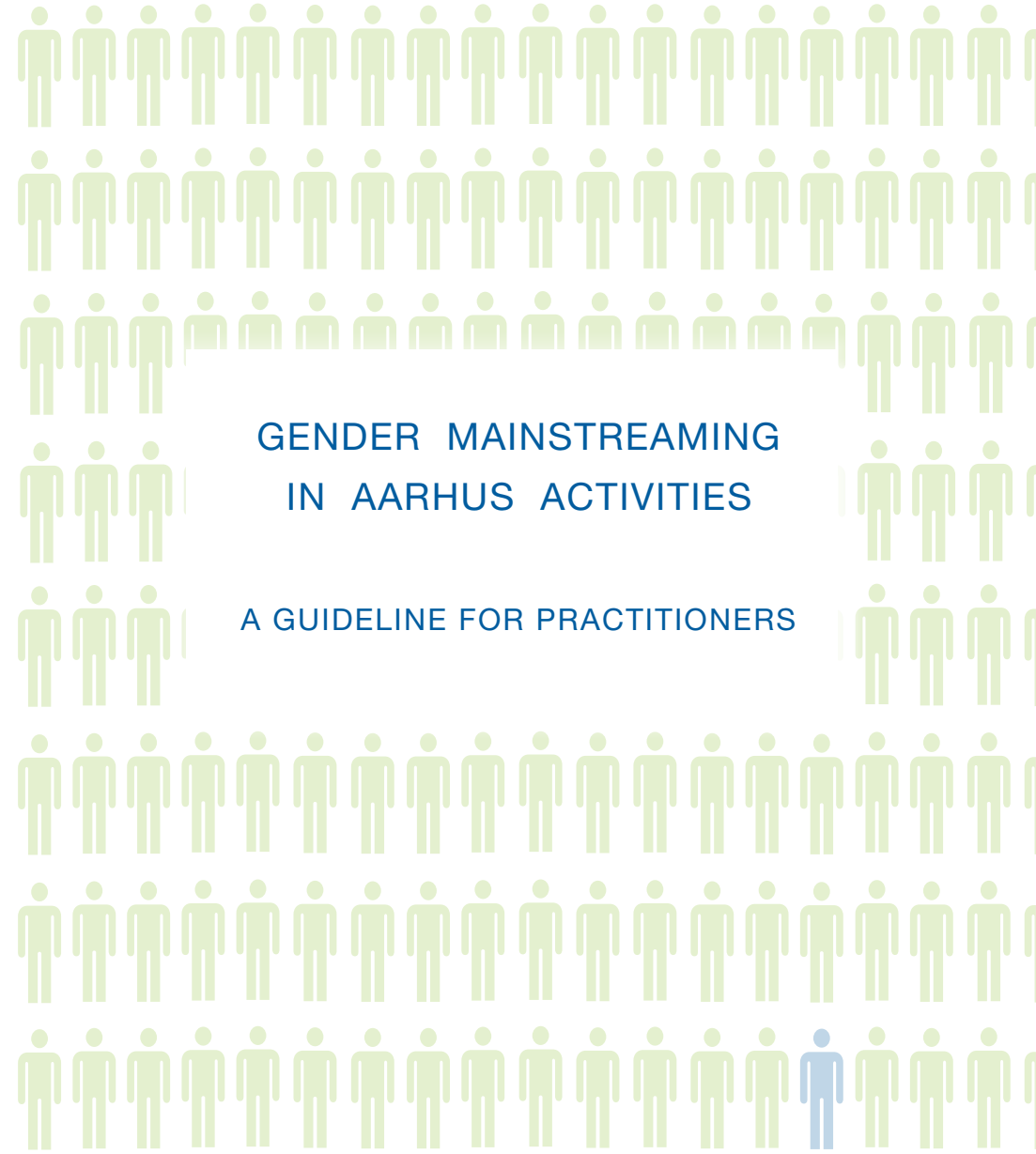


УЧЕТ ГЕНДЕРНОЙ
ПРОБЛЕМАТИКИ В
ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТИ ОРХУССКИХ
ЦЕНТРОВ:
РУКОВОДСТВО ДЛЯ ПРАКТИКОВ



GENDER MAINSTREAMING
IN AARHUS ACTIVITIES

A GUIDELINE FOR PRACTITIONERS

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Introduction

The UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters was adopted on 25 June 1998 in the Danish city of Aarhus. Among other issues, the Convention, which entered into force on 30 October 2001, links environmental rights and human rights and establishes that sustainable development can only be achieved through the involvement of all stakeholders. The Convention builds directly on Principle 10 of the 1992 UN Rio Declaration by linking government accountability and environmental protection, and focuses on interactions between the public and public authorities in a democratic context. By setting principles for access to information, public participation and access to justice, the Aarhus Convention provides the OSCE with a unique tool to support environmental governance processes at the national level, which in turn contributes to the countries' efforts to address environmental and security challenges. Currently, 48 OSCE participating States are parties to the Convention.

