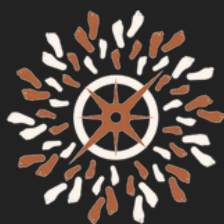


GENDER EQUALITY PLAN (2024-2027)

THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

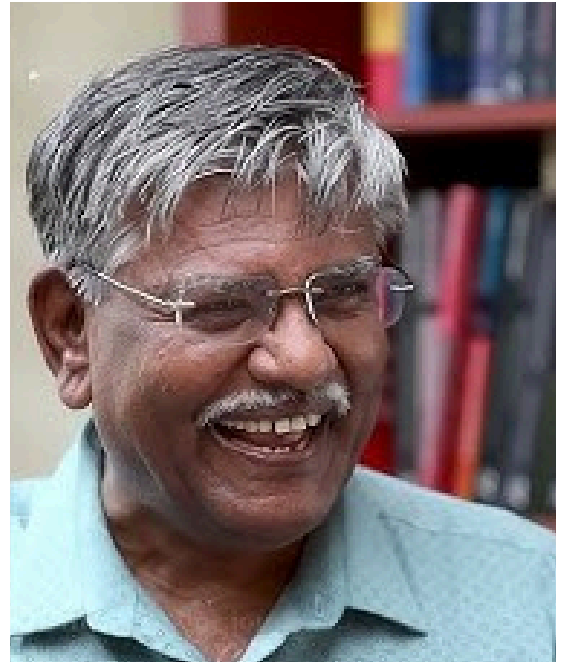


IIMAD



Sheela Thomas

Sheela Thomas, IAS (Retd)
President, IIMAD



S. I. Rajan

Dr S Irudaya Rajan
Chair, IIMAD

www.iimad.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

About IIMAD	3
Executive Summary	4
Introduction	5
Objectives of GEP	6
Objective 1: Ensure Transparency in Recruitment, Promotion, and Remuneration	7
Objective 2: Fostering an Inclusive Organisational Culture	8
Objective 3: Advancing Research through an Age- and Gender-Sensitive Approach	10
Objective 4: Acknowledge and Reward Invisible Work	13
Objective 5: Promote Work-Life Balance	14
Conclusion	15

ABOUT IIMAD

Established on May 23, 2019, the International Institute of Migration and Development (IIMAD) in Trivandrum, Kerala, India stands as an ideal of authoritative research, educational opportunities, and innovative policy formulation in the dynamic realm of migration studies. Representing one of India's most expansive interdisciplinary research networks in migration, IIMAD serves as a hub for a diverse array of international migration experts. Guided by a distinguished governing body comprising esteemed academicians, planners, and administrators, the institute orchestrates numerous national and international research endeavours. Collaborating with prominent professors and researchers worldwide, IIMAD not only facilitates impactful projects but also fosters capacity-building initiatives for its researchers. Supported by a cadre of seasoned senior research fellows with varied expertise and doctoral candidates actively engaged in cutting-edge research, IIMAD stands poised to tackle diverse projects with unwavering strength and intellectual rigor.

Our focus lies on research-oriented policy interventions that hinge on effective governance practices across our key focus practice areas :

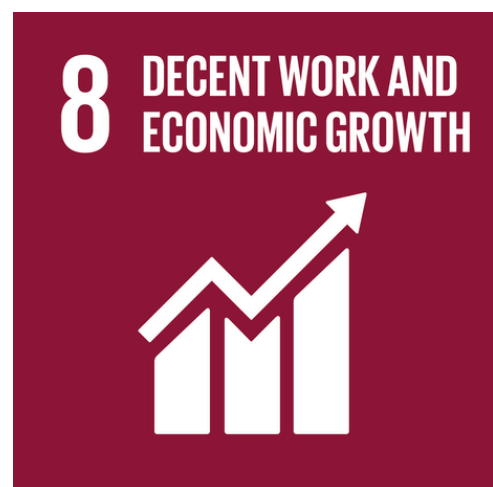
- 1) International Labour Mobilities
- 2) Remittances and Economy
- 3) Climate Change and Sustainability
- 4) Social Cost of Migration
- 5) International Student Mobility
- 6) Internal Migration in India

