



# EASY-TO-READ GUIDE ON SOMALIA

Draft National

## Gender Policy



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**Gender responsiveness** is planning and implementing activities that meet identified gender issues/concerns that promote gender equality

**Gender transformation** It describes a situation where women and men change their way of thinking from patriarchal towards a gender equality perspective.

**Gender mainstreaming** It is the process of integrating a gender equality perspective into the development process at all stages and levels. Gender mainstreaming is a strategy for the achievement of gender equality.

**Gender gap** is a difference in any aspect of the socio economic status of women and men, arising from the different social roles ascribed by society for women and men

**Gender blind** is the situation where potentially differential policy impacts on men and women are ignored

**Gender awareness** is the recognition of the differences in the interests, needs and roles of women and men in society and how they result in differences in power, status and privilege. It also means the ability to identify problems arising from gender inequity and discrimination

**Gender budget** is a budgeting method that analyses the incidence of budgets on men and women and girls and boys. Gender budgeting entails analyses of revenue and expenditure impacts so as to avoid or correct gender imbalances.



# Preface

Throughout the over two decades of civil war in Somalia, women witnessed insurmountable gender inequalities arising from culturally discriminating practices, lack of institutional gender management frameworks, meagre intervention opportunities and lack of gender policy. The adoption of this draft gender policy for Somalia is a reflection of how the current leadership in Somalia is committed to taking actions that will bring about more equal gender relations.

This draft gender policy recognises that even though there are many challenges towards achieving a working gender policy, the establishment of a functioning government and improving security situation now gives opportunities to actualise a gender policy. Taking cognizance of the evolving gender and security situation in Somalia, this gender policy is guided by the principles of gender equality, good governance and democracy, rule of law and bridging gender gaps. At the same time, this policy seeks to promote gender equality and sustainable human development in Somalia by ensuring that equal value is placed on the contributions of women and men as partners in post conflict reconstruction processes and national development.



The continuously improving security situation in Somalia provides opportunity for employment of relevant strategies with clear objectives aimed at actualising the gender policy priority in areas of health, political participation, education and economic empowerment. The implementation of this policy lies with the Federal Government of Somalia through its ministries, particularly the Directorate of Women and Social Affairs under the Ministry of Human Development and Public Services. This policy is set to run for duration of ten (10) years with periodic reviews, it has self-regulated monitoring and evaluation framework. Indeed this policy gives the Somalia people, the opportunity to examine, and implement gender related programmes that are in tandem with neighbouring countries and adopt and ratify international instruments and conventions on gender.



**Gender division of labour** relates to the different types of work that men and women do as a consequence of their socialization and accepted patterns of work within a given context.

**Gender equity** is the process of being fair to women and men. To ensure fairness, measures must often be available to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from otherwise operating on a “level playing field.”

**Gender equality** is the absence of discrimination on the basis of a person’s sex in authority, opportunities, allocation of resources or benefits and access to services. It is therefore, the equal valuing by society of both the similarities and differences between men and women, and the varying roles that they play.

**Gender analysis** is the process of examining roles and responsibilities or any other situation in regard to women and men; boys and girls, with a view to identifying gaps, raising concern and addressing them; investigating and identifying specific needs of girls and boys, women and men for policy and programme development and implementation.

**Gender issue** is a point of gender inequality that is undesirable and therefore an intervention. It results from some form of gender discrimination or oppression. A gender issue arises when there is inequality, inequity or differentiated treatment of an individual or a group of people purely on the basis of social expectations and attributes of gender. Gender issues are sometimes called gender concerns.

**Gender practical needs / interests** are needs related to the roles of reproduction, production and community work of men and women which, when met, do not necessarily change their relative position/condition in society, which arise from the gender roles.

**Gender strategic needs / interests** Refers to higher level of needs of women and men which, when met, help change their status in society. Examples of such needs are decision making and access to information.

**Gender sensitivity** This is the ability to perceive existing gender differences, issues and equalities, and incorporate these into strategies and actions.



# Glossary

## Basic Gender concepts

**Gender** This refers to the socially and culturally constructed differences between men and women; as distinct from sex which refers to their biological differences. The social constructs vary across cultures and time.

**Sex** refers to the biological and physiological differences between males and females as determined by nature. It is God-given, universal and non-changeable.

