

# **BIC Gender Policy**

This policy represents the organization's commitment to gender equality. It has been written to guide staff in its efforts to incorporate and promote gender equality within its organizational culture and programmatic operations.

## **I. Gender Framework**

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Gender equality is integral to BIC's rights-based commitment and value base. We believe that everyone regardless of gender is entitled, on an equal and equitable basis, to the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil, or any other field. BIC recognizes that gender rights are human rights and not special privileges, and will contextualize our approach within each region.

We recognize that women are disproportionately represented amongst the poorest and most disadvantaged segments of the world's population. We also recognize that women are not a homogenous group and that gender discrimination is often compounded by other axes of discrimination as aforementioned.

We will strive to incorporate gender sensitivity into our practices both internally and externally. This does not mean that we will be gender blind, but that we recognize that gender often plays a role in determining access to power and resources. In this context, gender does not simply mean 'sex' (which refers exclusively to biological differences), but refers more to the different levels of access to social, economic and political power, that often result from an individual's sex, sexuality, or because of the way they identify themselves or how others identify them. We believe that a gender perspective is necessary to ensure that everyone's specific needs, vulnerabilities and capacities (set in the broader context of class, ethnicity, race, etc.) are recognized and addressed.

## **II. Applying a Gender Perspective within our Organization**

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BIC will advance gender sensitivity within the organization through our management of human resources and organizational culture. We will strive to be a dynamic and learning organisation that places women's empowerment as a key aspect of our work. BIC will seek to create a gender-sensitive work environment where we:

- Commit to having a gender point person within the organization who will work to ensure that all staff understand the gender policy and have appropriate tools to implement it in their sphere of work.
- Build a common understanding of gender through induction and training and ensure that all training across the organization is gender-sensitive.
- Incorporate gender sensitivity as a preferred skill in our job descriptions.

### **III. Applying a Gender Perspective to our Program Work**

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BIC is committed to maintaining a gender perspective in our external work because we are convinced that only by understanding the complexity of the differentiated impact of IFI policies and projects on each gender, and by helping to bring all voices to the table, can we help design enduring and effective solutions. Development problems are often a result of inequities within structural relations of power and so only by acknowledging such inequities, can we hope to play a role in designing cogent solutions. Several ongoing strategies reflect this commitment:

- The incorporation of systematic outreach to women's rights and gender justice organizations as part of our medium term strategic plans and the annual operating plans for our policy and regional programs.
- Being aware of the differentiated impact of IFI policies and programs on different genders through partnering with gender-focused organizations or requesting training.
- Applying a gender lens to all our publications, electronic and print, to demonstrate how IFI policies and projects play out in practice, and the varied approaches of global civil society to solving these problems.
- Ensuring that the language we use is accurate and inclusive and reproduces neither stereotypes nor myths.

### **IV. Monitoring**

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BIC will write an annual report on the progress of BIC's efforts in making its internal operations more gender sensitive and in incorporating gender in its programmatic work. The policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it remains relevant and incorporates ongoing debate on gender equality and women's rights.