



Gender policy

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Rationale

In line with the global pursuit for a free and socially just society, NOUSPR adopts the universal principle of equality¹ between girls/women and boys/men. As a non-governmental Organization, NOUSPR subscribes to this principle and commits itself to striving for the attainment of gender equity and women empowerment through its policy, organizational processes and programmes.

2. For NOUSPR, gender equality is a cross-cutting corporate goal which requires that both women's and men's views, interests and needs shape its programmes and organizational policies and processes. NOUSPR recognizes that the advancement of the goals of gender equality and women's empowerment are central to its agenda of facilitating community development.

3. Gender is an inclusive category relating to girls/women and boys/men in terms of existing power and social relations. Gender is continuously an integral part of class, caste, religion, race, ethnicity, and other factors within society. NOUSPR appreciates that there is a diversity of experience with respect to achieving gender equality across the staff of NOUSPR as well as partner organization and government officials.

4. NOUSPR has adopted gender mainstreaming as an Organizational strategy to ensure that gender equality becomes an integral part of all NOUSPR's policies and programmes. This implies that interventions are analyzed from a gender perspective and the implications of how this impact on girls/women and boys/men are understood before decisions are made. It is more than adding a "women's component" or even a "gender equality

¹ See glossary for definitions of gender, sex, mainstreaming, gender equality, gender equity, gender balance, gender analysis and gender and development.

component" into an existing initiative, activity or Organisational process. Mainstreaming goes beyond increasing girl's/women's participation; it means that the experience, knowledge and interests of girls/women and boys/men are central to NOUSPR's development agenda.

Framework for Gender policy

As with other guiding documents, it was realized that NOUSPR should have a well designed gender policy written, approved and circulated so that it not only gives direction for the organization in practice, but also holds the organization accountable. It also comes from the understanding that, inequality between men and women is deep rooted and it is manifested in discrimination against women in different forms. To whatever extent, one might be sensitive; it needs conscious and continuous efforts to achieve a balanced environment both at organizational level and also in work with the partners at field level. Framing a gender policy is a commitment towards those efforts. The overall effort is to provide an enabling environment for women within the organization, various partners and the communities with whom we are working and strengthen the gender sensitivity throughout all our programmes.

Elements of Gender Policy:

What do we at NOUSPR understand by Gender?

NOUSPR understands that gender refers to the attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the socio-cultural relationships between women and men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context specific and changeable. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in activities undertaken, access to and control over resources as well as decision-making opportunities. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context, which also takes into consideration factors such as class, race, economic status, ethnic group and age.

NOUSPR adopts gender perspective, which means focusing on both women and men and their relationships with each other and resources. In addition, it means working with a global perspective that allows for and appreciates GEWE. The organization aims at mainstreaming gender by creating an enabling working environment that in turn attracts and helps to retain gender sensitive staff. Since NOUSPR is working to improve conditions in the sectors of Education, Protection, WASH, Health, Emergency and livelihoods especially amongst disadvantaged communities, it means we need to continuously analyze patterns of use, knowledge and skills regarding project planning and management in those sectors.

The gender policy is an integral part of all its organizational policies, programmes and projects and involves building a culture that understands the issues and policies, which respect diversity and gender, related concerns. This policy statement with its stated objectives is a beginning step in ensure the concerns relating to addressing gender inequality. Towards achieving the above objectives, clear indicators need to be defined to evaluate

and assess the organizations commitment towards gender equity on a periodic basis.

For NOUSPR, mainstreaming involves:

- i. Developing ourselves as a learning organisation with an understanding of the potential of gender and development and how that can transform unequal social relations and empower women;
- ii. Reaching shared understandings internally and with stakeholders about how far and in what ways gender equality is important to the results that the organisation wishes to achieve;
- iii. Selecting partners and consultants with the necessary competencies, or the willingness to develop them, in the area of gender and development;
- iv. Promoting the development of policies, plans and applications of technology to empower girls/women to ensure that girls/women and boys/men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated;
- v. Planning events in ways that allow gender issues to be appropriately addressed;
- vi. Monitoring and evaluating the results of the organisation's interventions and those of its partners and consultants from a gender perspective at all stages in the programme cycle by identifying gender indicators and encouraging management, staff and partners to undertake the same.

6. This policy provides the guidelines to promote and inform a gender perspective at NOUSPR. It reflects the commitment that gender equality and women's empowerment are not only goals in

their own right but also critical to achieving other development goals. The objective of this policy is to ensure that NOUSPR's interventions and actions contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment. To realize gender mainstreaming at NOUSPR, the following systems will deliberately be put in place and necessary strategies tried out internally and externally at various levels.

