



## AHDS' Gender Policy

"Any kind of discrimination and privilege between Afghan citizens is prohibited, Afghan citizens, both male and female, have equal rights and obligations in front of the law" (Article 22 of the Afghan Constitution).

### Definition

Gender refers to the different roles, behaviors and responsibilities of men and women, which are created by society and culture and change over time.

Afghan Health and Development Services is committed to gender integration in all areas of the organization's activities. The successful implementation of this policy requires active cooperation of all employees in the main office and provincial offices. High-ranked employees are responsible to ensure the implementation of this policy in practice.

### Goal

Gender mainstreaming in standard operations and activities of AHDS should meet the following objectives:

1. Creating a suitable working environment for women and men based on justice, equality and free from any gender discrimination.
2. Examining the different needs of men and women fairly in all programs and projects.
3. Providing balanced services for both men and women.

### Principles

1. No gender discrimination.
2. Equal employment opportunities for women and men.
3. Maintain a healthy work environment that does not contain any type of harassment, sexual harassment or violence.
4. Incentive packages should be considered for female employees in areas that face a shortage of female professional personnel.
5. The issue of gender and special needs of women should be considered in all stages of project design, management and evaluation.

### Procedure

1. Consider presence of members from both sexes, men and women in the composition of the board of directors of AHDS.

2. Give priority to programs in which services are provided for women, especially capacity building projects.
3. Inform employees and volunteers about gender and women's rights.
4. At the time of hiring and evaluating women, at least one member of the evaluation team must be a woman.
5. If two applicants, one male and one female, have the same qualification, priority will be given to the female applicant.
6. Employment of women is not rejected due to having children and pregnancy.
7. When men and women do equal work, they are given equal wages.
8. Equal opportunity for capacity improvement is provided for male and female employees.
9. In addition to other leaves, women are entitled to 3 months paid maternity leave.
10. If the baby dies during or after birth, the maternity leave in these circumstances is a maximum of 40 days, considering the mental and physical conditions of the mother.
11. Provide a safe working environment free from any prejudice for male and female employees.
12. Any type of sexual harassment is prohibited in the workplace. Any sexual harassment will cause the offender to be dismissed, and in severe cases, the accused will be handed over to police.
13. For the female employees who have infants, if there is no kindergarten, a private space will be provided for breastfeeding.
14. Specify separate washroom and prayer place for women.
15. If there are five children under the age of five belonging to female employees, the institution is obliged to establish a kindergarten at the workplace.
16. The following incentives are considered for female employees in remote areas that have a direct impact on providing services to women and empowering them:
  - a. Higher salary in case of budgetary possibilities.
  - b. Trying to hire their husband or mahram according to his competency.
  - c. Paying the expenses of her Mahrams during official trips inside Afghanistan.
  - d. Providing a place of residence if her family is not with her.

This policy was approved by the executive board on 11 Mar 2014 and approved by the board of directors of the institution on 1 May 2014.