Participating States have recognized gender equality as an integral part of comprehensive security and sustainable development since its founding days. Recalling international commitments on gender equality, subsequent OSCE Ministerial Council Decisions reaffirm the continued commitment of pS to promote gender equality within the Organization and pS, as well as throughout the human, politico-military and economic and environmental dimensions.

Despite the strengthening of the OSCE's and international frameworks on gender equality, additional work is necessary to ensure that both men and women benefit equally from and participate equally in OSCE supported Aarhus activities. Taking this opportunity, the guidelines "Gender mainstreaming in Aarhus activities" aims to assist pS, OSCE partners and Aarhus Centre staff and national stakeholders to effectively integrate a gender perspective in their work. Promoting gender equality in, as well as through, Aarhus activities is an opportunity to support good governance practices, raise effectiveness and sustainability line with the principles and goals of the Aarhus Convention, as well as those of the OSCE.

Purpose

The purpose of “Gender mainstreaming in OSCE Aarhus Activities” is to assist Aarhus Centre staff and Aarhus stakeholders to effectively integrate a gender perspective into their work. Taking the “Roadmap for Aarhus Centres”¹ as a point of departure, this tool suggests concrete and practical entry points for integrating a gender perspective into activities related to all three pillars (access to information, public participation and access to justice) of the Aarhus Convention, as well as in support of OSCE gender equality principles. These guidelines provide an opportunity to assist pS, OSCE partner organisations and other stakeholders to effectively promote gender equality in the environmental sector, assisting stakeholders to realize national and international commitments on gender equality and strengthen good governance overall.

This tool “Gender and Aarhus” complements the 2009 publication “Aarhus Centre Guidelines”, which serve as a reference document to provide guidance for the strategic orientation, set-up and activities of OSCE supported Aarhus Centres. Readers are also encouraged to consult “Gender and Environment”², a guide to the integration of gender aspects in the OSCE’s environmental projects, which was published jointly by the OCEEA and the Gender Section in 2009.

1 The Roadmap for Aarhus Centres was developed to support the implementation of relevant components in line with the Aarhus Convention Strategic Plan (2009-2014), which was adopted by the Third Meeting of Parties in Riga in June 2008.

2 <http://www.osce.org/item/36575.html>.

Aarhus: An overview³

The Aarhus Convention stands on three “pillars”: access to information, public participation and access to justice.

Pillar I - Access to information

Access to information stands as the first of the pillars of the Aarhus Convention. It outlines that effective public participation in decision-making depends on full, accurate, up-to-date information. The access-to-information pillar is split into two. The first part concerns **the right of the public to seek information** from public authorities and the obligation of public authorities to provide information in response to a request. This type of access to information is called “passive”. The second part of the information pillar concerns **the right of the public to receive information** and the obligation of authorities to collect and disseminate information of public interest without the need for a specific request. This is called “active” access to information.

Pillar II - Public participation in decision-making

The second pillar of the Aarhus Convention is public participation in decision-making. The public participation pillar is divided into three parts. The first part concerns participation by the public that may be affected by or is otherwise interested in decision-making on a specific activity. The second part concerns the participation of the public in the development of plans, programmes and policies relating to the environment and the participation of the public in the preparation of laws, rules and legally binding norms.

Pillar III - Access to justice

The third pillar of the Aarhus Convention is the access-to-justice pillar. It enforces both the information and the participation pillars in domestic legal systems, and strengthens enforcement of domestic environmental law. Specific provisions of the Convention convey rights to receive information, to participate in decision making and to any other provisions of the Convention that Parties choose to enforce in this manner. The justice pillar also provides a mechanism for the public to enforce environmental law directly.

Aarhus and the OSCE

Since 2002, the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) and the OSCE field operations have supported the establishment and functioning of Aarhus Centres (thereafter Centres) and Public Environmental Information Centres (PEICs) in the countries of South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia. As of April 2010, the OSCE has supported the establishment of Centres in eight countries. Some of these Centres have been supported under the umbrella of the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC), a partnership between the OSCE, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe (REC) and the North-Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (as an associate partner).

In 2009, the OSCE/OCEEA commissioned an independent evaluation⁴ of the Aarhus Centres/PEICs, the aim of which was to “generate knowledge from the experience of the Aarhus Centres within the context of OSCE’s efforts to raise awareness on environmental issues as well as promoting participatory approaches in environmental decision making.” The 2009 evaluation resulted in the “Aarhus Centre Guidelines”, which were published in November 2009.⁵

OSCE Aarhus Activities are also informed by the following:

The OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension adopted at the 2003 Maastricht Ministerial Council addresses specifically the importance of processes and institutions for providing timely information about issues of public interest in the economic and environmental field to the civil society and citizens as well as to the media and business community. Through the Strategy Document, the OSCE is committed to promoting public participation in sustainable development policy formulation and implementation, which in turn requires a well-informed and responsive dialogue between citizens and the governments.

