



Gender Equality Policy

Gender equality policy for Mahboba's Promise.

Introduction

Afghanistan's war torn history disproportionately impacts on women. The obstacles that women face in regards to achieving gender equality in Afghanistan are compounded by the traditional customs which undermine their status and the gross deprivations caused by policies which removed or banned women from public life. In 2001, an Afghan Presidential statement was released which supports equality between women and men, recognising that the provision of women's rights is a key issue of peace building and reconstruction.

Mahboba's Promise fully supports this and has ensured that gender equality and women's empowerment are key to the development programs the organisation implements.

Mahboba's Promise defines **Gender Equality** as: *Women and men having equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and for contributing to, and benefiting from, economic, social, cultural and political development.*

Purpose

The purpose of the organisation's gender equality policy is to ensure that the development actions Mahboba's Promise undertakes focuses on advancing gender equality and empowering women through our partnerships within Afghanistan. The policy ensures that Mahboba's Promise programs mainstream gender concerns and promote the full and equal participation of all members of society as an essential means for the effectiveness of development activity, and as a fundamental factor for the attainment of human rights for all.

Scope:

This policy applies to all Mahboba's Promise aid and development programs that operate within Afghanistan.

Policy

Mahboba's Promise strives to design and implement policies and programs that support gender equality and women's empowerment. However Mahboba's Promise recognises that it is a complex and evolving process which needs to be a long term focus for Afghanistan.

Mahboba's Promise will focus on empowering women and girls to realise their full potential and become active participants within Afghan society. By involving women and girls in decision making actions, providing women and girls with the opportunity to develop valuable vocational skills, educating orphan boys and girls to understand the concepts, benefits and outcomes of gender equality and removing gender barriers within the organization itself;

Mahboba's Promise aims to achieve gender equality within its aid programs which will have a flow-on effect into the broader society. Furthermore, Mahboba's Promise development programs have an end goal of self-sufficiency and empowerment to enable women to fully participate in the reconstruction of Afghan society.

To promote gender equality and women's empowerment, Mahboba's Promise will employ the following strategies in all development work the organisation undertakes:

- Education: By educating women and girls about their economic, legal and basic human rights as well as teaching them skills and knowledge that are valuable contributions to society; Mahboba's Promise aims to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in its community places and programs. Mahboba's Promise also focuses on educating males from a young age about the benefits of equal opportunities and rights for all in society as a way to allow Afghanistan to move forward.
- Program implementation: Mahboba's Promise programs understand that gender is a cross cutting issue and should therefore be addressed in all aspects of development to ensure that women and girls are given equal opportunities to participate in society.
- This is seen through our teaching, permaculture, mid-wife training and dairy co-op programs which aim to empower women to become self-sufficient, confident and skilled members of their community.
- Economic empowerment: By teaching women and girls in Afghanistan productive ways to earn a sustained income, Mahboba's Promise aims to assist vulnerable women and girls to achieve the self-sufficiency and freedom to provide for their families and take control of their own finances. This ensures that the programs implemented by Mahboba's Promise have a lasting impact on the lives and position of Afghan women and girls as well as their communities which achieves the end goal of sustainable development that reduces the need for donor and aid funding.
- Partnerships: When partnering with other organisations/NGOs in Afghanistan, Mahboba's Promise will ensure that these bodies align with its gender equality policy.
- Monitoring: Mahboba's Promise will monitor the development and implementation of programs to ensure they effectively promote gender equality and women's empowerment and make adequate changes where needed.

- Cultural sensitivity: Mahboba's Promise is a grassroots organisation which has a deep understanding of the cultural context of the society that our programs operate in. This knowledge allows us to effectively design programs which promote gender equality and women's empowerment within Afghanistan whilst ensuring they are accepted by the local communities we operate in. Mahboba's Promise is committed to working with like-minded individuals and community groups within Afghanistan to achieve gender equality whilst tackling the traditional and cultural barriers that impact on women and girls participation in society. Partnerships are assessed and monitored to ensure that all involved are committed to improving gender equality through the development program.