

VI AGROFORESTRY'S GENDER EQUALITY POLICY

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1 Purpose

Vi Agroforestry's vision is "a sustainable environment that enables women and men living in poverty to improve their lives". This vision can only be achieved if women and men have equal access to opportunities, capital, resources, services, and equal opportunity to participate in decision-making and benefits. Vi Agroforestry's current Global Strategy 2017-2021 stipulates a concentrated effort to achieve gender equality.

This policy defines Vi Agroforestry's explicit intention to support gender equality and emphasises Vi Agroforestry's commitment to gender equality and provides the basis for dialogue with partner organisations, donors and other stakeholders. It establishes a clear, shared understanding that gender equality is central to Vi Agroforestry's delivery on its mandate. This policy provides clarity and guidance to all Vi Agroforestry staff and individuals working with/for Vi Agroforestry. It represents Vi Agroforestry's commitment to take a cohesive and coordinated approach to gender equality. It guides Vi Agroforestry's internal gender equality work, including public relations and resource allocation.

The purpose of the Policy is to:

- Define and communicate clear commitments and consistent messages within Vi Agroforestry and with others on gender equality.
- Continue to strengthen efforts to promote gender equality in Vi Agroforestry, increasing Vi Agroforestry's integrity and credibility amongst donors, partners and allies in gender equality within the agroforestry space, in both programming and advocacy.
- Enable Vi Agroforestry to work as a team and building on each other strengths, experience and lessons learned.

For definitions, see annex 1.

2 Policy statement

Vi Agroforestry recognises that a majority of women and men in situations of poverty live and work in rural areas. They are most often smallholder farmers with

little or no land, or insecure access to land, with low investment capacity, limited production capacity, limited access to financial services and markets, and lack capacity to significantly influence duty-bearers. Many of them are women, young women and girls.

Vi Agroforestry acknowledges the importance of addressing gendered social norms at all levels of society that reinforce gender inequality. As a result, Vi Agroforestry believes that working with men and masculinities is key to achieving gender equality and recognises the importance of working with men and boys to transform harmful social norms that perpetuate gender inequality. Working with men as allies is also key when transforming gendered norms and practises that hinder women’s active and meaningful participation in the society.

Vi Agroforestry subscribes to the SDG commitment of “leaving no one behind”. Achieving gender equality is one of the prerequisites for reaching the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations¹. The correlation between sustainable development, poverty reduction and gender equality is a cornerstone in Agenda 2030. Vi Agroforestry will specifically contribute to the fulfilment of Goals 1, 2, 5, 13 and 15.

3 Scope

Vi Agroforestry’s definition of gender equality **and equity** is that **all individuals** have the same opportunities and rights to all aspects of human development. A gender just and equal society recognises, protects and affirms the rights of each individual regardless of **sexual orientation**, gender identity or expression. Equality between women and men is both a strategic objective and a means to achieving sustainable global development. Discriminatory legislation and harmful social norms, attitudes, beliefs and actions (particularly those related to inheritance, acquisition of property, social exclusion, reduced level of income, limited access to/and control over assets and benefits, decision-making and employment opportunities) prevent women’s economic empowerment and make them more vulnerable and much more likely than men to become poor. Girls and

¹ Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UN, 2015

young women are often affected by these discriminatory norms and practices at an early stage in life which can shape both their self-perception and their possibilities. Therefore, it's crucial for Vi Agroforestry to target girls and young women to break this cycle of poverty and discrimination. Gender equality is fundamental to achieving human rights for all individuals.

Gender inequalities are interlinked with poverty in all its dimensions. Poverty is multi-dimensional and is both a driver and a manifestation of gender inequality and discrimination. The majority of those living in poverty are women, young women and girls as a result of patriarchal norms and attitudes, which means women, young women and girls face more discrimination, have fewer resources, limited opportunities, less power and influence in decision-making. Poverty has many dimensions, as described above, including lack of power and influence, lack of income, security, education, material resources and lack of access and control over natural resources. To better understand poverty and discrimination, it is necessary to take an intersectional approach to understand how gender identity and expression intersects with other identities including ethnicity, class, religion, age, migration status², disability, health status and sexual orientation, and how these can result in the further discrimination against and exclusion of women, young women, children and marginalised individuals and communities. It is particularly important for Vi Agroforestry to ensure that age is not a barrier to participation.

