ICDI'S GENDER EQUALITY GUIDELINES

International Child Development Initiatives (ICDI) is a knowledge organization in psychosocial development of children and young people growing up in difficult circumstances. ICDI believes in the power of children and young people, supporting their rights and addressing the underlying causes of the problems they face. Talking about gender and taking into consideration the social, economic, and biological differences between women, girls, boys and men and, in particular, the gender inequalities which stand in the way of child rights is an essential means by which ICDI can achieve its mandate and strategic goals.

'GENDER refers to the social differences between females and males throughout the life cycle that are learned, and though deeply rooted in every culture, are changeable over time and have wide variations both within and between cultures'. (IASC Gender Handbook, 2019)

The Legal and Normative Framework
ICDI's gender policy rests on international law and practice, as articulated in treaties and resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council. These include, but are not limited to:

- United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Covenants on Human Rights
- The 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its General Recommendation 19 on Violence against Women
- UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace, and Security and its subsequent resolutions 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106, 2122, and 2242 (until Nov 2017)
- The Conventions on the Rights of the Child (1989)
- Beijing Declaration & Platform of Action (1995)

To facilitate the implementation of these norms and initiatives, ICDI benefits from the broad range of analyses and recommendations developed by international human rights organisations and institutions, women's organisations, and humanitarian organisations.

Gender at the organisational level
ICDI aims, through recruitment and training, to develop a staff dedicated and prepared to apply a gender perspective in the work and represent ICDI's gender sensitive values whether off or on duty. ICDI has personnel policies and other tools to secure a gender sensitive staff, e.g., ethical guidelines for our staff members that include the prohibition of sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation.
ICDI will in our own organisation:

- Keep track of the male/female composition in ICDI at all levels.
- Enhance women in management positions and promote gender balance.
- Provide for working conditions that suit the needs of women as well as men.
- Promote a working culture of respect; free from sexual harassment, avoid that power and entitlement create a culture of abuse.
- Create an inclusive, tolerant, and accepting environment welcoming the expression of individual gender identities and non-discrimination on a gendered basis for those that do not conform to a gender binary.
- Secure measures to identify sexual harassment and implement clear follow-up routines of whistle blowers.
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International Child
Development Initiatives

- Eschew silent complicity and create an atmosphere conducive to discussion and internal debate on gender-based discrimination, including violence.
- Ensure competence and awareness on gender issues and violence against women within the organisation. Make a special effort, to involve men in taking increased responsibility for strengthening the gender perspective of ICDI.

Gender in programmatic work
With a good understanding of gender relations, we are better equipped to contribute to closing the gender gap in power and resources. Gender equality is instrumental in reaching our goal of promoting the psychosocial well-being of children growing up in difficult circumstances. Gender equality contributes to equality and inclusion in the communities where we work.

- Analysis and practice:
  - ✓ Programmes shall be based on strong gender sensitive contextual analysis, including a power analysis. The analysis should seek to understand gender roles and relations in each specific context relevant to the programme.
  - ✓ Gender analyses will influence every stage of programme work: baselines and surveys, programme planning, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation.
  - ✓ All programmes shall secure sex- and age-specific information and performance indicators are in place, in qualitative as well quantitative terms.
  - ✓ We will strive to uncover power relations and advocate for change in unequal power relations that, intentionally or unintentionally, harm women, men, boys, or girls or any persons based on their gender identity.

Understanding context
ICDI recognises the importance of understanding local conditions and cultures and respect for local organisation. However, cultures are not static, but continuously changing. Within one society there often exist many cultures, where the dominating is the culture of the groups holding power. Often oppressive customs, expressions, and behaviours, including forcing a binary view of gender, are explained, and accepted as "culture". ICDI will never accept culture as an excuse for abuse and will support people and organisations who struggle for changes in traditions and practices that oppress and harm women, men, boys, or girls.

- Participation:
  - ✓ All programmes must identify gendered barriers to participation, decision-making, and control of resources and identify measures to address these.
  - ✓ All programmes must ensure that girls and women and any individual facing gendered discrimination have real influence and meaningful participation.
  - ✓ All programmes must analyse and consider time constraints which may be placed on women's time, due to their traditional domestic and caring responsibilities.
  - ✓ ICDI will find ways to engage boys and girls, men, and women in the work for gender equality, starting from women's and men's own definition of problems, and their analysis and strategies.
  - ✓ ICDI will support women's organising, as it is often key to change gender relations.

- Dialogue and Organisational Development:
  - ✓ ICDI will engage in dialogue with all partners on gender equality policy and practice, respecting each partner's capacity, pace, and strategy for change.
  - ✓ Gender equality will be included in organisational development support to partners based on the priorities and needs of each partner organisation.

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- Learning:
  - ✓ ICDI will seek to learn from partner's experience, knowledge, and ideas concerning political context, organisation, political influence, and gender. Many of ICDI's partners are highly qualified in gender equality work. ICDI will seek to utilise this competence to improve our own efforts and facilitate useful cooperation among partners, where feasible.
  - ✓ When evaluating programme work, ICDI will include questions with respect to gender differences in participation as well as gender differences in the impacts of our programme work.

Gender in policy, advocacy, and communication work

ICDI will always strive to enhance our work for gender equality in our policy, advocacy, and communication work.

- We will use experiences and examples of gender equality to advocate for change of laws, policies, and practices with the aim to create change that reaches beyond our programme work.
- We will contribute to participation of women and girls, and use dignified and gender-sensitive language when we advocate for change.
- We will use sex-disaggregated data whenever possible.

Implementation of guidelines

We will work to implement these guidelines through:

- Committed resources to improve our work for gender equality and to fulfil the ambitions of these guidelines
- Incorporation in annual plans
- Identification of needs, development of tools, and training of staff

This is a living document and will be updated and revised based on our experience and external and internal changes.

All ICDI policies concerning integrity can be found on its website https://icdi.nl/policies