The Madrid Declaration on Environment and Security adopted at the 2007 Madrid Ministerial Council also reaffirmed the importance of good environmental governance and underlined the importance of raising awareness on the potential impact on security of environmental challenges.

The Economic and Environmental Forums that are held annually since 1993 by the OSCE have also addressed the challenges associated with public participation and access to information within the framework of various economic and environmental issues linked to

⁴ For the report see <http://www.osce.org/eea/13471.html>.

⁵ For the guidelines see http://www.osce.org/eea/item_11_41593.html.

security.

The Aarhus Centres are usually based on an agreement between the relevant OSCE field operation and the Ministry for Environment in the respective country and managed by a board consisting of an equal number of representatives from government and civil society. Aarhus Centres have been instrumental in providing a forum for government officials to meet with members of environmental NGOs to build co-operative approaches in order to tackle environmental issues.

In this initiative, the OSCE partners primarily with the Governments of the participating States where these Centres are located as well as the leading environmental NGOs in these countries. UNEP, UNDP, UNECE, REC and NATO are the natural partners to the OSCE through their involvement in the ENVSEC Initiative.

Gender mainstreaming and Aarhus Activities

Environmental degradation, competition over natural resources, trans-boundary contamination and climate change are destabilizing factors, which can lead to conflict. The important link between environmental security and gender has been evidenced by a wide corps of research over the last decades. Women and men are often impacted differently by environmental degradation or pollution as a result of their specific gender roles in a society, such as respective divisions of labour. For example, women may be exposed to toxins while working on fields, while men may be exposed when working in mines. However, it is women often have limited or no access to participation, information or justice when it comes to addressing environmental issues. Aarhus activities aim to take these important considerations into account to disseminate information, but also to ensure that the voices and concerns of men and women are considered and access to justice is equally granted.

Women's participation especially in decision making processes is often a challenge in many societies. Although this is primarily a human rights matter, taking the knowledge, resources and capacities of men and women respectively into account adds benefits in terms of effectiveness and sustainability. Strategies to address environmental challenges can only be sustainable if they duly consider the concerns and contributions of men and women on the basis of full and free participation⁶.

In December 2004, the Ministerial Council endorsed the OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality (MC.DEC/14/04) (Action Plan). The Action Plan emphasizes gender equality as a priority for the OSCE and its participating States. It describes how gender equality should be achieved by a threefold approach of (1) mainstreaming gender into the organisational structures and in the working environment, (2) mainstreaming gender into OSCE policies, programmes, projects and activities and (3) defining priority areas to promote equality between men and women. Similarly, MC.DEC/7/09 on Women's Participation in Political and Public life explicitly calls on pS to actively promote women's participation in political and public processes.

Key international documents that are relevant for gender mainstreaming of OSCE economic and environmental dimension include, among others, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies, the Beijing Platform for Action, the UN Millennium Declaration or the principles endorsed at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development or the Earth Summit's Agenda 21. These international framework documents explicitly call on states to promote

⁶ The need to increase women's participation in public life has been reconfirmed by MC.DEC/7/09 on Women's Participation in Political and Public Life.

equal participation of men and women also in environmental affairs as a basis for democratic, sustainable development.

In line with the 2004 Action Plan, the OSCE applies gender mainstreaming as the strategy to be used to meet organisation's gender equality commitments. Following the UN definition⁷, the OSCE defines gender mainstreaming as *"the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality."*

The Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters links environmental rights and human rights, and establishes that sustainable development can only be achieved through the involvement of all stakeholders. The Convention text and related documentation is gender "neutral"⁸, however gender issues concerning the specific needs, vulnerabilities, contributions, and rights of men and women respectively are not directly outlined.

By paying greater attention to the integration of gender mainstreaming principles, Aarhus Centre staff, policy makers and other stakeholders can actively contribute to ensure that activities are inclusive and do not perpetuate inequality. Additionally, integrating a gender perspective in Aarhus activities allows stakeholders to demonstrate their commitment to international good practice and principles.

Gender Mainstreaming in Aarhus activities:

- ✓ Ensures that the needs, knowledge and contributions of both men and women are equally reflected and inequality is not perpetuated.
- ✓ Ensures that Aarhus centres represent all stakeholders equally, increasing transparency, accountability and public trust.
- ✓ Increases women's participation in public life and decision making processes.
- ✓ Taking the interests and rights of men and women into equal account results in a more balanced and representative provision of services.
- ✓ Results in more targeted and thus more effective service delivery in all three Aarhus pillars.

7

See official records of UN General Assembly, 52nd Session, Supplement 3 (A/52/3/REV 1) Chapter IV, paragraph 4.

