Action Plans can make Elephants dance!
Findings from Swiss Universities

Julia Nentwich
with Ursula Offenberger and Carolina Borra Krages
University of St. Gallen, Switzerland
## Research Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National level</th>
<th>Organizational level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document analysis</td>
<td>3 Case Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 interviews</td>
<td>18 interviews, 6 group discussions,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>document analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 interviews</td>
<td>18 interviews, 6 group discussions,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>document analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research project

„Excellence and/or Equal Opportunities of Gender National Objectives and discursive Practices at Universities (Germany and Switzerland)“

www.genderchange-academia.eu
Translating organizational change

Reforms are never complete: 'fading out'

Sense-making processes (enrolling allies) stabilize and transform meaning (editing)

Czarniawska and Sevòn 1996
Action Plans

SUC-Programme Equal Opportunities (2013-2016)
Action Plans: 7 Fields of Action

7 Fields of Action
1. Institutional anchoring
2. Number of women as professors & decision making bodies
3. Gender-fair measurements to foster young researcher’s development
4. General conditions for individuals with family responsibilities
5. Reduction of horizontal and vertical (access and dropouts)

Minor Fields of Action:
6. Human resources and organization development
7. Miscellaneous.
Action Plans

SUC-Programme Equal Opportunities (2013-2016)

Action Plans: 7 Fields of Action

Documents (federal) SNSF; SERI; CRUS 3 fields of action

7 Fields of Action
1. Institutional anchoring
2. **Number of women** as professors & decision making bodies
3. Gender-fair measurements to foster *young researcher’s development*
4. General conditions for individuals with *family responsibilities*
5. Reduction of horizontal and vertical (access and dropouts)

Minor Fields of Action:
6. Human resources and organization development
7. Miscellaneous.

Major Finding: ’Fading Out‘ & focus in meaning
Action Plans

SUC-Programme Equal Opportunities (2013-2016)

University’s Action Plans: 7 Fields of Action

Action Plans on Faculty Level

7 Fields of Action
1. Institutional anchoring
2. **Number of women** as professors & decision making bodies
3. Gender-fair measurements to foster **young researcher’s development**
4. General conditions for individuals with **family responsibilities**
5. Reduction of horizontal and vertical segregation (access and dropouts)

Minor Fields of Action:
6. Human resources and organization development
7. Miscellaneous.

‘Fading Out’ & strongly focused on future & family
Findings so far...

1) 'Fading Out'
2) Editing: EO as strongly focused on future problem solving and how to support organization of the family
3) High legitimacy of EO as fostering young researchers & EO as work-family balance
4) Stronger controversies about working time regimes and appointment procedures observed and facilitated.
Equal Opportunities as...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child Care Facilities</th>
<th>Work-family balance child care facilities; dual career couples</th>
<th>Framework for work-family balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Indeed, the report has shown that there are already a greater amount of part-time professors. Interestingly enough mainly men, successful men who are so successful that they can do additional interesting stuff along the way that also satisfies them. I mean not family care, but law firm. (...) Or politics. (Male name) was 50 % employed as a professor because the other half of the time he was a thoroughbred politician.”
Cycle 1
CHILD CARE

Cycle 2
WORKING TIME CULTURES

THE PROFESSIONAL MAN
HETERO Normativity

PUBLIC-PRIVATE DI VIDE
“Indeed, the report has shown that there are already a greater amount of part-time professors. Interestingly enough mainly women, successful women who are so successful that they can do additional interesting stuff along the way that also satisfies them. I mean not law firm or politics, but family. (...) (Female name) was 50% employed as a professor because the other half of the time she was a thoroughbred mother.”
„Action plans can make Elephants dance“ if...

1. Objectives are tailored to fit the local knowledge and sense-making → meaning is stabilized
   - EO as work-family balance
   - EO as young researchers development

2. Elephants are invited to dance by uttering critique, initiating debate and negotiating meaning, enrolment of other powerful allies.