হ্যাবিট্যাট ফর হিউম্যানিটি Habitat for Humanity® Bangladesh	**GENDER EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION (GESI) POLICY**
Approved by: Muhammad Mahfuzur Rahman National Director, HFH-Bangladesh	**Signature:**
Effective Date: September 22, 2026	**Release Date:** September 22, 2026

1. Our Ambition

Habitat builds homes, communities and hope. HFHIB believes that a safe, adequate and resilient home is more than a physical structure: it is a foundation for dignity, agency and opportunity. Yet women, men, girls, boys, persons with disabilities (PWD) and people of diverse gender identities do not experience housing, land, WASH, climate risks, humanitarian assistance or organizational opportunities in the same way.

Our ambition is to help build a Bangladesh where people of all genders can live with dignity and safety, have a meaningful voice in decisions that affect their lives, and enjoy fair access to housing, land, WASH, resilience and humanitarian support, a place where no one is left behind. We also aspire to demonstrate these values within HFHIB—through leadership, systems, partnerships and everyday behaviour.

We will be ambitious without being unrealistic: we will pursue change that is evidence-informed, contextually appropriate, safe and feasible, while continuously raising our standard.

2. Purpose

This Policy sets HFHIB's organizational direction and minimum expectations for advancing gender equality and equity across governance, people, programs, partnerships and operations. It guides annual planning, program design, resource allocation, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, r accountability, research, and learning (MEARL).

3. Scope

The Policy applies to staff, volunteers, interns, consultants, seconded personnel, contractors, partners, vendors, suppliers, sub-grantees and others acting on behalf of HFHIB, across offices, field locations, programs, humanitarian responses, partnerships, advocacy, communications and operations.

4. Our Policy Commitments

- Make GESI an organizational value and a practical contribution to more equitable housing and development outcomes.
- Strengthen women's agency, leadership and influence, while respecting the dignity, rights and participation of people of all genders.
- Use gender analysis and context evidence to understand barriers, opportunities, power, risks and intersecting forms of exclusion—and use the findings to shape decisions.

- Set Gender-Sensitive practice as the minimum standard for HFHIB programs and progressively strengthen core Housing and WASH programming toward Gender-Responsive practice where evidence, context, risk and feasibility support it.
- Pursue Gender-Transformative change where HFHIB has a credible opportunity to address harmful norms, power relations or structural barriers, particularly through advocacy, partnerships and flagship initiatives.
- Make participation meaningful: representation is not enough; all people who benefit from our work should be able to influence decisions and outcomes, particularly marginalised people.
- Promote equitable and, where legally, operationally and safely feasible, individual or joint recognition of women's housing, occupancy, ownership or tenure interests.
- Build a respectful, inclusive and equitable workplace and embed relevant GESI actions through the HR framework rather than creating parallel systems.
- Work with partners and other actors to advance GESI and include proportionate gender expectations in agreements and collaboration arrangements.
- Give GESI appropriate leadership attention, technical support and resources, proportionate to the intervention, risk, context and available capacity.
- Use evidence, feedback and learning to understand and capture what changes, what does not, and where unintended exclusion, backlash or harm may occur.
- Make resources available to implement, monitor and evaluate the GESI Policy.

5. Guiding Principles

- Equality and equity – equality is the intended outcome; equity recognizes that different people may need different support to overcome structural disadvantage.
- Do no harm – GESI work must not increase violence, exclusion, backlash, household conflict or other risks.
- Meaningful participation and agency – people should influence decisions, not simply attend or be consulted.
- Intersectionality – gender interacts with disability, age, poverty, displacement, geography and other factors that can compound exclusion or privilege.
- Context and feasibility – ambition will be balanced with evidence, risk, resources, partner capacity and operational realities.
- Learning and accountability – evidence and feedback should drive adaptation, not compliance alone.
- Shared responsibility – leadership, managers, technical teams, support functions and all personnel have a role, gender focal points are available to support teams to integrate GESI.

6. Programmatic Direction

Area	HFHIB direction
Housing, land and tenure	Promote equitable access, meaningful participation and agency of women and other marginalised people in housing and tenure decisions, consistent with law, safety and feasibility.
WASH	Respond to different safety, privacy, accessibility, care and participation needs and promote equitable use and influence.
Skill and market inclusion for housing echo system	Promote equitable access to skills development, livelihood opportunities, and financial inclusion across programs.

Area	HFHIB direction
Climate resilience and DRR	Recognize gender/marginalised people's-differentiated exposure, vulnerability, capacities, mobility, care responsibilities and decision-making.
Humanitarian response	Integrate GESI and protection considerations from assessment through implementation and learning, using approved safeguarding arrangements for protection concerns.
Advocacy and influencing	Use evidence and the voices of women and marginalised groups to influence policies, systems and practices affecting equitable housing and resilience.
MEARL	Track meaningful outcomes through appropriate disaggregation (sex, age, disaggregated data) and qualitative evidence, while protecting confidentiality and avoiding unnecessary sensitive data collection. Ensure respectful, safe, people centered approaches to primary data collection.

