



**GENDER POLICY
OF THE ALL-UKRAINIAN ASSOCIATION
OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENTS
"ASSOCIATION OF AMALGAMATED
TERRITORIAL COMMUNITIES"**

2024

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The All-Ukrainian Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities (AAATC) undertakes to plan and systematically implement activities focused on the implementation of the declared provisions and constantly increase sensitivity in matters of equal opportunities and respect for diversity.

The gender policy of the Association should be brought to the attention of the executive staff and members of the AAATC and taken into account by them in their current activities. The Association's Gender Policy is a public document that should be available for review by stakeholders.

Gender policy can be revised if necessary. When revision of gender policy, appropriate adjustments may be made to it.

In case of violation of the gender policy, it is necessary to inform the person responsible for compliance with the gender equality policy by e-mail: uliana75@ukr.net, Yulia Savelieva.

Approved by the decision of the Board dated 08.02.2024

INTRODUCTION

The All-Ukrainian Association of Local Self-Governments "Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities" is an association of the new Ukrainian self-government.

Gender equality is one of the principles of human rights, the basis for the democratic development of states and the world community. The implementation of gender policy is one of the key elements in the implementation of the mission of the All-Ukrainian Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities - to be the spokesman for the interests of new communities (municipalities) that are pioneers and carriers of change. The Association, like each of its members, is the most interested and consistent supporter and promoter of social reforms. In addition, creating a gender-sensitive environment in communities is one of the strategic objectives of the Association.

Gender equality envisages equal rights for women and men, girls and boys, as well as their equal importance, opportunities, responsibilities and participation in all spheres of public and private life. Likewise, it means equal access of women and men to resources and distribution between them.

In this regard, the All-Ukrainian Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities approved the idea of integrating gender issues into the organization's policy and developing appropriate procedures that would prevent discrimination and promote equal access of women and men to resources and services.

The All-Ukrainian Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities has formulated the Gender Policy (hereinafter referred to as the Policy), which is aimed at ensuring equal opportunities and equal rights for women and men in all spheres of activity and development. The implementation of the principle of gender equality and non-discrimination will be carried out at all levels, establishing dialogues between communities and authorities. To build such a new effective model of cooperation, the All-Ukrainian Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities has created a platform "On Gender Equality". The main areas of work of this platform include: increasing the capacity of local self-government bodies in integrating gender approaches in community development and recovery, using gender equality tools, collecting and disseminating gender-sensitive practices at the community level, assisting in signing by communities European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in the Life of Local Communities, support for the development of women's leadership.

Successful implementation of gender policy measures sets a number of new requirements for the activities of the All-Ukrainian Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities. In general, they are aimed at improving the effectiveness of gender equality activities, taking into account gender aspects in the formation of the Association's policy as a whole, creating additional value for the activities of regional offices and international partnerships. The beneficiaries of the new policy are not only the executive office, but also the communities that are members of the AAATC.

Achieving gender equality will improve the reputation and effectiveness of the executive office, strengthen the internal relations of the team, promote the development of innovation, and help increase work efficiency. Thus, equal opportunities for the development of talents and professional skills will be ensured, regardless of gender, age, national and social origin, religion. The implementation of the gender policy will also help to improve the reputation of the AAATC, which will become more authoritative for state authorities and territorial communities, more attractive to donors, new partners and businesses.

SECTION I. GENDER EQUALITY PRIORITY STATEMENT

We, the All-Ukrainian Association of Local Self-Governments "Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities" (hereinafter referred to as the Association), recognize that gender equality is the key to social stability, well-being and sustainable development, which allows for the full realization of human rights. With this gender policy, we declare the general directions and principles of our activities aimed at preventing all forms of discrimination and gender inequality. Instead, gender policy promotes gender-sensitive governance and the strengthening of the role of women in society.

We are committed to ensuring that every person who identifies with our organization represents his or her interests publicly, honors our organization's contracts, and understands, treats, and behaves in a way that promotes gender equality and equity. All our work is constantly monitored and transparently reported to all stakeholders in accordance with gender-labeled indicators.

We work together to ensure that equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities are represented in our professional goals, organizational culture, behavior and public image.

We define gender equality as the fair treatment of women and men based on an understanding of their needs. This may include both equal and different treatment, which is considered equivalent in the context of rights, privileges, obligations and opportunities.

Based on the above, we declare the priority of taking into account equal opportunities and respect for diversity in our activities and undertake the obligations defined by this Policy to implement the relevant measures.

