



GENDER POLICY

A BRIEF PROFILE OF FOUNDATION FOR ACTIVE CIVIC EDUCATION-FACE

The Foundation for Active Civic Education (FACE) is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) established under the Trustees Incorporation Act. FACE was established with the primary function of empowering rural communities to become self-reliant and enjoy a dignified public life manifested through improved nutrition, food security, cultural interaction and financial sustainability at household level.

FACE started operations in 2004 initially as a Community Based Organisation (CBO), before turning into a fully-fledged NGO in 2008. The organisation is duly registered with the Council of NGOs in Malawi (CONGOMA) and the NGO Regulatory Authority (NGORA).

In 2016, FACE established a community radio station known as *Gaka FM* which broadcasts a range of development programs like cultural diversification, food and nutrition security, disaster management, livelihood support and financial literacy to Nsanje, Chikwawa, Mulanje, Thyolo and parts of Blantyre, the programs consider cultural diversity and directs of Manganja, Sena and Lhomwe people.

The organization promotes cultural diversity to sustain cultural values, norms, practices and identity, this helps easy uptake of knowledge and comprehending issues in their own local language for easily passing of knowledge from generation to generation.

A. VISION STATEMENT.

FACE envisions to be a self-reliant and efficient NGO that brings change to the people of Malawi

B. MISSION STATEMENT

FACE's mission is to achieve human transformation through timely interventions to community needs and sustainable partnerships

1. BACKGROUND OF GENDER POLICY

The sena culture is one of the drivers for gender imbalance between men and women because resource ownership is left in the hands of men. This puts men to enjoy the monopoly of land, domestic animals, money and makes decision in the family without any or little consultation with the wife. Some cultural values are negative and affect women in a negative way. Efforts have

been made by government and other stakeholders to lobby for a just society where men and women are at par but little has been achieved.

Culturally families in Malawi will take boys education as a priority while girls are left to do family chores like cooking cleaning cooking utensils and washing clothes. Girls are there to support their brothers through lobola so that they get better education while they are to send for early marriages FACE through gender policy will ensure that the gaps which exist are minimized.

Women's poverty and women's health are intimately related, and poverty is both a cause and consequence of ill health. Also, as evidence on the burden of sexual and reproductive ill-health mounts, it is becoming increasingly clear that poverty and gender inequality are important determinants of sexual and reproductive health. At the macro level, infectious diseases like HIV can take off a few points in the GDP growth rate. At a micro level, serious illnesses can make the difference between poverty and living well for individual families¹. Poor health and nutritional conditions compromise a women's ability to generate a sufficient livelihood, triggering a process of impoverishment; conversely, being impoverished causes ill-health because women are improperly nourished, are unable to access health services to treat illnesses, or both.

Poor reproductive health reduces productivity and earnings, constrains investments in children and leads to untold private suffering. Poverty also aggravates poor reproductive health, contributing to risky behaviors, such as unsafe sex for survival, fuelling the spread of HIV infection and other sexually transmitted infections in most cases has put women, children and youth have suffered in silence and no lasting solutions yet have been found It is against this background that FACE decided to put in place a gender policy which shall ensure that women's suffering is eliminated while ensuring a balanced treat of both men and women. The social – economic status of many women comes as a result of poor economic stand, high illiteracy levels among women as well as poor access to sexual and reproductive health rights.

High illiteracy levels among women have been one of the drivers for gender-based violence. A well-informed woman is able to make informed decisions while somebody in the same environment who is not educated will fail to make good decisions and men or those who are above her will take advantage of her ignorance

¹ World Health Organisation. *Integrating Poverty and Gender into Health Programmes*. <http://www.wpro.who.int>

2. POLICY RATIONALE

The gender policy shall facilitate the establishment of clear guidelines for staff and board members who will make commitments for the realization of gender mainstreaming and women empowerment to influence policies, procedures and practices which will accelerate the achievement of gender equity and equality, gender justice, non-discrimination and fundamental human rights in areas of operations.

3. FACE POLICY VISION

The vision for FACE Gender policy is to achieve sound socio-economic society where equal chances to resources, opportunities based on gender equity and equality in a democratic dispensation are realised.

4. POLICY GOAL

The overall goal of the gender Policy is to ensure that there is equal participation between men and women in all decision-making processes and provide equal recruitment opportunities for both men and women. This policy shall create conducive environment for equal participation for both men and women in all FACE” s catchment areas at all levels.

5. POLICY FRAMEWORK

Gender is one of cross-cutting issue which needs to be mainstreamed in all organisation’s activities, work plans, budgeting and technical cooperation. This shall require commitment of every staff member and board of trustees and ensure its implementation at each and every level of operations. All thematic area officers will be expected to develop plans of action for integrating gender perspectives into their work. These action plans will help to monitor progress.

I. Outcomes

- a) Enhanced opportunities for both men and women in all recruitment processes.
- b) Create a post of gender focal person within the organisation
- c) Facilitate capacity building of all FACE staff members on gender inclusion
- d) Create sexual harassment reporting mechanism for redress
- e) Advocate for gender inclusion in local structures, partners and stakeholders to address gender in all thematic areas.

6. INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

- a) Empowerment of women by creating equal opportunities to employment.
- b) Reduced violence (20%) against girls and women at work places and targeted communities by 2022.

- c) Achievement of 50-50 representation at work place and community development structures for men and women
- d) Girls' empowerment in youth representation at local structures.
- e) Increased awareness to men, women, boys and girls on evils of gender based violence.

7. FACE POLICY PRIORITY AREAS

- i.** Promote the protection of targeted population and staff members from gender-based violence
- ii.** violence prevention mechanism against women, girls and children in operation areas
 - a)** Burden reduction on women, girls and children in communities.
 - b)** Men and boys' involvement as part of the solution.
 - c)** Provide radio forum for panel discussions on solution to gender-based violence and socio-economic empowerment for women and girls
 - d)** Promote gender violence reporting mechanisms
- iii.** Equal participation of women and men including equal access to benefits
 - a)** Consider the needs of women and girls and reduce the potential risk for violence against women over poor governance in local government structures.
 - b)** Promote early child development as an entry point to promote gender with innovative learning and advocacy methods

8. MONITERING AND EVALUATION

FACE Gender Policy is designed to trigger action in order to alleviate suffering for the marginalized groups of people through policy enforcement and awareness creation, to make this a reality, an integrated and effective monitoring and evaluation system with appropriate and efficient feedback mechanisms shall be put in place. This requires FACE to undertake monitoring and evaluation functions at macro, sectoral and grassroots levels by gathering information to the issues on gender. To facilitate this process, an institutionalized approach shall be designed to develop and establish internal self-monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for all stages of programming. This institutionalized framework entails developing appropriate monitoring and evaluation tools and performance output, outcome and impact indicators as have already been stipulated in the document. The indicators will be used at different levels to measure what will go into programs or projects and what comes out of them. The input-process-output-outcome-impact M&E frameworks shall be developed and used for programs or projects in order to systematically track progress in the achievement of the intended goals of FACE policy.

9. CONCLUSION

Gender equality and female empowerment are essential for achieving our development goals. Unless both women and men are able to attain their God given potentials in socio-economic and political aspirations, can there be holistic development. Realization of this policy at all developmental level and in all operational areas shall enable FACE to be a catalyst force for gender inclusion in all aspect of development work. Deliberate efforts shall be put in place to ensure that gender equity and equality. FACE policy implementation shall bring forth dignity to both sexes and maximize output in development endeavors.