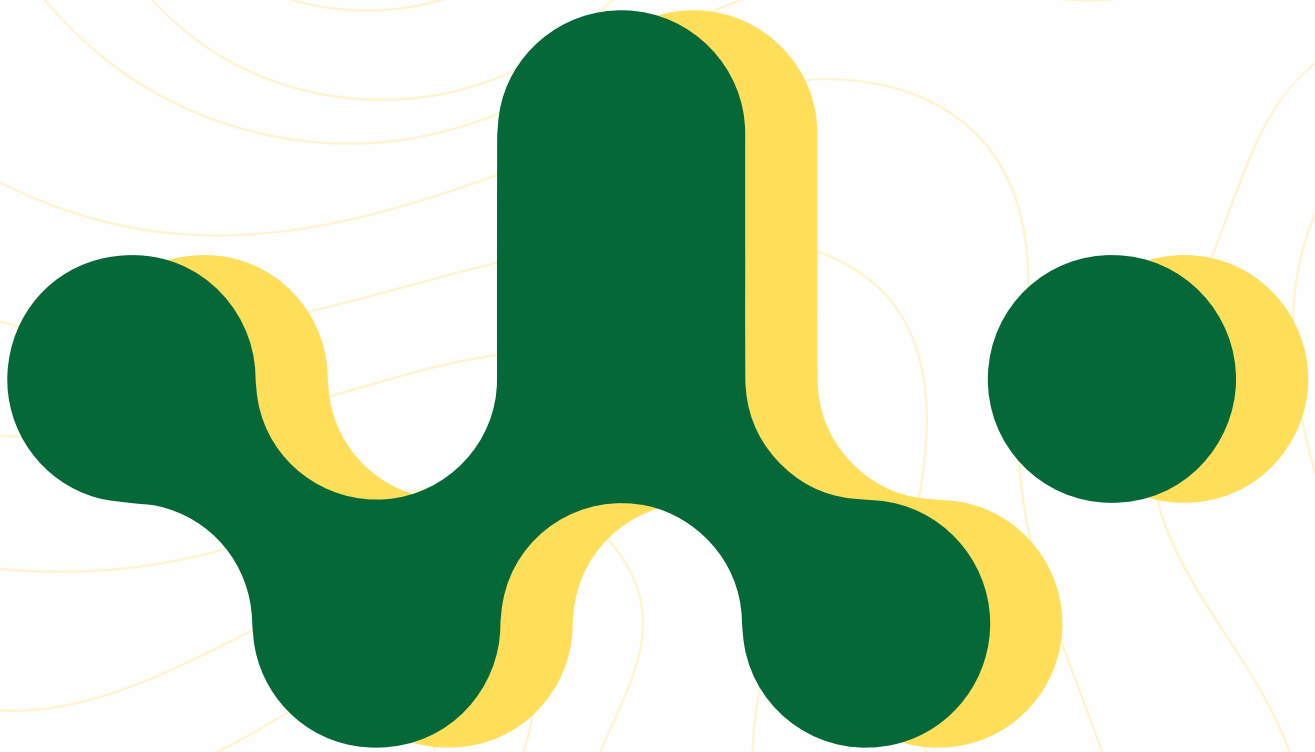


# **ACTS GENDER MAINSTREAMING POLICY**

**2026**



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## List of Abbreviations

- ACTS – African Centre for Technology Studies
- AFNS - Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security
- CEDAW - Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
- CRE – Climate Resilient Economy
- GBV - Gender - Based Violence
- ICPD - International Conference on Population and Development
- UDHR - The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- UN - United Nations
- SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals
- STI – Science, Technology, and Innovation
- STIKS - Science, Technology, and Innovation, Knowledge and the Society



## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **Background and Policy Context**

#### **1.1 Background**

The African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) recognises the importance of Gender Mainstreaming as a cornerstone for achieving its strategic objectives. ACTS is committed to fostering an inclusive environment where all individuals, regardless of their gender, age, class, ethnic background, or physical ability, can thrive and contribute equally.

ACTS is a development research think tank that uses science, technology, and innovation policies to support sustainable development in Africa. It is an intergovernmental organisation founded in 1988 to pursue policy-oriented research to strengthen the capacity of African countries and institutions to harness science and technology for sustainable development.