Goals and Objectives of Gender Policy:

To explicitly state the organizational commitment towards gender

To provide a direction towards building a gender related agenda

To provide a framework for effectively integrating gender concerns into the organizational agenda and policy domain

To create equal opportunities and a conducive environment for women and men at work place, through :

- Based upon available talent, an equitable gender balance exists at all levels of the organization, and women and men are fully represented in senior management positions and the decision-making process.
- All employment decisions related to recruitment , deployment and remuneration will be uniformly considered based upon qualifications, including skills, abilities, knowledge, experience, and responsibilities.
- NOUSPR's various policies will aim at balancing work, family, civic life, and the different gender roles of staff (e.g. responsibilities of pregnancy, childrearing and family care).

- An environment where non-discriminatory working relationships and respect for diversity in work and culture is encouraged.

To promote equal representation and participation of women in decision making at the professional/ programmatic and administrative levels.

NOUSPR will plan, execute and control project in selected target communities , with a deliberate consideration of gender roles and responsibilities with a commitment to also advancing long-term strategic gender interests.

Implementation

Gender Mainstreaming at Organizational level:

A) Staff composition/representation

Recruiting adequate women staff and ensuring the balance also at senior levels; with an objective of achieving a numerical gender balance in all posts at all levels

Ensuring equal opportunities among male and female staff for personal growth, in promotion benefits, training and working conditions

Ensuring equitable representation and participation of men and women in the core group, Board of trustees and in various functional committees of the organization

B) Workplace

Providing a safe and secure workplace for women staff, free from sexual harassment and establishing a *Gender promotion committee* to look into specific concerns.

Providing an enabling and friendly work environment where both men and women enjoy and actively participate in work. This includes providing flexible working hours and allowing working from home, wherever possible

Extending work related concessions and relaxations for women staff depending upon the situations and requirements; e.g. providing secure transport facilities when they work late hours; giving relaxation over travel time for the next day for those in the

field; ensuring security measures along with minimum basic facilities for women staff traveling in the field.

Reviewing the organizational structure, functioning, problems in relation to gender imbalances among staff and the work environment time to time and taking definite steps to address the same

Strategic orientation to staff in the field based programs and advocacy initiatives towards gender equity and women empowerment (GEWE) increasing women's access, control and ownership over the family and natural resources.

Placing gender in existing committees : A woman employee who has put in 3 months of service after confirmation shall be entitled for 4 months of Maternity Leave on full pay and under probation, she will be eligible for leave without pay for the same length of period.

Integrating a gender analysis clause (e.g. the collection of sex disaggregated data, impact analysis, etc) into all internal programme-related documents and organisational processes.

Promoting a quantitative and qualitative gender balance among the participants invited to conferences, workshops and meetings organized by NOUSPR.

Male employees' paternity leave

When spouses of men employees have children, the employee shall be entitled to 3 days of leave either immediately after child birth or 3 days before child birth and 3 days after child birth for primary parenting and child nurturing. In case of miscarriage /

abortion, women staff will be given 2 weeks of Maternity Leave with full pay and spouses are entitled to 2 day's leave.

Making efforts to develop infrastructure for childcare facilities in the office premises in order to ensure that the parents can bring their children in circumstances in which the child cannot be exposed to risks and harms.

Gender Mainstreaming in the field

Ensuring that gender equality is at the core of all its interventions to promote equitable and sustainable human development across all projects by promoting the development of gender sensitive projects, action plans, systems, models and materials as appropriate outcomes of all sectoral initiatives.

NOUSPR will continuously discuss and intensify efforts to promote participation of women as individuals or groups in various aspects of NOUSPR programme work.

Facilitating participation and even representation of women in various institutional structures created for the implementation of NOUSPR programmes and projects including Mercy TB centre, Technical College of Veterinary Medicine and skills and language training centre as well as branches as well as related committees(CPCs, CEC, user groups, cluster etc).

NOUSPR gender mainstreaming committee will regularly (every one year) ,analyze gender disaggregated roles and work patterns, and make recommendations to management on how to improve the working conditions including work load of women employees.

Extending constant orientation of field-level partners on gender perspectives in NRM as part of long-term gender goals like formal recognition of women's rights over resources like land, assets etc.

Ensuring equal wages for equal work by both men and women employees (full time, part time, consultants and volunteers) as part of the programs, where NOUSPR is directly or indirectly involved either as an initiator /implementer of the program or as a facilitating support service provider.

Making special efforts to constantly identify vulnerable women and provide them the necessary support and guidance.

Sensitizing the men and mobilizing their support towards gender mainstreaming

Building awareness and sensitivity by processing information and publishing communication material in diverse media to appeal different strata of people in our functional domain.

