



BERAT MUNICIPALITY

ABSTRACT

The Local Action Plan for Gender Equality of the Municipality of Berat 2026–2028 is a concrete contribution to promoting equality and inclusion in all areas of life. Based on data analysis and community consultations, the plan aims at institutional empowerment, women’s and girls’ health, and gender-sensitive delivery. With measurable and concrete objectives, this document guides towards a fairer and more inclusive local government.

content

Introduction	2
Thanks	3
Legal and institutional framework and the link to strategic documents	4
Municipality profile	6
Demographics	6
Illiteracy	7
Educational Level	7
Marital status	9
Mother's status	10
Kindergarten attendance	12
Kindergarten Attendance	13
Persons with Disabilities	14
Methodology	15
Vision and strategic objectives	17
Strategic goals and objectives	18
Strategic Goal 1 (SG1):	18
Strategic Goal 2 (SG2):	19
5. Action Plan (activity matrix)	20
Strategic goal 1:	20
Specific Objective (SO1.1)	20
Specific Objective (SO1.2)	22
Specific Objective (SO1.3)	23
Strategic goal 2:	24
Specific Objective (SO2.1)	24
Specific Objective (SO2.2)	26
Specific Objective (SO2.3)	27
Specific Objective (SO2.4)	28
6. Monitoring and reporting	29
6.1 Monitoring approach and principles	29
6.2 Responsible actors	29
6.3 Progress indicators	29
6.4 Reporting formats	29
6.5 Data Collection, Analysis and Digitization	30
6. Interim and final evaluation	30

Introduction

Gender equality and the empowerment of women, young women and girls have long been important objectives for the Municipality of Berat. To further advance their fulfillment in a systematic and sustainable manner, by integrating the gender perspective into all local policies and programs, I am pleased to present to you the Local Plan for Gender Equality 2026–2028.

This strategic document is the result of a comprehensive process, developed with the direct participation of leaders and specialists of the municipality and administrative units, community representatives, educational and health institutions, civil society organizations, experts from the National Association of Municipalities of Albania with the technical support of Smart Processess.

Local Plan for Gender Equality 2026 – 2028It is based on the analysis of local needs and experience from the implementation of previous policies, taking into account best practices and national and international standards in the field of gender equality.

This plan includes clear measures to promote the participation of women and girls in decision-making, their economic and social empowerment, and to address gender-based violence in our community. Special attention is paid to the most vulnerable groups, such as women in rural areas, young girls, women with disabilities, or those who have experienced violence.

The Municipality of Berat remains committed to building a just society, where no one is left behind and where the rights of every individual are respected and guaranteed. We believe that to achieve this vision, a joint effort and close cooperation with all stakeholders in society are necessary. Therefore, we invite all citizens, institutions and organizations to become an active part of the implementation of this plan.

Our commitment, towards a more equal and inclusive Municipality!

Acknowledgments

The Municipality of Berat expresses its special gratitude to all those who contributed to the drafting of the Local Action Plan for Gender Equality 2026–2028. This process was carried out with the support of the National Association of Municipalities of Albania (NAMA) and with the technical expertise of “Smart Processes”, who facilitated the analysis, planning and methodological construction of this strategic document.

We especially thank the Berat Municipal Council, which has supported this process through the engagement of the Gender Equality Commission and the Alliance of Women Councilors, ensuring an open and inclusive approach in the drafting of the plan.

We also appreciate the contribution of municipal leaders, representatives of local departments and sectors, civil society organizations, community groups, and local partners who actively participated in consultative meetings and helped reflect the true needs of the community.

Framework and the link to strategic documents

At the local level, the legal and institutional framework that guides efforts for gender equality in the Municipality of Berat is built on the basis of principles and obligations set out in national and international legislation.

The Constitution of the Republic of Albania , Article 18/2, guarantees equality before the law and prohibits discrimination based on gender and other factors.

Law No. 9970, dated 24.07.2008 “On Gender Equality in Society” : This law establishes the fundamental principles of equal treatment of women and men and promotes their participation in all areas of public life. It also provides for the obligation to collect gender statistics and the establishment of mechanisms for the implementation of gender policies at the local level.

Law No. 139/2015 “On Local Self-Government” : This law recognizes municipalities as a key role in implementing the principles of gender equality. Article 6 of this law stipulates that local self-government units must ensure the provision of public services in an equal and non-discriminatory manner. Article 62 requires municipalities to respect the principle of gender equality in appointments to leadership positions such as deputy mayors and unit administrators.

Law No. 68/2017 “On Local Self-Government Finances” : This law creates the basis for the inclusion of gender-responsive budgeting in all phases of the local budget cycle. It requires that the allocation and use of budget funds be oriented towards guaranteeing equal rights and opportunities for women and men, and provides flexibility to finance policies that address gender needs.

Law No. 57/2016 on the Management of the Budget System in the Republic of Albania includes for the first time the concept of gender responsive budgeting as one of the principles of the budget system. This supports gender mainstreaming in local financial planning and management.

Law No. 9669, dated 18.12.2006 “On measures against violence in domestic relations” , which defines the obligations of municipalities for the establishment and functioning of mechanisms for the protection of victims, including the Coordinated Referral Mechanism (CRM).

Law No. 221/2010 “On Protection from Discrimination” , which prohibits any form of discrimination, including gender discrimination, and obliges local governments to take measures to promote equality.

Law No. 121/2016 “On Social Care Services” , which establishes the provision of specialized services for abused or marginalized women and girls at the local level.

Law No. 65/2016 “On Social Enterprises” , which creates opportunities for the employment of women in disadvantaged situations through the promotion of local initiatives.

Law No. 75/2019 "On Youth" , which sanctions the principle of gender equality and guarantees the inclusion of young women in the political and social life of the municipality.

The Labor Code , with the amendments of 2015 and 2020, obliges local public institutions to provide a work environment free from harassment and discrimination based on gender.

Law No. 104/2014 on Social Security , which includes the right to parental leave for men and mothers returning to work.

Law No. 111/2017 "On State-Guaranteed Legal Aid" , which provides free legal aid to victims of gender-based violence and other marginalized groups.

Law No. 22/2018 "On Social Housing" , which establishes support for women victims of domestic violence and trafficking through social housing.

The National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021–2030 , approved by Council of Ministers No. 400, dated 30.06.2021, serves as the main guiding document for this plan. It orients the strategic objectives and measures for the promotion of gender equality and the elimination of gender-based violence, in accordance with Albania's international commitments (such as CEDAW, Istanbul Convention, Beijing Platform, Sustainable Development Goal 5, etc.). The Municipality of Berat, through this Plan, harmonizes local policies with this national document and takes responsibility for its implementation at the local level.