Research at IIMAD is driven by a focus on outcomes that are evidence-based, data-driven and facilitate people-centric policymaking to drive impact at scale. With an aim to inform effective policy frameworks, we undertake research initiatives with a clear goal to generate evidence to aid decisionmakers in designing and implementing robust programmes for the people and communities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The International Institute of Migration and Development (IIMAD) recognizes the imperative of fostering gender equality as a cornerstone of its organizational strategy and operational ethos. This Gender Equality Plan (GEP) outlines actionable objectives, measures, and commitments to ensure a diverse, inclusive, and equitable workplace. The plan is informed by in-depth diagnostics, global best practices, and IIMAD's core mission of addressing issues of migration, development, and equity.

IIMAD's GEP emphasizes the importance of equal opportunities, non-discrimination, work-life balance, and the recognition of invisible work. It aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly **Goal 5 (Gender Equality)** and **Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth)**. This plan will serve as a blueprint for creating an inclusive organizational culture and addressing systemic disparities in the workplace





INTRODUCTION

We are delighted to present the Gender Equality Plan for the International Institute of Migration and Development (IIMAD), a cornerstone initiative for the 2023-2024 period. This comprehensive plan has been developed following an in-depth assessment combined with extensive input from the diverse IIMAD community. To ensure inclusivity and relevance, multiple stakeholders, including researchers, policymakers, and administrative staff, were actively involved in shaping this document.

The Gender Equality Plan was prepared by an interdisciplinary team, carefully selected to represent a wide range of perspectives. The team includes individuals (Both males and females) at various stages of their careers, from different departments, and with expertise spanning migration, gender studies, and policy analysis. This team, including various affiliates and staff members of IIMAD, was selected and guided by the President and Chair of the institute. This collaborative effort reflects IIMAD's commitment to fostering equity and diversity across all levels of the organization.

The Team Includes :

1. **Sheela Thomas**
2. **S Irudaya Rajan**
3. **P Sadasivan Nair**
4. **Ginu Zacharia Oommen**
5. **Sunitha S**
6. **Varsha Joshi**
7. **K Ravi Raman**
8. **K J Joseph**
9. **Sreeja K S**
10. **Divya Balan**

Objectives of the Gender Equality Plan

1.

Ensure Transparency in Recruitment, Promotion, and Remuneration

Establish clear and equitable policies and processes for recruitment, internal promotions, and pay structures.

2.

Foster an Inclusive Organizational Culture

Create an environment that actively discourages discrimination and harassment while promoting diversity and inclusion. Also, work towards an environment which promotes equity, respect, and collaboration at all levels

3.

Advancing Research through an Age- and Gender-Sensitive Approach

To promote gender and age-sensitive research that addresses the unique needs, experiences, and challenges of diverse populations, fostering inclusivity and equity in knowledge creation and policy development.

4.

Acknowledge and Reward Invisible Work

Highlight and reward contributions that traditionally go unrecognized, such as mentoring and emotional labor.

5.

Promote Work-Life Balance

Support employees in harmonizing professional and personal responsibilities, especially those with caregiving duties.

OBJECTIVE 1 : Ensure Transparency in Recruitment, Promotion, and Remuneration

The International Institute of Migration and Development (IIMAD) has established Recruitment Policies and Procedures document to guide its recruitment, promotion, and remuneration processes. In addition to fostering an open and objective process, the framework emphasizes gender inclusivity, ensuring equal opportunities for all candidates.

