



**Infectious Diseases Institute
College of Health Sciences
Makerere University**

GENDER POLICY

2015

Integrating Gender Perspectives

Approved

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12 MAY 2015

Investing in the Future  *Impacting Real Lives*

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CONTENTS

<i>Foreword by the Executive Director</i>	2
<i>Summary of the IDI Gender Policy</i>	3
1. Introduction	4
2. Goals and Objectives	4
3. Key Definitions	5
4. Linkage with other legal, policy and institutional framework	7
5. Principles of the Gender Policy	7
5.1 Integration of gender equality and women empowerment	7
5.1.1 Integration of gender equality and women empowerment into the work of IDI	7
5.1.2 Integration of gender equality and women empowerment into employment at IDI	8
5.2 Inclusive and non-discriminatory approach to foster equality	9
5.3 Partnerships with key stakeholders	10
5.4 Accountability	10
6. Implementation	11
7. Establishment of Gender Unit	11
8. Revision of the Policy	12

Foreword

Infectious Diseases Institute Gender Policy: Integrating Gender Perspectives

Integrating gender perspectives in the work of the Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI) is not only sound public health, but also complies with Uganda's national and international obligations, and will help to strengthen the impact of our work.

The mission of the IDI is to strengthen health systems in Africa, with strong emphasis on infectious diseases, through research and capacity development. Gender can influence the way in which we provide our services, how effective the services are, and the degree to which they meet the needs of both men and women consumers.

The purpose of this gender policy is to ensure that gender differences and gender inequalities are curtailed, and that gender ceases to be a barrier in the course of our work and in fulfilling the IDI mission. Implementation of the Gender Policy will require the commitment, participation and contribution of every staff member and partner. Our commitment to integrating gender perspectives will need to be reflected in our work plans and budgeting.

It is a pleasure for me to present this policy, and I request that every staff and partner of IDI gives it full attention.

**Executive Director
Infectious Diseases Institute,
Makerere University
February 2015**

Summary of Policy

The IDI, as a matter of policy and good public health practice, will integrate gender in all its programmes including: prevention, care and treatment; research; training and capacity development; laboratory services; outreach; and finance and administration (including human resources); and information services, among others.

The goal of this policy is to contribute to better health for both women and men by ensuring that gender considerations to promote equity and equality between women and men are integrated within the work of IDI. This will enable IDI to: increase coverage, effectiveness and efficiency of interventions; ensure that interventions promote equitable gender relations; provide information on the influence of gender on health and health care and build the capacity of health systems to promote gender equity and equality.

The policy is in line with other IDI policies and the Ugandan Constitution, other national laws and policies, and international and regional human rights obligations. The policy which also defines some key concepts relating to gender is based on four principles namely: integration of gender equality and women empowerment into the work of IDI including in employment; an inclusive and non-discriminatory approach to foster gender equality; partnerships with relevant stakeholders and accountability to beneficiaries of IDI programmes and staff of IDI.

This policy applies to, and will be implemented in all the work of IDI. Senior management will take the necessary steps to ensure that the policy is translated into action by building the capacity of staff through the provision of information and training or hiring technical support staff needed to ensure the policy's success. Successful realization of this policy will require consistent and active participation by all staff and partners. Responsibilities and actions will require collaboration and effective linkages across departments and units of IDI.

In order to enhance compliance with the gender policy, IDI will establish a Gender Unit which will provide continuous guidance and support to analyse and ensure the integration of gender considerations in all work with which IDI is associated. The Gender Unit will assist and support the development of methodologies and materials for gender analysis, standardized terminology to ensure coherent communication about gender issues, a strategy for appropriate capacity building across the IDI and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation.

IDI will review this gender policy as and when the need arises, with the aim of enhancing its capacity to promote gender equality and equity within the organization.

1. Introduction

The Gender Policy is in line with IDI's mission: to strengthen health systems in Africa, with a strong emphasis on infectious diseases, through research and capacity development. The IDI recognises that there are differences in the factors determining health and the burden of ill-health for women and men. It is important to IDI that the dynamics of gender in health are not overlooked in fulfilling the IDI mission. There are distinct roles and behaviours of men and women in a given culture, prescribed by that culture's gender norms and values, which give rise to gender differences. Although not all differences promote inequity, gender differences and gender inequalities can give rise to inequities between men and women in health status and access to health care.

The IDI affirms the need for a coherent policy on gender and health to incorporate the particular needs of women and men, including those with disability and the aged, and is committed to the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into all its programmes including: using a gender perspective to plan and budget; continuing the pursuit of gender equity and equality in the workplace including staffing, paid maternity leave, and making the IDI family friendly for all employees.