This legal and strategic framework provides the foundation upon which the Municipality of Berat builds and implements integrated policies for gender equality, inclusion and social justice. The plan is aligned with:

- National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021–2030
- Territorial Development Plan of the Municipality of Berat, approved by Decision of the National Council of the territory on 29.12.2016
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDGs 5 and 10
- National European Integration Program

Municipality profile

The municipality of Berat is located in the south-central part of Albania and is one of the oldest and most historically and culturally important municipalities in the country. As one of the richest cities in cultural heritage, the city of Berat is part of the UNESCO World Heritage for its unique architecture and harmonious coexistence between different communities.

The Municipality of Berat includes 5 administrative units:

Administrative Unit	TYPE
Berat	Urban
Otllak	Rural
Velabish	Rural
Sinja	Rural
Roshnik	Rural

According to the latest data, the municipality has a population of around 99,793 **inhabitants**, with a population distribution in both urban and rural areas.

In terms of social aspects, the municipality has faced challenges related to youth migration, unemployment, and the need to improve social services, especially for the most vulnerable groups such as women, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

The Municipality of Berat is committed to improving local governance and citizen involvement in decision-making, promoting values such as transparency, equality, and sustainable development.

In this context, the drafting of **the Local Action Plan for Gender Equality** represents an important step in efforts to integrate the gender perspective into all policies and public services provided by the municipality.

Demography

The table below presents the population of the municipality by gender:

Population	MALE	Female	in total	% Males	% Female
Population	51085	48708	99793	51.19	48.81

The population is divided into administrative units as follows:

#	Administrative Unit	MALE	Female	in total	% Males	% Female
1	Berat	31900	31508	63408	49.7	50.3
2	Velabish	6300	5662	11962	52.7	47.3
3	Otllak	8050	7525	15575	51.7	48.3
4	Roshnik	2029	1629	3658	55.5	44.5
5	Sinja	2806	2384	5190	54.1	45.9

Illiteracy

The table below presents the number of individuals over 10 years of age who possess basic reading and writing skills.

designation	MALE	Female	in total	% Males	% Female
Illiterate residents	619	919	1538	40.2	59.8
Residents over 10 years old	28258	28651	56909	49.7	50.3

Out of a total of **56,909 residents over 10 years of age** in the Municipality of Berat, **1,538 people** are **illiterate**, which constitutes about **2.7% of the population** in this age group. Within this group, **919 are women** and **619 are men**, which means that **59.8% of illiterate people are women**, while **40.2% are men**.

If we compare this distribution with the gender composition of the population over 10 years of age, where **49.7% are men** and **50.3% are women**, a **clear disproportion to the detriment of women is observed**. Although women constitute slightly more than half of the population in this age group, they represent a significantly higher percentage of people who do not have basic reading and writing skills.

This shows that women are more exposed to illiteracy, especially those who may belong to older generations or live in rural areas. This gap represents a **form of gender exclusion from basic education**, with direct consequences for women's ability to participate in economic, social and political life. Illiteracy limits women's ability to have equal access to information, employment, public services and to exercise their rights.

This indicator highlights the need for **targeted interventions** that promote **basic education for illiterate women**, through adult education programs and awareness-raising initiatives at the community level.

Educational Level

The table below presents the educational level of the population.

The data show a different gender distribution at different levels of education, reflecting social trends and potential challenges to gender equality in the field of education and beyond.

#	designation	MALE	Female	in total	% Males	% Female
1	No educational level completed	143	241	384	37.2	62.8
2	Primary Education	1626	2221	3847	42.3	57.7
3	7/8/9 year old school	10751	12238	22989	46.8	53.2
4	High school	9560	6940	16500	57.9	42.1
5	Bachelor's degree	797	1055	1852	43.0	57.0
6	Master or Doctorate	1605	2148	3753	42.8	57.2

Data on the educational level of the population of the Municipality of Berat show a gender distribution that reflects important social and economic trends. This analysis is valuable for better understanding the challenges and opportunities for promoting gender equality in the field of education and beyond.

No educational level completed – This category includes 384 people, of whom **62.8% are women** and **37.2% are men** . Women constitute the vast majority, indicating that they have been more exposed to lack of access to education, especially in the past or in rural areas.

Primary Education – With a total of 3,847 people, **57.7% are women** and **42.3% are men** . Even at this level, women are more numerous, suggesting that a large number of them have discontinued education after primary school. This may be related to factors such as poverty, cultural norms, or early family responsibilities.

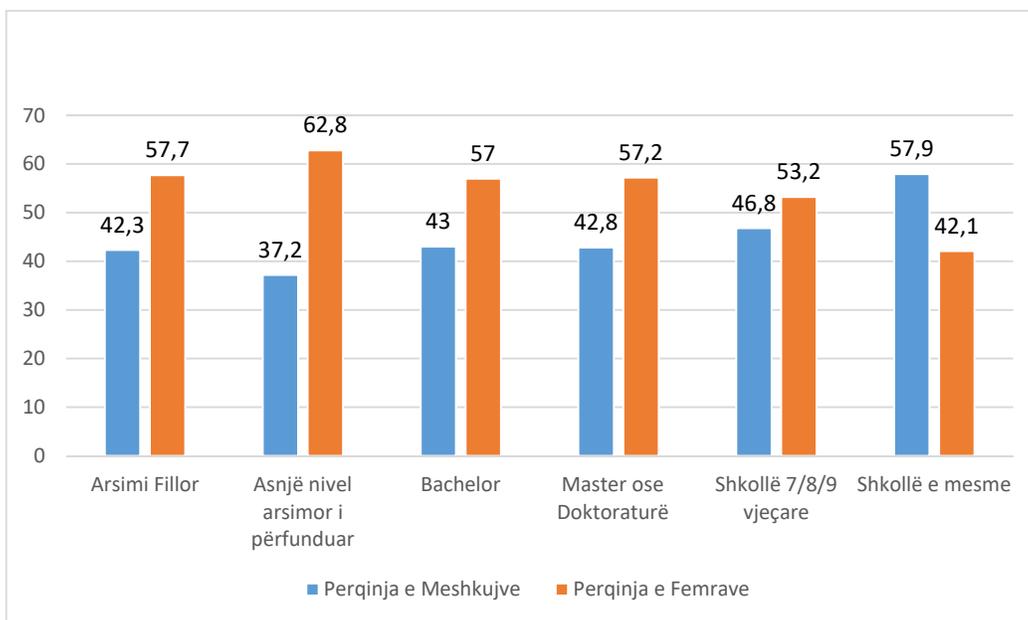
7/8/9-year education – This is the most widespread level in the population, with a total of 22,989 people. **53.2% are women** and **46.8% men** , a relatively balanced distribution that indicates improved access to compulsory education for both genders.

