

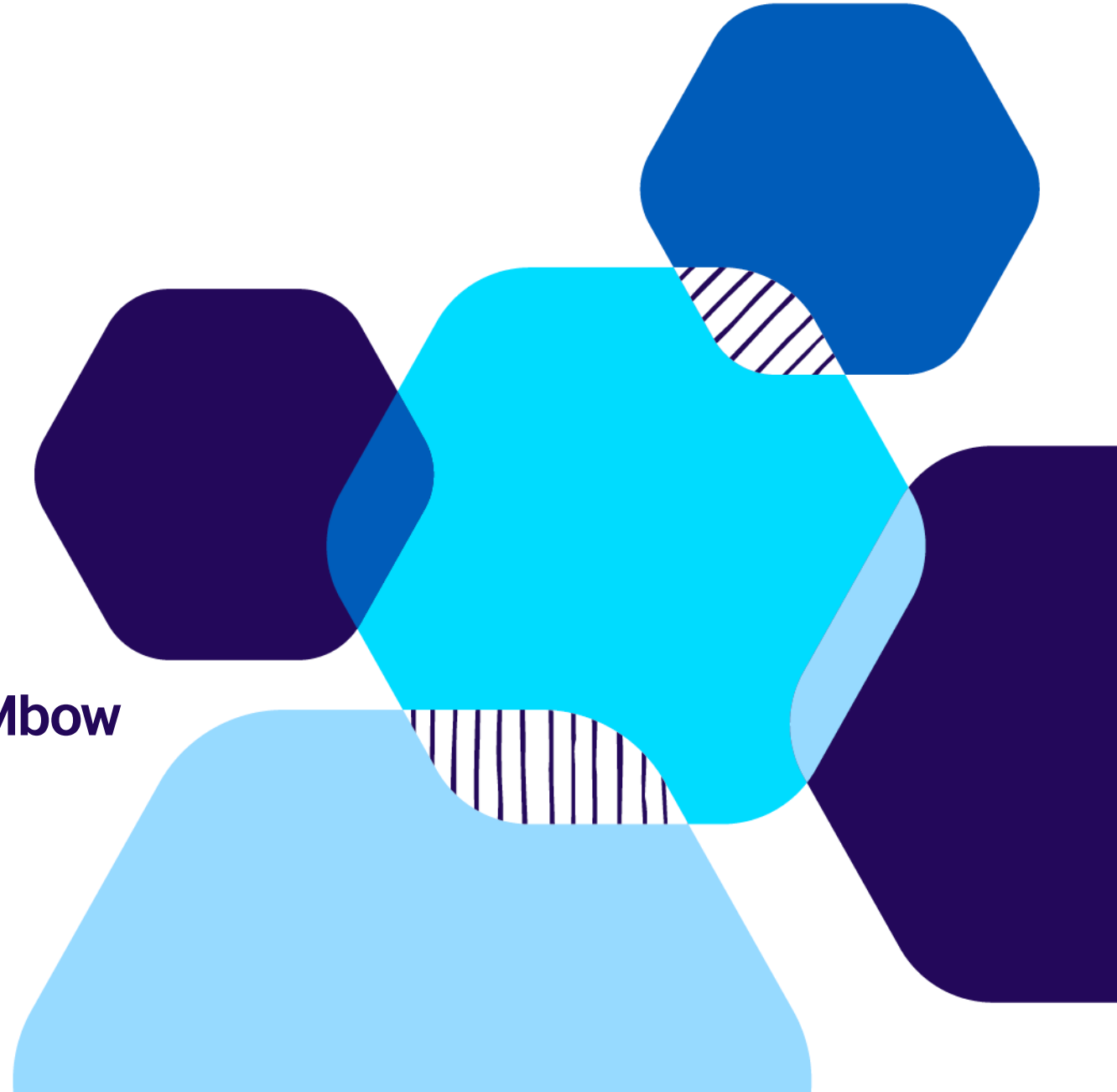
TeachingEnglish

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# How can we balance gender in teacher associations?

Josephine Katangila and Mame Awa Mbow

Saturday 17 August 2024



## About the speakers

**Josephine Katangila**, a teacher from DRC's South Kivu province, holds a BA in applied pedagogy from ISP-Bukavu. She teaches at ULPA in Kinshasa and is a teacher educator for her Teacher association. Trained by the British Council, she represents female teachers, has over a decade of teaching experience, and has developed a CoPs system. Skilled in entrepreneurship, she runs a small business making handbags, slippers, flower buds, pots, and trivets.

