



MOTHERS AND MAGINALISED ADVOCACY CENTRE

GENDER POLICY

Gender

While 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, MAMA Centre works to ensure empowerment and autonomy of women and the improvement of their political, socio-economic and health status and self-sufficiency towards achieving inclusive and sustainable development.

MAMA Centre is 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 MAMA Centre programs achieve their goals, and, ultimately, MAMA Centre's mission. Including women in the program design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages of development assistance not only increases the likelihood that social and economic needs will be addressed, but also empowers the whole community with a sense of ownership and influence. The Centre believes the full participation of women is essential if development initiatives are to have sustainable impact at the community, regional and national levels.

1.1 Management Objectives

To incorporate fully MAMA Centre's commitment to strive for gender equality; MAMA Centre must address similar issues within its own organizational structure. Women and men must be fully represented in all positions in the organization, including in senior management positions and the decision-making process. MAMA Centre 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 MAMA Centre, as an institution, fundamentally believes in the empowerment of women.

1.2 Practices

MAMA Centre's gender policy, developed with participation of the Executive Director as well as MAMA Centre's staff, affirms this commitment. In its management, MAMA Centre 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 MAMA Centre's organizational strategic plan
- Provide the resources necessary to implement this policy
- Hold senior staff responsible and accountable for 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 MAMA Centre's policy.

1.3 Gender Program Objectives

Strengthening legislature and making legislature accessible to the electorate is the main focus of MAMA Centre'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 MAMA Centre's programs. MAMA Centre'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. MAMA Centre's funding limits the extent to which we are able to conduct analysis of gender issues in each project, unless such analysis is specifically mandated. This does not lessen MAMA Centre's commitment, but challenges MAMA Centre to make equitable participation of women and analysis of that participation not simply as add on but an integral part of program design. MAMA Centre 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, MAMA Centre 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 MAMA Centre'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 MAMA Centre 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 MAMA Centre's ability to analyse gender data.