

## GENDER EQUALITY POLICY

ORGANISATION:	Kokoda Track Foundation
ACN:	103 660 948
POLICY TITLE:	Gender Equality
VERSION:	6.0
STATUS:	Final
ALLIED POLICIES / PROCEDURES:	Code of Conduct Child Protection Policy PSEAH Policy Discrimination, Harassment & Bullying Policy Disability & Inclusion Policy Board Diversity Policy Working with Communities Policy Program Guidelines
OWNER:	Senior Management
APPROVED BY:	CEO
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### INTRODUCTION:

Kokoda Track Foundation (KTF) recognises that the equality of women and girls is a fundamental human right and necessary for a safe and prosperous community; however, women are disproportionately represented amongst the poor, most marginalised, and most oppressed throughout the world. Sustainable Development Goal 5 – *Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls* – recognises the importance of this issue and has a range of measures in place to improve the position of females, addressing discrimination, violence, harmful practices, participation in the workforce, sexual and reproductive health rights and the right to resources and property. KTF acknowledges that individuals may face multiple forms of discrimination, emphasising the interconnected nature of various social identities (such as age, ethnicity, disability). The socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 have also adversely affected progress made in recent years in relation to gender equality.

Gender equality is a significant challenge in PNG and systemic violations of women's rights exist throughout the country. In 2020, Papua New Guinea ranked 159 out of 189 countries of the Gender Inequality Index. It is therefore critical to address gender equality directly in our programming to reduce this imbalance.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the approach that KTF takes to removing barriers and promoting gender equality in order to empower, build capacity, and ensure the sustainability of programs, projects and outcomes. KTF's commitment is grounded in Human Rights and globally agreed principles and standards, including the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

### SCOPE:

This policy applies to all of KTF's development programs, projects and activities in Papua New Guinea as well as its administration and fundraising base in Australia.

All staff, directors, volunteers, partners, contractors and representatives will be responsible for reflecting KTF's policy and values on gender equality and implementing this policy in their attitudes, behaviours and actions. Implementation will be overseen by KTF's Gender Equality, Disability & Social Inclusion Working Group.

## DEFINITIONS:

**Sex and Gender** - The term “sex” is defined to mean the biological and physiological differences between females and males. “Gender” refers to the social and cultural differences between women, men, girls and boys, as well as individuals with other gender identities, that vary from one society to another and at different points in history.

**Gender roles** - Gender roles are learned from the time of birth and are reinforced by parents, teachers, peers, society and culture. These gender roles are based on the way a society is organized and vary by intersecting identities, such as age, class and ethnic group.

**Gender norms** - Gender norms are the accepted attributes and characteristics of male and female gendered identity at a particular point in time for a specific society or community. They are the standards and expectations to which gender identity generally conforms, within a range that defines a particular society, culture and community at that point in time. Gender norms are ideas about how women, men, girls and boys should be and act. Internalized early in life, gender norms can establish a life cycle of gender socialization and stereotyping.

**Gender relations** - Gender relations have to do with the ways in which a culture or society defines rights, responsibilities and the identities of women, men, girls and boys in relation to one another. Gender relations refer to the balance of power between women and men or girls and boys.

**Gender equality** - Gender equality is a transformational development goal. It is understood to mean that women (girls) and men (boys) enjoy the same status on political, social, economic and cultural levels. It exists when women (girls) and men (boys) have equal rights, opportunities and status.

**Gender equity & gender parity** – *Gender equity is the process of being fair to men, women, boys and girls, and importantly the equality of outcomes and results.* Gender parity is a numerical concept stemming from Gender Equity. Gender parity concerns relative equity in terms of numbers and proportions of women and men, girls and boys. For example, the 50:50 ratio of girls and boys enrolled in school.

**Empowerment** - Empowerment is about women, men, girls and boys taking control over their lives: setting their own agendas, developing skills (including life skills), building self-confidence, solving problems and developing self-reliance. The process of empowerment enables women, men, girls and boys to question existing inequalities as well as act for change

**Gender analysis** - Gender analysis is an organized approach for considering gender issues through the entire process of program or organisational development. This requires sex-disaggregated data and ensures that development projects and programs incorporate roles, needs and participation of women, men, girls and boys.