8

What is meant here is that terms like "the public", "stakeholders" etc. are generic and are not defined and gender specific. Hence there is a danger that women, who are often marginalized and the most vulnerable, are not sufficiently and specifically accounted for within Aarhus related activities.

Road Map for Aarhus Centres

A. **Thematic Road Map** below, aims to identify entry points and activities by the Aarhus Centres to support the relevant components of the Aarhus Convention Strategic Plan (2009-2014) that was adopted by the Third Meeting of Parties in Riga on 11-13 June, 2008. The third column to the right, "Gender Action" provides a range of suggested activities to promote gender mainstreaming in all Aarhus activities¹.

No.	Objective (as contained in the Aarhus Convention strategic plan)	Suggestions for indicative types of activities for Aarhus Centres	Suggestions for gender actions for Aarhus Centres	
			Immediate actions	Actions upon additional resources/training support
A.1	Environmental education is widely available and promotes active and responsible behaviour among the public as regards the environment, including the exercise of the rights guaranteed by the Convention (Strategic Plan, Objective 1.4).	1.1. Aarhus Centres organize trainings and awareness-raising activities for environmental decision-makers, NGOs, professionals and other stakeholders.	1.1.a. Training curricula include a gender component, which is relevant for the target group. 1.1.b. Materials on gender and environment are used and/or made available.	1.1.c Materials on gender and environment are used and/or made available.

¹ Many of the activities listed as Suggestions for Gender Actions for Aarhus Centres will require training, capacity building and expert guidance on gender mainstreaming for Aarhus staff. This document should be viewed as a guide that provides a broad range of suggested activities to promote gender equality, and as such it provides a high threshold for Aarhus Centres to strive towards. It is understood that Aarhus Centres are often working with limited resources, therefore they would require additional funding and resources to meaningfully implement many of the suggested Gender Actions. It is not expected that Aarhus Centres will be able to implement all of the listed Gender Actions without assistance. The OSCE and participating States could be called upon to assist and support activities to improve gender mainstreaming with the Aarhus Centres in order to meet the organization's gender equality commitments under the 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality.

No.	Objective (as contained in the Aarhus Convention strategic plan)	Suggestions for indicative types of activities for Aarhus Centres	Suggestions for gender actions for Aarhus Centres	
			Immediate actions	Actions upon additional resources/training support
A.2	Public authorities at all levels and in relevant sectors of government are aware of the obligations under the Convention and allocate as far as possible the resources needed to comply with them (Strategic Plan, Objective 1.5).	<p>2.1. Aarhus Centres conduct information and awareness-raising activities targeting public officials. These initiatives should target not only the ministries of environment but also other line ministries and governmental bodies (such as energy, transport, industry and justice).</p> <p>2.2. Aarhus Centres specifically focus on public authorities at provincial and local levels.</p>	<p>2.1.a. Public authorities are made aware about existing gender equality legislation related to the Convention and international commitments and standards.</p> <p>2.1.b. Good practice on gender and thematic areas is made available.</p>	
A.3	The Convention leads to the development of an open administrative culture which supports public participation and transparency in environmental matters and values them as positive contributions to democratic, effective and good governance. Public officials concerned have and apply the knowledge and skills to provide assistance and guidance to the public to facilitate the exercise of its rights (Strategic Plan, Objective 1.6).	<p>3.1. Aarhus Centres advocate for good environmental governance and pioneer for demonstrating its practical implementation.</p> <p>3.2. Aarhus Centres disseminate good practices on good governance.</p>	3.2.a. Public officials are assisted in disseminating information and ensuring that men and women are reached equally.	3.2.b. Available tools and good practice examples gender equality and good governance are disseminated and promoted with administrations.

No.	Objective (as contained in the Aarhus Convention strategic plan)	Suggestions for indicative types of activities for Aarhus Centres	Suggestions for gender actions for Aarhus Centres	
			Immediate actions	Actions upon additional resources/training support
A.4	Public authorities at all levels and in all relevant sectors of government have well-established information policies and mechanisms, under which environmental information of high quality is routinely provided and proactively disseminated to the public in a user-friendly manner, making full use of electronic tools where available (Strategic Plan, Objective 1.7).	<p>4.1. Aarhus Centres facilitate access to available environmental information through various tools (web-site, newsletters, information boards, etc.)</p> <p>4.2. Aarhus Centres serve as community access points and repositories of national and local environmental information.</p> <p>4.3. Aarhus Centres take an active role in providing information to national nodes of the Aarhus Clearinghouse Mechanism.</p> <p>4.4. Where appropriate and so designated by the national authority, Aarhus Centres serve as national nodes of the Clearinghouse mechanisms.</p>	<p>4.2.a Access points and information dissemination activities are organised to ensure men and women have equal access to information.</p> <p>4.3.a. Centres that act as national nodes for the Clearinghouse mechanism solicit gender specific information, where possible, and sex disaggregated data where available.</p>	<p>4.1.a Information and tools made available use gender sensitive terminology, ensure that information is relevant to men and women and is equally available to men and women.</p>