**Social construction of gender** Refers to how society values and allocates duties, roles and responsibilities to women, men, girls and boys. This differential valuing creates the gender division of labour and determines differences in access to benefits and decision making which in turn influences power relations and reinforces gender roles. This is done at various levels of gender socialization including family, religion, education, culture, peers and the media.

**Gender and culture:** Culture refers to people's way of life, systems of beliefs, values, rituals, interaction patterns and socialization which determine attributes, roles, responsibilities, and expectations in a society. It determines what the society wants and expects from women, men, girls and boys. It defines the status and power relations between women, men, girls and boys.

**Gender roles** are reflected in activities ascribed to men and women on the basis of perceived differences which are reinforced through the gender division of labour. This arises from the socialization of individuals from the earliest stages of life through identification with specific characteristics associated with being male or female.

**Gender relations** refer to social relationships between men and women within a specified time and place. These social relationships explain the differences in power relations between the sexes.

**Gender stereotypes** are structured sets of beliefs about the personal attributes, behaviors, roles of a specific social group. Gender stereotypes are biased and often exaggerated images of women and men which are used repeatedly in everyday life.



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## 7.0 Time Frame for the Somali National Gender Strategy

- The time frame shall be 2014 – 2024
- Midterm Evaluation 2019
- Terminal Evaluation 2025

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## 6.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

Gender issues cut across all development sectors and levels. Therefore assessment of progress, outcomes and impact of interventions to address gender inequality is a shared responsibility for all development actors and agents. However, the Gender Commission envisioned in this policy shall be responsible for coordinating M&E of the National Gender Policy within the overall government monitoring systems and frameworks. The Commission will act as a catalyst to other sectors on gender responsive monitoring. Process and output indicators shall be periodically designed and reviewed within the Action Plan for the implementation of this policy.

### 6.1 Overall evaluation indicators

The indicators outlined below shall inform the monitoring and evaluation of this policy :

- Percentage / proportion of men and women in government’s institutions, private sector, Civil Society Organisations.
- Number of gender sensitive policies, guidelines, protocols, action plans, standard procedures, regulations formulated and implemented in all government institutions, private sector and CSOs.
- Number of sensitization campaigns/ materials carried out and developed on gender equality and men and women’s participation.
- Number of traditional leaders supportive of gender equality and women’s participation.
- Number of gender related reforms introduced in all the sectors.
- The percentage / proportion of women in security sector institutions and justice system.
- Number of sectors with sex disaggregated data .
- Numbers of gender units in public and private institutions.
- Level of budget allocation for gender initiatives in all sectors.
- Functioning and Independent Human Rights Commission in place.
- Level and nature of reporting on women in the media.
- Number of media that are gender sensitive and incorporates gender perspectives in their reporting and commenting

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# 1.0 BACKGROUND TO GENDER POLICY IN SOMALIA

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

This National Gender Policy is developed at a time when Somalia is emerging from over two decades of destructive civil war that has destroyed social, political and economic structures of the country. The conflict has impacted both men and women differently. For instance, both women and men have lost state protection, lost loved ones, lost livelihoods and access to social services.

It is worth noting that the conflict has emasculated Somali men and can no longer discharge their responsibilities as expected by their society. However, Somali women were disproportionately affected by the conflict. They have borne the brunt of the conflict. Unlike men, women have encountered gender-based violence. Despite the negative impacts of the conflict, Somali women became the primary income providers for their families and resumed new roles and responsibilities to maintain the basic survival of their families. Yet, women are marginalized from the decision-making processes.

The conflict has eroded some of the gains made in education, health care and employment prior to civil war and perpetuated gender inequality. Addressing gender inequality is crucial for recovery, sustainable peace and development. The recent developments in Somalia such as security improvement, new political dispensation, international recognition and support offer opportunities for political, social and economic transformation. This policy formulation comes at a timely moment. It will provide guidance for gender sensitive programming in the areas of economic empowerment, education, health and governance and political participation.



