

**T I M E 4 ACTION**

# Gender Equality Action Plan

2020 – 2023



Education International  
Internationale de l'Education  
Internacional de la Educación  
Bildungsinternationale

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# Introduction

Since its Founding Congress in 1995, Education International (EI) has consistently highlighted the need to achieve gender equality in unions, in education and in all societies. **Article 3 of the EI Constitution** forms the basis of EI's equality work, and sets out the aims and objectives of EI and its member organisations in this area of work:

- k) to combat all forms of racism and of bias or discrimination in education and society due to gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age, religion, political opinion, social or economic status or national or ethnic origin;
- l) to give particular attention to developing the leadership role and involvement of women in society, in the teaching profession and in organizations of teachers and education employees.

**Article 10 of the EI Constitution** establishes in subsection c) that at least 5 of the 10 open seats of the Executive Board shall be women.

The aim of the EI Gender Equality Action Plan is to provide a framework to enable EI and its member organisations to contribute to the creation of societies in which women and men have an equal share in the distribution of power, knowledge and resources, and enjoy equal opportunities, rights and obligations.

Concrete measures are needed for change to occur and the EI Gender Equality Action Plan (2020-2023) sets out EI's priorities for advancing gender equality up to the 9<sup>th</sup> World Congress in 2023.

## What is the EI Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP)?

The EI Gender Equality Action Plan is a framework, which will enable EI and its member organisations to translate education unions' **policies, rhetoric and activities relating to gender equality into action**. The GEAP 2020-2023 highlights three main priorities:

1. Promoting women's participation and leadership within education unions;
2. Taking action to increase intersectional gender equality in and through education;
3. Promoting women's economic empowerment.

## How to use the GEAP

The EI Gender Equality Action Plan is first and foremost a framework for action; it describes the actions that EI and its member organisations will be undertaking 2020-2023 to ensure promote gender equality in education, within education trade unions and in society more generally. At the international level, the GEAP will primarily be implemented through the activities of EI's Human, Trade Union Rights & Equality Unit, as well as being embedded in the activities of all other Units of the EI Secretariat. At the regional and national levels, EI regional offices and all EI member organisations are encouraged to align their on-going work towards achieving gender equality with the priorities identified in the GEAP. Monitoring and evaluation of GEAP implementation will be continuous at all levels, culminating in the 2022 EI Quadrennial Survey on gender and diversity issues to be completed by all EI member organisations in time for the 9th EI World Congress in 2023.

Resolutions on gender equality issues adopted by EI World Congresses also frame the implementation of the GEAP.

## EI Resolutions on Gender Equality Issues 1995-2019

<b>2019</b>	<u>Eliminating All Forms of Sexual Harassment &amp; Sexual Violence within Education Unions</u> <u>Multiple and Intersecting Forms of Discrimination</u> <u>Condemnation of Racist Appeals of President Donald Trump and in Solidarity with Women of Colour in the US Congress Attacked by him</u>
<b>2015</b>	<u>School-related Gender-based Violence</u>
<b>2011</b>	<u>Gender Equality</u> <u>Education and the Elimination of Violence against Women</u>
<b>2009</b>	<u>Declaration: Schools Shall be Safe Sanctuaries</u> <u>Vocational Education, Gender and Inclusiveness</u>
<b>2007</b>	<u>Gender and Pay equity</u>
<b>2004</b>	<u>Gender and HIV/AIDS</u>
<b>2001</b>	<u>Trafficking in Women, Girls and Boys</u> <u>Gender Perspective in Development Cooperation</u>
<b>1998</b>	<u>Support to Afghan Women</u> <u>Global March for Women in the Year 2000</u> <u>Feminised Nature of the Teaching Profession</u> <u>The Girl Child</u>
<b>1995</b>	<u>Policy Declaration on Women in Education and Teachers' Organisations</u> <u>Violence against Women and Girls</u>

## Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic

As the Covid-19 pandemic spread across the world during the first quarter of 2020, it quickly became apparent that the resulting global crisis, like previous crises, was not gender-neutral in its impact or effect. In his '[Policy Brief on the Impact of Covid-19 on Women](#)', the United Nations Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, noted that: '*Across every sphere, from health to the economy, security to social protection, the impacts of COVID-19 are exacerbated for women and girls simply by virtue of their sex*'.