SECTION II. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the Policy is to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men, to counteract discrimination in compliance with gender equality and to create favorable conditions for development.

Objectives of the Policy:

- Development of a gender analysis mechanism and gender mainstreaming in all areas of activity, including decision-making, development of strategies and action plans.
- Ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men in recruitment, promotion, salary and other issues related to economic participation and opportunity.
- Raising gender awareness among the executive apparatus.
- Development and implementation of measures to prevent and counter discrimination based on gender.
- Creating an enabling environment for women to participate in decision-making and leadership.
- Participation in the implementation of legislative activities to take into account gender aspects in regional and local development issues.
- Providing expert and consulting support to communities in gender equality issues.

The implementation of gender policy tasks and activities by the Association will create an environment that will promote equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes, help to take into account gender aspects in the planning and implementation of projects and programs. In addition, it will ensure the development and implementation of gender-sensitive mechanisms and management tools, increase gender awareness and awareness of persons involved in the work of the Association.

The implementation of these goals will contribute to ensuring gender equality and social justice, as the equality of women and men is a key element of the Association's sustainable development.

SECTION III. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The regulation of gender relations in the Association is based on the following principles and values:

- 1) Equality - ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men in all areas of the Association's activities.
- 2) Inclusion - taking into account the needs and interests of different groups of women and men in their diversity.
- 3) Differentiation of needs – recognizing that women and men may have different needs and interests, and taking this into account when developing and implementing internal policies.
- 4) Empowerment of women - providing women with opportunities to develop their potential and gain equal control over resources with men, reducing gender inequalities.
- 5) Partnership is cooperation between territorial communities, public authorities, the public and other stakeholders in order to ensure gender equality.
- 6) Gender sensitivity - mainstreaming gender perspectives in all areas of activity, from policy development to practical tasks.
- 7) Debunking gender stereotypes that limit the opportunities of women and men in various aspects.

Successful implementation of gender policy involves affirming the value of gender equality, preventing discrimination based on gender, and ensuring the equal participation of women and men in decision-making.

SECTION IV. ACTION PLAN FOR POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

1. Implementation of gender analysis and gender perspective

- 1) To collect and analyze statistical data on the gender composition of the organization, the number of men and women at different levels of management, the distribution of gender roles, the presence of gender inequalities in remuneration, etc.
- 2) Assess the impact of the organization's activities on men and women.
- 3) Based on the results of the analysis, develop an action plan taking into account the gender perspective.
- 4) Take action to achieve gender equality.
- 5) Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the measures.

2. Ensuring equal opportunities and equal rights for women and men in the field of work

- 1) To introduce, maintain and continuously improve the management system (taking into account the principle of equal opportunities and respect for diversity as a component of the overall management system of the Association).
- 2) Prevent and counteract discrimination in recruitment procedures and other processes (ensure transparent recruitment based on open competition, clearly defined and consistent criteria, ensure that there are no obstacles to the inclusion of applicants in the competitive selection if they meet the necessary requirements).
- 3) Ensure that the principle of equal opportunities and respect for diversity is taken into account in the activities of all structural units of the Association (in matters of career growth, internship programs, advanced training, lifelong education of any woman and man from the staff/members, and, accordingly, equal pay).
- 4) Ensure equal wages for women and men for work of equal value (establish transparent procedures for job evaluation and salary determination, which will be the same for all employees, regardless of gender).
- 5) Provide opportunities to reconcile family responsibilities with work through:
flexible work schedule, parental leave, childcare leave, creation of a family-friendly environment in the Association.
- 6) Prevent sexual harassment (identify, counteract and draw attention to the problems of violence, raise awareness of the problem of sexual harassment).
- 7) Appoint a person responsible for compliance with the gender equality policy in the Association.

3. Raising gender awareness among the executive office is an important element of the organization's gender policy

- 1) Conduct trainings, seminars and other educational activities aimed at understanding gender issues, gender discrimination issues and the relevance of gender equality.
- 2) Create an inclusive and gender-sensitive work environment that takes into account the needs of women and men.
- 3) Eliminate barriers and imbalances caused by inequality and discrimination in the organization.
- 4) To promote gender awareness and ensure more effective implementation of the gender policy of the organization as a whole.

