

2021

GENDER EQUALITY POLICY



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INTRODUCTION

JEAO is committed to supporting the achievement of gender equality throughout the organization. The rights of women and girls are an inalienable, integral, and indivisible part of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. The advancement of women and the achievement of equality between women and men are matters of human rights and conditions for social justice and should not be seen in isolation as a women's issue. They are the only way to build a sustainable, just, and developed society. Empowerment of women and gender equality are prerequisites for achieving political, social, economic, cultural, and environmental security among all peoples.

This gender policy is designed to act as a guideline for the program and project designer as well as policy makers including all in management to look at policies, programs and issues from a gender perspective. It recommend practical initiatives which will challenge and minimize all forms of discrimination against and will help to address social illness such as underage marriage, divorce, domestic violence, repressive laws and develop a positive and humanistic social order and organizational culture that values and benefits both women and men and allows them to explore their best potentials.

Goal

To support the achievement of gender equality in office to ensure sustainable development.

Objectives

- To advance gender participation as decision-makers in shaping the sustainable development in the organization;
- To support women and girls in the realization of their full human rights; and
- To reduce gender inequalities in access to and control over the resources and benefits of development

POLICY PRINCIPLES

The Gender Policy principles will serve as a framework for the application of the policy.

Equity and Equality: Equality is a matter of human rights and equal rights, opportunities and obligations for women and men. Equity is the quality of being fair and right, a stage in the process of achieving gender equality. It implies taking special measures to insure equality of outcomes.

Affirmative Action: Achieving gender equality will require specific measures designed to eliminate gender inequalities. Special temporary measures may be taken to help women overcome the results of past discriminations or present inequalities

that affect their performance at work. Once these discriminations have been overcome these special temporary measures may be removed. JEAO believe in affirmative action, and thus, from candidate of equal of qualifications, female will be preferred.

Enhanced Research, Interventions, Training and Services: It is expected that the responsiveness to gender concerns will enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of the organizational capacity and the quality of its activities. The adoption of the gender policy and the measures envisaged therein should in no measure adversely affect the quality of the research, interventions, services and training activities that the organization implements.

POLICY COMPONENTS

It is imperative that in implementing the gender policy JEAO looks into not only staff, target group and policies but also the construction of its different programs and examines critically whether or not gender perspectives is being implemented. The gender equity and equality expected to be achieved in three major areas;

- Individual Attitude and Behaviors
- Programmatic Outcomes and
- Organizational Systems

The policy is divided into two separate but interrelated components.

1. Programmatic Intervention and
2. Organizational change by staff related measures

POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Planning

Programs and activities of JEAO will be based on a clear understanding of gender context. The Gender Practical Needs (GPN) of women and men should be addressed first such as shelter, food, income, education and health care. But at the same time attention should be given to their Gender Strategic Needs (GSN) such as legal and political rights, property rights, decision making power, reproductive rights, control over resources and benefits and rights of their children.

Implementation

JEAO will undertake special measures to increase women's involvement in development activities. Women's participation will be given more priority in

implementation process. A continuous engineering will be going on to find out the suitable way of dealing with the gender issues resulting by the socio-cultural context of Afghanistan. So instead of “adding” women or men in existing system a redefining and restructuring of social norms and institutions are necessary.

Special structures

While the responsibility for promoting equality is shared throughout the organization, there is also a need for special resources and organizational structures to be put in place. These include the following:

- The Gender Advisory Committee, chaired by the head of the organization or his nominee (TOR in Reference Note # 01)
- Gender Focal Points in different programs of the organization. After an initial training of two days, the Gender Focal Points will subsequently convene every six months.

Responsibilities

The responsibility for the successful implementation of the policy rests with each of the divisions, departments, units as well as all organizations staff. Ultimately, the responsibility for implementation of the Gender Policy lies with the head of the organization.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Without monitoring and evaluation it is very difficult to assess the impact of any development intervention from gender perspectives. The monitors should have clear concept and understanding on gender perspectives so that they can develop Gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation indicators to monitor program activities.

Results

Both women and men should equally benefit out of any program, projects and policy implementing by JEAO. The results can be assessed by studying the actual impact of the intervention on their lives.

RELATED MEASURES

Programmatic

To achieve Its GOAL of gender equality JEAO will;

- Address the special needs of women and children during emergency relief work.
- Adopt women and environment friendly projects and minimize any hazardous activities that affect health particularly of women.

- Explore the issues and problems of the poor urban women.
- Increase girls' access to basic and secondary education by creating an enabling environment and opportunities.
- Make advocacy to the government for developing gender-sensitive education curricula content.
- Develop ways to identify problematic areas and work with community women through participatory methods.
- Address issues and special needs of adolescent
- Introduce human rights and legal education program through which women can have information and establish their right to property.
- Protest any anti-women declarations and action and take part different women forums.
- Facilitate legal aid clinics in partnership with organizations working on women's legal rights.
- Include gender issues and gender disaggregated data in JEAO reporting.
- Encourage women and men to share household and familial responsibilities equitably.
- Incorporate gender perspective in strategic planning of all programs and projects in consultation with stakeholders and screen all project proposals using gender lens. (Use a specific gender analysis tool)

Staff Related

Recruitment

- Introduce quota for female.
- Examine interview practices to ensure that interviewers encourage rather than discourage women candidates and closely monitor anti-women bias during interview.
- Form interview boards with equal numbers of women and men wherever possible.
- Give preference women candidate over a male candidate when both are equally qualified.
- Provide facilitates in a flexible way so as to encourage women to secure employment and return to employment without detriment when they make long breaks such as maternity and study leave.
- JEAO believes in ZERO TOLERANCE against harassment and implements it with strict and immediate effects.