A [UN Women report](#) on the gendered nature of the impact of Covid-19 warned that in addition to female essential workers facing increased risk of infection (globally, 70% of the health and social care workforce are women), women's economic precarity had increased (more women lost their jobs or businesses as a result of the pandemic) and feminised employment sectors – characterised by low pay and poor working conditions - are likely to face acute adverse impacts. The report also highlighted the intensification of women's unpaid care and domestic workloads during the nationwide lockdowns imposed in response to the pandemic, as well as the alarming increase in gender-based violence in all regions of the world.

Covid-19 also triggered a global educational emergency. The [Global Partnership for Education](#) reported that at their peak, nationwide school closures introduced by 90% of the world's countries kept 1.6 billion children (including 767 million girls) out of school and unable to access in-person classroom teaching for many weeks and months. According to the [United Nations Children's Fund \(UNICEF\)](#), worldwide, as many as 463 million students were unable to access education during school closures because of a lack of distance learning policies and lack of access to the technological tools required to learn at home. [Some reports](#) estimate that as many as 20 million secondary school-aged girls who were unable to attend school during the closures may never return.

The centrality of teachers and education support personnel to the functioning of communities, societies and countries has never been more keenly felt all over the world. A number of countries formally recognised teaching and education work as essential work.



The pandemic has brought the world's existing inequalities into sharp relief, as they have been exacerbated by factors including socio-economic status, ethnicity, age, ability, race, and gender. [UN Women's report](#) warns that: '*Without coordinated action to mitigate the gendered impacts of COVID-19, there is a risk that the fragile gender equality gains achieved over the past 25 years will be lost... Women's leadership and perspective are paramount and will help to ensure a more equitable recovery.*'

2020 was the year in which [the world was to commemorate](#) what is widely recognised as the most progressive global blueprint for realising women's rights and achieving gender equality: the [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#), adopted by the 4th United Nations World Conference on Women in 1995. It is more critical than ever that all efforts are made to [implement the Beijing Platform for Action](#) and to reach the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs), especially SDG4 on education, SDG5 on gender equality and SDG8 on decent work and economic growth by 2030.

**Education unions have a key role to play in those efforts, and the Gender Equality Action Plan remains as central to the work of EI and EI member organisations as it has ever been. In light of the gendered impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, when implementing the GEAP, EI and its member organisations are encouraged to:**

- **Apply a gender lens to all Covid-19 strategies developed and applied to respond to the pandemic;**
- **Define and apply the lessons learned from the rapid societal shifts made to respond and adapt to Covid-19, especially union responses that broadened outreach and led to an increased number of women joining, engaging with and participating in unions and in union work;**
- **Develop strategies to address increased casualisation and precarity of jobs within education at all levels, especially as these disproportionately impact female teachers and education support personnel.**



## GLOSSARY / DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Gender** refers to the differences and commonalities between women and men which are set by convention and other social, economic, political and cultural forces. While “sex” refers to biological differences, the term “gender” focuses on roles, relations, power dynamics and inequalities that are socially created.

**Gender-based discrimination:** The systematic, unfavourable treatment of individuals on the basis of their gender, which denies them rights, opportunities or resources, and participation in decision-making.

**Gender equality** describes equality between men and women in all areas of society, politics, economy and life planning. It means that there is no discrimination on grounds of a person's sex in the allocation of resources or benefits, or in the access to services. It is the direct opposite of gender-based discrimination.

**Women's rights** refer to the freedoms and entitlements of women and girls of all ages. This includes institutionalised and non-institutionalised rights, regulated by law or implicit in the behaviour and custom of society. Women's rights are differentiated from the broader notion of human rights, because they often differ from freedoms and entitlements that are inherently possessed by men and boys.

**Equality of opportunity** means that everybody has an equal chance, especially for equal access. In other words, equality of opportunity means that there is no structural discrimination standing in the way of any individual or social group. Equality of opportunity for women would mean an end to all gender discrimination.

**Gender neutral:** Not shaped by gender role models and stereotypes; not implicitly excluding one gender.

**Gender role (models):** A set of perceived behavioural norms associated particularly with males and females (e.g. women cook and clean, men fix cars).

**Mainstreaming a gender perspective:** The process of assessing the gender implications of any planned action, including legislation, policies and/or programmes in order for women and men to benefit equally, and to achieve the goal of gender equality.