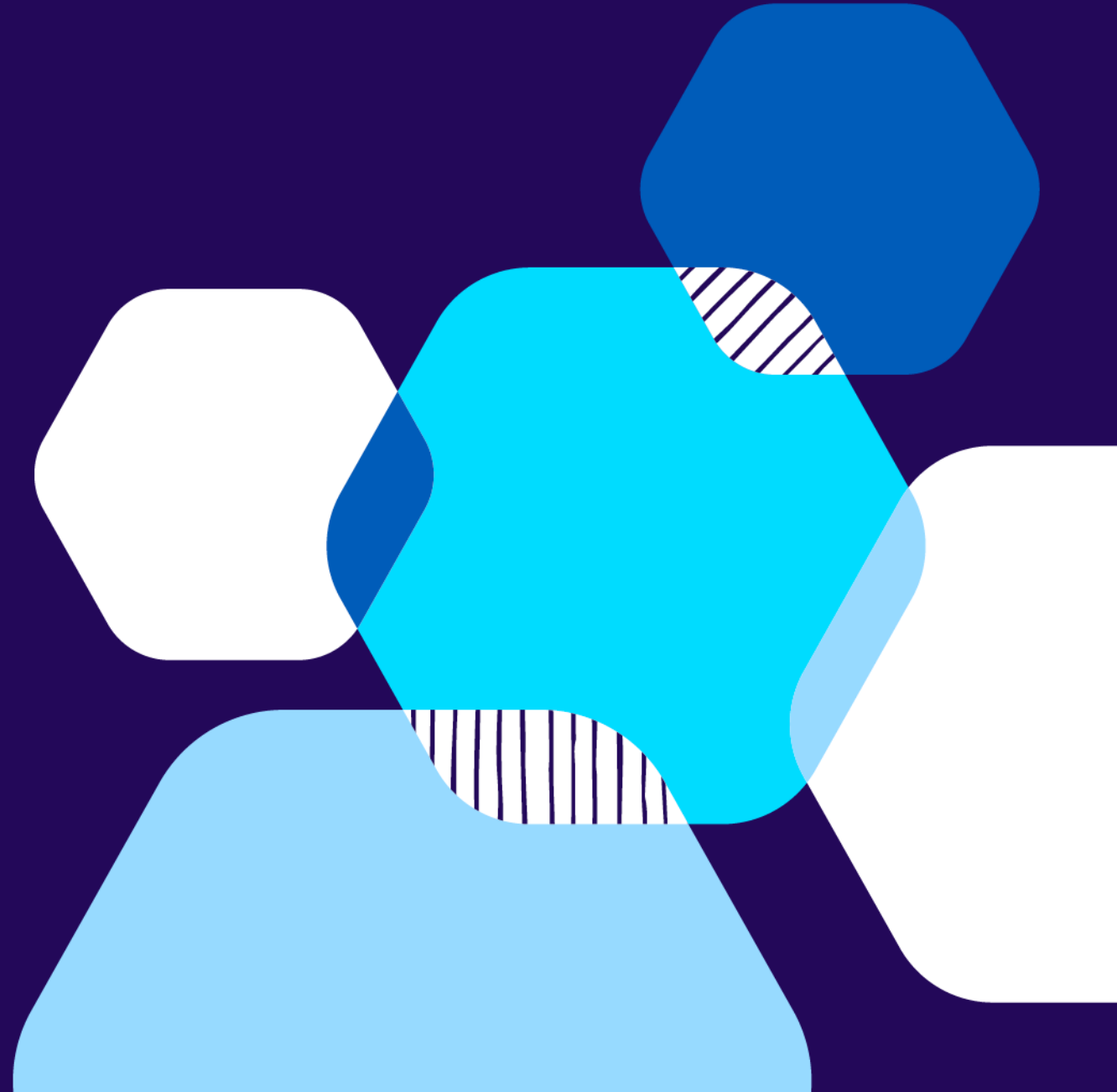


**Mame Awa Mbow** is a teacher of English in Kaffrine, Senegal. She has been teaching for 14 years and is a devoted member of her TA, ATES. She is the current Vice President of the association and one of the coordinators of its Female Teachers Special Interest Group.