Capacity Development

- Incorporate gender perspective in all training programs run by the organization
- Launch awareness initiative to disseminate the information about CEDAW, Universal Human Rights, ICPD and Beijing Platform for Action.
- Provide Gender Awareness training for all staff members at all levels.

- Provide specific training to encourage women to develop their career in supervisory and management posts, such as management, communication skills, Proposal Writing, Gender Awareness and Analysis, Mainstreaming Gender etc.
- Encourage and promote women voice in different decision making process.
- Delegate and authorize women to participate in possible forums.

Facilities

- Introduce Maternity and Paternity leave to encourage and promote shared childcare responsibilities.
- Consider local context to place female employees in far post.
- Establish and manage a space for female staff for allowing breast feeding.
- Provide separate office room for women staff in consideration to cultural context.
- Ensure safe transport and rescue measures for women staff during disfavorable weather.
- Employ one service staff who will look after employees' child in the day-care centre.

Personal Safety

- Ensure special needs of women staff in work especially during night and evening work.
- Allow flexibility towards staff during pregnancy, post partum and lactation period.
- Provide protective equipment devises, assistive aids considering women's special needs.
- Sharing menstruation and pregnancy issues with the authority.
- Provision of desk work for women staff during menstruation.
- Establish and manage accommodation near to workplace for female.
- Give one hour more leisure for the breast feeding mothers.

Conduct and Counseling

- Incorporate gender sensitivity as one component of staff performance evaluation.
- Develop and promote culture of functional disagreement and debate in the organization so that the marginalized and overlooked could come up with argument and logical stance.
- Ensure an environment free from teasing, abuse, harassment (physical, verbal, non-verbal) by adopting a strict policy of dealing with the above issues so that things are not perpetuated.
- Make each member within the organization regardless to level and seniority accountable for his/her actions if it is contrary to the measures laid down in this policy.

Reference Notes

GLOSSARY OF GENDER RELATED TERMINOLOGIES

Gender

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles played by women and men that are assigned on the basis of their sex. Gender is used as a means of examining similarities and differences between women and men without direct reference to biology, but rather to the behavioral patterns expected from women and men and their cultural reinforcement. These roles are usually specific given to a given area and time.

Gender Equity

The equality of being fair and right--a stage in the process of achieving gender equality. In order to ensure fairness measures must often be taken to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from otherwise operating on a level-playing field.

Mainstreaming

Focuses on the institutions, policies and programs that have a broad impact in setting the conditions under which communities, households and individuals function. It seeks to insure that these institutions, policies and programs respond to the needs and interests of women as well as men and distribute benefits equitably between women and men. Overall, it seeks to reduce existing disparities between women and men in incomes, resources and opportunities.

Gender Awareness

Gender awareness is the recognition that development actors are women and men, and that woman and men are advantaged and constrained in different ways with implications for women and men having differing needs, interests and priorities. Rethinking the assumptions and practice of gender-blind policies through gender analysis and learning about gender differences have resulted in what is referred to as gender-aware policies.

Gender Sensitivity

The understanding and consideration of the socio-cultural factors underlying discrimination based on sex, whether against women or men. Gender sensitivity refers to perceptiveness and responsiveness concerning differences in gender roles, responsibilities, challenges and opportunities.

Gender Analysis

Refers to the systematic process of identifying the differences in, and examining the related needs of, the roles, status, positions and privileges of women and men.

Gender Equality

Gender equality or equality between women and men means the equal employment by men and women of socially valued goods, opportunities, resources and rewards. Because what is valued differs among societies, a crucial aspect of equality is the empowerment of women to influence what is valued and share in decision making about societal priorities.

Gender equality entails that the underlying causes of discrimination are systematically identified and removed in order to give men and women equal opportunities. The concept of gender equality recognizes women's subordinate position within social relations and aims at the restructuring of society so as to eradicate male domination. Therefore, equality is understood to include both formal equality and substantive equality, not merely simple equality to men.

- Achieving equality does not mean that men and women are the same, it means that one's rights or opportunities do not depend on being female or male
- Women in every country experience both power and oppression differently
- Addressing gender equality as a cross-cutting goal requires that women's views, interests and needs shape community decisions as much as men's
- Every policy, program or project affects men and women differently

Gender Equity

Gender Equity means "fairness of treatment for women and men, according to their respective needs which includes equal treatment or treatment considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities". To ensure fairness, measures must often be put in place to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from operating on a level playing field.