**Pay Equity** is a means of eliminating gender discrimination in the wage setting system. It is sometimes called “equal pay for work of equal value”. Women who perform work that has equal levels of skill required or responsibility involved, under the same or comparable conditions, should be paid the same as men.

**Gender pay gap** refers to differences and general gap in the average pay of men and women, with women earning on average less than men. It is defined as the difference between average gross hourly earnings of male paid employees and of female paid employees as a percentage of average gross hourly earnings of male-paid employees.

**Illiteracy rate:** The proportion of people aged 15 and older who cannot read or write simple sentences in a language. (Number of people aged 15 and older who can read or write, divided by total number of people aged 15 and older).



# Priority 1: Promoting Women's Participation and Leadership

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Goal	Target	Indicators
1. EI member organisations are supported to increase the number of women in key union leadership and decision-making positions at local, national regional and global level.		1. Increased numbers of women nominated for and elected to election into union leadership and decision-making roles and positions at local, national, regional and global level.
2. EI member organisations are supported to increase and sustain women's and men's participation in gender responsive unions, including through the creation and/or strengthening of women's structures within the union at local, national and regional level.	By 2023, there will be an increase of at least 10% per region of women in union leadership positions in EI member organisations compared to the numbers recorded in the 2014 EI Quadrennial Survey.	2. Introduction of any or all of the following: gender quotas; gender audits; mentoring programmes; gender-disaggregated membership data collection; training programmes targeting women, including young women; increased exchange of information and enhanced communication within and between EI women's networks and with the EI regional offices and global secretariat; gender inclusive language in all publications & communications.
3. EI member organisations are supported to prioritise recruitment and retention of young female members from diverse backgrounds.		3. Union programmes, activities, campaigns and other measures targeting young female members from diverse backgrounds.
4. EI member organisations are supported to improve understanding of and take action to address the barriers to women's participation in union leadership and decision-making at local and national level, including taking action to prevent and address all forms of harassment and abuse within the union.		4. Union toolkits & briefs on best practices for increasing women's participation; adoption and effective implementation of policies on gender equality within the union and on addressing harassment and abuse and promoting safety and respect within the union.

# Leadership within Education Unions

Strategy	Expected Outcome	Actors (who)	Monitoring & Evaluation
1. Capacity development workshops & Training of Trainers on leadership for women and men within member organisations at national and regional level.			
2. Implement recommendations from the external evaluations of EI regional women's networks in Latin America and Africa regions - conduct an evaluation of women's networks in regions where none has been done.	Education union renewal at local, national, regional and global level is enhanced through the full engagement and participation of all members, including diverse, young female members and female leaders and decision-makers.	EI Executive Board EI Regional Committees EI member organisations DC Partners EI Women's Networks EI Regional Offices EI Secretariat	EI Regional Conferences 2022 4th EI World Women's Conference 2023 Quadrennial Survey of implementation of the EI Gender Equality Action Plan and relevant resolutions adopted at the 2019 8th EI World Congress
3. Facilitate establishment of mentoring initiatives for young female members and upcoming leaders at national, regional and global level.			
4. Training for union leaders, and exclusively for women, on addressing the barriers to women's participation and leadership.			



## Priority 2: Taking Action to Increase Intersectional G

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Goal	Target	Indicators
1. EI member organisations are supported to develop their capacity to advise relevant ministry personnel on gender-responsive education sector planning (GRESP) as part of their work towards achieving SDG4.	By 2023, 10% of EI member organisations per region are taking action to increase gender equality in and through education through their work on any or all of the following: providing advice GRESP at local or national level; addressing/preventing gender-based violence in and around educational settings; advocacy/lobbying for gender responsiveness in initial teacher education and continuous professional development programmes, teaching materials and pedagogical practice; involvement in research on intersectional gender equality issues within education.	1. Union Guide on GRESP is developed, widely disseminated and used by EI member organisations.
2. Number of EI member organisations supported to take action to prevent and address gender-based violence (GBV) in and around educational settings is increased across regions.		2. Implementation of programmes to address and prevent GBV in and around educational settings by member organisations at local and/or national level; union peer learning activities focused on preventing and addressing GBV in and around educational settings at local, national, sub-regional and/or regional level.
3. EI member organisations are supported to advocate and lobby for gender responsiveness in initial teacher education, in continuous development programmes, in teaching materials, and within pedagogical practice – with a focus on recognising and addressing gender stereotypes.		3. Development of union advocacy & lobbying tools.
4. Data on gender equality issues within education from educators' perspectives and through an intersectional lens, is collected, analysed and the findings disseminated among EI member organisations and beyond.		4. Number of context-related research topics related to gender equality in and through education & through an intersectional lens identified.