Secondary Education – Of the 16,500 people who have completed secondary education, **57.9% are men** and only **42.1% are women** . This is a significant decline in female participation compared to previous levels, indicating that girls face barriers to continuing their education after compulsory education.

Bachelor's degree – Of the 1,852 people with a bachelor's degree, **57% are women** , while **43% are men** . This represents an important difference: those women who manage to attend secondary education are more likely to continue on to higher education compared to men.

Master's or Doctorate - Of the 3,753 people with these higher levels of education, **57.2% are women** and **42.8% are men** . Women constitute the majority at this level as well, reflecting their strong presence in advanced academic education.

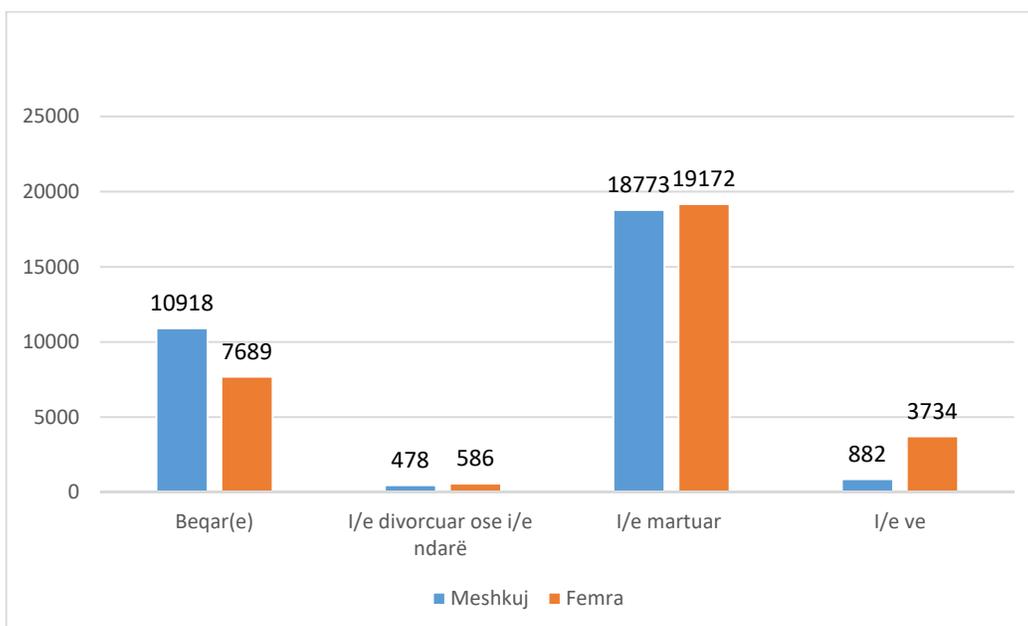
Summary – The data show two important trends: at the lowest levels of education, women face greater exclusion; while at higher levels of education, they are in the majority. This suggests that while there is improvement among younger generations, serious gaps still exist in secondary education and in the initial stages of schooling. These gaps need to be addressed through targeted measures that promote girls' retention in school and their empowerment through education.



Marital status

The table below presents the population over 10 years old by marital status.

#	designation	MALE	Female	in total	% Males	% Female
1	Single	10918	7689	18607	58.7	41.3
2	Married	18773	19172	37945	49.5	50.5
3	Divorced or separated	478	586	1064	44.9	55.1
4	Widow	882	3734	4616	19.1	80.9



The distribution by marital status shows significant gender differences, reflecting social norms, life expectancy, and different experiences of women and men regarding marriage and family.

In the “single” category , there are a total of **18,607 people** , of whom **58.7% are men** and **41.3% are women** . Men represent the majority of singles, which may be related to the fact that they tend to marry later or remain single longer compared to women.

In the “married” category , the total number is **37,945 people** , with an almost equal split: **49.5% men** and **50.5% women** . This shows that marriage remains an institution where both sexes are similarly involved, although there may be differences according to age or residence.

In the “divorced” or “separated” category , out of **1,064 people** , **55.1% are women** and **44.9% are men** . Women represent a higher percentage of divorced or separated people, which may be related to several factors such as: maintaining custody of children, lack of remarriage after divorce, or greater willingness to formalize the separation legally.

In the “widowed” category , there are **4,616 people** , of whom **80.9% are women** and only **19.1% are men** . This difference is very pronounced and reflects the difference in life expectancy between the sexes: women usually live longer than men, and are also more likely not to remarry after the death of their spouse.

This information shows that women, especially in adulthood, are more likely to face loneliness and the loss of a partner, which can have social and economic consequences. The greater presence of women in the “widowed” or “separated” status also indicates the need for specific support for this category, in particular with regard to housing, social services, community inclusion and access to financial assistance.

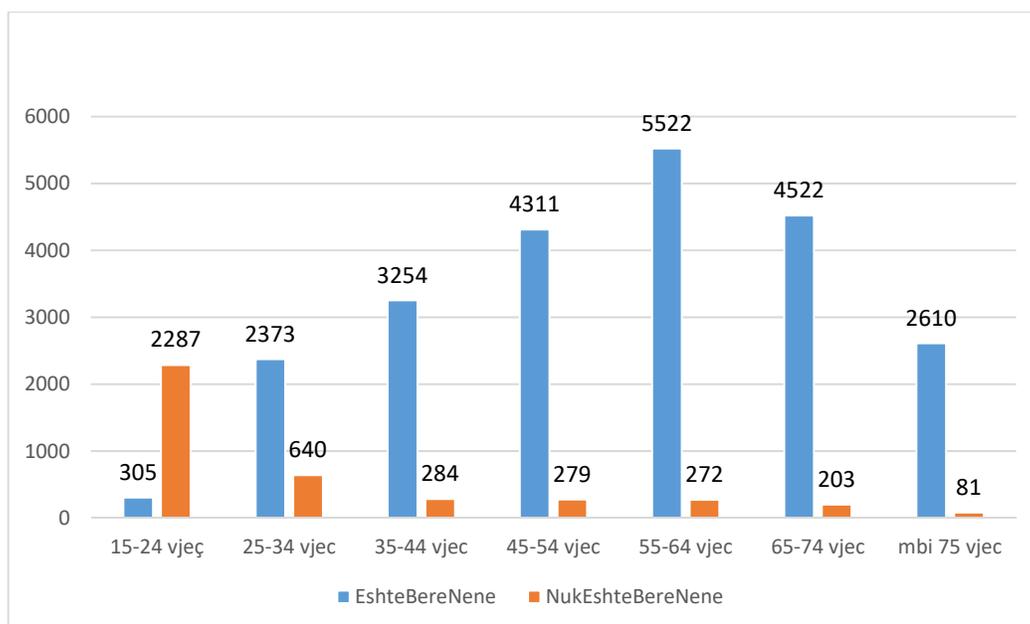
This data helps identify **the social groups most affected by gender and marital status** , becoming the basis for designing gender-sensitive social policies at the local level.

