



Equity, inclusion and justice strategy

2024–2029

Equity, inclusion and justice for a thriving world statement

Following our Race Audit in 2022, IIED realised that we had a long way to go to ensure we were an equitable, inclusive and just organisation. Though our heart and motivation has always been in the right place, there were many systemic barriers and biases that were preventing us from fully playing our role as a leading policy and action research organisation.

We already had a gender justice network (now known as our Gender Equality Champions Network, or GECN), however in terms of race, decolonisation and other protected characteristics we simply were not doing enough. We heard from our people, communities and wider partners that what was needed was a streamlined, consolidated approach, which embedded all these aspects into all areas of our work.

It was in that vein that we set out to design, dismantle and democratise our organisation's governance, including a new way of working for all. We have taken stock and carefully restructured IIED to best serve its people. We have a new governance structure, as outlined in this strategy, which is democratic and agile, and underpinned by our values of equity, inclusion and justice.

If not now, then when. We must strengthen our commitment to our values and our communities, and be an innovative leader, pioneering in the field of climate justice and equity. Through this strategy we commit to listen, learn and grow in the pursuit of equity, inclusion and justice. Together we will succeed.

IIED's mission is to build a fairer, more sustainable world, using evidence, action and influence in partnership with others. Since its inception, IIED has wrestled with putting our environment at the heart of human progress, where our research and influence has shaped many of the major relevant international policy moments and offered practical guidance to policy and decision makers. This continues to drive our strategy for the coming years where we are working to create a 'thriving world'.

To achieve our goals, help to advance sustainable development and contribute towards a thriving world, our daily actions internally and externally must reflect equity, inclusion and justice principles supported by our core values.

We recognise the impact of historic colonisation, how it has evolved and its continued impact on sustainable development, livelihoods, culture, economic sustainability and much more. We see how it has silenced local and Indigenous communities, often leaving them out of the decision-making process. We also acknowledge the internal impact this has on our workforce, especially those with intersecting identities.

At IIED, we make an explicit and public commitment to decolonising with care how we approach sustainable development and research. We will actively work to dismantle systems and processes embedded within the global political, economic and social landscapes, including the environmental and development paradigms that shape them, and advocate for a thriving world.

We also commit to being intentional in our work by bringing in the diverse perspectives of our people and partners, but most critically identifying and challenging any harmful and discriminatory systems. This includes acknowledging how we operate and benefit from the same system we are actively trying to change.

Finally, we commit to prioritising the wellbeing of our people, giving them the care and respect they deserve as they work towards delivering on our mission.

Equity, inclusion and justice vision: to create an environment where all our people and partners feel welcomed, respected, supported and valued to be their full selves.

Foreword

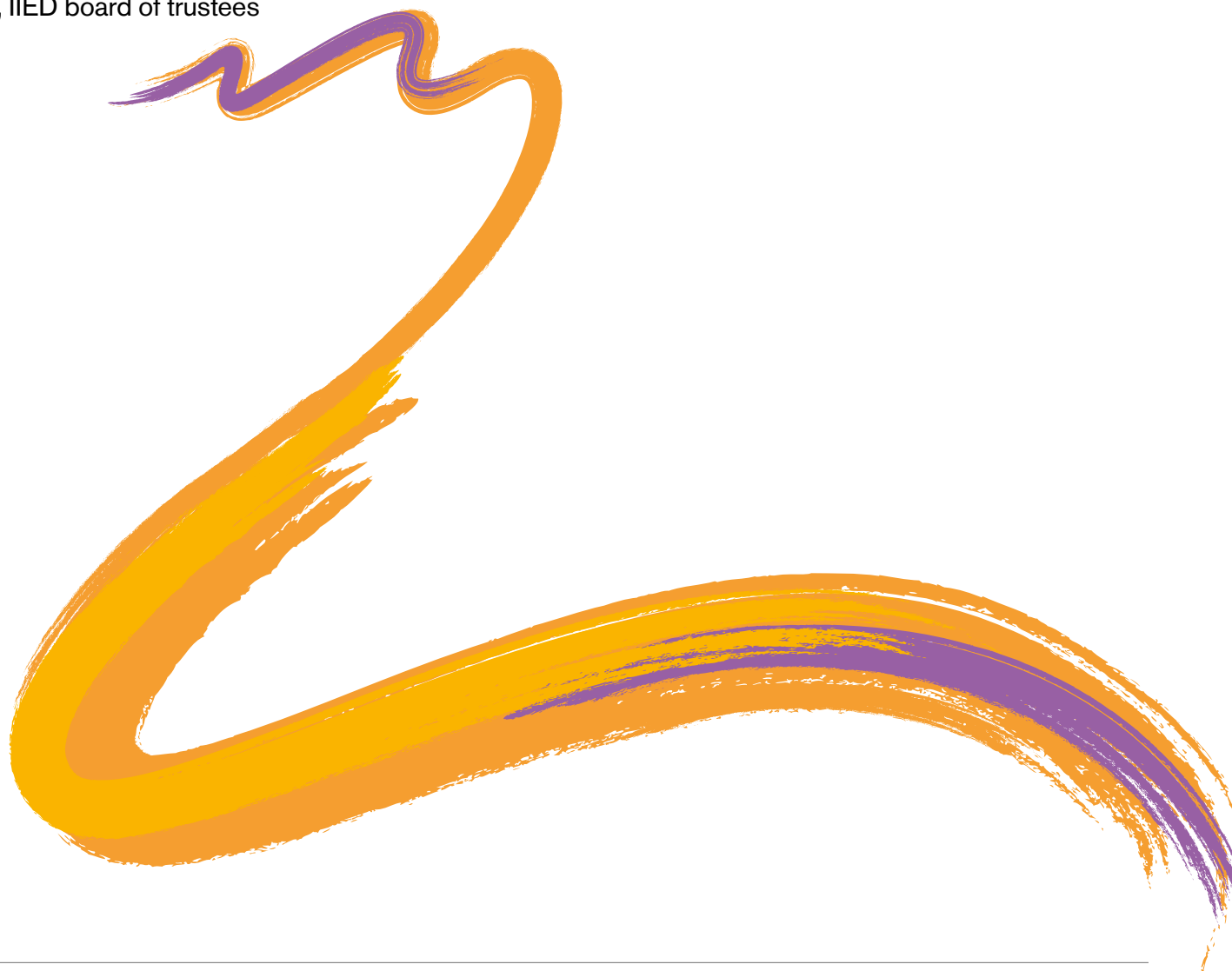
The tragic murder of George Floyd was a sharp wake-up call for all of us. Inequity, exclusion and injustice was not only the norm, but most of us also generally accepted it as the norm. For IIED, and the wider not-for-profit world, it brought up harsh realities of the way in which we had been operating until now. We simply had not been doing enough to address our inequitable, exclusive and unjust ways.

