

# Gender Equality Plan 2022-2024

*"Gender equality is more than an objective in itself. It is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development and good governance."*

**Kofi Annan**

(Former UN Secretary General, Nobel Peace Prize 2001)

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## 1. Introduction

The appealing concern of active gender equality policies is a topic of debate in our society over the years. It is increasingly necessary to measure the issue of gender equality and there is a set of parameters that have been established for this, either by global legislation or by European legislation, and even Portuguese legislation. **Gender equality** is a duty arising from the social responsibility of all companies and an obligation of all employees.

In accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the 193 UN member states have committed to adopt measures for global action that integrate goals into their decision-making, and that contribute with their power to innovate for a more sustainable and inclusive future. In September 2015, 17 SDGs were approved, being **SDG 5 - Gender Equality** - achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls. However, according to the 2020 annual report on the progress of the SDGs in the EU, one of the topics that has not been changing for improvement is actually SDG 5. As it is a topic of importance in the various sectors of the economy, there are several international studies that demonstrate and prove that Gender Equality enhances productivity and creates value in its human assets, namely:

- optimizing management systems, organizational development and retention and loyalty of the best human resources;
- stimulating creativity and innovation, fundamental foundations for competitiveness, and allowing for fairer and more efficient decision-making; and
- positively correlating the presence of women in management bodies with the profitability of companies.

The Portuguese Resolution of the Council of Ministers nº 19/2012, of March 8, 2012, stipulates the mandatory adoption of a plan for equality in all entities of the State business sector, oriented to achieve equality treatment and opportunities between genders, eliminate discrimination and facilitate a balance between work, family, and personal life. Later, this obligation was extended to companies listed on the stock exchange market, which obligates a regime of balanced representation between genders in the administrative and supervisory bodies of the entities and the preparation and publication of annual plans for **Gender Equality**.

## 2. Framework

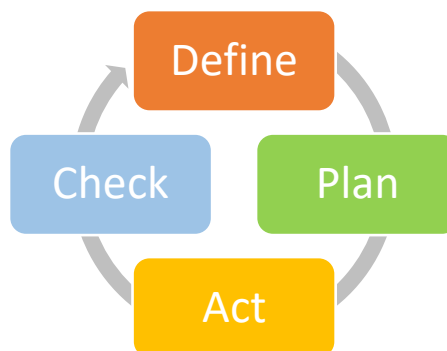
Considering the importance of the contribution of business organizations to a fully democratic and inclusive society, as well as the relevance of diversity, particularly of gender, for the balance and development of its businesses, Graphenest has dedicated special attention to this issue. Seeking to balance the representation of men and women in the organization, it decided to develop and implement a policy for **Gender Equality**, based on a plan that covers the following dimensions:

- Strategy, Mission and Values;
- Equal access to employment;
- Initial and continuing training;
- Equality in working conditions;

- Parenting protection;
- Conciliation of professional life with family and personal life;
- Prevention of the practice of harassment at work.

which design was supported in 4 steps (**Figure 1**):

- **Define** – the needs and policies to be addressed, in relation to human assets and the role they perform;
- **Plan** – a fair gender policy and budget for it;
- **Act** – in the implementation of the plan for gender equality; and
- **Check** – monitoring and monitoring of gender equality.



**Figure 1** - Define → Plan → Act → Check

The theme of **Gender Equality** has been encouraged and disseminated publicly by all those involved in Graphenest' structure. Every effort has been made to disseminate information that makes all stakeholders aware of the benefits of promoting **Gender Equality**.

### 3. Diagnostic method

Graphenest carried out a diagnosis of the current situation in terms of gender equality, according to the Guide for the preparation of equality plans, published by *the Comissão para a Igualdade no Trabalho e no Emprego* (CITE). A questionnaire was also prepared and distributed to employees with a binary answer possibility (Yes/No) with the objective to effectively assess what all employees felt/perceived in relation to the various dimensions of **Gender Equality**. The combination of these contributions allowed the perception of policies that had already been implemented, but that at no time had been written and notified to all stakeholders. Therefore, and with a view to support the **Gender Equality** plan, the most relevant elements of this diagnosis and its respective intervention plan are highlighted below.

### 4. Intervention Plan

Graphenest has defined an intervention plan that includes measures already implemented, measures in the implementation phase, as well as measures to be implemented in the period 2022-2024, taking into account the guidelines shared by CITE.