No.	Objective (as contained in the Aarhus Convention strategic plan)	Suggestions for indicative types of activities for Aarhus Centres	Suggestions for gender actions for Aarhus Centres	
			Immediate actions	Actions upon additional resources/training support
A.5	Public participation procedures are regarded by public authorities and all other actors concerned as an integral part of the preparation of policies, plans, programmes and projects which may have a significant effect on the environment, and are implemented in their full scope. Prospective applicants are, where appropriate, encouraged to undertake proactive efforts to identify and inform the public concerned and enter into discussions with them at an early stage of planning, allowing for the effective participation of all interested members of the public (Strategic Plan, Objective 1.9).	<p>5.1. Aarhus Centres bring all relevant stakeholders together and provide a platform for participation through consultation (e.g. public hearings) and for interactive participation (workshops, negotiation, mediation, etc.).</p> <p>5.2. Aarhus Centres serve as public consultation facilitators.</p> <p>5.3. Aarhus Centres strengthen the capacities of stakeholders on public participation techniques and procedures. Organize trainings on facilitation skills and dialogue planning for government institutions, local administrations, NGOs and business community and investors.</p> <p>5.4. Aarhus Centres organize timely discussions related to the development of natural disaster management programs and local policy documents (such as waste management programs), thus enabling public contributions at an early stage of planning.</p>	<p>5.2.a. Aarhus Centres communicate and demonstrate their awareness of and commitment to gender equality principles during consultative processes.</p> <p>5.3.a. Events are organised at times/locations that men and women can equally participate; Women are actively encouraged to participate in consultative processes and interactive events.</p>	<p>5.1.a. Aarhus Centres apply and promote the development of participatory approaches that ensure equal participation of men and women.</p> <p>5.4.a. Aarhus Centres ensure that gender perspectives are taken into consideration during the preparation and development of natural disaster management programs and policy documents.</p>

No.	Objective (as contained in the Aarhus Convention strategic plan)	Suggestions for indicative types of activities for Aarhus Centres	Suggestions for gender actions for Aarhus Centres	
			Immediate actions	Actions upon additional resources/training support
A.6	Judges, public prosecutors and other legal professionals are familiar with the provisions of the Convention and are ready to exercise their respective responsibilities to uphold them (Strategic Plan, Objective 1.11).	6.1. Aarhus Centres facilitate/organize training activities for legal professionals on relevant multilateral environmental agreements and specifically on the Aarhus Convention and update judiciary regularly on new environmental legislation.		6.1.a. Trainings for legal professionals include sessions on national and international gender equality legislation, conventions and good legal practice.

No.	Objective (as contained in the Aarhus Convention strategic plan)	Suggestions for indicative types of activities for Aarhus Centres	Suggestions for gender actions for Aarhus Centres	
			Immediate actions	Actions upon additional resources/training support
A.7	Each Party provides for appropriate recognition of and support to civil society organizations promoting environmental protection as important actors in advancing democratic debate on environmental policies, raising public awareness, and mobilizing and assisting citizens in exercising their rights under the Convention and contributing to its implementation (Strategic Plan, Objective 1.12).	<p>7.1. Aarhus Centres advocate for increased civil society involvement in environmental management and decision-making processes and offer means and mechanisms for effective co-operation between government agencies and civil society organizations.</p> <p>7.2. Aarhus Centres disseminate information on good practices on government-civil society partnerships.</p> <p>7.3. Aarhus Centres are actively involved in the preparation of the National Implementation Reports, its follow-up and dissemination.</p>	<p>7.1.a. Efforts are made to actively engage women's rights organisations to ensure a balanced representation of interests in decision making processes and dialogue with governments.</p> <p>7.3.a. Aarhus Centres advise national focal points to include gender aspects in National Implementation Reports or other relevant documentation.</p>	7.2.a. Information provided on good practices on government-civil society partnerships highlight the relevance and benefits of good gender practice.

No.	Objective (as contained in the Aarhus Convention strategic plan)	Suggestions for indicative types of activities for Aarhus Centres	Suggestions for gender actions for Aarhus Centres	
			Immediate actions	Actions upon additional resources/training support
A.8	Civil society organizations and the general public are aware of their rights under the Convention and assert them to effectively engage in addressing environmental and sustainable development issues and to advance both environmental protection and good governance, thus contributing to sustainable development (Strategic Plan, Objective 1.13).	<p>8.1. Aarhus Centres organize public awareness campaigns on environmental issues and specifically on the Convention.</p> <p>8.2. Aarhus Centres lead/facilitate initiatives to strengthen the capacities of civil society organizations in areas such as techniques for community involvement, participatory planning and programming, and project formulation, management and monitoring and evaluation.</p>	8.1.a. Public awareness campaigns are gender sensitive and raise awareness on the gender dimensions of access to information, public participation and access to justice.	8.2.a. Capacity building activities ensure that trainees have the ability to effectively apply gender mainstreaming principles in all aspects of their work.

