The Gender & Inclusivity Project presented an opportunity for COSTECH to enhance delivery of quality services to the national STI system including research and innovation (R&I) granting processes. Through the project, the Commission is building internal capacity for developing and tracking gender inclusive research and innovation programmes and projects.

**The Plan**

Although COSTECH had an existing institutional Gender Policy and Action Plan, there was no continuous assessment of implementation. With an emphasis on home-grown solutions COSTECH analysed three prior research and innovation calls during phase one of the Gender at Work (G@W) GAL process, re-examining the entire process from advertising and review to evaluation of impact.

**Successes**

Lessons learned from the G@W process are being applied internally to enhance implementation of the COSTECH strategic plan 2021/22–2025/26.

To address gaps in gender and inclusivity at both guideline and implementation levels, the Commission developed a National Framework for Mainstreaming Gender in Research and Innovation and a guiding document for administering calls, the Research and Innovation Grants Manual, which is being revised to introduce special grants targeting women and young researchers.

At a practical level, lessons were disseminated to institutional management on the need to improve adherence to the guiding documents, alongside improving the documents.