Some of the Key Points from the document are as follows:

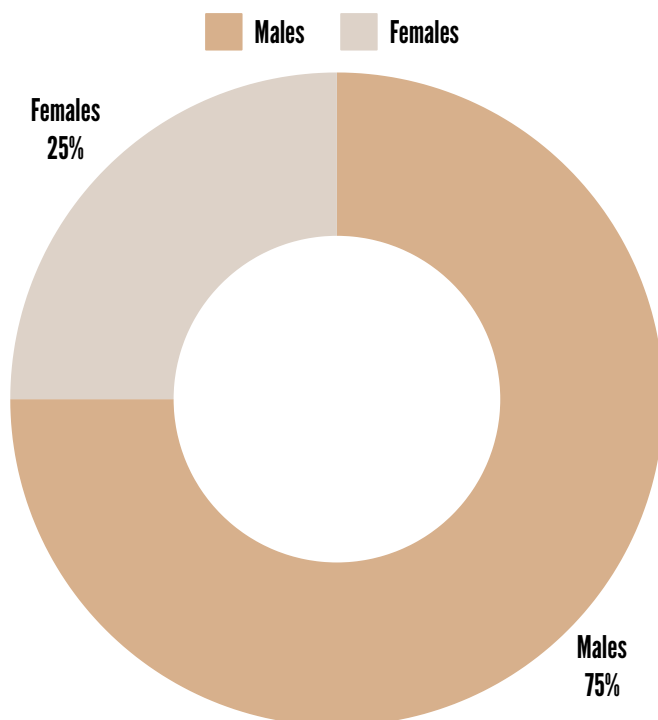
- 1. Structured and Documented Processes:** The recruitment process is organized into clear, step-by-step phases, from the creation of a job description to onboarding. This ensures that all candidates are evaluated objectively, based on predefined criteria.
- 2. Job Descriptions and Specifications:** Each role is accompanied by a detailed job description, including required qualifications and competencies. This transparency eliminates ambiguity and ensures fairness in candidate evaluation.
- 3. Panel-Based Decision-Making:** Recruitment decisions are made collectively by a panel that includes the chair, HR representatives, and the position supervisor. This reduces individual biases and ensures diverse perspectives in hiring.
- 4. Open Advertising:** By advertising vacancies internally and externally through multiple platforms, IIMAD ensures broad outreach to diverse candidates, creating opportunities for underrepresented groups.
- 5. Feedback Mechanisms:** Professionalism and transparency are maintained through regular communication with candidates, including regret letters for those not selected.

Objective 2: Fostering an Inclusive Organisational Culture

At IIMAD, we are committed to cultivating an inclusive organizational culture that celebrates diversity and promotes equitable opportunities for all. We believe that creating an environment where every individual feels valued, respected, and empowered is fundamental to driving innovation and achieving our goals

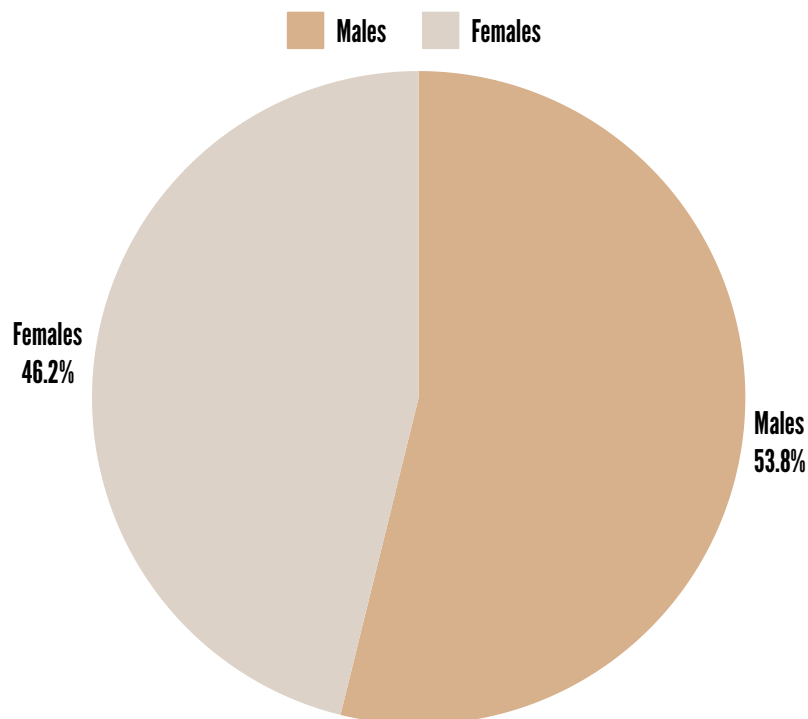
The following data presents the distribution by gender in different verticals of positions and staff at IIMAD. At IIMAD, we strive to create a balanced and inclusive workplace, ensuring equal opportunities for all individuals, regardless of gender.

