



Afghanistan Educational & Health Development Aids Organization AEHDA

Gender Policy

Approved by: Chair of BoDs 10Th August, 2024

History					
S.N	Description	Department/Org	Team/Person	Date	Remarks/ Sealed
1	Policy Revision and updated By	ECA	Advisory	20th July 2024	
2	Reviewed by	AWEC	Technical Team	28th July 2024	
3	Approved by	AEHDA	BoDs	10th Aug 2024	
4	Policy & Version	Gender Policy for AEHDA in Afghanistan (V.2)			
5	Policy Updated By	ECA	Advisory	20th July 2024	N/A

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1. Abbreviation List

S.N	Abbreviations	Full Words
1	AEHDA	Afghanistan Educational and Health Development Aids Organization
2	NGO	Non-Government Organization
3	MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
4	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
5	GBV	Gender Based Violence
6	CSO's	Civil Society Organizations
7	WE	Women Empowerment
8	AWEC	Afghanistan Women Education Center

2. Introduction

This policy is developed for the AEHDA which is a CSO partnering with The Afghanistan Women Education Center (AWEC), AEHDA is committed to promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls through education and community engagement. This gender policy outlines our commitment to creating an inclusive and equitable environment for all members of our organization, beneficiaries, and stakeholders. Gender is a social structure whereby the roles, rights, responsibilities, and obligations of males and females within a particular society are determined by one's biological sex. While standards may vary from society to society, these culturally determined identities mean that the two genders are valued differently. This is almost always to the disadvantage of women who, being viewed as inferior or subordinate to men, have fewer opportunities, lower status, and less power and influence than men and boys.

Whilst the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1945) protects the equal worth and dignity of all women and men, as well as their universal entitlement to civil, political, social, economic, and cultural rights in international law, it is clear from the above indicators that the achievement of equal rights for men and women remains some way off. Although gender inequality is, without question, a global issue, its impact is perhaps most keenly felt in developing countries where traditional roles and cultural norms mean that women lack access to the capabilities, resources, and opportunities that permit the enjoyment of social, economic and political power, as well as health and well-being.

Since the year 2000, the international community's efforts to tackle the gender gap have focused on achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in particular Goal 3 which aimed to promote gender equality and empower women. Future efforts and investment in tackling gender inequality will be measured against the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which aim to build on the MDGs and complete what was not achieved by the year 2030. Achieving gender equality and empowering all women has been designated as Goal 5 in this new global AEHDA.

It also seeks to provide guidance and focus for partners in developing their programs and ensuring that gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are mainstreamed at all stages of that process. Further, it clarifies, both internally and for partners, the priorities and limits for support within this premises. AEHDA, through its partners, recognize the importance of working with local communities and local government in executing any program, and in ensuring the engagement of women and girls at all stages of the program to ensure the long-term sustainability of interventions, we aim to ensure that all partners recognize the need to promote gender equality and transform roles, identities, and power relations to create a unbiased and more prosperous society for all.

3. About AEHDA

The Afghanistan Educational and Health Development Aids Organization (AEHDA) is a nonprofit, non-political, non-sectarian, and non-governmental humanitarian women lead organization. Originally established as an association in July 2003, AEHDA underwent additional registration with the Ministry of Economy (MoE) at the end of 2020, officially becoming an NGO with registration number 5085. AEHDA's mission spans education, a One Health Approach, healthcare, public nutrition, water, sanitation, hygiene, food security, advocacy and communication, training, capacity building, as well as research and development.

AEHDA was established by a group of committed, dedicated and professional volunteers to offer result-oriented services to rural, urban slums and urban areas of Afghanistan. AEHDA's services will be delivered through utilization of easy adaptable, contextual, accessible and participatory community empowerment strategies in accordance with the key principles of result-based management (RBM) approaches, and in line with Afghanistan national development priorities and national strategic plans. On the other hand, considering the professional/technical capacities in provision of primary education and public health services, AEHDA is one of the pioneer local NGO that provides contemporary, affordable and quality educational and public health services to Afghan population.

Vision:

AEHDA envisions empowering Afghan women, youth, children, and vulnerable groups through equitable access to quality education, healthcare, well-being, sustainable livelihoods, and essential services, fostering a prosperous and resilient Afghanistan.

