

CODWA GENDER POLICY

Over the years, it was recognized that CODWA is duty-bound to have its Gender policy formally written, approved and publicized, so that it not only gives direction for the organization in practice, but also holds the organization accountable as regards gender best practice. This also flows from the understanding that, inequality between men and women is profoundly rooted and it is manifested in discrimination against women in different forms. To whatever degree, one might be sensitive; it needs conscious and continuous efforts to attain a balanced environment both at organizational level and also in our work with the partners at field level. Establishing a Gender policy is a commitment towards these efforts. This determination is to provide an enabling environment for women within the organization, our partners and the communities where we work. Though it was challenging, we had no option but surmount the hindrances. Therefore, we do hope this will strengthen the gender sensitivity and accountability among all.

Objectives of Gender Policy:

- To unequivocally state the organizational commitment towards gender
- To provide a direction and focus towards building gender related standard
- To provide a framework for effectively integrating gender concerns into the organizational plan and policy domain
- To create equal opportunities and a conducive environment for women, young people and men at work place
- To build harmony among all, notwithstanding, the sex, religion, race or creed one may belong

To promote equal representation and participation of women, young people in decision making at the professional/ programmatic and administrative levels.

Essentials of Gender Policy:

What we mean by Gender...

CODWA understands that gender refers to the attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the socio-cultural relationships between women and men. These attributes, opportunities and interactions are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context specific and changeable. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in activities undertaken, access to and control over resources as well as decision-making opportunities. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural perspective, which also takes into consideration factors such as class, race, economic status, ethnic group and age. CODWA adopts gender viewpoint, which means focusing on both women and men and their relationships with each other and resources. In addition, it means working with a universal perspective that allows for and appreciates regional diversity. The organization aims at mainstreaming gender by creating an enabling working environment that in turn attracts and helps to preserve gender sensitive staff. Since CODWA is working to strengthen natural resources management practices to secure livelihoods of deprived communities, it means achieving a better analysis of patterns of use, knowledge and skills regarding protection and sustainable use of natural resources. Only with a gender perception can a complete picture of human relationships and ecosystems be constructed. The gender policy is an integral part of all its organizational policies, programmes and projects and involves building a culture that understands the issues and policies, which respect diversity and gender, related concerns. A mere declaration of policy and objectives does not ensure the concerns relating to addressing the gender. Towards achieving the above objectives, clear indicators need to be defined to evaluate and assess the organizations adherence to gender equity on a periodic basis.

The following structures would be put in place; and necessary strategies would be tried out internally and externally, *at organizational and at partners' level.*

At Organizational level:

A) Staff composition/representation

- Recruiting adequate women staff and ensuring the balance also at senior levels; with an objective of achieving a gender balance workforce at all levels
- Ensuring equal opportunities among male and female staff for personal growth, in promotion benefits, training and working conditions
- Ensuring unbiased representation and participation of men and women in the core group, Board of trustees and in various functional committees of the organization

B) Workplace

- Providing a safe and secure workplace for women and male staff, free from sexual harassment with a Gender Complaints committee to look into specific concerns.
- Providing an enabling and friendly work environment where both men and women enjoy and actively participate in work.
- Extending work related concessions and relaxations for women staff as and when necessary; depending upon the situations and requirements.
- Reviewing the organizational structure, functioning, problems in relation to gender imbalances among staff and the work environment time to time and taking definite steps to address the same
- Strategic orientation to staff in the field based programs and advocacy initiatives towards increasing women's access, control and ownership over the natural resources.
 - Placing Gender in existing committees: A woman employee who has put in 3 months of service after confirmation shall be entitled for 2 months of Maternity Leave on full pay and under probation, she will be eligible for leave without pay for the same length of period.
 - Men employees shall be entitled for 7 days of leave for the purpose of his wife's child birth for primary parenting and child nurturing if complications arose from the birth.

