

ADA



AFGHAN DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

ADA is committed  
to empower needy  
people through  
better socio-  
economic  
conditions to  
promote  
sustainable  
livelihoods, social  
justice and peace

## Gender Policy

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# **Table of content**

## **1- Introduction**

1.1 Gender Guideline

## **2- Gender Role**

## **3- Goal and Objectives**

3.1 Gender Equity and Gender Equality

3.2 Guiding Principles

## **4- Principles**

4.1 Empowerment

## **5- Gender analysis as a tool**

5.1 Gender Roles and the Gender Division of Labor

## **6- Gender analysis guidelines**

6.1 Gender analysis

6.2 Equality between Women and Men

## **7- ADA's role and responsibilities among staff and management**

4.1 Who is accountable and responsible for the implementation of the policy?

4.2 Who will provide support to the process of gender mainstreaming?

4.3 Who is gender policy written for?

## **Gender Guidelines**

### **Introduction**

Afghan Development Association (ADA) as a visionary organization, with the passage of time has played a significant role to improve the living condition of Afghans through implementing integrated rural Development programs. Since its inception, ADA has worked with individuals, communities and village to enable them to take charge of their own destinies and become less vulnerable.

Practical approaches and methodology, based on the analysis of social, economic, political and human resource condition of the target areas, have been introduced as strategy for implementing cost effect development programs. The aim to increase the awareness, knowledge and capacity of participating communities both men and women through mobilization and organization in order tp take part in decision making process of their villages, to get rid of their dependency on external sources and make sustainable livelihood within their villages.

Since the beginning, ADA has been promoting the participation process in its development work. ADA believes that in order to enable Afghans to have just society at the grassroots level. It is essential to help people become organized in order to participate in decision that affect their lives.

Being half of the population, women can play a significant role in the overall socio-economic development of the country. Women share a major responsibility with the men inside as well as out side the home. However, their contribution have always been undermined by the traditional male-dominated the society of Afghanistan .Due to traditional and cultural restriction, women are not allowed to work (education and health sector under certain conditions) or travel outside the home without a male companion from family, get education beyond the primary level of form local organization/association to under take collective effort for their development.

ADA based on its development approaches and goals in its community development program tried to develop a workable policy on how to involve both men and women in the development process. For this purpose ADA assess the social and political condition of the target communities and contacted stakeholders for development of a policy or guideline for gender.

The guideline has been so designed to consider all aspect to the life of the community in order to do not act as a divider or create problems among the tar get communities.

### **GENDER ROLES**

Gender roles are the culturally defined behaviors deemed appropriate for a man or a woman. A role is essentially per formative. One learns how to play a masculine or feminine role, what is acceptable and what is not, how one should behave, think, and evaluate oneself and others

in a gendered manner. While age, ethnicity, class, and many other factors also have culturally prescribed norms, gender is the most universal and salient social organizing principle. The advancement of women and the achievement of equality between women and men are matters of human rights and conditions for social justice and should not be seen in isolation as a women's issue. They are the only way to build a sustain-able, just, and developed society. Empowerment of women and gender equality are prerequisites for achieving political, social, economic, cultural, and environmental security among all peoples.

### **3. Goal and Objectives**

#### **Goal**

The goal of ADA's gender policy is to support the achievement of equality between women and men to ensure sustainable development.

#### **Objectives**

the objectives of the policy are:

- to advance women's equal participation with men as decision-makers in shaping the sustainable development of their societies;
- to support women and girls in the realization of their full human rights; and
- to reduce gender inequalities in access to and control over the resources and benefits of development.

#### **Gender Equity and Gender Equality**

Gender equity is the process of being fair to women and men. To ensure fairness, measures must often be available to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from otherwise operating on a level playing field. Equity leads to equality. Gender equality means that women and men enjoy the same status. Gender equality means that women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and potential to contribute to national, political, economic, social and cultural development, and to benefit from the results.