ACTS vision is knowledge for better Livelihoods with the aim of contributing towards accelerating sustainable, inclusive agri-food systems' transformation for food and nutrition security through cutting-edge STI-focused, policy relevant research and knowledge brokerage, providing policy choices that support the generation, uptake and harnessing of climate change-related STI for sustainable and diversified livelihoods, socio-economic development and bio diversity conservation in Africa, undertaking key STI research and supporting the development of a cadre of researchers, analysts, policy makers, entrepreneurs, businesses and communities in Africa on the interplay of STI, knowledge and society, specifically related to the African context, enhancing the development, deployment and adoption of responsible digital technologies for sustainable and inclusive development in Africa through capacity building, policy research and technology brokerage and empowering women, youth and vulnerable groups to harness science, technology and innovation for economic, social and environmental sustainability in Africa.

ACTS envisions a sustainable economic, social and environmental future for Africa, through science, technology and innovation. Article 3 of the Charter of ACTS empowers the Organisation to undertake capacity building, conduct research, provide advisory services, and disseminate information on the policy aspects of applying science and technology to sustainable development in Africa. It also requires ACTS to:

- a) Promote capacity building in the developing countries in the field of policy analysis related to sustainable development.
- b) Monitor international trends in science and technology, undertake technology assessment and forecasting and analyse the impacts of new technologies for the purposes of providing policy options to African and other developing country governments.

- c) Promote, enhance, inspire, study and conduct the building of the institutional framework requisite for the management, assessment, sustainable utilization and conservation of natural resources.
- d) Foster the exchange of information and networking between the Centre and other governmental and private institutions and individuals that have similar or related interests at the local, national, regional and international levels, with particular emphasis on policy matters.
- e) Promote, encourage, inspire and undertake technical cooperation activities between and within nations.

Since its founding, ACTS has been instrumental in enlarging the range of policy choices for sustainable development in Africa. This policy, therefore, aims to map out ways in which being aware of the gender dimension can contribute to achieving the goals of the new ACTS Strategic plan. As an STI policy research think tank, ACTS plays a key role in supporting African countries and institutions in harnessing science, technology and innovation for sustainable development through high-quality policy research, policy engagement, outreach and dissemination. Tackling all forms of inequity, including gender inequality, is crucial for sustainable and peaceful development and in the work that ACTS does. Gender inequality refers to unequal power relations leading to unequal opportunities. For ACTS, working on gender means treating people equally regardless of their gender, age, class, ethnic background, and physical ability.

Gender is one of the most important aspects for the work that ACTS is doing without which our core values and beliefs cannot be fully realized. Gender concerns must be made "clear" or they will be submerged, neutralized, or vanish entirely. Gender equality involves ensuring that all human beings—men, women, girls, and boys—are treated equally in terms of dignity and rights. Gender discrimination is one of the main causes of poverty and a major obstacle to equitable and sustainable global human development. We cannot achieve any of the SDGs without gender equality. This policy outlines how the gender dimension can be addressed as an integral consideration in all ACTS operations. ACTS will go a step further than equity, making gender equality the ultimate core value that cuts across all other values.

This Policy provides a framework to accelerate the realisation of gender equality, fairness, non-discrimination, and fundamental rights in ACTS. This policy document outlines how to integrate gender perspectives into the organisation's culture, policies, and practices, ensuring that no one is left behind in the pursuit of growth and prosperity.

## **1.2 Legislative, Policy and Regulatory Framework**

### **1.2.1 National Framework**

The Constitution, under Article 10 on the National Values and Principles of governance, highlights such principles as equality, equity, inclusiveness and non-discrimination. These principles provide an anchorage for gender equality. Article 27 entrenches the fundamental rights to equality and freedom from discrimination by providing that women and men have the right to equal treatment, including equal opportunities in political, economic, cultural, and social spheres. Article 27(4) prohibits discrimination on any basis, including pregnancy, race, sex, marital status, health, ethnicity or social origin, colour, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, dress, language or birth. Article 27(6) creates a duty on the State to take legislative and other measures, including affirmative action programs and policies, to redress any disadvantage suffered by individuals because of past discrimination. Article 43 defines education as a socioeconomic right, a public good, and a fundamental imperative for a country's development. Article 54 (2) mandates the progressive realization by the State of five percent of persons with disability in elective and appointive bodies. Article 55 obligates the State to take affirmative action in providing special opportunities for employment for minorities and marginalised groups. Article 56(b) provides that minority and marginalized groups are to be provided with special opportunities in the educational and economic fields and Article 232 lists the values of public service that include adequate and equal opportunities for appointment, training and advancement at all levels of the public service.

