

Paid Internship Programme for Women Planners, Engineers, and Climate Practitioners

Under the Project: Enhancing Local Capacities in Socially Inclusive Resilience in Asia (SIRA)

Location: Bangladesh and Nepal

Duration: 2-6 months

Who can apply: Self Identifying Women Candidates

Terms of Reference (ToR)

1. Background

The **Enhancing Local Capacities in Socially Inclusive Resilience in Asia (SIRA)** Project is a regional initiative being implemented by ICLEI South Asia and ICLEI Southeast Asia, in partnership with selected local governments in Bangladesh, Nepal, Indonesia, and the Philippines. The project aims to foster socially inclusive and climate-resilient local development by strengthening institutional capacities and supporting targeted interventions. It is funded by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) of the UK Government and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada, under the CLimate Adaptation and REsilience (CLARE) programme.

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability is a global network of more than 2,500 local and regional governments committed to advancing sustainable urban development. Active in over 125 countries, ICLEI shapes sustainability policy and drives local action for zero-emission, nature-based, equitable, resilient, and circular development. Through peer exchange, strategic partnerships, and capacity building, ICLEI supports its members and partners in delivering systemic change toward urban sustainability.

ICLEI South Asia Secretariat, headquartered in New Delhi, India, serves as the regional office for South Asia. It operates country and project offices in Bangladesh, Nepal, and Bhutan, providing technical support, knowledge exchange, and implementation guidance for sustainable and climate-resilient development.

ICLEI's engagement with local governments in the target countries has highlighted the significant underrepresentation of women and individuals from marginalised communities, particularly in technical roles such as urban planning, engineering, and climate action. To address this gap, the SIRA project is launching a targeted **Internship Programme** for women in their final year of study or recent graduates/post graduates. The goal is to enhance women's participation in local governance and promote gender-sensitive urban resilience planning for urban local governments (Municipalities, City Corporations) in Bangladesh and Nepal.

2. Objectives of the Internship Programme

- Provide practical exposure to women students and young professionals in local government environments
- Foster inclusive planning and development by increasing gender representation in technical roles
- Strengthen urban local governments through knowledge-sharing and mentorship

- Build a future cohort of gender-aware urban resilience professionals

3. Internship Structure and Duration

- **Who can apply:** This internship programme is only applicable to Self-identifying women candidates.
- **Duration:** 2 to 6 months (based on availability and mutual agreement).
- **Location:** Selected urban local governments in participating countries (Bangladesh and Nepal). Selected candidates will be posted within their respective countries; cross-country placements will not be considered under this programme.
- **Periods:**
 - 1 to 2 weeks at ICLEI offices for orientation and training
 - Remaining time at designated local government offices
- **Stipend/ Salary:** Basic stipend will be paid to interns to cover living costs at the place of internship. Please note no relocation charges can be provided.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Interns**
 - Prepare an internship work plan in consultation with their designated mentor, outlining key tasks and learning goals
 - Work closely with local government departments on planning, engineering, climate resilience, or related issues
 - Assist local government officials in developing and implementing climate resilience initiatives, both at policy and operational levels
 - Attend relevant training sessions and events organised by ICLEI and/ or local governments
 - Submit a final internship report at the end of the term
 - Submit administrative documents such as timesheet and report
 - Recommend measures to improve the internship programme
 - Actively participate in project peer-learning platforms
- **Host Local Governments**
 - Assign a dedicated focal point or mentor for each intern
 - Provide basic administrative support (e.g., work desk, internet access)
 - Approve and support implementation of the intern's work plan and integrate them into relevant technical teams
 - Offer mentoring and provide regular feedback to support intern development
 - Engage in orientation/handholding sessions facilitated by ICLEI if required
- **ICLEI Country Offices**
 - In consultation with the local government review and recommend approval of the workplan
 - Facilitate recruitment, orientation, and placement of interns
 - Organise training sessions and exposure events alongside municipal representatives

- Support host local governments and mentors with technical guidance and coordination
- Monitor and evaluate the internship programme, documenting lessons and good practices
- Monitor progress and provide backstopping measure to address emerging issues and challenges in the implementation of the workplan
- Ensure compliance with the Safeguarding Protocol developed under the project

5. Eligibility Criteria

- Applications are open exclusively to nationals of Bangladesh and Nepal, for positions within their respective countries.
- Final year female bachelor's students, postgraduate students or recent graduates/postgraduates from departments such as urban planning, geography, environmental science, forestry, climate and disaster management, natural resources management, civil engineering, development studies, or related disciplines.
- Preference will be given to candidates from marginalised groups (e.g., indigenous or tribal communities, ethnic minorities)
- Demonstrated interest in climate resilience, inclusive planning, or urban governance
- Basic proficiency in English and/ or relevant local languages
- Willingness to relocate to the assigned local government office in one of the SIRA project cities
- Strong adaptability to work within formal local government structures
- For current students, a no-objection or affiliation letter must be submitted from the respective department

6. Expected Outcomes

- Enhanced capacity of local governments to deliver on climate resilience and inclusive development
- Strengthened technical and leadership skills of women professionals in climate and planning fields
- Increased representation of women in municipal technical roles
- Improved institutional understanding of gender-responsive planning practices
- Strengthened peer-to-peer learning networks across participating countries

7. Application and Selection Process

- The call for applications will be shared via participating local governments, universities, ICLEI's networks, and other project communication channels in Bangladesh and Nepal
- Selection will be carried out by ICLEI in collaboration with participating local governments, prioritising merit, diversity, and equal opportunity

8. Reporting and Documentation

- Interns must submit monthly activity reports outlining key activities, learnings, and challenges
- A final report and a brief presentation must be submitted upon completion of the internship

- Local government mentors are encouraged to submit short feedback notes on the intern's performance and contribution as requested by ICLEI

9. Submission of Applications

Interested candidates are requested to submit the following documents as part of their application package:

- Curriculum Vitae (CV) (maximum 2 pages)
- Statement of Interest
- Proof of enrolment (for current students) or graduation certificate (for recent graduates)
- Departmental affiliation or no-objection letter (if currently enrolled)

Applications must be submitted **via email** to the appropriate ICLEI's country office based on the applicant's country of citizenship:

To:

For Bangladesh:

Md. Jubaer Rashid

Country Representative – Bangladesh

ICLEI South Asia

Email: jubaer.rashid@iclei.org

CC: simran.kaur@iclei.org

For Nepal:

Megh Dhoj Adhikari

Country Representative – Nepal

ICLEI South Asia

Email: meghdhoj.adhikari@icleisouthasia.co.in

CC: simran.kaur@iclei.org

Subject Line (for email submission):

Application for SIRA Internship Programme – [Your Country]

Closing Date : September 15, 2025.

All applications must be received by **15 September 2025**. Incomplete applications or submissions received after the deadline will not be considered. Only shortlisted applicants will be contacted.