Mother's status

The table below shows the number of women who become mothers by age group.

Age group	They were born	They were not born.	in total	% were born	% NOT born
15-24 years old	305	2287	2592	11.8	88.2
25-34 years old	2373	640	3013	78.8	21.2
35-44 years old	3254	284	3538	92.0	8.0
45-54 years old	4311	279	4590	93.9	6.1
55-64 years	5522	272	5794	95.3	4.7

old					
65-74 years old	4522	203	4725	95.7	4.3
over 75 years old	2610	81	2691	97.0	3.0



Data shows that the majority of women over 25 years old in the territory of the Municipality of Berat have become mothers, while the percentage of childless women is higher among younger age groups.

In the **15–24 age group** , only **11.8%** of girls and women have given birth, while **88.2%** have not. This is a positive figure and in line with modern trends that further delay the age of first birth, perhaps due to pursuing education or employment.

In the **25–34 age group** , **78.8%** of women have given birth and **21.2%** have not given birth. This age group represents the stage where most births occur and is the most active time of reproductive life.

In the **35–44 age group** , **92%** of women have given birth to children, while only **8%** have not. This shows that after this age, the vast majority of women have already fulfilled their reproductive function in the traditional sense.

In the age groups **45–54, 55–64, 65–74 and over 75** , the percentage of women who have given birth ranges from **93.9% to 97%** . These figures reflect the rates of previous generations, when having children was the social norm and the pressure to become a mother was much stronger.

This distribution shows a **clear generational shift** , with younger women, especially those under 25, more likely to have not yet given birth. This can be interpreted as a

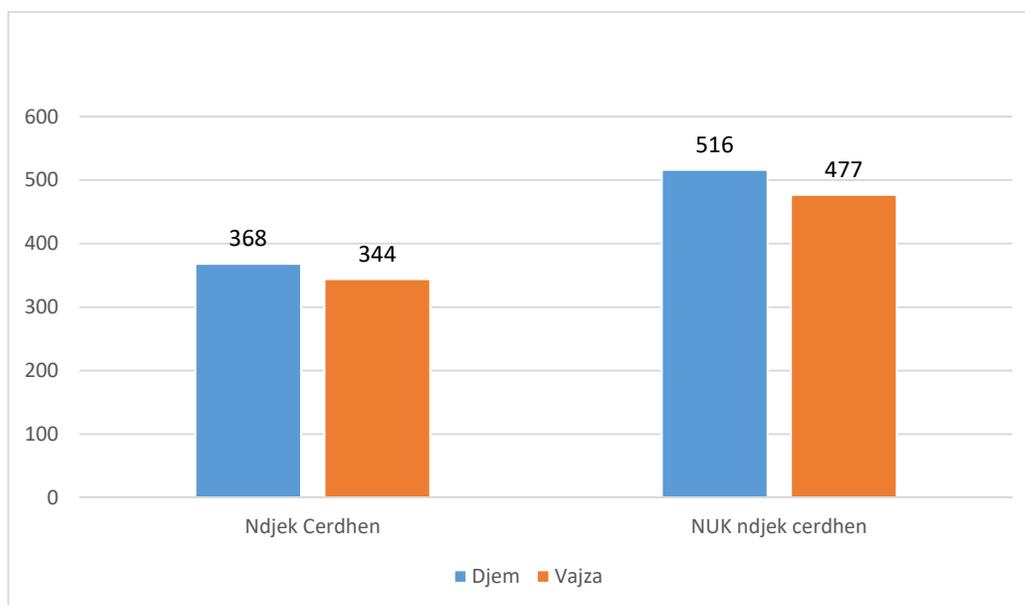
consequence of changes in personal aspirations, increased participation in education and employment, and changing gender roles and family structures.

This information is important for understanding **the social needs of women at different stages of their lives** . For example, young women may need support with family planning, access to information on reproduction, and support in reconciling parenthood with a career. Meanwhile, older women who are or have been mothers may need support with childcare, social benefits, or assistance with other stages of family life.

Kindergarten attendance

The table below shows the number of children attending kindergarten.

#	designation	MALE	Female	in total	% Males	% Female
1	I attend kindergarten.	156	132	278	54.3	45.99
2	I DO NOT attend kindergarten.	482	307	789	61.1	38.9



Out of a total of **1,067 children aged 0–3 years** in the territory of the Municipality of Berat, **278 children (about 26%) attend kindergarten** , while **789 children (about 73.9%) do not attend** .

Among children attending kindergarten, **54.3% are boys** and **45.99% are girls** . The distribution is almost equal and does not suggest a strong gender bias in access to kindergarten services.

Likewise, among those who **do not attend kindergarten** , **61.1% are boys** and **38.9% are girls** , which confirms that there are large gender differences at this age in terms of inclusion or lack of inclusion in kindergarten.

What is striking is that **only about 4 in 10 children in this age group attend kindergarten**, while the majority do not benefit from this service. This low percentage may be a result of lack of capacity, an insufficient number of kindergarten institutions, costs for families, or cultural norms that prefer care in the family – often by the mother.

This situation has **direct implications for gender equality**, as lack of access to childcare affects the ability of parents, especially women, to pursue employment or education. When childcare services are absent or inadequate, it is usually women who bear the main burden of caring for young children, reducing their time and opportunities to participate actively in economic and public life.

Therefore, this table shows a **need for expanding the nursery service** and for policies that make it more accessible to all families, as a **direct measure to promote gender equality and support women in their professional engagement**.

Kindergarten Attendance

The table below presents the number of children aged 3-6 attending kindergarten (1,545 children aged 3-6 or 67%).

