

## **PHREB GENDER POLICY**

**Overview of the Gender Policy:** PHREB's (the "Organization") gender policy will be pursued within the context of the Organization's mission of "*ending violence against girls and women; promoting human rights, gender equality and social justice; reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS among women and girls; promoting adolescents' sexual and reproductive health and rights; and promoting girls' human rights to education.*" The purpose of this Gender Policy is to ensure that gender perspectives are central to the Organization's policy development, advocacy, planning, and development and implementation of programs and projects. When reviewing all issues concerning the Organization the assumption of gender-neutrality will never be made. The Organization acknowledges that this policy does not replace existing targeted, women-specific policies. The goal of this Gender Policy is to promote gender equality in Bangladesh.

**Why has the Organization adopted a Gender Policy?** The Organization believes that if our employees are aware of the gender differences in Bangladeshi Society they can better implement the Organization's programs, improve the Organization from within and help the Organization's overall mission.

**Executive Council:** The Organization is committed to ensuring that women are fully representing in the decision making process on the Executive Council. Since the inception of the Organization the chairperson of the Executive Council has been a woman. In 2008 the General Council elected a woman Chairperson and a total of five women to serve on the seven member Executive Council for the 2009-2011 term.

**Accountability and Monitoring:** The Executive Council has mandated that the Executive Director shall be responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the Organization's Gender Policy to ensure the policy is properly implemented.

**Sexual Harassment – Zero Tolerance Policy:** The Organization promotes gender friendly working environment that is free of sexual harassment.

**Empowerment of Women Staff:** The Organization's main program, Bangladesh Kishori Adhika Forum (BKAF), is an alliance of adolescent girls who are committed to make women's rights a Bangladeshi reality and prevent all forms of human rights abuses against girl child and women. BKAF empowers adolescent girls to speak out, demand and access their fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution of Bangladesh and UN Documents by developing their leadership skills and focusing on the issues concerning their lives such as sexual and reproductive health rights, violence against girls, women rights and social justice. The Organization acknowledges that none of PHREB's programs, including BKAF, will be successful if the Organization does not provide the support and tools to our female employees to overcome Bangladeshi Society subjugation of women. The Organization is committed to helping female employees to gain power and control over their lives, creating a workplace that builds self-confidence, be active in the decision making process of the Organization, gain management skills to move up within the Organization, and express their needs as female employees. At the same time the Organization will train the entire staff that the Empowerment of Women works towards the Organization's mission of creating a society where gender equality is a reality.

**Internal Policy Making:** All new internal policies will incorporate a gender perspective. All existing policies will be reviewed to determine if they need to be re-evaluated under this new policy.

**Research:** Research done for existing programs or pilot programs shall include the use of sex-disaggregated data that segregates data by sex and age. In addition, gender sensitive guidelines for research data will be created for all new pilot programs.

**Training:** All new employees shall receive gender equality training as part of their overall introduction/training to the Organization.

**Glossary:** The Organization has adopted the following UN definitions:

**Equality between women and men (gender equality):** refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration - recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a "women's issue" but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development.

**Gender:** refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/ time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context. Other important criteria for socio-cultural analysis include class, race, poverty level, ethnic group and age

**Gender Analytical Information:** refers to qualitative information on gender differences and inequalities. Gender analysis is mainly about understanding culture, e.g. the patterns and norms of what men and women, boys and girls experience in relation to the issue being examined and addressed. Where patterns of gender difference and inequality are revealed in Sex Disaggregated Data, gender analysis is the process of examining why the disparities are there, whether they are a matter for concern, and how they might be addressed.

**Sex Disaggregated Data:** refers to the quantitative statistical information on differences and inequalities between women and men. Sex disaggregated data might reveal, for example, quantitative differences between women and men in morbidity and mortality; differences between girls and boys in school attendance, retention and achievement; differences between

men and women in access to and repayment of credit; or differences between men and women in voter registration, participation in elections and election to office. Sex Disaggregated Data should be used in conjunction with Gender Analytical Information.