



World Renew's Gender Working Group:

Mandate: The Gender Working Group maintains awareness throughout World Renew of our commitment to work for gender equality in all aspects of organizational culture and through all our relief and development programs and provides feedback and encouragement at all levels towards the achievement of this goal. The GWG creates the organization-wide gender plan and reports on it annually in Newdea under World Renew.

The GWG members are:

- Andrew Ryskamp
- Ida Mutoigo
- Irene Zepeda Murillo
- Kris VanEngen
- Kristen deRoo VanderBerg
- Nema Aluku
- Stephanie Kroll
- Rolando Pinzon
- Stephanie Sackett
- Vanessa Mathews-Hanna

World Renew Adopts New Operational Gender Policy

“World Renew is committed to work for gender equality and equity in all aspects of its programs, policies and organizational culture.”

This phrase marks the first line of World Renew's new Operational Gender Policy approved by Team Leaders at the September 2014 Team Leader's meeting. The policy is a continuation of the Gender Policy that has been in place since 2006.

The Operational Gender Policy reinforces and builds on the commitments outlined in the 2006 document and operationalizes it by outlining the specific commitments of each World Renew team.

What it is:

The new Operational Gender Policy is an organizational document that highlights one of World Renew's key priorities — gender equality. It provides foundational and Biblical principles for why World Renew is committed to working for gender justice. It also gives an overview of how gender mainstreaming should be implemented within World Renew's programs, policies, structures and activities.

The specific objectives of the Operational Gender Policy are:

- To provide consistent messages and a coordinate approach to gender equality by World Renew at all levels
- To guide World Renew staff and volunteers in adopting the principles and practices of gender equality
- To foster an organizational culture that exemplifies World Renew's commitment to gender equality
- To communicate World Renew's position on gender equality to international, national and local stakeholders
- To engage World Renew's partners in policy and programming that promote gender equality

Every World Renew staff person, regardless of function or position, is responsible for the implementation of this policy.





Gender Key Message

Gender equality is often misunderstood as a mathematical equation of trying to make women = men or male = female. In other words, gender equality can be misconstrued as trying to make men and women the same in every way.

This is not practical or helpful. Men and women are biologically different and also have many different roles placed on them by the cultures they live within. If we ignore these facts and traditions and work for same-ness, our work will not gain traction nor will it be helpful.

Instead of thinking of our work as trying to equate women and men in

every action or aspect, it is important to think of it as working to restore right relationships. The goal is for men and women to be equally valued, have the same chances to use their God-given gifts, and be able to fully enjoy their human rights.

This type of gender equality cannot be achieved simply by helping one woman improve her livelihood and income, nor can it be achieved by advancing groups of women at the expense of men. Instead, gender equality is achieved when men and women are working together to achieve a society where everyone is able to contribute and everyone is able to benefit.

This may occasionally mean treating men and women differently so that they can enjoy the same benefits. It might also mean advocating for a change in cultural or legal traditions that hinder women's rights and women's abilities to be leaders or make decisions.

Gender equality cannot be achieved without the willing participation and actions of men in these communities. World Renew aims to integrate gender justice into all of its programs.

Where to Find it:

As with other key World Renew documents, the Operational Gender Policy can be found on World Renew's staff intranet site known as "Corporate" in the "policies" section. This document will be presented to new World Renew staff during their orientation. It is important that current World Renew staff also review the document and familiarize themselves with it.

A few highlights:

- There are **five foundational principles** upon which the Operational Gender Policy is based. The first is that World Renew's gender policy and practice are rooted in our understanding from the Bible that men and women are created equally to live in partnership with each other.

- There are also **five programmatic principles** upon which the OGP is based. The first of which is that gender inequalities at each level of society are impacted by gender inequalities at other levels — requiring holistic interventions that involve individuals, households, communities, churches and public sectors.
- And there are **three organizational principles** that also provide the foundation of the policy. The first is that our actions as development and humanitarian agents may affect the human rights of the people we work with in positive and negative ways.
- There is an **implementation overview** in the Operational Gender Policy that suggests specific actions for lead consultants, team leaders, disaster response project managers, gender champions,

Delta team members, CORE team members, Human Resources staff, co-directors, the gender working group, and all other staff members.

