GENDER EQUALITY POLICY

1. Scope

Sight For All is firmly committed to ensuring gender equality is fully incorporated into our work, as a universal human right and as a means to social justice and overcoming poverty.

Sight For All promotes and supports the principles of gender equality within our organisation, with partners and among representatives, including Board Directors, staff, Visionaries, Fellows and project participants.

Sight For All recognises that the differences between and among women and men in terms of their relative position in society and the distribution of resources, opportunities, constraints and power in a given context, must be identified and recognised for allowing the development of interventions that address gender inequalities and meet the different needs of women and men.

This policy applies to Sight For All Board Directors, staff, Visionaries, volunteers, Fellows, project participants and partners.

2. Inequality in Vision Loss

The inequality in vision loss is well documented, including in the *World Report on Vision* 2019 which guides the World Health Organisation's work and the resolution on *Integrated People Centred Eye Care at the World Health Assembly* in 2020. A total of 90% of people with vision loss live in low and middle income countries, and women and girls experience 55% of all vision loss. Women's average life expectancy is longer than men, and in industrialised countries, eye conditions such as aged-related macular degeneration and glaucoma are associated with increasing age. However, in non-industrialised settings, certain eye conditions such as cataract and trachoma are responsible for most blindness.

Gender roles and unequal gender relations interact with other social and economic variables, resulting in different and sometimes inequitable patterns of exposure to health risk, and in differential access to and utilisation of health information, care and services. These differences, in turn have a clear impact on health outcomes. For example, in many countries, women and girls have less access to eye health services due to cultural and socio-economic factors. They undertake much of the caring role, often have limited exposure to information and have less access to money to pay for eye care and transport costs to access services.

3. Purpose

This Gender Equality Policy has the following purpose:

- To demonstrate Sight For All's commitment to gender equality, providing a clear direction and consistent messaging
- To promote the understanding of gender equality within the organisation, including through the education of Board Directors, staff, Visionaries and other stakeholders.
- To enable the full participation of people representing all genders and ages, as equal partners within the organisation and in the planning, delivery and evaluation of projects.

4. Commitments

Sight For All's commitment to gender equality is founded on the human rights framework and principles of equality and non-discrimination. It is based on international law and regional standards, in particular:

- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Sustainable Development Goals – specifically Goal 5, Achieve Gender Equality and Empower all Women and Girls and Goal 10, Reduce Inequality within and among countries.
- ACFID Code of Conduct Commitment 2.3 – We promote gender equality and equity.

5. Policy in Practice

Sight For All recognises that the differences that exist between men, women, girls and boys and in between countries must be considered when planning and implementing projects. Sight For All uses the following strategies to enhance gender equality organisationally and in project design, implementation and evaluation:

Organisational

- Promoting the development of a culture supportive of the principles of gender equality and diversity, and ensuring this culture is reflected in policies and processes
- Providing equal opportunities by identifying and removing barriers to participation and by taking positive steps to promote equal opportunity for people representing all genders and ages
- Providing a working environment and conditions that are supportive and free from discrimination on the grounds of gender
- Identifying and remedying any gender inequality issues within the organisation
- Ensuring a gender balance on the Sight For All Board of Directors
- Ensuring a gender balance with Fellowship opportunities
- Ensuring a gender balance within the Sight For All staff and Visionary teams
- Recruiting and retaining staff with a commitment to gender equality, building staff and partner capacity and skills in gender equality and ensuring operating plans, job & person specifications and performance reviews reflect Sight For All's commitment to gender equality
- Taking all measures to prevent and respond to all forms of sexual harassment and violence and sexual exploitation and abuse of children and vulnerable adults, promoting staff awareness and training and effective systems for monitoring and reporting
- Ensuring marketing, fundraising and communication materials demonstrate respect and uphold our commitment to gender equality. This includes, being inclusive and respectful, using positive language and images and avoiding stereotypes with particular attention to those based on gender and ethnicity
- Nominating the Chief Executive Officer as the Gender Focal Person and providing ongoing training and upskilling for this role
- Making available this Gender Equality Policy and other policies such as Code of Conduct Policy, Human Rights Policy and PSEAH Policy to ensure understanding of responsibilities
- Providing information about gender equality to staff, Board Directors, Visionaries, Fellows and project participants via Good Development Practice Workshops