BOARD MEMBERS



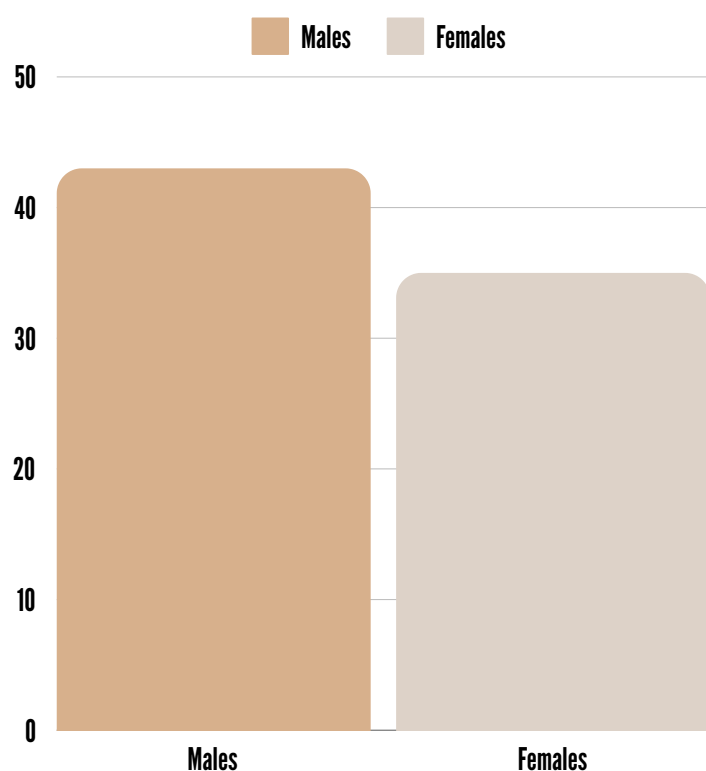
The board consists of 12 members in total, with 9 males and 3 females. At the time of IIMAD's registration in 2019, IIMAD only had one female board member. In 2024, two female board members were elected. Board members of IIMAD have collectively agreed on electing in new members, being mindful of an even representation across the board.

IIMAD CORE TEAM



IIMAD Core Team consists of 13 members, 7 males and 6 females. Core Team members constitute of Research Associates, Research assistants and Field Staff. IIMAD has strived to attain equal representation in putting together IIMAD's body of staff.

VISITING PROFESSORS AND RESEARCH AFFILIATES



There are 78 members in total, who are affiliated to IIMAD in varying capacity including Senior Research Fellows (SRFs), Research Fellows (RFs), Visiting Professors. Among them 43 are male and 35 female. Visiting Professors and Research Affiliates are reviewed bi-annually and these figures will be updated every two years.

Objective 3: Advancing Research through an Age- and Gender-Sensitive Approach

The International Institute Of Migration And Development believes that advancing research through an age- and gender-sensitive lens is central to fostering inclusive and impactful academic and societal outcomes. IIMAD strives to ensure that its research not only contributes to knowledge but also addresses critical issues related to gender and age. Recognizing the intersectionality of age, gender, and other social factors, IIMAD has developed and executed projects that integrate these aspects to create more equitable and comprehensive research outcomes. By embedding a gender lens into each project, IIMAD aims to promote diversity and advocate for policies that lead to more inclusive development. Below is an exploration of how this approach is reflected across some of the projects at IIMAD.