No.	Objective (as contained in the Aarhus Convention strategic plan)	Suggestions for indicative types of activities for Aarhus Centres	Suggestions for gender actions for Aarhus Centres	
			Immediate actions	Actions upon additional resources/training support
A.9	The impact of civil society's contribution to environmental management and sustainable development is better understood, documented and evaluated (Strategic Plan, Objective 1.15).	<p>9.1. Developing results oriented work-plans and performance indicators for Aarhus Centres for periodic review and evaluation.</p> <p>9.2. Aarhus Centres disseminate good practices on civil society's contribution to environmental management and sustainable development.</p> <p>9.3. Aarhus Centres advocate for and facilitate partnerships and networking among civil society organizations at the local and national levels.</p>	9.3.a. Efforts are made to actively engage women's organisations and interest groups in networking on all levels.	<p>9.1.a. Work-plans and monitoring and evaluation frameworks include gender sensitive indicators.</p> <p>9.2.a. Lessons learnt and good practice examples on gender are highlighted and disseminated.</p>

No.	Objective (as contained in the Aarhus Convention strategic plan)	Suggestions for indicative types of activities for Aarhus Centres	Suggestions for gender actions for Aarhus Centres	
			Immediate actions	Actions upon additional resources/training support
A.10	The range of environmental information that is made available to the public is gradually widened, inter alia, by developing and implementing mechanisms enabling more informed consumer choices as regards products, thereby contributing to more sustainable patterns of production and consumption. Through exchange of information and good practice, consideration is given on how to promote increasing accessibility of environmental information held by the private sector, taking into account relevant issues of confidentiality of commercial and industrial information and protection of intellectual property rights in line with the current approach under the Convention (Strategic Plan, Objective III.2).	10.1. Aarhus Centres lead/facilitate training and awareness - raising activities on sustainable production and consumption patterns and on PRTR for citizens and enterprises. 10.2. Aarhus Centres enter into and/or facilitate partnerships with the private sector in areas related to the implementation of the Convention.	10.1.a. Public and private sectors partners are made aware of gender equality principles, gender dimensions and good gender practice. 10.1.c. Efforts are made to increase awareness of women of information on PRTR.	10.1.b. Trainings and awareness raising activities consider the different and specific roles and contributions of men and women as producers and consumers.

No.	Objective (as contained in the Aarhus Convention strategic plan)	Suggestions for indicative types of activities for Aarhus Centres	Suggestions for gender actions for Aarhus Centres	
			Immediate actions	Actions upon additional resources/training support
A.11	The provisions of the Convention relating to public participation in the preparation of plans, programmes and policies relating to the environment, as well as executive regulations and other generally applicable legally binding normative instruments that may have a significant effect on the environment, are applied, kept under review and further developed, as appropriate, to enhance public participation from an early stage in strategic decision-making processes. This should be done with appropriate public involvement and taking fully into account the specific nature and constraints of such processes and related obligations under other multilateral environmental agreements such as in particular the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a	<p>11.1. Aarhus Centres review and analyze the implementation of the public participation pillar of the Convention and identify the barriers to participation (financial, legal, cultural, language, literacy, etc).</p> <p>11.2. Aarhus Centres facilitate the EIA process by offering the services for information dissemination and platforms for public participation, where appropriate.</p> <p>11.3. Aarhus Centres take an active role in the EIA follow-up by monitoring the actual project/plan implementation and informing the stakeholders on the results of the EIA follow-up, where possible.</p> <p>11.4. Aarhus Centres advocate for the SEA and disseminate good practices on its implementation.</p>	<p>11.3.a. Good practices gathered should include gender aspects.</p> <p>11.4.a. Meaningful efforts to include women's participation in local environmental and sustainable development action planning and implementation should be made.</p>	<p>11.1.a. Aarhus Centres review and analyze the implementation of the public participation pillar of the Convention and identify the barriers to participation, incl. Gender.</p> <p>11.2.a. The facilitation of all EIA activities (planning, implementation, monitoring, information dissemination) ensure that the needs, vulnerabilities and contributions of men and women are taken into equal consideration.</p>

No.	Objective (as contained in the Aarhus Convention strategic plan)	Suggestions for indicative types of activities for Aarhus Centres	Suggestions for gender actions for Aarhus Centres	
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	Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) and by involving its bodies in such processes (Strategic Plan, Objective III.4).	11.5. Aarhus Centres provide a platform for participatory local environmental and sustainable development action planning and implementation.		
A.12	To enhance the effectiveness of public participation, the development and application of innovative forms and tools of public participation beyond traditional consultation procedures are encouraged, the development of non-governmental organizations' capacity is supported and civil society is strengthened (Strategic Plan, Objective II1.5).	12.1. Aarhus Centres disseminate good practices on innovative forms and tools of public participation. 12.2. Aarhus Centres co-ordinate/facilitate formulation, implementation and management of small-scale NGO projects.	12.1.a. Good practices and tools should reflect gender aspects.	12.2.a. Aarhus centres should create awareness on gender issues and follow good gender practice within its NGO projects.

