**CHILDHOPE-ZAMBIA**

**GENDER POLICY**

1. ***INTRODUCTION***

***1.1 Policy Statement***

Gender equality is high on the agenda of CHILDHOPE-ZAMBIA. CH-Z believes that gender equality is inextricably linked to the primary goal of the community school development mechanisms, which is to *reduce economic and social disparities in the in society as they promote equity in access to schooling for OVC*.

Men and women must have equal rights and opportunities in all areas of the economy and society if real sustainable economic and social development is to be achieved. Furthermore, gender discrimination is a violation of fundamental human rights. CHILDHOPE-ZAMBIA recognises that not all projects will lead to a maximum impact on gender equality. However, the inclusion of gender equality as a cross-cutting issue of the activities acknowledges the fact that to be effective, the programs available through the CHILDHOPE-ZAMBA mechanisms should include gender equality considerations.

***1.2 Scope***

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance as to how the activities carried out under CHILDHOPE-ZAMBIA shall contribute to furthering gender equality. Furthermore, this document, as with the other cross-cutting policy documents and checklist, is intended to give members and applicants a better understanding of the cross-cutting issues. Together, these documents indicate how gender equality considerations, and the considerations of the other cross-cutting issues, will be evaluated by CHILDHOPE-ZAMBIA in the appraisal of applications both in terms of their eligibility and suitability for membership.

This gender equality policy is intended to be complementary to the strategies of other actors with similar objectives, the beneficiaries and NGOs. The policy has been developed based on the legal Gender framework of the Republic of Zambia, combined with input from a number of Gender based organisations.

1. ***Gender equality - definition***

In respect to CHILDHOPE-ZAMBIA, the donors shall understand the term ‘gender equality’ to mean:

*“That all human beings are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by strict gender roles; that the different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men are equally considered, valued and favoured”.*

Implementing gender equality fully requires equal representation and participation of both men and women in the economy, decision-making, as well as in social, cultural and civil life. Only in this way will men and women reach their full potential in society. It implies a fair distribution of resources between men and women, the redistribution of power and caring responsibilities, and freedom from gender-based violence.

Closely linked to the concept of gender equality, is that of gender mainstreaming. Gender equality cannot be achieved by dealing with the issues of one gender seen in isolation from those of the other, nor from those of society as a whole. Hence, gender mainstreaming is used in order to ensure that gender issues are dealt with at all levels and at all stages. It involves all general policies and measures, so that they may specifically bring about equality by actively and openly taking into account, at the planning stage, their effects on the respective situations of women and men in implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

1. ***Key dimensions of Gender equality***

Considerable progress has been made regarding gender equality in the beneficiary communities of CHILDHOPE-ZAMBIA however; formal rights do not necessarily reflect actual rights/rights in practice. This consideration - combined with persistent underrepresentation of women in politics and economic leadership, as well as violence against and trafficking in women - shows that despite the legal framework, structural inequalities persist.

Although the dimensions of gender equality often contain overlapping elements and may be divided in different ways, for the purposes of the financial mechanisms they have been broadly grouped into the following categories:

* economic and social rights
* human rights
* prevention of violence
* participation and decision-making

The overlapping characteristics of the categories listed naturally results in the outcomes not being linked to a specific category of gender equality, but rather that activities in one area are likely to have outcomes in one or more of the others.

***3.1. Economic and social rights***

The essence of the economic rights element of this dimension of gender equality is that women and men must have the opportunity to participate equally in economic development. It entails the full integration of women into the economy and is therefore very closely linked to social rights.

The economic dimension of gender equality is also found to some extent in both of the other two categories of gender equality listed below. Failure to protect social rights relates directly to the feminisation of poverty, which emerges as a result of dated models that do not take into account the family role. This can be due to career breaks, part time work, lack of education and training, etc.

By its very nature, there is a wide range of activities relating to economic and social rights in gender equality. Initiatives that may contribute to the inclusion of gender equality issues into the economic dimension include:

* eliminating gender gaps in the labour market,
* equal pay for equal work,
* access to education,
* Provision of day-care facilities, more flexible work environments, etc.

Initiatives that promote gender equality in social rights may include such initiatives that take into account parental leave, maternity protection, working time, part-time and fixed-term contracts, and particularly those that impact women’s daily life such as public transport, public health, etc. Due to the nature of economic and social rights in gender equality, the initiatives in these areas are closely linked.

***3.2. Human rights***

As affirmed at the UN Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1992, and reaffirmed at the UN World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, women’s rights are human rights; they are not a special category of rights. Hence this dimension of gender equality relates to the issue of the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms. This element focuses predominantly on women who are subject to multiple types of discrimination.

***3.3. Prevention of violence***

This dimension includes issues relating to women who face gender-based violence, domestic violence/violence in intimate relationships, and sexual exploitation. However, this dimension relates not only to the prevention of gender-based violence, but also to support to those that have been the victim of such violence. Furthermore, issues relating to reproductive rights and sexual health also fall under this category. Initiatives include those activities that seek to reduce discrimination, promote women’s rights as human rights and prevent trafficking in women.

