

OXFAM GB Gender Equality Policy

Title of Policy:	Gender Equality Policy- Director of Women's Rights & Gender Justice
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LT sponsor:	Penny Lawrence – Deputy CEO
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Policy Statement

Our vision of gender equality is that through our work many more women will gain power over their lives. This will happen through changes in attitudes, ideas and beliefs about gender relations, and increased levels of women's active engagement and critical leadership in institutions, decision-making and change processes. To achieve this vision we will put poor women's rights at the heart of all that we do.

Rationale

Two fundamental beliefs underpin our work on gender equality:

- All human lives are of equal value. Everyone has fundamental rights that must be recognised and upheld at all times.
- Unequal power relations between women and men often increase women's vulnerability to poverty and suffering. Unequal power relations must be addressed wherever they occur.

Throughout the world, discriminatory cultural, religious and legal practices based on gender stereotypes and unequal power relations deny millions of women their fundamental human rights.

Women often have less recourse than men to legal recognition and protection, less access to assets, knowledge and information, and less decision-making power both within and outside the home. In many parts of the world women have little control over fertility and marital choices. Systematic discrimination increases their vulnerability to violence and HIV infection.

The role that women play in livelihoods, the economy and society – including women's unpaid work – is frequently undervalued, and women's potential contribution to development initiatives is often overlooked.

All of these factors increase women's vulnerability to poverty and result in women representing a disproportionate percentage of the world's poor. Put simply, the intrinsic links between gender inequality and poverty mean that we cannot achieve our mission if we do not put poor women's rights at the heart of all we do.

Procedures for Implementation

- All programmes (humanitarian, long-term development, campaigning/advocacy) will:
 - Start with an analysis of how that programme will contribute towards achieving transformational change in the lives of poor women
 - Have at least one, and ideally more, core objective(s) with associated activities and clear indicators which together makes explicit how the programme will deliver transformational change in poor women's lives.

(For current programme strategies for Aim 5, see the Strategic Steer 2011-14)

- Our humanitarian responses will implement culturally appropriate strategies to enhance dignity as soon as practically possible.

As part of our programme work in Oxfam more broadly, we will:

- Work with both men and women, together and separately, to have a more lasting impact on beliefs and behaviour that help to support the promotion of gender equality and poor women's rights.
- Assess partners and alliances on the basis of their commitment to gender equality and, where appropriate, prioritise working with women's rights organisations
- Highlight our commitment to gender equality, and the essential role played by women in all aspects of development and humanitarian work, in our communications and media messages and the images we use to support these
- Ensure that managers demonstrate leadership in gender equality by setting appropriate gender objectives at a team and individual level, monitoring progress towards these and holding their staff accountable for actions and results
- Require that all candidates demonstrate a commitment to gender equality and respect for women's rights within their area of work during the recruitment process
- Build a common understanding among all staff and volunteers during their induction period and on an on-going basis of the importance Oxfam places on gender equality and that promoting gender equality is everybody's responsibility
- Promote and support work practices that enable both men and women to participate fully in work and family life
- Commit adequate staff and resources to enable us to meet the aspirations outlined in this policy

This gender equality policy is closely linked to Oxfam GB's Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policies, and the Code of Conduct.