Other policies and legislation that contain provisions on gender equality and inclusivity include Kenya's Vision 2030, the National Policy on Gender and Development (2019), National Policy on Gender and Development (2019), National Policy for Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence Policy (2014), National Gender and Equality Commission Act, 2011, the Employment Act (Cap 226 Laws of Kenya), Law of Succession Act (Chapter 160), Children Act, 2022 (No. 29 of 2022), Sexual Offences Act, 2006 (No. 3 of 2006), Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Act, 2011, Land Act (No. 6 of 2012), Matrimonial Property Act (No. 49 of 2013) and the Protection Against Domestic Violence Act (No. 2 of 2015).

### **1.2.2 Regional Framework**

Regionally, Kenya has ratified the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Establishment of an African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (2005). Kenya has also ratified the Convention governing Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the Maputo Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa albeit with reservations on article 10 (3) and 14 (c).

Other regional instruments that Kenya has adopted include the African Union Agenda 2063, the EAC Vision 2050, the East African Community Gender Policy, 2018, Joint General Comment on African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child on Ending Child Marriage (2017), African Union Strategy for Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment 2018-2028 and African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights Resolution 275 on Protection against Violence and other Human Rights Violations against Persons on the basis of their real or imputed Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity (2014), Continental Policy Framework on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (2006), and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa.

### **1.2.3 International Framework**

This policy is also anchored on International treaties that Kenya has ratified that promote gender equality and inclusion of vulnerable groups including: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights ("ICCPR") and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights ("ICESCR"), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) which all have gender equality imperatives as a state obligation.

Kenya has also been party to other international initiatives that have drawn attention to the need for gender equality such as the Vienna Declaration on Human Rights, the Beijing Platform for Action, the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) specifically Goals 1 (Eradication of Extreme Poverty and Hunger); 3 (Promotion of Gender Equality and Women's empowerment) and 5 (Improvement of Maternal Health) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations in September 2015 specifically Goals 1 (No Poverty) 2 (Zero Hunger); 5 (Gender Equality); 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation); 10 (Reduced Inequalities); and 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong institutions).

### **1.3 Purpose of the Policy**

The primary purpose of this gender policy is to provide a comprehensive framework for gender mainstreaming within ACTS. This gender policy is a statement of ACTS to commit to initiating steps to apply a gender lens to all aspects of her operations on a routine basis, by making it the norm for persons to share resources and power on a fair basis and to address any existing imbalances on a just and equitable basis. In a stronger way, ACTS will utilize all available human resources for the core activities of policy research, policy engagements and outreach.

ACTS will also commit resources to eliminate gender violence, discrimination, and injustice, which will contribute to achieving the vision, mission, and core values, recognising and acknowledging the global consensus that gender equality is a prerequisite for achieving development goals. This gender policy will guide the institutionalisation of policies and practices that promote gender equity and ensure that no one faces discrimination or harassment based on their gender, age, class, ethnic background, or physical ability.

#### **1.4 The Rationale**

The policy is critical in the elimination of gender disparities and enhancement of gender equity and equality in the plans and operations of ACTS. The policy will not only strengthen the procedures already in place for gender mainstreaming but also provide a basis for accountability and collective responsibility regarding gender balance.

#### **1.5 Policy Statement**

ACTS is committed to institutionalising gender mainstreaming to ensure that opportunities and benefits are equally accessible to all persons in all its operations.

#### **1.6 Policy Goal**

The overall goal of this policy is to create and maintain a conducive working environment for ACTS staff, promote gender mainstreaming and inclusivity in all ACTS operations, and contribute to the achievement of equal opportunities, a conducive working environment, and a level playing ground for both genders.

