

1. Senior managers must lead the way

Senior managers can encourage good practice by showing commitment to mainstreaming and achieving equality goals. Such leadership is essential because only senior managers can oversee implementation of a cross-cutting theme that intersects all structures and programmes of an organisation.

2. Accountability

Ultimate accountability for policy implementation rests with senior managers. They must put accountability systems in place that ensure all staff deliver on policy priorities.

3. Don't mix your strategy with your goal

Mainstreaming is a strategy aimed at political, economic and social change. Equality is the ultimate goal.

4. Link your cross cutting priorities

Multiple forms of discrimination are a reality in most people's lives. Acknowledging these and understanding how they reinforce each other are essential to achieving overall equality goals. *(Disabled women are especially vulnerable as they encounter multiple forms of discrimination, live in extreme poverty and do not have jobs. Rosa Salgado: Nicaragua)*

5. Effective mainstreaming needs policy coherence

Real progress towards equality goals must not be undermined by policy and practice in other areas such as trade or macro-economics.

6. Socio-economic analysis must be the starting point

Without detailed analysis of a situation, it is impossible to develop an effective strategy. Good equality-sensitive analysis needs clear and accessible information including disaggregated data.

The 12 Essentials of Mainstreaming

7. How your organisation works and what it looks like matters

Organisational structure and culture can promote or prevent effective mainstreaming. Organisation structure needs to match policy priorities. If equality is a priority, it must be reflected in the way the organisation works and how resources are allocated.

8. Mainstreaming is not cost free and can't happen on its own

Adequate, ring-fenced and sustained financial and human resources are essential to closing the policy/practice gap. Successful mainstreaming requires expert staff at senior level and secure resources. Mainstreaming should be accompanied by properly resourced positive action measures.

9. Training must be continuous and relevant

Frequent and relevant training is central to effective mainstreaming and must be regularly evaluated to ensure that knowledge and expertise are applied and retained.

10. All monitoring and evaluation must include equality analysis

Ongoing and regular M&E are essential elements of effective policy implementation and must include equality analysis. Documenting, highlighting and disseminating good practice promotes lesson learning and shows that equality objectives can be achieved.

11. Listen and learn from others

Increasing dialogue, partnerships and networking on mainstreaming with civil society and academic institutions will strengthen mainstreaming efforts by exchanging ideas and good practice examples.

12. Work with others

Informal and formal exchange opportunities encourage governments, civil society and donors to work more collaboratively and create a more enabling environment for mainstreaming equality issues.

