

TITLE: Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion			
APPROVED BY:	Board		
POLICY OWNER:	John Patterson, Chief Programs and Contracts Group (A/g)	POLICY DELEGATE:	Dr Tracy McDiarmid, Evidence and GEDSI Manager
VERSION #:	4	EFFECTIVE DATE:	February 2026
LAST REVIEW DATE:	November 2021	NEXT REVIEW DATE:	February 2029
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ASSOCIATED WVI POLICY:	GESI Partnership Management Policy English.pdf		

PURPOSE

World Vision Australia’s (WVA) Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Policy provides guidance and framework to fulfill WV’s commitment to Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GESI) in our ministry, fully integrating GEDSI in programming, advocacy, communications, marketing, fundraising and institutional practices. In addition, WVA is committed to meeting Australian regulatory requirements and WVA requirements such as accreditation requirements set out by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the Australian Council for International Development Code of Conduct.

WHO?

This policy applies to all WVA employees.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

1. The [WVI Partnership Management Policy: Gender Equality and Social Inclusion](#) applies to all WVA employees, supported by the [Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Management Guidelines](#).
2. Australian regulatory requirements, ACFID Code of Conduct, and accreditation requirements as set out by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, see ‘Supporting Information to the Policy Management Policy’ section below.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

All Personnel must:

1. Understand your role(s) and responsibilities under this Policy and Management Guidelines.
2. It is the responsibility of all WV employees to ensure full alignment with this policy in their respective roles.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Responsibility
WVA Staff	Adhere to the WVI Partnership Management Policy: Gender Equality and Social Inclusion, including supporting documents, and meet Australian regulatory and WVA requirements such as accreditation requirements as set out by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and Australian Council for International Development Code of Conduct.

POLICY DEFINITIONS

Refer to definitions in [WVI Partnership Management Policy: Gender Equality and Social Inclusion](#)

POLICY BREACHES

WVA is committed to acting quickly and appropriately to address any breaches of this policy. Employees in breach of this policy may be subject to WVA’s disciplinary process and procedures.

Breaches of this policy can be reported via:

- Raising with your immediate or any other Manager/Chief within WVA.
- Board members may raise matters with the Board Chair or Company Secretary.
- Via WVA’s Protected Disclosure (Whistle blower) procedure, including via the nominated independent, confidential external service (refer to WVA Hub for this policy).

POLICY REVISION HISTORY

REVISION DATE	SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF REVISION	SECTION(S) CHANGED
May 2017	Drafting of WVA policy, in line with existing WVI Gender Equality policy documents Drafting of new policy	NA
September 2019	Revision of original policy; shift to high-level approach, inclusion of diversity, change to core principles, more gender inclusive approach, update to resources	Revisions made across whole policy
November 2021	Adoption of WVA Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Policy combining WV Partnership Management Policy on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (2021) and new WVA policy addendum, building on language from 2019 WVA Gender Equality and Diversity Policy; incorporated into new WVA policy template with new sections. Revision informed by internal and external legal reviews.	Consolidation of newly framed WVA policy combining WVI policy and WVA policy addendum, in updated WVA policy template.
January 2026	Retiring of separate Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Policy (2021) and Disability Inclusion Policy (2022) under the overarching WVA Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion Policy which is an adoption of the WVI Partnership Management Policy: Gender Equality and Social Inclusion	All, new template

SUPPORTING INFORMATION TO THIS POLICY

In addition to the information contained in this policy, several external references and resources that can be used or referenced in conjunction with this policy. These documents include (but are not limited to):

STANDARD/ INDUSTRY REFERENCE	SUMMARY OF WHAT THESE COVER
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Australia's International Gender Equality Strategy , Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra (2025)	<p>Australia's International Gender Equality Strategy outlines how DFAT will use all tools of foreign policy to drive gender equality, including through bilateral and regional programs and relationships, multilateral diplomacy, trade, development and humanitarian assistance. It guides how DFAT will leverage our existing expertise, partnerships, and resources and highlights the importance of working collaboratively with partner governments, civil society, and with the international community. The Strategy focuses on five priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. work to end sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and protect and advance women's sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) 2. pursue gender responsive peace and security efforts 3. deliver gender equitable climate action and humanitarian assistance 4. promote women's economic equality and inclusive trade 5. support locally led approaches to women's leadership.
DFAT, Australia's International Disability Equity and Rights Strategy , Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, (2024)	<p>This Strategy marks a shift in Australia's focus from disability inclusion to disability equity and rights.</p> <p>Australia will focus on five priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Invest in partnerships and movements 2. Address discrimination and exclusion 3. Promote the preconditions for inclusion 4. Support equity in humanitarian assistance and climate action 5. Strengthen the evidence base. <p>Australia has introduced the first ever performance target for disability equity in our international development program – 60 per cent performing effectively on disability equity by 2026, and 70 per cent by 2030 – making clear our expectation that its investments will deliver better outcomes for people with disability.</p>
DFAT, Australia's International Development Policy , Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, (2023)	<p>Sets the long-term direction for Australia's development program. The objective of Australia's development program is to advance an Indo-Pacific that is peaceful, stable, and prosperous.</p>

