



Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

(GD&I)

The Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD)



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Gender, Diversity and Inclusion (GD&I) Policy

Policy Statement

The Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) is a private, independent, non-profit international mine action organisation. FSD is committed to actively embrace different identities and individuals, to guard against all discrimination in its actions and to promote the value of a diverse society with equal opportunities. Gender, diversity and inclusion (GD&I) are key aspects of ensuring the implementation of the “do no harm” approach in its humanitarian activities.

Women, girls, boys and men are affected differently by landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) and hold different views on the problem. Gender and other diversity factors condition their vulnerability, needs and coping capacity, therefore, the implementation of gender and diversity analysis and programming is crucial to ensure effective, sustainable and inclusive mine action, while leading to higher productivity and a better working environment. All FSD staff and related personnel are required to behave irreproachably with members of the community, fellow staff, and taking particular care with the most vulnerable groups: minors, women, the elderly, marginalized members of society, and persons with disabilities.

Policy Scope

The principles laid out in this policy apply at all times, during and outside of office hours and during periods of leave, with no exceptions.

This policy applies to, and is mandatory for all FSD’s Board members, management staff, international and national staff (full and part-time), in all FSD structures and programmes. The policy scope also covers volunteers, interns, consultants, contractors, all persons acting voluntarily on behalf of FSD, any current or potential suppliers of any sort of goods, services, or works, and all other people not included in the above-mentioned categories who have signed a contract with FSD.

FSD includes all components of the FSD Group: Fondation suisse de déminage (FSD) in Geneva, Switzerland; Crosstech S.A., a Geneva-based commercial subsidiary of FSD as well as the Association FSD France, based in Archamps, France. This also extends to any representative office of FSD in its global programmes and all locally registered FSD branch, charity or legal organisation bearing the FSD name. FSD’s partner organisations and suppliers are required to have similar GD&I commitments that meet minimum standards or they agree to adhere to FSD’s standards where necessary.

Context

Gender sensitivity does not, at its core, mean women or targeting only women and girls for special treatment. Gender looks at how people experience life differently based on one prescribed attribute - whether they are male or female. The Swiss Campaign to Ban Landmines defines gender as referring to the “social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those



between men”¹. Gender equality implies that “the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taking into consideration”.

As it happens, women tend, on a whole, to have their needs and priorities taken into less consideration by decision makers than those of men. They disproportionately suffer the burden of poverty² and have less access to financial, natural, and health-related resources. **Applying a gender perspective to mine action means we insist that men and women have equal rights to the benefits produced by mine action activities.**

The concept of gender equality is not new. The International Bill of Human Rights signed in 1948 recognises the formal equal status of men and women. In 1978 the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women became the first legally binding international instrument for the protection of women’s rights. More recently the Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security specifically links gender and mine action as it is “Emphasising the need for all parties to ensure that mine clearance and mine awareness programmes take into account the special needs of women and girls.”

The example of women’s suffrage and the battle for equality in the right to vote over the twentieth century demonstrates that, while gender is not at its core about women, social contexts can create a disadvantage for women which must be addressed. Therefore, women are often the focus of gender equality movements. In order for these movements for equality to be successful, both men and women need to work together to create a more equal playing field.

Key Terms

Gender: an aspect of a person’s socially determined identity that relates to masculinity and femininity – it is not binary. Gender roles vary significantly between cultures and can change over time (including over the course of an individual’s lifetime). Social and structural expectations related to gender strongly influence a person’s social role, power, rights and access to resources.

Diversity: the full range of different social backgrounds and identities that make up populations. It includes, but is not limited to, gender, ethnic origin, nationality or citizenship, age, disability, language, political opinions, religious beliefs, social background, sexual orientation, physical appearance and colour.

Equal opportunity: the right to be treated without discrimination, especially on the grounds of one’s sex, race, age, or disability condition.

Inclusion: reduction of inequalities based on social backgrounds, identities, roles and power relations. Providing inclusive services means giving equitable access to resources for all. In the long term, inclusion also focuses on facilitating access to opportunities and rights for all by addressing, reducing and ending exclusion, stigma and discrimination.

