

Small talk on gender equality in the workplace

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Our organization

- ▶ The Cameroon Civil Aviation Authority (CCAA):
 - ▶ 700 staff,
 - ▶ in Charge of Security on 10 airports,
 - ▶ Safety Oversight of all civil aviation activities,
 - ▶ Air navigation services in some airports,
 - ▶ Overflight Authorizations,
 - ▶ Airport land management,
 - ▶ Air transport regulation
 - ▶ etc

How our organization is unique for gender?

- ▶ The Director general is a woman
- ▶ Deep gratitude to our Head of State who made an unprecedented and bold move by appointing me as the first woman to manage such a strategic organization

Impact on gender equality

- ▶ Having a woman as the top manager has made our organization unique for gender because it has simply changed the narrative in our organization and even in the country.
- ▶ Without special campaign, girls and women are now applying naturally to the Civil Aviation Authority, which was up to recently, a real male preserve, despite me being a Director
- ▶ We are just taking the excellence wherever it is, male or female
- ▶ Impact on other sectors of the civil aviation: more women candidates for pilots, flight dispatchers, mechanics and even fields like firefighters

Concerns for the future (Barriers)

- ▶ A fast growing women workforce (around 30%) now, but very young
- ▶ Disillusion: very demanding jobs, not so glamorous, behind the scenes
- ▶ The usual work-“life” choice



Personal experience

- ▶ I started as the only female civil aviation engineer in the country, at 23, with a bright future, but then left at 32 for 10 years to build a family
- ▶ Major period of my life which helped to build children morally strong and I can go through the challenges of this high demanding position without big family concerns
- ▶ In such a specialized and technical field, I have been able to come back because I went through an extensive re-training programme
- ▶ This was done with a strong individual will and “luck”
- ▶ It was not a formal policy

How to make the future bright? (Enablers)

- ▶ Positive: Strong Staff regulations
 - ▶ Equal and good pay
 - ▶ Maternity leave
 - ▶ Insurance scheme, etc

How to make the future bright? (Enablers)

- ▶ Can we, as an organization?:
 - ▶ Instill confidence that these young women can build a family if they want and come back
 - ▶ Design strong policies for technical reinsertion of women who left the workplace for that reason
 - ▶ Work with the human resources to protect their career advancement
 - ▶ Work on a scheme on continuous training specifically for the technical positions

Conclusion

- ▶ How to attract: different strategies but a strong incentive when the top management is a woman
- ▶ How to keep and take some to the top: Need of strong management will for adequate policies
- ▶ To pay attention: will not come naturally just because the top management is a woman