#### **1.7 Policy Objectives**

**The gender mainstreaming policy has the following specific objectives:**

- a) Ensure that gender equity is integrated into ACTS strategic planning, and that policy development, operational practices and procedures are well informed by equality of opportunity
- b) Ensure that the dignity and integrity of all persons in the organisation are equally respected and valued, regardless of status or occupation
- c) Optimally serve the interests of all persons in research, training and development activities
- d) Advocate for a governance, administrative and a research culture that is gender sensitive in all aspects of ACTS operations, including employment and service delivery.
- e) Prevent discrimination and violence at work and in work related activities
- f) Ensure that all staff are aware of their rights and responsibilities regarding gender based violence in the workplace
- g) Reinforce effective personnel management and appropriate workplace behavior by entrenching high ethical standards and respect for other in ACTS plans and procedures

- h) Manage risks and reduce the potential for direct and indirect social and financial costs associated with gender based violence
- i) Provide guidance for the informal and formal resolution of incidents of gender based violence in the workplace.

### **1.8 Scope of the Policy**

This policy covers all members of ACTS including:

- a) The Governing Council
- b) Management Team
- c) Staff members
- d) Stakeholders

### **1.9 Overarching Principles**

The guiding principles in this policy are as follows:

- a) Promoting gender equity and equality by ensuring that all interventions are designed to promote equality and justice.
- b) Gender responsiveness and inclusivity shall be upheld.
- c) Gender equity and equality shall be enforced as a cross-cutting theme in all programmes and activities.
- d) The Policy affirms that everyone has the right to equal benefits regardless of their gender, age, class, ethnic background, and physical ability.
- e) In all ACTS interventions, gender mainstreaming will be used by all stakeholders to improve gender equity and equality.
- f) The Gender Policy mandates that gender imbalances, whether they favor men or women, be addressed.
- g) Gender responsive allocation of resources and opportunities, especially at community level to promote equality and social justice.
- h) The policy will ensure equal participation of all persons especially in governance and management.
- i) Transparency, accountability and good governance shall be upheld.
- j) Strengthening institutional frameworks such as formal policies, legislation, regulations or norms that will help staff and partners to develop capacity to promote gender equality.
- k) Ensuring equal opportunities for all persons to participate in technical fields of expertise and decision making at all levels regarding all matters of, protection, prevention and access to services.
- l) Equal access by all persons to opportunities, control of resources and benefits at ACTS, programme, projects and beneficiaries.
- m) Ensuring that all people are involved in activities to build their capacities to participate fully in all programmes and projects regardless of their gender.
- n) Ensuring all persons are equally involved in, contribute to, control and benefit from all the programs and projects.
- o) Empowerment of all persons, on a progression from a focus on practical needs to the higher levels of strategic interests including participation, decision making and control of resources.

- p) ACTS will strive to be an equal opportunity institution where all persons will be accorded equal regard.
- q) ACTS will provide equal chances of access to benefits, staff recruitment, and promotions.
- r) ACTS will strive to enhance interpersonal relations among staff in order to achieve a common goal. The key values that the ACTS will strive to promote include integrity, honesty, tolerance and mutual respect.
- s) ACTS will ensure active participation by women, men, youth, PWDs and other vulnerable groups

## CHAPTER TWO

### Policy Commitments and Strategies

#### Overview

This chapter discusses the key policy priority areas, key commitments, and strategies for addressing the issues raised. To achieve the objectives of this policy, ACTS has identified the following thematic areas of intervention and strategic actions.

#### Policy Statements and Strategic Actions

Policy Thematic Area	Policy statement	Strategic Actions
<b>1. Governance</b>	<p>ACTS commits to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Establish policies and procedures that ensure gender equity and equality in the management of the organization.</li> <li>ii. Ensure gender equity and inclusivity in appointment and promotions to senior positions in the organization.</li> <li>iii. Implement mechanisms to ensure gender responsiveness in management and governance.</li> </ul>	<p>ACTS shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Mainstream gender in all ACTS programmes</li> <li>ii. Developing effective tools for integrating gender into governance, that is, governance indicators, institutional and governance reviews.</li> <li>iii. Sensitize top decision makers to commit and support gender mainstreaming at ACTS.</li> <li>iv. Conduct regular training and sensitizations on gender and inclusive leadership</li> <li>v. Enhance stakeholders' sensitization and capacity building to support all persons in leadership.</li> <li>vi. Ensure gender balance in appointments to governance and management positions</li> <li>vii. Implement affirmative action without compromising competence as a means of redressing any gender imbalance in the recruitment and capacity development of staff, where there are gender gaps</li> </ul>

