

Rural Education and Environment Development Center (REED-Nepal)



GENDER EQUALITY POLICY

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Approved by:	Executive Committee of REED Nepal
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1. DEFINITION

Gender equality is regarded as a state of fairness in access to resources and in the distribution of benefits from development, according to the different needs of women, men, girls and boys (Constitution of Nepal 2015/16). It requires that the specific needs of these particular groups are considered separately and acted upon accordingly. The concept of gender equality recognizes that women and men have different life experiences, different needs, different levels of power and access to decision making in society and differing expectations by others. Gender equality strategies recognize that gender leads to different social, economic and political opportunities for women and men.

2. BACKGROUND

Gender inequality persists in the Himalaya region undermining economic growth, human development and poverty reduction. This specifically encompasses women's limited access to employment opportunities due to gender disparity in education, under-representation in decision-making and politics and high rates of domestic and sexual violence. Evidence confirms the importance of gender equality, not only as a fundamental human right, but as essential for poverty reduction, sustainable economic growth and effective and accountable governance. The evidence is clear — Gender equality is critical to development, and must be a key part of aid programming.

3. REEDs' COMMITMENT

The Rural Education and Environment Development Center (REED-Nepal) is committed to:

- Supporting gender equality and empowering women and girls in the Himalaya region in line with Nepal Government policy and the Sustainable Development Goals; and
- Equitable and sustainable development by involving both men and women at all levels of programming.

4. OBJECTIVE

The aim of the REED Gender Equality Policy is to ensure that gender equality considerations are addressed and maintained in a holistic manner through the REED's program operations and management arrangements.

5. PROGRAM OPERATIONS

Achieving gender equality means providing access to economic resources, participation and leadership in decision-making, respect for the human rights of women and girls, and an increased capacity to tackle gender inequalities. This recognizes that women and men require equal opportunities to realize their individual potential, to contribute to their country's economic and social development, and to benefit equally from their participation in society.

Gender equality principles are applied to all activities undertaken by REED Nepal, including the design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of projects, and the employment of national staff. Women and girls are involved in the decision-making processes of project development, administration and implementation.

Through its projects the REED Nepal aims to:

- Engage with both men and women to advance gender equality.
- Improve the economic status of women.
- Promote equal participation of women in decision-making and leadership in the Himalaya region.
 - Improve equitable health and education outcomes for women, men, girls and boys.
 - Promote the eradication of violence against women and girls.
 - Strengthen partner ownership and support country-driven priorities on advancing gender equality.
 - Ensure that all project/program performance frameworks integrate gender equality objectives and related M&E indicators. M&E is critical for gathering evidence on the contribution that gender equality makes to poverty reduction and sustainable development.
 - Advance gender equality strategies and targets to engage women and girls more effectively, and monitor the effectiveness of these strategies and targets.
 - Continuously strengthen accountability mechanisms to increase effectiveness and collect and analysis information to improve gender equality results. The M&E of REED Nepal projects/programs includes:
 - specific indicators to measure gender equality; and
 - the disaggregation of all data by sex.

6. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

REED Nepal acknowledges the positive contribution of a diverse workforce and is committed to promoting and supporting the principles of gender equality, diversity and flexibility in the workplace. Staff procedures are aimed at achieving fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between men and women. Although REED Nepal is a relatively small organization its management and governance arrangements, and those of its in-country partners, aim to ensure gender equality across all positions. These commitments include:

- All REED Nepal staff are responsible for the development of gender equality and diversity within REED Nepal and its in-country partners.
- That the diverse backgrounds, skills, talents and views of REED Nepal staff are recognized, encouraged and valued by supervisors and managers.

- REED Nepal staff must be free from any direct or indirect discrimination, unfair treatment in the workplace and workplace harassment.
- Encouraging workplace practices that provide flexibility for staff to balance their work and personal commitments.
- Remedying any employment related disadvantage of current and potential employees in designated groups.
- REED Nepal staff, and those seeking employment with REED Nepal must receive fair and equitable treatment in personnel selection processes and career development opportunities.
- That employment decisions are based on merit.
- Supervisors are encouraged to focus on the diverse backgrounds and skills of their staff and to draw on and develop these qualities in the workplace.
- REED Nepal staff are encouraged to acknowledge and draw on their diverse backgrounds, skills and talents.

These principles are applied to all personnel associated with the REED Nepal including Board Directors, paid staff, contractors, volunteers and in-country partners. Gender equality is a guiding principle for the nomination and selection of staff to senior management positions.

The current equal representation of men and women on REED Nepal delegations, Boards and other decision-making bodies demonstrates the Foundation's commitment to achieving gender balance. This commitment is also reflected in the selection of interstate representatives and volunteers, as well as the provision of support and advice.