- There are **five areas of commitment** to which World Renew has agreed to achieve specific outcomes within the next four years as part of the 2015-2019 strategic plan.
- There are **12 key terms** that are defined

For more information, please review the Operational Gender Policy on "Corporate" or talk with your team's Gender Champion or a member of the Gender Working Group. If you would like to participate in a training about the gender policy, please talk with Kris VanEngen.



Gender Equality in Action: A Story from Kenya

Recently, World Renew’s Davis Omanyo met with a group of men in a Kenyan community where World Renew supports a maternal/child health project. He shared this story:

The community is in a semi-arid area that receives very little rainfall. Water is scarce, and women in this community walk 15 to 20 kilometers in search of water, and consequently water is rationed.

In this community, World Renew is training 8,000 farmers in kitchen gardening and how to raise chickens and rabbits to help improve food production. World Renew is also working with 2,200 women of reproductive age to ensure that they get good nutrition and have nutritious food available to feed their babies as they learn about exclusive breastfeeding until the age of six months, and then appropriate and timely complementary feeding thereafter.

When we began this project, some women were struggling to nurse their children because they, themselves, did not have enough nutritious food to eat. We recognized that improving household nutrition would be key to improving child health.

After 10 months of project activities, however, we realized that some households were beginning to produce enough nutritious food to feed their families, but others were not—even though they were in the same environment. The key difference between the two groups was what was happening at the household level and whether or not men and women were working together.

When I took time to discuss the issue with the community’s men-folk, I heard a lot about the project’s impact. All of the men said, “We thank World Renew for opening our eyes.”

Then one of the men, Bwana Alfunse, continued. “The minute my wife came home with some chickens from World Renew and wire mesh for making a poultry house, I was challenged. I had no choice but to help her. Since there was no one to build the chicken house, I did it.”

Bwana went on to say that not only did his wife come home with chickens, but she had gained confidence based on her new knowledge and began to use that confidence to share her knowledge with him. He listened.

“She told me how to take care of her when she is pregnant and how to take care of our baby after delivery. This is education I had not received anywhere else,” he said.

Bwana’s wife also took the initiative to start a kitchen garden to grow vegetables to improve the family’s nutrition.



“My wife was determined to make sure that we had vegetables to eat,” Bwana said. “Because she created a vegetable garden out of an old sisal sack, we have been eating vegetables for the last four months.”

The other men in the more successful group also said that the project has

brought them closer to their wives than before. “We are now learning from our wives and appreciate it. We do not care what other men say about us—all we know is that we are now living a better life than before. I now help my wife collect water using my bicycle. It is a long distance, and for many years my wife has collected the

water and come home tired. Now we are a happy family.”

We did not intentionally create a focus on wife-husband relationships in this project. The focus arose out of the project and the village men are eager to support their wives because they see the way that this is improving their relationships and their overall well-being.

We thank God for these men and what they are doing to improve their family life. They have decided to become role models in their village, and they work with their wives and children to produce food for their families. They are planning to start a club in the village for men to support each other and help them understand the role that men can play in improving their family's life. They have requested training from World Renew to help them accomplish their goals.

For your Gender Toolkit

Every culture has its own expectations for how men and women should behave and what their roles should be. In order to be successful at working for gender justice, World Renew staff must consider the cultural context that they are working within and then adapt their actions and approaches appropriately. Mary Crickmore has put together some resources to help you analyze the local culture,

identify potential issues, and think about how to address them. You can find this “Contextual Analysis for Gender Justice in Countries” resource as well as other gender justice tools on the staff intranet site for learning, sharing and collaboration known as “The Commons.” It can be found in the Gender section.



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