<p>ACFID Code of Conduct (2023, effective from 30 June 2024)</p>	<p>A voluntary, self-regulatory industry code of good practice. Members are required to be compliant with the Code at all times. Members’ governing bodies monitor their organisation’s compliance with the Code and submit a declaration of compliance with the Code when they submit their triennial self-assessment to ACFID. Quality Principle 1 ‘Rights, Justice and Safeguarding’ and Quality Principle 2 ‘Locally Led Action and Inclusion’ are the most relevant areas however GESDI is embedded within the other principles. For the purposes of this policy, Principle 2 is the most explicitly aligned principle.</p>
<p>ACFID Quality Assurance Framework, (18 October 2023, effective from 30 June 2024)</p>	<p>Outlines Key Compliance and Good Practice Indicators that Australian NGOs should use to meet the sector’s commitments under the Code of Conduct. Although relevant information for GESDI is included across the Framework, ‘Quality Principle 2: Development and humanitarian initiatives enable sustainable change by supporting local leadership and inclusive approaches’ is the targeted principle on GESDI (‘2.2 We promote gender equality and equity’ⁱ and ‘2.3 We promote the empowerment of people with disabilities’). It also provides information on how these indicators can be evidenced. See Endnote 1.</p>
<p>DFAT Accreditation Criteria Framework (2025)</p>	<p>Although GESDI is mainstreamed across the criteria, the targeted criteria is ‘B2: The ANGO integrates cross cutting themes to enable effectiveness.’ The relevant full accreditation indicators are: ‘B2.1 ANGO demonstrates its commitment to gender equality in its programming.’ and ‘B2.2 ANGO demonstrates its commitment to disability equity and rights in its programming.’</p>
<p>DFAT Australian NGO Accreditation Guidance Manual (Nov 2025).</p>	<p>Outlines specific requirements in relation to ‘Cross-cutting themes’ that include GESDI (Assessment Criteria B2.1 and 2.2, as above).</p>

OTHER SUPPORTING DOCUMENT	SUMMARY OF WHAT THESE COVER
<p>WVI Partnership Management Policy: Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (2021)</p>	<p>The policy outlines the commitment that all World Vision ministry and entities will promote GESI by the following means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Programming – Adapt and optimise WV development and humanitarian programming to mainstream quality GESI integration, promote targeted GESI-transformative programming and monitor and report evidence of GESI impact. · Advocacy – Strengthen GESI related policy engagement and social accountability with key stakeholders (including governments, international institutions, donors, FBOs and networks), highlighting GESI related structural and systemic issues and inequalities that impact the most vulnerable girls and boys. · Marketing, fundraising and communications – Showcase GESI issues and impact appropriately in marketing, grants, and communications channels and products. · WV operations and institutional practices - Promote GESI within a diverse and inclusive organisation by accountably implementing relevant organisational measures and institutional practices. <p>Next policy review scheduled for 2026.</p>
<p>WVI Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Management Guidelines (2022).</p>	<p>All WV entities are required to contextualise the GESI Policy, adopt and implement it, and report on progress toward the policy’s implementation. This guidance document provides WV entities with the tools they need to implement the policy. These are scheduled to be updated alongside the scheduled 2026 policy review.</p>

ⁱ ACFID Quality Assurance Framework [Compliance Indicators](#) for Principle 2.2 WE PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND EQUITY:

2.2.1 Members demonstrate an organisational commitment to gender equality and equity.

2.2.2 Members’ planning process includes consultation with those marginalised due to their gender, in particular women and girls, contextual analysis of barriers to their inclusion and identification of opportunities for their participation.

2.2.3 Members promote opportunities for those marginalised due to their gender, in particular women and girls, to participate in decision-making.

