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GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

YOUNET APS

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INTRODUCTION

YouNet APS is dedicated to fostering gender equality throughout its operations. This comprehensive plan incorporates strategies, tools, and insights to promote an inclusive environment while ensuring compliance with Italian gender equality laws.

OBJECTIVES

- Achieve Gender Balance: Ensure equal representation across leadership, staff, and volunteers.
- Promote Gender Awareness: Enhance understanding and commitment to gender equality.
- Implement Gender-Responsive Policies: Ensure all policies are gender-sensitive and promote equality.

KEY COMPONENTS

1. GENDER ANALYSIS

- Action: Conduct gender analysis to assess the current state of gender equality.
- Tool: Utilize EIGE's gender analysis toolkit to identify gaps and opportunities (European Institute for Gender Equality).

2.	GENDER-RESPONSIVE EVALUATION	• Action: Integrate gender perspectives into evaluations of projects and programs. • Tool: Apply EIGE's gender-responsive evaluation methods to ensure gender equality in assessments (European Institute for Gender Equality).
3.	GENDER MONITORING	• Action: Establish a systematic monitoring process to track gender equality progress. • Tool: Use EIGE's guidelines on gender monitoring to develop indicators and benchmarks (European Institute for Gender Equality).
4.	GENDER AWARENESS-RAISING	• Action: Implement training programs and awareness campaigns to educate staff and volunteers. • Tool: Follow EIGE's strategies for gender awareness-raising (European Institute for Gender Equality).
5.	USE OF GENDER STATISTICS	• Action: Leverage data from EIGE's Gender Statistics Database for decision-making and policy development. • Tool: Access and analyze relevant gender statistics to understand trends and disparities (European Institute for Gender Equality).

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

In order to assess success of the above-mentioned plan, YouNet developed a series of strategic indicators.

ASSESS THE CURRENT SITUATION

- Conduct a Gender Audit: Evaluate the current status of gender equality within the organization. Assess representation, participation, and the experiences of different genders in various roles and levels.
- Collect Data: Gather quantitative and qualitative data on gender distribution, pay gaps, hiring practices, promotions, and work environment.
- Engage Stakeholders: Involve staff, volunteers, and beneficiaries in identifying gender-related issues through surveys, interviews, and focus groups.

SET OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

- Define Clear Goals: Establish specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals for gender equality.
- Align with Mission: Ensure that the goals align with the NGO's mission and values, reflecting the importance of gender equality in its broader social objectives.

DEVELOP STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

- Policy Review and Development: Review existing policies and develop new ones that promote gender equality, such as anti-discrimination, equal pay, and parental leave policies.
- Capacity Building: Provide training and development programs to educate staff on gender equality, unconscious bias, and inclusive practices.
- Recruitment and Retention: Implement strategies to attract, retain, and promote diverse talent. Ensure recruitment practices are fair and inclusive.
- Supportive Environment: Create support systems such as mentoring programs, flexible work arrangements, and safe reporting mechanisms for discrimination and harassment.

UTILIZE TOOLS AND RESOURCES

- EIGE's Tools and Methods: Leverage tools and methods from the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) or other reputable sources to guide the development and implementation of the GEP.
- Benchmarking and Best Practices: Study successful GEPs from other organizations and adapt best practices to fit your NGO's context.

IMPLEMENTA-TION AND INTEGRATION

- Action Plan: Develop a detailed action plan outlining responsibilities, timelines, and resources needed for each strategy.
- Communication: Communicate the GEP to all members of the organization, ensuring transparency and buy-in from everyone.
- Integrate into Core Activities: Embed gender equality considerations into all aspects of the NGO's work, from program design to community engagement.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- Action Plan: Develop a detailed action plan outlining responsibilities, timelines, and resources needed for each strategy.
- Communication: Communicate the GEP to all members of the organization, ensuring transparency and buy-in from everyone.
- Integrate into Core Activities: Embed gender equality considerations into all aspects of the NGO's work, from program design to community engagement.

REPORTING AND ACCOUNTA-BILITY

- Regular Reporting: Provide regular updates on the progress of the GEP to all stakeholders, including staff, board members, and funders.
- Accountability Framework: Establish clear accountability for the implementation of the GEP, designating roles and responsibilities within the organization.

After successful implementation of said plan,YouNet and its staff, board and volunteers will acknowledge and celebrate milestones and achievements in the journey towards gender equality. YouNet is also committed to share success stories and lessons learned through its website and official social media to inspire continued commitment and action both within the organization and in the wider community.

INDICATORS

In order to assess success of the above-mentioned plan,YouNet developed a series of strategic indicators.

1. Workforce Composition

- Gender Representation: Percentage of women, men, and non-binary individuals at different levels of the organization (board, management, staff, volunteers).
- Recruitment Rates: Number and percentage of hires by gender across different roles and levels.