¹ Gender and Landmines - from Concept to Practice, Page 4. The Swiss Campaign to Ban Landmines

² http://www.mdgender.net/upload/tools/MDGender_leaflet.pdf

Core Principles

- FSD's beneficiaries are numerous and diverse. Gender and other socio-demographic diversity factors (such as - but not limited to: age, disability, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, legal, marital/family status, health and other social status) shape the extent to which people are vulnerable to, affected by, respond to and recover from conflict and other threats, and impact their coping strategies and risk of being exposed to targeted violence, exploitation and abuse.
- Inequality, marginalization and exclusion increase insecurity, damage social support structures, reduce income generating opportunities, and change social and physical environments (among other shocks). As a result, marginalized groups may be disproportionately affected, and face multiple barriers in accessing protection and humanitarian assistance.
- FSD seeks to eliminate inequalities and discrimination by mainstreaming a gender & diversity inclusion at all levels of the organisation and in all its activities.
- FSD ensures equal opportunities for all applicants for employment and current employees. The promotion of equality and diversity also apply to FSD's operations, including its beneficiaries, partners and visitors.
- As the culture of dignity and respect is part of the FSD management practice, this policy will support all FSD employees to develop their full potential by fully using their diverse talents and resources.
- Equality and inclusion for everyone will be ensured in relation to age, disability, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including caste, colour, ethnicity, language or nationality), religion or belief (including lack of religion or belief), opinions, gender or sexual orientation.

Commitments

Responsibilities

All staff members, irrespective of their position in FSD, are expected to promote equality and diversity in line with this policy. This applies in the workplace, outside the workplace, and in any work-related context (when dealing with beneficiaries, visitors, partners or other work-related contacts) and on work-related trips or events including social events. The policy also applies in principle when an individual is on leave, or in their private life whilst under contract with FSD.

Every individual will:

- Treat others with dignity;
- Co-operate fully with measures introduced by FSD to ensure the equality of opportunity and celebration of diversity;
- Identify and inform management of any suspected discriminatory act or practice;
- Ensure that the principles of equality and diversity are applied in all dealings with members of the public, partners and beneficiaries;
- Avoid instructing or pressurising others to discriminate unfairly, or discriminate themselves in response to such instructions or pressure;



- Avoid victimising anyone who has made a complaint alleging that unlawful discrimination may have taken place.

Prevention

To prevent and mitigate the risk of inequality and discrimination, FSD commits to:

- Implement an inclusive Human Resources policy, which does not discriminate, directly or indirectly, against any job applicant, includes fair annual, maternity and paternity leave policies (in accordance with the relevant national labour laws), and ensures equal remuneration and gender neutral job evaluation.
- Ensure all new and existing employees sign FSD's Code of Conduct annually. The acceptance by signature of the FSD Code of Conduct is a condition for undertaking any relation with FSD.
- Communicate the key Gender, Diversity and Inclusion messages and reporting mechanisms at the signing of the contract and during induction and refresher training, in order to promote an inclusive workplace.
- Include sensitivity and commitment to gender, diversity and inclusion in performance evaluation and other staff appraisals.
- Circulate the FSD Code of Ethics to all FSD staff and its affiliates. The FSD Code of Ethics contains the mission, vision, declaration of values and principles, set of rights, duties and responsibilities that it holds with whomever collaborates with FSD or benefits from its projects or programmes.
- Promote awareness of staff and related personnel on the Core Principles contained in this policy, the related principles included in FSD's staff Code of Conduct, Code of Ethics, and provide at least an annual training session on gender, diversity and inclusion in the workplace for new and existing staff recognizing and responding to risks and concerns at regularly scheduled intervals.
- Appoint a dedicated Gender, Diversity and Inclusion coordinator at HQ level who's role is to ensure provision of adequate training to staff at the national and field level, stay current with cutting edge information on GD&I, develop and review policies and procedures, conduct research and disseminate findings to partners and stakeholders, represent the organisation in forums addressing GD&I locally, nationally and internationally, and who will monitor the implementation of the GD&I policy and procedures.
- Collect disaggregated data by sex, age, disability and other relevant diversity factors that will support and inclusive and disability & gender sensitive programme planning and implementation.
- Include the gender, diversity and inclusion principles in the monitoring and evaluation process of all programmes.
- Promote working in partnership with women owned businesses and/or partnering with women run national NGOs when practical/possible.

