

Activity Report submitted on the 26th of May 2023 for SDG 5: Gender Equality, within the IAU HESD Cluster by the University of Bologna, Italy- Leader of SDG 5

University of Bologna

As a SDG5 Cluster, in October 2022 the University of Bologna has organised an online meeting with some of the satellite partners to discuss local strategies and to envision potential and achievable future joint actions. In particular, the necessity of starting research collaborations on gender and development and of sharing policies and good practices was tackled to compare them and learn from other experiences, questioning specifically the possible gaps between policies and the implementation of the good practice; furthermore, the role of academia within the broader civil society was addressed. The next step will be the distribution of a questionnaire among the cluster satellites (and eventually other IAU partners) to map the existing good practices focused in particular on SDG 5.

UNIBO has published its [Gender Equality Annual Report](#) (now in its seventh edition), providing a detailed overview of the progress in achieving equity and in contrasting gender biases, but also of the defective areas in which changes are still needed for a more inclusive and equal community. While showing the significant improvement that has been made, the 2021 edition has underlined also the complexities of the academic community and the discrepancies that still affect it, focusing in particular on the phenomena of “horizontal segregation”, “vertical segregation”, and “leaky pipeline”, and thus on the necessity to develop tools and critical thinking to address the challenges of gender equality.

UNIBO has also approved its new [Gender Equality Plan 2021-2024](#), whose aims are to implement actions and projects to reduce gender inequalities and to enhance diversity, equity and inclusion with regard to age, culture, diverse ability, sexual orientation and identity, multilingualism and interculturality. Among the numerous actions and services already implemented, the university has opened the [Helpdesk against Gender Based Violence](#), which offers a protected environment for counselling and provides support for the various forms of violence that can occur both within and outside the university (by partners, family members, relatives, strangers) and it is aimed at the entire UNIBO community of students, teaching and administrative staff.

Another important step has been the creation of a webpage on [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion](#), collecting all the services, documentations, institutional bodies and figures, initiatives, networks, research centre and course of studies that the university dedicates to the topics. In particular one of the areas is focused on [Equal Opportunities and Gender identity](#).

Furthermore, to promote all women’s and girls’ empowerment, gender mainstreaming, and inclusion of diversities, as well as to prevent and combat gender violence, UNIBO has produced an intense programme of actions and events addressing not only the academic community but also the civil society, strengthening even more its already solid connection with the city administration.

Assam Don Bosco University (ADBU)

Assam Don Bosco University (ADBU) recognizes the importance of gender equality and is committed to fostering a safe and inclusive environment for all its members. As part of this commitment, ADBU has established a [Gender Amity Committee](#), also known as the Internal Complaint Committee (ICC), to address issues related to gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence.

The committee plays a crucial role in promoting gender equality and ensuring the well-being of all individuals associated with the university through its own approved policy which is also considered under service policy. It consists of members from diverse backgrounds, including faculty, staff, and student representatives and a member from outside organisations who are trained in handling sensitive matters with empathy, confidentiality, and impartiality.

The primary responsibility is to receive and address complaints of gender-based discrimination, harassment, or any form of violence within the university premises including:

- Mitigation of complaints lodged by stakeholders through meeting and counselling.
- Raising awareness about gender equality and promoting a culture of respect, dignity, and inclusivity.
- Organisation of workshops, seminars etc.
- Campaigns on gender-related issues.
- Empowering the university community.

The committee plays a crucial role in fostering a gender-sensitive and safe environment.

UNESP (São Paulo State University)

UNESP addresses the gender issue in actions distributed in 24 campuses in São Paulo State/ Brazil. On March 8, 2023, UNESP – represented by Professor Maysa Furlan (Vice-Rector) – the other Public Universities and the Federal Institute of São Paulo State signed a Term of Commitment forming the GENDER EQUITY NETWORK. In the campuses the faculty and students produced more than ten theses and almost forty dissertations and gender issues were addressed in twelve research groups, eight graduate programs, thirteen undergraduate courses, and extension projects which debated on inclusion, accessibility, and permanence.

A concrete example of the actions is seen in the development of the App for women, which provides content on health, guidance, acceptance of problems related to women's rights and can also report cases of harassment that have occurred inside/outside the university.

Concerning the research group Gender and Race, led by Professor Cláudia Nigro, another important activity (2001/2022) was a course given to 50 teachers in the municipality of São José do Rio Preto. There were twelve round table conferences distributed in the period. Moreover, a free e-book was launched this year with some of the conferences available [here](#).

University of Vechta

As cross-sectional topics, gender equality and equal opportunities are part of the actions and attitudes of teachers, researchers, employees and students at University of Vechta. For a living gender sensitive culture, the phases of informal learning particularly shape the development of skills in the context of equality and diversity. The project "Education and Society: Gender Aspects in Focus (BiGGiB)", developed a concept for gender dimension in research and development in all subjects to promote excellent research orientation and living conditions of people. Furthermore the "Gender & Diversity Certificate" represents a successful model example for an additional qualification integrated into universities curricula prioritising gender and diversity research topics which is constantly evolving. In 2022 the University of Vechta was successfully re-audited as "Family-Friendly University". The University was certified for integrating family-friendly approaches into the university strategy, for systematic institutionalisation of family-friendly study, qualification and working conditions and its organisational culture, instruments and communication. In the strategic target agreements of the University of Vechta as well as in its university development plan the expansion and promotion of gender research topics and the inclusion of equality and diversity aspects in research are successively implemented. The University of Vechta is an ambassador for gender equality in the Oldenburg Münsterland area and beyond.

McMaster University

McMaster researchers, students and staff are answering the UN call to embrace change and work towards creating a healthier brighter world.

Some projects of the McMaster University include:

- [Building a digital community of global entrepreneurs](#): McMaster researcher, Benson Honig provided entrepreneurial training across the globe to women and marginalised people. The next plan is him taking a virtual incubator to Kenya to encourage new business opportunities for regional multigenerational refugees.

- [Deliver an end to hunger](#): McMaster faculty has a goal to create a system that fills gaps between the four million food insecure Canadians and the 2.3 million tonnes of wasted household food to end hunger locally and globally.
- As [rising food insecurity emerges as a population health risk](#), McMaster experts call for universal nutritious accessible school lunch programs.

McMaster University is a leader in providing a welcoming and inclusive environment and a range of programs focused on non-discrimination for women and transgender people. Recent SDG 5 'Gender Equality' related initiatives/achievements include:

- [McMaster Women in Tech Initiative](#) recognizes women tech changemakers within the McMaster community and provides them with a platform to share stories and inspire others. Their achievements were recognized during the 2023 International Women's Day.
- [McMaster's Faculty of Engineering made great progress in enrolling women into non-traditional disciplines and various fields in Engineering](#). Currently, women make up to 40 per cent of the 2022 incoming Engineering class.
- McMaster has its first female Dean of Engineering.