The IDI will incorporate gender perspectives as a matter of policy and good public health practice in all its programmes including: prevention, care and treatment; research; training and capacity development; laboratory services; outreach; and finance and administration (including human resources); and information services, among others. IDI will also form alliances with other appropriate agencies to enhance advocacy for gender equity and equality in health care.

2. Goal and objectives

The goal of this policy is in line with the IDI mission, and aims to contribute to better health for both women and men through ensuring that gender considerations to promote equity and equality between women and men, are integrated within the work of IDI. IDI will analyse and address gender issues in: prevention; care and treatment; research; training and capacity development; laboratory services; outreach; finance and administration (including human resources); and information services, among others. This will be done in order to achieve the following objectives: increase coverage, effectiveness and efficiency of IDI interventions; promote equity and equality between women and men in health and health care; ensure that interventions do not promote inequitable gender relations; provide information on the influence of gender on health and health care and build the capacity of health systems to address gender issues to promote gender equity and equality.

3. Key Definitions

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women. (WHO)

Gender analysis is the study of differences in conditions, needs, participation rates, access to resources, control of assets, and decision-making powers, among other things, between women and men in their assigned gender roles.

Gender audit is the analysis and evaluation of policies, programmes and institutions, in terms of how well they apply gender-related criteria.

Gender-based violence (GBV) is used to distinguish violence that targets individuals or groups of individuals on the basis of their gender from other forms of violence. It includes any act which results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm. GBV includes violent acts such as rape, torture, mutilation, sexual slavery, forced impregnation and murder. Threats of these acts are also a form of violence. (United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW))

Gender budgeting refers to gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues in order to promote gender equality.

Gender-disaggregated statistics refers to the collection and separation of data and statistical information by sex.

Gender equality is the absence of discrimination on the basis of a person's sex in opportunities, in the allocation of resources and benefits or in access to services. (WHO)

Gender equity refers to fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between women and men. The concept recognises that women and men have different needs and power and that these differences should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies the imbalance between the sexes. (WHO)

Gender Issue is a point of gender inequality that is undesirable and requires intervention. It results from some form of gender discrimination or oppression. A gender issue arises when there is inequality, inequity or differentiated treatment of an individual or a group of people purely on the basis of social expectations and attributes. **Gender Identity** is our own conception of being male or female, and of the roles that we believe should accompany this conception of ourselves. This conception often arises from our individual attributes as well as society's definition of one's conduct, roles, perceptions and expectations. Gender identity is strongly based on the culture of specific societies. One can be identified with either a masculine identity or a feminine identity.

Gender mainstreaming is "...the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres, such that inequality between men and women is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality". (WHO)

Gender responsive is the ability of an individual or agency, to take into account the social relations of women and men as well as differences in their needs in any undertaking or decision. (Uganda Gender Policy)

Gender relations refers to those dimensions of social relations that create differences in the positioning of women and men in social processes. Through gender relations, men are often given greater capacity than women to mobilize a variety of resources and cultural roles. Gender relations consist of social distribution of space, the norms governing the space and the social, political and economic rights. Gender relations entail the ways in which a culture or society defines entitlements, responsibilities and identities of men and women in relation to one another. (Uganda Gender Policy)

Gender roles are the socially constructed and defined responsibilities for ex-ample, child rearing is a female gender role rather than a female sex role as it can be done equally by men or women. Unlike sex roles, gender roles are not universal and differ in different places from time to time. They are also changeable and interchangeable.

Gender sensitivity is being conscious of the different situations and needs of women and men, throughout the decision-making process. It entails the ability to recognize the differences in perception and interests between males and females arising from their different social position and different gender roles. (Uganda Gender Policy)

Mainstreaming gender is both a technical and a political process which requires shifts in organisational cultures and ways of thinking, as well as in the goals, structures and resource allocations. Mainstreaming requires changes at different levels within institutions, in agenda setting, policy making, planning, implementation and evaluation. Instruments for the mainstreaming effort include new staffing and budgeting practices, training programmes, policy procedures and guidelines". (WHO)

Sex refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that define men and women. (WHO)

Women's empowerment is a social process whereby women acquire power individually and collectively. It enhances women's capacity to act independently, control assets and make choices and decisions about all aspects of their lives. It is a process where unequal power relations are transformed and women gain greater equality with men including the ability of women to express and defend their rights

and gain greater self-esteem and control over their own lives and personal and social relationships. Male participation and acceptance of changed roles are essential for women's empowerment. (UNFPA)

4. Linkage with other legal, policy and institutional frameworks

This IDI Gender Policy is complementary to other IDI policies including the Human Resource Manual, Standard Operating Procedures, and Strategic Plan. The Policy is in line with Uganda's Constitution, national laws such as the Equal Opportunities Act and policies such as the Gender Policy, among others. It is also in line with Uganda's international and regional human rights obligations arising from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability, African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and the Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Women in Africa and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the Millennium Development Goals, among others.