## 4.1. Strategy, Mission and Values

Graphenest is committed to the theme of **Gender Equality**, having given greater emphasis to the subject in the last year as a result of its growth in terms of human capital. Despite being aware of the matter, the policy on this matter was not mentioned in its communication, nor in official documents. For that reason, and since the entire team of the organization is involved in this topic, the mission and the strategy in terms of communication (internal and external) have been updated accordingly.

<b>Objective 1</b>	Publicly assume (internally and externally) the commitment to promoting equality between men and women			
<b>Measure</b>	<b>Responsible Department</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Implementation Status</b>
Inscription of the commitment to promoting equality between men and women in the company's mission and values	Board	No specific costs	The company's mission and values have inscribed the commitment to promoting equality between men and women for the period 2022-2024.	Implemented
Express inscription of the commitment to promoting equality between men and women in strategic documents (e.g., reports, regulations, code of ethics/conduct, submitted projects) as a company value	Board	No specific costs	Strategic documents have included equality between women and men as a company value for the period 2022-2024.	Implemented

<b>Objective 2</b>	Publicize the Plan for Equality 2022-2024 and its strategic importance for Graphenest			
<b>Measure</b>	<b>Responsible Department</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Implementation Status</b>
Disclose the Equality Plan to all employees	Board and Human Resources	No specific costs	Official disclosure on the company's website, and internal communication by e-mail	To be implemented in 2022

<b>Objective 3</b>	Ensure the implementation of the equality plan, its monitoring, follow-up and sustainability			
<b>Measure</b>	<b>Responsible Department</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Implementation Status</b>
Introduction of the theme of Gender Equality in the agendas of existing management forums, in order to ensure that leaders monitor the implementation of defined policies and take responsibility and commit to the success of their execution	Board	No specific costs	Preparation of internal reports	To be implemented in 2022

## 4.2. Equal Employment Opportunity

Graphenest's principle is to promote **Equal Employment Opportunity** regardless the gender. This policy begins with the recruiting process and is maintained throughout the employees' professional career. When selecting and recruiting human resources, Graphenest values the principle of **Gender Equality**, although in some cases there is some conditioning due to the nature of the activity.

<b>Objective 1</b>		Contribute to a fair and objective selection and recruitment process for men and women		
<b>Measure</b>	<b>Responsible Department</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Implementation Status</b>
Creation and implementation of an internal procedure to ensure that the criteria and procedures for HR selection and recruitment consider the principle of equality and non-discrimination based on sex	Human Resources	No specific costs	Evidence of procedure	To be implemented in 2022
Conducting training actions aimed at people responsible for selection and recruitment interviews on selection and recruitment procedures without gender bias	Human Resources	No allocated costs	Training sessions to be held	Implement in 2022

<b>Objective 2</b>		Ensuring the principle of equality between men and women and non-discrimination in access to employment		
<b>Measure</b>	<b>Responsible Department</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Implementation Status</b>
Verification of all job vacancies and other publications linked to pre-selection to ensure that they do not directly or indirectly contain any specific restriction or gender-based preference	Human Resources	No specific costs	Job offer advertisement and other forms of advertising linked to pre-selection exempt from any restriction, direct or indirect, specific or preference based on gender	Implemented

## 4.3. Initial and Continuing Training

Graphenest seeks to enhance and reinforce the skills of its employees throughout their professional career, in order to respond to the challenges it poses in terms of research and development (R&D), production and marketing of its products. In addition, Graphenest also invests in training for the personal development of employees, which reveals its importance to the organization. Training is based on a dynamic plan (which can be changed according to the objectives and/or projects) and investment in literature research, laboratory work, etc. The approved training plan was developed based on the principle of **Gender Equality**, seeking to ensure a balanced representation in all training initiatives developed. Finally, Graphenest

encourages an active participation of all employees in various activities that are developed throughout the year.

<b>Objective 1</b>	Eliminate structural barriers to equality between men and women			
<b>Measure</b>	<b>Responsible Department</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Implementation Status</b>
Development and integration in the training plan training options on equality between men and women	Human Resources	No specific costs	Evidence of the training content made available on gender equality	In Implementation

<b>Objective 2</b>	Promote a culture of gender equality between men and women in the workplace, favoring management and work practices in line with it			
<b>Measure</b>	<b>Responsible Department</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Implementation Status</b>
Development and implementation of awareness and awareness actions that prepare leaders to manage team diversity and gender equality	Human Resources	No specific costs	Holding of internal or external events to discuss issues related to gender equality and women in leadership	Implement in 2022

#### 4.4. Equality in Working Conditions

One of the essential pillars of Graphenest's growth is its human capital. In this context, Graphenest is going to implement a performance evaluation system. In this respect, all employees will have access to an explanation of their role and will understand what is expected during their professional career, opening the way for better performance.

