

GENDER EQUALITY PLAN 2024-2027

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01 INTRODUCTION

Our strategy on gender equality originates from our actions and work for over 20 years on environment and sustainable development. Environmental sustainability requires solutions that also incorporate social sustainability, and in particular, gender equity. The importance of gender equality for a sustainable future has been established in Sustainable Development Goal 5 - Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. For us, it is not a stand-alone objective; rather, gender equality is important for the achievement of other goals, including those related to environmental challenges.

5 GENDER EQUALITY



"to create, through our everyday actions, a gender-responsive culture that understands gender

This Gender Equality Plan (GEP) spells out the organization's plan to achieve this goal, its scope and the strategic objectives we want to achieve over the next three years. It is intended to be a living document that will be updated regularly to accommodate new actions and developments.

The promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities has been an important topic for INCA since the beginning, guaranteeing a gender balance both at the organizational level and within the activities promoted. Indeed, gender considerations are crucial both to INCA's vision and to the achievement of its mission.

We consider equality to be 'part of our daily job' and an essential part of building a just and sustainable future for all humanity.

Currently, around 50% of our staff, 37% of the management and 40% of our board of directors are women.

To progress gender equality further we must also continue to challenge the beliefs and attitudes that are undermining progress.

We must expand our focus on workplace flexibility and be more innovative in how we overcome the barriers that gender diverse individuals face.

This equality plan acknowledges that "gender equality is about non-discrimination and the protection of fundamental human rights".

With that in mind, we also recognize that gender is non-binary and that various gender identities apart from men and women exist and that people with many of these gender identities face systematic discrimination and violence.

02 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

INCA works on finding solutions for preserving the highly valued biodiversity in Albania, pressured by the development challenges. Since 2004, we have managed a large number of field projects, addressing the drivers behind biodiversity loss, and trying to bring local communities closer to governmental institutions that are responsible for the development and implementation of policies by approaching best practices aiming at nature and biodiversity conservation. Mainstreaming gender into our everyday actions and agenda, is essential to strive for a healthier environment, acknowledging the fact that gender inequalities created by weak rights to own land and reduced access to energy, water and sanitation facilities for women, have a negative impact on human health, environment and the sustainable development. When developing and implementing new actions, INCA ensures that men and women equally benefit from budgetary allocations to such actions. This enables everyone to employ their skills and leadership to respond.

INCA takes an important role in recognizing and valuing the diversity of its staff based on language, cultural background, gender, age, religion, geographical region, sexual orientation, functional disability and socio-economic situation.

This role is positively associated with the organizational situation given the age diversity of employees ranging from 27 to 60 years, variety of cultural backgrounds present, and half of its workers being women. The organization's performance in relation to gender equality, in particular, significant achievement with women being well represented in senior leadership, in management and in certain disciplines.

INCA is dedicated to making an additional effort to achieve a gender- equal company culture, by taking the measures necessary to develop working conditions and a culture in which female, as well as male workers, feel they are welcome, have job satisfaction and experience the organization as a caring and fair employer.

Despite the long-lasting engagement on this topic, organizational data and consultation with members and staff show that actions to empower women and arrive at a clearer definition of inclusive workplace culture are still needed.

Additionally, INCA takes a clear position when it comes to quotas and targets, as is elaborated further in this action plan. At the same time, it is important to work on company culture. A quantitative target is of no use without a simultaneous change in mentality. Therefore, this gender action plan will be joined in the future by a detailed implementation plan.

This gender equality plan suggests the development of specific interventions for areas in need of more practical and strategic approaches, in order to ensure the empowerment of gender diverse individuals as a step towards gender equality.

03 OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of this GEP is to serve as a tool and framework for enhancing gender equality in the workplace and to enable the integration of gender into organizational practices.

In parallel, this GEP also aims to contribute to the achievement of gender equality in the development of a sustainable future for environment in harmony with humans, through research, project design, and programs that pay due attention to gender differences in labor market participation, and actively promote equality between gender diverse individuals.

INCA aims to proactively hold itself up as an example to promote organizational changes in other networks and social groups.

04 SCOPE

This Plan applies to all the work throughout the Organization.

An Equality Officer has been appointed to oversee the implementation of the gender equality plan.

Effective implementation of the plan will require commitment from all staff and organizational support for activities to advance the knowledge and skills of staff to enable efficient gender mainstreaming in their areas of work.

The equality officer will monitor and report on the progress of implementation to the executive team and will provide an annual report to all INCA staff.

The equality officer will also set up mechanisms for building capacity among the staff, information, training, and technical support needed to assure the plan's implementation.

05 Accountability and Responsibility

01 — Ratification

The GEP is ratified at the executive level (board of directors and president) and the equality officer is responsible for ensuring that it is communicated to all staff members

02 — Communication

The equality officer has the further responsibility to ensure that employees are aware of the gender equality plan and to initiate corrective action when discrimination is observed or reported.