<p><b>2. Collaboration and Partnerships</b></p>	<p>ACTS commits to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Foster new partnerships in gender-focused research and strengthen existing linkages</li> </ul>	<p>ACTS will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Provide an enabling environment for collaboration and publication in gender focused research</li> <li>ii. Encourage and enhance the participation of all persons in conducting and publishing research on gender based issues</li> <li>iii. Facilitate gender inclusive joint research projects</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Staff Welfare</b></p>	<p>ACTS commits to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Promote the health, well-being and work-life balance of all staff, ensuring a supportive, equal and inclusive work environment.</li> <li>ii. Provide facilities likely to improve the welfare of staff.</li> <li>iii. Support the needs of staff with children, promoting a family friendly and gender inclusive workplace.</li> </ul>	<p>ACTS will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Provide regular communication to members of staff concerning the medical facilities that are available to them, their spouses and their children</li> <li>ii. Establish welfare unit for staff, which includes welfare and counseling</li> <li>iii. Provide staff wellness programmes including team building activities.</li> <li>iv. Implement family friendly policies such as parental leave for all</li> <li>v. Provide breastfeeding facilities for lactating female staff</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Gender Based Violence and Sexual Harassment</b></p>	<p>ACTS commits to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Eliminate all cases of gender-based violence and sexual harassment at the workplace</li> <li>ii. Promote discipline among staff</li> <li>iii. Promote mental and physical health of staff</li> </ul>	<p>ACTS will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Develop Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Harassment Policy.</li> <li>ii. Educate and raise awareness on gender-based violence and other forms of human rights abuse to ACTS staff.</li> <li>iii. Provide support services for sexual harassment and gender based violence victims</li> <li>iv. Establish and implement reporting and management structures for gender issues, including SGBV</li> <li>v. Display information on gender based violence</li> <li>vi. Create an environment that fosters participation of all persons in safety and free from gender based violence of any form</li> </ul>

<p><b>5. Gender Equality</b></p>	<p>ACTS commits to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. To Promote gender equality as an explicit human right</li> </ul>	<p>ACTS will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Ensure equitable recruitment and promotion of qualified persons and promotion to senior positions</li> <li>ii. Provide gender responsive office facilities and equipment for staff use</li> <li>iii. Encourage applicants from marginalized groups to apply for opportunities and shortlist them in line with Affirmative Action</li> <li>iv. Treat all staff equally with regards to pay, benefits, training, promotion, growth and development</li> <li>v. Train and sensitize all staff and stakeholders on gender equality</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Gender Sensitivity</b></p>	<p>ACTS commits to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. commits to sensitize and train her staff on gender related issues to enhance gender sensitivity</li> </ul>	<p>ACTS will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Conduct orientation and induction of all staff on this Policy.</li> <li>ii. Undertake continuous training on gender issues to all staff</li> <li>iii. Collaborate with strategic partners to provide Information, Education &amp; Communication (IEC) materials on gender issues</li> </ul>

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Implementation of the Policy**

#### **3.1 Overview**

This chapter provides a policy implementation framework indicating the roles and responsibilities of various actors at ACTS.

#### **3.2 The Roles and Responsibilities of Key Actors**

##### **3.2.1 The Organisation (ACTS)**

- a) Establish policies and procedures that ensure gender equity and equality in the management of the organization.
- b) Ensure gender equity in appointments and promotions to senior positions in the organisation.
- c) Provide an enabling environment for collaboration and publication in gender focused research
- d) Encourage and enhance the participation of male and female in conducting and publishing research on gender based issues
- e) Foster new partnerships in gender focused research and strengthen existing linkages

##### **3.2.2 The Governing Council of ACTS**

- a) The Governing Council (GC) shall ensure the sustenance of a gender friendly environment by promoting gender equity and eliminating discrimination across all the programmes, departments and units of management
- b) The Governing Council shall annually receive and consider, and monitor progress reports from the Secretariat on steps taken or being taken to provide a gender-friendly environment in order to promote gender equity in the organisation.