2.2.4 Members monitor and evaluate their progress in promoting gender equality and equity

ACFID Quality Assurance Framework Good Practice Indicators for Principle 2.2:

- a. Gender focal person in place.
- b. Initiatives with a primary or explicit focus on the promotion of women's rights and/or gender equality and equity are supported.
- c. Gender training for governing body, staff, volunteers and partners is provided, covering topics such as gender analysis, gender programming, gender equality and equity, gender identity and gender rights.
- d. Initiatives that seek to build the capacities of those marginalised due to gender identity, in particular women and girls to determine their own priorities and advocate for their own equality and equity are supported.
- e. Women's rights, gender equality and equity, and other relevant gender issues are promoted in communications with the public and external stakeholders.
- f. Members work with partners and communities to challenge attitudes which permit or excuse sexual misconduct both internally and within organisational program activities.


ACFID Quality Assurance Framework Compliance Indicators for Principle 2.3 WE PROMOTE THE EMPOWERMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES:

- 2.3.1 Members demonstrate an organisational commitment to the inclusion of people with disabilities.
- 2.3.2 Members' planning process includes consultation with people with disabilities and contextual analysis of the barriers to social inclusion and participation.
- 2.3.3 Members promote opportunities for people with disabilities and/or their representative organisations to participate in decision-making.
- 2.3.4 Members monitor and evaluate their progress in promoting the empowerment of people with disabilities.

ACFID Quality Assurance Framework Good Practice Indicators for Principle 2.3:

- a. Disability inclusion focal person in place.
- b. Activities focused on the promotion of rights and inclusion of people with disabilities are supported.
- c. Training for key personnel and partners which covers disability inclusion issues and the rights articulated in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) is provided.
- d. Activities that build the capacities of disabled people's organisations (and other groups with disabilities) to advocate for the fulfilment of the rights articulated in the CRPD are supported.
- e. The principles of disability inclusivity are promoted in communications with the public and external stakeholders.

Partnership Management Policy on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT POLICY			
TITLE: GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION ¹			
APPROVED BY: ExL 28 th July 2021		Executive Leadership (ExL) RESPONSIBILITY: Partnership Leader, Global Impact	
POLICY OWNER:	Senior Director, Transformational Development	POLICY DELEGATE:	Technical Director, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
DATE ISSUED:	28 th July 2021	LAST DATE REVISED:	N/A
LAST REVIEW DATE:	N/A	NEXT REVIEW DATE:	July 2024
DOCUMENT NUMBER:	1.00	VERSION NUMBER:	1.0.0
PUBLICATION STATUS:	Internal use only	AUTHORISING PARTNERSHIP POLICY:	Partnership Policy on Transformational Development (TD)

I. OVERVIEW

I.1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to guide World Vision (WV) entities and employees to fulfill WV's commitment to Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) in our ministry, fully integrating GESI in programming, advocacy, communications, marketing, fundraising and institutional practices.

I.2. Scope

This policy applies to all World Vision entities. World Vision entities include but are not limited to Field Offices, Support Offices, VisionFund International (VFI) and all its affiliated microfinance institutions (MFIs), and World Vision International and its Global Centre, regional, programme, branch and project offices (hereinafter 'WV entities'). It is relevant to all operational and programme contexts where beneficiaries are impacted across the Partnership.

I.3. Effective Date

The policy takes effect from 28th July 2021.

¹Social Inclusion includes key identity markers such as language, religion, traditional knowledge and ethnicity beyond nationality, as well as disability.

1.4. Related Policies

This policy is implemented with reference to the following Partnership ministry policies:

- Partnership Policy on Transformational Development
- Partnership Policy on Witness to Jesus Christ
- Partnership Policy on Partnerships with Churches
- Partnership Policy on Disaster Management and Conflict Response
- Partnership Policy on Advocacy for Justice
- Partnership Policy on Public Awareness

2. POLICY

As a Christian organisation, World Vision is founded on the biblical principles that women and men, girls and boys are created in the image of God, and of Jesus' love for all people without discrimination (see Reference Document I for the WV Gender Equality Theological Brief). Our work is also grounded in globally agreed human rights frameworks and principles². This means that as a global Partnership with rich diversity, we recognise and affirm the equal worth, dignity and rights of women, men, girls and boys and the significant role each individual can play in transformational development. These commitments provide a solid foundation for our focus on gender equality and social inclusion of the most vulnerable children and adults.

