

**POLICY NAME:** Gender Policy  
**APPROVED BY:** CPAC  
**POLICY OWNER:** Co-Directors, HR

**CATEGORY:** Human Resources  
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

*“God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. (Gen1:27)”*

World Renew is a Christian Development and Humanitarian organisation that believes men and women are created in God’s image as equals. Brokenness of sin affects how men and women relate to each other. World Renew is committed to heal the brokenness and restore gender equality in all aspects of its organisational culture, structure, programmes, and policies and in our engagement with participant communities across the globe. World Renew will adopt both a community-based and a rights-based approach in actualizing the commitments of this policy.

Over the years, progress has been made in decreasing Gender Inequalities, however, everywhere across the globe women and girls continue to be disproportionately affected by poverty, gender-based violence and humanitarian crises. In addition, they face injustices and discrimination while participating in political, public, social and economic platforms.

Against this background, and in cognizance of the critical role gender equality plays in sustainable development, World Renew commits to engage in programmes that empower women and girls to fully participate in their communities, economies and societies and supports them to overcome inequality, discrimination and stereotyping. In this journey of empowerment, World Renew will engage men and boys as essential champions as well as to avoid reverse discrimination against them. World Renew’s programmes encourage their involvement in fostering practices that achieve gender justice.

In addition to World Renew’s theological foundation, our commitment to gender equality is strengthened by internationally agreed upon Human Rights commitments. These include, among others, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, on women, peace, and security, that bind all states and provide for equal enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms for both men and women. This policy is aligned

to the Sustainable Development Goals that recognize gender equality and the empowerment of women as an individual goal<sup>1</sup> as well as a cross cutting theme across the other development goals.

**Gender Equality** refers to the enjoyment of equal opportunities, conditions and treatment of women, men, boys and girls to human rights, contributing and benefiting from political, social, and economic development. It is the equal valuing of similarities, differences and roles played by men and women in the society. Equality does not mean men and women become the same, rather, it is about their full partnership in the home, community and society.

**Gender Equity** is the process of being fair through just treatment of both sexes. It takes into account the different needs of men and women, cultural barriers, and past and present discrimination of the specific group. Gender equity may include various kinds of targeted actions, as permitted by international, domestic and local law.

World Renew works in plural and multi-faith contexts. This necessitates an attitude of respect for other traditions through attentive listening, exploration of shared values, inclusive needs analysis, and participatory programme planning and evaluation. At the same time, the values and relationships of trust we share with our faith-based partner networks provide opportunity to stimulate dialogue within the church about gender, faith and culture.

## **2. SCOPE**

In 2006, World Renew’s Board of Directors affirmed that “World Renew will work for gender equality in all aspects of its programmes and organisational culture” and that “Gender Equality must be integrated throughout the organisation, in all of World Renew’s policies, structures, and culture. It must also be integrated throughout all World Renew programming, including diaconal, community and organisational development, Justice, North-South relations and Disaster Response.”

The World Renew Gender Policy applies to all staff, Interns, Volunteers and visiting groups and guides all our programmatic work and organisational culture in the home and field offices. It is complementary to, but does not replace, other policies including World Renew’s Code of Conduct, Partnerships Policy, the Justice policy and ACT Alliance’s Gender Justice Policy.

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<sup>1</sup> Sustainable Development Goal No.5, Achieve Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls.

### 3. PURPOSE

The Purpose of this Policy is to ensure that the principles of gender equality and non-discrimination are a common value and recognised as an inalienable human right in World Renew's programming and organisational culture.

This Gender Policy reinforces and builds on these commitments, its objectives are:

- To provide consistent messages and a coordinated approach to gender equality by World Renew at all levels.
- To guide World Renew staff and volunteers in adopting the principles and practices of gender equality;
- To foster an organizational culture that exemplifies World Renew's commitment to gender equality;
- To communicate World Renew's position on gender equality to international, national and local stakeholders;
- To engage World Renew's partners in policies and programming that promote gender equality.

### 4. PRINCIPLES

World Renew's Principles of Gender Equality are rooted in our biblical understanding that men and women are created equally to live in partnership with each other and built on the belief that the joint gifts and collaboration of men and women are needed to achieve our goal to renew hope, reconcile lives and restore creation.

The principles are further reinforced by the United Nations Human Rights standards on Achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment.

