

COMMUNITY LINKS AND HUMAN EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVE

Linking Communities, Changing Lives!



GENDER POLICY

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DEFINATION OF TERMS

Gender refers to the social differences between females and males throughout the life cycle that are learned, and though deeply rooted in every culture, are changeable over time, and have wide variations both within and between cultures. "Gender," along with class and race, determines the roles, power and resources for females and males in any culture. Historically, attention to gender relations has been driven by the need to address women's needs and circumstances as they are typically more disadvantaged than men. Increasingly, however, the humanitarian community is recognizing the need to know more about what men and boys face in crisis situations.

Gender equality refers to the equal enjoyment of rights, opportunities, resources and rewards by women, girls, boys and men. Equality does not mean that women, girls, boys and men are the same but that their enjoyment of rights, opportunities and life chances are not governed or limited by whether they were born female or male.

Gender equity is the process of being fair to women, girls, boys and men. To ensure fairness, strategies and measures must often be available to compensate for women's and girls' historical and social disadvantages that prevent them from otherwise operating on the same playing field with men and boys.

Gender mainstreaming was defined by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations as the process of assessing the implications for women, girls,

boys 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.

Gender analysis examines the relationships between females and males. It examines their roles, their access to and control of resources and the constraints they face relative to each other. A gender analysis should be integrated in any needs assessments, sector assessments or situational analysis, and should form the basis of design and development of interventions and strategies. .

Gender-based violence (GBV) is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between females and males. The nature and extent of specific types of ~~GBV vary across cultures, countries and regions.~~ Examples include sexual violence, including sexual exploitation/abuse and forced prostitution; domestic violence; trafficking; forced/early marriage; harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation; honour killings; and widow inheritance.

Women's and girls' empowerment involves awareness-raising, building of self-confidence, expansion of choices, increased access to and control over resources and actions to transform the structures and institutions which reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination and inequality. ACF Gender Policy 13

Gender sensitive vs. gender transformative: The gender transformative approach is defined as program approaches or activities that actively seek to build

equitable social norms and structures in addition to individual gender-equitable behaviour. Gender-transformative is different from a gender-sensitive approach through which programmes or activities respond to the different needs and constraints of individuals based on their gender. These activities significantly improve women's, girls', boys' or men's access to protection, treatment, or care. But by themselves they do little to change the larger contextual issues that lie at the root of gender inequities. While it is essential for programming to be gender-sensitive, this is not sufficient to fundamentally alter the balance of power in gender relations and to reach gender equity.

This Gender Policy defines CLHEI's explicit commitments to support gender equality and the principles expressed in international agreements. The accompanying implementation guideline sets out mechanisms and minimum common standards for all CLHEI members and Field Offices. This policy statement therefore strives to make our collective programming efforts more effective, builds on commitments made in the existing Policy Statements and reflects subsequent developments in gender equality policies of development organizations working to end poverty and social injustice. It thereby, sets the stage for increased accountability.

Through this policy CLHEI seeks to promote equal realization of dignity and human rights for girls, women, boys and men, and the elimination of poverty and injustice. Specifically, this policy is intended to improve the explicit incorporation of gender in programmatic and organizational practices.

CLHEI commits to:

1. Promote gender equality as an explicit internationally recognized human right.

2. Address systemic and structural practices that create barriers to the realization of women's rights and gender equality; including prevention and response to gender based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse.
3. Support the empowerment of women and girls as a key strategy toward ending poverty, conflict, human suffering and gender inequality.
4. Actively involve men and boys as allies in promoting gender equality.
5. Analyze and implement strategies to manage potential risks and harms to women, girls, boys and men.
6. Engage and coordinate with partners, governments, funders and civil society organizations to promote and support effective, creative and impactful ways to promote gender equality
7. Monitor, evaluate and institutionalize organizational learning regarding specific gender equality results.
8. Actively hold ourselves and others accountable to gender equality standards.
9. Ensure that key organizational policies, systems and practices, including but not limited to budgeting, human resource recruitment, training and management, and decision making support women's rights and gender equality.
10. Ensuring adequate funding to realize our commitments.
11. Apply these commitments within CLHEI and across all programme areas using integrated planning approaches and recognized gender sensitive tools and techniques such as gender analysis frameworks, collection of age/sex disaggregated data, and results-focused design and evaluation.

