

Approaches to Ensuring Representative and Diverse Leadership in the Inclusive IPS Ecosystem

Design Note

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Representative Leadership

When building Inclusive IPS leadership and board teams, representative leadership refers to leadership structures that meaningfully reflect the diversity of the populations they serve, particularly by ensuring women—especially from marginalized backgrounds—are intentionally included, represented, and empowered in decision-making roles.

Representative Leadership is a composite of several components:

- 1. **Gender Balance in Leadership.** Balance necessitates, not just token participation of a single woman in a leadership role, but gender-balanced representation at executive, board, and advisory levels. The number of women in leadership or management roles should be reflective of the overall population of women in that market.
- 2. **Voice and Influence in Decision-Making.** Women leaders must have actual authority, not symbolic roles. This means voting power on boards, leadership over key portfolios, influence over strategic direction (not just CSR), and gender equity programs.

- 3. **Inclusive Institutional Culture.** Policies and Practices that ensure leadership pathways are accessible to women.
- 4. **Structural Mechanisms for Inclusion.** This can include but is not limited to mandates or targets to increase inclusion of women in boards, senior management and other teams.

What follow in the subsequent tables are direct mechanisms to enshrine representative leadership and supporting policies to sustain representative leadership composition and participation. Direct approaches will have an immediate impact on increasing the number of women represented. Supporting policies will work to create positive environments to help create or improve the environment that will increase the recruitment, retaining, and promotion of women in the institution.

The Scheme should pursue both sets of strategies to reap intended benefits of genuinely diverse leadership.

Direct Mechanisms to Enshrine Representative Leadership

Mechanism	Description	Intended Impact
 Set Gender Representation Targets	Establish minimum % targets for women in executive, senior, and board roles.	Signals commitment; improves visibility and accountability.
 Redesign Succession Plans	Audit and revise leadership succession pathways to promote diverse internal candidates.	Increases long-term gender balance in leadership pipelines.

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Supportive Policies to Sustain Representative Leadership

Mechanism	Description	Intended Impact
 Mentorship and Sponsorship Programs	Pair high-potential women staff with senior leaders to mentor/support career advancement.	Builds career confidence and internal mobility for underrepresented staff.
 Re-entry and Career Flexibility Programs	Create structured return-to-work initiatives after career breaks (e.g., maternity leave).	Retains skilled talent; eases transitions for women rejoining workforce.
 Leadership Development Programs	Offer training, coaching, and executive education tailored for women and diverse candidates.	Prepares a wider talent pool for senior decision-making roles.
 Promote Work-Life Balance and Supportive Policies	Provide flexible work arrangements, childcare, parental leave, and wellness programs.	Reduces attrition; supports diverse retention in demanding leadership roles.
 Publish Diversity Metrics	Require annual reporting on gender diversity in leadership, boards, and hiring.	Enhances transparency and peer benchmarking for inclusive governance.