

Attachment 2.6 Gender Policy

Version 3.1

Introduction

The Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), recognise that gender justice is a fundamental human right. The fifth Sustainable Development Goal (2015) recognises the need to “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” as a fundamental means to achieve global sustainable development. ChildFund acknowledges that gender inequality is one of the most significant drivers of poverty worldwide, with women 4% more likely to live in extreme poverty than men¹. ChildFund Australia recognises that inequitable access to gender justice is one of the most significant factors affecting the wellbeing of boys and girls, men and women.

ChildFund Australia understands that in order to reduce poverty and achieve better development outcomes for boys and girls and their communities, a gendered perspective must be integrated into the design of the programs we support. We support the principles of gender transformative programming and aim to foster critical examination of gender norms and dynamics and work to challenge attitudes and strengthen systems that support gender equality.

This Gender Policy defines ChildFund Australia’s explicit commitments to support gender equality and our willingness to challenge inequitable gender norms and dynamics. Our organisation recognises that it is women and girls who experience more disadvantage due to different socially constructed identities, cultural norms, roles and responsibilities. Our programs work towards the ‘twin-track’ principles of inclusive programming; enabling both gender specific projects and also mainstreaming gender perspective principles across all projects, with an aim to advance their rights and overcome deprivation, exclusion or vulnerability. The policy aims to provide a clear guidance for ensuring proactive and consistent integration of gender equality in all ChildFund Australia programs.

Key Principles

Gender transformational approach: Efforts to address the results of gender inequality can only be sustainable and effective if they understand and respond to the underlying factors that drive them. These are the norms, beliefs and practices embedded through the values and behaviours of both women and men, that result in discrimination between boys and girls. A transformational approach to promoting gender equality is therefore a critical element of supporting all children to experience a safe and happy childhood. It is also an essential platform for moving to explore emerging questions around diverse gender identity and rights as a next step.

Do No Harm: A “Do No Harm” approach to gender equality requires that projects/programmes conduct an analysis of the potential risks of unintentionally perpetuating or reinforcing gender inequalities in the context of the intervention, proactively monitor risks, and take corrective/compensatory measures if applicable.

Intersectionality: Gendered inequality interacts and intersects with other forms of discrimination in society, such as age, disability, racism, homophobia, classism and other. Programming and activities should understand and respond to the ways in which gender intersect with other personal

¹ World Bank Group, “Gender Differences in Poverty and Household Composition through the Life-cycle”, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/135731520343670750/pdf/WPS8360.pdf>, March 2018.

characteristics/identities, and how these intersections contribute to unique experiences of discrimination.

Participation and inclusion: all genders have the right to access information and participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives. Programming and activities should be structured so as to ensure the equitable participation of all genders.

Policy Statement

ChildFund Australia will work to address gender-based inequalities and build the power of girls and women to enable equity. We are committed to implement inclusive projects to ensure that all genders have equitable opportunity to participate in, and benefit from, programs and projects we support.

Policy Commitments

ChildFund Australia will:

- Ensure that the programs aspects of the Strategic Plan, Country Strategic Papers and program policies reflect the organisation’s understanding of and commitment to addressing gender inequality that keeps children, especially girls, from achieving their full rights and potential through their childhood and later lives.
- Ensure that a gender analysis is undertaken for all projects. This is needed to identify the different risks, barriers and strategies for responding to boys’ and girls’ vulnerability. Gender analysis should be holistic, and explore the system around girls and boys, including service providers and community groups, because of the impact they may have on children.
- Put adequate time, budget and human resources in place to enable staff to understand the importance of gender equity and how to build the power of girls and women when implementing projects and programs.
- Design projects and programs that reflect the ‘twin-track’ inclusive principles, enabling both gender specific projects and/or gender mainstreamed considerations, dependant on gender analysis and need. This includes mandatory collection of gender disaggregated data.
- Support field staff to collect and analyse data with gender equality programming tools that are integrated into ChildFund Country Office and Sydney existing processes (e.g. gender analysis tool, gender specific/mainstreamed activities, gender indicators and gender equality outcomes).
- Build networks with local civil society organisations and INGOs with demonstrated experience in transformative gender programming. Explore new partners’ attitudes to and experience with gender programming and document this in partner assessments and partnership ‘health checks’ for accountability and consistency with ChildFund’s programming approach.
- Report to participants, donors and the public on progress on gender equality in ChildFund’s work, including program related advocacy and communications that uphold commitment to gender equality, including being respectful, using inclusive and positive language and images and avoiding stereotypes based on gender.
- Take all measures to prevent and respond to all forms of sexual harassment and violence, and sexual exploitation and abuse of children and vulnerable adults, promote staff awareness and training, and effective systems for reporting and monitoring.

- Ensure girls and women are consulted on the design, implementation and monitoring of feedback and complaints mechanisms.
- Undertake periodic assessments of our own and implementing partners gender practices, at least every 3 years, including the degree to which this policy is being implemented and the ongoing quality of the policy and practices.

Guidance Notes

Please refer to the ChildFund Australia Program Handbook for supporting documents, such as Gender Equality Toolkit containing template and checklists, and other resources to assist with the implementation of this policy.

Document Information

Document details	
Name of document	Gender Policy
Owner	Global Programs Director
Approved By	Board of Directors – Program Review Committee
Date of Approval	17 June 2020
Date of Effect	17 June 2020
Assigned Review Period	Every three years after Date of Approval.
Date of Next Review	31 December 2023

Version control				
Version No.	Version Date	Amendment Details	Amended By	Approved By
1.0	25/10/2007			Board of Directors
2.0	06/02/2013			Board of Directors
2.1	12/06/2018			International Programs Director
3.0	27/09/2019	Input incorporated from Program Review Committee	Head of Programs	Board of Directors – Program Review Committee
3.1	17/06/2020	Commitments updated to include periodic assessment of the policy and its implementation.	Compliance Officer	Global Programs Director