4. Development and implementation of measures to prevent and counter discrimination based on gender

- 1) Ensure respect for human rights, equal opportunities and respect for diversity (when procuring products, services, as well as when interacting with contractors, in particular, non-compliance with the principles of this policy by partners/contractors may be an obstacle to cooperation).
- 2) Cooperate on gender equality issues with authorities, scientific, educational institutions, public organizations, other associations of local governments and institutions, stakeholders at the local, regional, national and international levels.
- 3) To establish a multi-ethnic, multicultural dialogue within the community of the Association, (not to give preference to any of the communities professing a particular religion/faith; to accept the free choice of a person to follow cultural and religious traditions, if this does not contradict human rights and the legislation of Ukraine).
- 4) Ensure access to resources for women and men without discrimination on the basis of gender.
- 5) Implement mechanisms for employees to contact the management bodies of the organization (create an internal system of appeals and complaints where employees can express their problems and wishes to ensure gender equality in the organization).

5. Creating an enabling environment for women's participation in decision-making and leadership

- 1) Conduct information campaigns to raise awareness of the importance of equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes.
- 2) Implement mentoring programs for women leaders.
- 3) Recognize and support women leaders by providing opportunities to participate in commissions and working groups at all levels of decision-making.

6. Participation in legislative activities for gender mainstreaming in regional and local development issues

- 1) Cooperate with government agencies on gender equality in all areas of regional and local development, as well as initiate such interaction if necessary.
- 2) Involve local self-government in legislative support for inclusive and gender-sensitive decentralization, community development and recovery.
- 3) Participate in the process of developing and supporting legislation that promotes gender equality.
- 4) Appeal to local and regional authorities to take into account gender aspects in community and territorial development plans, infrastructure projects, social support programs and other initiatives related to community recovery.
- 5) Analyze draft laws and, if necessary, provide recommendations for politicians on ensuring gender equality.

7. Providing expert and advisory support to communities on gender equality issues

- 1) Conduct gender monitoring and analysis of problems arising in the processes of decentralization development of territorial communities, as well as joint search and decision-making for their rapid solution.
- 2) Provide practical recommendations for the creation of innovative, effective and gender-sensitive governance structures in local governments.
- 3) Conduct various training activities in order to increase the level of gender competence of the representation of local self-government bodies in the context of local self-government reforms, changes in legislation, etc.
- 4) Organize seminars, conferences, round tables, forums for territorial communities to highlight problematic gender issues, as well as to adopt a consolidated position of the Association in a particular area.
- 5) Ensure access to information on gender equality, including through the creation and dissemination of information and training materials.

8. Exchange of experience and best gender-sensitive practices of local self-government

- 1) To ensure the activities of the platform for the exchange of experience and best gender-sensitive practices of local self-government in order to build the institutional capacity of communities.
- 2) Provide the technical assistance needed to implement innovative and creative gender-sensitive solutions in communities.
- 3) Introduce an exchange of experience between communities and public authorities on the implementation of projects and programs on gender equality.
- 4) Provide partnerships and collaborations with other organizations working on gender equality and women's empowerment.

SECTION V. CONDUCTING A GENDER AUDIT

Gender audit is a process based on the principles of active participation and stakeholder involvement. It promotes a process of self-learning on how to effectively put into practice an integrated gender approach, provides a view from different perspectives for analysis, and provides reliable data for change planning.

Gender audit is a tool that helps to assess the effectiveness of gender policy implementation and identify opportunities to improve its results. The audit makes it possible to analyze the extent to which the principles of gender equality are reflected in the activities of the organization and how gender issues are integrated into strategic, program documents, and relations in the team.

Conducting a gender audit at the Association will provide an opportunity to track and evaluate the relative progress in promoting gender equality, establish initial principles, criteria and identify problems. As well as to recommend methods for solving these problems and propose new, more effective strategies, to record the positive experience of achieving gender equality.

Stages of a gender audit:

1. Organizational stage:

- a team is being formed to conduct a gender audit;
- the goal and objectives are determined;
- the method of conducting is chosen;
- an action plan is being developed.

2. Research stage:

- collecting and analyzing data on various aspects of the organization's activities;
- analysis of policies, procedures, regulations and other documents related to gender policy;
- evaluation of data on the current state of implementation of gender policy and identification of problematic aspects.

3. Corrective stage. Development of recommendations for improving the effectiveness of gender policy implementation.

4. Stage of report preparation. The gender audit ends with a report reflecting the results of the study and recommendations for improving the implementation of gender policy.

5. Final stage. Taking measures to improve the effectiveness of gender policy implementation.

Women and men are involved in gender audit, which allows to collect diverse views and experiences, and contributes to a more objective analysis of the state of implementation of gender policy.