##### **3.2.3 The Senior Management Team**

Through the leadership of the Executive Director, the Senior Management Team (SMT) will:

- a) Allocate resources to support conducting of gender sensitization, data collection and dissemination of information on gender sensitization as per this policy
- b) Undertake research and address gender differences and inequalities in the planning, monitoring and evaluation of ACTS work, and to include this requirement in the performance contract
- c) Support and sustain the incorporation of a gender perspective into the mainstreaming of ACTS policies and programmes, including through recruitment.
- d) Provide support to departments and programmes in order to build their capacity for gender analysis and action, and for formulating and sustaining strategies and actions based on relevant budgets for integrating gender equality in all policies, programmes and projects
- e) Ensure that the programmatic and thematic evaluations indicate the extent to which gender issues are incorporated in ACTS daily operations.

- f) Ensure proper monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the policy
- g) Collect and analyze sex disaggregated and other relevant data to guide in planning and programming
- h) Sensitize staff on gender mainstreaming and on prevention of gender based violence (GBV)
- i) Conduct periodic reviews and update the gender policy to ensure that emerging issues, practices and trends in gender equality and social inclusion are, where appropriate, incorporated herein.

### **3.2.4 Human Resource Department**

- a) Create an environment that fosters participation of all individuals in safety and zero tolerance to harassment of any kind
- b) Address gender issues related to sexual offences
- c) Provide adequate, appropriate and gender responsive facilities and amenities for all staff
- d) Ensure equal chances of access to benefits, staff recruitment, and promotions.

### **3.2.5 Staff**

- a) Familiarize themselves and adhere to the provisions of the policy.
- b) Participate in gender mainstreaming capacity building programmes and activities.
- c) Observe and respect diversity in all their undertakings at the workplace.
- d) Report cases of discrimination in the workplace.
- e) Providing timely information required in the evaluation of the implementation of this policy
- f) Report and access free counselling offered by the organisation in case they fall victim to gender-based violence and/or discrimination

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review of the Policy**

#### **5.1 Monitoring and Evaluation**

We will conduct regular monitoring and evaluations of the gender policy to ensure effective and efficient implementation and to measure progress. The key responsibility for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) remains with the Senior Management Team. This monitoring and evaluation process will be guided by the Senior Management Team's work plan, which will be developed with clear gender mainstreaming indicators. Each Programme will be required to contribute towards mainstreaming gender actions in ACTS.

To guide the implementation and development of the monitoring and evaluation tools and performance Indicators for the Policy, we will develop a comprehensive annual work plan.

Furthermore, monitoring will be conducted quarterly to ensure the policy's effective implementation. The data/information generated from monitoring will be utilized by the management to inform decisions including taking corrective actions on the implementation of the Policy where necessary. Furthermore, monitoring reports will be prepared to provide information for the evaluation of the Policy.

Evaluation will entail an assessment of the effectiveness of the Policy after implementation of Gender Mainstreaming initiatives, The Policy envisages that quarterly reporting will be facilitated by inputs which will be provided by the Senior Management Team. We expect the evaluation results to inform decision-making, promote accountability, facilitate learning, and address identified gaps.

## 5.2 Review of the Policy

The Gender Policy shall be reviewed every five years, in tandem with ACTS' planning cycle. In addition, the Senior Management Team may, from time to time, add or alter these policy statements where clear justification exists.

## References

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- UNDP: Gender, Policy and Energy: A review of energy policies in east and Southern Africa; 2015: UNDP, USA
- UN Cares works to reduce the impact of HIV in the UN and wider workplaces. It advocates widely for the adoption of 10 Minimum Standards. For more information, access: <http://www.uncares.org/content/what-uncares>
- UN Globe advocates for Equality and non-discrimination of LGBTQIA+I staff in the UN system and wider workspaces, access: <http://www.unglobe.org/>
- Rights (OHCHR), which promotes equal rights and fair treatment of LGBTQIA+ people, <https://www.unfe.org/>

## Annex 1: Glossary of Terms

**Discrimination:** The unequal or disadvantageous treatment of an individual or group of individuals

**Empowerment:** Process and result of gaining attitudes, knowledge and skills that position one to compete equally with others for available opportunities and resources and to exercise autonomy.

**Gender:** Culturally and socially based expectations of the roles and behavior of men and women. Gender is socially constructed and is related to how we are perceived and expected to think and act as men or women because of the way society is organized. For instance, women cook, wash and take care of babies. Men head families, inherit land and provide leadership. These roles can, however, be played by either sex as they are not biologically pre-determined.