#	Attendance	MALE	Female	in total	% Males	% Female
1	I follow the garden.	558	480	1038	53.8	46.2
2	I DO NOT attend kindergarten.	284	223	507	56	44

Here it is noted that a low number of children do not attend kindergarten (507 in total), and among them **boys constitute a slightly higher percentage of 56%** compared to their representation in kindergartens (only 53.8%). This means that **girls are slightly more likely to remain outside preschool institutions compared to boys**, which is in itself a gender problem.

This fact has a direct impact on **mothers**, because in the context of Albanian society, the care of preschool-age children falls primarily on them. Therefore:

Mothers of children who **do not attend kindergarten** are less likely to be employed full-time or to pursue a career. This situation is exacerbated when the child is a girl, due to cultural trends that often do not prioritize early education for girls and especially parents from the Roma community who find it very difficult to accept the integration of their girls into kindergarten.

In this way, the data of the Municipality of Berat **shows a trend that integrates girls into kindergarten, there is no gender inequality**: girls go to kindergarten → mothers are integrated into the labor market → women are not limited in employment opportunities and the economic and social development of women increases.

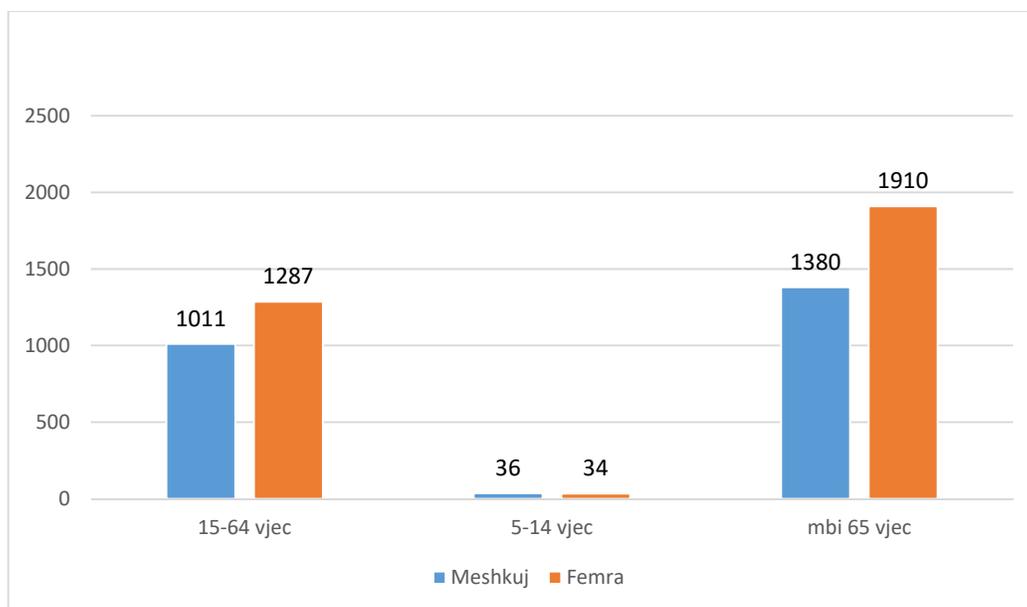
However, these trends identified through data should be **a key point in the gender equality plan of the Municipality of Berat**, with concrete interventions to:

- increasing the number of children, especially girls, attending public kindergartens,
 - expand the capacities of preschool institutions,
 - providing facilities for working parents, and
-
- promote equal sharing of care responsibilities within the family.

Persons with Disabilities

The tables below show the number of people with disabilities in the municipality in total and divided by type of disability.

Age group	MALE	Female	in total	% Males	% Female
0-6 years old	24	20	44	55	45
6-18 years old	88	53	141	62	38
over 60 years old	36	42	104		



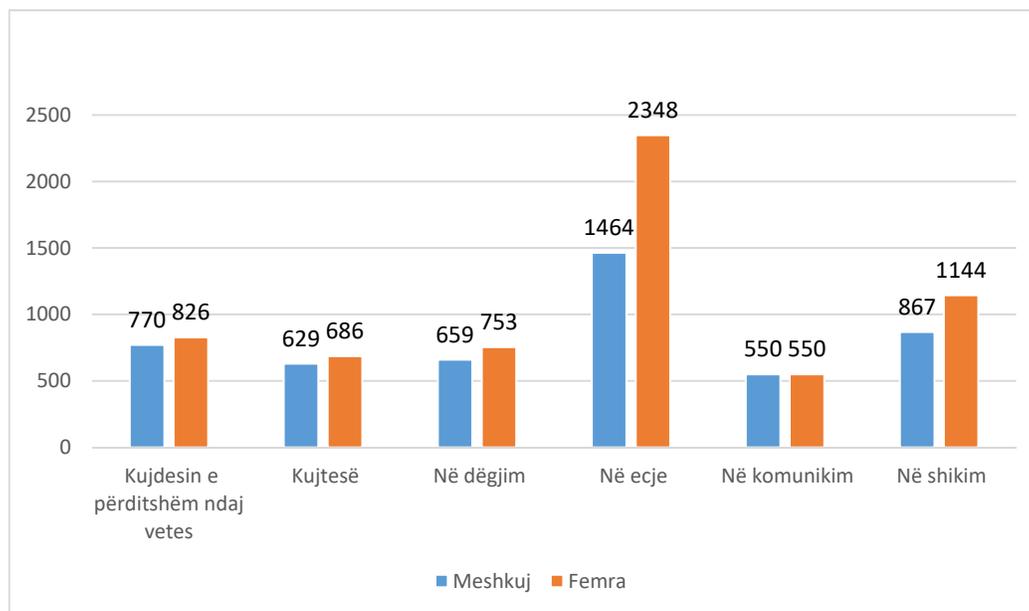
Data on persons with disabilities show a clear gender trend that has a direct impact on women’s equality and social inclusion. In the age group 06–18, the distribution between boys and girls is almost equal, but with increasing age, the percentage of women with disabilities increases significantly. In the age group 15–64, women account for 56% of all persons with disabilities, while at the age of 65 and over they reach 58.1%. This trend reflects factors such as women’s higher life expectancy, lack of access to healthcare throughout their lives, but also the impact of social and economic barriers that make women more exposed to health problems and functional difficulties.

These gender differences are also confirmed when the data are analyzed by type of disability. For every category – except communication, where the split is equal –

women represent the highest percentage. The most pronounced is in walking difficulties, where women account for 61.6% of those affected. They are also more numerous in difficulties with vision, hearing, self-care and memory. This shows that women with disabilities face multiple barriers: physical, economic, institutional and cultural. In many cases, they experience a double form of discrimination – as women and as people with disabilities – that limits their access to education, employment, services and independent living.

