

	Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Policy	
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

At Our Rainbow House, we recognise that inequality and exclusion—based on gender, disability, age, and other intersecting factors—are key barriers to achieving human rights, social justice, and our organisational mission. This policy commits Our Rainbow House to integrating gender equality, disability inclusion, and broader social inclusion into all aspects of our work, including programs, governance, fundraising, communications, and human resource management.

We recognise that inclusion is not simply about access or participation, but about equity, dignity, and actively addressing the power dynamics that perpetuate marginalisation.

2.0 REFERENCE

Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)

Anti-Discrimination Act 1991

Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)

Education Act No. 23 of 2011 - Zambia

Gender Equity and Equality Act No. 22 of 2015 - Zambia

Persons with Disabilities Act No. 6 of 2012 - Zambia

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

Our Rainbow House Anti -Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy and Procedure

Our Rainbow House Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure

Our Rainbow House Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

Our Rainbow House Whistleblower Policy and Procedure

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Disability refers to the interaction between a person's impairment and attitudinal, legal, physical or communicative barriers that restrict their full participation in society.

Gender includes women and girls, men and boys, and people of diverse gender identities and expressions beyond the binary.

Social Inclusion is the process of improving the terms for individuals and groups to take part in society, particularly those disadvantaged due to age, gender, disability, ethnicity, economic status or other factors.

Representative shall mean any board member, staff member, volunteer, student placement, apprentice, contractor, sub-contractor or any other person who is caused to undertake tasks or duties on behalf of Our Rainbow House.

Stakeholder means a person or group having an interest in the performance or success of our organisation.

4.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- all representatives of Our Rainbow House.
- all operational and programmatic aspects of Our Rainbow House.

5.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Policy is to:

- promote equal realisation of dignity and rights for all people, regardless of gender, disability, age, or other identities.
- integrate GEDSI principles into all organisational functions, including programming, staffing, leadership, fundraising, and partnerships.
- strengthen Our Rainbow House's integrity, credibility, and accountability with stakeholders, including donors, communities, and partners.
- guide inclusive, rights-based, and empowering practices across our development and humanitarian activities.

6.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

Board of Directors

- Approve and endorse the GEDSI Policy as part of our organisation's governance.
- Provide oversight and accountability to ensure GEDSI is reflected in the strategic direction, programs, and partnerships.
- Promote a culture of inclusion, safety, and respect at the highest level.

Australian Staff

- Lead the integration of GEDSI principles across all organisational operations, including funding, communications, administration, and project support.
- Ensure recruitment, training, and HR practices uphold inclusive and non-discriminatory principles.
- Collaborate with Zambian staff to support the implementation of GEDSI approaches in programs and organisational culture.
- Support capacity building on GEDSI through training and knowledge sharing.

Zambian Staff

- Embed GEDSI principles in day-to-day program delivery, ensuring all activities are inclusive and accessible.
- Actively promote the participation of marginalised groups in community engagement and project decision-making.
- Identify and address barriers to inclusion in local program contexts, including physical, cultural, attitudinal, and legal obstacles.
- Provide regular feedback to the Australian team and Board about challenges, successes, and opportunities to strengthen GEDSI in practice.

All Representatives

- Demonstrate respectful, inclusive behaviour in all interactions with colleagues, community members, and stakeholders.
- Attend relevant GEDSI training as provided and engage in continuous learning.
- Report any instances of discrimination, harassment, or exclusion based on gender, disability, or other factors, using the procedures outlined in the *Our Rainbow House Anti -Bullying, Harassment*

7.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Our Rainbow House is committed to human rights for everyone, regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, indigeneity, disability, age, displacement, caste, gender, gender identity, sexuality, sexual orientation, poverty, class or socio-economic status. We are also committed to the pursuit of racial justice and the inclusion and representation of those who are in vulnerable positions or experiencing marginalization and exclusion – temporarily or ongoing.

Our Rainbow House commits to:

Inclusive Programming and Decision-Making

- Actively involving people with disability and people of all genders and ages in decision-making at every stage of the program cycle.
- Designing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating inclusive programs that consider gender, disability, age, and other social factors.
- Allocating sufficient resources to initiatives that focus on inclusion and representation of marginalised people.
- Identifying and addressing barriers (physical, cultural, attitudinal, legal, communicative) that hinder full participation.

Organisational Culture and Practices

- Creating a safe, inclusive, and adaptable work environment, including adjustments for representatives with disability.
- Promoting gender equality, disability inclusion, and social inclusion in leadership, management, recruitment, training, and organisational development.
- Ensuring all staff are trained in GEDSI principles and held accountable for inclusive practice.

Challenging Discrimination and Inequality

- Confronting discrimination and stereotypes based on gender, disability, age, and other identities—including gender-based violence and systemic marginalisation.
- Promoting social norm change and fostering inclusive attitudes through advocacy, programming, and community engagement.

Accountability and Continuous Learning

- Monitoring and evaluating the impact of our work on gender equality, disability inclusion, and social inclusion, and using findings for learning and improvement.
- Building partnerships that reflect our commitment to GEDSI.
- Ensuring complaints related to harassment or discrimination are addressed through the *Our Rainbow House Anti-Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy and Procedure*.

Commitment to Intersectionality

We acknowledge that individuals experience inequality in diverse and intersecting ways—for example, women and girls with disabilities may face multiple forms of discrimination. Our GEDSI approach is intersectional, recognising that meaningful inclusion must account for these overlapping identities and power dynamics.

8.0 REVIEW

Date of next review: 19/05/2027