

Gender Equality Policy

Introduction

We recognize the vital role of women and men, in all their diversity, in driving economic and social progress and strive to build inclusive and competitive markets that generate sustainable economic opportunities for all people as entrepreneurs, farmers, and employees. We focus on women specifically because women often face greater discrimination and more severe constraints than men to participate in and benefit from the economy. Addressing these inequalities is critical to enhancing scale and deepening the impact of our programs. We recognize that engaging, empowering, and benefitting women and men is required to maximize inclusive, climate and nature-positive economic growth and achieve widespread prosperity.

Policy Statement

We aim to achieve parity in the share of women and men who financially benefit from our programs and enable them to translate their economic participation into positive outcomes for them, their families, and communities. This policy describes TechnoServe's commitment to advancing gender equality and women's economic empowerment through our work and in our workplaces.

Definitions¹

Agency is the capacity, condition, and state of expressing an individuals' own power, for themselves and with others, and their ability to act in accordance with what they value.

Empowerment refers to the expansion of people's ability to make strategic life choices, particularly in contexts in which this ability had been denied to them. *Women's economic empowerment* is the process by which women and girls are able to succeed and advance economically and have the power to make and act on economic decisions.

Gender is a socially and culturally constructed concept which distinguishes the attributes of men, women, and other identities and assigns them behaviors, roles, and expectations. Gender-based roles and other attributes change over time and vary with different cultural contexts.

Gender equality is defined as a state where individuals and groups can have the same opportunity, rights, and agency over their lives, absent from discrimination or bias on the basis of gender or sex.

¹ For a full set of terms and definitions related to this Policy, consult [this](#).

Scope

Core Principles

Our policy and commitments are designed to help our leadership, staff and programs to uphold these principles that guide our work.

Understand and address power

Inequality is often an expression of power structures that privilege certain individuals and groups over others. We work to address the root causes of gender inequality and expand the power women and men, in all their diversity, have to improve their lives.

Respect the dignity of all people

We believe all people deserve to be treated with dignity and respect, honoring the voice and contributions of all people.

Do no harm

We believe that all persons we encounter have the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation. We strive to ensure our work does not create new inequalities or widen existing inequalities among the clients with whom we work.

Context matters but does not define objectives

We recognize that differences exist across the communities and geographies where we work. Understanding this context is necessary to design and implement impactful programs, and build trusting relationships with our clients. It does not however diminish our objective to create equitable economic growth. Our work aims to enable women and men to advance economically, and this often requires changing existing harmful practices, norms, and behaviors.

Programmatic Commitments

We advance gender equality and women's economic empowerment when we apply best practices to improve the quality and impact of our programs.

Programs are required to:

- Conduct a **gender analysis** to inform the design and implementation of programs and as part of the process for developing a gender action plan.
- Set a **minimum target of 40% for reaching women** clients.²
- Collect and **disaggregate key indicators by sex and age** at least at output and outcome levels.

Programs are encouraged to:

² The target should be included in the program's log frame, results framework, and/or gender action plan.

- Design activities that **address the structural inequalities** within households, businesses, and communities.
- Include activities that **engage men and boys** in taking actions to support gender equality.
- Develop **gender learning agendas and disseminate learnings** about our program impacts on women's economic empowerment.
- **Communicate the benefits of women's economic empowerment** to partners, including funders, business partners and communities with which we work.

Corporate Commitments

We achieve lasting results for the individual women and men, and communities we serve, when our corporate culture and policies reflect the values of inclusion and equity and advance gender equality.

Country offices, including Headquarters, are required to:

- Ensure their policies **acknowledge and respect the needs of staff in all their diversity**.
- Ensure supervisors and managers follow **non-discriminatory and inclusive practices** in hiring, retention, and promotion.

Teams and staff are encouraged to:

- **Build their confidence and capacity to lead** programs and operations in inclusive and equitable ways by participating in training and workshops related to this policy.
- Adopt **inclusive language and communication** practices in our internal and external communications.
- **Report any concerns or suspicions of harassment, abuse and exploitation**, as per our [Safeguarding Policy](#). Country Offices are also strongly encouraged to publicly display information and resources for people experiencing gender-based violence.
- Implement practices to **diversify our partnerships with women-owned/led and minority-owned/led businesses** and with donors and corporate partners who share our commitment to gender equality.

Accountability

We are all responsible for upholding the commitments in this Policy. While not all commitments apply to every role in the organization, each of us has responsibility to know the contents of this Policy and understand how it relates to our individual responsibilities.

We use a set of key performance indicators to track our progress and hold ourselves accountable to our commitments across our programs and corporate practices. The KPIs focus on different areas and levels of the organization to ensure the responsibility for fulfilling our commitments is tied to each and every one of us.

The Global Gender Practice will work with Directors and the Senior Management Team to regularly report our progress on the commitments in this Policy to staff, clients, the Board, and partners.