

# Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan 2023-2026

ICLEI European Secretariat





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# 1. Background and context

The Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan (hereafter the Action Plan) can be seen as a stepping stone with concrete actions to feed into the discourses around the Gender Equality Plan (GEP). The Gender Equality plan is an important milestone for ICLEI and the activities proposed in this Action Plan shall be pertinent to support the appropriate formulation of the Gender Equality plan as well as its implementation.

Building on the discussion with management, the gender group conducted a survey in early 2022 and a follow up one in 2025. Based on the first survey, followed by discussions with management and staff, the gender group determined and delineated certain essentials as well as recommended actions for the 2023-26 period, which are elaborated in this document under the 4 pillars of the gender work within ICLEI. Resources for conducting these proposed activities, needed in addition to the existing baseline hours, are presented at the end of the document.

## 2. Objectives

The Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan serves several purposes to support the gender mainstreaming work and related activities within ICLEI over the course of 2023-26. The main objectives are:

1. To elaborate on the description, objectives, timings and resources associated with the 4 pillars of the gender work within ICLEI. The 4 pillars are 1. Organisational actions, 2. Communication, 3. Training and capacity-building and 4. Monitoring and evaluation
2. The actions are highlighted in colour codes to denote their progress status as follows:
  - a. **Green actions** are completed at the time of publication of this GAP;
  - b. **Yellow actions** are ongoing at the time of publication of this GAP;
  - c. **Red actions** are upcoming and expected to be completed within the 2023-2026 timeframe.
3. To ultimately support management in developing and implementing a robust Gender Equality Plan.

## 3. Description of actions

### 3.1. Organisational actions

#### 3.1.1 Development of a Gender Equality Plan (GEP)

- Description: In collaboration with Office Management, the Gender Group prepares a GEP including ICLEI's commitment and objectives related to mainstream gender in its work. The preparation will take into account the EMAS auditing and ICLEI Europe's recent restructuring. The possibility of including a representative of the gender group in the EMAS auditing group should be explored. The first step of preparing the GEP includes setting up the framework for the document (structure, length...), before proceeding with the tasks and roles. In addition, ICLEI ES' management statement and ICLEI WS' value statement should also be considered. The process of developing the GEP will also consider and implement the actions needed for engaging with staff and management in different phases (e.g. commenting on the draft, introducing the final document...)
- Objectives: To provide clear objectives and guidance for the gender mainstreaming work in ICLEI.
- Timeline: 2023-25.
- Resources: hours to develop the document.

#### 3.1.2 Establishing relationships and collaboration with the Directors' Group and Senior Management Group

- Description: Establishing frequent communication and meetings with the Directors' Group and Senior Management Group. Agreeing on the collaboration model. Integrate a gender-sensitive perspective in ICLEI's restructuring process.
- Objectives: Ensuring the presence of the gender group in key organisational processes, including ICLEI's restructuring.
- Timeline: ongoing since 2023.

#### 3.1.3 Showcasing ICLEI's members' work on gender

- Description: Give visibility to local initiatives, good practices and policies related to gender developed by ICLEI's membership through different possible platforms (social media, publications, gender initiative award).

- Objectives: To disseminate and advocate for a gender-sensitive approach to sustainability.
- Timeline: ongoing since 2023.

#### 3.1.4 Internal collaboration

- Description: Collaboration with other ICLEI Secretariats to identify common goals and possible synergies. Approaching ICLEI WS to explore the potential for collaboration and identify counterparts in different offices.
- Objectives: To strengthen collaboration with other Secretariats and identify common values for ICLEI throughout its offices.
- Timeline: Ongoing since 2024

#### 3.1.5 External collaboration

- Description: Cross-organisational collaboration with other organisations in our field with already established Gender working groups (e.g. Advisory board of Pink Circle Network).
- Objectives: To crowdsource already existing knowledge and integrate lessons learned into our statements and objectives as a working group. To gain visibility in the international arena as a gender-sensitive company.
- Timeline: Ongoing since 2024

#### 3.1.6 Strategic project acquisition to support gender work in the organisation

- Description: Using leverage from Horizon Europe and/or other EU-funding calls to build expertise. Exploring interesting calls and potential flagship projects integrating gender and sustainability.
- Objectives: Gaining knowledge and visibility for ICLEI's gender work using a "flagship" project. Access to external funding for the gender work. Building a gender inclusive process and practices for future project acquisitions.
- Timeline: 2025-2026.
- Resources: EU calls + hours for the internal gender mainstream group.

### **3.1.7 Positioning ICLEI as a gender-sensitive organisation**

- Description: Building collaborations with organisations in our field by co-organising workshops, seminars and events focusing on gender. Involvement in at least 1 large-scale conference related to gender.
- Objectives: Gaining visibility for ICLEI's gender work. Maximise impact and advocacy opportunities.
- Timeline: 2025-2026.
- Resources: Review of existing debate on gender and sustainability - conference topics.

## **3.2. Communication**

### **3.2.1 Staff contact & information**

- Description: Inform staff about the gender group contact email and through in-person activities in the yearly Staff Plenary, with consideration to mandate, and differentiation of roles within the staff council. Inform about upcoming actions.
- Objectives: To inform staff about the group and engage them.
- Timeline: Ongoing since 2022.

### **3.2.2 Staff engagement in the GEP development and publication**

- Description: Staff event/workshop in the form of an ICLEI Brown Bag Lunch gathered existing knowledge and feedback of staff for the GEP to complement the document draft, and (integrated/separate) event to introduce and go through the GEP principles. The workshop feedback was integrated into the draft of the GEP.
- Objectives: To help ensure existing knowledge is utilised in the work.
- Timeline: Completed in 2025.