CLHEI intends to uphold gender in every level

At Organizational level:

A) Staff composition/representation

- Recruiting adequate women staff and ensuring the balance also at senior levels; with an objective of achieving a numerical gender balance in all posts at all levels
- Ensuring equal opportunities among male and female staff for personal growth, in promotion benefits, training and working conditions
- Ensuring equitable representation and participation of men and women in the core group, Board of trustees and in various functional committees of the organization

B) Workplace

- Providing a safe and secure workplace for women staff, free from sexual harassment with a Gender Complaints committee to look into specific concerns.
- Providing an enabling and friendly work environment where both men and women enjoy and actively participate in work. This includes providing flexible working hours and allowing working from home, wherever possible
- Extending work related concessions and relaxations for women staff depending upon the situations and requirements; e.g. providing secure transport facilities when they work late hours; giving relaxation over travel time for the next day for those in the field; ensuring security measures along with minimum basic facilities for women staff travelling in the field.

- Reviewing the organizational structure, functioning, problems in relation to gender imbalances among staff and the work environment from time to time and taking definite steps to address the same
- Strategic orientation to staff in the field based programs and advocacy initiatives towards increasing women's access, control and ownership over the natural resources.
- Placing Gender in existing committees. A woman employee who has put in 3 months of service after confirmation shall be entitled for 4 months of Maternity Leave on full pay and under probation; she will be eligible for leave without pay for the same length of period.
- Men employees when their spouses have children shall be entitled for 30 days of leave either immediately after child birth or fifteen days before child birth and fifteen days after child birth for primary parenting and child nurturing. In case of miscarriage / abortion, women staff can avail 2 weeks of Maternity Leave with full pay and spouses are entitled for one week's leave.
- Making efforts to develop infrastructure for childcare facilities in the office premises in order to ensure that the parents can bring their children in circumstances in which the child cannot be taken.

In the field

- Furthering deliberate and intense efforts to promote participation of women and their collectives in various aspects of natural resource management.
- Facilitating participation and even representation of women in various institutional structures created for the management of natural resources like committees, user groups etc.
- Analysis of gender disaggregated roles and work patterns. And make special efforts to reduce the work load of women.
- Ensuring equal wages to equal work for both men and women in the works as part of the programs, where CLHEI is directly or indirectly involved either as an anchor of the program or as a facilitating support service provider.
- Making special efforts to constantly identify vulnerable women and provide them the necessary support and guidance
- Sensitizing the men and mobilizing their support towards gender balance
- Building awareness and sensitivity by processing information and publishing communication material in diverse media to appeal different strata of people in our functional domain.

C) Staff capacity building

- Facilitating staff capacity building processes and trainings to enhance perspectives and conceptual clarity on Gender issues (*for all the staff members*). It will be an important component of the induction programme

- Ensuring that all trainings (internal and external) facilitated by the organization are gender-sensitive.- a) training content/methodology/mode of facilitation b) logistics part -time/location of venue/crèche facilities/other logistics/first-aid kit
- Conducting Gender trainings for both men and women; and ensuring participation of women in all the field level meetings and trainings

D) Organizational policies and systems

- Making all HR systems and policies gender-sensitive and responsive, and integrating gender indicators into staff performance appraisal systems.
- Incorporating and explicitly mentioning gender sensitivity as an essential element in the tasks/job profiles in all terms of reference, including TORs for external consultants.
- Ensuring that the conceptual clarity and sensitivity on gender issues will be one of the important selection criteria in recruitment processes and capacity building efforts of staff
- Initiating and building the advocacy around gender balance and making efforts to integrate gender concerns into the scaling up and mainstream developmental programs

E) Staff benefits

- Following all statutory requirements related to maternity and paternity leaves.
- Ensuring that staff access to and use of information technology is gender equitable

Arrangements should be made for recording all information and open access for reviewing the performance of tasks mentioned at organizational level regularly in different forums from staff meetings to Annual meetings.

Networking:

- CLHEI would proactively make several efforts in promoting gender concerns in the work with partners. It involves extending support to partners in organizing training programs, conducting gender studies, preparing resource material, providing documentation support etc.
- CLHEI would extend support to partner organisations in developing their own gender policies, strategies and programs
- CLHEI would further strengthen linkages with the Gender desk of Centre for World Solidarity (CWS) to work on various women issues. Participation and contribution to the common platforms like Synergy group of women employees of all Solidarity Institutions will further help the organization.
- Sharing Gender reports with our network members and partner organizations and also facilitating similar process within the partner organizations to promote gender sensitivity
- Associating with networks and organisations working on this agenda like AP women's network
- Supporting and expressing solidarity with partners at field level in taking up issues of discrimination or harassment against women

Note: This is a policy statement, which outlines CLHEI's sensitivity towards Gender and its operational framework to address the related concerns.

Policy Implementation


The policy is accompanied by proposed implementation arrangements, common standards and supporting definitions. More operational guidance and enforcement will be developed by CLHEI staff as required to support the policy implementation. To ensure the policy is effectively applied and achieves expected results.

Policy Review

CLHEI will work collaboratively to undertake a review of this common gender policy. This will take place after four years.

Signed By


Chairman BOI


Board Secretary