IIED took time to reflect, discuss and map out a rigorous, democratic and caring way to decolonise our ways of working. We knew we had to act, however we wanted to act in a way that would be fair and sustainable. It is why we had The Better Org. conduct our Race Audit in 2022, and from that had many consultative and open forums to shape our way forward.

Out of the design teams and roundtable discussions that were weaving into our change process, this equity, inclusion and justice strategy was formed. Our equity, inclusion and justice committee provides the governance to ensure that what is outlined here is embedded throughout IIED so that we hold ourselves accountable. We have full confidence and faith that together we can truly make IIED an equitable, inclusive and just organisation not only for our people, but by our people.

Tara Shine

Chair, IIED board of trustees



Equity, inclusion and justice definitions at IIED

Importance of having a collective definition

At IIED, there is an increasing awareness of equity, inclusion and justice (EIJ), and you will often hear many colleagues across IIED use the terms inclusion, equity, justice, intersectionality, gender justice and so on. These are important words, but without a collective definition of what it means to us, we are at risk of naming buzzwords with no true meaning and actions behind them. It is critical that we as an organisation understand what these words mean to us.

Having a collective definition of what some of the more common words mean allows us to galvanise to achieve a common goal. In addition, it allows us to define at IIED what is within our remit and context to deliver and tackle as an international development organisation.

The following content defines some of the EIJ keywords we're currently using at IIED. This is not an exhaustive list, but some of the immediate keywords that require us to understand what they mean to us at IIED.

Equity at IIED is to understand that our people have different backgrounds, contexts, accesses and privileges, and we will actively learn, redesign and embed systems and processes that address structural inequality of opportunities, information and resources. Whilst equality means each individual or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities, equity is about offering differing levels of support based on individual need, to reach an outcome on a par with others. It recognises that different characteristics may present their own unique barriers to each individual person and so the support offered needs to be tailored to that person, rather than the same support for each characteristic.

Inclusion at IIED is an everyday act we all commit to. To create an environment where all our people and partners feel welcomed, respected, supported and valued to be their full self at IIED. This includes, but is not limited to, culture, skin colour and race, and epistemologies, and applies to our external work as well as internally.

Diversity at IIED is to acknowledge and value the differences we all have as individuals and as a collective, this includes different worldviews and ways of knowing (not just those of Euro-Western societies). These differences are not limited to what is visible but also what is invisible and forms a core part of our individual identities. These range from race, nationality, religion, gender, socio-economic status/background, education, learning styles, disability, educational background, sexual orientation, migratory status, caring responsibilities, social capital and ties, and so on. We want all our people and partners to bring the identity that is most authentic to them and for us to see them as they want to be seen.

Justice at IIED is to create an environment that commits to daily active allyship to support those who have been historically marginalised by systems that perpetuate inequality, and as an organisation seek to dismantle these systems and practices. Justice at IIED will be applied fairly both internally and externally with just practices and decision-making processes.

Decolonisation at IIED will be done with care. Through our work we will investigate social constructs of hierarchies shaped around race, ableism, gender and so on with a view to changing them, improve and increase access to knowledge and information by centering those who have been historically marginalised, and rebuild community access and platforms for diverse voices. We will rethink the colonial environmental and development paradigms we work with and promote, and will be active in dismantling these.

Anti-racism at IIED is to acknowledge that racial inequality has no place within sustainable development (or the systems we operate in). IIED has committed to becoming an anti-racist organisation, and we commit to actively advocating to influence policies and change structures, practices and attitudes to eliminate structural and individual racism. We also commit to taking ownership of our own learning to better understand the experiences of different ethnicities and races, so the work we do with our stakeholders and communities operates from an anti-racist lens.

Gender justice at IIED is to take a holistic approach that breaks the gender binary and seeks to rectify the deeply ingrained structural inequalities that perpetuate gender-based discrimination and exclusion, with an intersectional focus. It entails dismantling systems that perpetuate gender injustice, including unequal power relations, within national boundaries and across regions. It seeks not only to level the playing field but also to rectify historical and systemic gender injustices.

Intersectionality at IIED is to recognise how historically marginalised identities intersect with other identities resulting in unique combinations of discrimination and privilege. We will work to actively understand the underlying structures that produce these inequalities and advocate for justice by centering local and Indigenous voices in our work.

What do we mean by historically marginalised

Within the context of IIED, these are individuals or communities that have been systematically disadvantaged, discriminated against or oppressed throughout history. Experiences of marginalisation vary widely from context to context, including cultural, societal and historical contexts.

Some examples of historically marginalised groups include: Black and Indigenous people, people of colour, women, the LGBTQIA+ community, people with disabilities, immigrants and refugees, socioeconomically disadvantaged people and religious minorities, among others. These groups are not static and monolithic. The experience of disadvantage comes from dynamics of power and disadvantage that respond to situations in specific contexts.

Our values and culture guiding principles

Understanding our values

Our values form our organisational core beliefs that every individual, team and piece of work adhere to. Our values are the foundation of all that we do, our ethos, code of conduct and direction of travel, and guide our behaviour and actions towards our stakeholders.

Research indicates that different sets of organisational values may have differential impact on behavior (Finegan, 2000). This is why our values have been carefully thought out and highlight key actions and principles that we live by at IIED.

For example, anti-racism has been highlighted in our values to recognise that organisations (including IIED) are not race-neutral, but are often racialised entities (Ray, 2019). This allows us to consider how we work, how we role model anti-racism and how we confront it by making it a central ethos of how we work.

Our values

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Respect and dignity | We build mutual trust and respect local knowledge. We act transparently and with integrity and treat each other with consideration. |
| Care | We prioritise wellbeing and care towards each other, our partners and collaborators, marginalised groups and the planet. |
| Justice and fairness | We address social, economic and environmental injustices and unfair power dynamics, embedding decoloniality principles in our everyday actions and outputs. |
| Ethical partnership | We proactively seek to collaborate with others, break down silos and share power with our partners. |
| Transformative change | We do everything we can to deliver impactful and systemic change that addresses major environmental, economic and social challenges and inequity. |
| Inclusion and equity | We approach gender justice and anti-racism through an intersectional lens, where equity and inclusion are championed through daily active allyship. |

Respect and dignity guiding principles

- Working with sincerity, humility and integrity
- Being honest, open and transparent
- Acting in good faith whilst showing appreciation
- Communicating considerately and listening carefully
- Setting and respecting boundaries with consideration
- Admitting and learning from mistakes.

Care guiding principles

- Prioritising wellbeing and care towards each other, our partners and collaborators, marginalised groups and the planet
- Treating staff and partners with kindness, compassion, patience and empathy
- Role modelling our values and supporting each other, and celebrating colleagues, partners and their work
- Giving and receiving feedback constructively with care, whilst being mindful of the emotions and time of others
- Encouraging each other to have a healthy work-life balance
- Trusting each other to work flexibly, respecting each other's working patterns and communication preferences.