These data clearly show the need for social policies and gender equality plans that specifically address the challenges of women with disabilities. The Municipality of Berat should take measures to ensure accessible infrastructure, support for personal and health care, inclusion in the labor market, and protection from discrimination and violence. The inclusion of this category in gender planning is essential to guarantee a more inclusive and just society.

#	Type of difficulty	MALE	Femal e	in total	% Males	% Female
1	At a glance	198	180	378	52	48
2	In hearing	8	6	14	57	43
3	On the walk	189	134	323	58	42
4	Mental health	92	142	234	39.3	60.7
5	Mentally disabled	152	107	259	58.6	41.4



METHODOLOGY

The preparation of the Local Action Plan for Gender Equality 2026–2028 of the Municipality of Berat has been developed based on a combined methodology, which combines in-depth analysis of the local context with guidance from the legal framework and national and international strategic documents. The process has been

comprehensive, based on gender statistical data, institutional assessments and best practices of local gender equality planning.

The first methodological step was to review the legal and policy framework on which the plan will be based. This included, among others, Law No. 9970 “On Gender Equality in Society”, Law No. 139/2015 “On Local Self-Government”, the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021–2030, as well as supporting documents such as the European Charter for Gender Equality in Local Life and the United Nations 2030 Agenda - Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 5, 10 and 16). These documents have guided the conception of the objectives, the role of local government and institutional responsibilities in implementing the principles of gender equality.

Subsequently, an in-depth analysis of the gender situation in the territory of the Municipality of Berat was carried out, divided into two pillars: territorial analysis and assessment of institutional capacities. The territorial analysis was based on statistical data processed by INSTAT and other administrative sources, which were divided by gender and treated according to the main themes: population by age group, educational level, illiteracy rates, marital status, women's relationship with motherhood, and children's access to early care services (nurseries and kindergartens). Issues related to persons with disabilities, such as gender distribution and type of limitation, were also addressed.

The analysis also took into account the differences between urban and rural areas of the territory of the Municipality of Berat, to understand whether gender challenges are homogeneous or influenced by the geographical and social context. This analysis helped identify different needs at the administrative unit level and created the basis for adapting interventions in the action plan.

In terms of institutions, the existing structure and functionality of gender equality mechanisms within the municipality were analyzed. Specifically, it was examined whether the municipality had adopted the Gender Equality Charter, whether the Gender Equality Commission within the Municipal Council was functional, and whether the Alliance of Women Councillors was active and had budgetary support. It was also assessed the existence and role of the gender equality officer within the administration, his/her positioning in the structure (separately or related to domestic violence), and what role and duties are defined in the job descriptions or in the internal regulations of the municipality.

An important part of the methodology was also the assessment of the capacity for integrating a gender perspective into public policies and services, through the establishment of an Administration Commission for Gender Equality. It was assessed whether the commission exists, was established by order of the mayor, and whether it has a functioning regulation to guarantee gender inclusion during budget drafting and service planning.

The practice of collecting gender-disaggregated data for each local service was then reviewed. It was noted that for some services there is regular data collection, while for others there is a need to improve administrative capacities and reporting methods. It was also assessed whether the municipality has ever implemented gender-responsive

budgeting and to what extent funds have been allocated for activities that contribute to gender equality.

This methodology has enabled not only a clear understanding of gender challenges in the territory of the Municipality of Berat, but also the creation of a realistic, measurable and appropriate plan with the resources and local context of local government.

Vision and strategic objectives

Over a three-year period, the Municipality of Berat aims to build a tangible reality of gender equality, where every girl and every boy, every woman and every man, have equal opportunities to participate in and benefit from local development. Through the implementation of the Local Action Plan for Gender Equality 2026–2028, institutional structures will be consolidated, the accessibility and quality of public services will be improved, the participation of women and girls in decision-making will be expanded, and safer, inclusive and gender-sensitive communities will be built in every corner of the municipal territory. The vision of this plan is that gender equality should not remain a principle on paper, but be translated into concrete benefits in the daily lives of citizens.

“A Berat where every girl and every boy, every woman and every man, feels valued, heard and equal. A municipality that grows with the dignity of its people, where gender equality is part of everyday life — at school, at work, in the family, on the streets and in decision-making. A community that moves forward together, leaving no one behind.”

Strategic goals and objectives

The Local Action Plan for Gender Equality of the Municipality of Berat 2026–2028 is built on **two strategic goals**, which represent the fundamental pillars of the municipality's intervention in promoting gender equality at the local level. These goals are translated into specific objectives and concrete activities, which can be implemented, monitored and measured over a three-year period.

Strategic Goal 1 (SG1):

Strengthening local governance through the institutionalization of gender equality as a fundamental principle in every decision-making, planning and public reporting process.

This goal aims to consolidate local governance by treating gender equality not only as a political or normative commitment, but as a functional and necessary component of the way in which municipalities are organized, managed and developed. In this context, gender equality is not conceived as an isolated goal, but as a cross-sectoral approach that directly impacts the improvement of local government decision-making, planning, management and reporting processes.

This goal focuses on building an institutional culture that recognizes, promotes and protects the rights and needs of women and men equally, ensuring fair representation in decision-making structures, balanced inclusion in policy-making and equal access to public services.

To achieve this goal, it is necessary that the principle of gender equality is systematically integrated into all strategic documents of the municipality, in local policies and budgets, in the analyses and assessments carried out by public institutions, as well as in the way in which it communicates and cooperates with citizens. This includes developing institutional capacities, establishing internal mechanisms for monitoring and accountability, and strengthening the role of local actors, including municipal councils, local administration, civil society organizations and the community, in promoting gender equality as an indisputable element of good governance.

Strategic Goal 1 includes three specific objectives:

- **1.1.** Establish a sustainable and transparent system of public reporting on progress towards gender equality, using gender data and digital platforms.
- **1.2.** Strengthening local institutional mechanisms that deal with gender issues, through the establishment of representative structures, training and functional regulations.
- **1.3.** Promote and expand the active participation of women and girls in decision-making processes and community consultations.

Strategic Goal 2 (SG2):

This goal focuses on significantly improving the quality of life of citizens through equal access to public services adapted to the gender and social reality of the community. It aims to ensure that all services – such as those in education, health, social care, infrastructure, public safety, transport, and employment support – are designed and implemented on a basis that recognizes and addresses gender, economic, and territorial differences among citizens in a fair and effective manner.