5. Principles of the IDI Gender Policy

The key principles guiding the gender policy will be: integration of gender equality and equity into the work of the IDI including in employment; an inclusive approach to foster equality; developing partnerships with key stakeholders and accountability to beneficiaries and employees.

5.1 Integration of gender equality and equity and women empowerment into the work of IDI

5.1.1 Integration of gender equality and equity into the work of IDI

The IDI will integrate approaches and actions to advance gender equality and equity and women empowerment in its programmes particularly: prevention, care and treatment; research; training and capacity development; laboratory services; outreach; and finance and administration, among others.

In particular, IDI in its programmes commits to the following: integrating gender analysis and gender-responsive actions into programme design; building the capacity of programme staff to address gender inequalities; reducing any gender-related barriers to access services; promoting women's participation; addressing gender in the monitoring and evaluation of programmes; and advocating for gender-responsive health policies.

Furthermore, IDI commits to the following:

1. Providing gender-equitable services.
2. Advocacy against gender-based violence (GBV) and providing services for post-GBV care.

3. Advocacy against harmful gender norms and promoting positive gender norms including legal protection.
4. Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and using the human rights based approach to health and health care.
5. Assessment and collection of data on gender relations, roles, and identities that pertain to the achievement of programme outcomes and analyse data for gender-based constraints and opportunities that may affect, impede or facilitate programme objectives.
6. Strategic planning to develop or revise programme objectives for their attention to gender considerations; if necessary restating them so that they strengthen the synergy between gender and health goals; including identification of participants, clients, and stakeholders.
7. Design by identifying and deciding on key programme strategies and activities to address gender-based constraints and opportunities.
8. Monitoring by developing indicators that measure health and gender-specific outcomes.
9. Evaluation by measuring progress and impact of programme and policies on health and gender equity and making recommendations to adjust design and activities based on monitoring and evaluation results.
10. Strengthening aspects of programmes that contribute to more equitable health and gender outcomes, and rework aspects that do not.

5.1.2 Integration of gender equality and equity into employment at IDI

In order to integrate gender equality and equity into employment IDI commits to:

- a. pay a decent living wage and ensure fair and comparable wages, hours, and benefits for comparable work for all employees;
- b. carry out concrete, verifiable actions to recruit women candidates and retain women employees from traditionally underrepresented groups and for non-traditional positions;
- c. eliminate all forms of discrimination based on attributes such as sex, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, or cultural stereotypes and other status in all work-related activities or privileges, including wages, hours, benefits, job access, and working conditions;
- d. prohibit discrimination based on marital, parental, reproductive, or health status, including HIV/AIDS, in all employment or promotion decisions;
- e. ensure job security by allowing for interruptions in work for maternity leave, paternity leave, and family-related responsibilities;
- f. implement equitable policies for non-salaried employees conducting temporary and/or temporary work e.g. consultants and other such category;
- g. ensure equitable layoffs that do not disproportionately affect women;

- h. undertake concrete, verifiable actions to make professional and private life more balanced by implementing and promoting a variety of flexible work options, including workforce exit and re-entry opportunities, and support women returning to positions of equal pay and status;
- i. promote the use of family leave, dependent care, and wellness programmes; and allow time-off from work for employees seeking medical care or treatment, for themselves or their dependents, including family planning and reproductive health care;
- j. support access to childcare either by providing childcare services, preferably on-site, or referrals;
- k. provide equal opportunities and access for women to education, including literacy, vocational, and information technology training;
- l. provide professional development opportunities that include formal or informal networking, client development activities, and mentoring programmes for women at all levels, including women working in non-traditional fields;
- m. prohibit and prevent all forms of violence in the workplace, including verbal, physical, or sexual harassment;
- n. ensure the safety of female employees and vendors in the workplace, including travel to and from the workplace and on company-related business, and ensure the safety of vendors in the workplace;
- o. provide and promote policies and programmes addressing domestic violence;
- p. work to eliminate and disclose unsafe working conditions by providing protection from exposure to hazardous or toxic chemicals in the workplace, particularly when those substances have known or suspected adverse effects on the health of women, including reproductive health;
- q. establish policies and undertake proactive efforts to recruit and appoint women to managerial positions and to the board of directors;
- r. establish policies and undertake proactive efforts to ensure participation by women in decision-making and governance at all levels and in all areas of their operations, including budgetary decision-making; and
- s. include improving gender equality as a factor in performance measures and provide resources to support gender initiatives.