Reporting and Complaints Mechanisms

Misconduct related to GD&I corresponds to engaging in any direct behaviour (verbal or by actions) that is offensive, intimidating, malicious, discriminating or insulting. This includes any form of sexual or other harassment or bullying, whether individual or collective, motivated by race, age, role, gender, gender identity, colour, religion, country of origin, sexual orientation, marital status, dependants, disability, social class or political views.

To enable complainants to report cases of misconduct, FSD commits to:



- Provide a reporting system to FSD Board level, either through the chain of command or through a dedicated confidential email address (See FSD Whistleblower and Grievance Policies).
- Nominate a GD&I focal person in each country programme to whom staff and community members can report concerns of GD&I and get clarity on the reporting process. They will be duly instructed on how to handle reports of complaints and be able to speak the local languages of the areas of operations.
- Adapt outlets to file complaints to best fit the needs of beneficiaries where each programme runs and to present them in a way that all groups, including children, understand. These should be designed by the respective GD&I focal persons in consultation with the FSD GD&I Coordinator.
- Provide country-specific reporting channels for beneficiaries. These should consider access to resources and - identify service providers for counselling, as well as cultural sensitivities. Such reporting channels should also allow for people with different educational backgrounds, disabilities and language skills to file a complaint. They must be accessible, transparent, safe and confidential.
- Give complainants the free choice which of the provided reporting mechanisms they want to avail of.
- Protect the identity of complainants and survivors to the highest possible extent. Complainants are free to choose whether or not they want to disclose their identity. However, should a complainant decide to file an anonymous allegation, he or she must provide sufficient information so that a potential investigation has an adequate basis. A person reporting a concern of GD&I in good faith and with no ulterior motive will never be retaliated against, regardless of whether the claim is found to be true or not.

Investigations

All GD&I related allegations and complaints raised through the chain of command will be initially reviewed at FSD's HQ by the Head of Operations and the Director General. Based on an initial triage of the case, it may then be raised to Board level depending on the information available and the details of the case. All cases will be shared with the Board representative irrespective of severity.

The respective process for the investigation of individual cases will be defined by the FSD HQ based on the available information. FSD commits to guarantee throughout the whole procedure full confidentiality about the identity of the complainant and neither reveal his or her name during the investigation nor in the final report. The investigating team will conclude their inquiry by drafting a comprehensive report about the case and deliver it to the FSD Board lead; this will then lead to any corrective action, sanctions and/or disciplinary actions against the offender – or close the file in case the findings have been unsubstantiated.

Policy, Practical Steps and Procedures in Mine Action

The five Pillars of Mine Action are recognized by the Ottawa Treaty (1997) and they specifically refer to the UN Chart of Rights of the Child and to the Chart of Human Rights. This proposed intervention aims to follow those foundation principles and to integrate the protection of women and children in the context of all operations where possible.

FSD recognises that different people have different needs which are influenced by many factors, including age, membership in ethnic/minority groups, physical abilities, social roles and other factors. Women and girls and boys and men of all ages have different experiences issues and concerns. In

humanitarian settings these experiences and concerns maybe further exacerbated. Gender roles may also change, affecting decision making structures and peoples' access and participation. An understanding of the distinct needs of different population groups helps to identify and prioritise vulnerability for effective humanitarian response. In light of this FSD believes the inclusion of gender sensitivity considerations in humanitarian planning is crucial.

In some cases, the marginalisation of women prevents access and involvement with mine action clearance, survey and operations and participation in open venues of exchange. However, based on FSD's experience in the field, the role of women in the "multiplier effect" in the spreading of threat messages and collection of data and baseline information is recognised as key to success. Where possible, priority to employment of women in order to execute operations, training and community liaison will be given in order to enforce the importance of a gender balanced workforce as a cross section of society.