# Objectives:

- to discuss contexts of gender inequality
- to present solutions
- to show what is being done in DRC and Senegal



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# Introduction

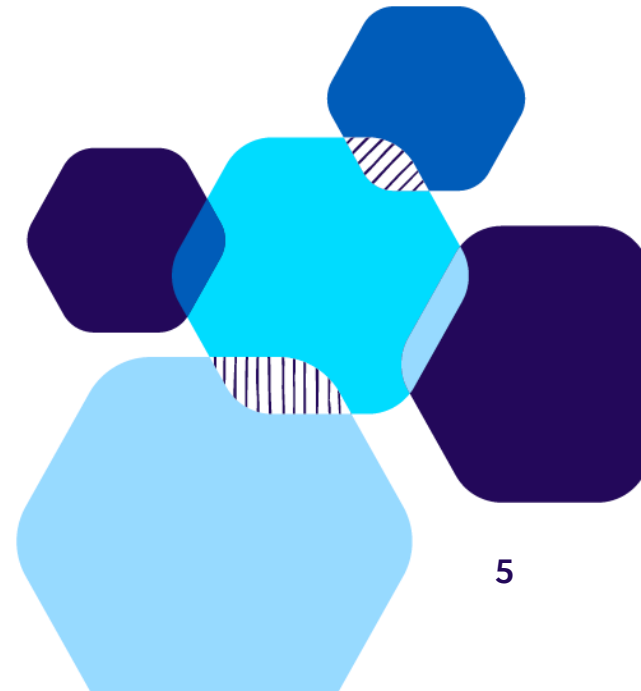
- **Gender challenges and discrimination persist as significant societal issues.**
- **Despite progress, gender inequality remains prevalent in various domains, including education.**
- **Addressing gender inequality is crucial in educational settings. It impacts students, teachers, and the overall learning environment.**
- **By promoting gender equality, we create a more inclusive and equitable educational system.**

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**Questions – please answer in the chat:**

**Why is gender equality important to you?**

**What issues with gender inequality have you seen in your country?**



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# Contexts of Gender Inequality:

Gender bias manifests in several contexts

**Leadership Representation**  
Few women in leadership roles within schools

**Impact on Teachers**  
Gender bias influences teachers' knowledge and behaviour

**Teaching Styles**  
Societal expectations may shape teaching approaches

**Professional Development**  
Unequal access to training and career advancement

# Existing Efforts

## Small Group Discussions:

These intimate sessions allow teachers to engage in open dialogue about gender-related issues. Participants share experiences, challenges, and strategies for fostering equality.

## Debates:

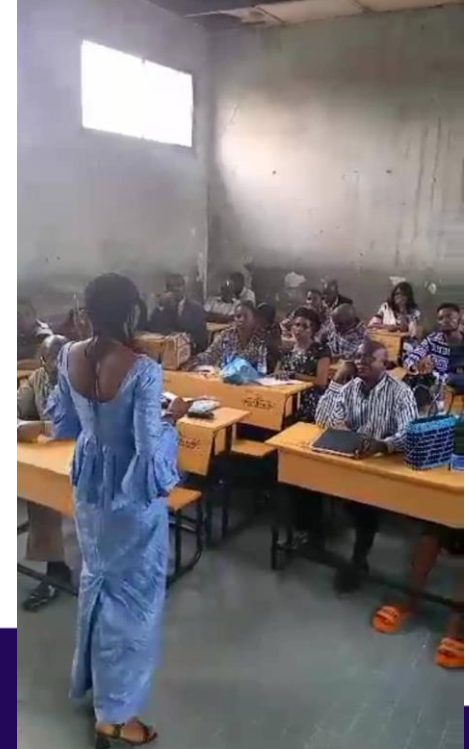
Debates encourage critical thinking and raise awareness.

Teachers can explore different perspectives on gender equality and challenge stereotypes.

## Workshops and Training:

Practical workshops provide teachers with tools to create inclusive classrooms.

Training sessions cover topics like gender-sensitive teaching methods and curriculum design.



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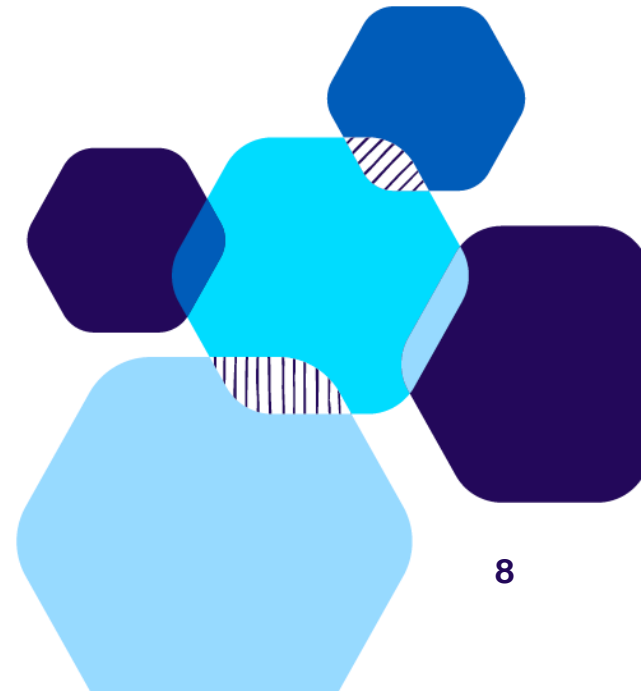
# Impact and Limitations