5.2 Inclusive and non-discriminatory approach to foster equality

IDI will fulfil its mission in an inclusive and non-discriminatory manner with due regard to human rights and dignity of the person. All IDI programmes and services shall be targeted to all, and be inclusive of all, without discrimination on the basis of

race, ethnicity, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, age, disability, HIV status or other status.

5.3 Partnerships with key stakeholders

IDI will partner with government, civil society, private sector and development funders where necessary to ensure gender sensitive health care and that its efforts are coordinated and non-duplicative according to the pending needs and priorities of the country. In particular, IDI will: encourage its partners to promote gender equality through their grant-making for programmatic initiatives; provide accessible information and training programmes designed specifically for women and men; work with authorities and communities where IDI operates to eliminate gender-based discrimination and protect women from sexual harassment, gender-based violence, mutilation, intimidation, retaliation, or other denial of their basic human rights; and refuse to tolerate situations where cultural differences or customs are used to deny the basic human rights of women and girls.

5.4 Accountability

In order to enhance accountability IDI commits to:

- I. prominently display its commitment to gender equity and equality and/or make such commitment information available to all employees and beneficiaries of IDI services and other stakeholders in a readily accessible form;
- II establish benchmarks to measure and monitor progress toward gender equality and document results. IDI will ensure implementation of gender equality throughout the organization by conducting periodic self-evaluations through data collection with gender-disaggregated statistics and gender responsive analysis, audits, and reporting;
- III. establish a clear, unbiased, non-retaliatory grievance policy allowing employees and beneficiaries of IDI services to comment or complain about their treatment in relation to gender, among other things;
- IV. engage in constructive dialogue with stakeholder groups, including employees, development partners and beneficiaries of IDI services, among others, on progress in implementing the organization's commitment to gender equity and equality; and
- V maintain transparency in the implementation of IDI's commitment to gender equity and equality and promote endorsement and implementation by affiliates, vendors, suppliers, customers, and others with whom the organization does business.

6. Implementation

This policy applies to all work throughout the IDI including prevention, care and treatment; research; training and capacity development; laboratory services; outreach; finance and administration (including human resources); and information services, among others. This policy shall encompass all future research; programme

planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, human resource management, and budgeting, among others.

Effective implementation of this policy will require senior level commitment and organizational support for activities to advance the knowledge and skills of staff for efficient gender analysis and integration in their area of work. IDI Heads of Department will be expected to institutionalize mechanisms for building capacity among their staff by providing information and training or hiring technical support staff needed to assure the Gender Policy's success. Successful realization of this policy will require consistent and active participation by all staff and partners. Responsibilities and actions will require collaboration and effective linkages across departments and levels of IDI.

Senior management will take the necessary steps to ensure the policy is translated into action. They will transmit the policy to technical and administrative staff and monitor its consistent and effective application throughout the area of work for which they are responsible. They will be accountable to the Executive Director for successful incorporation of gender considerations in their area of work.

The resources and administrative and operational mechanisms for implementation and monitoring effectiveness of this policy throughout the organization will be set forth in directives of the Executive Director and the Board.

7. Establishment of Gender Unit

IDI will establish a Gender Unit which will provide continuous guidance and support to analyse and ensure the integration of gender considerations in all work with which IDI is associated. The Gender Unit will assist and support the development of methodologies and materials for gender analysis, standardized terminology to ensure coherent communication about gender issues, a strategy for appropriate capacity building across the IDI, and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation.

The Gender Unit will also have responsibility for on-going collection and dissemination of information, such as case studies of best practices in mainstreaming gender in the work of IDI, as well as contributing to the building of an appropriate evidence-base on gender-related issues in the IDI. The Gender Unit will collaborate with all staff in the IDI to ensure continuous implementation of this policy.

8. Revision of Policy

IDI will review this Gender Policy as and when the need arises with the aim of enhancing its capacity to promote gender equality and equity in the organization based on periodic gender-focused evaluations; analysis; audits; and reporting.