SELECTED COMPLETED PROJECTS

1) DEMIKNOW (Decentering Migration Knowledge)

It is an initiative by Toronto Metropolitan University in collaboration with IIMAD that reimagines migration research by challenging Western-dominated perspectives and amplifying voices from the Global South and marginalized communities. It fosters inclusivity by prioritizing the lived experiences of migrants, ensuring these perspectives shape academic and policy discussions.

2) Women on the Move (EU Funded)

Women on the Move is an initiative dedicated to amplifying the voices, experiences, and agency of migrant women across Europe. By challenging gender-blind migration narratives, it highlights the unique contributions and challenges faced by women migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. The initiative is deeply committed to gender inclusivity, shedding light on how migration intersects with gendered experiences such as caregiving, labor exploitation, and resilience in navigating systemic barriers.

3) COVID-19 Pandemic Impact on International Nurse Migration

The COVID-19 pandemic profoundly impacted the international migration patterns of Indian nurses, the majority of whom are women, by creating unprecedented challenges in both professional and personal spheres. As frontline healthcare workers, they faced heightened risks of infection, long working hours, and significant mental and physical strain. Simultaneously, personal vulnerabilities, including separation from families, financial burdens, and limited access to support systems, compounded their struggles. This study delves into these impacts through case studies and surveys focused on healthcare migration, offering a nuanced understanding of how the pandemic reshaped the migration decisions, experiences, and well-being of Indian nurses abroad.

4) MiFood

The Impact of the Global Pandemic on Food Security among Female Return Migrants in Kerala from the Gulf Countries explores the intersection of migration, gender, and food security in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The study focuses on women migrants who returned to Kerala from Gulf countries, shedding light on how the pandemic disrupted their livelihoods and exacerbated vulnerabilities. These women, often key contributors to household incomes, faced significant challenges such as unemployment, reduced remittances, and limited access to resources, which directly impacted their food security and overall well-being. By employing a gender-sensitive lens, the research highlights the compounded socio-economic hardships faced by female return migrants and underscores the urgent need for inclusive policies that address their specific needs and foster resilience during global crises.

5) KMS (Kerala Migration Survey)

The Kerala Migration Survey (KMS) 2023-2024 explores critical dimensions of migration by focusing on the experiences of women who stay behind, women migrants and older adults in migrant households. It examines the financial autonomy, property ownership, and decision-making capabilities of women whose spouses are migrants, highlighting their agency and active roles in managing households.

3) Migration-Driven Transformation: The Feminization of Tamil Nadu's Agricultural Labour Force (National Commission for Women)

This project was funded by the National Commission for Women, India. The project's scope encompasses a comprehensive field survey to examine the socio-economic and cultural aspects contributing to the feminization of the agricultural labor force in Tamil Nadu. The primary objectives include assessing the impact of migration on the gender dynamics within the agricultural sector, identifying challenges faced by female laborers, and proposing recommendations for sustainable development and gender-inclusive policies. The deliverables included a detailed report outlining key findings, statistical analyses, and actionable insights to inform policy and promote gender equality in the context of migration-driven agricultural transformations.

4) Rapid Gender-Sensitive Vulnerability and Risk Assessment Report in Climate-Affected Areas of Odisha, India

As part of this study, IIMAD undertook a rapid gender-sensitive Vulnerability and Risk Assessment (VRA) to understand the intersection of climate change, migration, and vulnerabilities among rural households in coastal Odisha and dry areas of Telangana. The VRA focused on identifying the challenges faced by households, particularly women and marginalized groups, in coping with climate shocks and making migration decisions. The findings were presented at a validation and inception workshop in Bhubaneswar, engaging key stakeholders to validate the results and align priorities. Additionally, we conducted a baseline study in the Ganjam and Kendrapada districts of Odisha to analyze socio-economic and demographic factors influencing migration trends, adaptive capacities, and gendered vulnerabilities. These activities provided critical insights for enhancing livelihoods, supporting informed migration decisions, and strengthening policy coherence in addressing migration, agriculture, and climate resilience.

