

WACC POLICY

GENDER JUSTICE

September 2019

Statement of Commitment

WACC is committed to achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls as stated in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 5 (2015) and the Beijing Platform for Action for the Advancement of Women (1994). WACC is committed to respecting, empowering and protecting the dignity, the uniqueness and the intrinsic worth and human rights of every human being.

WACC does not accept any discrimination on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation, disability, nationality, race, religion or belief, class or political opinion so that all people shall have the same power to shape societies, faith communities and their own lives. WACC is committed to ensure gender equality as a common value and an inalienable human right. The human rights principles of universality and non-discrimination apply to all people with whom WACC works.

Through gender-aware and gender-responsive activities, WACC aims to contribute to the achievement of gender justice in the communities and spaces in which it intervenes. A significant cause of injustice is discrimination on the basis of gender difference.

WACC considers gender equal communication rights to be a key to policy-change and public awareness of the issues impacting gender justice.

In its international development work, WACC's strategy is to pay attention to the identity of project participants and beneficiaries, to the distribution of resources and to identified gender needs and interests, to ensure that benefits are skewed towards those who have historically or systematically been marginalized on the basis of gender. WACC focuses on women and marginalized groups, at the same time as it integrates gender responsiveness across its programmes.

Definitions

Gender refers to socially constructed norms and practices that are derived from a person's real or perceived sex. Gender is learned through socialization, and is often expressed in terms of

masculinity or femininity. Gender inequality implies an imbalance of power in specific or societal situations due primarily because of gender.

Gender is relational, creating and sustaining relations of dominance and subordination between individuals and groups. Power inequalities result in structural injustice that may be rectified through deliberate strategies that reach its root core.

Gender equality is the equal enjoyment of human rights, opportunities, responsibilities, resources and rewards irrespective of gender or sex, including fundamental freedoms in the political, civil, economic, social and cultural spheres. Gender equality is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centred development.

Gender identity is a personal perception of one's own gender, which may or may not match - with their sex assigned at birth. It includes all of the attributes and characteristics that different cultures attach to the belonging to one or the other sexes.

Gender responsiveness means challenging and seeking to correct asymmetrical gender power relations that cut across all societies. Gender injustice is structural and cannot be corrected through strategies that fail to address the root causes of gender inequality.

Framework

1. Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

Adopted by governments at the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, this document sets forth governments' commitments to enhance women's rights. Platform J has two strategic objectives:

- * J.1. Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication.
- * J.2. Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media.

2. The Commission on the Status of Women (2003)

Agreed conclusions CSW47, 2003, recognizing "The potential of the media and of information and communication technologies to contribute to the advancement and empowerment of women".

The CSW proposed 24 actions for Governments, the UN system, international financial institutions, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders. The Commission underlined the need to prioritize gender perspectives in ICT and media policy and regulations, to support research, education and training, to strengthen inter-stakeholder partnerships, to tackle media-based violence against women and to allocate adequate resources.

3. United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

"Women and girls, everywhere, must have equal rights and opportunity, and be able to live free of violence and discrimination."

Targets of focus

- * End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.

- * Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.
- * Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.
- * Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women.
- * Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

General Principles

Within WACC's structures and through WACC's activities, the following principles will be upheld:

Principle 1: Ensure gender balance in participation, decision-making, representation and staffing. Participation and empowerment are part of the process and definition of development. Therefore people have a right to take part in decisions that affect their lives. WACC works with a gender-inclusive rights-based perspective which always includes consultation with and participation of people irrespective of gender, building upon their own capacities.

Principle 2: Ensure gender equality through a focus on women and marginalised groups at the same time as gender-responsiveness is integrated across WACC's work. WACC commits to this strategy for attaining gender equality, and to the process of assessing the implication of gender in any planned action, in all areas and at all levels.

Principle 3: Promote strategies that guard against human rights violations perpetrated on the grounds of people's gender identity. All people, irrespective of sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, are entitled to enjoy the protections provided for by international human rights law, including in respect of the right to be free from discrimination and the right to freedom of expression.

Principle 4: WACC's commitment to gender equality will be made visible throughout its reporting and communication efforts.

Policy Review

This policy approved by the Board of Directors will be reviewed every four years. If there is any significant programme or contextual changes, the policy may need to be reviewed more frequently.