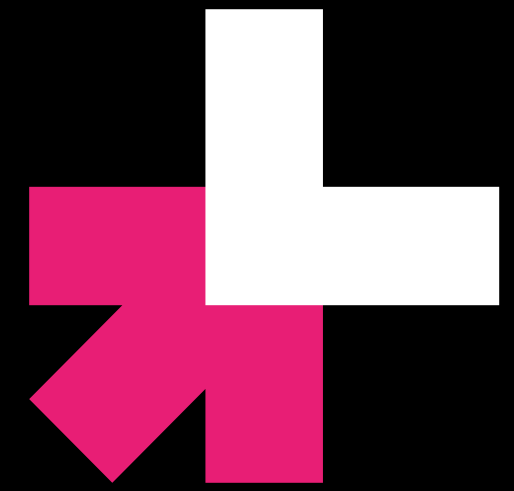


Proven  
Solution

Equal Representation At Leadership



HeForShe

# UK Policing

## Achieving gender equality in policing

## Global Context

**Police forces globally are heavily male-dominated organizations. Given their unique role in protecting communities from the types of violence experienced by women and girls which originates from the societal power-imbalance between men and women, becoming gender-equal in terms of how they look and how they operate is key to their legitimacy.**

This solution is based on the experience of UK Police Forces in seeking to address gender inequality and may be replicated in other forces across the world.

Despite the fact that women have been policing in the UK for more than 100 years, men continue to progress at a disproportionately higher rate than women leading to a significant imbalance in senior positions across nearly every single police force, all of which remain imbalanced in terms of the proportion of women officers compared to the communities they serve.

Within the UK, approximately 2m adults experience domestic abuse each year, with women being twice as likely to experience it

than men. Domestic abuse is a key priority for police forces but the link between this and the cultural issues that underpin how their organizations operate and therefore respond to this abuse was not always recognized in practice.

“Policing in the UK recognizes its fundamental responsibility to be representative of all the communities we serve. We know that all too often men have the power and it is our responsibility to support, mentor and champion the cause of women. We have seen real progress with a number of forces having 50/50 gender recruitment and significant rises in the number of women Chief Constables.

I hope the steps we have taken will be useful to other forces. We know there is much still to do, including addressing disproportionality in senior posts and specialist functions, and eliminating unacceptable behaviours towards women. With resolve and humility, we can make the police a fair, trusted and representative part of the justice system.”

**Carl Foulkes, Chief Constable of North Wales; Diversity and Ethics Strategic Lead, National Police Chiefs Council**



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## Key Stages of Implementation

Three key steps were undertaken to unite UK policing in their approach towards achieving gender equality:

# 1

### Step 1 Explaining and Influencing

It was firstly important to introduce the concept of HeForShe across UK police forces. The brand provided a powerful tool to spread the message of gender equality and acted as a starting point for relevant conversations.

It was also important to explain why UK policing needed HeForShe. National data demonstrated the under-representation of women throughout policing and the scale of violence against women and girls within communities. The data was used to

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influence the appropriate people within each force who could accelerate change. The most senior ranking officer within each UK police force is the Chief Constable and in the majority of forces this is a man. The most senior male from every force was invited to a national event in May 2018 to learn more about HeForShe. It was also recognized that whilst this individual could influence work within their force, it was likely that another person within the organization would progress activity. Therefore a HeForShe single point of contact for each force was nominated and a network of contacts established.

Key conferences and events throughout the year were attended to raise awareness of HeForShe and continually promote the message to a targeted audience. As the movement gained momentum, different forces and organizations that supported policing asked for a presentation to be made at local and national conferences.

### Step 2 Seeking a clear commitment

Every police force within the UK was asked to make the same three commitments:

- To engage with the workforce to discuss gender equality within the workplace and to aspire to improve the gender imbalances at senior levels within policing
- Continue to work to combat domestic abuse and sexual abuse in society to create communities free from such abuse
- Support the annual reporting of gender equality information.

It was important for all forces to make the same three clear commitments, allowing progress to be easily monitored and to promote the sharing of best practices and working together as a network for change.

# 2

Likewise, the commitments needed to be realistic and achievable in order for forces to support the movement.

The commitments were introduced at a national event in May 2018. The most senior male from every police force was asked to attend and sign up to the commitments on behalf of their force. This event provided commitment from 62% of the 45 police forces in the UK. Further commitment was received by supporting police services such as the College of Policing, British Transport Police and the Police Superintendents' Association.

## In March 2019, it was announced at a national event for senior women in policing that all UK police forces had made a commitment to HeForShe and were working towards achieving gender equality.

The remaining forces were individually contacted and encouraged to participate by making their own commitment. A key element to this was the success of the national event; having signed up the critical mass the others were supportive in following the movement. Evidence of activity and the improvements made were shared with other forces, demonstrating success is possible. In March 2019, it was announced at a national event for senior women in policing that all UK police forces had made a commitment to HeForShe and were working towards achieving gender equality.



### Step 3 Demonstrating accountability and continuing momentum

Once a national sign-up to HeForShe across policing in the UK was achieved it was important to provide a level of accountability and ensure the momentum gained from national events was maintained.

The solution to this was producing an annual report. Gender Equality in UK Policing: First Annual Report was publicly launched in November 2019. It contains national and local data, as well as best practice examples from all 45 police forces. The report acts as a benchmark for UK policing and demonstrates the clear commitment and desire to achieve gender equality. The production of the report provided a level of accountability for every force as well as a desire to be seen as undertaking positive activity when compared to other forces

publicly. Since the event, the report has been a catalyst for activity, inspiring forces to act and learn from each other.

The report will be produced annually in order to demonstrate progress and promote innovative activity. This will continue the momentum of the movement and the level of accountability in producing the report that has been established, both by us as the lead force and the public.

Opportunities to attend (physically and virtually) notable conference and events to promote HeForShe and inspire activity are taken, including the development of a best practice event to support progress and coordinate local activity.

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### Resources

A pack of resources was provided to every police force once they had made their commitment to HeForShe. This included artwork for posters and leaflets, access to promotional items and an action plan template with suggested activity. We also produced a video of a senior male officer explaining how HeForShe relates to policing and using his personal experiences to demonstrate why men should support gender equality. This was a powerful message used by many forces to raise awareness.

Strong communications support was required to promote the movement both internally and externally, as well as produce and promote the annual report.

A HeForShe Programme Manager was employed to monitor and progress internal activity as well as coordinate the national sign-up and support. In addition to this, work was undertaken by dedicated and passionate individuals as part of their core role and as a clear focus for the force.

### Contact

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