While these efforts have positive effects, it's essential to recognise their limitations:

**Reach:** Not all teachers participate in these initiatives.

**Sustainability:** Ensuring lasting change beyond isolated events requires ongoing commitment.

What can we do to get all teachers to participate and ensure lasting change?





# The Need for a System-Wide Framework

A comprehensive approach is essential to address gender inequality effectively.

Isolated efforts may yield limited results, but a system-wide framework ensures coordinated action across all levels of education.

## Why a System-Wide Framework?

**Holistic Impact:** A framework considers multiple dimensions (curriculum, policies, teacher training) simultaneously.

**Consistency:** It ensures uniform practices across schools and minimizes disparities.

**Sustainability:** Long-term change requires systemic shifts, not just isolated interventions.

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# Proposed Framework:

## Introducing Gender Equality Empowerment:

Gender equality empowerment focuses on empowering teachers to challenge biases and promote equality.

It goes beyond awareness to active engagement and skill-building.

## Creating Lasting Change:

### By empowering teachers, we create a ripple effect:

Teachers model gender equality behaviors; Students learn from positive examples; and Societal norms gradually shift.

## Examples of Successful Implementation:

**Professional Development Programs:** Training sessions on gender-sensitive teaching methods.

**Inclusive Curricula:** Integrating diverse perspectives and challenging stereotypes.

**Teacher Networks:** CoPs where teachers collaborate and share best practices.

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# Creating Communities of Practice (CoPs) for Female Teachers:

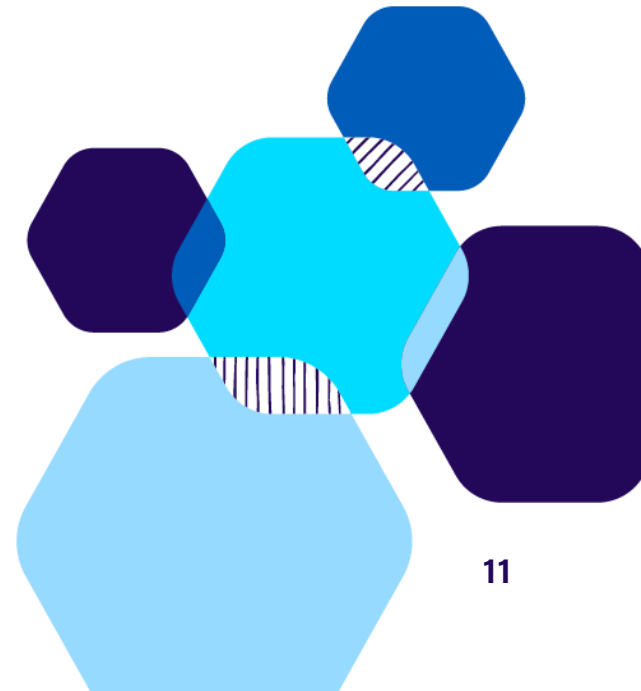
CoPs are collaborative spaces where teachers come together to learn, share, and grow.

For female teachers, CoPs provide a supportive environment to discuss gender-related challenges.

## Role in Promoting Gender Equality:

CoPs allow female teachers to:

- Exchange experiences and strategies.
- Advocate for gender-inclusive practices.
- Lead initiatives within their schools.



# Case Study: CLASS-DRC Initiative:

In Ngaliema commune, Kinshasa, CLASS-DRC encourages CoPs led by female teachers.

These CoPs actively promote gender equality through training sessions, awareness campaigns, and mentorship



# CLASS-DRC – CoPs led by female teachers



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# ATES, SENEGAL – FEMALE SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP: HOW EVERYTHING STARTED

- **NOT** an **independent branch** of the association, we are part of the association
- **3 coordinators**: Mary Frederic Pouye, Mouhsinatou Toure and Mame Awa Mbow

## WHAT WE NOTICED

- women teachers less attendance in CPD activities
- Reluctance to volunteer in presentations
- Less female voices heard

## REFLECTIONS

- How can we know?
- Where do we find them?
- How can we reach **them?**
- How can we possibly **support** them?



