



JESUIT WORLDWIDE LEARNING

HIGHER EDUCATION AT THE MARGINS

Learning Together to Transform the World

Jesuit Worldwide Learning – Higher Education at the Margins Gender Equality and Inclusion Policy



Activities at Jesuit Worldwide Learning (JWL) are founded on gender equality, recognizing the equal work of all people. JWL's conducts its activities in ways that allow each individual to learn on the basis of their personal capacities, independently of irrelevant distinction of gender, ethnic or social background, religion or other belief, sexual orientation, disability or age.

Gender equality means that women and men shall have the same opportunities, rights and obligations across all areas of life. It embodies an even distribution of power and influence, equal opportunities for economic independence and access to education as well as equal conditions regarding employment and opportunities for development. Additionally, gender equality means shared responsibility for family, children and home including the absence of gender-based related harassment.

JWL commits to ensuring gender equality is fully incorporated into all of its work and program activities as not only a universal right but also as a means to overcome poverty and social injustice. JWL fosters a culture that embraces and exemplifies its commitment to gender equality and inclusion. **This Policy applies to all work and programs throughout JWL's organization, including all staff** (defined as but not limited to employees, temporary staff, volunteers, tutors, teachers, community learning center coordinators, all third-party contractors and freelancers).

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear vision, direction, common and consistent language to operationalize and communicate our commitment to the advancement of gender equality, women's rights and inclusion for all students and staff.

Gender inequality and exclusion vary in their expression from place to place but, in all countries where we JWL is located, we encounter different forms of gender-based discrimination, gender stereotyping and an unequal distribution of influence between women and men as well as exclusion based on multiple factors. These factors include identities such as race, class, ethnicity, ability, language, sexual orientation, and gender identity, among others. Gender inequality intensifies the negative effects of all other forms of exclusion and as a result, exclusion is different and often worse for girls and women. We recognize that women often face the most significant barriers to exercising their human rights, which is why gender equality and rights remain a distinct priority of JWL's mission.

Achieving gender equality, promoting gender justice and fostering an inclusive society are core objectives of our vision and mission. Our mission is inspired by the Human Rights Framework and its globally agreed principles, international lawⁱ and is based in particular on the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) as well as the objectives set out in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Attention to gender-specific rights abuses is well-defined in the SDGs, as evidenced by Goal #5 that calls on the world to "achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls" and Goal #10 aimed to reduce inequality within and among countries.

Commitments

Gender is a cross-cutting issue and the implementation of this Policy requires the full commitment, participation and contribution of everyone associated with JWL. It is JWL's commitment to integrate gender perspectives in its work, development and budget planning. Action plans will be set to monitor progress. The foundation of JWL commitments are:

1. JWL's Founding Board, Global Advisor Board and Global Leadership Team shall work proactively to achieve gender equality within the organization and the promotion of gender equality in its mission and learning path activities.
2. To the student population and ensures that the admission process through graduation will be inclusive of all communities, genders, and religions.
3. Ensure that gender perspectives and gender-conscious pedagogy shall have a prominent place across all JWL programs.
4. Actively identify potential support mechanisms and programs that address gender equality and provide women in marginalized communities greater access to higher education.
5. Ensure timely evaluations and reviews of its programs are participatory and assesses the progress towards gender equality, with best practices documented and shared for global-learning across JWL's community learning centers worldwide.
6. Gender equality aspects shall always be considered in all human resources policies ensuring that all operating plans, policies and work descriptions reflect JWL's dedication to actively focus gender equality.
7. Recruit staff (defined as but not limited to employees, temporary staff, volunteers, tutors, teachers, community learning center coordinators, all third-party contractors and freelancers) that are committed to gender equality and diversity
8. Gender quality aspects shall further be considered in decisions regarding research strategy and planning.
9. Form partnerships with like minded organizations and local partners to collaborate in achieving shared goals of bringing higher education to marginalized communities by addressing gender equality.
10. Communicate actively to donors, partners and the public on JWL's performance related activities that specifically address gender equality within its educational programs.
11. Ensure that all forms of communications both internal and external (marketing, instructional design, fundraising and advocacy) respect and uphold JWL's commitment to social justice and equality, in particular using inclusive and positive language and avoiding stereotypes, especially those based on ethnicity and gender.

Objectives

The objective of this policy is to contribute to improving the education of women by providing a variety of learning paths that give due attention to gender considerations and promote equity and equality. JWL will analyze and address gender issues in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programs, policies and research in order to attain a gender balance across all its learning programs. To achieve this, JWL will formulate measures to ensure that gender-specific vulnerabilities and capacities are systematically identified and addressed.

With it, JWL will continue to strengthen its efforts to promote gender equality throughout the organization with its learning programs, and thereby increase its integrity and credibility amongst donors, partners and staff as a leading advocate.

Policy Terms

This policy is complementary to JWL's other important policies that address equity, equality and human rights of each individual. Those are –

- Safeguarding Policy for the Protection of Children and Adults at Risk
- Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)
- Code of Conduct
- Media Relations and Social Media Policy

As with all JWL policies, this policy will be implemented in the context of the local legal environment where JWL works.

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ⁱ Relevant International Agreements include: [Convention on the Political Rights of Women \(1954\)](#); [Convention to the Consent of Marriage, Minimum Age of Marriage, and Registration of Marriages \(1964\)](#); [Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict \(1974\)](#); [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women \(CEDAW\) \(1979\)](#); [Declaration of the Elimination of Violence against Women \(1993\)](#); [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action \(PFA\) \(1995\)](#); [CEDAW's Optional Protocol](#); [Maputo Protocol – Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa \(2003\)](#); [Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence \(Istanbul Convention\) \(2014\)](#)

