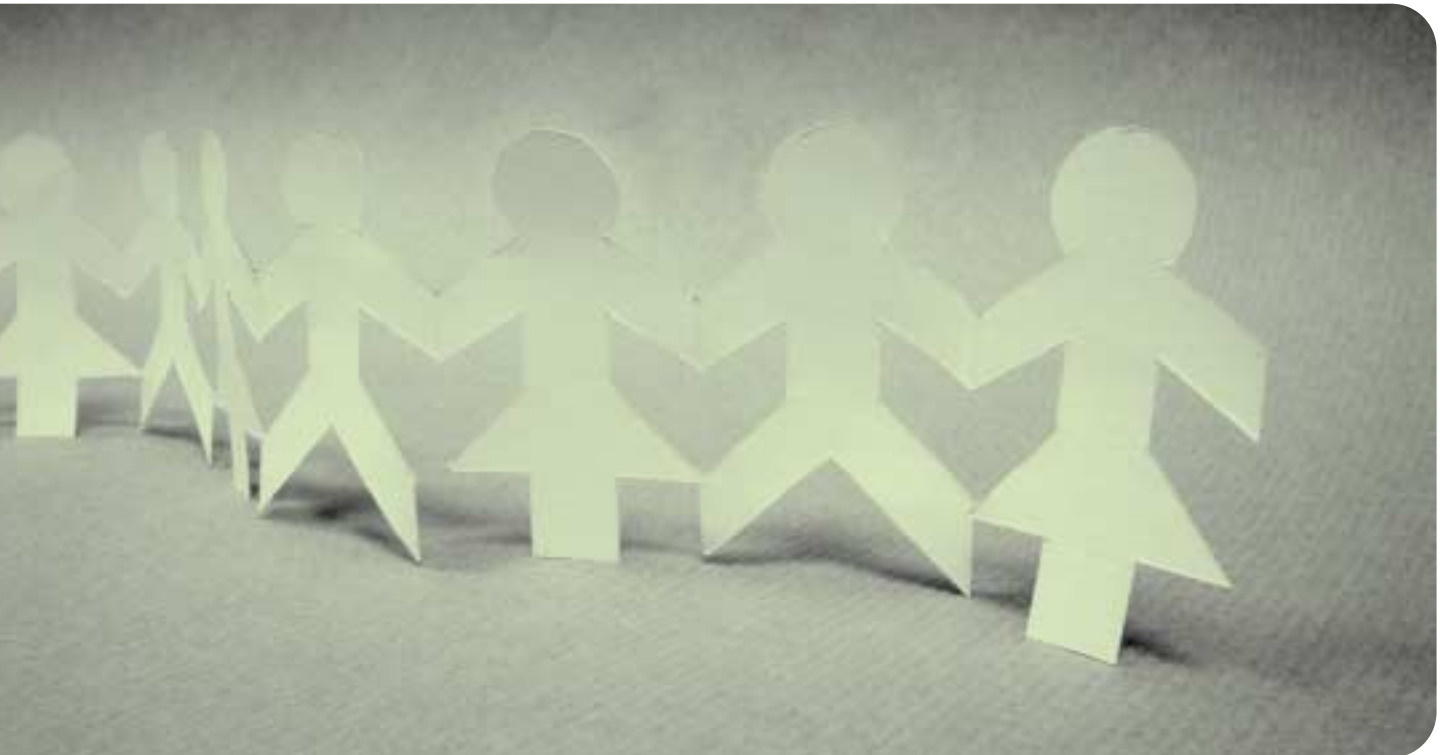


# OXFAM'S POLICY ON GENDER EQUALITY



## Oxfam's mission is to work with others to overcome poverty and suffering

People experience poverty when they are denied the right to livelihoods, water, education and health, protection and security, a voice in public life, or freedom from discrimination. Oxfam's definition of poverty goes beyond the purely economic to encompass capabilities, powerlessness and inequality.

Women often have less recourse than men to legal recognition and protection, as well as lower access to public knowledge and information, and less decision-making power both within and outside the home. Women in many parts of the world frequently have little control over fertility, sexuality and marital choices. This systematic discrimination reduces women's public participation, often increases

their vulnerability to poverty, violence and HIV, and results in women representing a disproportionate percentage of the poor population of the world.

Gender equality gives women and men the same entitlements to all aspects of human development, including economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights; the same level of respect; the same opportunities to make choices; and the same level of power to shape the outcomes of these choices

This policy represents our organisational commitment to gender equality. It has been written to help staff and volunteers ensure that our work improves the lives of both women and men and promotes gender equality.



## Principles

- Throughout the organisation, we will base our work on a common understanding that gender equality is key to overcoming poverty and suffering
- We will work with both women and men to address the specific ideas and beliefs that create and reinforce gender related poverty
- Women and girls will be empowered through all aspects of our programme and ways of working, and we will often prioritise work which specifically raises the status of women
- Our own internal practices, and ways of working, will reflect our commitment to gender equality
- Partnerships and alliances will be assessed on the basis of their commitment to gender equality
- Our campaign, advocacy and media messages, and the images we use to support these, will emphasise the importance of gender equality in overcoming poverty and suffering. Our communications will also highlight our own commitment to gender equality, and the essential role played by women in all aspects of development and humanitarian work
- Managers will encourage groups and forums across the organisation to share learning and best practice on gender equality. Gender training will also be made available to staff and volunteers

## Strategies for achieving gender equality

- A thorough understanding of the different concerns, experiences, capacities and needs of women and men, will shape the way we analyse, plan, implement and evaluate all our work
- We will address the policies, practices, ideas and beliefs that perpetuate gender inequality and prevent women and girls (and sometimes men and boys) from enjoying a decent livelihood, participation in public life, protection and basic services
- We will seek to ensure the full participation and empowerment of women in all areas of our work, and will promote women's rights as human rights, particularly in the areas of abuse and violence
- We will work with both men and women, together and separately, to have a more lasting impact on beliefs and behaviour. We will ensure that any work we do with men and men's groups supports the promotion of gender equality
- In all our work we will demonstrate commitment to gender equality through setting appropriate team and individual objectives, and through allocating adequate staff and resources to enable us to fulfil the gender equality policy
- Managers of all divisions will devise and report on measurable objectives and actions relating to the gender equality policy; and our management, finance and human resource systems will facilitate and contribute to our gender work
- Gender awareness and understanding will be used as a criterion for recruitment and development of staff and volunteers
- Within the organisation we will pursue family friendly work practices that enable both men and women to participate fully in work and family life

This gender policy is closely linked to Oxfam's Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policies.