

## GENDER MAINSTREAMING POLICY

### 1. Introduction

Oxfam India (OIN) is committed to the principle of gender justice, non-discrimination, and equal opportunity for all, and gender friendly laws at the workplace. Oxfam's vision is to create a more equal, just, and sustainable world. The overarching vision of the organisation is "*Right to Life with Dignity for All*".

All of OIN's work strives towards the creation of a gender just environment, promoting the goal of equity and equality in all spheres of life that would result in joint decision-making and leadership, defining and shaping policies, structures and decisions that affect the lives of women and men, based on their own interests and priorities.

OIN has developed and adapted programme models in partnership with local partner organisations that are committed to advancing gender equity while maximizing the participation of girls and women, who lack access to education, health and other opportunities that are enjoyed by boys and men. To make a sustained impact on reducing poverty and development, strategies must empower girls, women, boys and men.

Gender mainstreaming is a concept of ensuring equality amongst all irrespective of biological differences amongst women and men. It means bringing the experience, knowledge, and interests of women and men to bear on the developmental agenda. It would involve ensuring that the perspectives and interests of women and men become central to programme analysis and planning, resource allocation, implementation, research, policy development, advocacy/dialogue, influencing and monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects. It would also involve ensuring that the perspectives and interests of women and men are reflected in the organizational policies and practices.

### 2. Purpose of the Policy

This policy provides a framework for ensuring gender is mainstreamed across Oxfam India's programmes. OIN's commitment to gender equality is clearly articulated in the OIN Strategic Plan 2010-2015 Strategic Plan, with an emphasis on integrating gender equality across three external change goals and a specific focus on gender in Change Goal 4: Gender Justice.

This policy is intended to guide OIN's work and provide staff and partners with guidelines on gender mainstreaming. This document will be shared with all staff along with an action plan to guide implementation.

- **Guiding Principles**

Gender equality is a human rights issue. OIN is guided by international conventions on women's rights as defined in key United Nations (UN) instruments.

The Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) 1979) guarantees the right for all women to be free from discrimination and sets out obligations for State parties to ensure legal and practical enjoyment of that right.

Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993) was adopted to strengthen and compliment the process of effective implementation of CEDAW and to situate violence against women (VAW) within a human rights framework. It contains within it the recognition of ‘the urgent need for the universal application to women of the rights and principles with regard to equality, security, liberty, integrity and dignity of all human beings’.<sup>1</sup>

The Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) (1995) is an agenda for women’s empowerment and seeks to promote and protect the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms of all women. BPfA endorsed gender mainstreaming as a global strategy to promote gender equality.

### 3. Key Principles

The gender mainstreaming policy and practices will be guided by:

- **Rights-based:** OIN will use a rights-based framework to mainstream gender and women’s rights, drawing in particular on CEDAW and BPfA. The aim is to transform the existing relations between women and men.
- **Inclusion and participation:** OIN will support full and meaningful participation by women and men, girls and boys in our own and partner activities which will inform our priorities, objectives and strategies in implementing long term development, humanitarian, and advocacy programmes and campaigns.
- **Addressing multiple layers of discrimination:** OIN will pay particular attention to the multiple layers of discrimination women and girls may face such as disability, age, and religious or ethnic discrimination. OIN recognises that women and girls are not a homogenous group and will strive to ensure as far as possible that our programme work addresses the compounded discrimination that women may face.
- **Positive representation:** OIN will ensure that all our work enhances women and girls’ status and promotes gender equality and women’s rights.

### 4. Elements of the Policy

In addition to upholding the above mentioned principles, all OIN programmes will:

- Ensure gender is incorporated into the situational analysis of all programme and sectoral contexts (including policy, advocacy and influencing contexts) along with an analysis of factors such as power, caste, culture, religion, class, disability, age, sexuality and HIV/AIDS as far as possible.
  - Ensure that targets are set for the inclusion and active participation of women and girls in all OIN programmes as appropriate based on the above analysis.
  - Ensure that programmes, policy recommendations, advocacy and influencing interventions do not harm women and girls or exacerbate gender inequality.
  - Develop a realistic and robust evaluation process which will ensure:
    - Collection of project relevant sex-disaggregated data
-