Vi Agroforestry ensures that a power analysis and the understanding of intersecting socio-cultural factors are included in the context analyses that guide the organisation's actions in local, regional and global development and advocacy work.

² Migration status refers to the status that individuals hold in the country in which they reside, including refugees, internally displaced persons and those with insecure migration status.

Linkages between gender equality and climate change:

Women, men, girls and boys in rural areas in developing countries are especially vulnerable to the negative effects of climate change as they are often highly dependent on natural resources for their livelihood.

Link between gender equality and access to productive resources and economic empowerment:

Globally, women are less likely to own or have secure access to land even though they make up an estimated 43 per cent of the agricultural labour force. Land and agrarian reforms, allocation and titling or registration programmes often target the household

4 Guiding principles

The following principles should guide all of Vi Agroforestry work:

Equality as a right: Gender equality is a central component of a rights-based approach. Vi Agroforestry adopts a rights-based approach, which is vice versa critical for advancing gender equality by ensuring women and girls' participation and leadership in all activities. Vi Agroforestry aligns its work to relevant national, regional and global human rights instruments as well as monitoring and complaint mechanisms, including UN special rapporteurs.

Active and Meaningful participation: Vi Agroforestry should promote that women and men actively can participate and have equal access to all opportunities.

Addressing root causes: Vi Agroforestry will take a transformative approach to work on advancing gender equality. This approach recognises that issues of gender inequality intersect with other forms of oppression based on unequal power relations.

Build alliances and collaborations: Vi Agroforestry seeks to build alliances with diverse partners who shares its values.

Evidence-based: Vi Agroforestry's framework and approach is grounded in empirical evidence and efficient methodologies.

5 Commitments

In order to enact the guiding principles, Vi Agroforestry will fulfill the following ten commitments and ensure that they are implemented, monitored, evaluated and reported on as part of Vi Agroforestry's responsibility of transparency and accountability.

1. Incorporate participatory gender and intersectional power analysis to inform actions across the programme/project cycle.
2. Collect qualitative and quantitative data disaggregated by sex and age to ensure that Vi Agroforestry's starting point for our work on gender equality is evidence-driven and based on a country specific context analysis including gendered norms, attitudes and values.
3. Ensure that all staff have relevant knowledge on gender equality and sexual harassment as well as the Sexual Harassment Policy and its implementation and apply the Human Rights-based Approach to development in their work.
4. Support partner organisations' capacity and development in working with a Human Rights-based Approach and, more specifically, to ensure that women, young women, girls and boys are not left behind.
5. Build alliances with diverse partners. Addressing gender inequality requires collaboration among diverse stakeholders, including international, national, local, civil society organisations; the private sector and development partners.
6. Support partner organisations' capacity to ensure that a gender analysis is mainstreamed in policies, services and products, addressing both practical and strategic needs of women, young women and girls.
7. Promoting organised sharing of work between women and men, as well as young women and young men and girls and boys for them to enjoy equal economic, social and political opportunities.
8. Supporting partner organisations to allocate at least 50 per cent of the development resources (financial and technical) from Vi Agroforestry to women, thus promoting women's sustainable livelihoods through the adaption of Fair Resources Allocation System (FRAS)+ for resource allocation.

9. Raising awareness about the situation for women, young women and girls in rural areas in the countries where Vi Agroforestry operates.
10. Ensuring best practices and challenges are documented and creating mechanisms for cross-learning amongst the partner countries.

6 Governance and Accountability

6.1 Responsibilities

See details of responsibilities in annex 2.

