

Gender Policy

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1. Introduction

The rationale for mainstreaming a gender perspective in all the programme activities of CVM and APA lies in the APA and CVM mission statements and objectives to work together for a more humane world. Gender equality ensures that there is no sex-based discrimination in the allocation of resources, benefits or access to services. The purpose of this policy is to define the main principles and approach of CVM and APA and how to address gender issues in APA and CVM programme activities.

2. Principles

The achievement of gender equality requires that:

- Gender equality and equity are vital to CVM's and APA's work.
- The empowerment of women and girls is recognized as basic to our mission because women and girls benefit least from services/resources, carry the largest share of work and are more exposed to poverty and most at risk to HIV infection.
- Every individual understands and promotes attitudes and behaviours that facilitate gender equity and equality.
- Adequate resources are allocated to ensure that gender is prioritized as a fundamental aspect to all programming and efforts. All activities of the programmes are continuously monitored against gender indicators.
- The cross-cutting nature of gender concerns are recognized (gender equality is both everyone's responsibility and an area that warrants specialized attention and resources).

3. Objective

The gender policy aims to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment are central to APA's and CVM's:

- Programmes in all countries
- Organizations, culture and behaviour
- Organizational identity

4. Programmes

All programmes must support women's empowerment and promote women's rights through the use of the following strategies:

- Apply gender analysis at all stages of the programme, including planning, implementation, impact assessment and development of measurable gender indicators.
- Develop the capacity of programme staff to carry out monitoring and evaluation related to gender.

- Develop gender-sensitive approaches and methods of work, which are empowering, building on lessons learnt from monitoring and evaluation of activities through participation at all levels.
- Ensure project staff take responsibility for promoting gender equality.
- Initiate and promote structures and opportunities for women's participation in decision-making at all levels of the organisations and programmes.
- Ensure that women's and girls' voices are heard in mainstream development processes.
- Include gender equality perspectives in all advocacy work and spheres of influence.
- Support women and girls to ensure their economic, social, political, civil and cultural rights.
- Promote women's and girls' independent access to and control over resources, employment, services and institutions, including their ability to exercise rights over their own lives (free of early marriage, FGM, and violence).
- Develop, promote and use creative ways to bring about attitudinal and behavioural change of men and boys so they become agents of change to facilitate gender equality.
- Support and seek out development partners who are working together in our programmes and aligned to our gender principles.

5. Organization Development

Gender equality and equity are vital to CVM's and APA's work and missions and will continue to be maintained through the following strategies:

- Ensure that gender balance is sought for employment, contracting, and within the Board of Directors.
- Recognize knowledge related to gender concerns and gender-related analysis as one of the core areas of capacity for staff and build capabilities throughout the organisations' projects.
- Build a common understanding around gender through quarterly meetings and trainings.
- Ensure that all trainings of the organizations are gender sensitive.
- Staffing and implementation of gender sensitive projects and integrate gender indicators into staff objectives, accountabilities and performance management systems.

6. Organizational Identity

The external presentation of CVM and APA should promote a balanced view of the issues surrounding gender equality and equity through the following strategies:

- Gender analysis will be the basis of the development of all fundraising and campaign work.
- Gender concerns will be incorporated into activities where possible.
- Inform donors about CVM and APA gender objectives and principles.
- All materials and general communications will be formulated to reflect APA's and CVM's objectives and principles on gender equality/equity through challenging gender stereotypes and recognising diversity.

- Gender sensitive language and images will be used in all internal and external communications.

7. Implementation

The following guidelines detail the responsibility of different parts of the organisations for the achievement of gender equality:

- All those involved in all levels of the organisations will be responsible for implementing this policy including project coordinators, representatives and teams.
- The implementation process will be included in ~~all~~ annual reports.
- Country representatives and project facilitators will demonstrate the political will to implement the required changes implied by the policy.
- Country representatives are responsible for implementation details for country programmes.
- All staff will be expected to show a gender perspective in attitude and behaviour as well as in their work.
- The organisational mechanisms and gender posts necessary for implementation of the gender policy will be an essential part of all project funding resourced.