***3.4. Participation and decision-making***

This dimension includes representation and participation in decision-making both at apolitical and an economic level. The political level encompasses the equal participation and representation of women in the societal systems and local decision-making processes, including elections. Decision-making at an economic level relates to the step from education and training into working life, including recruitment and career development aspects.

There is a general under-representation of women in all areas of decision-making, which represents a fundamental democratic deficit. Initiatives include, among others activities, promotion of the involvement of women in political, economic and social decision-making at all levels.

1. ***Gender equality in CHILDHOPE-ZAMBIA***

Experience among those organisations promoting gender equality has shown that it is insufficient to work only with gender equality-oriented projects. Gender equality issues must be a part of entire processes, policies and actions. Care must also be taken to secure the focus on gender equality throughout the project cycle. Therefore, gender equality is defined as a cross-cutting issue that is evaluated in all project applications of CHILDHOPE-ZAMBIA. However, the notion of gender equality may also exist as the key focus of a project; an element without which the project would not exist. In such cases, it will naturally be appraised on a full set of project indicators and hence falls outside the scope of this policy.

***4.1. As a cross-cutting issue***

Gender equality is one of the cross-cutting issues identified for projects supported by CHILDHOPE-ZAMBIA. Gender equality is inextricably linked to the other cross-cutting issues. On a broad level, without gender equality, sustainable development cannot be achieved. Moreover, gender equality is an inherent component of good governance, without which there would be an inefficient use of a country’s resources and good governance could not be achieved.

The involvement and the full and equal participation of both women and men are crucial aspects of economic and social development, if effective and sustainable development is to be achieved. The related issues of ‘poverty and social exclusion ‘and ‘economic and employment exclusion’ tend however to be more significant problems for women than for men, and have led to a feminisation of poverty. The linkbetween women and poverty/social exclusion is so strong that without the focus on gender equality, one cannot expect reductions in poverty levels.

As a cross-cutting issue, gender equality will as such be covered and followed up throughout the project cycle. This starts with the preparation of the application, continuing with the appraisal and decision processes, as well as throughout project implementation and evaluation. Gender equality considerations have been incorporated into all areas of the project cycle.

***4.2. In projects***

A key aspect of the success of any gender equality policy is to translate it into action. In CHILDHOPE-ZAMBI mechanisms, this primarily entails its incorporation into projects and the project cycle, starting at the project application stage. In essence, the potential and actual impact of the inclusion of gender equality must therefore be assessed both in project appraisal and followed-up within project monitoring.

In assessing the inclusion of gender equality of each project, a gender equality checklist has been developed. The checklist is meant as a tool throughout the process of project development, appraisal, monitoring, and result evaluation. It is one of a number of tools, including discussions with appraisal agents and project monitoring, that will be used to ensure the inclusion of gender equality.

Due to the differences in nature of projects possible under CHILDHOPE-ZAMBI, some of the gender equality issues relevant to the project will vary. Therefore the checklist must be used in a flexible way, declaring the ‘not applicable’ questions as such, and focusing on the relevant ones. When developing the gender equality element of projects, a number of elements should be considered in order to give an indication of its potential impact on gender equality issues. In particular, the project should address how the project takes the following issues into account.

***4.2.1 General methodology***

* How does the project take into account gender specific needs and address gender specific conditions?
* How does the project take past experiences and/or current gender equality activities in the country into account?
* How does the project address the gender equality issues and targets relevant to the project?
* How does the project provide qualitative information on gender issues where necessary?

***4.2.2 Economic and social rights***

* How does the project encourage lifelong learning and access by women to the labour market?
* How does the project enhance the income earning opportunities of women?
* How does the project strengthen social rights and/or contribute to participation in civil life by women?
* How does the project reduce the social exclusion of women?

***4.2.3 Human rights***

* How does the project contribute to strengthening organisations and public institutions working to improve the opportunities and rights of women, including NGOs?

***4.2.4 Prevention of violence***

* How does the project support awareness-raising actions and campaigns empowering women?

***4.2.5 Participation and decision-making***

* How does the project contribute to participation by women in decision making at both a political and an economic level?
* How does the project involve male and female stakeholders in the consultative process?
* How does the project promote women’s participation within the project, for example as project staff, members of steering committees?

Project applications with a discriminatory gender bias or that may contribute to reinforcing existing gender inequalities should be rejected. Likewise, applications with no reference to gender equality issues where such an inclusion is relevant should be approached for additional information. Furthermore, in such cases where an inclusion is relevant, this may be stipulated in the grant conditions.

Monitoring throughout the project and ex-post evaluation is necessary elements for assessing the actual impact of a project, and is key elements in securing the inclusion of gender equality in projects. To facilitate monitoring, data must be sex disaggregated; reporting requirements must include gender equality considerations, and ex-post evaluations must not only measure impact, but also provide lessons learned and suggest possible future improvements.

