



GENDER EQUALITY POLICY

APPLICABILITY	AOG World Relief Vietnam Team (Staff) Members, Volunteers, Visitors & Project Partners
VERSION	March 2022
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SECTION 1:

PREAMBLE, PURPOSE & SCOPE

1. PREAMBLE

- Globally, women:
 - account for 47.7% of the workforce yet only 27.1% of women are managers and leaders and experience a gender pay gap of 20%¹
 - 55% of women in senior roles have experienced sexual harassment
- The COVID crisis is widening the pay gap with women expecting to lose 50% more of their labour income than men²
- In Vietnam, the gender gap is estimated to be 29.5% - 21.5% in urban areas and 35.2% in rural areas³.
- 35% of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime⁴.

Gender inequality is a systemic issue which is entrenched in societal beliefs, systems and laws leading to inequity and gender-based discrimination and violence. Therefore, it cannot be changed through simple initiative alone, but through fundamental shifts in attitudes and structures. AOG World Relief Vietnam (hereon after referred to as AOGWR Vietnam) aims to promote the rights of all people by addressing and removing barriers which oppress and prevent both women and men from achieving their full rights.

2. DEFINITIONS & APPROACH TO GENDER EQUALITY

Gender equality: the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities for women and men, girls, and boys. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognising the diversity among different groups of women and men⁵.

Gender equity: fairness in access to resources and in the distribution of benefits from development, according to the different needs of women, men, girls, and boys⁶.

¹ Team Stage (2022), 'Women in the workforce statistics: senior roles, maternity leave, pay gap in 2022, blog with data collected from: The World Bank, Time, Catalyst, ILO, Pew Research Center, Silver Swan Recruitment, US Department of Labor, Forbes, The Muse, BuiltIn, McKinsey, McKinsey, Silver Swan Recruitment, <https://teamstage.io/women-in-the-workforce-statistics/>.

² Dang, H.-A. & Nguyen, C.V. (2020, October). Gender inequality during the COVID-19 pandemic: Income, expenditure, savings, and job loss. IZA Institute of Labor Economics.

³ <https://www.vietnam-briefing.com/news/vietnam-implements-gender-equality-strategy-but-challenges-remain.html/>

⁴ World Health Organisation (WHO), 'Global and regional estimates of violence against women,' 2013, p.2 available at: <http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/9789241564625/en/>

⁵ Australian Government, 2007

⁶ Guide to Gender and Development, AusAID, 2007.

Mainstreaming: incorporating a gender perspective and initiatives into all areas of the organisation. This includes all program systems and processes, as well as programs such as education, health, livelihoods, water and sanitation and disaster management projects. This involves developing strategies to ensure that the concerns and experiences of both women and men are integral throughout the project cycle, so that inequality is not perpetuated.

Gender analysis: The process of considering the impact that an initiative may have on women and men, boys and girls, and the economic and social relationships between them⁷.

3. OUR COMMITMENT TO GENDER EQUALITY

AOGWR Vietnam acknowledges that the promotion of gender equality and equity in programs is a precursor to delivering sustainable, people-centred development. As a faith-based organisation, we acknowledge that addressing systems and practices that lead to harm and exclusion based on gender is linked to our faith, as we believe that all people are created equal in the sight of God.

We know that it is vitally important for AOGWR Vietnam to prioritise the advancement of gender equality and equity, as we cannot achieve transformed communities and nations unless there is an increase in the equal distribution of opportunities, resources and power in order to promote social justice and poverty eradication.

Therefore, we seek to promote the full participation and dignity for all people, regardless of gender, at our organisational and program level. Through this we empower women living in poverty, who often face multiple vulnerabilities on top of gender inequality such as disability exclusion, racism, or ageism.

4. PURPOSE

This policy aims to:

1. demonstrate AOGWR Vietnam's commitment to gender equity and equality, as it underpins our culture and behaviour;
2. outline AOGWR Vietnam's internal commitments and strategies across all areas;
3. outline expectations for stakeholders; and
4. provide a clear Policy Statement on Gender to inform the development, monitoring and implementation of a Gender Strategy across all areas and levels of AOGWR Vietnam.