In particular, the goal emphasizes the importance of providing services that are accessible, affordable and appropriate for women, men, girls and boys – including people with disabilities, older people, minorities and groups in vulnerable situations. The principle of inclusiveness requires that no one is left behind in accessing services, while gender sensitivity requires that any intervention takes into account the roles, responsibilities and barriers that men and women face differently in society.

This goal also requires building institutional and professional capacities to analyze and use data disaggregated by gender and age group in the planning and delivery of services, as well as establishing mechanisms to monitor and evaluate their impact on gender equality and social cohesion.

Strategic Goal 2 is concretized into four specific objectives:

- **2.1.** Guarantee equal and territorially balanced access to gender-sensitive public services, through local structures and economic support.
- **2.2.** Increasing the effectiveness of the multi-sectoral approach to the protection and support of victims of gender-based violence.
- **2.3.** Transforming neighborhoods into safe and accessible spaces for all gender groups, through sensitive urban planning.
- **2.4.** Promoting equal gender inclusion in cultural and sports life, through infrastructure, content and equal participation.

5. Action Plan (activity matrix)

Strategic goal 1:

Strengthening local governance through the institutionalization of gender equality as a fundamental principle in every decision-making, planning and public reporting process.

Specific Objective (O1.1) To create a sustainable, transparent and periodic public reporting system on the Municipality's progress and commitments for gender equality, through the use of gender data, digital platforms and citizen involvement.					
events	Implementation period	responsible	PARTNERS	Financial resources	indicator
1.1.1 Publication of the Action Plan on the website of the municipality and the KBR.	2026	The unit responsible for administering the official website of the municipality; IT of the municipality	Municipal Council Secretariat, Municipal Council Commission for Gender Equality, Alliance of Women Councilors	5,000 lek (website, technical staff)	Published plan and public access on the official website
1.1.2 Drafting guidelines and indicator tables for monitoring.	2026	Strategic Planning Unit and Performance Unit	Unit responsible for compiling statistics/performance	90,000 lek (design + guide printing)	Document completed and distributed to relevant departments
1.1.3 Training for employees on collecting data with gender indicators.	2026 - 2028	Human Resources Unit	INSTAT, donors (UN Women)	180,000 lek (trainers + logistics)	Number of employees trained and post-training evaluation
1.1.4 Creation of an open online platform for	2026 - 2027	Municipality IT	UNDP, AKSH, Civil Society	450,000 lek (platform)	Functional platform and

LOCAL ACTION PLAN FOR GENDER EQUALITY 2026 – 2028

the publication of statistics and public consultations on gender equality measures in the Municipality of Bulqiza				development, 1 year maintenance)	number of active users
1.4.5 Inclusion in the relevant section of the public consultation section on budgeting and promoting gender participation	2026	Unit responsible for drafting the Medium-Term Budget	Administrative Units, Women Councilors	60,000 lek (meetings + informative publications)	Functional section and gender participation in consultations
1.4.6 Local Calendar and organization of activities for International Women's Rights Days	Year 2026 (repeatable every year)	Units responsible for culture and social services	School, local NGO, media	120,000 lek (activities, printing, logistics)	Number of activities organized according to the calendar
1.4.7 Integrated digital system for gender data collection and analysis at the local level	2027 – 2028	IT and Heads/Heads of Directorates/Sectors in the Municipality	INSTAT, technical partners, field experts	700,000 lek (system development + training)	Functional system, number of gender data processed

LOCAL ACTION PLAN FOR GENDER EQUALITY 2026 – 2028

Specific Objective (SO1.2) To strengthen the institutional capacities and organizational structures of the Municipality to guarantee, coordinate and integrate gender equality in all local functions.					
events	Implementation period	responsible	PARTNERS	Financial resources	indicator
1.2.1 Strengthening and increasing the capacities of the structure responsible for gender equality in the Municipality (Gender Equality Unit)	2026	Human Resources Unit & Mayor	donor	200,000 lek (structuring, materials, working hours)	Functional structure and equipped with human resources
1.2.2 Establishment and functionalization of the Gender Equality Commission at the Municipality level (executive)	2026	Mayor	Heads of Departments, Municipal Council	80,000 lek (collection, documents, coordination, working hours)	Active committee and documented periodic meetings
1.2.3 Training for members of the Municipal Gender Equality Commission (MGEC) on gender budgeting.	2026	Unit responsible for Gender Equality	UN Women, contracted experts	100,000 lek (trainers, logistics, materials)	Number of trainings and member involvement
1.2.4 Training program for municipal officials on gender equality and anti-discrimination according to an approved annual calendar.	2026 - 2028	Human Resources Directorate	School of Public Administration, NGO	300,000 lek/year (training packages, facilitators, certifications)	Number of trainings conducted according to the annual calendar

LOCAL ACTION PLAN FOR GENDER EQUALITY 2026 – 2028

Specific Objective (SO1.3) To encourage and expand the active participation of women and girls in decision-making processes, public consultations and spaces for dialogue with the community, at the local level.					
events	Implementation period	responsible	PARTNERS	Financial resources	indicator
1.3.1 Informational meetings with social administrators on the importance of participating in hearings.	2026	Unit responsible for Social Services	Administrative Unit, Unit responsible for Gender Equality in the municipality (gender equality officer)	75,000 lek (organization, materials, working hours)	Number of meetings and representative participants
1.3.2 Organizing awareness campaigns on gender roles in rural communities and urban neighborhoods	2026 - 2028	Administrative Unit, Unit responsible for Gender Equality in the municipality (gender equality officer)	Local NGOs, schools, interest groups	150,000 lek (posters, activities, facilitation, working hours)	Number of campaigns and areas covered
1.3.3 Organizing gender communication campaigns with local media and schools	2026 - 2028	Directorate of Communication and Education	Local media, ZVA Berat, NGOs	180,000 lek (video, educational content, publications)	Number of campaigns conducted in media and schools
1.3.4 Organizing periodic and regular consultations with women's organizations and groups in need on problems and challenges in the provision and benefit of local public services;	2026 and beyond	Community Relations Office	NGOs, community groups, service representatives	120,000 lek/year (meetings, reports, coordination, working hours)	Number of consultations and topics addressed in public services

goal 2:

Developing and providing comprehensive, high-quality and gender-sensitive public services that address the concrete needs of women and men in all areas of the territory of the Municipality of Berat.