Mission :

AEHDA is committed to empowering Afghan women, youth, children, and vulnerable groups by providing accessible, quality, and sustainable education, healthcare, mental health and psychosocial support, livelihood opportunities, and essential services. We strive to foster community resilience, social cohesion, and economic growth, ultimately contributing to a prosperous and self-reliant Afghanistan.

4. Purpose

The purpose of this gender policy is to ensure that AEHDA's programs, policies, and practices are gender-sensitive and promote gender equality. This policy is to set objectives about gender equality and the empowerment of women., such as;

- Foster a culture of respect and equality.
- Ensure equal opportunities for women and men in all aspects of AEHDA's exertion.
- Address and eliminate gender-based discrimination and violence.
- Promote women's empowerment and leadership.

5. Scope

This policy applies to all AEHDA's employees, volunteers, beneficiaries, partners, and stakeholders. It covers all programs, activities, and operations conducted. Our programs,

implemented in partnership with International and local NGOs, support women to exercise their Voice, Choice, and Control to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment.

6. Definitions

- **Gender:** The socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women.
- **Gender Policy:** A set of principles and ideal practices applied across different levels of employment in the organization to build a healthy workplace culture and equality among all gender employees. To provide a framework for action to ensure that the staff are equally treated and given full access to different resources and opportunities.
- **Gender Equity:** A process to ensure fairness, measures must often be available to compensate for social disadvantages that prevent women and men from otherwise operating on a level playing field. Equity leads to equality
- **Gender Equality:** The state in which access to rights or opportunities is unaffected by gender.
- **Gender Mainstreaming:** The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies, or programs, in all areas and at all levels.
- **Gender Analysis:** A critical examination of how differences in gender norms, roles, power structures, activities, needs, opportunities, and rights affect men, women, girls, and boys in a certain context.
- **Gender Gap:** Any disparity and inequality amongst women and men's situation due to their status or role in society.

7. Policy Statements

Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination

- We are committed to ensuring that all individuals, regardless of gender, have equal opportunities and are not subjected to discrimination.
- Recruitment, hiring, training, rewards, and promotion processes will be conducted in a manner that promotes gender equality.

Women's Empowerment

- AEHDA will implement programs and initiatives aimed at empowering women and girls and enhancing their access to education, health services, and economic opportunities.
- Special focus will be given to increasing women's participation in leadership and decision-making roles within our organization and the communities we serve.

Gender-Sensitive Programs

- All programs and projects will be designed and implemented with a gender-sensitive approach, ensuring that the needs and perspectives of both women and men are considered.
- Gender analysis will be integrated into the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of all programs.

Addressing Gender-Based Violence

- We will take a zero-tolerance approach to gender-based violence (GBV) and harassment within its operations and programs.
- Mechanisms will be established for reporting and addressing GBV, and support services will be provided to survivors.

Capacity Building

- We will invest in building the capacity of its staff, volunteers, and partners to understand and promote gender equality.
- Regular training and awareness-raising sessions on gender issues will be conducted in Afghanistan.

Partnerships and Advocacy

- AEHDA will collaborate with local, national, and international organizations to advocate for gender equality and women's rights in Afghanistan.
- Efforts will be made to influence policies and practices that affect the lives of women and girls in Afghanistan.

8. Implementation and Accountability

- Our Gender Focal Point will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy and ensuring compliance.
- Regular monitoring and evaluation will be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the policy and make necessary adjustments.
- We will provide regular reports on gender equality efforts and outcomes to stakeholders.

9. Review and Revision

This gender policy will be reviewed every three years or as needed to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. Revisions will be made based on feedback from staff, beneficiaries, and stakeholders, as well as changes in the external environment.

10. Conclusion

AEHDA is dedicated to creating an environment where gender equality is the norm and women and girls are empowered to achieve their full potential. This gender policy is a testament to our commitment to fostering a more just and equitable society. This policy serves both as a guide and roadmap for the mainstreaming of gender, starting with the adoption of a gender policy by all partners and stakeholders.

This policy should be considered a living document and will need to be revised based on the experience of AEHDA and partner organizations in implementing the policy. There is also ongoing development in international standards and approaches to gender that must be reflected in the policy for it to be relevant and timely.