# 5.0 Institutional Framework for the Implementation of the Somalia National Gender policy

Institution	Roles and Responsibility
<b>Education</b>	
Parliament	Legislate on the Education Bill
Directorate of Education	Designing and implementing programmes to improve girls and boys access to education
Directorate of Gender and Social Affairs	Promote public awareness acceptance equal opportunity and gender equality and treatment in employment and occupation
Directorate of Education	Mainstream gender into primary, secondary and tertiary syllabus
<b>Economic Empowerment</b>	
Ministry of Finance & Planning/Directorate of Gender and Social Affairs	Mobilize, allocate and release resources for gender mainstreaming activities Monetize the contribution of the care/domestic economic of women and men contribution in national accounts Undertake gender audit of sector budget Ensure that growth and investment politics befits both women and men
<b>Health</b>	
Directorate of Health/Directorate of Gender and Social Affairs	Establish appropriate mechanism for provision of health services for all Design framework suitable for reproductive health promotion and mitigation of mother & child mortality
<b>Political Participation</b>	
Parliament, Ministry of justice and Directorate of Gender and Social Affairs	Enforcement of legislated gender sensitive laws Establish appropriate mechanism to monitor gender equality and equal opportunity Ensure all legislation is free from gender based discrimination Create conducive conditions for the implementation of policy Ensure a just a peaceful environment where men and women live dignified in a harmonious lives.



## 4.4 Gender and Political Participation

This Gender Policy defines political participation as an inclusive process where men and women as citizens have the space to affect and influence decision making at all levels, and having the right to political electoral and governance processes.

### Strategies for implementation

**The following strategies shall be used to achieve increased political participation for both women and men, including those living with disabilities at all levels :**

- Developing strategies to promote equal political participation of women and men.
- Supporting and safeguarding the promotion of national policies that guarantees women's quota in all government and private institutions.
- Promoting gender sensitization for traditional leaders on the importance of women's participation at all levels of leadership.
- Stipulating guidelines for strengthening security and justice institutions to promote gender equality.
- Supporting the initiative to enhance institutional capacity of the Independent Human Rights Commission.
- Developing strategies that strengthen government's ability to deliver equal access to social services to men, women, boys and girls.
- Facilitating capacity building for legislators to enact gender responsive laws.
- Promoting capacity-building for Somali media on gender sensitive reporting.



## 1.2 LEGAL CONTEXT

The Provisional Federal Constitution of Somalia provides equal rights to both men and women<sup>1</sup>. However, there are no mechanisms available to actualize the various equality provisions in the Constitution.

It is imperative that the Somali Federal Government accedes to and domesticates various regional and international gender instruments and conventions such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), African Charter on Human and People's Rights Protocol (ACHPR), Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women In Africa 2003 (The Maputo Protocol), The Solemn Declaration on gender Equity in Africa, (SDGEA), Protocol on the Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children, the Beijing Platform for Action, UN Resolution 1325 and 1820, and other relevant gender-specific international and regional Resolutions, Instruments and Conventions.

## 1.3 DATA

Credible data on gender are non-existent in Somalia. Thus, it is paramount to establish mechanisms that can collect credible sex disaggregated data in rural and urban areas. Such data will assist policy-makers to understand the specific gender issues and concerns and design gender sensitive policies and programs to address those issues.



## 2.0 GOAL, PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### 2.1 Goal of the National Gender Policy

The goal of this Policy is to promote gender equality and sustainable human development in Somalia by ensuring that equal value is placed on the contributions of women and men as equal partners in post conflict reconstruction processes and national development.

### 2.2 Purpose of the National Gender Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish a framework to guide the process of developing legislations, policy formulations implementation and programmes that will promote equal rights and opportunities for women and men in all spheres of life.

### 2.3 Objectives of the National Gender Policy

**This gender policy seeks to:**

- Eliminate all forms of gender discrimination from Somali society
- Reduce gender inequalities between women and men; boys and girls to achieve sustainable livelihoods
- Advocate for and promote understanding of human rights of women and men.
- Increase women's participation in decision-making processes at all levels.
- Provide sets of guidelines for concrete strategies and actions to empower women and men, girls and boys.
- Hold government accountable to its commitment to gender equality, and;
- Promote positive societal beliefs, attitudes and behavioural change pertinent to achieving gender equality.



- Facilitating the creation of incentives and welfare measures for the motivation and retention of healthcare workers.
- Improving equal access to HIV/AIDS information for prevention, treatment and care for women and men living with HIV/AIDS.
- Improving services for the management of cases of GBV.
- Promoting the rights of women and men, boys and girls with disabilities and ensuring that all those in need of rehabilitation have access to the necessary services.