<b>Objective 1</b>	Ensuring the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value			
<b>Measure</b>	<b>Responsible Department</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Implementation Status</b>
Assessment and monitoring of salary conditions, seek to ensure gender parity control mechanisms	Human Resources	No specific costs allocated	Internal report to monitor the evolution of salary conditions	In Implementation

<b>Objective 2</b>	Ensuring a fair and objective assessment process for men and women			
<b>Measure</b>	<b>Responsible Department</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Implementation Status</b>
Carry out and implement a performance evaluation model to ensure that it excludes any discrimination based on sex and that it does not penalize employees for exercising family responsibilities	Human Resources	No specific costs allocated	Performance evaluation report	Implement in 2022

#### 4.5. Parenting protection

Graphenest guarantees the right to take advantage of parental leave for all employees. All the rights of employees are safeguarded, with temporary replacement during the parental leave. In this context, the granting of periods of leave and absences for childcare provided for in the applicable legislation is ensured.

Objective 1	Promote a culture of encouraging parenting, through the organization and dissemination of support instruments existing in the company			
Measure	Responsible Department	Budget	Indicators	Implementation Status
Encouraging workers to share initial parental leave	Human Resources	No specific costs yet	Ratio between licenses taken and the number of new parents	Implement in 2022
Give new parents the parenting KIT	Human Resources	No specific costs yet	Ratio between parenting kits delivered and registrations of new parents	Implement in 2022

#### 4.6. Conciliation between professional, family and personal life

The issue of **Gender Equality** must be understood in a broader perspective, encompassing equal opportunities for all genders, in different contexts – professional, family and personal. Graphenest has a Work Flexibility Program (WFP) whose mission is to actively contribute to the conciliation between the personal and professional lives of employees and, consequently, to their well-being and professional fulfillment. This program aims to publicize and encourage the adoption of a flexible working model, allowing to work remotely, to choose workday hours, reduce the weekly workload, ask for unpaid leave, have up to 3 extra days for unpaid personnel.

Objective 1	Promote the reconciliation of professional life with the family and personal life of employees			
Measure	Responsible Department	Budget	Indicators	Implementation Status
Encouraging the adoption of flexible working practices in force, namely remote work, flexible hours and new forms of work organization	Human Resources	No specific costs	80% of employees joined telework 100% of employees with flexible hours	Implemented

#### 4.7. Prevention of harassment at work

Graphenest does not allow any form of harassment or any other behavior that jeopardizes the dignity of employees, having prepared a guiding document for this purpose – *Code of Good Conduct for the Prevention and Combat of Harassment at Work* – which contains a set of rules to be followed by everyone, as well as the possible consequences if a situation of harassment occurs. Any behavior that could constitute harassment at work, as well as any witness of this type of behavior, must be reported as soon as possible, thus delivering the participation of the facts, through the means of communication and protocol available.



<b>Objective 1</b>		Ensuring the prevention and combat of harassment at work		
<b>Measure</b>	<b>Responsible Department</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Implementation Status</b>
Existence of the Code of Good Conduct for the Prevention and Combat of Harassment at Work	Human Resources	No specific costs	Evidence of the document made available when welcoming the employee and sending it by email to employees	Implemented

<b>Objective 2</b>		Prevent and combat the practice of other offenses to physical or moral integrity, freedom, honor or dignity		
<b>Measure</b>	<b>Responsible Department</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Implementation Status</b>
Formalization and communication to receive and manage suggestions and complaints from employees in the field of gender equality and harassment at work	Human Resources	No specific costs	Evidence of communication performed	To be implemented in 2022

## 5. Monitoring the execution of the plan

In order to monitor the effectiveness of actions and the achievement of objectives, identifying potential improvements and/or new measures to be implemented, the execution of the Graphenest **Gender Equality plan** will be subject to a systematic monitoring process.

## 6. Conclusion

In conclusion, it is important to point out that Graphenest, which has an active role and intervention in society, believes that the intention expressed in this **Gender Equality Plan** should go beyond organizational boundaries, seeking to positively influence the different stakeholders in order to promote a change in the current paradigm.