

Gender Policy



1. Purpose

This policy expresses TEAR's organisational position on gender equality in terms of Gender Justice. Through its gender justice framework TEAR ensures integration of gender equity and equality into all of the organisation's internal processes, and expresses its commitment to promoting these values in the wider community.

2. Scope

The policy provides the gender framework for all of TEAR's domestic and international operations, and applies to all involved in its work: employees, volunteers, interns, contractors, and supporters.

3. Policy

3.1. Policy principles

3.1.1. Acknowledgement of injustice

Although injustice can occur to all people, we acknowledge that we live in a world where some groups of people (usually women, girls and other marginalised groups) continue to experience the injustice of sexism to a greater degree than men and boys.

3.1.2. Christian Foundation

As Christians, we believe that the Bible models systems of economic and social justice which illustrate God's plan for renewal of all. It is our belief that Christ calls us to partner with God in this renewal and that the restoration of gender justice is key to seeing God's promise of newness unfold in the world. We celebrate the differentiation of woman and man as part of God's creation, while recognising that many gender differences are fluid. Although these differences exist, it does not imply the superiority of one over the other. We believe that all people, regardless of gender identification and any other points of difference are called to lead and serve as equals. TEAR aspires to reflect these principles of gender justice throughout all of its operations and activities.

3.1.3. The people with whom we partner

TEAR Australia seeks to have its organisational policy and practice as closely aligned as possible with the gender justice standards it is asking of its International and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander development partners. Development research and practice consistently links gender equity and equality to the effectiveness of social and development outcomes. TEAR therefore considers the pursuit and implementation of *gender justice* to be essential to its mission. TEAR respects the journey of faith and justice for our partners as they serve the poor in cultures where their beliefs are different to ours and will work with them to challenge discrimination where it occurs.

In respect of TEAR's mission amongst Australian Christians and in the broader community, TEAR will apply a gender lens to the planning and management of its Australian program. In all circumstances, we will endeavour to ensure that staff members represent TEAR's position on gender justice with grace, humility and a learning spirit.

3.2. Policy commitments

TEAR Australia is committed to ensuring gender justice in all areas of the organisation, including staffing, governance, management and decision-making, thereby giving all people equal opportunity to shape the organisation and its work.

- 3.2.1. TEAR is committed to achieving and maintaining gender balance throughout all levels of the organisation so that all functions, levels of responsibility and influence display gender justice. All recruitment and professional development processes will give consideration to both merit and gender balance.
- 3.2.2. TEAR's governance and leadership will be committed to the integration of gender justice throughout the organisation.
- 3.2.3. TEAR will not permit within the organisation any discrimination on the basis of sex or gender. However, in certain circumstances, at the discretion of the CEO decisions may be made to provide gender balance (such as appointment of LT members).
- 3.2.4. During the recruitment process, employment decisions will be made with gender justice in mind (considering both merit and gender balance) which may result in one candidate being selected based on gender over another with equal credentials.
- 3.2.5. TEAR is committed to ensuring that its employees receive gender training (within the first year of their employment) to enable them to work in alignment with TEAR's commitment to gender justice. In addition, TEAR will facilitate conversations about Gender Justice through its employee events (e.g SOUL Food, Staff Gathering).
- 3.2.6. All people will be treated equally in the application of TEAR's remuneration policy and professional development resources and opportunities.
- 3.2.7. TEAR will endeavour to ensure that all decision-making processes take into account the different personalities, styles and strengths of both women and men, so that all voices may be authentically heard.
- 3.2.8. TEAR is committed to ensuring that TEAR's workplace is characterised by gender sensitivity and grace. Inappropriate language and behaviour will be addressed when it occurs. Where insensitive conduct in regard to gender justice occurs, it will be addressed by supervisors with a view to improving understanding and conduct.
- 3.2.9. TEAR's leave policies reflect its commitment to the role of both women and men in parenting children.
- 3.2.10. TEAR will endeavour to use gender-inclusive/neutral language in its media and when quoting from the Bible.

4. Compliance Obligations

- 4.1. TEAR will undertake an organisational gender audit on a 5-yearly basis.
- 4.2. Through its performance appraisal processes, TEAR staff will work to affirm and nurture a culture of gender justice.

5. Related References

ACFID, Code of Conduct Commitment 2.3

<https://acfid.asn.au/content/commitment-23-we-promote-gender-equality-and-equity>

Christians for Biblical Equality (CBE), 'The Bible and Gender Equality'

https://www.cbeinternational.org/sites/default/files/english_3.pdf

DFAT, 2014, Australian aid: promoting prosperity, reducing poverty, enhancing stability - Section 5, page 25, Gender equality and empowering women and girls)

<https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/australian-aid-development-policy.pdf>

Micah Network Statement on Gender Equality <http://www.micahnetwork.org/topics>

TEAR Australia Code of Professional Conduct, Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, Disciplinary Policy, Recruitment Policy, Remuneration Policy, Leave Policy, Parental Leave Policy, Flexible Leave Policy, Bullying and Harassment Policy, Guidelines for Relief and Development Assistance.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>

6. Definitions/Terminology Clarification

- *Gender* – the social relationships and distribution of power and roles between women and men, girls and boys (can simultaneously be relations of cooperation, support, connection and conflict, separation and competition). The term is also used more broadly to denote a range of identities that do not correspond to established ideas of male and female. These roles and relations are influenced by, and intersect with, other social relationships such as social class, ethnicity, sexuality and ability/disability etc. These roles and relationships are dynamic, changing over time and across cultures.
- *Gender balance* – theoretically, the degree to which women and men hold a full range of positions in a society or organisation. However, most add that it should also include the element of *quality* alongside numbers, so as to avoid the token adding of members of either sex to make up numbers.
- *Gender equality* – equal rights, opportunities and outcomes for both women and men.
- *Gender equity* – the process of being fair to women and men.
- *Gender integration* – involves the integration of gender equality concerns into the analysis and formulation of all of the organisation’s policies, programs and projects, including those implemented through its domestic and international partnerships. It includes initiatives to enable women and men equally to formulate and express their views and genuinely to participate in decision-making.
- *Gender justice* - the ending of, and provision of redress for, inequalities between women and men that result in subordination of one sex to the other. As *process* it refers to accountability of organisations like TEAR that are set up to dispense justice; as *outcome* it implies access to and control over resources, combined with the ability to make choices.
- *Gender lens* – refers to adopting a perspective that firstly brings into focus the participation, needs and realities of both women and men, then accommodating these in planning and decision-making processes.