

# Monitoring Progress: Gender Equality in Local Governance

Monitoring Report on the  
Implementation of the Gender  
Equality Local Action Plan in  
the **Municipality of Hani i Elezit**  
(2024-2026)



HANI I  
ELEZIT



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# Introduction

Levizja FOL, within the project "Monitoring and accountability with gender sensitivity", with the support of the Kosovar Center for Gender Studies (KCGS), has carried out the monitoring of the implementation of Gender Equality Action Plans in the municipalities of Hani i Elezit, Dragash and Prizren.

Gender equality action plans constitute a strategic tool for integrating gender equality into the daily functioning of institutions. They include clear objectives, concrete measures, clear divisions of responsibilities, time frames and the necessary resources, both human and financial, for their implementation. In addition, these plans provide mechanisms for monitoring progress and assessing impact, ensuring that institutional leaders are held accountable for progress towards gender equality. Ultimately, these plans aim for institutional change by incorporating a gender perspective into the rules, procedures and common practices of institutions, making gender equality an integral part of daily action.<sup>1</sup>

The Gender Equality Local Action Plan (GELAP) in Municipality of Hani i Elezit was approved in December 2023 by the Municipal Assembly, following an open consultative process that included civil society organizations, community representatives, and municipal institutions. This three-year plan (2024–2026) is the first strategic document at the local level in this municipality that sets out concrete measures to advance gender equality and integrate a gender perspective into municipal policies, services, and budgeting.

The GELAP has been prepared in accordance with Kosovo's legal and strategic frameworks, as well as international documents on human rights and gender equality, including the Law on Gender Equality, the Gender Equality Programme 2020–2024, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDG 5), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the European Union's Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 and Gender Action Plan (GAP III) 2021-2025.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> EIGE, "Gender Equality Action Plans," Retrieved from: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/tools-methods/gender-equality-action-plans>

<sup>2</sup> Gender Equality Action Plan 2024-2026, Municipality of Hani i Elezit.

The plan focuses on four main objectives::

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1:**

Promoting economic, social and decent employment rights, as well as the empowerment of girls, young women and women.

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2:**

Promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights.

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3:**

Promoting gender equality and empowering women, young women and girls in all their diversity.

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4:**

Freedom from all forms of gender-based violence

For each objective, activities and initiatives containing measurable progress indicators have been defined, along with concrete budgeted measures to address gender-specific needs. The purpose of this monitoring report is to assess the progress of the implementation of the Gender Equality Local Action Plan in municipality of Hani i Elezit during the period January 2024 - March 2025, to identify the main challenges in implementation and to propose concrete measures for improvement.

# Methodology

Within the framework of this monitoring, a methodological approach was selected based on the review of documentation available from the municipalities, as well as direct cooperation with municipal officials responsible for the implementation of the Gender Equality Local Action Plan (GELAP) 2024-2026, reviewing the progress achieved in the period January 2024 to March 2025. Initially, existing materials such as municipal reports, meeting minutes, budget documents and content published on the official websites of the municipalities were analyzed. This was complemented by meetings with relevant officials to provide additional clarifications and context regarding the measures and progress of implementation. Due to the lack of materials on the website and technical difficulties, information was provided directly by municipal officials. These officials have shown willingness to cooperate and have provided full access to relevant documentation and information.

During this process, a monitoring matrix, approved together with the GELAP, was used as a technical tool for collecting and organizing data for each objective and activity foreseen in the plan. This matrix was completed in direct consultation with municipal officials, who contributed data and information based on their work practices and official documentation. The matrix data was categorized based on the level of progress of each activity, and was analyzed numerically and qualitatively.

For the purposes of this report, the status of each activity is categorized as follows: "Implemented" when the activity has been fully completed according to plan; "Exceeded Indicators" when the results achieved exceed the set objectives; "Partially implemented" in cases where the activity has been initiated, but has not been fully implemented or detailed data on progress is missing; "Not started" when the activity has no reported progress; and "Lack of supporting documents" when, despite claims of implementation, no evidence or documentation necessary to verify its implementation is provided, as well as in cases where the municipality itself has not provided any information regarding the activity. These categories serve as key indicators for assessing the level of implementation and accountability of the Gender Equality Local Action Plans.

At the conclusion of the report's drafting, its content was sent for review and comment to the municipal officials involved in the process, so that they could provide final remarks and ensure that the information presented was accurate and complete, before the report was published to the general public.