In order to integrate these considerations into all FSD's projects, and proposals, FSD follows the following guiding principles:

- **The use of sex, age and disability disaggregated data (SADDD) wherever possible.** When ensuring that gender sensitivity is "mainstreamed" it is important to the circumstances and needs of different groups are described in initial needs assessments and their implications for programming and prioritization are subsequently included in all analysis and planning.
- **Provide gender analysis and highlight gender dimensions of impact on different vulnerable groups of women, men, boys and girls wherever possible to illustrate differential impact.** Specifically in relation to mine action and this proposal, this translates as:
 - Ensuring the context and situation analysis reflects different issues and priorities facing men and women.
 - Avoid the terminology of grouping all people together (such as, "affected population" and, "vulnerable groups") if there are absolute identified gender-based needs.
 - Ensuring indicators for performance utilize SADDD principles if necessary/relevant.
 - Where outputs are gender sensitive, ensure they are specific in relating who is benefiting.
 - Ensuring activities are logically derived (within the log-frame) from identified needs and analysis.
 - Where possible ensure all partners apply IASC Gender Marker principles at the planning/design stage to ensure and promote equal opportunity and gender equality.
 - Consider the involvement of both women and men in the planning and design stages of any operation and intervention.
 - Ensure security and protection needs are met for all gender groups – not a general plan.
 - Consider whether specific gender groups are more vulnerable than others within the plan and what the impact of that is?
 - Do certain vulnerabilities for gender groups affect livelihood and income generation opportunities and how is equal access ensured?
- **Develop strategies and objectives that are gender sensitive where possible.** This involves ensuring objectives consider meaningful participation and equitable access to services, resources and



protection measures for women, girls, boys and men.

- **Ensure that indicators allow the measure and monitoring of different impacts by both sex and age.**

FSD also closely follows the internationally recognised principles outlined in the UN Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes which echo those principles above. Consideration should be given to the following:

- **Land Release**

- Data gathering and baseline survey operations are conducted at suitable times and locations for all gender groups and that information of threat, impact of the intervention and projected use of cleared land is gathered from both a male and female perspective.
- A gender balance is sought for all mine action teams when possible, within the bounds of national employment law and accepted ethical and cultural practices/laws.
- All gender groups are involved in land release processes in order that all groups have access to the benefits of that land release.

- **Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE)**

- Data is collected and analysed to establish the distinct at-risk behaviours of men, women, boys and girls (and further establish/distinguish between child age groups of 3-6, 7-10, 11-15 and 16-18).
- Collect data that establishes the distinct attitudes of men, women, boys and girls (and further establish/distinguish between child age groups of 3-6, 7-10, 11-15 and 16-18).
- Consider credible messengers and delivery media when conveying appropriate messages to both sexes.
- Consider availability of all gender groups when planning venue and timing of EORE sessions.
- Seek to obtain verification that all gender groups understand EORE messages presented equally.
- Strive for a gender balance amongst EORE trainers.

- **Victim Assistance**

- Female survivors might experience greater difficulties than males in obtaining medical care.
- Military personnel (who are mostly male), sometime receive swifter and better attention than civilians.
- Support is provided/considered also to relatives of mine/ERW victims as they are often likely to assume new burdens depending on their social role.
- Gather and analyse SADD on survivors needs and access to services.
- Pursue advocacy initiatives with, or on behalf of, mine/ERW survivors.
- Strive for a gender balance amongst health workers and counsellors to properly address specific needs of all gender groups.



References

Beijing Declaration on Action for Equality, Development and Peace, 1995

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 2016

Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (n.111)

Equal Remuneration Convention (N. 100)

IASC Guidelines on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action, 2019

FSD PSEA Policy, Code of Conduct, Code of Ethics

GICHD Gender & Diversity in Mine Action Quality Management, 2015

Maternity Protection Convention (n.183)

UN Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes

Workers with Family Responsibility Convention (n.156)