Foundational Principles:

**Principle 1) Equality and Non-Discrimination:** World Renew's work as a development and humanitarian agency may affect the human rights of the people we work with

negatively or positively. To avoid inadvertently reinforcing societal divisions, break down relationships and exacerbate gender-based violence and injustice, gender considerations must be fully taken into consideration. All programmes and policies should promote fundamental human rights and principles of non-discrimination, so that men and women benefit equally and injustices are not perpetuated. (The Do No Harm Principle adapted to gender only).

**Principle 2) Participation and Empowerment of Women and Girls:** World Renew recognises that women and girls are key agents of transformation in their communities. We will further the realisation of their rights as it is essential to building just and peaceful communities as well as ensuring sustainable development. This assumes the involvement of men and boys to champion these changes towards equality in participation and decision-making.

**Principle 3) Holistic Approach to Gender Equality Interventions:** World Renew recognises that Gender inequalities at the individual, household, community and society levels are interrelated and interdependent, hence requiring holistic interventions with the ultimate aim of ensuring gender transformative programming.

**Principle 4) Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls:** World Renew is committed to challenging injustices. No form of gender-based violence and no practice that undermines the dignity of women and girls and their rights to be protected from physical and psychological harm will be tolerated. Programmes will be developed to proactively address gender-based violence.

**Principle 5) Ensure access to Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR):** World Renew believes that SRHR is first of all an accountability to God for flourishing life as He intended. In recognition that access to SRHR is a key factor for ensuring the enjoyment of other rights and for poverty reduction, World Renew uses a values-driven and values-transformative approach to encourage and sustain healthy practices in SRHR. This will enable individuals and families to make informed decisions as well as have access to services and information concerning their sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care. This will enhance their productivity in the community.

## **5. POLICY**

### **5.1 Organisational Commitments**

- i. Strive to ensure financial, human and other resources to implement the provisions of Gender Policy.

- ii. Ensure gender balance in participation, decision-making, and representation and staffing, as permitted by law, at World Renew’s home and field offices at all levels.
- iii. Where permissible, support country offices and partners to adopt a board approved Gender Policy.
- iv. Redesign staff performance appraisals to include staff’s contribution to the goal of gender equality and non-discrimination in all its forms.
- v. Ensure the training and technical capacity development on gender is provided for all staff and long-term partners.
- vi. Create awareness and publicity of the Gender Policy amongst partners and communities.
- vii. Build the reputation of World Renew as a competent and reputable organization on gender equality issues amongst its peers locally and internationally.
- viii. Respect the diversity of women, men, boys and girls and recognize that factors such as age, language, ethnicity, race, gender identity, caste, culture, religion, disability, family and socio-economic status, and rural or urban background can create additional barriers to gender equality.
- ix. Make provision for evidence-informed learning through research and documentation and sharing with stakeholders in North America and in the field offices.
- x. Ensure that World Renew’s operations, policies, and programmes promote the equal rights of all individuals and do not directly or indirectly discriminate against anyone on the grounds stipulated in (8) above or as otherwise required by national or local law.
- xi. Promote flexible and family work arrangements that enable both men and women to contribute fully to the workplace without sacrificing family responsibilities.
- xii. Ensure gender equality considerations in selection of partners.
- xiii. Build World Renew’s external communication to reflect gender equality considerations.

## **5.2 Programmatic/ Project Level Commitments**

- i. Undertake age, sex, and gender and diversity analysis in all our operations, policies, programmes and activities and, to the extent permitted by law, take appropriate targeted action in order to achieve gender equality.
- ii. Ensure data disaggregation by gender for all the projects and programmes including in the complaints and feedback mechanisms.
- iii. Ensure the meaningful participation of women and men in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of all our operations, policies, and programmes.
- iv. Promote the right of girls to participate in decision-making in a meaningful way and to express their views in all matters that affect their lives.
- v. Ensure that gender is mainstreamed in all our programmes and interventions with the communities and congregations.
- vi. Implement specific programmes and policies to support the empowerment of women and girls so that they can access and enjoy their rights.

- vii. Ensure that a rights-based approach and thorough gender analysis are incorporated into humanitarian work and subsequent community reconstruction efforts (e.g. linking relief, rehabilitation and development).
- viii. Ensure deliberate involvement of men, boys and community opinion shapers including religious leaders, gatekeepers, local and national governments in interventions aimed at gender transformation.
- ix. Develop and strengthen sector specific indicators with a strong gender transformative dimension.

## **6. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed every three years and revised to incorporate any lessons learned during implementation or significant changes in context.