Projects

- Incorporating gender analysis into the planning, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects
- Understanding and taking into consideration the unique needs of women and girls, men and boys as part of project planning
- Identifying gender inequalities as part of Country Situational Analysis, Capacity Assessments and Gender Analysis undertaken for every project
- Requiring the collection of disaggregated data (including gender) as part of all projects
- Identifying potential gender inequality project risks throughout the project cycle
- Ensuring evaluation and reviews do no harm, are participatory and assess progress towards gender equality outcomes
- In planning new projects, ensuring genders are represented in the team of Visionaries teaching throughout the project period and in the selection of Fellows
- Engaging key stakeholders in striving for gender equality including partners, governments and donors.

Gender Analysis

As part of the design and development of a project, Sight For All considers cross cutting issues pertaining to the partner country. This includes understanding gender requirements for countries and partners, included in the Gender Analysis Report. These reports incorporate:

- Executive summary or shortened version of the full report
- Purpose of gender analysis acknowledging the differences between and among women and men
- The methodology used to collect the data for the report including:
    - The gender background and activity profile which provides data and information to form a gender perspective into projects
    - The access and control profiles identify the resources used in the identified tasks; define by gender who has access to these resources and control over their use; and define the benefits that result from each activity and those who have access to and control over these benefits
    - Analysis of factors and trends clearly identifying the different needs of men and women and addressing those needs at different stages during the project cycle
    - Project cycle gender analysis, to demonstrate the gender issues addressed in the different project cycle activities
    - Gender Analysis conclusion, promoting better informed, gender responsive and effective interventions.

It is the responsibility of the Country Officer/Project Officer to undertake the Gender Analysis Report with support from the International Development Manager.

6. Responsibilities

The Sight For All Board of Directors and Chief Executive Officer are responsible for

- Promoting the development of a culture that supports the principles of gender equality and ensuring that the organisation's policies and practices reflect the same
- Providing equal opportunity by identifying and removing barriers to participation and by taking positive steps to promote equal opportunity for women and girls
- Providing a working environment that is supportive and free from discrimination on the grounds of gender
- Identifying and remedying any gender inequalities within the organisation
- Ensuring that all Board Directors, staff, Visionaries, volunteers, Fellows and project participants are aware of and understand this policy.

7. Definitions

Gender: Refers to socially constructed differences in women's and men's roles and responsibilities, which are learned, vary from culture to culture and change over time and thus equally to the economic, social, political and cultural opportunities associated with being male and female.
Sex: Biological differences between women and men.
Gender Equality: refers to equal chances or opportunities of women and men and other genders to access and control social, economic and political resources. It is the provision of equal conditions, treatment and opportunity for both men and women to realize their full potential, human rights and dignity, as well as opportunities to contribute to and benefit from economic, social, cultural and political development.
Gender Equity – Fairness in access to resources and the distribution of benefits from development, according to the different needs of women, men, girls and boys.
Gender mainstreaming: A process used to ensure that women's and men's needs, concerns and experiences are integral to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all legislation, policies and programmes.
Gender Responsiveness: Gender responsive programming refers to programs where gender norms, roles and inequalities have been considered, and measures have been taken to actively address them. Such programmes go beyond raising sensitivity and awareness and actually do something about gender inequalities.

8. Related Documents

- Sight For All Child Protection Policy
- Sight For All Code of Conduct Policy
- Sight For All Complaints Handling Policy
- Sight For All Disability Inclusion Policy
- Sight For All Human Rights Policy
- Sight For All Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy
- Sight For All Safeguarding Policy
- DFAT Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy 2016
- DFAT Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy 2018
- ACFID Code of Conduct – Commitment 2.3

9. Review

The Sight For All Gender Equality Policy is reviewed on a biennial basis.

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