**Gender Analysis:** Systematic scrutiny of contexts to reveal differences in the conditions and positions of men and women, boys and girls, the factors behind the differences and their implications.

**Gender Awareness:** Recognition that there is inequality in the conditions and positions of men and women, boys and girls, and that these inequalities are systemically caused and perpetuated.

**Gender Balance:** Equal representation and participation of women and men in all structures, e.g., a committee of 10 people will have five men and five women. But gender balance must not only be looked at in terms of absolute numbers but also at each level in a structure. For example, there must be parity at management, middle staff and auxiliary staff level for an organization to be called gender balanced.

**Gender-Based Discrimination:** The unequal or disadvantageous treatment of an individual or group of individuals based on their gender. Gender-based discrimination can be treating an individual differently based upon his/her gender in academia or extracurricular activities, academic programs, discipline, class assignments given in a classroom, class enrollment, physical education, grading, and/or athletics.

**Gender Bias:** Prejudiced actions against women or men, boys or girls in the belief that the other sex is inferior or less deserving.

**Gender-Based Violence:** is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between females and males. Examples include sexual violence, including sexual exploitation/abuse and forced prostitution;

domestic violence; trafficking; forced/early marriage; harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation; honor killings; and widow inheritance.

**Gender Disaggregated Data:** Qualitative and quantitative information, broken down to show the different conditions and positions of women, men, boys and girls.

**Gender Equality:** Similarity in the treatment of women and men based on human rights provisions (all born equal) as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979). It means that women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and potential to contribute to national, political, economic, social and cultural development and to benefit equally from the results. Given the current situation of inequality, gender equality cannot be achieved without the empowerment of women. There are two types of equality. First is equality of opportunity, which means access for girls and boys, women and men, e.g., enrollment in school. Second is equality of outcome, which means proximate results for women and men, girls and boys, e.g., completion rates for girls and boys in primary school and their performance levels. The second is also called substantive equality. Equality of opportunity alone is not enough given the historical and systemic causes of gender disparities. Gender equality is not a women's issue, it is a vital societal issue.

**Gender Equity:** This is the process of being fair to women and men in the sharing of resources, opportunities and benefits, depending on a prevailing situation, to attain justice. To ensure fairness, measures must often be available to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from otherwise operating on a level playing field. Provisions for equal opportunities may not take into account the unique challenges that different individuals and groups face. That is why equity measures are necessary. Equity leads to equality: equity is the means and equality is the end.

**Gender Gap:** Quantitatively measurable differences in the situations of men and women, girls and boys, e.g. school enrolment.

**Gender Lens:** Means working to make gender visible in social phenomena by asking if, how, and why social processes, standards, and opportunities differ systematically for women and men.

**Gender Mainstreaming:** A strategy for ensuring that gender is taken into account in organizational policy, structures, practices and programmes. It is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned

action including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is an integral dimension of 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.

**Gender Parity:** Gender parity concerns relative equality in terms of numbers and proportions of women and men, girls and boys, and is often calculated as the ratio of female-to-male values for a given indicator.

**Gender Roles:** Activities assigned to men or women by each community/society over and above their biological roles. They can be classified as productive (to generate income and wealth), reproductive (to care for and maintain human life) and community management (to make decisions and establish and maintain order, structures and systems in a community).

**Gender Sensitivity:** Awareness of and respect for the needs, interests and sensibilities of women as women and men as men, e.g., not using derogatory language, avoiding stereotypes, avoiding patronizing language, providing facilities for both in public places in recognition of different needs etc.

**Sex:** Biological distinction between males and females, e.g., males sire children, females bear and breastfeed children, etc. Sexual differences are the same across the world and are natural.

**Sexual Exploitation:** Any abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust for sexual purposes.

**Sexual Harassment:** Any covert or overt act of a sexual nature that is unwelcome, uninvited and unrequited and which makes its target uncomfortable, offended, demeaned, humiliated, coerced and undignified. The act could be physical, verbal, pictorial, electronic, or carried out in any form and could be targeted at and coming from a person of the same or opposite sex.

**Zero tolerance:** an organizational commitment to investigate and appropriately sanction any and all instances of unacceptable behavior, including those that may be illegal.

**For more information, contact:**

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