

# GENDER EQUITY

## Why Gender Equity is a Priority

World Relief Canada has made Gender Equity a key cross-cutting theme in our relief and development programming. The importance we place on gender equity is reflected in our Gender and Development Policy and our Gender Equality Action Plan. This emphasis is birthed from the understanding that all people are created in God's image and deserve to be treated with dignity and respect (Gen 1:27). Men and women were given equal responsibility as co-custodians over the earth and its' resources (Gen 2:15).

We encourage our partners to consider Gender Equity issues during the programming cycle because the activities of women and men differ and they control and influence different social and economic resources. Men and women also differ in how they respond to and benefit from development interventions. When programming staff work with a community to bring about positive change, this process can be severely hindered if either the male experience or the female experience within that community is considered to be the norm. Gender analysis is a useful tool to ensure that the unique needs and capabilities of men and women are determined during the planning phase of a program.

The reality is that access to and control over socially valued resources is unequal between men and women in many communities. Identifying current and potential inequities is essential to ensuring that the needs of both men and women will be addressed during the development process. Women generally have less access than men to training, land, business capital,

secure employment, leisure, and to the political process. It is important that programs that want to have a significant positive longer-term impact, address women's practical needs (water, shelter, food, safety etc.) and strategic interests (education, networking, government involvement etc.). It is also essential that we guard against unduly burdening a segment of society as we seek to improve the overall condition of a community.

According to the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO)/ UN, "gender bias and gender blindness persist: farmers are still generally perceived as "male" by policy-makers, development planners and agricultural service deliverers. For this reason, women find it more difficult than men to gain access to valuable resources such as land, credit and agricultural inputs, technology, training and services that would enhance their productivity. The FAO recognizes that the empowerment of women is key to raising levels of nutrition, improving the production and distribution of food and agricultural products and enhancing the living conditions of rural populations"<sup>1</sup>

There are many social, economic and political structures that contribute to the disparity between rich and poor. World Relief Canada and our partners remain committed to addressing the root causes of poverty and central to this commitment must be ensuring that Gender Equity is a priority in our programs.

<sup>1</sup> Gender and Agriculture, FAO [www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org)



**Bangladesh  
Natore Women's Credit**

### Inside this issue:

Facts and Findings...	2
Commitments to Ensuring Gender Equity...	2
Guidelines & Tools for Gender Analysis...	3
Gender Equity Definitions...	3
Other Gender Equity Resources...	4

## Facts and Findings 1

1. In Southeast Asia, women provide up to 90 percent of the labour for rice cultivation
  2. In Africa, 90 percent of the work of gathering water and wood, for the household and for food preparation, is done by women.
  3. In many regions, women spend up to five hours a day collecting fuel wood and water and up to four hours preparing food
  4. Women make up 51 percent of the agricultural labour force worldwide and produce between 60 and 80 percent of the food in most developing countries.
  5. Rural women are the main producers of the world's staple crops (rice, wheat & maize), which provide up to 90 percent of the rural poor's food intake.
  6. Equalizing agricultural inputs between men and women results in significant gains in agricultural productivity.
  7. Targeting women in agriculture technology dissemination can have a greater impact on poverty than targeting men.
  8. Raising a woman's status dramatically improves the health, longevity, and productivity of her children.
  9. Targeting programs to women benefits the whole household, but particularly girls.
  10. The social and economic status of women is one of the most important factors affecting the spread of HIV and the ability of households and communities to withstand its impacts.
1. Excerpts from FAO "Division of Labour" [www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org) & IFPRI Briefing "WOMEN Still the key to Food and Nutrition Security", [www.ifpri.org](http://www.ifpri.org)



Rwanda  
Microfinance Program

***“Equalizing agricultural inputs between men and women results in significant gains in agricultural productivity”***



Tanzania  
Area Development Program

## Commitments to Ensure Gender Equity

1. Encourage participation of both men and women in the planning and implementation of relief and development programs.
2. Ensure programs identify and address inequities related to access and control over resources
3. Ensure programs address the practical needs (e.g. food, water & shelter) and strategic interests (e.g. education, societal roles, & political involvement) of women.
4. Ensure programs have gender disaggregated data in proposals, reports and impact assessments.
5. Provide partners with Gender Equity capacity building and related resources and tools.

## Guidelines for Gender Analysis—CIDA



Mozambique: Microfinance

### 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 equity 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.

### 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?

#### Tools for Gender Analysis

⇒ Access to & control of community resources chart



⇒ Community activity profile worksheet



### Gender Equity Definitions...

#### Gender:

Gender refers to the socially determined differences between women and men, such as roles, attitudes, behaviours and values. Gender roles are learned and vary across cultures and over time; they are thus amenable to change. Gender is a relational term that includes both women and men.

#### Gender Equity:

Gender equity is the process of being fair to both men and women. 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 can be understood as the means by which we establish fairness in gender roles.

#### Gender Analysis:

Gender analysis is a process to assess the differential impact of proposed or existing policies, programs, projects and legislation on men and women. Gender analysis recognizes that the realities of men's and women's lives are different, and that equal opportunity does not necessarily mean equal results.

Full document:

"Key concepts related to gender equity"



---

## Other Gender Equity Resources...

---

### **Policies & Guidelines:**

WRC's GAD Policy



WRC's GE Action Plan



CIDA's GE Policy

AusAid: GAD Guidelines for  
Water and Sanitation

### **Websites:**

CIDA's Online GE Course:

[www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/equality](http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/equality)

Australia Aid: GAD Policy, Guidelines, Lessons  
Learned and Additional Internet Links:

<http://www.usaid.gov/keyword/gender.cfm#policy>

---

**World Relief Canada** becomes involved in projects that reflect the technical expertise and managerial capacity of its southern implementing partners. However, in the interest of developing internal efficiencies and expertise, WRCanada prefers to focus its activities in the following sectors:

**Emergency Disaster Relief**  
**Food Security**  
**Water Supply**  
**Microfinance**  
**Institutional Development** of southern implementing partners

At the present time, WRCanada is supporting R&D projects in the following countries:

**Africa:** Eritrea, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, & Sudan

**Asia:** Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, & Vietnam

---

#### World Relief Canada

310-600 Alden Road	Phone: 905-415-8181
Markham, ON	Fax: 905-415-0287
Canada	<a href="mailto:worldrelief@wrcanada.org">worldrelief@wrcanada.org</a>
L3R 0E7	<a href="http://www.worldreliefcanada.org">www.worldreliefcanada.org</a>

---

This newsletter is produced by WRCanada's international staff and is addressed to our southern partners for the purpose of providing updates on WRCanada and sharing our ideas, plans and resources.