Gender equality is therefore the equal valuing by society of both the similarities and differences between women and men, and the varying roles that they play.

#### **Guiding Principles**

Eight guiding principles:

- Gender equality must be considered as an integral part of all ADA policies, programs and projects;
- Achieving gender equality requires the recognition that every policy, program and project affects women and men differently;
- Achieving gender equality does not mean that women become the same as men.
- Women's empowerment is central to achieving gender equality.
- Promoting the equal participation of women as agents of change in economic, social and political processes is essential to achieving gender equality;
- Gender equality can only be achieved through partnership between women and men;
- Achieving gender equality will require specific measures designed to eliminate gender inequalities; and
- ADA policy, programs, and projects should contribute to gender equality.

#### 4. Principles

ADA's policy on gender equality is rooted in the following principles:

- a. **Gender equality must be considered as an integral part of all ADA policies, programs and projects.** In addition to being one of ADA's programming priorities, gender equality is also a cross-cutting goal. Addressing gender equality as a cross-cutting goal requires that women's views, interests and needs shape the development agenda as much as men's, and that the development agenda support progress toward more equal relations between women and men.
- b. **Achieving gender equality requires the recognition that every policy, program and project affects women and men differently.** Women and men have different perspectives, needs, interests, roles and resources - and those differences may also be reinforced by class, race, caste, ethnicity or age. Policies, programs and projects must address the differences in experiences and situations between and among women and men.
- c. **Achieving gender equality does not mean that women become the same as men.** Equality means that one's rights or opportunities do not depend on being male or female.
- d. **Women's empowerment is central to achieving gender equality.** Through empowerment, women become aware of unequal power relations, gain control over their lives, and acquire a greater voice to overcome inequality in their home, workplace and community.

### **Empowerment**

Empowerment is about people both women and men taking control over their lives: setting

their own agendas, gaining skills, building self-confidence, solving problems, and developing self-reliance. It is not only a collective, social and political process, but an individual one as well and it is not only a process but an outcome too.

Outsiders cannot empower women: only women can empower themselves to make choices or to speak out on their own behalf. However, institutions, including international co-operation agencies, can support processes that increase women's self-confidence, develop their self-reliance, and help them set their own agendas.

- e. **Promoting the equal participation of women as agents of change in economic, social and political processes is essential to achieving gender equality.** Equal participation goes beyond numbers. It involves women's equal right to articulate their needs and interests, as well as their vision of society, and to shape the decisions that affect their lives, whatever cultural context they live in. Partnership with women's organizations and other groups working for gender equality is necessary to assist this process.
- f. **Gender equality can only be achieved through partnership between women and men.** When choices for both women and men are enlarged, all society benefits. **Gender equality is** an issue that concerns both women and men, and achieving it will involve working with men to bring about changes in attitudes, behaviors, roles and responsibilities at home, in the workplace, in the community, and in national, donor and international institutions.
- g. **Achieving gender equality will require specific measures designed to eliminate gender inequalities.** Given ingrained disparities, equal treatment of women and men is insufficient as a strategy for gender equality. Specific measures must be developed to address the policies, laws, procedures, norms, beliefs, practices and attitudes that maintain gender inequality. These gender equity measures, developed with stakeholders, should support women's capacity to make choices about their own lives.

## 5. Gender Analysis as a tool

Gender analysis is an indispensable tool for both understanding the local context, and promoting gender equality.

ADA defines knowledge of the local context as: "the recognition that development interventions operate within existing social, cultural, economic, environmental, institutional and political structures in any community, country or region. Further, few communities,

countries or regions are homogeneous—formal and informal power structures within each reflect social, economic and political relationships among the people concerned as well as with the outside world. Simply put, knowledge of the local context is vital to understanding these relationships and their connection to the project in terms of needs, impact and results".

