



CISLAC GENDER POLICY

1.0 Gendre

Many societies, historically and culturally, have placed one gender (most commonly women) at a disadvantage by limiting opportunities for its members to achieve equal social, economic, and political status. By working counter to this injustice and inequitable treatment, civil societies that involve and empower both women and men are the most effective in promoting democracy and maximizing sustainable economic development.

CISLAC, an organization committed to developing civil societies, works at local, regional, and national levels in the Country. At each level, the participation of women and men is vital to ensuring CISLAC programs achieve their goals, and, ultimately, CISLAC's mission. Including women in the program design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation stages of development assistance increases the likelihood that social and economic needs will be addressed and empowers the whole community with a sense of ownership and influence. CISLAC believes the full participation of women is essential if development initiatives are to have a sustainable impact at the community, regional, and national levels.

1.1 Management Objectives

To incorporate fully CISLAC's commitment to strive for gender equality; CISLAC must address similar issues within its organizational structure. Women and men must be fully represented in all organization positions, including senior management positions and the decision-making process. CISLAC is committed to maintaining equitable representation of both genders throughout its staffing. This not only ensures a representative perspective on program direction but demonstrates to our beneficiaries and supporters that CISLAC, as an institution, fundamentally believes in the empowerment of women.

1.2 Practices

CISLAC's gender policy, developed with the participation of the Executive Director as well as CISLAC's staff, affirms this commitment. In its management, CISLAC will strive to—

- Promote equitable participation of women at all levels of decision-making
- Recruit and retain qualified women to maintain gender balance in staffing all positions, including senior management and Executive Director positions
- Educate all staff on the gender policy and provide training to increase awareness and knowledge of gender issues in staffing and programming
- Promote non-discriminatory working relationships and respect for gender in work and management styles
- Develop guidelines and procedures for implementing and monitoring the gender policy in programming and management, with measurable objectives, targets, and timetables, and integrate them into CISLAC's organizational strategic plan
- Provide the resources necessary to implement this policy

- Hold senior staff responsible and accountable for the implementation of the policy and appoint a staff person to periodically assess progress to ensure its implementation of the gender policy.
- Develop and implement gender policies that are appropriate and consistent with CISLAC's policy.

1.3 Gender Program Objectives

Strengthening legislature and making legislature accessible to the electorate is the main focus of CISLAC's program objective. The empowerment of women, particularly through advocacy and leadership skills, is fundamental to achieving our objective. Men play significant roles in life as well, and their acceptance and commitment to affording women to play a more substantial role is crucial.

Emphasis on women is found throughout CISLAC's programs. CISLAC's challenge is to deepen the scope of these programs to better understand their impact on women, and their implications for the overall development of the nation. CISLAC's funding limits the extent to which we are able to analyze gender issues in each project unless such analysis is specifically mandated. This does not lessen CISLAC's commitment, but challenges CISLAC to make equitable participation of women and analysis of that participation not simply as add on but an integral part of program design.

CISLAC will continue to focus on the needs of women in project design and to strive for equal participation of men and women within the social, economic, political, and time constraints.

To achieve this end, CISLAC programs must —

- Increase the participation of women in decision-making forums
- Increase the access to and control by women over the resources at their disposal
- Ensure that women and women's organizations are increasingly included in the design, implementation, and monitoring of activities
- Promote the full participation and empowerment of women in existing and future programs
- Proactively provide training and other capacity development opportunities for women in all activities, while striving to achieve equal participation of men and women
- Improve CISLAC's ability to analyse the impact of program activities on women and the community at large
- Incorporate gender analysis and needs assessment, when possible, in program planning, project design, and evaluation
- Provide training in gender analysis, as needed, to CISLAC staff and NGO partners
- Develop indicators by which program impact can be evaluated and determine to what degree women participate in program activities
- Use data on gender impact to design future programs to further address issues involving the role of women
- Identify or develop tools to enhance CISLAC's ability to analyse gender data.