03 — Monitoring

All the while they are on duty, the equality officer has the responsibility to monitor the situation and keep the plan regularly updated to accommodate new actions and developments

04 — Data collection

The equality officer is expected to collect data disaggregated by sex and other relevant variables, and to review and reflect on the gender aspects of the respective areas of work. Such action will help ensure the integration of gender considerations in all of INCA's work in different fields.

06 OUR KEY FOCUS AREAS

The equality plan identifies four areas for focused attention that will enable strategic and sustainable change at INCA. The plan will help us, over the next 3 years, to navigate and accelerate the gender equality journey that INCA must take in order to improve its performance.



01 — Organizational culture and easier combination of work-life balance



02 — More balanced gender representation in management, recruitment, career progression and events



03 — Integrating gender in research and education content



04 — Combating sexual and gender-based harassment

In order to achieve its strategic objectives, INCA needs to work in several areas that serve as building blocks for the strategy, taking its specific organizational context and features into account.

01 — ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AND EASIER COMBINATION OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Promotion and support of an organizational culture and working environment that is inclusive and fair to all genders, facilitating a flexible workplace, which enables staff to balance work and life responsibilities.

STRATEGIES

The equality officer will oversee, monitor and promote the implementation of the gender equality strategy and action plan

Promote the organization's image and reputation as an inclusive organization that supports and values diversity

Integrate gender inclusion into planning and strategy across the organization

Undertake a regular review of flexible work and other relevant policies

Diagnosis of the needs of persons coming back to work after parental leave, with respect to support from the organization

Ensure all staff are aware of the gender equality and related equality policies

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- Incorporate gender equality objectives in INCA's planning and strategy
- External communication and statements of support for gender equality
- Annual surveys of all staff (including in-house consultants and interns) with a satisfaction score of a minimum of 80% on gender experiences in the workplace: harassment, discrimination, workplace culture and management styles, the results of which are shared with the executive committee
- Carry out consultations and surveys, and publish the results as part of the activities related to the next gender equality plan for INCA
- Create family-friendly policies. Provide options and implement flexible working hours and methods

02 — MORE BALANCED GENDER REPRESENTATION IN MANAGEMENT, RECRUITMENT, CAREER PROGRESSION AND EVENTS

Equal access to and balanced participation of gender diverse individuals in decision- making structures (formal and informal) and ensuring equal chances to develop and advance their careers

STRATEGIES

Representation of gender diverse individuals in senior positions and in leadership domains

Review the workforce planning process to ensure gender equality objectives are included

Promote key stakeholders', INCA members' and decision-makers' engagement with gender equality

Promote gender inclusive and bias- free recruitment, career progression, and evaluation policy

Balanced gender representation at events arranged at and by INCA

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- Representation of gender diverse individuals on projects and research activities implemented by INCA
- Having a human resources policy to promote equal career opportunities for all genders
- Training and mentorship programs that help employees to accommodate work demands on their return from parental, maternity, or family-related leave
- Include gender awareness in all job specifications
- Formulate recommendations with respect to increasing balanced gender representation at events
- Use social media and a range of other media outlets to create a positive image of successful practices and/or key stakeholders in the social economy engaged in gender equality

03 — INTEGRATING GENDER IN RESEARCH AND EDUCATION CONTENT

Integrating a gender dimension in ongoing research and education content, and applying it while conceiving new projects and training

STRATEGIES

Promote the inclusion of the sex and gender dimension in research content

Promote diversity in research management

Promoting the integration of a sex and gender perspective in training, education/ teaching curricula

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- Disaggregating research data (articles, reports etc.) by sex and/or gender where relevant
- Considering all genders for language and images in research material and production
- Requiring all applicants for funding to consider sex and gender in their research and application design where relevant
- Providing staff with guides and workshops on the integration of equality and diversity in training program design, and learning activities as a teaching and learning support
- Providing staff with specific training courses and materials on gender equality
- Communications about training must not be gender-specific “unless the training is specifically designed for a specific gender”

04 — COMBATING SEXUAL AND GENDER- BASED HARASSMENT

Preserving and promoting the physical and emotional health, safety and well-being of employees

STRATEGIES

Educating staff about different forms of bias and strategies to combat sexual and gender-based harassment

Working collectively to combat bias and stereotypes

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- Providing staff and decision-makers with specific training courses and materials on combating sexual and gender-based violence, gender equality and unconscious gender biases, i.e. 3 hrs of training per INCA staff member per year
- Measuring performance by how well staff address these issues
- Create reporting mechanisms that allow staff to raise concerns, document, and act on gender balance issues they identify

GENDER EQUALITY PLAN 2024-2027



Organisation Name	Institute for Nature Conservation in Albania - INCA
President	Genti Kromidha
Steering Committee	<p>Nihat Dragoti</p> <p>Jeta Abeshi</p> <p>Ines Leskaj</p> <p>Fadil Malko</p> <p>Genti Kromidha</p>
Equality Officer	Valbona Ylli
Number of employees (employees and in-house consultants)	9
Authorized by	Genti Kromidha
Date	December 2023
Stamp and signature	