

Gender Equality Plan (GEP)

Refugees International Women Empowerment Foundation (R.I.W.E.)
Adopted by the Founder and Management
Varna, Bulgaria
2026

1. Introduction

Refugees International Women Empowerment Foundation (R.I.W.E.) is a non-profit organisation based in Bulgaria working on refugee protection, women's empowerment, prevention of gender-based violence (GBV), trafficking in human beings (THB), and social inclusion.

Gender equality is a core value of R.I.W.E. and an integral part of its mission and activities. Given that the majority of forcibly displaced populations affected by war and migration are women and children, the organisation recognises the importance of integrating gender equality principles into governance, project design, research activities, and community engagement.

This Gender Equality Plan establishes the internal framework through which R.I.W.E. promotes equal opportunities, prevents discrimination, and integrates gender perspectives across all organisational functions.

2. Scope and Objectives

The objectives of this Gender Equality Plan are to:

- promote gender equality within the organisation
- ensure equal opportunities in leadership and decision-making
- integrate gender perspectives into research, advocacy and programmatic work
- ensure safe and inclusive working and cooperation environments
- prevent gender-based violence, harassment, and discrimination
- strengthen gender-responsive approaches in projects and partnerships

This plan applies to:

- board members
- staff and consultants
- volunteers and project partners
- external collaborators and experts

3. Governance and Responsibility

The Founder and Board of R.I.W.E. are responsible for ensuring the implementation of this Gender Equality Plan.

Responsibilities include:

- ensuring gender equality principles are integrated into organisational strategy
- monitoring the implementation of gender equality commitments
- ensuring equal opportunities in recruitment and participation in projects
- addressing potential cases of discrimination or harassment

Gender equality considerations are integrated into the organisation's governance, project design, and partnership development.

4. Key Areas of Implementation

4.1 Work-Life Balance and Organisational Culture

R.I.W.E. promotes a supportive and inclusive organisational culture.

Measures include:

- flexible working arrangements where possible
- respect for caregiving responsibilities
- inclusive communication practices
- non-discrimination in all organisational processes

4.2 Gender Balance in Leadership and Decision-Making

The organisation aims to maintain balanced gender representation in its governance structures and decision-making processes.

Measures include:

- encouraging diverse participation in leadership roles
- ensuring gender diversity in advisory and expert groups
- promoting inclusive decision-making processes

4.3 Gender Equality in Recruitment and Participation

Although R.I.W.E. currently operates with a small team structure, recruitment and collaboration principles include:

- equal opportunities regardless of gender
- transparent selection processes for experts and consultants
- encouragement of women's leadership and participation

Special attention is given to including refugee and migrant women in project activities and consultations.

4.4 Integration of Gender Dimension in Activities and Research

Gender equality is integrated into all activities of the organisation.

Examples include:

- gender-sensitive research methodologies
- analysis of gender-specific vulnerabilities in migration and displacement
- integration of gender perspectives in advocacy and policy dialogue
- support programmes addressing women's empowerment and safety

4.5 Prevention of Gender-Based Violence and Harassment

R.I.W.E. maintains a zero-tolerance policy toward gender-based violence, harassment, or discrimination.

Measures include:

- clear reporting mechanisms
- confidential handling of complaints
- safeguarding principles in all projects and events
- trauma-informed approaches when working with vulnerable groups

5. Resources and Implementation

Although R.I.W.E. is a small organisation, gender equality is embedded in its mission and programmatic work.

Resources for implementation include:

- expertise of the organisation's leadership and advisory network
- integration of gender equality principles into project activities
- cooperation with gender experts and partner organisations

Gender equality considerations are included in project design, research methodology, and organisational planning.

6. Data Collection and Monitoring

R.I.W.E. commits to monitoring gender equality aspects in its activities.

Where applicable, the organisation will collect gender-disaggregated data related to:

- participation in programmes
- consultations and surveys
- training and events

Monitoring results may be included in internal reports and project documentation.

7. Awareness and Training

The organisation supports awareness-raising on gender equality and unconscious gender bias.

Measures include:

- internal discussions and learning sessions on gender equality topics
- participation in external training and workshops
- integration of gender perspectives in project-related capacity building activities

8. Review and Updates

This Gender Equality Plan will be periodically reviewed and updated to reflect the development of the organisation and evolving best practices.

Approved by:

Ivanna Khodos

Founder

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