Ten Ways to Create an Enabling Environment during COVID-19

UN Women created the [Enabling Environment Guidelines](#) in support of the Secretary-General's [System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity](#). **The Enabling Environment Guidelines can and should especially be applied as the UN adapts to the COVID-19 crisis.** Adapted from the recommendations in the Guidelines, here are ten ways to create an enabling environment for all personnel during this extraordinary time:

1) Senior management **promote the benefits of workplace flexibility** as a way to be **more effective and deliver better results**, not only as a way to balance work and life. Research shows that workplace flexibility benefits organizations through improving staff well-being and enabling business continuity.

2) Managers **recognize results-based good performance and productivity**, not time spent in the office or online. All personnel promote an **environment of trust and accountability**.

3) Efforts are made to **arrange team meeting times that work for everyone** including colleagues in different time zones and those with care responsibilities.

4) The **'right to disconnect'** is recognized. All colleagues are encouraged to be offline when not working.

5) **Maximum flexibility is urged for colleagues to carry out care commitments** which may be exacerbated during this crisis: flexibility to support personnel addressing family care issues, including eldercare and care for family members with disabilities, including temporary disabilities or illness.

6) Managers and colleagues **do not make assumptions about colleagues' family structures and how domestic responsibilities are shared**.

7) All personnel should contribute to and support a **culture of respect, zero tolerance and accountability for discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment and abuse of authority** which can all take place online.

8) Efforts are made to create **diverse and gender balanced panels during webinars** and other online meetings.

9) **Online mentoring networks and informal support systems** are harnessed.

10) **Career development training and learning** opportunities are promoted for everyone. These can be beneficial to support colleagues through the crisis as well as in the future.