# Gender Equality in and through Education

Strategy	Expected Outcome	Actors (who)	Monitoring & Evaluation
1. Develop a Union Guide on GRESP, in partnership with UNGEI.			
2. Integrate work on gender-based violence in & around educational settings into DC programmes, where appropriate; seek external sources of funding to expand the work across regions; create opportunities for peer exchange and learning between member organisations.	Education unions take sustainable and effective action to address key gender-based barriers to the realisation of the right to education for all, and contribute to increasing gender equality and responsiveness in and through education, with due regard to intersectionality.	EI Executive Board EI Regional Committees EI member organisations DC Partners EI Women's Networks EI Regional Offices EI Secretariat	EI Regional Conferences 2022 4th EI World Women's Conference 2023 Quadrennial Survey of implementation of the EI Gender Equality Action Plan and relevant resolutions adopted at the 2019 8th EI World Congress
3. Identify opportunities for advocacy & lobbying and develop union capacity & understanding of key issues related to gender equality and responsiveness in and through education, including through EI initiatives on/for young members.			
4. Commission research with/by EI member organisations and/or external partners, as appropriate - on key gender equality issues within education, highlighting the impact of intersectionality.			

## Priority 3: Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment

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Goal	Target	Indicators
1. EI member organisations are supported to investigate and expose the existence and extent of the gender pay gap in the education sector - including within pension rights - with external partners where appropriate.		1. Updated EI toolkit on the gender pay gap, including information on gender and pension rights.
2. Ensure the EI Global Response to privatisation & commercialisation in and of education includes a gender lens, especially with regard to the issues of job opportunity and security for women educators at all levels of education.	By 2023, a regional mapping of collective agreements of at least 5% of EI member organisations per region has been undertaken, and capacity developed among the same number of member organisations on the gender pay gap & the impact of gender on pension rights, as well as the ratification of ILO Convention 190 & Recommendation 206.	2. Specific aspects of the Global Response campaign prioritise a gender perspective.
3. EI member organisations are supported to provide labour perspectives in international forums and processes and to join or support campaigns focused on increasing women's economic empowerment.		3. EI coordinates delegations at international forums and processes and signs up to relevant campaigns and statements to advance women's economic empowerment.
4. EI member organisations are supported to contribute to the Global Unions' campaign for the ratification of ILO Convention 190 & Recommendation 206 on gender-based violence and harassment in the world of work.		4. EI COMs strategy for the GUF C190 R206 ratification campaign.

Strategy	Expected Outcome	Actors (who)	Monitoring & Evaluation
1. Map which EI member organisations include reference to the gender pay gap within their collective agreement; develop knowledge about the gender pay gap & the impact of gender on pension rights among EI member organisations.		EI Executive Board	
2. Mainstream gender considerations in all aspects of the EI Global Response campaign.	Education unions promote women's economic empowerment through their own actions and in collaboration with key partners, as appropriate, at national, regional and global level.	EI Regional Committees EI member organisations DC Partners EI Women's Networks EI Regional Offices EI Secretariat	EI Regional Conferences 2022 4th EI World Women's Conference 2023 Quadrennial Survey of implementation of the EI Gender Equality Action Plan
3. Participate in annual sessions of the UN Commission on the Status of Women & relevant ILO sessions; join campaigns for ratification and implementation of key ILO Conventions, such as C183 & Recommendation 191 on maternity protection.			
4. Participate in GUF planning and activities for the C190/R206 ratification campaign.			

# Gender Equality Action Plan

2020 – 2023

*Concrete measures are needed for change to occur, and the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) sets out EI's priorities for the work on gender equality up to the next World Congress in 2023. The GEAP is addressed to all of EI's affiliates across the world and to the work of the EI Secretariat.*

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Education International represents organisations of teachers and other education employees across the globe. It is the world's largest federation of unions and associations, representing thirty million education employees in about four hundred and seventy countries and territories, across the globe. Education International unites teachers and education employees.

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