No.	Objective (as contained in the Aarhus Convention strategic plan)	Suggestions for indicative types of activities for Aarhus Centres	Suggestions for gender actions for Aarhus Centres	
			Immediate actions	Actions upon additional resources/training support
A.13	Work on promoting effective access to justice continues, in particular by way of further information exchange, capacity-building and exchange of good practice, inter alia, on the issue of criteria for standing, taking fully into account the Convention's objective of guaranteeing access to justice. The extension of the range of members of the public having access to administrative and judicial procedures is explored, with particular focus on access by non-governmental organizations. Steps are taken to remove or reduce financial and other barriers and to establish assistance mechanisms where appropriate (Strategic Plan, Objective II 1.6).	<p>13.1. Aarhus Centres facilitate/co-ordinate legal consultations to civil society organizations and individuals on environmental rights and responsibilities.</p> <p>13.2. Aarhus Centres provide information and guidance to public on court procedures, administrative review procedures and judicial appeal possibilities.</p> <p>13.3. Aarhus Centres provide assistance mechanisms such as promoting public interest lawyers, providing list of lawyers, and acting as law clinics.</p> <p>13.4. Aarhus Centres establish and provide a database on court decisions in environmental issues.</p>	<p>13.1.a. Aarhus Centres should ensure that legal consultations are equally accessible to women's organisations and that women's rights issues are dealt with equally.</p> <p>13.3.a. Lawyers familiar and committed to women's rights should be included in lists to ensure optimal referrals.</p>	<p>13.2.a. Information dissemination strategies should ensure that men and women are equally reached.</p> <p>13.4.a. Where possible, databases on court decisions on environmental issues should allow for the identification of cases and decisions with a gender aspect.</p>

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			Immediate actions	Actions upon additional resources/training support
		13.4. Regarding the Convention's compliance mechanism, Aarhus Centres assist in understanding the template, in monitoring jurisprudence and disseminating results, and in informing the public on cases related to their respective countries.		

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			Immediate actions	Actions upon additional resources/training support
A.14	The Parties explore possibilities for the development of measures under the Convention to ensure greater opportunities for public participation in policy formulation and implementation contributing to sustainable development, recalling the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the related Plan of Implementation. Furthermore, the Parties share their experiences in implementing the Convention with other forums interested in using them as a basis or a source of inspiration for further strengthening participatory democracy in their respective fields (Strategic Plan, Objective II1.7).	14.1. Aarhus Centres establish partnerships with other local and national level initiatives/ programmes in the field of environment and sustainable development.		14.1.a. Within partnerships with local and national environmental programmes, Aarhus Centres should identify, record, document, share and coordinate good practice, experiences, tools and resources on gender and the environment.

B. **Operational Road Map** below, aims to identify the key actions needed to strengthen the performance, efficiency and impact of Aarhus Centres.

No.	Objective (as contained in the Aarhus Convention strategic plan)	Suggestions for indicative types of activities for Aarhus Centres	Suggestions for gender actions for Aarhus Centres	
			Immediate actions	Actions upon additional resources/training support
B.1	Aarhus Centres' vision and activities are streamlined in order to better respond to national and regional challenges and enhance their effectiveness and efficiency in contributing to the implementation of the Aarhus Convention.	<p>1.1. Develop a common understanding on the role and functions of the Aarhus Centres.</p> <p>1.2. Develop a common understanding on the role of stakeholders (Ministry of Environment, National Focal Point, Aarhus Centre Manager, OSCE, host-NGO, etc.)</p> <p>1.3. Formulate a monitoring and evaluation strategy for Aarhus Centres with measurable performance indicators.</p> <p>1.4. Conduct self-evaluation of AC performance/activities annually.</p>	<p>1.1.a. The Vision, Mission and Values Statement of Centres should incorporate and reflect commitments to gender equality.</p> <p>1.2.a. When identifying stakeholders, include state institutions and NGOs that work on gender issues and gender equality.</p>	<p>1.3.a. Monitoring and Evaluation strategies should include gender related performance indicators.</p> <p>1.4.a. Self-evaluation activities should include gender indicators.</p>

No.	Objective (as contained in the Aarhus Convention strategic plan)	Suggestions for indicative types of activities for Aarhus Centres	Suggestions for gender actions for Aarhus Centres	
			Immediate actions	Actions upon additional re-sources/training support
B.2	Capacities of Aarhus Centres strengthened in order to better respond to the challenges in the implementation of the Aarhus Convention.	2.1. Identify capacity-building needs of the Aarhus Centres' staff and conduct trainings at the national and regional levels.	2.1.a. Aarhus Centres should strive to achieve gender balanced among staffing and volunteers.	2.1.a. Gender trainings should be provided to Aarhus Centre staff/stakeholders. 2.1.b. Regional trainings and capacity building initiatives should include relevant gender components.