7. Our Progressive Standard

HFHIB will not knowingly design or implement gender unaware or gender neutral programs. Gender sensitive programming is our minimum organizational standard. For core Housing and WASH programs, we will progressively move toward Gender-Responsive practice where assessment demonstrates that it is appropriate and feasible. Gender-Transformative practice is an aspiration where HFHIB can responsibly influence root causes, harmful norms, power relations or structural barriers.

The Gender Procedures Manual and approved program tools define the review stages, evidence and practical steps. The annual Gender Action Plan converts this Policy into priorities, actions, responsibilities and indicators.

8. Organizational Culture and People

HFHIB aims to be an organization where GESI is visible in leadership, opportunity, voice, respect and everyday behaviour. Recruitment, remuneration, performance, career development, leave, flexible work, reasonable accommodation, workplace facilities, employee relations and disciplinary processes are governed by the HR Policy/Manual and related procedures. GESI related HR actions identified through the Action Plan should be embedded in that framework.

9. Safeguarding and Protection

GESI considerations should inform safeguarding risk identification, prevention and program design. Safeguarding concerns—including GBV, sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment, child protection and other protection risks—are governed by the HFHIB Safeguarding Policy and approved reporting, referral and case-management arrangements.

This Policy does not create parallel complaint channels, investigations, referrals, confidentiality rules or survivor-support arrangements.

10. Governance and Accountability

- Senior Management provides strategic direction, appropriate resources and management oversight. They ensures that the policy is implemented.
- The Gender Focal Point and Alternative Gender Focal Point coordinate implementation of gender action plan, provide technical support and support learning in line with their approved TOR and protected time.
- Managers and technical teams integrate gender considerations into their areas of work.
- All personnel and associated parties are expected to uphold this Policy and use established organizational mechanisms to raise concerns.

11. Implementation, Monitoring and Review

HFHIB will translate this Policy into annual priorities through the approved Gender Action Plan and relevant organizational and program plans. Progress will be reviewed through existing management and MEAL mechanisms using proportionate indicators, qualitative learning and relevant evidence. Gender Focal Point(s) will consolidate learning and identify issues requiring management attention.

The Policy will normally be formally reviewed every three years, or earlier where required by law, HFHI guidance, organizational change or significant contextual change.

12. Relationship with Other Instruments

Instrument	Relationship to this Policy
Safeguarding Policy and procedures	Governs safeguarding prevention, reporting, case management, investigations, referrals, confidentiality and protection response. GESI considerations should inform the safeguarding policy.
HR Policy/Manual and procedures	Governs employment conditions and HR processes; GESI related HR actions should be embedded there.
Code of Conduct / PSEA arrangements	Governs expected conduct and prevention/response to misconduct, exploitation and abuse. GESI considerations should be fully integrated.
HFHI Gender Equity in Housing Framework / Gender Marker	Provides the technical and assessment framework for gender integration.
GFP TOR	Defines the role, responsibilities, reporting relationship and protected time of the GFP and Alternative GFP.
GESI Procedures Manual and GESI tools	Define in detail, practical steps to be taken in HFHIB to integrate GESI; and provides the tools to support implementation of this Policy.
Approved /Gender Action Plan	Translates this Policy into time-bound priorities, activities, responsibilities and indicators.

Annex 1: Key Definitions

Term	Definition
Gender	Socially constructed roles, expectations, responsibilities and power relations associated with women, men, girls, boys and people of diverse gender identities.
Gender Equality	Equal rights, opportunities, participation, safety, decision-making influence and access to and control over resources and benefits.

Term	Definition
Gender Equity	Fairness and justice in opportunities, resources, responsibilities, risks and benefits, recognizing that different measures may be needed to address structural disadvantage.
Gender Analysis	Systematic examination of gender roles, relations, power, access to and control over resources, decision-making, norms, barriers and intersecting characteristics.
Gender Mainstreaming	Integrating gender analysis and considerations into policies, programs, budgets, implementation, monitoring, learning and decision-making.
Gender-Sensitive	Recognizes gender differences, avoids harm and supports equitable access; HFHIB's minimum program standard.
Gender-Responsive	Addresses identified gender barriers and promotes equitable participation, access, safety and decision-making.
Gender-Transformative	Seeks to address root causes, harmful norms, power relations and structural barriers that sustain gender inequality.
Intersectionality	The interaction of gender with other characteristics and social positions can create compounded discrimination, exclusion, risk or privilege.
Meaningful Participation	Participation enables people to influence decisions and outcomes, rather than only being present or consulted.

Document Control

Item	Policy position
Policy owner	**National Director**
Technical lead	Gender Focal Point and Alternative Gender Focal Point
Applies to	HFHIB personnel and associated parties within the scope of this Policy
Related instruments	Safeguarding Policy and procedures; HR Policy/Manual; Code of Conduct/PSEA arrangements; HFHI Gender Equity in Housing Framework; HFHIB Gender Marker; approved /Gender Action Plan; GFP TOR
Review cycle	Formal review every three years or earlier when required

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