

African Library and Information Associations and Institutions (AfLIA)



Gender Equality Policy

MAY, 2020

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 African Library and Information Associations and Institutions – AfLIA, is the African continental body of library and information associations and institutions. It actively pursues the interests of library and information associations, library and information services as well as librarians and information workers and provides a platform to discuss issues and further the cause of the library and information sector in Africa. AfLIA is an association characterized by institutional membership with a Governing Council which has the power to act on its behalf in accordance with the AfLIA Constitution. The day to day affairs of the Association is steered by a Secretariat, headed by an Executive Director.

Our commitment to gender equality is anchored on Ghana’s National Gender Policy (2015) and international agreements and declarations including: the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979), the Convention on the Right of the Child (1989), the Sustainable Development Goals (2015), the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008), the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights, reinforced by the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA).

The implementation guideline sets out mechanisms and minimum common standards for all Governing Council, Association Members, AfLIA Staff, Vendors, Consultants, Resource Persons and Mentees. Achieving gender equality is regarded by AfLIA as the attainment of human rights and a pre-requisite for sustainable development.

1.2 The overarching goal of this Policy is to mainstream gender equality concerns into the programs and projects of AfLIA at all levels of the organization to ensure that the human rights of Governing Council members, Association Members, AfLIA Staff, Vendors, Consultants, Resource Persons and Mentees are promoted and protected.

1.3 The Policy is aimed at:

- Outlining the commitment of AfLIA to gender equality;
- Promoting an organizational culture of gender-responsiveness;
- Clearly defining the incorporation of gender issues into programs and projects of AfLIA at all levels of the organization;
- Empowering women, girls, men and boys across all programs and projects of AfLIA thereby leaving no one behind;
- Ensuring greater consistency of gender principles, policies and practices across AfLIA and to provide an accountability framework in relation to gender equality, against which Governing Council members, Association Members,

AfLIA Staff, Vendors, Consultants, Resource Persons and Mentees can be accountable and against which the organization will audit itself.

1.4 The Policy is anchored on the following principles:

- Gender equality is central to the existence of the organization;
- The empowerment of women, girls, men and boys is central to AfLIA's mission;
- Governing Council members, Association Members, AfLIA Staff, Vendors, Consultants, Resource Persons and Mentees endorse gender equality through actions;
- Adequate resources are allocated to gender work;
- Continuous monitoring and evaluation of work against gender indicators;
- Adherence to the principle of gender equality between men and women, boys and girls in enjoying their rights, sharing of opportunities, benefits and contributions;
- Guarantee of fairness and equal treatment for all, including equal pay for work of equal value, recruitment, contracts, training, promotion, conditions of work, and provisions available to men as well as women to enable them to fulfill family responsibilities (maternity and parental/family leave).

2.0 Scope

2.1 The Policy outlines the general commitments, implementation instruments and common standards to guide AfLIA ensure that gender equality is fully integrated at all levels of work. It requires the Governing Council and AfLIA Secretariat to work in a concerted manner towards the goal of gender equality at all levels of work, as well as individual staff, vendors, consultants, resource persons and mentees to strengthen their own actions to ensure that the human rights of women, girls, men and boys are equally promoted and protected.

3.0 Gender Equality Policy Commitments

3.1 The Policy mainstreams gender equality concerns into the programs and projects of AfLIA at all levels of the organization to ensure that the human rights of Governing Council members, Association Members, AfLIA Staff, Vendors, Consultants, Resource Persons and Mentees are promoted and protected. AfLIA commits to:

- a. Create an enabling and stable work environment devoid of discrimination in whatever form against any gender;
- b. Create regular platforms for civil society engagement, especially among women organizations, for dialogue, consultations and harnessing women's indigenous knowledge to achieve sustainable gender equality;
- c. Develop a communication and popularization strategy to disseminate information on international human rights instruments;