- **All staff:**
 - All of Vi Agroforestry’s Staff are obliged to read, understand and comply with this policy and are always required to commit to respecting and promoting gender equality.
 - All partners are required to ensure that their members, staff, consultants, service providers and sub-contractors that they engage with on Vi Agroforestry funded projects are aware of this policy and comply with its terms.
- **Country Managers:**
 - All managers are responsible for ensuring that staff and partners within their countries have access to and are aware of this policy and are supported to implement and work in accordance with it.
- **Vi Agroforestry Regional Technical Working Group (Gender Children and Youth):**
 - This Regional Technical Working Group (RTWG) is responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of this Policy and ensuring that all Staff are supported to meet their responsibilities under the Policy.
- **Gender focal points at country level:**
 - Act as catalysts to assist with gender mainstreaming in respective areas of jurisdiction/work stations.

6.2 Compliance, monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed at least every three (3) years. While the Policy Owner is ultimately responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed as per this time line, all staff will be responsible for enhancing this policy and incorporating lessons learned into subsequent versions. Feedback from staff will be sought in the process.

Vi Agroforestry's work on gender equality will be monitored at all levels. Vi Agroforestry programme are monitored and evaluated according to the procedures established in the Quality Management System. This policy will be monitored in line with the implementation guidelines. The results will be disseminated throughout the organisation to strengthen learning.

6.3 Reporting

Reporting on gender equality will be as per Vi Agroforestry's reporting guidelines, templates and timelines. It is expected that all reports will at the bare minimum include sex disaggregated data when reporting project/programme progress, trainings conducted, exchange visits, board representation, organisations management structures etc.

6.4 Records management

Vi Agroforestry recognises that records form part of our organisational memory are an important asset. This applies to all records, in all media, which are created, received or maintained as regards gender equality. This also includes success stories and case studies. Vi Agroforestry will ensure that all records are created and stored for organisational learning.

7 Related policies and documents

- Vi Agroforestry Code of conduct
- Vi Agroforestry Policy Against Sexual Harassment
- Implementation guidelines for the Policy Against Sexual Harassment
- Vi Agroforestry HRBA guidelines
- East Africa Community (EAC) Gender Policy (2018)

- UN Sustainable Development Goals
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (1979)
- Declaration of the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993)
- Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (PFA) (1995)
- Maputo Protocol – Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003).

8 Approval

The management team, consisting of the Vi Agroforestry Director and the Regional Director approves this document; revisions are approved by the management team. The document shall be uploaded in QMS.

Annex 1: Definitions

- **Empowerment** - A process by which people who are marginalised, discriminated against or without equal opportunities obtain the capacity and opportunity to participate more directly in the decisions affecting their life, and reach political, social and economic empowerment.
- **Femininity** - Socially constructed definitions and perceived notions and ideals about what is perceived as female in each setting. Femininities can change over time and their making and remaking is a political process affecting the balance of interests in society. The term is not connected to the body but to the social and cultural gender.
- **Gender** - Relates to the social and cultural expectations about the roles and behaviour of women and men. Gender refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being female and male and the relationships between women and men, and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. In most societies, there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities. (UN Women, Concepts and definitions, 2014)
- **Gender Analysis** - The systematic assessment of policy and practice on women and men and on the social and economic relationships between the two. The application of a gender perspective to the development issue which is being addressed requires: an analysis of the gender division of labour, the identification of the needs and priorities of women and men, the identification of existing opportunities and constraints to the achievement of development objectives, and the choice of an intervention strategy to address these.

- **Gender based violence** - A form of **violence** directed against a person because of gender (including gender identity/expression), that reflects and reinforces stereotypes and inequalities inside society, depriving women of their ability to enjoy fundamental freedoms.
- **Gender equality** - The state in which access to rights or opportunities is unaffected by gender. Equality between women and men is a recognised human right and it reflects the idea that all human beings, both women and men, are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without any limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles or prejudices. Gender equality means that the different behaviours, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally. It also signifies that there is no discrimination on the grounds of a person's gender in the allocation of resources or benefits, or in the access to services. Gender equality may be measured in terms of whether there is equality of opportunity or equality of results. (UNFPA)
- **Gender Equity** - A just distribution of benefits and rewards between men and women.
- **Gender expression** - The presentation of an individual, including physical appearance, clothing choice and accessories, and behaviors that express aspects of gender identity or role
- **Gender identity** - A person's deeply-felt, inherent sense of being a boy, a man, or male; a girl, a woman, or female; or an alternative gender that may or may not correspond to a person's sex assigned at birth or to a person's primary or secondary sex characteristics.
- **Gender mainstreaming** - 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 societal spheres so that women and

men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality. (ECOSOC)