Justice and fairness guiding principles

- Supporting the voices, priorities and agency of the communities we serve and operate in, including the rights of low-income and marginalised groups
- Being inclusive and equitable in how we interact with each other whilst minimising our environmental impact
- Making decisions around who we work with based on justice and fairness
- Seeking to undo colonial structures and repair the harm of colonial injustices
- Working with trust and courage in a way where we can be ourselves, speak our mind, and share our needs, vulnerabilities, limits and boundaries
- Being guided by the priorities, values and worldviews of the Majority World partners and communities we work with.

Ethical partnership guiding principles

- Shifting power in partnerships by acknowledging and redressing inequalities embedded in institutional norms and behaviours (for example, colonial legacies, and racial and gender inequalities)
- Respecting diversity by acknowledging and respecting local context and priorities, embracing differences, and accepting other ways of knowing and being.
- Fostering inclusive decision making at all stages and building trusting relationships
- Having flexible operational processes and funding, ensuring that partnership requirements and tools including due diligence, contracts, procurement systems and language used, do not disadvantage partners
- Promoting fair and inclusive resource allocation processes, sharing risk, and distributing roles and benefits fairly in partnerships.

Transformative change guiding principles

- Conducting rigorous, innovative action research to challenge the status quo and catalyse change
- Being open-minded and fostering creativity
- Producing high-quality work, doing our best, and striving to learn and stay ahead of the curve
- Innovating and scaling for impact
- Being proactive and trying new approaches
- Applying creative solutions to challenges.

Inclusion and equity guiding principles

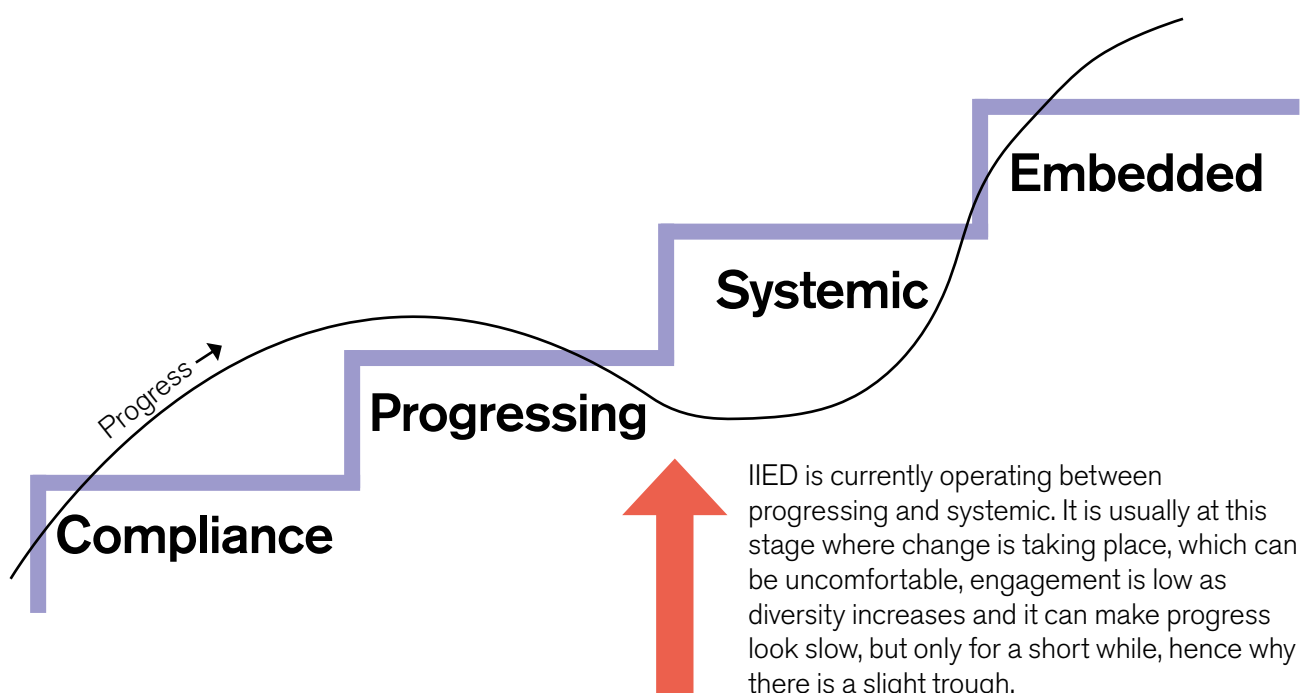
- Practicing allyship through actions, being committed to continuous learning
- Being sensitive to the cultural context of people's upbringing, and the way that can inform their decisions, approaches and relationships at work
- Making a conscious effort to acknowledge and value each other's differences, assuming positive intent first
- Actively and intentionally involving as many people in our decision-making processes
- Acknowledging that everyone has different viewpoints and thus being open to these when appropriate
- Understanding your own personal biases and learning to mitigate their impact on decision making and interactions.



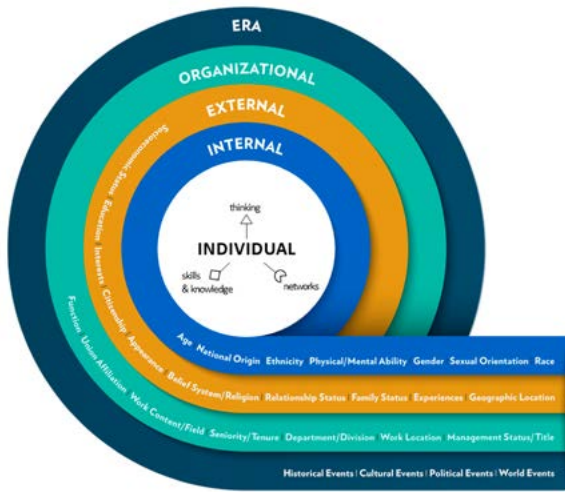
IIED's EIJ maturity stage

| Maturity stages | What it means |
|-----------------|---|
| Compliance | At this stage, approach to EIJ tends to be more reactive; definition of diversity is often limited to one or two factors and tends to focus on what is visible. Leaders tend to have limited involvement in EIJ work and efforts tends to be focused on risk management. EIJ is viewed from a compliance perspective (as long as legal requirements are adhered to). EIJ responsibility sits solely with legal and HR. |
| Progressing | This is where you start to move away from risk management and the focus tends to be purpose-driven, linked to an organisation's mission and strategic direction. The definition of diversity expands to include both visible and invisible dimensions of diversity, and is broad in its understanding and assessment. There is a dedicated person(s) and budget for EIJ. HR is involved, but other parts of the organisation are as well. |
| Systemic | At this stage diversity is broader, intersectionality is considered when thinking about diversity. There is collective understanding of key concepts across the organisation and this can be evidenced through behaviours and data collected. There is clear accountability in place. Leaders have inclusive leadership skills, and are held accountable for creating a diverse and inclusive environment. They often have EIJ resources and budgets distributed throughout other functional areas and regions. |
| Embedded | At this stage EIJ is sustainable and doesn't require any key person(s) to drive it, all functions of the organisation work holistically to drive and deliver EIJ. There is clear accountability for EIJ, leaders take full ownership of how EIJ functions and operates in the organisation. Systems and processes work for as many people as possible including partners and any future staff members. It becomes a collective and intentional effort driven through actions and accountability. |

This model has been adapted using the Korn Ferry diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) maturity model.