⁷ *Guide to Gender and Development, AusAID, 2007.*

5. STANDARDS & GUIDANCE

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1946) sets forth the basic rights and freedoms of every person “without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”. This is further outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women CEDAW (1978), which was ratified by the Australian Government in July 1983. Other relevant Australian acts include the Sex Discrimination Act (1984) and the Workplace Gender Equality Act (2012).

Other relevant AOGWR Vietnam policies include:

- AOGWR Vietnam’s Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy
- AOGWR Vietnam’s External Complaints Handling Policy

6. SCOPE

Those who fall within the scope below are required to read, sign and adhere to **AOGWR Vietnam’s Gender Equality Policy**.

This policy applies to AOGWR Vietnam key stakeholders as defined below:

- All AOGWR Vietnam Team (Staff) Members.
- All AOGWR Vietnam Advisory Board Members.

This policy is recommended for other AOGWR Vietnam stakeholders as defined below:

- AOGWR Vietnam Volunteers including but not limited to office and event-based volunteers.
- AOGWR Vietnam Partnering Agencies including but not limited to government departments, consultants, and contractors.

SECTION 2:

COMMITMENTS & PROCEDURES

7. AOGWR VIETNAM'S COMMITMENTS AND STRATEGIES

AOGWR Vietnam's is committed through its organisational development to achieve the following.

- **Continued learning and organisational reflection** through staff training and working towards undertaking gender audits of the organisation.
- **Supporting women's leadership** at all levels of the organisation and aspiring to continue to assess and maintaining gender balance in role distributions within management and board positions; and
- Supporting initiatives that are in our line of work to **reduce gender inequality**.
- develop appropriate and safe systems and mechanisms for staff and volunteers to report concerns or misconduct confidentially.
- assign a **focal person** with the responsibility of helping their organisation to be more gender sensitive;
- Consider how to **support stakeholders**, including government agencies, to become more gender sensitive.
- Engage **men and boys as partners** and allies in achieving gender equality and reducing gender-based violence and harmful traditional practices.
- Run **initiatives** within their organisation promoting women's rights, gender equality and equity.
- **Networking** with research, advocacy or development organisations who have a strong gender focus.

8. REPORTING CONCERNS OR INCIDENTS

AOGWR Vietnam stakeholders and others are encouraged to report the following:

- concerns regarding AOGWR Vietnam's compliance to commitments outlined in this policy; and
- incidents of gender discrimination given sex discrimination is a crime in all Vietnamese provinces per the Law on Gender Equality (2006).

To respond to discrimination and abuse based on gender, please refer to AOGWR Vietnam's External Complaints Handling Policy for more details.

- Report violence or gender discrimination incidents to the AOGWR Vietnam management (Program Director/s or Program Managers via (management@aogwr.org)

- In addition, per Vietnamese law, report allegations of sex discrimination by a staff member or volunteer in the organisation to the police.

AOGWR Vietnam is committed to:

- treat all concerns raised seriously;
- ensure that all parties will be treated fairly with prime consideration of the principles of natural justice; and
- handle all reports professionally, confidentially, and expediently.

9. THE PREVENTION OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, ABUSE AND HARASSMENT

AOGWR Vietnam acknowledges the importance of the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment within this policy.

For more information, please refer to:

- AOGWR Vietnam’s Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy

10. REVIEWING THE POLICY

AOGWR Vietnam’s Gender Equality Policy and Code of Conduct will be **reviewed every three years**. AOGWR Vietnam management (Program Director/s or Program Managers via (management@aogwr.org) will manage the review and stakeholders will be consulted during this process.

11. COMMITMENT

I, _____, have read and understood the above AOGWR Vietnam Gender Equality Policy and agree to adhere to it and the associated procedures in their entirety.

Signed: _____

Date: _____