**Gender mainstreaming** - Gender mainstreaming is the process of assessing implications for women, men, girls and boys of any planned action including legislation, policies or programmes at all levels. It refers to a strategy for making women’s, men’s, girls’ and boys’ concerns and experiences an integral dimension of design and implementation, monitoring and evaluating policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and girls can benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.

## PRINCIPLES:

KTF adopts and adheres to the following principles:

- Gender equality and a lack of discrimination is an integral part of universal human rights;
- All genders have the right to access information and participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives. Programming and activities should be structured so as to ensure the equitable participation of all genders;

- Societal norms have a significant impact on gender roles in PNG and root causes of inequality must be considered and addressed;
- Gender equality is a cross cutting issue that must be included in the planning and implementation of all KTF's programs, projects and activities;
- A "Do No Harm" approach to gender equality requires that projects and programs conduct an analysis of the potential risks of unintentionally perpetuating or reinforcing gender inequalities in the context of the intervention, proactively monitor risks, and take corrective/compensatory measures if applicable;
- Gender identities are diverse and gender is intersectional.

#### POLICY:

KTF aims to promote equal opportunities for females and males in its programs in Papua New Guinea and administration in Australia. KTF recognises that sustainable development in PNG is only possible with the active participation of all members of the community.

KTF will work to address gender-based inequalities and build the power of girls and women to enable equity. We are committed to implement inclusive projects to ensure that all genders have equitable opportunity to participate in, and benefit from, programs and projects we support.

#### KTF will:

- Ensure that its Strategic Plan, organisational and program policies, and project designs reflect the organisation's understanding of and commitment to addressing gender inequality that keeps women and girls from achieving their full rights and potential through their childhood and later lives.
- Ensure that a gender analysis is undertaken for all projects. This is needed to identify the different risks, barriers and strategies for responding to individuals' vulnerability. Gender analysis should be holistic, and explore the system around girls and boys, men and women, including service providers and community groups, because of the impact they may have on children.
- Put adequate time, budget and human resources in place to enable staff to understand the importance of gender equity and how to build the power of girls and women when implementing projects and programs.
- Design projects and programs that reflect the 'twin-track' inclusive principles, enabling both gender specific projects and/or gender mainstreamed considerations, dependent on gender analysis and need. This includes collection of gender disaggregated data.
- Explore and build on partners' attitudes to and experience with gender programming and document this in partner capacity assessments and partner training.
- Report to participants, donors and the public on progress on gender equality in KTF's work, including program related advocacy and communications that uphold commitment to gender equality, including being respectful, using inclusive and positive language and images and avoiding stereotypes based on gender.
- Take all measures to prevent and respond to all forms of sexual harassment and violence, and sexual exploitation and abuse of children and vulnerable adults, promote staff awareness and training, and effective systems for reporting and monitoring.
- Ensure girls and women are consulted on the design, implementation and monitoring of feedback and complaints mechanisms.

## PROCEDURES:

KTF recognises the multidimensional nature of gender dynamics and commits to promoting equality across all its programming and via partnership processes with in-country partners. The following procedures and commitments will be implemented by KTF across its PNG and Australian jurisdictions.

