



PALMERA

INNOVATING
FOR SUSTAINABLE
LIVELIHOODS



Women In Development Policy

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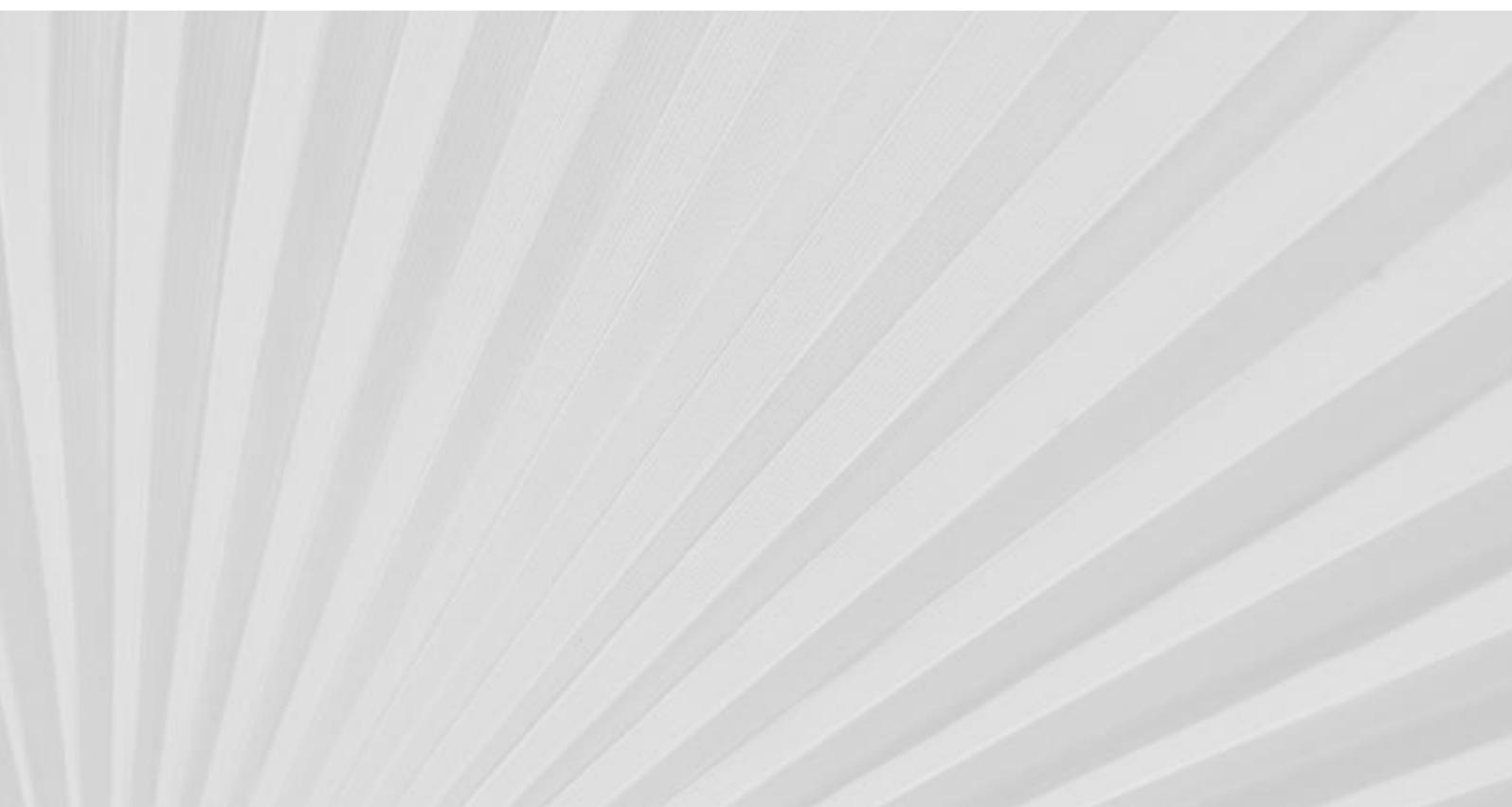




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Women In Development Policy

1.1 Introduction

Palmera recognises that social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female is perceived and experienced differently in different cultural contexts. Consequently, we are committed to gender sensitive practices within our implementing partners and in our projects.

1.2 Purpose Of The Policy

To improve development outcomes by empowering women and advancing gender equality, and to promote the full and equal participation of all members of society as essential for the effectiveness of development activity, and as fundamental to the attainment of human rights for all.

1.3 Scope

This policy applies to all Palmera's international projects.

1.4 Recognising the need to focus on women in development

Palmera recognises that discrimination against women, and excluding women from access to resources, services or productive activities negatively affects a vulnerable community's capacity to increase its economic growth, development and to raise its living standards.

Women bear a disproportionate burden of poverty and in particular in Sri Lanka, single-women headed households are vulnerable due to the lack of a male income earner as a result of the civil war. Gender inequalities intensify poverty, and poverty also contributes to perpetuating cycles of gender inequality. For example:¹

- Two-thirds of the 800 million people in the world who lack basic literacy skills are female.
- Half a million women die each year from complications during pregnancy – 99 per cent live in developing countries, and many are adolescent girls.
- Around 80 per cent of the displaced people in the world are women and their dependent children.
- Globally one-third of women and girls experience physical and sexual violence.
- Up to 900,000 people are trafficked across international borders each year, the majority of whom are women and girls.

¹ Statistics taken from Gender equality in Australia's Aid Program: Why and How (Aus AID, 2007), UN Women Fact Sheet: Gender and the Millennium Development Goals (2010) www.unifem.org.au/LiteratureRetrieve.aspx?ID=43256, UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Forty Sixth Session, Summary Record of the 939th meeting. Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the convention: Combined initial, second and third periodic reports of Papua New Guinea, 22 July, 2010.



1.5 Commitment to Gender Equality

Palmera's commitment towards women is to employ a rights-based approach by promoting local ownership of development processes through an emphasis on participation, inclusivity and accountability. Promoting gender equality and empowering women is also essential for combating violence against women, which is both a symptom and cause of gender inequality and discrimination.

Palmera recognises that investments in gender equality yield some of the highest returns of all development investments, including in reducing maternal mortality and in better educated and healthier children. Women's health and socioeconomic status, even before a child is born, is directly linked to a child's prospects for survival and their outcomes in life. Discrimination against women is therefore also detrimental to the next generation.

1.6 International Project Partners

Palmera is committed to periodically assess and build partners' understanding of and capacity to conduct and implement gender analysis and gender mainstreaming.

1.7 Project Design and Monitoring

Palmera aims to 'mainstream' our gender equality approach within all stages of program management: selection, planning, design, participation, monitoring and analysis.

Palmera will factor in gender concerns into the assessment of programs/projects for funding. This will include actively engaging women by identifying barriers to, and risks arising from, women's involvement in the project, and strategies to overcome them. This also involved taking into account how women will meaningfully participate in the implementation phases and project review process and the inclusion of gender disaggregated data and measurable gender-specific outcomes and indicators.

1.8 Partner Selection

Palmera will work with like-minded implementing partners, committed to promoting gender equality in their context. Furthermore, Palmera is committed to building the capacity of partners to grow in their understanding of these issues and capacity to act upon them.

1.9 External: Legislative and Regulatory Framework

- United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discriminations Against Women (CEDAW) (1979) to which Australia became a signatory in 1980 (<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/cedaw.htm>)
- Beijing Platform for Action (1995) (<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/plat1.htm>)
- AusAID Gender Policy (2007): Gender Equality in Australia's Aid Program