

## Guidance for collecting and monitoring gender information

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Up-to-date and accurate workforce records provide information needed to plan and make decisions that bring enhanced benefits your enterprise and workers.

Collecting sex-disaggregated workforce data (data split by male and female) will inform you of the different situations of men and women in your workforce, enabling greater understanding of business needs and more effective planning for the future.

### Monitoring gender information can help you to:

- Understand the roles that men and women occupy in your workforce
- Identify specific problems
- Effectively set action plans to address issues
- Develop effective, data-informed human resource strategies
- Measure progress against equality objectives

### Why is Sedex asking for this information?

Businesses face increasing pressure from their customers and external stakeholders to understand circumstances of female workers and challenges they might face. Collecting, analysing and making informed decisions based on gender data shows your ability to report on, analyse and tackle issues.

Your customers want better information on workers in their supply chains. They want to show their customers and stakeholders that they are considering workers with different vulnerabilities and making informed responsible sourcing strategies.

Brands with a commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals need to be able to address the limitations posed by gender inequality. Disclosing information on women in your SAQ enables increased understanding of their supply chains and where efforts need to be focussed to achieve overall goals.

### What records are beneficial to split by male and female?

Below is a list of types of personnel records you can split by gender and benefits to your business.

In collecting workforce information, it is important to involve Human Resources teams, managers, workers and worker representatives. Workers will want to know why information is being collected, and what it is being used for.

Type of record	Benefits of splitting record into male and female
Workforce Profile: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job role</li> <li>• Occupation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand differences and trends in roles/occupations held by men and women.</li> <li>• Identify barriers to progression.</li> <li>• Ensure that talents of all workforce groups are utilised throughout roles/occupations.</li> <li>• Provide context to pay gap analysis.</li> <li>• Assess progress on equal opportunities objectives.</li> </ul>
Employment terms and conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay</li> <li>• Hours worked (including overtime)</li> <li>• Holiday entitlements and other benefits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess progress on equal opportunities objectives.</li> <li>• Identify which groups experience limitations in pay and working hours.</li> <li>• Analyse pay gaps.</li> </ul>
Worker retention rates and turnover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand retention issues and highlight areas that need attention.</li> <li>• Develop more effective retention strategies.</li> </ul>
Recruitment and promotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify which groups are limited in recruitment and promotion processes.</li> <li>• Develop processes to ensure that equal opportunities are provided.</li> <li>• Business benefits from a diverse workforce.</li> </ul>
Absence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sickness</li> <li>• Maternity/paternity leave</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable better understanding of absence needs for different worker groups.</li> <li>• Identify where issues lie.</li> <li>• Develop data-informed strategies to improve absence rates.</li> </ul>
Accidents and injuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand which workers are experiencing higher risk of accidents and injuries.</li> <li>• Identify where extra protection, safeguarding or training is needed to prevent accidents.</li> </ul>
Skills training and professional development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Induction</li> <li>• Skills training</li> <li>• Further education</li> <li>• Health and safety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify gaps in skills and training.</li> <li>• Better allocate training resources where it is needed.</li> <li>• Understand recruitment needs.</li> <li>• Support workforce development strategies with data.</li> <li>• Improve skills in line with business requirements.</li> </ul>
Complaints and grievances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable management to make informed decisions when a breach has occurred.</li> <li>• Understand if violations are impacting a group of workers.</li> <li>• Have data to support actions to address new and recurrent issues.</li> </ul>

### How do I set up sex-disaggregated data collection?

1. Identify gaps in your answers where questions ask to split data by male and female workers.
2. Modify current human resource data systems.
3. Train staff on new systems and sensitive issues.

The first step is to identify which of the sex-disaggregated questions in the Sedex SAQ you are unable to answer. It might be that you keep data for all workers, but do not divide this into male

and female. This will allow you to see which points need to be collected or disaggregated between men and women.

Next, you will need to modify your current data collection system so that it allows information to be collected for male and female workers separately. For example, if you currently maintain a spreadsheet on accidents, an extra column can be added so that gender can be included alongside current records.

The final step is to train relevant staff to record information split by male and female. Staff may need additional training on more sensitive issues, such as grievances or accidents. Your staff need to be well-prepared to deal with these issues in a sensitive manner that helps the man or women who raised them.

### How do I make the most of gender data?

The value of capturing gender data can be enhanced when collected and monitored regularly and used to inform policies. Once you have the information, it is important to:

1. *Assess whether the difference is significant.*

Not all differences are due to gender, so it is important to assess whether differences between men and women are significant. A difference is significant if there is an 80% gap between the favoured and less favoured gender<sup>1</sup>. In the United Kingdom, the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) has developed [guidance](#) on the likely areas where sex discrimination can occur in the workplace and how to address them.

2. *Identify root cause.*

Root cause investigations will need to consider the company's sector, location, workforce profile, and policies and processes. Sector and location are important to assess whether barriers to women are influenced by the context within which they are working. See page 50 in the [BSR report](#) for more on conducting root cause analysis.

3. *Develop action plans to address and track the issue.*

Action plans should be developed in mind of the data collected and include measurable indicators to track and monitor progress. Plans should include consultation with management and worker representatives, and awareness raising around gender discrimination. See page 19 in [Ethical Trade Initiative \(ETI\) guidance](#) on taking action on gender equality.

More information can be found in the following guidance documents:

- ACAS: [Personnel data and record keeping](#)
- ACAS: [Voluntary Gender Equality Analysis and Reporting](#)
- ACAS: [Sex discrimination key points for the workplace](#)
- BSR: [Making Women Workers Count](#)
- ETI: [Base Code Guidance: Gender Equality](#)

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<sup>1</sup> ACAS (2011) 'Voluntary Gender Equality Analysis and Reporting'  
<https://archive.acas.org.uk/media/3192/Voluntary-Gender-Equality-Analysis-and-Reporting/pdf/Voluntary-gender-equality-analysis--reporting-accessible-version.pdf>