No.	Objective (as contained in the Aarhus Convention strategic plan)	Suggestions for indicative types of activities for Aarhus Centres	Suggestions for gender actions for Aarhus Centres	
			Immediate actions	Actions upon additional resources/training support
B.3	Enhanced awareness on and visibility of Aarhus Centre initiatives.	<p>3.1. Formulate a communication strategy and action plan for Aarhus Centres.</p> <p>3.2. Communicate more actively with local and national media.</p> <p>3.3. Put in place mechanisms to ensure enhanced awareness of local stakeholders on the Aarhus Centres, with special focus on initiatives to enhance interest and participation of women and youth.</p> <p>3.4. Aarhus Centres network function as Environmental communication network in EECCA.</p> <p>3.5. Contribute to the Aarhus Convention Communication Strategy.</p>	<p>3.1.a Communication strategies should be gender sensitive to ensure that relevant information reaches men and women in the most effective way.</p>	<p>3.2.a. Information on gender issues and the environment is provided to national/local media and journalists are sensitized toward gender issues if and when applicable.</p> <p>3.3.a. Mechanisms for awareness raising of local stakeholders on awareness raising and targeting women and youth should take gender dimensions into consideration; good practice should be introduced, established and exchanged.</p> <p>3.4.a. Aarhus Centre experience on good gender practice in communication should be shared with the Aarhus Secretariat.</p>
B.4	Mechanisms are in place for information and experience sharing among the Aarhus Centres at the country and regional levels.	<p>4.1. Identify and put in place mechanisms for networking and information sharing among Aarhus Centres.</p>		<p>4.1.a. Mechanisms for networking and information sharing take gender dimensions into consideration and good practice should be introduced, established and exchanged.</p>

No.	Objective (as contained in the Aarhus Convention strategic plan)	Suggestions for indicative types of activities for Aarhus Centres	Suggestions for gender actions for Aarhus Centres	
			Immediate actions	Actions upon additional resources/training support
B.5	Efforts are advanced for ensuring sustainability of Aarhus Centres.	<p>5.1. Identify measures to strengthen the ownership and support of Governments towards long-term sustainability of Aarhus Centres.</p> <p>5.2. Ensure more active involvement of Aarhus Convention Focal Points in Aarhus Centre initiatives.</p> <p>5.3. Establish closer co-operation and partnerships with CSO/ NGO networks at local and national levels.</p> <p>5.4 Establish closer co-operation and partnership with public authorities at provincial and local levels.</p> <p>5.5. Identify options for legal status of Aarhus Centres.</p>	<p>5.1.a. Men and women should participate in the development of sustainability of Aarhus Centres and gender dimensions should be considered when designing or implementing sustainability of Aarhus Centres.</p> <p>5.3.a. Women's organisations working on environmental issues and NGO's with a relevant portfolio should be actively engaged.</p> <p>5.4.a. Partners for cooperation should include female representatives and counterparts and gender issues should be addressed.</p>	

Designing or implementing sustainability of Aarhus Centres; e.g. When charging fees for services, it should be ensured that both men and women have the necessary resources to pay for such services? When developing staffing plans, do women and men have equal opportunities in accessing management positions?

No.	Objective (as contained in the Aarhus Convention strategic plan)	Suggestions for indicative types of activities for Aarhus Centres	Suggestions for gender actions for Aarhus Centres	
			Immediate actions	Actions upon additional resources/training support
B.6	Synergies established with other relevant initiatives at the national and regional levels.	6.1. Co-operate and partner with other local, national and regional initiatives and programmes in support of environment, sustainable development and good governance (such as other ENVSEC projects, GEF projects/programmes, EC supported projects/programmes, etc.)		6.1.a. Activities, projects (etc.) supported or implemented by partners which have a gender dimension should be identified and strengthened as a basis for sustainable development and good governance. 6.1.a Gender Advisors and focal points of partners and relevant organisations should be actively engaged to assist the strategic, tactical and coordinated advancement of gender equality in environmental contexts on a local or regional level (also see above on Good Practice Exchange).

The OSCE

The OSCE works for stability, prosperity and democracy in 56 participating States through political dialogue rooted in shared values and through practical work that makes a lasting difference.

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