Specific Objective (SO2.1) Guarantee equal and territorially balanced access to quality and gender-sensitive public services, through the development of local structures, economic support and community awareness.					
events	Implementation period	responsible	PARTNERS	Financial resources	indicator
2.1.1 Creation and operationalization of LRU (Local Referral and Response Units) structures for each administrative unit	2026	Unit responsible for Social Services	Administrative Units, Unit responsible for gender equality in the municipality (Gender Equality Coordinator) Police, Health Service	350,000 lek (structure formation, training, logistics, working hours)	Number of established and functional UJVRR structures in administrative units
2.1.2 Establish an annual small grants program to promote social initiatives and women's small businesses (with attention to rural areas)	2026-2028	Unit responsible for Economic Development and Agriculture	Regional Development Agency, Donors, Economic NGOs	1,200,000 lek/3 years (fund for grants, promotion, technical assistance, fiscal relief)	Number of grants awarded; % of beneficiaries from rural areas
2.1.3 Creation of community spaces for Women and Girls in each administrative unit	2026-2027	Units responsible for Infrastructure, public services, & investment monitoring in the	Administrative Units, Architects, Community Associations	700,000 lek (furniture, premises, initial maintenance)	Number of open spaces and their frequency

LOCAL ACTION PLAN FOR GENDER EQUALITY 2026 – 2028

		municipality			
2.1.4 Development of awareness modules on gender equality in cooperation with ZVA and primary schools	2026-2027	Unit responsible for Gender Equality in the municipality (Gender Equality Coordinator)	ZVA Berat, educational NGO, selected teachers	180,000 lek (materials modulation, teacher training, monitoring)	Number of modules developed and number of participating schools

LOCAL ACTION PLAN FOR GENDER EQUALITY 2026 – 2028

Specific Objective (SO2.2) Strengthen the multi-sectoral institutional response to gender-based violence, through coordinated mechanisms, gender-sensitive approaches and direct support to victims in ordinary and emergency situations.					
events	Implementation period	responsible	PARTNERS	Financial resources	indicator
2.2.1 Drafting and adopting a gender-sensitive protocol for responding to pandemics, natural disasters or civil crises	2025	The unit responsible for Civil Emergency Services and the Health Directorate	Unit responsible for Social Services; Health Center, NGO, Ministry of Health	200,000 lek (legal and social expertise, consultations)	Protocol document approved and distributed to local structures
2.2.2 Free legal advice on gender discrimination issues;	2025–2027	Unit responsible for Social Services	Free Legal Aid Center, NGO for women's rights	250,000 lek/year (fees for experts, consulting offices, public information)	Number of cases treated and consultations provided

LOCAL ACTION PLAN FOR GENDER EQUALITY 2026 – 2028

Specific Objective (SO2.3) To improve the safety and quality of life in urban and rural public spaces, through gender-sensitive design and the creation of safe, inclusive and accessible environments for women, girls and vulnerable groups.					
events	Implementation period	responsible	PARTNERS	Financial resources	indicator
2.3.1Implementation of the 'Safe Cities for Women, Girls and Vulnerable Groups' initiative in 3 pilot neighborhoods through lighting, signage and marking of safe public spaces	2026 - 2028	Unit responsible for Urban Planning and Infrastructure projects	Municipal Police, NGO for women's rights	1,000,000 lek (technical project, lighting, signage, promotion, working hours)	Number of neighborhoods involved and infrastructural interventions implemented

LOCAL ACTION PLAN FOR GENDER EQUALITY 2026 – 2028

Specific Objective (SO2.4) To ensure equal gender inclusion in the cultural, literary and sporting life of the community, through fair access to infrastructure, promotional content and participatory programs for women, men, girls and boys.					
events	Implementation period	responsible	PARTNERS	Financial resources	indicator
2.4.1 Enriching the library's collection with books that emphasize the positive role of women and men in various fields, as well as promoting gender-equal reading through reading clubs	2026 - 2028	Unit responsible for Culture and Education	City Library, ZVA, Cultural NGO	120,000 lek (book purchase, promotion, activities, working hours)	Number of books purchased; number of reading activities
2.4.2 Promoting reading clubs for gender equality	2026 - 2028	Library and Gender Equality Unit (Coordinator)	Schools, NGOs, youth clubs	80,000 lek (materials, guided reading, discussion meetings, working hours)	Number of functional clubs and participants (by gender)
2.4.3 Ensuring equal participation of women and men in cultural and sports activities through improved infrastructure and gender-sensitive adapted programs	2026 -2028	Directorate of Culture, Youth and Sports	Sports clubs, Administrative Units, community	900,000 lek (small reconstructions, programs, training)	% of women and men participating in activities; number of adapted facilities

6. Monitoring and reporting

The implementation of the Local Action Plan for Gender Equality 2026–2028 will be accompanied by a dedicated monitoring and reporting system, which ensures real-time tracking of progress, identification of challenges and continuous improvement of actions taken. This system will be based on a combined institutional, participatory and data-driven approach.

6.1 Monitoring approach and principles

Monitoring will be:

- **structured** , with clear responsibilities for each implementing unit;
- **based on measurable indicators** , defined for each activity;
- **open to community participation and non-public actors** , to guarantee transparency and inclusion.

6.2 Responsible actors

- **The Gender Equality Coordinator** will play the coordinating and technical role for data collection and analysis.
- **The Municipal Gender Equality Commission (MGEC)** will monitor progress at a strategic level and report to the Municipal Council.
- **The relevant implementing departments and units** are responsible for periodically sending information on the implementation of activities.

6.3 Progress indicators

For each activity in the plan, clear indicators have been defined such as: number of trainings conducted, gender participation in activities, number of structures established, community involvement in consultations, etc. Indicators have been disaggregated by gender and, where possible, by age group and area (urban/rural).

6.4 Reporting formats

Reporting will be carried out:

- **Every 6 months** , through a simplified data collection and gender analysis format, to be used by all directorates and administrative units.
- **Every year** , through a summarized annual report on the progress of the Plan, which will be published on the municipality's website and presented to councilors and the community.
- The annual report will contain data analysis, practical examples from the territory, as well as recommendations for further improvement.

6.5 Data collection, analysis and digitization

Within the first year of implementation, a digital registry will be created to monitor and publish gender statistics and progress of the plan. This information will be open to the public, enabling transparent access to data and initiatives.

6. Intermediate and final evaluation

interim evaluation will be carried out at the end of 2027 to analyze the pace of implementation and make adjustments to the plan, if necessary. In 2028, a final implementation report will be prepared , which will serve as the basis for drafting the next plan.