

**WOMEN
FOR WOMEN
ILC MENTORING &
SOLIDARITY NETWORK**

WOMEN FOR WOMEN ILC'S MENTORING AND SOLIDARITY NETWORK

DESCRIPTION

ILC's **Women for women - ILC Mentoring & Solidarity Network** is part of our efforts to make ILC gender just by:

- achieving gender balance in governing ILC bodies,
- promoting women's leadership
- support women to play more significant roles in ILC member organisations
- reinforcing connection among women within ILC members

The mentoring & solidarity network is a safe space for women in the ILC to exchange and learn from each-others' experiences, to support each other and jointly strategise to strengthen women's roles in our network.

Mentoring is a flexible tool for mutual exchange and collaboration, based on reciprocity. It is an effective tool to provide guidance in navigating specific issues or situations, and it can apply to leadership development, careers, specific work issues, working environment or relevant policies.

Mentoring can be a one-to-one relationship or a group exercise with a mentor interacting with a small group (max 5) sharing a similar interest in a given topic or issue. In both cases, a successful mentoring scheme relies on the interest, willingness and (time) commitment of mentors and mentees to animate the exchange. It also requires patience to build a new relationship and keep it going and openness to understand each other's culture and perspective.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO BECOME

A MENTEE:

- Interest in learning
- Willingness to share experience and receive guidance on specific issues

A MENTOR:

- Willingness to share knowledge
- Availability to provide support to women leaders and staff within ILC's membership and be a role model
- Openness to finding commonalities among women's experiences and challenges, and to jointly finding solutions

■ THE MENTORING CYCLE: HOW IT WORKS!

ILC Gender Justice Mentoring & solidarity network runs as an annual cycle, starting in 2019 and taking advantage of ILC meetings, with a face-to-face meeting and assessment at the 2021 GLF.

The cycle consists of **4 main steps**, each of which supported by **ILC's Gender Justice Advisor**, with regional gender focal points in the regions to accompany mentoring groups.

STEP 1: GETTING IN TOUCH

Identification of mentors and mentees

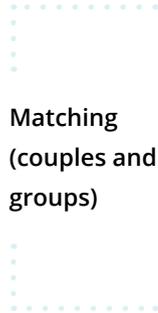
A call will be issued for women in **ILC members** to express their interest in participating. Both mentors and mentees are asked to briefly introduce themselves, present their motivation to engage, identify topics/issues they can cover (for mentors) and they wish to receive support on (for mentees) and whether they are interested in group work, individual interaction or both. Individual interaction will be within a region (as much as possible) for language reasons and to take advantage of regional events to meet, while group work will be cross-regional and take place on-line.

If interest is very high, the **Gender oversight committee** may be involved in defining criteria for selecting mentors and mentees. Any woman expressing interest, even if not selected for the mentoring because demand for mentors outweighs availability, will be invited to the online platform to get access to resources and advice so as to offer a minimum level of support.

Identification of topics and issues

Based on the expressions of interest, the **Gender Justice advisor** will extract a list of topics and issues to be covered as a preliminary step to match mentors and mentees, including most likely:

- organisational/staffing issues
- how to overcome challenges in pushing for gender justice
- in programmes planning/implementation
- discrimination based on gender
- career development
- work-life balance



**Matching
(couples and
groups)**

Based on topic, regional distribution and willingness to be part of group or individual mentoring, mentors and mentees will be matched, and groups of up to 5 mentees formed. Mentors will be encouraged to focus on either individual or group mentoring to ensure their time commitment is realistic.

Mentors and mentees are informed of the matching, and consequently put in touch via email.

STEP 2: DEFINING THE GOALS OF THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP



Mentors and mentees will start by setting goals, for individual and group mentoring, and agreeing to confidentiality, especially where discussions might focus on personal topics. The goals to be set could fall under the following categories:

- **Personal goals:** linked to individual needs, specific situations and challenges, (for ex. discrimination, career issues, family and societal challenges) with the aim of promoting personal and professional growth.
- **Organisational goals:** upon identification of specific gender related issues at organisational level (for ex. glass ceiling, lack of maternity leave, work-life balance, lack of gender sensitivity in an organisation). Such goals could also be discussed at organisation level if considered appropriate by the women involved.
- **Shared goals as ILC members:** as Gender Justice is a core value for ILC, mentors and mentees are requested to identify goals for the ILC network.