# What we thought of doing

Childcare committee during events



**BUT**

Other hindrances: family issues (husbands)



03/12  
REFUSAL OF THE CALL

weareneo.com

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# What we have done

1. **Sharing the news:** sensitising female teachers about the initiative during ATEs events
2. **Collecting Data:** asking them to share their electronic addresses
3. **WhatsApp group:** creation of a platform on January 21st 2021 gathering all female teachers to facilitate communication and collaboration
4. **Survey:** Shared a questionnaire on women empowerment
5. **Yearly Seminars:** for Women Teachers
6. **Seek help:** Talked to partners about the SIG and its aims, seeking support





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# Aims

## Our plan for the Women teachers SIG:

- Provide support for each other
- Share opportunities
- Discuss issues and find solutions
- Speak out – and publish – to get our voices heard
- Learn from the experiences of others
- Interesting weekly organized discussions

**JOIN US! – a safe space to discuss issues**



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# Offered Opportunity

**British council: English Connects**

**Workshop for Female Teachers on December 16th**

**Theme: Online Professional Development**



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# Ongoing Opportunities

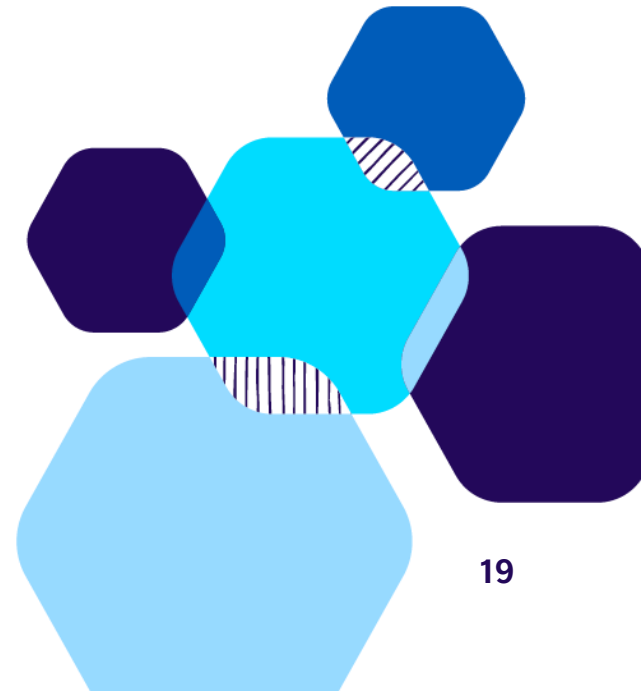
## British Council

**Training Courses for  
female teachers**

**Theme: Presentation  
Skills**

## R.E.L.O.

**Opportunity to finance  
Female Teachers  
projects**



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# Concrete Steps for Implementation

## Teacher Training Programs:

**Gender Sensitivity Workshops:** Organise workshops for all teachers to raise awareness about gender biases and stereotypes.

**Inclusive Pedagogy Training:** Train teachers on gender-inclusive teaching methods, classroom practices, and curriculum design.

## Curriculum Integration:

**Review Existing Materials:** Evaluate textbooks and educational resources for gender bias.

**Include Diverse Perspectives:** Ensure curricula represent diverse genders, cultures, and historical figures.

**Challenge Stereotypes:** Address gender roles and stereotypes in lesson plans.

# Concrete Steps for Implementation cont.

## School Policies and Guidelines:

**Gender Equality Policy:** Develop a clear policy statement on gender equality.

**Reporting Mechanisms:** Establish procedures for reporting incidents of discrimination or bias.

**Inclusive Language:** Promote the use of gender-neutral language in school communications.

## Male Teacher Engagement:

**Awareness Sessions:** Conduct sessions specifically for male teachers on understanding gender issues.

**Male Allies:** Encourage male teachers to actively support gender equality initiatives.

**Co-Teaching:** Pair male and female teachers for collaborative teaching experiences.

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## Conclusion

**Gender equality is essential for a thriving educational environment.**

**By implementing practical steps, schools can create lasting change.**

**Let's take action together to promote gender equality in our classrooms and beyond!**

**What else can we do? What are you planning?**

**Please share in the chat!**

**Thank you**

**Any questions?**

