

## Policy 9

## GENDER EQUALITY

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### 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This document describes ADRA Vanuatu's Gender Policy and provides guidance for ADRA Vanuatu board members, employees, regular volunteers and ADRA country office partners. Through its Gender Policy, ADRA Vanuatu seeks to ensure that:

- ADRA Vanuatu is an organisation in which Gender Equality is mainstreamed to a high standard in all aspects of its operations.
- ADRA Vanuatu board members, employees, regular volunteers and ADRA country office partners are aware of the key principles of Gender Equality and their responsibilities to uphold Gender Equality as a core value and fundamental human right.
- Funds and resources that contribute to development and emergency management activities are used in accordance with the donor's Gender equality and women's empowerment requirements.

ADRA Vanuatu acknowledges that to address gender equality, development and humanitarian assistance must consider both women's and men's<sup>1</sup> roles and responsibilities within the community and their relationship to each other. ADRA Vanuatu encourages the active participation of men and women in order to bring about sustainable development including gender equality and women's empowerment. ADRA Vanuatu also finds its motivation for promoting Gender Equality based on Biblical values and principles, and strive for all people to live life to the fullest.

### 2. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions of important gender concepts inform the policy statements set out in this document:

- A. Gender Roles and Responsibilities - Gender refers to the socially constructed expectations, roles and relationships between women and men. These are learned, change over time, and vary within and between countries and cultures according to social, religious, historical and economic factors. Gender contrasts with sex, which describes a set of biological differences between men and women. Gender roles and responsibilities affect women's and men's ability and incentive to engage with ADRA

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<sup>1</sup> While the document refers primarily to women and men, girls and boys, it recognise the people may identify differently, and where relevant ADRA will extend its assessment and intervention to include people of different SOGIE.

Vanuatu, its operations and programs, and lead to different impacts for men and women.

- B. **Gender Equality** - Gender equality refers to equal opportunities and outcomes for women and men. This involves the removal of discrimination and structural inequalities in access to employment, resources, opportunities and services, and the promotion of equal rights. Equality does not mean that women should be the same as men. Promoting gender equality within ADRA Vanuatu's operations and programs recognises that men and women may have different roles and needs, and takes these into account. At the same time ADRA Vanuatu recognises that other factors such as individual preferences, age, abilities, ethnicity, religion, education level, sexual orientation and identity etc. may also influence the individual's and groups' perceived needs and aspirations.
- C. **Gender and Development (GAD)** - This approach acknowledges that to address women's concerns and needs, development and humanitarian assistance must take account of both women's and men's roles and responsibilities within the community and their relationship to each other. It requires the active participation of men as well as women in order to raise the status of women and bring about sustainable development. The GAD approach is both strategic and practical, and starts with an examination of issues of power, decision making, work allocation and ownership and control of resources.

### 3. POLICY STATEMENT

- A. ADRA Vanuatu affirms that gender equality strengthens the organisation and makes it possible to embrace the broadest range of thinking and action possible in all circumstances.
- B. At the Board level, ADRA Vanuatu is committed to the active recruitment of female Board members. The Board is also committed to exercising gender equality in its activities and in the programs it advocates for.
- C. At the employee and volunteer levels, ADRA Vanuatu is committed to achieving gender equality at all levels, including in recruitment, career development, and compensation.
- D. At the program level, ADRA Vanuatu seeks to enhance the ability of women and men to take greater responsibility for their own lives in order to contribute in a more meaningful way to the development and wellbeing of their communities.
- E. ADRA Vanuatu will monitor and assess its progress in the area of gender equality in its operations and programs on a regular basis.
- F. This policy must be provided to all new and existing ADRA Vanuatu Board members, employees, regular volunteers and ADRA country office partners.
- G. This policy must be reviewed and updated every five years or more frequently if necessitated by legislative or global environment changes. Any lessons learned during the review period must be documented and incorporated into the updated policy.

### 4. PRACTICAL GUIDELINES

The following information is intended to enable ADRA Vanuatu Board members, employees, volunteers and ADRA country office partners to effectively comply with this policy. ADRA Vanuatu encourages inclusion of all people in its operations and programs without discrimination including but not limited to gender (including sexual orientation and gender expression), age, ethnicity, religion, or status.

### **A. Be Informed**

ADRA Vanuatu Board members, employees, and regular volunteers should ensure that they have read this policy document and any additional donor requirements. Please refer to relevant regional and international gender declarations for further information.

In addition the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) adopted by world leaders in September 2015 provide a framework to mobilize efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities (including gender) and tackle climate change.

### **B. Be Proactive in Operations**

ADRA Vanuatu Board members, employees, and volunteers should actively seek to identify and suggest to the relevant decision-making body (Board or PROCOM) opportunities to improve ADRA Vanuatu's practice of gender equality in its day-to-day operations.

ADRA Vanuatu should undertake an organisational gender review on a periodic basis to assess its performance in relation to the principles, standards and goals set out in this policy document. Such a review can serve as a learning opportunity as well as driving changes in both policy and practice.

### **C. Be Proactive in Programs**

Any development or relief activities directly supported by ADRA Vanuatu are expected to comply with this policy.

To ensure gender sensitivity in our programs, it is recommended that

- Key constraints to women's and men's participation are identified during project preparation for all project components;
- Project strategies are identified to overcome constraints to participation, including the setting of quantitative and qualitative targets against which progress can be monitored, and the dedication of project resources to ensure that strategies will be implemented;
- Project documents integrate gender considerations and gender and social analyses into mainstream project activities, as well as separate project activities for women or men if these are appropriate;
- Strategies to involve and benefit women are well-resourced and fully costed in project design and project implementation;
- Women's status and decision making power is advanced as a result of project activities;
- Men and women participate equally in project planning, implementation and monitoring;
- Women and men benefit equally from project interventions.
- Gender-sensitive monitoring indicators and processes are devised to monitor both the impact of the project on women and men and the relationships between them, and the progress towards targets for involving women (sex disaggregated data should be collected throughout the project cycle);
- Program and project documents have sex disaggregated data;
- Counterpart institutional capacity for implementing gender-sensitive projects is assessed and appropriate actions taken to strengthen this capacity.

For detailed assessment tools ADRA Vanuatu programs and ADRA country office partner staff should refer to ADRA's Gender Equality and Social Inclusion framework for assessment.