Gender analysis examines one of these relationships, that between women and men. It identifies the varied roles played by women and men, girls and boys in the household, community, workplace, political processes, and economy. These different roles usually result in women having less access than men to resources and decision-making processes, and less control over them.

### **Gender, Gender Roles and the Gender Division of Labour**

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles and responsibilities of women and men. The concept of gender also includes the expectations held about the characteristics, aptitudes and likely behaviors of both women and men (femininity and masculinity). These roles and expectations are learned, changeable over time, and variable within and between cultures. Gender analysis has increasingly revealed how women's subordination is socially constructed, and therefore able to change, as opposed to being biologically predetermined and therefore static.

The gender division of labor refers to the different work that women and men generally do within the community or inside the home. Factors such as education, technology, economic change, and sudden crises like war and famine cause gender roles and the gender division of labor to change. By examining the gender division of labor it becomes evident that women's and men's tasks are interdependent, and that women generally carry the greater burden of unpaid work in the home and community.

Gender analysis is an essential tool for understanding the local context. It is particularly useful in project design as it helps planners identify constraints and structure projects so that objectives can be met and measured. The use of gender analysis, throughout the project cycle, provides information on:

- the differential perspectives, roles, needs, and interests of women and men in the project area, country, region, or institution, including the practical needs and strategic interests of women and men;
- the relations between women and men pertaining to their access to, and control over resources, benefits and decision-making processes;
- the potential differential impact of program or project interventions on women and men, girls and boys;
- social and cultural constraints, opportunities, and entry points for reducing gender inequalities and promoting more equal relations between women and men;
- the capacity of institutions to program for gender equality; and

- the differences among women and men and the diversity of their circumstances, social relationships and consequent status (e.g. their class, race, caste, ethnicity, age, culture and abilities).

## Gender Analysis Guidelines

### **Gender analysis: What to ask**

- Who is the target (both direct and indirect) of the proposed policy, program or project? Who will benefit? Who will lose?
- Have women been consulted on the 'problem' the intervention is to solve? How have they been involved in development of the 'solution'?
- Does the intervention challenge the existing gender division of labour, tasks, responsibilities and opportunities?
- What is the best way to build on (and strengthen) the government's commitment to the advancement of women?
- What is the relationship between the intervention and other actions and organizations - national, regional or international?
- Where do opportunities for change or entry points exist? And how can they best be used?
- What specific ways can be proposed for encouraging and enabling women to participate in the policy/program/project, despite their traditionally more domestic location and subordinate position?
- What is the long-term impact in regard to women's increased ability to take charge of their own lives, and to take collective action to solve problems?

### **Gender analysis: What to do**

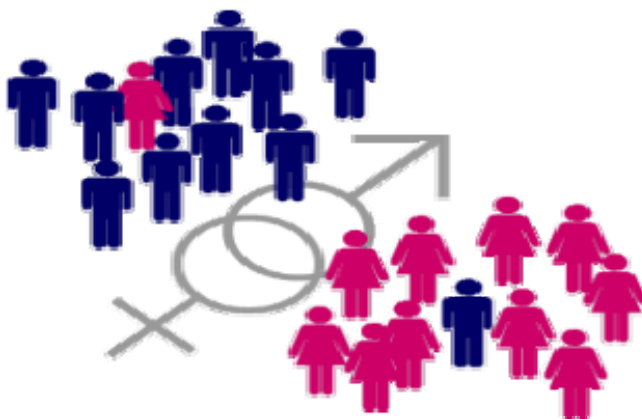
- Gain an understanding of gender relations, the division of labour between men and women (who does what work), and who has access to, and control over, resources.
- Include domestic (reproductive) and community work in the work profile. Recognize the ways women and men work and contribute to the economy, their family and society.
- Use participatory processes and include a wide range of female and male stakeholders at the governmental level and from civil society - including women's organizations and gender equality experts.
- Identify barriers to women's participation and productivity (social, economic, legal, political, cultural...).
- Gain an understanding of women's practical needs and strategic interests, and identify opportunities to support both.