- **Gender transformation** - Refers to efforts to change gender and social norms to address inequalities in power and privilege between persons of different genders, in order to free all people from harmful and destructive norms. These norms include gender roles, expectations, stereotypes, and harmful attitudes, customs, and practices, including gender-based violence.
- **Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA)** - Conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights. It seeks to analyse inequalities which lie at the heart of development problems and redress discriminatory practices and unjust distributions of power that impede development progress.
- **Intersectionality** - An analysis and understanding of how different power structures, based on gender, age, race, sexuality, origin, class, migration status, etc., jointly and interlinked influence the life, rights, etc., of individuals and groups, resulting in discrimination and/or privileges.
- **Masculinity** - Socially constructed definitions and perceived notions and ideals about what is perceived as male in each setting. Masculinities can change over time and their making and remaking is a political process affecting the balance of interests in society. It is not connected to the body but to the social and cultural gender.
- **Sex** - Biological sex defined by genitals, sex chromosomes and hormone levels.
- **Sexual orientation** - A component of identity that includes a person's sexual and emotional attraction to another person and the behavior and/or social affiliation that may result from this attraction. A person may be attracted to men, women, both, neither, or to people who have other gender identities.

Annex 2: Commitment and Responsibility

Commitment	Responsible
1. Implementation and monitoring of the Vi Agroforestry Gender Equality Policy	Regional Gender, Children and Youth Advisor and Country Managers Support: Policy and Advocacy Unit Regional Director
2. Collect qualitative and quantitative data disaggregated by sex and age to ensure that Vi Agroforestry's starting point for its work on gender equality is fact-driven and based on a country specific context analysis including gendered norms, attitudes and values.	Country Managers and Gender focal leads Support: Regional Gender, Children and Youth Advisor) Senior Gender Advisor Global Thematic Expert Group (GTEG) on Gender
3. Ensuring that all staff has relevant knowledge on gender equality and sexual harassment, including Vi Agroforestry's sexual harassment policy and its implementation and applies a Human Rights-based Approach in their work.	Head of Human Resources, Regional Gender, Children and Youth Advisor Country Managers Support: Senior Gender Advisor Regional Director
4. Supporting partner organisations' capacity and development in working with a Human Rights-based Approach and, more specifically, to ensure that women, young	Country Managers ALL staff Support: Regional Director

women and men, girls and boys are not left behind.	
<p>5. Building alliances with diverse partners. Addressing gender inequality requires collaboration among diverse stakeholders, including international, national, local, civil society organisations; the private sector and development partners.</p>	<p>Country Managers Gender focal leads</p> <p>Support: Regional Director Vi Agroforestry Department - HO</p>
<p>6. Supporting partner organisations' capacity to ensure that gender is mainstreamed in policies, services and products, addressing both practical and strategic needs of women, young women and girls.</p>	<p>Country Managers Gender Focal leads</p> <p>Support: Regional Gender, Children and Youth Advisor Regional Director</p>
<p>7. Promotion of organised sharing of care work between women and men, young women and men, boys and girls for them to enjoy equal economic, social and political opportunities.</p>	<p>Country Managers Gender focal leads</p> <p>Support: Regional Gender, Children and Youth Advisor Senior Gender Advisor - HO Regional Director</p>
<p>8. Supporting partner organisations to allocate at least 50 per cent of the resources (financial and technical) from Vi Agroforestry to women, thus promoting women's sustainable livelihoods.</p>	<p>Country Managers Gender focal leads Finance Officers at country level</p> <p>Support: Regional Finance Manager Regional Director</p>
<p>9. Raising awareness about the situation for women, young women and girls in rural</p>	<p>Vi Agroforestry Department – HO Marketing Department Regional Communications Officer</p>



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<p>areas in the countries where the organisation operates.</p>	<p>Regional Director</p> <p>Support: International Department</p>
<p>10. Compliance and review – final responsibility</p>	<p>Vi Agroforestry Management Team, Regional Director and Director.</p>