PR20
GENDER and DIVERSITY POLICY

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1 Terms and definitions

Istituto Oikos has decided to adopt the definitions developed by international organisations (in brackets at the end of the statement) that are closest to its mission and vision.

Gender

The socially constructed set of norms and behaviours, based on social, cultural, political and economic expectations and values, describing what it means to be a woman or a man. The term distinguishes the socially constructed from the biologically determined aspects of being female and male. Unlike the biology of sex, gender roles, behaviours and the relations between women and men are dynamic. They can change over time and vary widely within and across a culture, even if aspects of these roles originated in the biological differences between the sexes (Source: IUCN, IFAD).

Gender equality

Women and men have equal rights, freedoms, conditions and opportunities to access and control socially valued goods and resources and enjoy the same status within a society. It does not mean that the goal is that women and men become the same, but rather that they have equal life chances. This applies not only to equality of opportunity but also to equality of impact and benefits arising from economic, social, cultural and political development (Source: IFAD).

Gender equity

Means treating women and men fairly according to their needs. Sometimes that means providing additional support to address inequality. Because of current disparities, equal treatment of women and men is insufficient to achieve gender equality. Gender equity is used to reach gender equality (Source: PIN).

Diversity

Refers to the full range of different social backgrounds and identities that make up populations. It includes, but is not limited to, gender, ethnic origin, nationality or citizenship, age, disability, language, political opinions, religious beliefs, social background, sexual orientation, physical appearance and color (Source: IFRC).

Gender sensitive

Understanding and taking into consideration socio-cultural factors underlying sex-based discrimination. In application, gender sensitive has come to mean "do no harm" (Source: IUCN).

Gender-Responsive Approach

The proactive identification of gender gaps, discriminations and biases and then the coordinated development and implementation of actions to address and overcome them, by advancing women's and girls' empowerment via enhanced access to and control of, for example, resources and services, benefits, participation and decision-making. This approach helps ensure that IUCN policies, programmes or projects do not exacerbate inequalities, but rather take meaningful steps to reduce disparities and empower women, girls and members of traditionally disadvantaged groups, as fundamental toward meeting IUCN's mission. (Source: IUCN)

Social Inclusion

Inclusion refers to reducing inequalities based on social backgrounds, identities, roles and power relations. Providing inclusive services means giving equitable access to resources for all. In the long term, inclusion also focuses on facilitating access to opportunities and rights for all by addressing, reducing and ending exclusion, stigma and discrimination (Source: IFRC)

Discrimination

Discrimination against any individual/set of individuals can take many forms and be both violent and non-violent. Examples of violent discrimination are physical attack and execution, whereas examples of non-violent discrimination may range to include verbal abuse to employment termination (Source: OXFAM).

2 Introduction

This Gender and Diversity Policy confirms and strengthens Istituto Oikos' commitment to achieving gender equality and promoting diversity across its policies, programmes and projects.

Istituto Oikos adopts a gender-responsive and socially-inclusive approach for the proactive identification of gender gaps, discriminations and biases and then the coordinated development and implementation of actions to address and overcome them. This approach helps ensure that Istituto Oikos programming not only avoids exacerbating or reinforcing inequalities, but rather takes meaningful steps to reduce disparities and to empower women, girls and members of traditionally disadvantaged groups.

3 Rationale

Women and men from different social backgrounds and identities use natural resources differently and, as a result, they are affected differently by changes to these resources. Gender inequality and social exclusion increase the negative effects of environmental degradation on women and girls and disadvantaged groups. Persistent discriminatory social and cultural norms, unequal access to land, water and productive assets, and unequal decision-making continue to limit opportunities for women and men to equally participate in, contribute to, and or benefit from environmental policies, projects and programmes.

While women face unique barriers, they are also increasingly recognized as holders of knowledge and agents of change who make valuable contributions to the environment.

The recognition that efforts to combat environmental degradation and those to address gender inequality can be mutually supportive, is also reflected in the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, which recognizes gender equality and women's empowerment as a sustainable development goal in its own right, as well as a catalyst for reaching all other goals. Istituto Oikos recognises that protecting and promoting gender equality and diversity are not only globally agreed imperatives in their own right, but fundamental to meeting its mission. It further understands that Istituto Oikos' conservation and sustainable development programming provides significant potential to accelerate progress toward gender equality and diversity.