- Inclusion of appropriate indicators in its strategic framework and performance indicators
  - Inclusion of appropriate indicators in monitoring and evaluation of programmatic intervention
  - Initiate the inclusion of appropriate indicators in the financial, operational, communication and organizational aspects
- Ensure project / programme reporting and organisational documents reflect how women and girls have been included and impacted by the intervention(s) both as standalone and as a cross-cutting issue.
  - Develop appropriate tools and train Oxfam India staff and partners to strengthen their capacity to undertake gender analysis and mainstreaming.
  - Ensure all staff and partners have an awareness of gender mainstreaming principles and approaches and how these align with a rights-based approach.
  - Ensure relevant programme staff have knowledge and competencies in implementing practical strategies to promote gender mainstreaming
  - Ensure opportunities and avenues (for example, gender working group) for ensuring open dialogue between staff and partners on ensuring an environment conducive to both women and men within organizations.

## 5. Gender Mainstreaming Responsibilities and Accountabilities

Specific responsibilities and accountabilities for ensuring implementation are as follows:

<b>Accountable</b>	<b>Activity</b>
OIN Board	Ensure that OIN work enhances gender equality
CEO	Hold Directors accountable to this policy and promote policy principles, as appropriate, in the OI confederation
Directors, Programme & Advocacy; Policy, Research & Campaign	Ensure a gender perspective informs the planning, prioritisation, design, appraisal, implementation, evaluation and learning strategies for all OIN development and humanitarian response work, including advocacy and influencing and collaborative work with other Oxfam affiliates
Director - Communications	Ensure OIN's communications and branding work is informed by a gender analysis, promotes women and girls status, and enhances gender equality and justice
Director - Fundraising	Ensure OIN's marketing and fundraising work is informed by a gender analysis, promotes women and girls status, and enhances gender equality and justice
Director - Operations	Ensure OIN's operations work is informed by a gender analysis, promotes women and girls status, and enhances gender equality and justice

All staff	Understand and apply the policy to your work, highlight challenges and provide appropriate solutions to the relevant teams as and when
MEL Team	Ensure there is periodic monitoring and tracking of compliance and implementation of the policy
Gender Team	Promote gender mainstreaming at the institutional and programme level through appropriate and relevant tools and processes.
HR Team	Socialise, review and update policy

## Annexure

For the purposes of this policy, the key definitions are:<sup>2</sup>

- **Gender:** The social attributes and opportunities associated with being female and male and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between them. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialisation processes; they are not biologically determined and thus are changeable.
  - **Sex:** The biological differences between women and men, which are universal, obvious and generally permanent. Sex describes the biological, physical and genetic composition with which we are born.
  - **Gender Analysis:** Examines the relationships between females and males and their access to and control of resources, their roles, and the constraints they face relative to each other. A gender analysis should be integrated into all assessments or situational analyses to ensure that interventions do not exacerbate gender-based injustices and inequalities and, where possible, promote greater equality and justice in gender relations
  - **Gender Equity:** The process of being fair to women and men and girls and boys regardless of sex or gender identity which may require different gender specific interventions; equity leads to equality.
  - **Gender Equality:** The equal enjoyment by women, men, girls and boys of rights, opportunities, resources and rewards and the same level of dignity and respect. Equality does not mean that women and men, girls and boys are the same but that their rights and opportunities are not governed or limited by whether they were born female or male
  - **Gender Mainstreaming:** A strategy which aims to bring about gender equality and advance women's rights by taking account of gender equality concerns and building gender capacity and accountability in all aspects of an organisation's policy and activities (including policy and program development and implementation; advocacy; organisational culture and resource allocation) thereby contributing to a profound organisational transformation
  - **Gender Justice:** The goal of full equality and equity between women and men in all spheres of life; resulting in women jointly and on an equal basis with men defining and shaping the policies, structures and decisions that affect their lives and society as a whole, based on their own interests and priorities. Gender Justice
-

commits to taking a gender perspective on the definition and application of civil, political, economic and social rights. Gender justice is an outcome and a process. As an outcome, it implies access to and control over resources, combined with agency (the ability to make choices). As a process, it brings an additional essential element: accountability, which implies the responsibility and answerability of precisely those social institutions set up to dispense justice.

- **Gender based violence:** Any act that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering on the basis of gender
- **Violence against women:** Any act of violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering of women