# Findings on actions and indicators

In Municipality of Hani i Elezit, gender representation in the Municipal Assembly is among the highest at the national level, with 40% of assembly members being women.<sup>3</sup> This makes this municipality a positive example of women's representation in local government and an important starting point for advancing gender equality in local decision-making processes. In addition to representation in the Assembly, women are involved in the management of municipal structures at every level, exercising direct authority in decision-making. Currently, more than half of the municipal directorates are headed by women<sup>4</sup>, which shows a significant commitment of the Municipality to build a more inclusive and gender-balanced administration. However, a challenge remains the lack of an officer dedicated solely to gender equality. While the municipality has a gender equality officer, in many cases he/she is overloaded with additional tasks in addition to the foreseen tasks due to the lack of staff.

Overall, the Municipality of Hani i Elezit has made significant strides towards gender equality, both in representation and institutional inclusion and policy-making, although some important components such as the dedication of resources for coordination remain to be implemented. In this context, the monitoring report, based on the review of existing documents, meetings with municipal officials and the joint assessment of the content of the report with the institution itself, aims to provide a fair and factual overview of the implementation of the gender equality action plan in this municipality.

## Monitoring the achievement of objectives

This section provides an in-depth qualitative analysis of the results of monitoring the Gender Equality Local Action Plan in the municipality of Hani i Elezit, focusing on the factors that influence the implementation of the activities and objectives set in the plan.

Monitoring shows that a significant part of the preparatory activities have not yet been launched, including activities that promote cooperation between departments responsible for implementing the plan, and the drafting of guidelines for the involvement of beneficiaries. These steps are essential to ensure a solid planning basis, but their implementation requires time and resources. According to conversations with municipal officials, the lack of trained staff and the burden of daily responsibilities have made it necessary to distribute efforts

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<sup>3</sup> National Democratic Institute (NDI). Kosovo's 2021 Local Elections - NDI Analysis of Inclusion and Information Integrity. Retrieved from: <https://www.ndi.org/publications/kosovo-women-make-gains-municipal-elections> , p.17.

<sup>4</sup> Kallxo.com. The municipality of Hani i Elezit becomes a champion with the number of women at the head of municipal directorates. Retrieved from: <https://kallxo.com/komuna/komuna-e-hanit-te-elezit-behet-kampione-me-numrin-e-grave-ne-krje-te-drejtorive-komunale/>

between priority projects of services to citizens and commitments to gender equality. This situation requires clarification of roles and a clear division of duties among staff, although it shows that the municipality is committed to continuing the work on gender equality beyond administrative tasks.

For activities that have been partially implemented, it often involves awareness-raising sessions and public meetings that have only reached a portion of the target communities. Comments from municipal representatives raise the issue of the general mindset of the population, where some segments consider gender issues as topics that do not reflect their daily needs or as externally imposed demands. This attitude has required more time and additional communication steps to gain the trust of participants and to build connections with marginalized groups. Achieving full geographic and demographic coverage remains challenging in the absence of a strong network of local partners and communication channels that build credibility within the community.

Activities that have been fully implemented demonstrate positive experiences, where setting objectives with clear allocation of responsibilities and dedicated budgets has facilitated the implementation process. In these cases, progress has also been aided by cooperation with civil society organizations, which have acted as catalysts for local mobilization. For example, activities planned within the framework of the "16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence" campaign have been successful in achieving the indicators, although the budget was lower compared to other activities. This success is the result of the commitment of the relevant directorate and the involvement of civil society and international support organizations in the activities, creating a model that can be reused for other thematic priorities.

In some activities, a lack of information on progress has been noted as data has not been collected or is not yet prepared for presentation. In discussions with municipal staff, it was highlighted that the current tools for collecting information require additional time and are sometimes considered as an additional administrative burden. To address this, it is recommended to simplify the data collection forms and include them in routine working meetings. This will strengthen transparency, facilitate the timely identification of challenges and free up staff to focus on concrete activities.

At the institutional level, the main challenges relate to building internal capacities and strengthening the spirit of interdepartmental cooperation. When activities require the engagement of multiple units, the lack of a clear common working framework sometimes leads to unintentional delays. To address this situation, it is recommended to develop training sessions on gender-responsive planning and organize regular coordination meetings that create a routine of cooperation. Furthermore, by incorporating gender objectives into existing public service registers and strategies, gender equality issues will become an integral part of the daily agenda and not temporary projects.

