



## Gender Equality, Equity and Diversity Policy

### PURPOSE

The Gender Equality<sup>1</sup> Policy defines and describes the Micronutrient Forum's (Forum) commitment to promoting gender equality, equity, and diversity.

### SCOPE

All people, regardless of gender, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, religion, nationality or other differences, are equal and have equal rights. The responsibility to advance gender equality, equity, and diversity is the responsibility of all organizations.<sup>2</sup>

The Forum, working together with its partners, will endeavour to create environments that promote gender equality, equity, and diversity. Women's empowerment is a critical aspect of achieving gender equality and we will work to advance women's' and girls' empowerment and welfare in nutrition outcomes.

The Forum does not tolerate any form of discrimination, stereotyping or prejudice in the workplace, in programs and operations, and externally by representatives of the Forum.

As applicable to Forum representatives, the Forum commits to investigate suspected, observed or reported incidents of discrimination, stereotyping or prejudice, and respond appropriately.

Ensuring gender equality, equity, and diversity are crucial to the Forum's achievement of its mission and vision.

This policy seeks to guide the Forum's work from both a programmatic and operational capacity to achieve its vision and mission. The policy applies to programming and policy work and to the members of the Board of Directors, staff, consultants, and volunteers.

### APPLICATION OF THE POLICY WITHIN THE FORUM'S PROGRAMMATIC APPROACH

The Forum aims to mainstream gender equality, equity, and diversity in its programmes. This will translate in the following approaches:

1. As part of the Forum's work and within its three key Strategic Goals of Collaboration, Evidence and Action, the Forum will incorporate gender analysis into the planning and implementation of each program to provide the evidence-base for equitable targeting and gender-responsive programs that address the most substantial barriers for those facing malnutrition. Gender analysis may include:
  - Incorporate relevant analysis of the unequal distribution of nutrition outcomes (e.g., sex-disaggregated data).

#### Gender and nutrition

Good nutrition and gender equality are closely intertwined.

Women are often disproportionately affected by malnutrition because

- social norms lead to unequal access to nutritious foods, health care, and education for women and girls; and
- women and girls have increased nutritional needs throughout their life due to their reproductive role.

Increasing women's status across various outcomes—such as decision-making power, educational attainment, and income—is known to be a key driver of improved nutrition for all.

When women and mothers are better educated and empowered, this results in better nutrition for their children, better growth and higher potential to learn and earn.

<sup>1</sup> Gender equality means that women and men enjoy the same status and have equal opportunity to realize their full human rights and potential to contribute to national, political, economic, social and cultural development, and to benefit from the results (Government of Canada Policy on Gender Equality).

Equity means being fair to everyone, regardless of gender, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, religion, nationality or other differences. To ensure fairness, measures are often needed to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from otherwise operating as equals. Equity leads to equality.

<sup>2</sup> Gender equality is acknowledged as central to sustainable development, as demonstrated by Sustainable Development Goal 5 on Gender Equality and the targets that cut across all 17 goals, including Goal 2



- Assess the structural—or “upstream”—causes of nutrition inequalities, such as those rooted in social, political or spatial processes and realities.
- Identify key performance indicators directly linked to gender equality and equity objectives.
2. Work to improve attention on women’s nutrition. Women’s nutrition has not received the same attention as child nutrition, but it is crucial for their offspring’s health and well-being, and it is vital to give women an equal chance in society ensuring better health, education and income.
3. To better serve achievement of gender equality, equity, and diversity, the voices of the concerned groups need to be heard and brought to the table. The Forum will:
  - Strive for diverse and inclusive participation of low- and middle-income delegates in its meetings, notably the Conferences.
  - Amplify women’s voices through its advocacy activities.

### **APPLICATION OF THE POLICY WITHIN THE OPERATIONS AND GOVERNANCE OF THE ORGANIZATION**

1. The Micronutrient Forum will ensure that its governance structures facilitate and reflect its commitment to gender equality, equity, and diversity. In support of this objective, the Micronutrient Forum will:
  - Strive to achieve gender equality and diversity in Board membership, by removing barriers to discrimination.
  - Encourage a governance culture that honors and facilitates a diversity of voices and ways of participating in decision-making processes.
  - Ensure the Forum’s Board of Directors, staff, consultants, and volunteers demonstrate gender- and diversity-sensitive attitudes and behaviours in their discussions, decisions, and activities.
2. The Micronutrient Forum is committed to a fair, open and non-discriminatory employee recruitment, selection and promotion process. In support of this objective, the Forum:
  - Advertises all open positions on its website and other venues.
  - States clearly that the Forum welcomes applications from all sections of the community.
  - Job advertisements and job specifications specify the required knowledge, experience, and skills for the position.
  - Candidate selection is on the basis of relevant criteria, experience, aptitude and ability.
  - Candidate selection is always carried out by a gender equitable panel of at least three persons.
3. The Forum ensures that a positive work environment, free of all forms of harassment, abuse and discrimination, is upheld by all staff, consultants, and volunteers. This includes a complaints investigation procedure to enable and encourage those who experience or witness misconduct to come forward, and to ensure that perpetrators are held accountable and prevented from causing any further harm.
4. To assess its performance on gender equality and diversity and to track its adherence to this policy and realize its commitment to gender equality, the Forum performs an annual assessment, such as the Global Health 5050 Self-Assessment tool. The Board will formally receive and review this assessment. The assessment will be made available to all stakeholders, funders and interested organizations and individuals.

The Chair of the Board of Directors is responsible to ensure a climate conducive to upholding this policy during Board meetings and as part of overall governance. The Executive Director is responsible for ensuring the application of this policy in programmatic activities. All Board members, staff, consultants, and volunteers have a responsibility to work towards the realization of the goal and objectives outlined in this policy.