In addition:

- We recognise that World Vision entities cannot fully contribute to the well-being of girls and boys within families and communities, especially the most vulnerable, unless we address the deeply entrenched negative social and spiritual gender norms and systemic exclusions and marginalisation which cause and accelerate extreme child vulnerability in communities and societies, and also influence our own organisation.
- We acknowledge that gender inequality and social exclusion are among the most powerful drivers of vulnerability for children in every context. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and our Ministry Goal (sustained child well-being within families and communities, especially for the most vulnerable) can only be achieved when opportunities, resources and choices are available to women and men, girls and boys and marginalised and excluded groups, especially children living with disabilities. This includes ensuring that people from all of these groups have agency, in the form access to the power and resources to shape their own lives and contribute to their families and communities.
- We recognise that there are multiple drivers of marginalisation and the need to understand the ways in which gender inequality intersects with other inequalities on the basis of age, disability, race, ethnicity, and religion, among others. We also recognise that systemic discrimination, exclusion and marginalisation across the communities where we work has disproportionately disadvantaged women and girls.
- We believe that to achieve the vision of transformational development,³ WV programmes must work effectively with partners, including women and girls, men and boys, churches and other faith-based organisations, government, civil society organisations, and the private sector, to promote gender equality and social inclusion, reduce abuse, redress power imbalances and challenge harmful norms and behaviours.
- We acknowledge that a sustainable contribution to child well-being also requires a response to structural and systemic inequalities relating to GESI, including through advocacy which influences the formulation and implementation of legislation and policies.

² e.g., the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

³ Partnership Policy on Transformational Development (2017).

- We recognise that WV entities operate in extremely varied cultural and legal environments which will require them to contextualise the implementation of this policy and may require supplementary local policy documents for use with their constituencies.

Gender equality and social inclusion will be promoted across all World Vision ministry and entities by the following means:

- **Programming** – Adapt and optimise WV development and humanitarian programming to mainstream quality GESI integration, promote targeted GESI-transformative programming and monitor and report evidence of GESI impact.
- **Advocacy** – Strengthen GESI related policy engagement and social accountability with key stakeholders (including governments, international institutions, donors, FBOs and networks), highlighting GESI related structural and systemic issues and inequalities that impact the most vulnerable girls and boys.
- **Marketing, fundraising and communications** – Showcase GESI issues and impact appropriately in marketing, grants, and communications channels and products.
- **WV operations and institutional practices** - Promote GESI within a diverse and inclusive organisation by accountably implementing relevant organisational measures and institutional practices.

2.1 GESI in Programming

As a global partnership with rich diversity, we oppose unjust discrimination and exclusion and recognise and affirm the equal worth, dignity and rights of women, men, girls and boys. We commit to the inclusion of the most vulnerable children and their families in our programming “without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, sexual orientation, gender identity or other status”⁴. WV will mainstream GESI integration and promote GESI-transformative programming by adopting the following actions as standard practice:

- a. Establish GESI as an essential core competency, focusing on building technical capacity and skills to help deliver GESI outcomes in our programming and shifting mindsets, attitudes and behaviours of FO programme quality, area and technical programme staff, partners and the SO and RO teams who support them.
- b. Ensure FO strategies, annual programme plans, budgets, performance dashboards and frameworks reflect World Vision’s strategic commitment to GESI.
- c. Mainstream quality GESI integration across all WV’s development and humanitarian programming, combining targeted GESI transformative interventions with full GESI integration across locally adapted TD programme approaches, core project models and programme accountability.
- d. Ensure inclusive stakeholder consultation and apply GESI-responsive design, monitoring and evaluation (DME) and accountability practices to enable staff, partners and participants to understand the different experiences of women/men, girls/boys, and how gender inequality intersects with social exclusion and other inequalities (including but not limited to age, disability, ethnicity, or religion).
- e. Measure and effectively report evidence of GESI impact by using indicators in programme designs that track changes in relation to GESI domains (or women’s economic empowerment domains where relevant), and disaggregate data by sex, age, disability and other locally identified vulnerability factors to measure GESI programme impact in the lives of children, their families and their communities.

⁴ Universal Declaration of Human Rights 2014 second resolution on "human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity".

- f. Integrate prevention, mitigation and response to gender based violence (GBV) against children and adults and a Do No Harm approach across all humanitarian and development interventions by identifying risks, monitoring them and developing strategies to mitigate them.