- Consider the differential impact of the initiative on men and women, and identify consequences to be addressed.
- Establish baseline data, ensure sex-disaggregated data, set measurable targets, and identify expected results and indicators.
- Outline the expected risks (including backlash) and develop strategies to minimize these risks.

## Equality between Women and Men

Equality between women and men or gender equality—promoting the equal participation of women and men in making decisions; supporting women and girls so that they can fully exercise their rights; and reducing the gap between women’s and men’s access to and control of resources and the benefits of development—is still out of reach for most women worldwide.

Women continue to have fewer rights, lower education and health status, less income, and less access to resources and decision-making than men. Nevertheless, women’s critical roles in food production, income generation, management of natural resources, community organization and domestic responsibilities are essential for sustainable development. If equitable and sustainable progress is to be achieved, women’s status must be improved, their rights must be respected, and their contributions must be recognized.



## 4-Organization role and responsibilities

Equally important to any policy document, aside from the goals themselves, are the Owners and decision makers behind the document. In this case there are some Relevant questions to be addressed by ADA’s gender policy. Outlining the Stakeholders of the policy document makes them visible to the user and therefore Accountable to the objectives of the document. A policy document without a known

Owner is not likely to have an impact or be firmly founded in the organization. On the other hand a policy document that openly identifies the responsibilities and roles of diverse stakeholders will be more useful and have a larger impact. This part of policy therefore outlines the responsible and relevant staff of the organization regarding its implementation.

#### **4.1 Who is accountable and responsible for the implementation of the Gender Policy?**

Managing director and deputy managing director of ADA are responsible for the organization's gender policies that are at the highest level of management within the program.

Managing director and deputy director will always be ultimately accountable for the end result of the program's work as well as its policy decision and the implementation of the gender policy by ADA.

However as the overall owners of the gender policy, the Managing director and deputy managing director will not be able to implement the direct demands of the policy. In every day work, the responsibilities outlined in the policy will be delegated according to the structure of the program. Senior management is responsible for gender mainstreaming in their specific regions and departments.

This system of delegation will be followed throughout the program and in day to day work of the staff acknowledging the gender policy in the overall framework of ADA.

It is the responsibility of the managing director together with the deputy managing director and senior management to ensure that the gender policy is implemented, and they are accountable for the outreach and impact of its objectives. However professional staff of the program must be responsible for the direct implementation of the policy document in their day to day work and activities.

#### **4.2 Who will provide support to the process of gender mainstreaming?**

Gender committee will be established to support staff in implementing the objectives of the gender policy with the aim of building capacity and strengthening awareness within the program.

The gender advisor will provide support to all levels of the program and operation in order to enable a better understanding of and attaining the gender policy objectives. The gender focal point of each region office will also provide support to project staff.

The members meet on regular basis to discuss and develop strategies and mechanism for mainstreaming gender in ADA. One staff member will be elected by gender committee to participate in management meetings in order to incorporate a gender perspective in the decision making process.

Gender committee is responsible for assessing gender mainstreaming work with the organization on yearly basis.

### **4.3 Who is the Gender Policy written for?**

The policy is designed to be used by all professional staff and management in their every day work as a reference for planning, decision making and implementation of projects within the program.

ADA's staff, management, implementers, senior managers, middle managers and professional staff are the identified target group as they are crucial in the implementation of the gender policy objectives, as the agents of gender mainstreaming in ADA's work.

All the above identified staff of the organization is the primary stakeholders of the policy document. The secondary stakeholders, of the gender policy, are the number of beneficiaries of the programs and projects implemented by ADA.

The overall target groups of the gender policy are the stakeholders of ADA's activities. To be able to reach this group it is important that the implementers, staff and management use this policy in their work to reach the end users or beneficiaries. This implies that these groups of beneficiaries are always kept in mind and analyzed from a gender perspective at all levels in implementing the ADA's functions.