Our EIJ approach



Taking into account where we are based on the adapted Korn Ferry DEI maturity model (on the previous page), our approach at IIED is to be as inclusive as possible through an intersectional lens.

The diagram on the left provides the framework through which we will disrupt and transform our workplace so everyone feels included and cared for, and knows they belong. It will also allow us to be critical in our work and how it is delivered.

Source: Thomas C, MacMillan C, McKinnon M, Torabi H, Osmond-McLeod M, Swavley E, Armer T and Doyle K (2021) Seeing and Overcoming the Complexities of Intersectionality. *Challenges*. 12(1):5. <https://doi.org/10.3390/challe12010005>

What diversity looks like at IIED

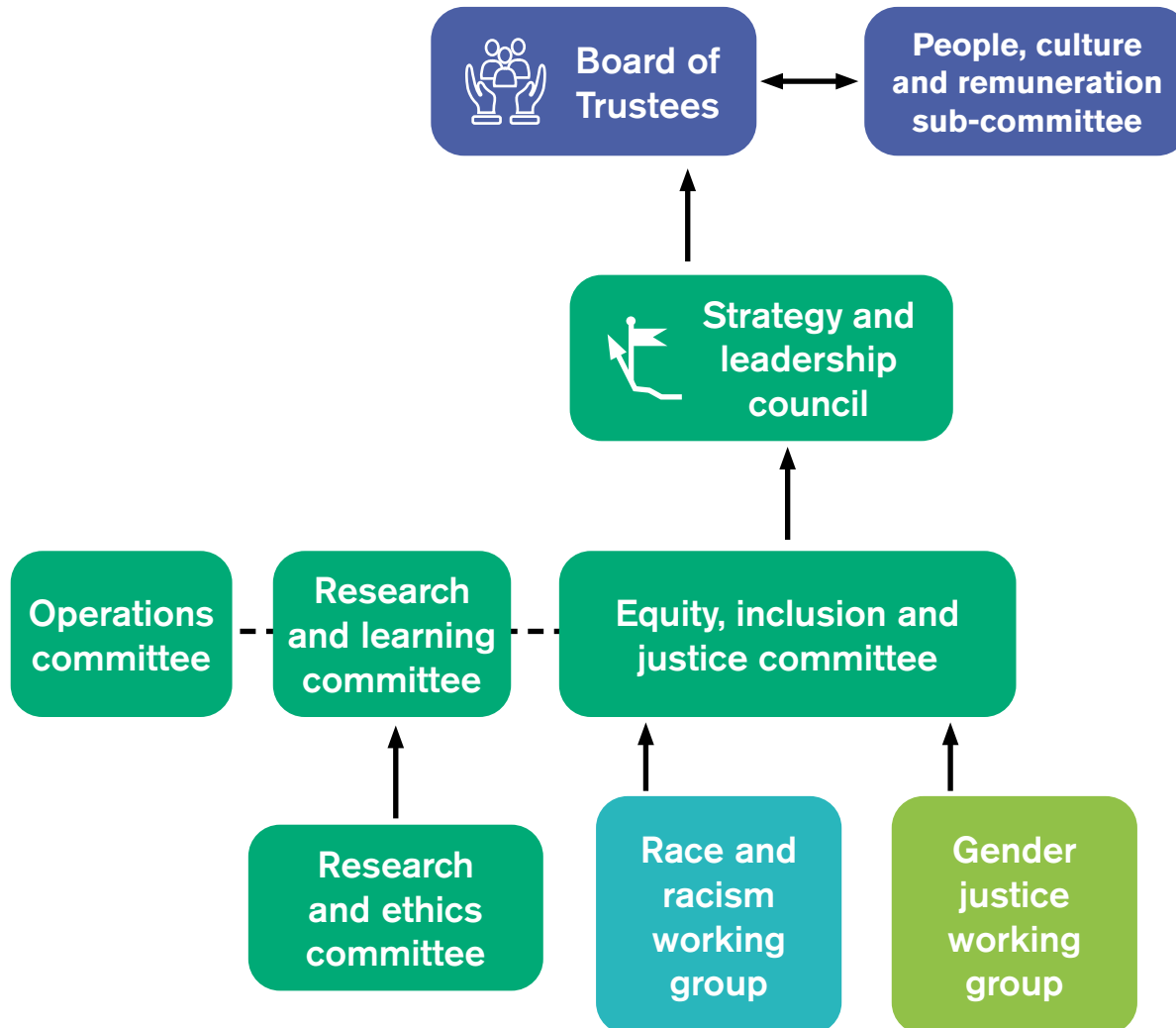
| Category | Type of diversity |
|---|---|
| Protected by law | Race/ethnicity; gender; gender reassignment; age; religion; disability; sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity |
| Knowledge and skills | Education/degree type; information or expertise; training type; diversity of thought/process/thinking |
| Beliefs | Ideological, religious beliefs and politics |
| Personality differences | Motivational factors; introvert–extrovert spectrum; communication style |
| Organisational/community status differences | Tenure or length of service; title (work function, seniority, discipline and so on); awards attained; publishing |
| Differences in social and network ties | Socioeconomic background; work-related ties and connections; friendship/family ties; community ties; in-group memberships; popularity/influence; parents and carers; migratory status |
| Culture | Accent/mother tongue; cultural background; family traditions; ethnic traditions and ways of doing things; UK-based or abroad |

Please note this is not an exhaustive list!