## Quantitative Summary of Activity Status

The Gender Equality Local Action Plan in the Municipality of Hani i Elezit includes a total of 53 specific activities. The monitoring data provides a clear categorization of their current status, highlighting the dominant challenges in implementation.

**Table 1:** Summary of the General Status of GELAP Activities for Hani i Elezit

Objektivi	Has not started.	Partially implemented	Implemented	Exceeded Indicators.	Lack of supporting documents	Total Activities
<b>Strategic Objective 1: Promoting economic, social and decent employment rights, as well as the empowerment of girls, young women and women.</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>29</b>
Specific Objective 1.1: Increase access of women and young women, in all their diversity, to services, products and financial resources that impact their economic empowerment.	5	4	2	0	1	12
Specific objective 1.2: Increase awareness and improve access to care services, enabling equal division of household and care work between women and men, young women and young men, girls and boys.	5	2	0	0	1	8
Specific objective 1.3: Providing equal opportunities for quality education and lifelong learning for girls, young women and women, as well as boys, young men and men of the Municipality, in all their diversity.	5	2	1	1	0	9
<b>Strategic objective 2: Promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights.</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>
Specific objective 2.1: Increase access of women, young women, and girls in all their diversity to quality health and sexual and reproductive health services.	4	0	1	0	2	7

Objektivi	Has not started.	Partially implemented	Implemented	Exceeded Indicators.	Lack of supporting documents	Total Activities
<b>Strategic Objective 3: Promoting gender equality and empowering women, young women and girls in all their diversity.</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</b>
Specific Objective 3.1: Increase awareness among women, young women and girls about their rights and the importance of providing equal opportunities for participation and leadership for all residents of the Municipality.	4	0	1	0	0	5
Specific objective 3.2: Increase the Municipality's measures and actions that take into account and implement gender mainstreaming and gender responsive budgeting.	5	1	2	0	0	8
<b>Strategic Objective 4: Freedom from all forms of gender-based violence</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>
Specific objective 4.1: Informing and raising awareness among women, young women and girls in all their diversity about gender stereotypes and harmful practices that fuel gender-based violence.	1	2	1	0	0	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>53</b>

As shown in the Table, a significant portion of the GELAP activities, specifically 29 out of 53 (54.7%), are categorized as "Not started". In addition, 11 activities (20.8%) are "Partially implemented", and 4 activities (7.5%) are marked with "Lack of supporting documents". Only 8 activities (15.1%) are "Implemented", and a single activity (1.9%) has "Exceeded Indicators".

# Overall qualitative performance analysis

The quantitative summary provides a basis for in-depth qualitative observations regarding the municipality's approach to gender equality initiatives.

A key observation is that a significant portion of the planned activities have not yet started, suggesting that the municipality is facing challenges in transforming strategic planning into concrete results. It is worth noting that for many of these "Not started" activities, specific comments explaining progress are missing, indicating an opportunity for strengthening documentation and accountability. This situation suggests the need to further align the strategic goals of the GELAP with the operational capacities and political commitment required for implementation. Addressing this gap is essential to turn the GELAP from an aspirational document into a functional roadmap for change. A careful analysis of the not-started activities would help assess the realistic nature of the objectives, the adequacy of the allocated human and financial resources, and the depth of the municipal administration's commitment to gender equality.

Another important issue identified is the opportunity for improvement in documentation and monitoring. The recurring status of "Lack of supporting documents" for several activities, as well as comments such as "accurate figures missing", "no participant list" and "No way of classification", indicate the need for a stronger monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework within the municipality. To ensure accountability and to accurately assess impact, it is essential that data is properly collected, shared and documented. Improving this M&E system will increase the credibility of reported progress and strengthen the municipality's ability to learn from its initiatives. Reliable data is essential for evidence-based decision-making, ensuring effective resource allocation and demonstrating tangible results for citizens and stakeholders. This will also help deepen understanding and prioritization of the key role of data in effective governance.