Gender Balance

Planned situation when social, economic and political situation of men and women become equal. The attainment of gender balance is grounded in the entirety of core indices, among which equal distribution of incomes, holding the prominent political and governance positions, the degree of being burdened with keeping the household and doing local public affairs, level of educational attainment, health status and life expectancy are of crucial importance.

Gender-inclusive Language

This is language, which challenges the assumption/ tradition that masculine nouns, pronouns and adjectives include both male and female. Examples of gender-inclusive language are 'staff-hours' (rather than 'man-hours'), 'he or she' (rather than 'he'), and 'his or her' rather than 'his'. Gender-exclusive language, by subsuming the female in the male, acts as both a cause and an effect of the invisibility of women's contribution.

Gender Relations

The relative position of women and men in the division of resources and responsibilities, benefits and rights, power and privileges. When used as an analytical

category, gender relations shift the focus away from viewing women in isolated from men.

Women in Development (WID)

The WID approach aims to integrate women into the existing development process but not to transform unequal relationships. Early WID projects were characterized by women being passive beneficiaries, being isolated into women-only or peripheral activities, and does not have as an explicit goal passive beneficiaries of programming. No gender analysis was done to ensure that WID activities would meet the needs of women involved or would be accepted by men who were not consulted.

Gender and Development (GAD)

The GAD approach focuses on intervening to address unequal gender relations which often lock women out of full participation. It seeks to have both women and men participate, make decisions and share benefits by meeting practical needs and promoting strategic interests. The GAD approach is rooted in solid gender analysis.

Gender-neutral Policies

These are policies that are seen as having no significant gender dimension. However, government policies seldom if ever have the same effect on women as they do on men, even if at first sight they may appear to exist in a context where gender is irrelevant. Thus policies which may appear to be 'gender-neutral' are often in fact 'gender-blind', and biased in favor of males because they presuppose that those involved in and affected by policy are males, with male needs and interests.

Gender Responsive

Refers to a planning process in which programs and policy actions are developed to deal with and counteract problems, which arise if the needs arising out are socially constructed differences between women and men are not adequately met.

Gender Strategic Interests

Within a gender context, strategic interests are usually about getting more choices, more options or more voice. They focus on fundamental issues related to women's (or less often men's) subordination and gender inequities. Strategic interests are long-term and rarely material which differ from practical needs which are immediate and often focus on acquiring essential material goods. Structural change such as legislation for equal rights or reproductive choice and laws setting quotas of women in elected positions aim to help the disadvantaged sex fulfill strategic interests. In striving to meet their personal strategic interests, individuals are often seeking to increase their own capacity or their ability to take control of their own lives.

Gender Practical Needs – GPN

Refer to those needs which are manifest in everyday life in order that men and women can fulfill their socially recognized roles and responsibilities prevalent in a given culture at a given historical moment.

Sex-disaggregated Data

This is data collected – via questionnaires, observation or other techniques – that reveal the different situations, roles and responsibilities of men and women. Having data disaggregated by sex is extremely important to being able to assess the differential impact of a policy or project on women and men.

Gender Blind

Gender blindness refers to the non-recognition of distinctions between sexes, both biological as well as socially constructed distinctions, and the differences in the implications these distinctions have in terms of the needs and interests of women and men. Gender blindness, by not taking conscious account of these distinctions, assumes biases in favor of existing gender relations and thereby tends to exclude women and favor the perpetuation of male privilege.

The following practices have led to gender blindness:

Compartmentalizing: refers to the practice of treating social realities of women and men in segregated compartments as though these are isolated from each other and one has no bearing on the other. Compartmentalizing tends to, therefore reinforce stereotyping male female dichotomies (e.g. 'technical and social', 'macro and micro' etc).

Aggregating: refers to the use of aggregate categories which conceals differentiation and inequality within categories (e.g. household, poor, labor force, etc). This tends to homogenizes women and men in these categories as having identical needs and interests.

Externalizing: refers to the tendency to assume gender attributes and gender relations as essential and absolute (i.e. therefore assuming that these cannot be changed). Thereby, biological attributes of women and men may be highlighted in rationalizing the perpetuation of existing distribution of resources, opportunities and rights.

Gender Audit

A gender audit is a management and planning tool. An audit evaluates the gender-responsiveness of an organization's culture and how well that organization/company is integrating a gender perspective into its work. The audit recommendations aim to assist the organization to become more gender responsive.

Gender Lens

A gender lens is a tool which enables one to view the participation, needs and realities of women alongside the participation, needs and realities of men. A gender lens can be a checklist, a survey, a problem-solving drama or can take on many other forms. The origin of the term gender lens is a comparison with our sight. Just like we need two healthy eyes to see clearly and fully, we need to see the distinctive realities of men and women, boys and girls, to get the full picture needed for sustainable development.

Gender Integration

Gender integration means taking into account both the differences and the inequalities between women and men in program planning, implementation and assessment. The roles and power relationship between women and men affect who does what in carrying out an activity and who benefits. Taking into account the inequalities and designing programs to reduce them should contribute not only to more effective development programs but also to greater social equity/ equality. Experience has shown that sustainable changes are not realized through activities focused on either women or men alone.