Adapted from: Mannix and Neale (2005). Updated in 2023 by IIED's DEI manager

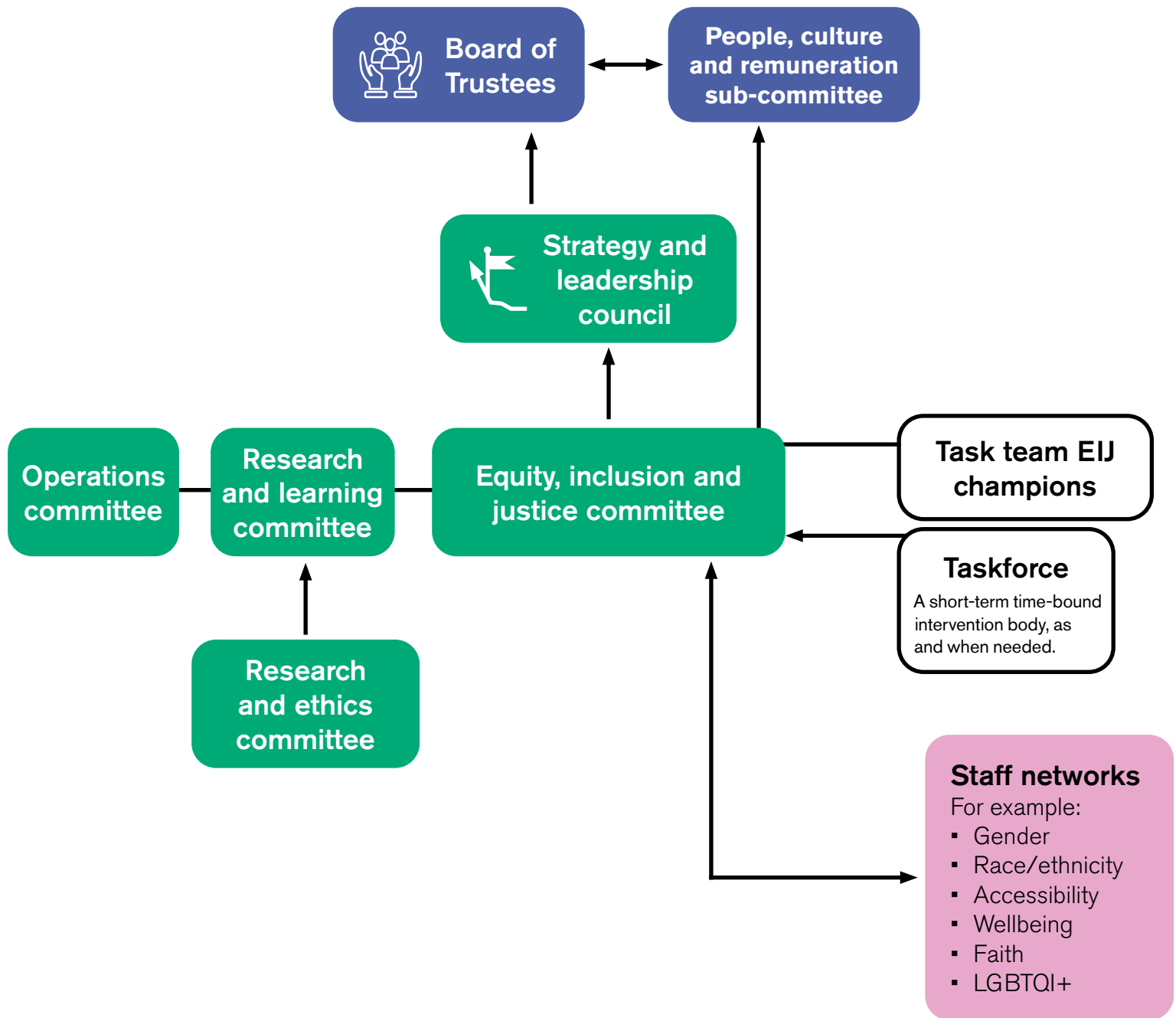
How EIJ is governed at IIED

This is how our EIJ governance framework is now:



Our working groups are time-bound and target specific interventions until their remit is done.

This is where we want to be on EIJ governance:



Our EIJ strategic priorities

Accountability for EIJ

EIJ will not progress if there isn't sufficient accountability in place to monitor progress, evaluate actions taken and seek required information. We recognise that embedding EIJ is everyone's responsibility, both collectively and individually; however, there must be an accountability body holding IIED to account on it. This is where our EIJ committee takes centre stage.

Inclusivity

IIED is a globally distributed organisation, which means that inclusion has to be central in how we look after our people, the output we produce and the partners we work with. By focusing on inclusivity, it allows us to intentionally consider diversity in its broadest sense, include as many people as possible and create an environment that allows success to happen as we work towards creating a thriving world.

Learning and development

We are at the start of our EIJ journey, especially as we work on being an anti-racist organisation and decolonising how we engage with stakeholders with care. This means continuous and consistent learning is key to taking and supporting our people on this journey. Our learning will be extensive and practical, allowing us to truly embed EIJ in how we work and function at all levels and with key stakeholders.

EIJ data

It is critical that we are making decisions based on evidence and data available to us. We want to be informed when we put initiatives and programmes in place. This will not only allow us to measure progress but also to continue to hold ourselves accountable. It will allow us to be more ambitious as we may look to put targets in place in the future. The data will inform us when the time is right to do so.

IIED output and partnerships

Our research and influence has shaped many of the major relevant international policy moments and offered practical guidance to policymakers. We need to embed EIJ principles in this, as we may be upholding the very system we want to decolonise.

IIED's EIJ priorities: promoting transparency and accountability for EIJ at IIED internally and externally.

What are the EIJ priority indicators?

The EIJ priority indicators are key success indicators that let us know if we are progressing in alignment with the EIJ action plan. It states clearly what we see as markers of EIJ progress.

How do the EIJ priority indicators work?

The EIJ priority indicators are 16 indicators taken from the EIJ action plan. The priority indicators provide a quick and easily accessible snapshot of what IIED is looking to achieve within a set timeframe. This is to allow us to measure progress and be agile in how we deliver on the EIJ action plan.

Each indicator will be measured against four progressive ratings. The ratings are: not met, working towards, meets and exceeds.

The ratings will be assigned and reviewed by relevant individuals/teams responsible and approved by the EIJ committee. All ratings will be reviewed against evidence provided, which can range from activities and/or quantitative data submitted.

Where are we now?

We are at the very early stages of data acquisition; however, a number of activities have taken place that can be evidenced. This is the beginning of our EIJ journey and having the EIJ priority indicators, action plan and strategy all aligned is to support and hold us accountable on this journey.

Accountability

As an organisation, we have taken actions and made progress on EIJ, in particular on anti-racism, but we acknowledge that there is still more to do. To continue to move towards change, we need to hold ourselves accountable, where progress doesn't stop if key people leave the organisation.

This is why accountability for EIJ is key. We will design systems and processes to ensure accountability is embedded into the governance structure of IIED, the Board and leadership continue to be held to account on progress, and we champion new ideas and perspectives as we progress on EIJ.

We will remain agile and adapt to the ever-changing world around us.

This is why our approach will be intersectional and adapt to the varying needs that diversity requires.



Accountability indicators

EIJ strategy and action plan

The strategy and action plan set the road map and a clear direction for where we want to be over the next 3–4 years on EIJ, aligned to our new agile strategy and new structure.

Diverse membership of EIJ governance

EIJ can only work when we have as many different people represented in the room, and this may mean sometimes taking a positive action approach as well as participatory decision-making processes to make this happen.

Senior leadership to role model EIJ principles

EIJ is everyone's responsibility but must be modelled at senior leadership and board level. They set the tone for what EIJ can and should look like at IIED.