2.2 GESI in Advocacy

WV FOs and SOs will advance GESI in advocacy in the following ways:

- a. All WV national offices will engage with their governments, international organisations, and donors to address GESI issues through joint action and advocacy towards realising SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and in sector related advocacy, and providing evidence of progress towards achieving SDG related global and national GESI targets.
- b. Collaborate with faith leaders and authorities at local and national levels, to amplify the voices of children, (especially girls), and support GESI awareness and action on structural and systemic issues and inequalities that impact the most vulnerable girls and boys.
- c. Collaborate with WV global campaigns to galvanise action towards GESI related issues.

2.3 GESI in Marketing, Fundraising and Communications

WV will represent GESI in marketing, grants acquisition and management, and communications in the following ways:

- a. Establish diversified funding for GESI related work on extreme child vulnerability from new and existing funding streams, including grants and PNS funding.
- b. Ensure relevant WV internal and external communications channels and marketing products showcase GESI and emphasise the integral nature of our GESI work to fulfilling Our Promise.
- c. Present evidence of our GESI programming's effectiveness as a distinctive of WV's work, highlighting good practices and enabling girls and boys to tell their own stories of transformational change.

2.4 WV Operations and Institutional Practices

The Partnership Management Policy on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion will be implemented in combination with Child and Adult Safeguarding and People & Culture organisational measures and institutional practices which promote GESI. Child and Adult Safeguarding measures and practices which promote GESI include contextualised implementation of the Partnership Policy on Safeguarding and the Partnership Management Policy on Child and Adult Safeguarding; and related safeguarding reporting to highlight ongoing and emerging GESI issues for leadership attention. People & Culture measures and practices which promote GESI include contextualised implementation of the Partnership Policies on People and Culture, Diversity Management and Harassment Prevention and relevant P&C Partnership Management Policies⁵; and tracking progress related to gender equity and social inclusion using the P&C Scorecard (Measures that Matter) and related reporting to highlight ongoing and emerging GESI issues⁶ for leadership attention.

In addition, all WV entities, including VisionFund entities, will take the following measures to promote GESI across our Ministry facing work:

- a. Benchmark performance within the wider industry through GESI Self-Assessments and developing GESI action plans to address identified gaps.
- b. Establish GESI focal points or units, to promote GESI inclusive institutional practices, strategic planning and budgeting.

⁵ e.g., Staff Well-being, Recruitment and Selection, Staff Development, Maternity and Child Nurture

⁶ e.g., monitor using Our Voice survey data and Workforce Demographics data

3. ACCOUNTABILITY

The leadership of all World Vision entities are accountable for compliance to this policy.

4. DEFINITIONS

The definitions of key concepts as used in this policy⁷:

Gender Equality: Is the state or condition that affords women and girls, men and boys, equal enjoyment of human rights, socially valued goods, opportunities, and resources. It includes expanding freedoms and voice, improving power dynamics and relations, transforming gender roles and enhancing overall quality of life so that males and females can achieve their full potential⁸.

Social Inclusion: Is work to address inequality and/or exclusion of vulnerable populations by improving terms of participation in society and enhancing opportunities, access to resources, voice and respect for human rights. It seeks to promote empowerment and advance peaceful and inclusive societies and institutions⁹.

Disability: Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.¹⁰

Diversity: Means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognising and respecting our individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, age, physical abilities, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, religious, political and other beliefs.

Equity: Means being fair to all groups in distribution of resources and benefits. This involves recognition of inequality and requires measures to work towards equality of all groups. Gender equity is the process that leads to gender equality.

Sex refers to the biological differences between women and men, while **gender** examines the socially ascribed roles, relationships, behaviours, norms and attitudes about expectations for women, men, girls and boys that vary from one society to another and at different points in history.

Integration refers to strategies applied in programme assessment, design, implementation, and evaluation to take GESI perspectives into account and to address gender inequality and social exclusion¹¹.

Agency is attained when vulnerable individuals (and groups) who previously exercised little power develop their own capacities for self-understanding and expression, and gain control over their lives, resources, beliefs, values and attitudes. Agency facilitates self-empowerment—power to and power within—through individual consciousness and the transformation of personal attitudes, self-perceptions and power relations¹².

GESI-transformative programme approaches actively seek to address inequality, exclusion and discrimination and transform gender and social relations to promote equality and inclusion, and achieve programme objectives¹³.

⁷ Definitions of some terms may vary across WV functions and entities

⁸ World Vision's GESI Approach and Theory of Change, 2020

⁹ Ibid. Also see United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), # 5, 8, 10, 11 and 16.

¹⁰ UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

¹¹ World Vision's Toolkit for Integrating GESI in Design, Monitoring and Evaluation, 2020

¹² Ibid

¹³ Ibid