

# GENDER AT WORK SCENARIOS

**Leadership:** A recently promoted female senior leader in the political organization feels that she has to act 'like a man' in order to be taken seriously as a manager. She senses that many people in the office do not associate femininity – or women – with strong leadership.

**Participation:** A recently elected female politician is becoming increasingly frustrated at her male colleagues talking over her in meetings and claiming her ideas as their own. She complains to a senior male official about this sexism, but he tells her not to be so sensitive, and that she will have to fight to be listened to just as he had to.

**Child care:** A male politician wants to spend more time with his young baby while his wife goes back to work, but he is told that won't be possible because only women can take leave for child care responsibilities. And as one of his male colleagues says, "if you take time off for children, you will give the impression you are under the control of your wife!"

**Sexual discrimination:** A male senior politician only hires attractive women administrative staff because, he says, a pretty woman helps to make the workplace "a more pleasant environment".

**Sexual entitlement:** A male politician reacts angrily when a female colleague rejects his sexual advances. He tells his male colleagues that he feels this woman has been leading him on by the way she was dressing and by her friendliness toward him so she has no right to turn him down now.

**Sexual harassment:** A female staff member in the political organization complains to colleagues that she is being sexually harassed by her male manager. Some colleagues, both men and women, feel that she is making up the story in order to get attention for herself. Others blame her for the abuse because she does not dress 'modestly' like the other women in the office do.

**Domestic violence:** A female politician returns to work after an absence, doing her best to hide the bruising on her face. Most of her colleagues, men and women, say nothing, even though they know that the woman's husband has been violent with her in the past. They feel that she should be more careful about not provoking her husband and has only herself to blame.