EIJ Committee framework, ToR

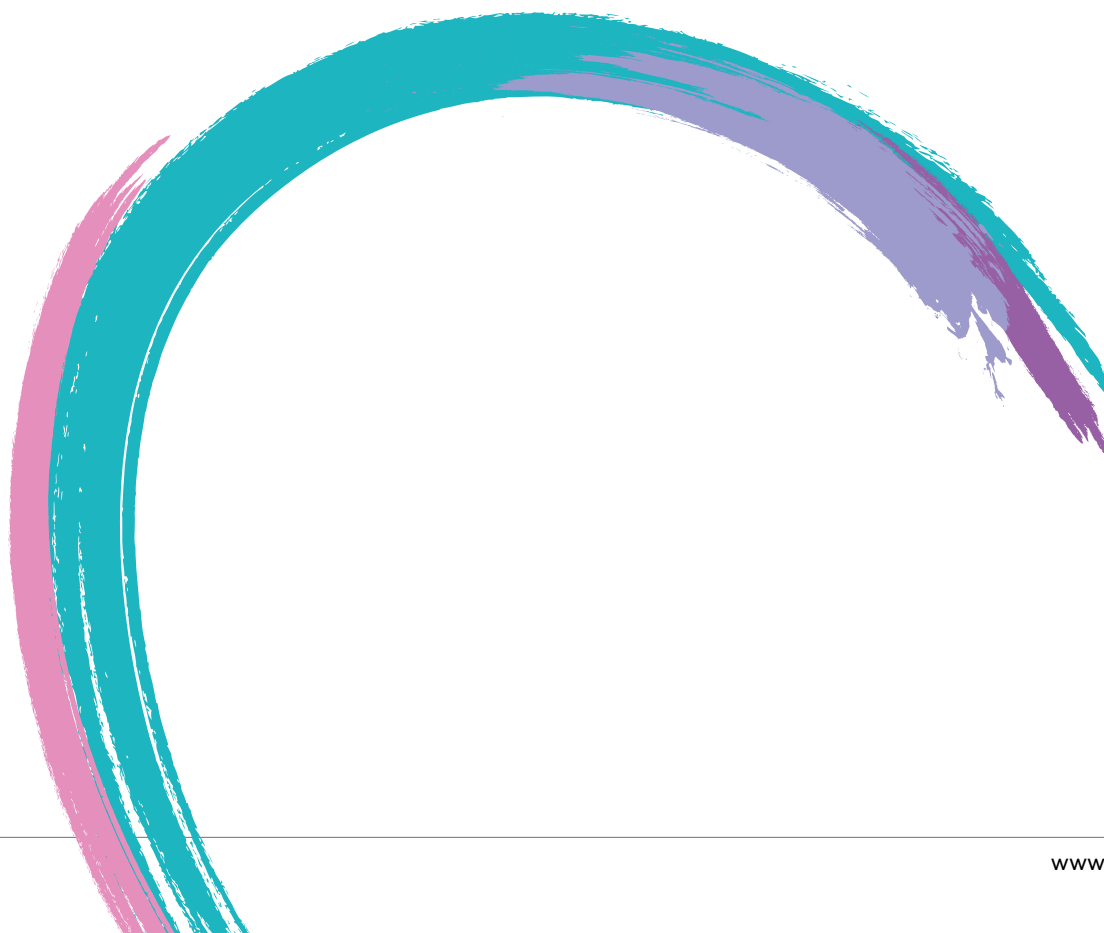
Setting clear frameworks for the accountability of EIJ and how that operates in synergy with other governing structures at IIED.

EIJ periodic review

EIJ may change internally and externally, remaining agile means we can adapt our approach quickly. This review will be internal and conducted every two years.

EIJ included in performance management

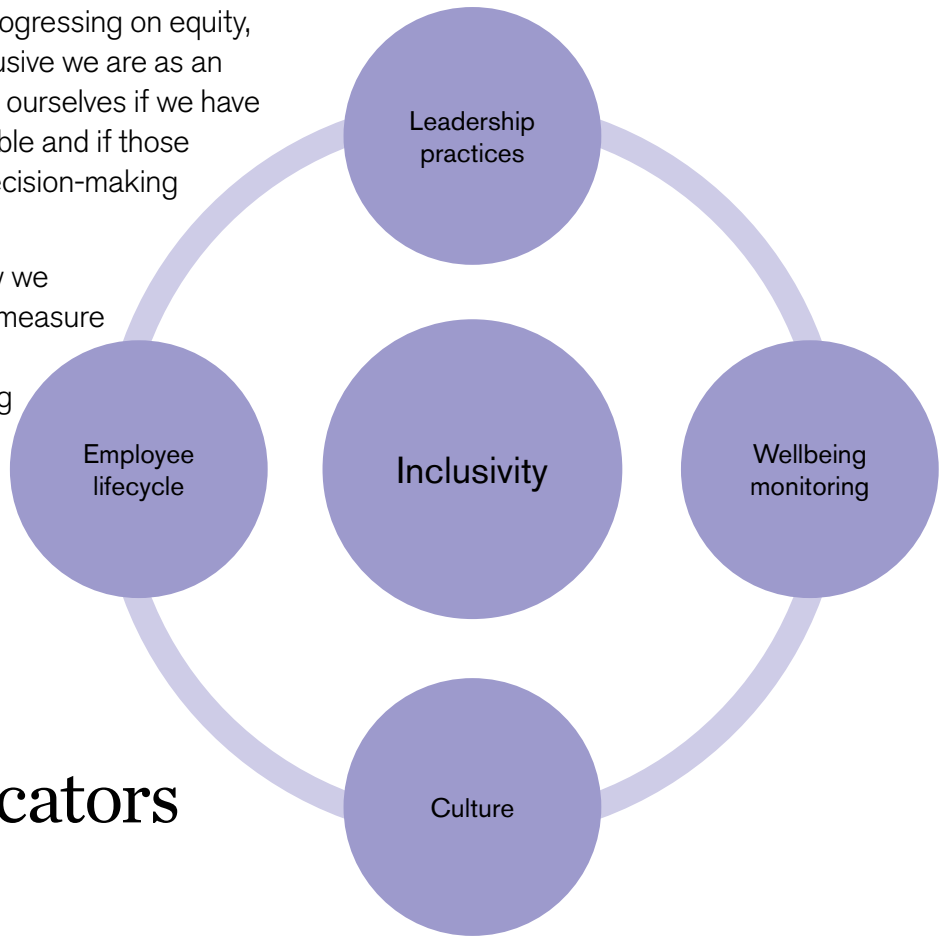
EIJ accountability and embedding it means everyone at IIED understanding how they contribute to EIJ through their role and engagement at IIED.



Inclusivity

A key indicator of how well we are progressing on equity, inclusion and justice will be how inclusive we are as an organisation. We need to always ask ourselves if we have heard from as many people as possible and if those sitting around the influencing and decision-making table are diverse.

