in statistical organisations at this current time. The theories presented will always be considered in relation to their practical purposes and the aim for all inputs is to look for ways for participants to utilise them pragmatically when they return to work.

¹ The leadership gap in statistics – where are the women? A. Misra and L. Suchodolska; Paris21 blog post; 12 July 2021.

It is vital that today's young women can envision themselves as leaders in the field of data and statistics



“Gives a diverse perspective towards leadership especially as a woman”

Course participant

What makes this programme unique?

The programme is tailored for women with the potential to become senior leaders within national statistical organisations and speaks to the unique experiences and challenges faced by leaders today.

Before delivering the programme, the course tutor holds extensive conversations with the participants to understand the culture and challenges they face. This is an important element of the programme and the programme content will be adapted to the context and needs of each organisation.

There will be one-to-one conversations with participants during the programme seeking to uncover the challenges they currently face and would like to address during the classroom course.

There will be a number of role model guest speakers – well respected, female leaders in the world of statistics, economics or government with experience of leading through change – offering a further unique contribution.

The programme is pragmatic and is designed to enable participants to apply the skills learnt on the course to their workplace challenges, creating an immediate positive impact on their organisations. It uses participant’s real work challenges to link theory to practice.

What key skills will I learn?



Strategic thinking

How can I look at my statistical organisation strategically to lead high performance and transformational change initiatives in the organisation? How can I adopt a strategic approach to my development and career? What gender specific challenges do I face, and need to overcome, to make a difference as a leader?



Integrity

What are the qualities of a leader? What does integrity mean for statistical leaders? How do I measure up to these qualities? How do I identify and overcome challenges?



Communication

What techniques can I use to communicate more effectively with staff and stakeholders? What gender specific challenges are there and how do I overcome them? How do I address the possible prejudices of people I communicate with?



People leadership

How can I better understand myself? What skills do I need to develop to motivate, lead and manage people and teams? Are there any additional considerations women need to take to succeed?



Knowledge

What tools and techniques can I use to develop myself, my team and the organisation? How can I be more aware of the challenges and prejudices I may have to face and overcome? Whose support do I need?

Objectives

1 Develop self-awareness and confidence

The programme provides participants with the opportunity to take stock of their leadership style and the impact they have on others. By using a wide range of tools and techniques to develop personal and professional awareness, participants will identify their strengths and how to build on them. In doing so, it enhances confidence in their professional and personal abilities and actions. The programme also enables participants to identify their weaknesses and reflect on ways to address them. It offers tools to develop personal strategies to become better leaders.

2 Lead teams and individuals

The programme supports leaders to drive better engagement and better results from their teams. It does so by enabling participants to understand their own leadership style and develop managerial and leadership tools and skills. It also looks at any prejudices against women that might be in play and how to overcome them. The aim is to inspire and motivate teams and individuals through collaboration, challenge and support, and to create and promote a culture in which everyone feels valued and respected. By having a greater focus on performance and the development of others, leaders will be able to increase the visibility, agility, curiosity and innovation of staff. This, in turn, will enhance business performance.

3 Improve influencing skills

The programme develops a strong understanding of the skills needed to influence and persuade others, with a focus on the specific challenges faced by women. Leaders will develop skills for effective communication and listening. This will enable them to improve relationships with stakeholders through partnerships, collaboration and cooperation, to manage conflicting priorities and to address opportunities and problems effectively.

4 Lead and manage change

The programme aims to understand the culture of the organisation and the specific challenges faced by female leaders. Participants will develop the skills needed to champion learning and cultural change within their organisations by learning about and selecting from a range of options to develop strategies that will guide them to lead robust transformation.

5 Build networks

The programme aims to develop a network of support and challenge amongst peers within statistical offices and externally. Mentoring by female leaders in a similar role will help develop the skills and confidence to continue building relationships with others inside and outside their organisation.

Course timeline

Access own strengths and development needs

- assess yourself as a leader
- learn about your personality type
- think about real personal and leadership challenges you want to tackle
- obtain feedback from others

Attend classroom-based learning

- understand the use of effective communication to deliver your vision and develop more effective relationships by being aware of your audience and any likely prejudices they may have
- develop a toolbox of leadership skills and techniques to develop strategies and plans for your organisation
- understand yourself as a leader and plan developmental change
- learn how to lead teams, delegate, motivate and develop others
- become a better influencer, negotiator and persuader

Apply learning in the workplace

- produce your own action plan that will lead to a tangible change in yourself and in the workplace
- assess and review the progress of your own action plan with your tutor
- consolidate your learning by attending online seminars facilitated by your tutor

Classroom-based learning

The face-to-face element of the programme is delivered over five days, at premises chosen by the statistical office.