### **3.2.3 Gender Guidelines for Project Work**

- Description: A quick guide for staff on gender aspects in project work building on knowledge gathered in 3.4.1. The work will utilise existing material best practices, existing ICLEI work, and consulting with management, and will involve collaborating with graphic design.

- Objectives: To provide staff all the information they need on gender considerations in project work, from acquisition to communication and dissemination, deliverables and considerations in running project work. A user-friendly, quick-to-read document, to ensure it is read and applied in a busy work environment.
- Timeline: Ongoing since 2025.
- Resources: Additional resources for two people to prepare communication guidelines to support project work and staff using these guidelines.

### **3.2.4 Gender Guidelines for the Workplace**

- Description: A concise, easy to read and visually attractive handbook based targeted at staff (and as a read-me for all new staff) covering main principles of gender considerations in the workplace. The draft will be shared with management and the board of directors for feedback discussion, in order to build a shared understanding of the implementation of the guidelines within the organisation.
- Objectives: To guide all staff for continuous gender sensitive behaviour at the office and externally. To publish the guidelines as a resource in Orgavision (contact: Carolin Thomas).
- Timeline: 2026.
- Resources: graphic design, best practices.

### **3.2.5 Develop public gender mainstreaming statement and publicise it**

- Description: As part of the Gender Equality Plan, a public statement should be developed and shared via ICLEI channels and among its members. It should include quotes from the RexCom. When promoting the statement, it should be kept in mind that ICLEI is not a pioneer or an expert organisation on the topic, and therefore, a neutral promotion approach is needed. (e.g. communication activities should avoid drawing attention to the fact that ICLEI only recently published its action plan)
- Objectives: To create an outward facing image of ICLEI as a gender-sensitive organisation and potential employer.
- Timeline: 2025-2026.

### **3.2.6 ICLEI Member Webinar**

Description: Webinar for Members gathering experiences from exemplary members on how to engage in gender mainstreaming in the sustainability context



Objectives: to provide members a chance to learn from pioneers in ICLEI's network.

Timeline: yearly.

### 3.3 Training and capacity-building

#### 3.3.1 *Designing and conducting a Gender Training for ICLEI ES staff*

- Description: Designing and conducting an introductory training for the ICLEI ES staff focusing on 1) understanding of the basic concepts of gender and its implications for the work at ICLEI, 2) exchanging good practices from ICLEI's projects, and 3) providing guidelines for gender-inclusive internal and external communication practices. The training would be based on registrations, aiming to ensure an equal representation and participation across all teams. The special needs of the members of the Gender Group will be considered when consulting and collaborating with an external trainer in designing and organising training together (train-the-trainer approach with the members). The training is targeted primarily at staff members but is also open to people in management positions.
- Objectives: Increasing the capacity and skills of the ICLEI ES staff in gender inclusive work, both as staff members and as experts. Exchanging knowledge. Building the working group's capacity to lead the gender work and providing further training within the organisation.
- Timeline: completed in 2023.
- Resources: Cost of hiring the trainer (asking for an offer). Hours for two people to design and facilitate the training. Cost of the venue.

#### 3.3.2 *Gender Training for Management*

- Description: The training will focus on reflecting on gender-relevant issues in management processes (e.g. hiring, promotions, leadership), raising awareness, and finding solutions to promote gender and inclusion in management processes and gender-sensitive internal and external communication. To be organised in collaboration with the staff council. The planning of the training will take into account the development of organisational actions and emerging training needs from communication with management.
- Objectives: Improving ICLEI's capacity as a gender inclusive employer (leading by example).
- Timeline: 2026.



- Resources: Hours for two people to design and facilitate the training (1 from the gender group, 1 from the staff council).

## 3.4 Monitoring and evaluation

### 3.4.1 ICLEI Gender Assessment Surveys

- Description: Internal assessment of gender knowledge, working relations, and capacity-building needs at ICLEI with surveys. The survey results will be complemented with additional evaluation measures piloted as part of the preparation of the gender assessment report (see 3.4.2).
- Objectives: Troubleshoot and optimise areas for improvement in working relations, gender dynamics and knowledge within the organisation. Provide inputs for ICLEI's Annual Gender Assessment. Contribute to the evaluation of the GAP and GEP.
- Timeline: Once every 2 years.
- Resources: Hours for drafting and analysing the survey.

### 3.4.2 ICLEI regular gender assessment

- Description: Report on the activities and achievements in the gender field, to be published for transparency. In addition to the ICLEI gender assessment survey, additional evaluation measures will be piloted as part of the preparation for the gender assessment report, e.g, qualitative assessment, interviews with staff and management.
- Objectives: Showcasing ICLEI's work on gender while monitoring and assessing it. Identifying main areas for improvement.
- Timeline: every two years starting from 2025.
- Resources: Hours to analyse activities and draft the report for 2 people. Hours to review the report for 1 person.

## 4. Annual staff and resources

On an annual basis, the Gender Mainstreaming Group should receive around 350 hours to carry out the foreseen activities. An example of resource distribution is provided below for the year 2025:

Task	Description	Total hours	Other Resources
<b>Overall management</b>	Basic budget for the whole gender group to run the ongoing and organisational gender mainstreaming activities at ICLEI (e.g. consulting staff members, supporting communication, establishing collaboration).	100	
<b>Development/ Implementation of ICLEI Gender Action Plan</b>	Development of the actions described above.	250	
<b>Total hours needed for 2025: 350</b>			