### Organisational Implementation, Policies and Practices

- KTF will ensure that its principles for gender equality are mainstreamed within the organisation;
- KTF will foster an organisational culture that promotes the equitable participation and distribution of power between men and women within the organisation, including on decision-making bodies;
- KTF will ensure that all staff, volunteers, and board directors are aware of and understand the importance of KTF's Gender Equality policy and have appropriate tools to implement it in their sphere of work;
- Ensure our human resources policies and practices are developed with a gender lens. KTF will report on gender and diversity balance in staffing and governance structures and will implement targeted strategies to redress any evidence of gender inequality in gender and diversity balance and pay levels;
- Equality, partnership, respect and cooperation across genders are values that will be promoted throughout KTF's work at all times;
- KTF will recruit and retain staff with a commitment to gender equality; build staff and partner capacity and skills in gender equality and diversity, and ensure all annual operating plans, job descriptions and performance plans reflect KTF's commitment to gender equality
- KTF will regularly report to program participants, donors and the public on the organisation's progress on gender equality in KTF's work;
- KTF will ensure external marketing, fundraising, advocacy and communications respect and uphold our commitment to social justice and gender equality including being respectful, using inclusive and positive language and images and avoiding stereotypes with particular attention to those based on gender and ethnicity;

### Gender Equality Integration in Programming

- Gender analysis will be conducted as a core element of planning, program design, monitoring and evaluation and learning to ensure that females and males have equitable opportunity for involvement in program and projects and contribute to project conception and planning;
- KTF will seek to ensure that women and girls are not discriminated against and have equal access to all KTF programs in PNG i.e., education, health, equality and leadership; participation targets for mixed-gender programming are 50:50. KTF will actively develop programs that empower women and girls where relevant;
- PNG programs will promote activities that enhance the self-esteem of women as well as their knowledge about their rights and their participation in activities and decisions that affect their lives;
- KTF recognises that women and men have different socially-defined gender roles and responsibilities in PNG. As a result, we are committed to being aware of these differences and designing appropriate activities to incorporate and respond to the unique needs. KTF extends our commitment to respecting and aligning with local cultural norms while seeking to challenge harmful practices without imposing external values;

### Stakeholder engagement

- Men and boys will be engaged as key stakeholders in promoting equality for grassroot change, including consultation and collaboration, to move community stereotypes and move norms about traditional gender roles;
- KTF acknowledges the power of language and imagery in promoting gender stereotypes and will design programs, materials and communications that seek not to perpetuate harmful gender stereotypes;

## **Advocacy and Collaboration**

- KTF will challenge all types of violence, including violence against women, girls, men and boys but also among boys and men, and among girls and women;
- KTF will ensure that it works with PNG partner organisations and stakeholders who share its vision for gender equality;
- Policy priorities will reflect partner's experiences in working on gender equality and women's rights and KTF will promote a stronger understanding of the links between gender and good governance with partners;
- KTF will assist partners in building capacity in gender equality where opportunities arise;

## **Inclusivity and Intersectionality**

- Diverse gender identities will be supported in our work, taking into consideration cultural sensitivities and human rights;
- KTF understands that issues faced by women and girls intersects with other factors of disadvantage, including but not limited to, disability, sexuality and tribe, and will be considered in program design and delivery;

## **Reporting and Accountability**

- KTF will take all measures to prevent and respond to all forms of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH) of vulnerable adults and harm towards children, promote staff awareness and training, and effective systems for reporting and monitoring;
- Issue reporting and escalation mechanisms will be implemented and clearly communicated, taking into consideration cultural reticence due to 'fear and favour'. Processes will be interrelated with PSEAH and Child protection reporting;
- KTF will advocate against all forms of gender-based violence and will support victims and survivors of violence to access referral pathways;
- KTF will not tolerate violence of any form against all genders. Breaches of this will result in immediate termination of employment of engagement with KTF;
- KTF will advocate for gender equality in the communities where we work in a culturally sensitive way.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

**KTF Employees and Related Personnel** - It is the responsibility of all KTF employees and related personnel to uphold the principles, procedures and commitments of this policy. All new employees are required to review, sign and adhere to the policy at the beginning of their employment and will participate in regular policy orientation training throughout the course of their employment.

**Leadership team and Senior Managers** – Leadership team and Senior Managers must ensure that all KTF employees, partners, volunteers and directors understand and comply with this policy. Managers responsible for human resources and onboarding of new staff are also responsible for robust recruitment, induction and training as well as performance management to ensure the implementation of the policy.

The policy will be reviewed every two years to ensure that it is relevant and reflects progressive debate on gender equality and women's rights.

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