C) Staff capacity building

Facilitating staff capacity building processes and trainings to enhance perspectives and conceptual clarity on Gender issues (for all the staff members). It will be an important component of the induction programme

Ensuring that all trainings (internal and external) facilitated by the organization are gender-sensitive.in terms of

- Training content/methodology/mode of facilitation
- Logistics issues (time, budget and scope)

Conducting Gender trainings for both men and women; and ensuring participation of women in all the field level meetings and trainings

NOUSPR will continually encourage more women employees to participate actively in meetings, and in taking up leadership positions.

D) Organizational policies and systems

Making all Human Resource (HR) systems and policies gender-sensitive and responsive, and integrating gender indicators into staff performance appraisal systems.

Mainstreaming gender as an essential element in the tasks/job profiles in all terms of reference, including TORs for external consultants.

Ensuring that a new employee has a fair understanding of and sensitivity to gender issues will be one of the important selection criteria in the recruitment processes and capacity building efforts of staff

Initiating and building the advocacy around gender balance and making efforts to integrate gender concerns into the scaling up and mainstream developmental programs

E) Staff benefits

Following all statutory requirements related to maternity and paternity leaves.

Ensuring that staff access to and use of various NOUSPR resources is gender equitable

Arrangements should be made for recording all information and open access for reviewing the performance of tasks mentioned at

organizational level regularly in different forums from staff meetings to Annual meetings.

Gender Mainstreaming while Networking:

NOUSPR will proactively promote gender equity in our routine work and dealing with partners. It involves participating in or organizing training programs on gender, conducting gender studies, preparing resource material, providing documentation support etc.

NOUSPR will extend support to partner organizations in developing their own gender policies, strategies and programs

Encouraging Focal Points and partners to identify and develop specific initiatives for gender-focused capacity building in order to lead and sustain the gender and development agenda within NOUSPR

Sharing Gender reports with our network members and partner organizations and also facilitating similar process within the partner organizations to promote gender sensitivity

NOUSPR will collaborate with partner organizations, networks and government agencies to promote gender equity and women empowerment, including research, identifying emerging issues and best practices in gender mainstreaming and disseminating this information to the organization's stakeholders.

Supporting and expressing solidarity with partners at field level in taking up issues of discrimination or harassment against women.

Glossary

1. **Gender** is an overarching and fundamental variable which intersects with all other cross-cutting variables such as race, class, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, disability and locality. Gender systems are rooted in different socio-economic contexts which determine what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman/man and girl/boy in these specific contexts. Gender roles are learned through socialisation processes; they are not fixed but are changeable. Perspectives on gender are institutionalized through educational, political and economic systems; through legislation; and through culture, religion and traditions.

2. **Gender Analysis** is a systematic way of looking at the different impacts of development, policies, programmes and legislation on women and men that entails, first and foremost, collecting sex-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive information about the population concerned. Gender analysis can also include the examination of the multiple ways in which women and men, as social actors, engage in strategies to transform existing roles, relationships, and processes in their own interest and in the interest of others².

3. **Gender and development** (GAD) focuses on social, economic, political and cultural forces that determine how women and men participate in, benefit from, and control project resources and activities differently. This approach shifts the focus from women as a group to the socially determined relations between men and women.

² Source: Glossary of Gender-related Terms and Concepts, United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), www.un-instraw.org

4. **Gender balance** is primarily a human resource issue. It is about the equal participation of women and men in all areas of work (international and national staff at all levels, including at senior positions, and among consultants) and in programmes that NOUSPR and its partners initiate or support. Achieving a balance in staffing patterns and creating a work environment that is conducive to a diverse workforce improves the overall effectiveness of our policies and programmes, and will enhance our partners' capacity to better serve the entire population.

5. **Gender equality** relates to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men, girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that individuals' rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both men and women are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centred development³.

6. **Gender equity** goes further than equality of opportunity to look at outcomes. Treating women and men, or girls and boys, equally does not automatically ensure that they obtain equal outcomes and benefits, since there are many structural factors that may mitigate against this. Work towards gender equity therefore looks at structural power relations in society as well as material resources, and may include taking positive or affirmative action to ensure that policies and programmes benefit women/girls and men/boys equally 9.

³ Source: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OHCA), IASC (Inter-Agency Standing Committee) Gender Handbook,

7. **Gender Mainstreaming** is the process of assessing and factoring the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women as well as of men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres, so

that women and men benefit

equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality.

8. **Sex** refers to the physiological and biological characteristics which are used to define and differentiate humans as either female or male.

1.1. Adoption of the Gender Policy

We, Board members of NOUSPR, today, 19th January 2018 hereby adopt this document as a binding gender policy for NOUSPR.

Names	Title	Signature
Shemus Murakatete	Chairperson	