Istituto Oikos recognises that gender gaps of all kinds and inequality, across sectors, undermine conservation and threaten sustainable development progress. The historic and recurring patterns of discrimination and

bias, including over gender, age, ethnic belongings, disability, sexual orientation, among others, continue to demand special attention and corrective action.

Equally important is the opportunity that gender-responsive and socially-inclusive action unlocks, as a powerful driver of positive change for nature conservation, in all countries and communities and at all levels. Women and girls together with men and boys from different social backgrounds and identities are vital change agents, possessing invaluable knowledge, experiences and capacities that can and must shape more equitable and effective policies, projects and programmes toward a just world that values and conserves nature.

4 Scope of policy

The scope of this policy is to set the standard and principles under which all Istituto Oikos entities/offices (HQ and country offices) create systems, programs, process and practices for mainstreaming Gender Equality and socially-inclusive approach and take appropriate measures to adopt a shared vision to guide Oikos staff in their work, at organizational and programs levels.

All staff (employees, interns, volunteers) and consultants, regardless of their role, type of contract, or percentage of work are responsible to familiarize with its content and apply the commitments as they relate to their work.

5 Objective

The main objective of this policy is to ensure that gender equality and the inclusive approach are central and pursued in Istituto Oikos:
- Programs and processes
- Organizational culture and behaviors
- External representation

6 Istituto Oikos commitments

In order to implement a gender and diversity responsive approach throughout the organization, Istituto Oikos commits to the following   :

Programmes and projects:
- Integrate gender equality objectives into each country's strategic plans and programmes, globally and domestically
- Gender and diversity aspects are considered in all stages of the project cycle, including in assessment, planning and design, implementation and monitoring, and review and evaluation.
- Seek collaborations with partners and stakeholders who share IO's commitment to work for advancing gender equity and diversity

- Projects are informed by gender and socially disaggregated data at all stages of the project cycle, monitor women's participation, and assess project outcomes for women and for men, including how the project impacts gender relations.
- Enter into partnership agreements only with organisations that can ensure alignment to the present policy.
- ·Examine how policies, processes and institutions at and beyond community level (i.e. national, regional and global) affect gender equity, and men and women's access to and control over resources, as well as power of decision-making in our programmes/projects and identify options and, where appropriate, promote gender equity within these.

Organization management
- Prioritize equality and inclusion in staff recruitment, orientation, promotion, and retention, and strive for equitable numbers of women and men at all levels of the organization, including senior leadership.
- Ensure that priority is given to fostering safe, gender sensitive work environments for all staff, with clear accountability mechanisms to prevent and protect against sexual and gender-based discrimination and harassment in the workplace
- Provide capacity building and awareness for all staff in gender and diversity at all levels to strengthen a responsive approach.
- Build a common understanding around gender and diversity through induction and training.

Budgeting /Resource Allocation

- Allocating in the programmes budget sufficient resources for specific activities, technical support and/or other actions to improve gender equality and inclusion considerations, including the meaningful engagement of diverse stakeholders and beneficiaries.

7 Governance and Accountability

a. The Policy is approved by The Board of Directors and Director and Country Coordinators are accountable for its implementation.
b. Progress on gender equality and diversity will be tracked via a quality key performance indicators, and reported on annually at the HQ level.
c. Directors and Country Coordinators will report on the implementation process every 3 years to the Board of Directors and Supervisory Body, with an internal audit.
d. Gender and Diversity Policy will be updated/reviewed every 3 years on the basis of internal audits. Based on ongoing review and annual reports, the Policy may be updated more frequently, as needed.

8 Policy alignment

- Among other synergies, this Policy aligns in particular with:

- The global human rights frameworks in particular with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, International Labour Organization's core conventions, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the UN Human Rights Council Resolutions on Human Rights and the Environment;
- Istituto Oikos policies and procedures, especially the Ethical Code of Conduct, Policy on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), Whistleblowing Policy, Communication and Visibility Toolkit;
- Mandates under the relevant multilateral environmental agreements (e.g. UNFCCC, UNCCD and CBD), the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (3, 4, 5 and 6 in particular) and their targets, as well the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and other major environmental finance mechanisms;
- Various policy commitments made by non-governmental organizations (e.g. Action Aid International, FFI, OXFAM, Save The Children, WWF).

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