This is why inclusion is central to how we operate and is in our values. We will measure inclusion through qualitative data, asking if our leadership are practicing inclusion, if all employees have equitable access to progression, support and learning, and finally if they are able to be their full selves at IIED.



Inclusivity indicators

Employee lifecycle

Inclusion must happen at every point in our people's engagement with us, from the moment they choose to apply for a job, to their progression within IIED and eventual exit. We want our employee lifecycle, no matter how short, to be a valuable one allowing our people to thrive. Their experience with us should be one where they have felt considered and able to thrive.

Leadership practices

Inclusive leadership is an ongoing skill and one that is not only practiced at senior level, but also at a people management level (those who have pastoral responsibilities for staff). Our leaders also have a responsibility for creating an environment where every person truly feels that they can give honest feedback, and both fail and succeed at work.

Culture

We want to make it clear that our culture is one of inclusion. Not only the physical environment, but in our explicit commitment to transparency and shared learning.

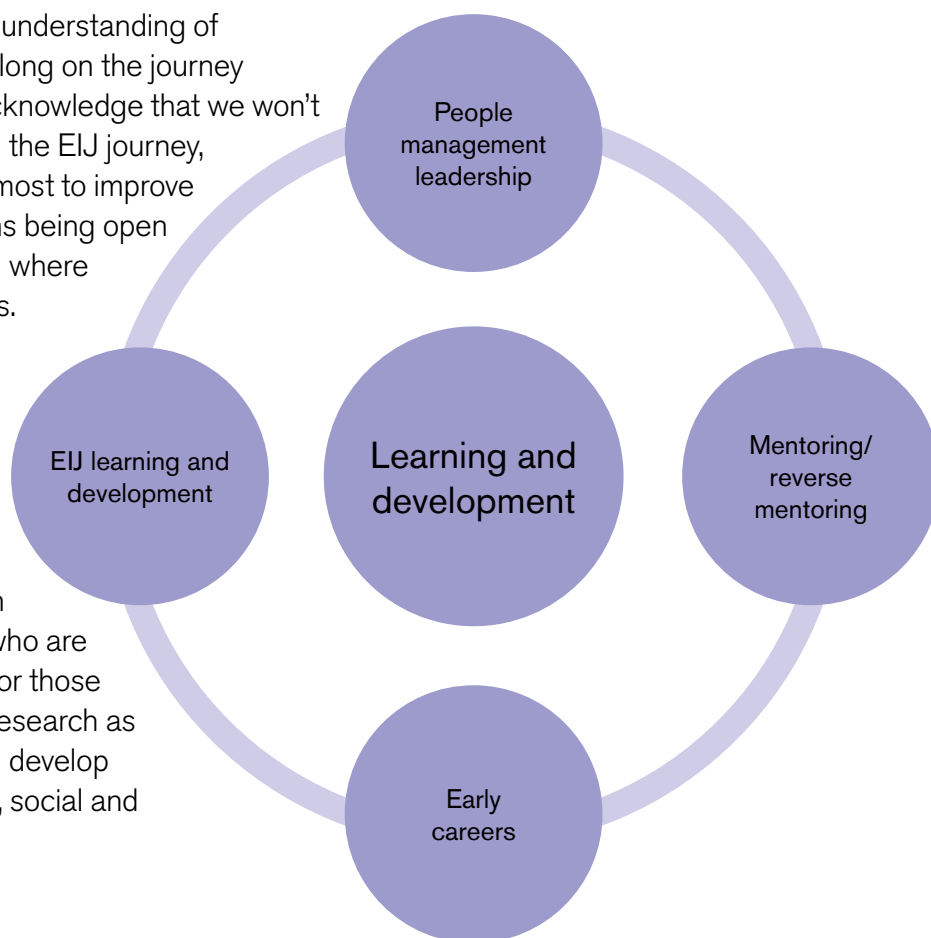
Wellbeing monitoring

Our people are our most important asset, we want them to be looked after not only through the benefits we put in place but also through our policies, processes and practices.

Learning and development

We are all at different stages of our understanding of EIJ. Our aim is not to force people along on the journey when they are not ready. We also acknowledge that we won't always be able to bring everyone on the EIJ journey, our aim will always be first and foremost to improve collective understanding. This means being open to continuous learning and adapting where necessary for groups and individuals. Our research ethics committee is thus planning research integrity and research ethics training at IIED.

We can work at IIED because of those who have paved the way. We will continue this cycle by bringing in diverse and passionate individuals who are just starting out in their career and/or those who previously haven't considered research as an area they want to go into. We will develop future researchers in environmental, social and economic development.



Learning and development indicators

EIJ learning and development

As we continue on a very important journey, we will learn together in different ways, whilst developing a shared understanding of EIJ principles.

People management leadership

We want to make sure our people managers, those who have direct reports, are supported to be the best people managers they can be. This means equipping them with the required skills to do so effectively and allocating resources for this to happen.

Mentoring/reverse mentoring

Being a trusted peer to share learning with is an effective way to embed EIJ principles, and we want to do this through formal mentoring and reverse mentoring programmes (where a more junior employee mentors someone more senior than them).