Furthermore, the analysis highlights the importance of setting clear objectives to ensure accurate measurement of progress. A pattern was observed where some activities categorized as "Implemented" achieve this status based on non-numerical or unclear objectives. For example, Activity 1.1.5 was marked as "Implemented" because "The target does not present a number and therefore it was considered accomplished since 2 women benefited from the subsidy". Similarly, Activity 1.3.7 was considered "Implemented" after the construction of a single elevator, as "the indicators do not have a number set for the interventions". Activity 2.1.2 was also "Implemented" supporting "one woman" due to a non-numerical objective. While these activities technically align with the stated indicators, the precise measurement of impact and degree of achievement remains an important discussion.

This approach to setting objectives and reporting can give the impression of progress without necessarily achieving substantive change. It highlights the need for the municipality to aim for more measurable objectives to ensure real commitment and effective programming. For a gender equality plan, setting clear objectives is essential to ensure that interventions adequately address inequalities. This observation highlights the importance of adopting Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound (SMART) indicators in the municipality's future planning and reporting.

# Cross-sectoral performance analysis

A detailed review of the implementation of the Gender Equality Local Action Plan in the Municipality of Hani i Elezit reveals several systemic challenges, along with some successful practices. These general observations provide a holistic understanding of the municipality's performance and commitment to gender equality.

## Systemic challenges

A notable systemic challenge is the number of activities categorized as "Not Started", an indicator of the need to address fundamental issues in the implementation process. Many of the activities that have not started across all strategic objectives often lack explanatory comments, indicating room for improvement in the implementation process. This challenge, present throughout the plan, suggests that the GELAP, while ambitious, could benefit from strengthening operational capacities, dedicated human resources, consistent political prioritization, and clear lines of responsibility for execution. The presence of budgets allocated to many of these not-started activities indicates a challenge in planning and effective use of the budget, where funds have been allocated but implementation remains to be strengthened. This indicates that the municipality has shown capacity in policy formulation, and current efforts should focus on strengthening execution. Addressing this will increase the credibility of the GELAP and the municipality's commitment to gender equality, while seizing opportunities for concrete improvements in the lives of citizens.

Another important area for improvement is in documentation and information management. The recurrence of the status "Lack of supporting documents" for numerous activities, as well as remarks about missing figures, lists of participants, or the inability to classify data, indicates the need for stronger monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems. In particular, the fact that the existing lists are not gender-disaggregated indicates a crucial area for development for a gender equality plan, highlighting the importance of gender-sensitive analysis. This situation in data management, record-keeping, and M&E systems provides an opportunity to strengthen the effectiveness of the monitoring process. With verifiable data, the municipality will be able to accurately assess progress, identify specific areas for improvement, and demonstrate the actual impact of interventions. This will strengthen evidence-based decision-making, increase accountability to citizens and financial partners, and help the municipality learn from its experiences and adapt strategies. It also suggests opportunities to strengthen institutional capacity and prioritize strong M&E practices.

Finally, the analysis shows that setting clearer objectives can help to accurately reflect progress. A pattern observed among activities categorized as "Implemented" is that their success is often based on non-numerical or vaguely defined objectives. In some cases, minimal efforts, such as supporting two women, building a single elevator, or holding a meeting, were considered sufficient to achieve "Implemented" status. While technically meeting the stated indicator, this approach provides an opportunity to develop more substantive objectives. This practice of setting clearer objectives and subsequently reporting on "Implemented" status will create a more accurate picture of achievements. It will help the municipality to show up in line with its plan, driving meaningful change and addressing the root causes of gender inequality. This will strengthen the integrity of the GELAP and the municipality's commitment to transformative gender equality outcomes. This highlights a critical need for the municipality to adopt Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound (SMART) indicators for all future activities, to ensure that reported progress reflects actual and measurable impact.

## Identification of successful approaches and best practices

Despite systemic challenges, the municipality has demonstrated effective approaches in several areas and has provided valuable lessons for the implementation of the Gender Equality Local Action Plans. These successes demonstrate the potential of the municipality and offer avenues for further development:

- **Measurable success with the scholarship program:** Activity 1.3.2, which subsidized 24 girls and 16 boys, exceeding its target by 133%, is an excellent example of effective implementation with clear and disaggregated data. This success shows that when objectives are clearly defined and implementation is focused, the municipality can achieve significant and measurable results. This program can serve as an inspiring model for other programs, emphasizing the importance of numerical objectives and detailed data collection.
- **Direct Service Provision:** The continued provision of shelter and care for survivors of gender-based violence (Activity 4.1.4) demonstrates the existence of a functional and essential mechanism for direct support. This highlights the municipality's ability to provide vital services to vulnerable groups when the need is immediate and tangible, demonstrating a commitment to direct assistance.
- **Policy formulation:** Successful amendment and adoption of municipal regulations (Activity 3.2.1) demonstrates the capacity of the municipality to complete legislative and policy tasks when there is a clear focus. This shows that the institutional structure for policy development is capable, providing a strong basis for their operationalization in the future.