The Gender Working Group will be tasked with the tracking and monitoring of the progressive realisation of the provisions of this policy. The field offices, under the stewardship of the country consultants, will take the lead in ensuring the realisation of the policy in their respective countries. A compliance mechanism shall be used to ensure the organisation keeps its commitment to the policy.

## **7. KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS<sup>2</sup>**

*Community-Based Approach:* A community-based approach is based on an inclusive partnership that recognizes the resilience, capacities and resources of communities. It mobilizes and builds on these to deliver assistance and solutions while supporting community processes and goals. It recognizes the role of NGOs as facilitative and temporary with their interventions having long-term impact. It reinforces the dignity and self-esteem of communities and seeks to empower all actors to work together to support the different members of the community in exercising and enjoying their human and civil rights.

*Empowerment:* Empowerment refers to increasing the freedom and capacity of women and men to choose and to act, increasing their opportunities to influence and make decisions that affect their lives and be able to claim their rights.

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<sup>2</sup> World Renew commits to complying with its applicable statutory and legislative obligations. Accordingly, the specific definitions, terms or concepts used in this policy are for reference purposes only. If necessary, the applicable provincial or federal definitions mandated by the appropriate jurisdiction where an employee is employed, will take precedence and/or will supersede the definitions outlined in this policy.

*Gender:* Gender refers to the expectations, duties and value placed on men, women, boys and girls by the society based on their sex or identity.

*Gender Analysis:* Gender analysis is an organized way to learn about the relationships and roles between men and women in a specific context and to uncover the causes and consequences of society differentiation of the assigned roles and responsibilities of gender differences and gender injustices.

*Gender-Based Violence:* Gender-based violence refers to physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence inflicted on a person because of being male or female. Girls and women are most frequently the targets of gender-based violence; GBV also affects boys and men, especially those who do not fit dominant male stereotypes of behavior or appearance. Some acts of GBV include domestic violence, trafficking of girls or boys, female genital cutting, early and child marriages, rape and defilement.

*Gender Discrimination:* Gender discrimination is the unequal or unfair treatment of men and boys or women and girls based solely on their sex rather than on their individual skills, talents and capabilities. It means one is treated with less value because they are male or female. Gender discrimination is often based on negative gender stereotypes and involves any distinction, exclusion or preference based on sex that has the effect of negatively affecting equality of opportunity and treatment. Social exclusion, inability to participate in decision-making processes and limited access to services and resources are common forms of discrimination.

*Gender Equality:* Gender Equality is achieved when men and women and boys and girls are equally valued, have the same chances to use their God-given gifts and enjoy their full human rights. It is realized when men and women both contribute to the development of their communities and societies and when they benefit equally from development.

*Gender Equity:* Gender equity is the process of treating both men and women fairly. As a strategy to reach gender equality, gender equity means that men and women may need to be treated differently so that they can enjoy the same benefits.

*Gender Mainstreaming:* Gender mainstreaming is about considering both women's and men's concerns and experiences when designing programs or developing policies and evaluating all programs, plans and policies to see how they affect men and women differently, so that men and women can benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated.

*Intersectionality:* An approach that seeks to examine various social and culturally constructed categories such as gender, class, disabilities and other social identities and the related systems of oppression, domination and/or discrimination.

*Rights-Based Approach:* A rights-based approach integrates the norms, standards and principles of the international human rights system into the policies, programmes and processes of development and humanitarian actors. It focuses on both outcomes and processes as it is

founded on the principles of participation and empowering individuals and communities to promote change and respect for rights.

*Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR):* Sexual and reproductive health rights include the rights of all married, unmarried (adolescents and youth) and couples to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children, and to have the information and means to do so. Decisions concerning reproduction should be made free from discrimination, coercion and violence. The SRHR services include a range of family planning; obstetrical and gynecological care, prevention, care and treatment of STIs and HIV/AIDs; education and counselling on human sexuality and reproductive health; prevention and surveillance of violence against women and elimination of traditional harmful practices.

*Masculinities and Femininities:* Masculinities and femininities refer to the possession of qualities traditionally associated with being a man or being a woman. The terms are in plural form because physical and personality traits considered 'masculine' and 'feminine' are different in different settings, and so there are as many definitions for masculinity and femininity as there are for culture. When we talk about 'positive' masculinities or femininities, we refer to men and women taking on qualities that exhibit their full and equal humanness as imagers of God, allow them to live in right relationship with each other and encourage the full use of their gifts in the fulfilment of their callings.

*Sex:* Sex is the biological difference between men and women. It refers to the differences between men's and women's bodies.