In the field

- Promoting deliberate and passionate efforts to encourage participation of women and their collectives in various aspects of natural resource management.
- Facilitating participation and even representation of women in various institutional structures created for the management of natural resources like committees, user groups etc.

- Ensuring equal wages to equal work for both men and women in the works as part of the programs, where CODWA is directly or indirectly involved either as an anchor of the program or as a facilitating support service provider.
- Making special efforts to constantly identify vulnerable women and provide them the necessary support and guidance
- Sensitizing the men and mobilizing their support towards gender balance
- Building awareness and sensitivity by processing information and publishing communication material in diverse media to appeal different strata of people in our functional domain.

C) Staff capacity building

- Facilitating staff capacity building processes and trainings to enhance perspectives and conceptual clarity on Gender issues (*for all the staff members/volunteers*). It will be an important component of the induction program
- Ensuring that all trainings (internal and external) facilitated by the organization are gender-sensitive.- a) training content/methodology/mode of facilitation b) logistics part -time/location of venue/crèche facilities/other logistics/first-aid kit
- Conducting Gender trainings for both men and women; and ensuring participation of women in all the field level meetings and trainings

D) Organizational policies and systems

- Making all HR systems and policies gender-sensitive and responsive, and integrating gender indicators into staff performance appraisal systems.
- Incorporating and explicitly mentioning gender sensitivity as an essential element in the tasks/job profiles in all terms of reference, including TORs for external consultants.
- Ensuring that the conceptual/model clarity and sensitivity on gender issues will be one of the important selection criteria in recruitment processes and capacity building efforts of staff
- Initiating and building advocacy around gender balance; and making efforts to integrate gender concerns into the scaling up and mainstream developmental programs

E) Staff benefits

- Ensuring all statutory requirements related to maternity and paternity leaves.
- Ensuring that staff access to and use of information technology is gender equitable

Arrangements shall be made for recording all information and open access for reviewing the performance of tasks mentioned at organizational level regularly in different forums from staff meetings to Annual meetings.

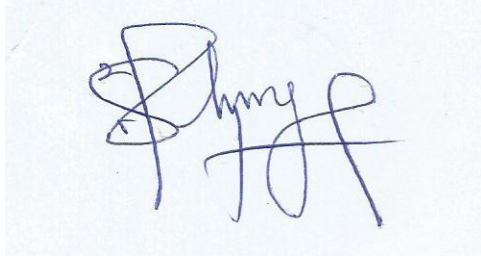
F). Persons with Disability (PWD). This policy accords persons with disability the same treatments, and CODWA shall within her capacity create necessary environment needed for them to optimally partake in our activities.

Networking:

- CODWA would proactively make several efforts in promoting gender concerns in its work with partners. This will involve but not limited to: extending support to partners in organizing training programs, conducting gender studies, preparing resource material, providing documentation support etc.
- CODWA would encourage partner organizations in developing their own gender policies, strategies and programs
- CODWA would further establish/strengthen linkages with organizations with similar aims and objectives working on various women issues.
- Sharing Gender reports with our network members and partner organizations and also facilitating similar process within the partner organizations to promote gender sensitivity
- Supporting and expressing solidarity with partners at field level in taking up issues of discrimination or harassment against women

Note: This is a policy statement, which outlines CODWA's sensitivity towards Gender and its operational framework to address the related concerns. The exact operational procedures would have to be worked out in detail for all the above outlined statements in a consultative process; internally involving all the staff with possible external facilitation support. The idea of formulating gender policy for the organization is a dream comes through, as this has lingered on for so long. The need to finally complete this gender policy has been a response to issues of necessity; and we owe this success to our partners, staff and other

stakeholders that we work with. **HENCE**, we in CODWA, sincerely acknowledge the contribution of all, and sundry.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Omowumi Olalekan', written on a light blue background.

Signed
Executive Director

05/08/2019

Mr. Omowumi Olalekan
Ag. Chairman, BOT. August 5th, 2019

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Omowumi Olalekan', written on a light brown background.