2. Pay Equity

- Gender Pay Gap: Difference in average earnings between genders for the same role or level within the organization.
- Salary Band Distribution: Proportion of each gender within different salary bands.

3. Career Advancement

- Promotion Rates: Percentage of promotions by gender within a given period.
- Retention Rates: Retention rates of staff by gender over a specified period.
- Training and Development: Participation rates in professional development programs by gender.

4. Work Environment and Culture

- Employee Satisfaction: Gender-disaggregated results from employee satisfaction surveys, particularly on questions related to inclusivity, fairness, and workplace culture.
- Incidents of Harassment and Discrimination: Number and type of reported incidents of harassment and discrimination, and their resolution.

5. Work-Life Balance

- Parental Leave Usage: Uptake rates of parental leave by gender.
- Flexible Working Arrangements: Availability and usage rates of flexible working arrangements by gender.

6. Policy and Practice

- Policy Implementation: Number of gender equality policies developed, revised, and implemented.
- Gender-Sensitive Practices: Adoption and implementation of gender-sensitive practices in project planning, execution, and evaluation.

7. Beneficiary Impact

- Program Reach: Number and percentage of beneficiaries disaggregated by gender in the NGO's programs.
- Beneficiary Feedback: Gender-disaggregated feedback from beneficiaries on the inclusivity and impact of the NGO's programs.

8. Organizational Commitment

- Budget Allocation: Proportion of budget allocated to gender equality initiatives.
- Leadership Involvement: Number of gender equality initiatives championed by leadership.

9. External Recognition and Partnerships

- Awards and Recognition: Awards or certifications received for gender equality efforts.
- Partnerships: Number and quality of partnerships formed with gender-focused organizations or initiatives.

MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Frequency of Measurement	Responsible Person/Team
Gender Representation in Management	30% women	50% women	Annually	HR Department
Gender Pay Gap	15%	<5%	Annually	Finance and HR
Promotion Rates	20% women	40% women	Annually	HR Department
Employee Satisfaction (Inclusivity)	70% positive	90% positive	Bi-annually	HR Department
Program Reach (Beneficiaries)	60% women	70% women	Annually	Program Managers

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- Articles 2 and 3 of the founding Treaty on European Union (TEU)
- Articles 21 and 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights
- Article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) calls for equality between women and men.
- Article 8 of the TFEU, explicitly requires the Union to ‘eliminate inequalities and promote equality between women and men through all its activities' (gender mainstreaming)
- The Treaty of Lisbon includes a commitment to gender equality through Declaration 19, annexed to the Final Act of the Intergovernmental Conference that adopted the treaty.

COMPLIANCE WITH ITALIAN LAW

YouNet Organization is committed to adhering to Italian legislation on gender equality, specifically:

- Equal Opportunities Code (Codice delle pari opportunità): Ensuring equal opportunities for men and women in the workplace.
- Legislative Decree 198/2006: Addressing equal treatment and opportunities between men and women.
- Legislative Decree 5/2010: Prohibiting discrimination based on gender in all organizational practices.

Gender Pay Gap Reporting: Regularly reporting on pay disparities and implementing measures to close any identified gaps.

RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

Internal Resources:
Allocate budget and personnel for gender equality initiatives.

External Support:
Collaborate with gender equality experts and organizations for guidance.

DETAILED INITIATIVES

Promoting Work-Life Balance

- Flexible Working Arrangements: Introduce flexible working hours and remote work options to support work-life balance, especially for those with caregiving responsibilities.

Diversity in Leadership

- Mentorship Programs: Establish mentorship and leadership development programs aimed at increasing gender diversity in senior roles.
- Leadership Quotas: Consider implementing gender quotas or targets for leadership positions to ensure balanced representation.

Inclusive Work Environment

- Zero Tolerance for Harassment: Strictly enforce a zero-tolerance policy towards sexual harassment and discrimination, providing clear reporting mechanisms and support for victims.

Community and Outreach Programs

- Gender-Focused Projects: Develop and implement community projects that address gender-specific issues, such as education and health programs for women and girls.
- Partnerships: Build partnerships with organizations that focus on gender equality to amplify impact and share best practices.

CONCLUSION

This Gender Equality Plan serves as a roadmap for YouNet APS to foster a more inclusive and equitable environment. By implementing these strategies, YouNet APS can make significant strides toward achieving its gender equality objectives while complying with Italian law.

Since its inception, promoting gender equality has been one of our top priorities. As an organization that uses Education & Research as mechanisms for social intervention, we recognize the crucial role of promoting equality, particularly gender equality, in driving social and political change. We aim to promote parity both within our internal team and among our beneficiaries.

We acknowledge that discussing "gender equality" extends beyond removing barriers to women's participation, although this is indeed a priority. We recognize that gender is non-binary, encompassing various identities, including those within the LGBTQI+ community, who have also been rendered invisible, marginalized, and excluded from participation systems.

This Gender Equality Plan has been approved by the Assembly on July 2024.