### 4.3 Gender and Education

This is the delivery and transfer of skills, knowledge and information

#### Strategies for implementation

**The following strategies shall be used to achieve education for both women and men, including those living with disabilities, at all levels :**

- Designing and implementing programmes to improve girls and boys access to primary education, laying emphasis on enrolment and retention of girls in school.
- Promoting the sensitization of equal rights of boys and girls to free and compulsory primary education.
- Providing guidelines for creation of conducive teaching/learning environment to guarantee quality education for all.
- Facilitating the development and promotion of standard gender-sensitive national curriculum that includes Women, Peace and Security education.
- Establishing mechanisms for access to formal and non-formal education for women and men.
- Building schools and care centres for girls and boys including those with disabilities.



## 4.2 Gender and Health

Health is the state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (WHO)

### Strategies for implementation

**The following strategies shall be used to achieve quality primary health care services for women and men, girls and boys including those living with disabilities, at all levels :**

- Finalising, adopting and operationalizing a gender-sensitive National Health Policy
- Facilitating access to primary health-care service for all.
- Training more health-care staff, including providing scholarships for health related courses.
- Promoting sensitization and provision of reproductive health services for youth, women and men including those with disabilities.
- Establishing more healthcare infrastructure with the appropriate equipment and supplies in both rural and urban areas.
- Establishing strategies to eradicate negative cultural practices such as female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/FGC) and child marriage and other harmful practices.
- Outlining strategies to promote proper nutrition at the National and community levels.
- Reviewing on a regular basis health norms and standards to evaluate and assess their gender sensitivity
- Advocating and promoting gender awareness amongst healthcare policy makers and healthcare providers to mainstream gender concerns in both planning and implementation of healthcare services.
- Promoting reduction of maternal child mortality rate country wide by expanding maternal and child healthcare service.



## 2.4 Guiding Principles of National Gender Policy

This National Gender policy will be guided by the values and principles stipulated in the Islamic Sharia Law and Somalia Provisional Federal Constitution, including:

### Gender Equality

Ensure adherence to the principle of gender equality between women and men, girls and boys in enjoying their rights, equal access to opportunities, benefits and other constitutional rights.

### Good Governance and Democracy

The tenets of accountability, transparency, integrity and gender inclusivity shall be observed in all planning and implementation processes.

### Rule of law

There shall be strict observation of the provisions of the Federal Constitution and laws of Somalia to ensure gender equity, equal opportunities and benefits for women and men, boys and girls.

### Bridging the Gender Gaps

Bridging gender gaps in the various development sectors as enshrined in the Sharia Law as a way of engendering Affirmative Action.



### 3.0 STRATEGIES FOR POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

To effectively achieve the goal and objectives of this policy, the following strategies will be applied:

- Incorporating gender education in the school curriculum.
- Creating awareness and sensitization on gender issues through media, disseminate a simpler version of the policy to increase gender awareness.
- Establishing a Gender Commission for coordination and oversight.
- Developing a gender sensitive monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanism for all sectors to periodically report to the oversight institution.
- Establishing Gender Focal Points in all sectors for effective implementation of gender programmes.
- Institutionalising periodic stakeholders' fora to facilitate consultations, reviews and report on progress on the policy implementation.
- Developing guidelines for Gender Budgeting
- Undertaking research and documentation incorporating gender disaggregated data to inform policy and gender programming.
- Acceding to and domesticating regional and international conventions, protocols and instruments which enhance gender and development.



### 4.0 PRIORITY AREAS

The priority interventions areas are arranged into four thematic areas; economic empowerment, health, education and gender and political participation. Responsibility for undertaking these interventions shall lie with government ministries, directorates and agencies, local governments, private sector and civil society.

#### 4.1 Gender and Economic Empowerment

##### *Strategies for implementation*

The following strategies shall be used to achieve the economic empowerment of both women and men, including those living with disabilities, at all levels :

- Increasing the representation of women to a “critical mass” in the National Chamber of Commerce to address the concerns of women entrepreneurs.
- Establishing a Special Sharia-compliant Fund accessible to women.
- Developing a mechanism for identifying and addressing the economic needs of rural women and men.
- Creating opportunities in rural areas to improve the economic status of rural women and men as a means of minimising rural-urban migration.
- Establishing quota for women in employment especially at the decision-making and high management levels in both public and private sectors.
- Conducting periodic employment audit to determine the numbers of men and women employed in public and private sectors at different levels.
- Establishing vocational, entrepreneurial and skills enhancement programmes and trainings for women and men including those with disabilities.