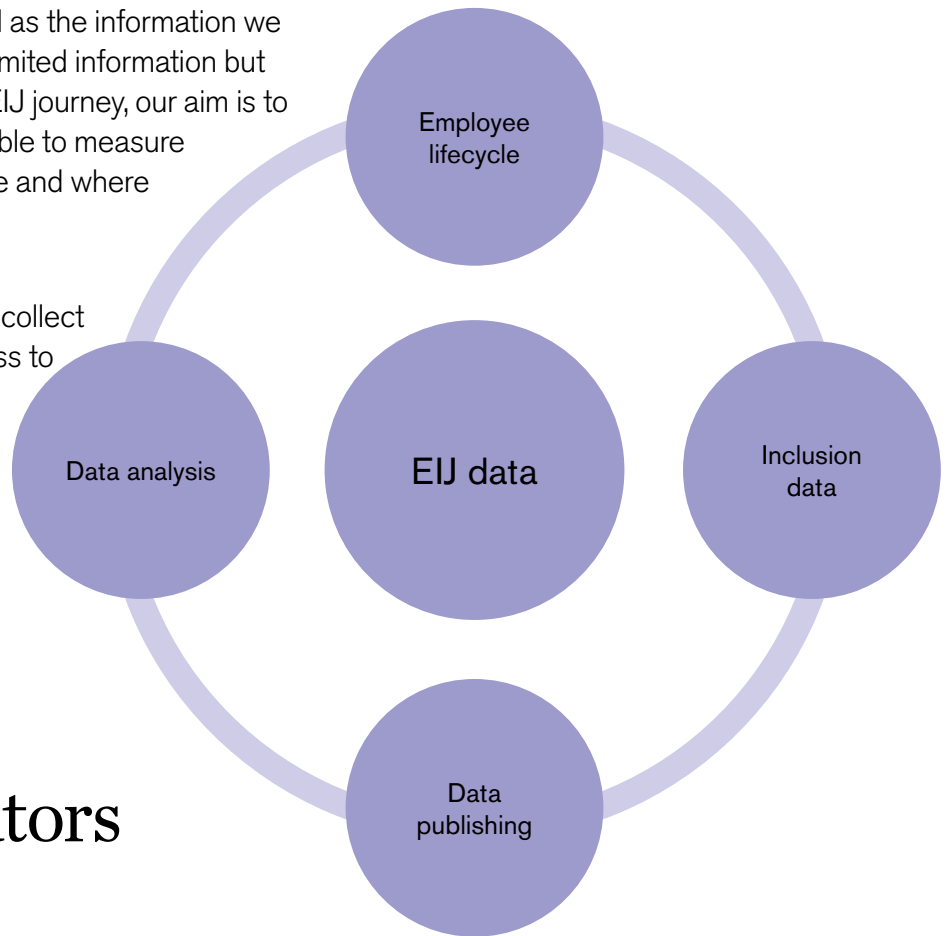
Early careers

Careers in international development is still only accessible to a small part of the population, especially research. Developing our early careers programme will allow us to build a strong pipeline of future diverse researchers.

EIJ data

Our decision making is only as good as the information we have access to. Currently, we have limited information but as we continue to progress on our EIJ journey, our aim is to plug any data gaps we have, to be able to measure progress, see how far we have come and where necessary make radical decisions.

Access to this data will follow our value of respect and dignity. We will collect and treat all data that we have access to with the respect and consideration it deserves and most importantly, be transparent about it.



EIJ data indicators

Data analysis

Intersectionality is one of our key EIJ principles and we will analyse all our data through this lens, ensuring we understand the diverse population at IIED collectively and individually, especially those who are historically marginalised.

Employee lifecycle

We will collect relevant and necessary data across the employee lifecycle. We want to know who is applying to us, who we are placing, who is progressing and who is staying. This matters for ensuring an environment where all can thrive and succeed at IIED.

Inclusion data

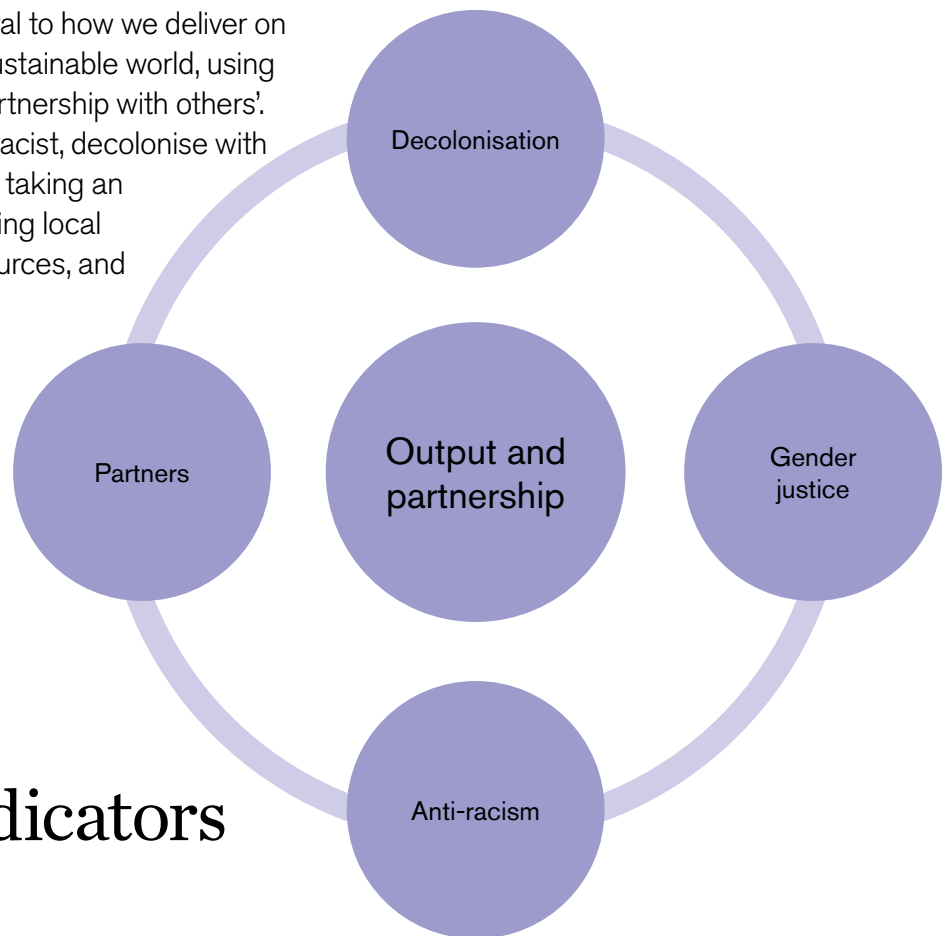
Diversity is counting the numbers. While this is very important to us, we do not want to bring diverse candidates into an environment where they feel they don't belong or are not included. This is why inclusion data is even more important.

Data publishing

Our commitment to transparency means informing our people of our progress and where we are at. This means publishing data internally and a summary externally for our key stakeholders.

Output and equitable partnership

Our work and our partners are central to how we deliver on our mission 'to build a fairer, more sustainable world, using evidence, action and influence in partnership with others'. This is why IIED will be actively anti-racist, decolonise with care and promote gender justice, by taking an intersectional approach and prioritising local knowledge, sharing power and resources, and increasing access to information.



Output and partnership indicators

Partners

We need to ensure the partners we work with have EIJ principles aligned with ours. This means implementing the recommendations from the internal review done as part of our equitable partnerships work, which included improving current tools and practices, such as contracting, due diligence and risk management, to align with equitable partnership principles.

Decolonisation

Our work in international development is critical and we need to reimagine a system and work that doesn't perpetuate colonisation. This means either having individuals in our new structure who have decolonisation expertise or upskilling researchers in this area to strengthen their knowledge and skills to understand what it means to decolonise research.

Gender justice

Gender justice is a continuous journey, especially when considering the regions our outputs are focused on. We need to put systems in place and experts in gender justice to positively influence the work we do.

Anti-racism

Anti-racism at IIED has been internally focused and we have only just started on this journey, we want to progress in this area with the support of IIED's DEI manager.

What next?

EIJ action plan

This strategy is supported by an EIJ action plan owned and monitored by IIED's DEI manager.

This action plan breaks down the strategic priorities into bite-size actionable chunks, allowing us as an organisation to have a clear direction on what is to be delivered over the next five years.

The action plan also details what is to be achieved year-on-year, the metrics by which we will measure success and where the responsibilities lie.

Progressing on EIJ at IIED will be a collective and joint effort with everyone coming together to achieve a clear vision of creating an environment where all our people and partners feel welcomed, respected, supported and valued to be their full selves.

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