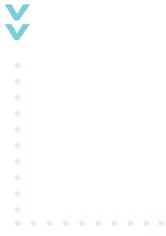
STEP 3 EXCHANGING AND LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER



**Meetings –
“virtual safe
space”:
by topic**

Individual and group mentoring relationship will take place on line, via Skype or similar channels (to be determined by participants). For one-to-one mentoring, the schedule is decided by mentors and mentees, depending on availability and specific needs, with one check-in per month suggested as a basis for building a relationship and to allow the GJ advisor to provide support. It's up to each mentor to agree on the frequency and type of interaction.





Groups exchanges require a more structured schedule as they involve a higher number of participants. They will take place at least once a quarter over skype and/or via the online group (see below). As agreed with mentors, mentees can contact them with specific requests via email.



**Meetings -
“physical safe
space”: by
region**



Face-to-face meeting will take place at regional level, taking advantage of regional meetings and events linked to the Leadership Programme (see below). Priority will be given to enabling face-to-face meetings of mentor/mentee couples, depending on the location of participants in mentoring groups face-to-face meetings may be organised on occasion of regional events.

Mentors and mentees can autonomously take their mentoring relationship further (beyond this description of activities funded by ILC) and organise visit or other meetings at regional level at their own pace and according to individual/members' specific needs and resources.



**Online
solidarity
group**



An invitation-only FB group will be set up as a safe (online) space beyond the “one-to-one” or “group”¹ relationship. This group will be open to all mentors and mentees, as well as any woman who expressed interest, to share concerns, experiences and good practices, seek advice and provide feedback. The group will be moderated by the GJ advisor, including some summarising of discussions in other languages, so as to facilitate cross-regional interaction.

It will also serve as a repository for useful resources (toolkits, manuals, articles...).

All mentors and mentees will have access to the closed group, including after their direct involvement in mentoring activities ends.

¹ The use of an online space is inspired by the work of the Nigerian-American activist Lola Omolola, founder of FIN, see <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-40261913>.

STEP 4: ASSESSMENT AND RESHUFFLE



Mentoring couples and groups will be facilitated by the GJ advisor and regional gender focal points in the RCU for one year, including an initial briefing of the mentors and mentees, availability to respond to requests, and regular checks that the mentoring relationship is developing as hoped (after 4 and 8 months). A final assessment will take place at the end of the one-year cycle, with mentors and mentees meeting either face-to-face or virtually. At the end of the one-year cycle, new couples and groups will be formed unless there are specific requests to keep working together.

The second cycle starts with a new call for expressions of interests. Mentors and mentees involved in the first cycle can decide to remain involved or withdraw (while keeping access to the online group). At the end of year one, mentees might express interest in serving as mentors for the following cycle if they wish so.

LINKAGES BETWEEN ILC WOMEN FOR WOMEN & ILC LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

Mentors and mentees are welcome to join and encouraged to contribute to the ILC Leadership Programme, bringing in their experience on promoting women’s leadership and gender justice. Where the LP includes a mentoring component at regional level, interaction with mentors and mentees participating in Women for women will be encouraged. Participation in Women for Women will be considered an asset with regard to applications for the Leadership Programme.

LINKAGES BETWEEN ILC WOMEN FOR WOMEN & GENDER AUDITING

Where possible, staff from organisations involved in piloting gender audits (or who have already undertaken gender audits and are ready to share their experience) are encouraged to join Women for Women. ILC members with women staff or activists participating in Women for Women will be given priority if they express interest in taking part in piloting gender audits, so as to create complementarity between components of the Gender Action Plan.

ILC WOMEN FOR WOMEN AT REGIONAL MEETINGS AND AT GLOBAL LAND FORUM 2021

Any meeting taking place at regional level represents an opportunity for mentors and mentees to meet as well as an opportunity to promote women's participation in regional events. Similarly, the Global Land Forum 2021 will be an occasion for the entire group of mentors and mentees to meet face-to-face, and conduct a joint assessment of the experience to guide ILC beyond 2021.

INDICATIVE TIMELINE

24 May 2019: Deadline for expressions of interest

June 2019: Selection of participants and matching

July 2019: Creation of FB group and introduction of participants

September - November 2019: Launch at regional meetings/ events

January - March 2020: First assessment

April 2020: Launch of second call for expression of interest

May 2020: Selection of new participants

May - July 2020: Second assessment

September - November 2020: End of first cycle, annual assessment and face-to-face meetings, reshuffle and new matching