- d. Active involvement of the male gender as allies in promoting gender equality;
- e. Promote gender equality as human right recognized nationally and internationally;
- f. Ensure that key policies, systems and practices (finance, budgeting, human resource management, recruitment, promotions, training, management and decision making) support gender equality;
- g. Continuous holding accountable Governing Council members, Association Members, AfLIA Staff, Vendors, Consultants, Resource Persons and Mentees to gender equality standards;
- h. Engage and coordinate with development partners, governments, funders and civil society organizations to promote gender equality;
- i. Mobilize resources for implementing the AfLIA Gender Equality Policy;
- j. Mobilize stakeholders for implementing the AfLIA Gender Equality Policy;
- k. Build the capacity of Governing Council members, Association Members, AfLIA Staff, Vendors, Consultants, Resource Persons and Mentees on gender mainstreaming.

4. 0 Implementation of Policy

AfLIA will implement, monitor and evaluate this policy according to standards in support of Gender Equality. Governing Council members, Association Members, AfLIA Staff, Vendors, Consultants, Resource Persons and Mentees will:

- Create work friendly environments that enable women and men to balance work in the workplace, taking into consideration the basic gender differences in their biological roles and needs;
- Include relevant and feasible gender sensitive indicators for every stage of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation;
- Provide technical assistance and resources to facilitate the implementation of the Gender Policy;
- Engage development partners and civil society organizations as important strategic partners for the attainment of women’s empowerment and gender equality;
- Provide a sensitization platform to advance the goals and objectives of AfLIA Gender Equality Policy;
- Mobilize sufficient fiscal resources to meet gender requirements and formulate staff work plans and budgets;
- Implement the AfLIA Gender Equality Policy by allocating resources to gender equality program goals, especially measures to enhance women’s participation and empowerment programs.

AfLIA will track and report bi-annually on gender balance in staffing and governance structures and implement specific strategies to continually address any imbalances in gender representation.

5.0 Review of Policy

AfLIA will annually report its progress with respect to the status of implementing the Gender Equality Policy. The annual summary report will be submitted to the Governing Council by the Executive Director for evaluation and assessment in accordance with the dictates of the Policy. A review of the Gender Equality Policy will be initiated by the Secretariat every four years in sync with two terms of leadership for members of the Governing Council. The Governing Council will review and approve the Policy before implementation.

6.0 Gender Definition for AfLIA

6.1 Gender

The socially and culturally constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that society ascribes to men and women, boys and girls which give them unequal value, opportunities and life chances. It determines the roles, power and resources for males and females in any society. It also refers to typically masculine and feminine characteristics, abilities and expectations about how women and men should behave in society.

6.2 Gender Equality

Gender equality is a basic human right that requires that men, women, boys and girls are treated equally with respect to legislation, life chances, opportunities, policies, resources, rewards and rights, among many others. Gender equality is a core development objective in its own right and critical in respect of the attainment of sustainable development. Greater gender equality can enhance productivity, improve development outcomes for the next generation, and makes institutions more representative.

6.3 Gender Equality Programming

Gender equality programming is an umbrella term encompassing all strategies to achieve gender equality and includes gender mainstreaming, gender analysis, promotion and protection of human rights, empowerment of women and girls, and gender balance in the workplace.

6.4 Gender Equity

Gender equity means fairness of treatment for women and men, boys and girls according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different but considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities.

In the development context, a gender equity goal often requires built-in measures to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages of women. In other words, the concept recognizes that power relations between men and women, boys and girls are unequal and that such inequalities should be addressed.

6.5 Gender Mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming refers to a goal-oriented process that recognizes that most institutions consciously and unconsciously serve the interests of men and encourages institutions to adopt a gender perspective in transforming themselves. It is a strategy for achieving gender equality. The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations defined gender mainstreaming as the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. Mainstreaming gender for AfLIA means applying gender analysis to all aspects of its work, including advocacy and communications.

6.6 Gender Policy

An organization's policy that integrates gender in the mainstream of its program and activities, where the policy also designates institutional arrangements, responsibilities, management functions and tools/guidelines for mainstreaming.