It covers a range of leadership topics selected to ensure a pragmatic approach to the training.

No	Topic	Learning objectives
1	Introduction to women into leadership Defining leadership, identifying any gender specific challenges you may face, the difference between leadership and management, what type of leader are you?	Identify personal challenges. Develop an understanding of leadership and decision-making processes. Enable participants to better understand themselves and how they behave.
2	Personal development Understanding who you are and what you are capable of. What makes you strong and effective and what holds you back.	Understand yourself and what you are best at. Identify the skills and behaviours necessary to progress in your personal and professional life.
3	The importance of teams The nature of teams, leading a team, delegation, motivation, developing and maintaining the team, organising and time management.	Understand that the greatest resource leaders have are their people. By better understanding how they may react to you, how best you can lead, delegate, motivate and develop them, participants will become more effective leaders.
4	Communicating and enabling a clear vision Importance of communication, listening, written communication, presentations, meetings and giving feedback.	Understand the power of effective communication. By developing their written skills, presentation skills and giving better feedback, participants will be better able to deliver their vision, enable actions and develop more effective relationships. Identify any barriers to effective communication, such as gender prejudice.

No	Topic	Learning objectives
5	Culture, influence and power Mission, vision, values, learning and culture, persuading, influencing, and negotiating, power and resilience. Putting it all together.	Understand and influence cultural aspects of their own organisation. By understanding how leadership and personal power works, attendees will become better influencers, negotiators and persuaders and ultimately leaders of their organisation.
6	Career development How you can assess and plan your career inside or outside of the organisation. What specific challenges you faced and how do you overcome these?	Take a look at your long-term career plans. Identify strengths and weaknesses and challenges you may face. Identify and use a range of tools and skills that will help you overcome obstacles.
7	Strategic leadership tools and leading change Leading change: people and processes, strategic leadership tools.	Participants will develop a toolbox of leadership skills and techniques to allow them to develop strategies and plans for their organisation.
8	Resilience As a female leader you will have unique challenges and inevitably setbacks. It's how you react to the setbacks that show your true strength.	Identify challenges you have faced and overcome. Identify a range of tools and techniques you can use to prepare for setbacks. Use these experiences to help you become a stronger, more resilient leader.

Self-assessment

Participants assess their own learning needs and current leadership skills in the following ways:

360-degree feedback

Participants are asked to nominate individuals who they believe would supply honest feedback. These are likely to be their line manager, peers, direct reports, and customers. Feedback providers are sent a form to complete.

The answers are anonymised and discussed with each participant individually, to enable them to understand the key elements for their own individual development, identify areas for improvement and build on their strengths.

Personality assessment (The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator)

The profile reveals how we see and interact with the world, giving insight into our motivation and the motivation of others. This provides a foundation for personal growth and development, underpinning enhanced personal effectiveness.

The course tutor will help participants to interpret their profile and understand how this tool can be used, for example by helping leaders to understand and appreciate different strengths, relate to others with greater understanding, identify gaps in their teams and resolve conflict.

Current challenges

Participants are encouraged to think of a current workplace challenge that they want to work on during the programme.

Attendees are instructed to bring along a challenge they currently have. There are opportunities throughout the week for them to work on these challenges as part of an action learning group. Participants carry out group work looking to solve a workplace problem they have identified on the course using a variety of tools and techniques they have learned.


Self-assessment

Participants are asked to complete a questionnaire determining their level of experience of leadership.

This is used by the tutor to tailor the course. It also provides a baseline to be used for evaluation purposes.

One-to-one session with tutor

The 360-degree feedback forms the basis for a one-to-one session with the leadership programme trainer before the start of the training programme to highlight strengths and weaknesses and explore ways to address and consolidate them.



"I got everything I needed to learn and also have received the slides for every topic we discussed. It was perfect"

Course participant

Follow-up learning

Participants are required to produce individual action plans to help implement the learning. This will consist of a personal development element as well as a work-focused element. The action plan is intended to lead to a tangible change both personally and at the workplace.

The tutor will be available remotely to provide advice and support to implement action plans and to answer further questions from participants. There will be a follow-up session around six months after the course to discuss the action plan and give further support, and to carry out a verbal assessment on the impact the course has had.

There is an opportunity for attendees to be matched with a mentor from another statistical organisation. This is optional. Attendees will be invited to consider this option and speak to the tutor should they wish to pursue it.

Link to other programmes

It is recommended that an organisation should complete a Statistical Leadership Programme before the Women into Leadership Programme. The programmes are complementary and together they will help consolidate the learning and ensure a positive step is taken towards enhancing the culture of the organisation.

Contact information

For further information,
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