## Budget allocation in relation to activity status

A review of the allocated budgets in relation to the status of activities reveals opportunities for improvement in budget efficiency and use of funds. It is noted that significant budgets have been allocated to activities that have not yet started. For example, Activity 1.1.7 (subsidies for greenhouse managers) has an allocated budget of EUR 91,304, and Activity 1.3.9 (construction of a new school building) has EUR 156,500, however both are awaiting the start of implementation. Similarly, Activity 2.1.4 (home visits for young mothers), with a budget of EUR 32,880, is marked with "Lack of supporting documents", highlighting the need for more accurate documentation of expenditures. This situation calls for an in-depth review of financial planning, budget execution, and accountability mechanisms within the municipality, in order to ensure that resources are deployed more effectively for their intended purpose and that public funds are used in a transparent and efficient manner.

# Recommendations

To address the identified challenges and increase the effectiveness and impact of future gender equality initiatives under the GELAP, the following recommendations are proposed:

## **Strengthening the implementation of activities and continuity:**

- The municipality should conduct an urgent and comprehensive internal review to identify specific barriers contributing to the failure to start activities. This review should delve into resource constraints, unclear responsibilities, and existing capacity gaps within relevant departments.
- For each uninitiated activity, a detailed operational plan should be developed. This plan should clearly assign responsibilities to specific individuals or teams, set realistic deadlines, and set measurable benchmarks in shorter timeframes to track progress.
- Activities with high potential for transformative impact, especially those that address systemic inequalities, should be prioritized and ensure adequate resource allocation and sustained political support from the highest levels of municipal leadership.

## **Implementation of clear monitoring and evaluation mechanisms:**

- It is essential to implement rigorous data collection for all activities. This includes, but is not limited to, maintaining accurate lists of participants, recording accurate numbers of beneficiaries, and ensuring that all data is systematically disaggregated by gender.
- The municipality should develop and implement unified data collection forms and standardized reporting protocols across all municipal departments. This will ensure consistency, comparability, and reliability of data, addressing the current fragmented and undocumented approach.
- Significant investment in capacity building for municipal staff is essential, focusing on effective monitoring and evaluation methodologies, data management techniques, and the development of gender-sensitive indicators. This will empower staff to accurately track and report progress.
- A clear system for verifying reported progress should be established, including regular on-site checks, mandatory submission of supporting documents for all activities, and independent audits where appropriate.

### **Improving the specification and measurability of objectives:**

- The municipality should review the existing indicators of the GELAP to align with the SMART principles (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound). Future action plans should include measurable objectives for all activities to enable objective assessment of progress and impact, moving beyond vague or non-numeric indicators that mask limited achievements.
- For activities where numerical Indicators are inherently difficult to define, clear qualitative benchmarks or process indicators should be established. These benchmarks should demonstrate concrete steps taken and visible results achieved, ensuring that progress is not simply an assumption.

### **Addressing identified systemic barriers and ensuring accountability:**

- Strengthen political commitment and leadership for gender equality by institutionalizing regular high-level reviews of the implementation of the Gender Equality Action Plan. These reviews should include public accountability for progress and transparent reporting of challenges and successes.
- A thorough review and optimization of budget allocation and utilization processes is essential. This will ensure that funds specifically earmarked for gender equality initiatives are effectively distributed, properly accounted for, and demonstrably contribute to the intended objectives, addressing current inefficiencies.
- The municipality should prioritize the development and immediate implementation of critical policies and awareness-raising campaigns that have been neglected. This includes, but is not limited to, a municipal policy against sexual harassment (Activity 3.1.3) and comprehensive sexual and reproductive health education initiatives (Activities 2.1.5, 2.1.6, 2.1.7).
- It is essential to recreate and strengthen participatory mechanisms, such as women's budget debates (Activity 3.2.3), to ensure continued community engagement and foster local ownership of gender equality initiatives and resource allocation decisions.

# Annex