1. ***Implementing the gender equality policy***

Empowerment has become a fashionable concept and therefore requires operationalisation. It entails various dimensions: material and immaterial, which are interlinked and relate to issues of **material well-being**, **access**, **ideology/value**, **participation/agency** and **control**. Empowerment shall take place with regard to each of these dimensions, which, as they are interrelated, impact upon one another. CHILDHOPE-ZAMBIA shall endeavour to act on gender issues in the following ways;

1. **Well-being:** the basic material needs, like health, food supply and income. Women's unequal socio-economic situation arises directly from the inequality of access. We shall attempt to ensure equity and parity is supported in this area in all programmes
2. **Access**: the need for equal access to resources, such as education, knowledge, land, water, employment, labour and capital. In achieving equality of access women face blockages such as discriminatory laws, traditions, customs and values.
3. Equal **Participation** in decision-making processes. This requires women's mobilisation, through organising collectively, in order to push for increased representation. Ultimately this should lead to greater control. The point of departure is that women are considered as active **agents**, rather than passive recipients or beneficiaries.
4. **Control**: a balance of power between women and men, without either side in a position of dominance. Equality of control requires participation, to ensure equal access to resources and equal distribution of benefits. Equal control is necessary for the realisation of equal well-being. This gender equality policy must therefore be implemented in all parts of the project cycle based on the following principles and activities:

* This policy is an integrated part of the grant policy adopted by the donors and they will thereby be committed to include gender equality assessment as an important decision criterion.
* The *Gender equality policy shall* be presented and thoroughly discussed with all the focal points in order for them also to consider the same criteria in their future assessments.
* The *Gender equality policy shall* be referred to in next revision of the application forms for membership and employment.
* Other measures to make the policy public in the beneficiaries and staff members shall be considered.

1. ***MONITORING AND EVALUATION***

For the purpose of progress of the gender policy it is important to develop a set of indicators that will ensure that CHILDHOPE-ZAMBIA moves towards achieving gender equality. It is envisaged that this policy will promote and institutionalize a process of development in which women and men are equal partners in creating society where gender and racial equality are normative. The future of CHILDHOPE-ZAMBIA and the communities we serve will depend on the extent to which women are given space and opportunity to participate fully and as equals at all levels of society.

***6.1 Staff***

CHILDHOPE-ZAMBIA shall follow a pattern as outlined below; she will need to decide and demonstrate her position on the following:

1. Arrive at a fair gender balance of women/men and race in the organization (at least 30% of the absent sex and race)
2. Put women in senior and decision making positions
3. Enhance and support women’s performance to get into and maintain positions of power.
4. Afford women maternity and reproductive rights and benefits.
5. Develop and implement strategies for dealing with gender violence and sexual harassment in and outside the office.
   1. ***Programme Assessments***

CHILDHOPE-ZAMBIA shall assess programmes to establish the extent to which programmes address the following:

***6.2. 1. Better women’s/men’s health***

1. reduction in the prevalence of illnesses,
2. availability and awareness of maternity/ reproductive rights

***6.2.2. Provide women/men with more or better education and training***

1. functional literacy,
2. skills training

***6.2.3. Enhance women’s/ men’s income opportunities***

1. pieces of short term work (for more than one month),
2. entrepreneurial activities

***6.2.4. Identify barriers to women/men’s participation in the programmes***

1. cultural traditions that assign specific roles to women/men that makes them unable to participate in activities that are meant to strengthen
2. their social and economic positions attitudes that prevent women/men from becoming active development partners
3. lack of resources (e.g. child care) that prevents women/men from making use of opportunities

***6.2.5. Promote women/men’s opportunity to participate in the project***

1. projects may be planned by outsiders but in close cooperation with local female/male leaders and others whose views are taken into account
2. a majority of female/male staff may be drawn from the local community and given decision making authority and /means to influence the development process

***6.2.6. Give women/men increased control over resources***

1. employment that leads to position of power
2. decision making power,
3. professional or popular support that leads to positions of authority

***6.2. 7. Enhance women/men’s democratic rights***

1. equality,
2. justice

***6.2.8. Enhance women/men’s opportunities for organized participation***

1. religious associations,
2. women’s social clubs

***6.3 Budgets***

Policies have an impact on budgets and /vice versa. It is therefore imperative that gender is considered in developing budgets.

Budgets need to:

* Incorporate and reflect gender sensitive strategies and implementation plans
* Enable the design of specific means to help overcome identified barriers to women’s participation
* Consider the inclusion of specific means to ensure equitable participation and control by women and men over activity outputs
* Enable the development of gender sensitive indicators including impact indicators for monitoring and evaluation
* Be guided by the commitment to implement gender policies in budget design, implementation and monitoring
* Be informed by gender sensitive consultation at all levels and stages

***6.4 Evaluation Mechanisms***

For effective implementation of this policy, CHILDHOPE-ZAMBIA will give this gender policy a three-year implementation period. During this period, CHILDHOPE-ZAMBIA will conduct bi/annual assessments where they will be monitoring the progress of their plans. These will be reported on in Annual Reports. A comprehensive evaluation will be conducted at the end of three years, detailing the whole implementation of the policy.