Objective 4: Acknowledge and Reward Invisible Work

Invisible work refers to the often-unnoticed contributions that sustain an organization, such as emotional labor, behind-the-scenes efforts, and tasks that go beyond formal job descriptions. These contributions are vital for fostering collaboration, maintaining workplace harmony, and achieving organizational goals. By acknowledging and rewarding this type of work, IIMAD aims to build a culture of inclusivity and fairness, ensuring that all forms of labor—visible or otherwise—are recognized and valued.

IIMAD's Policy documents mention the rewarding system of the institute. Some of the key points are :

- 1. Skill Development and Recognition:** Our tailored training programs focus on empowering employees through both mandatory and optional courses, such as project management and technical training. These programs are designed to uncover and enhance competencies often overlooked, ensuring employees receive recognition for their often-invisible yet vital contributions. By fostering growth in key areas, we not only enhance their skill set but also strengthen their sense of belonging and value within the organization.
- 2. Upholding Integrity and Ethical Contributions:** The Code of Conduct is grounded in principles of integrity, transparency, and inclusivity. It promotes values such as accountability, respect, and ethical behavior, ensuring that contributions—whether visible or not—are valued equally. Invisible efforts like emotional labor, maintaining harmony, and supporting colleagues are recognized as essential to the organization's success.

Objective 5: Promote Work-Life Balance

The International Institute Of Migration And Development places a strong emphasis on work-life balance as a fundamental pillar for fostering both personal well-being and professional productivity. The institution views work-life balance not only as a means to maintain employee health but also as a strategy for long-term organizational success. The key aspects of IIMAD's view on work life balance is as follows:

1. **Holistic Well-being:** IIMAD recognizes employees as individuals with diverse needs. The institute supports mental, emotional, and physical well-being through flexible hours, wellness programs, and opportunities for relaxation.
2. **Flexible Work Arrangements:** IIMAD encourages adaptable hours and remote work options to help employees balance personal responsibilities and maintain productivity.
3. **Supportive Organizational Culture:** The institute promotes a culture of empathy and open communication, ensuring employees feel comfortable taking time off and balancing work and personal commitments.
4. **Integration of Work and Personal Life:** IIMAD advocates aligning personal and professional goals, fostering fulfillment, engagement, and long-term career growth.
5. **Focus on Outcomes, Not Hours:** Emphasizing results over rigid schedules, IIMAD allows employees to work at their own pace, optimizing productivity without sacrificing personal well-being.

CONCLUSION

The Gender Equality Plan (GEP) for the International Institute of Migration and Development (IIMAD) is a pivotal initiative in our journey as a growing institution committed to fostering inclusivity, equity, and diversity. While IIMAD is a relatively small organization, it is rapidly evolving, guided by its mission to address critical issues of migration and development through research, policy advocacy, and capacity-building. This plan is a testament to our commitment to continuous improvement and our determination to create a supportive and inclusive environment for all members of the IIMAD community.

The GEP is not a static document; it is designed to evolve and adapt alongside the institution. Each year, it will undergo rigorous reviews to assess its relevance and effectiveness, ensuring it aligns with the changing needs of our staff, researchers, and stakeholders. By integrating feedback, monitoring progress, and learning from our experiences, we aim to refine the plan and deepen its impact. This ongoing process will not only strengthen our organizational culture but also enable IIMAD to lead by example in promoting gender equality within the migration and development sectors. Through this iterative approach, we reaffirm our commitment to building a workplace that celebrates diversity and fosters equity, paving the way for sustainable growth and long-lasting change.

