

GENDER EQUALITY POLICY

VISION AND PURPOSE

Equitas aspires to collectively build a world where human dignity is respected, where non-discrimination and equality are realities for everyone, and where gender equality for all is realized.

Gender equality is a critical component of social change that human rights education strives to achieve.

Equitas is committed to working with gender equality movements, decision-makers, and frontline activists and rights defenders to challenge patriarchal systems that create conditions of exclusion, erasure, marginalization, discrimination and violence in order to rebuild more inclusive, just systems.

The principle of “do no harm” guides our gender equality work.

This policy aims to:

- Ensure a common organizational understanding of what gender equality means and to define the organization’s gender approach.
- Strengthen organizational commitments towards gender equality by creating and ensuring **respectful, equitable, inclusive, safe and supportive environments** internally and in Equitas programs, particularly for women experiencing marginalization, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people*.
- Ensure that governance, programming, partnerships and organizational practices reflect the principles and values of gender equality.

SCOPE

The responsibility to advance gender equality belongs to all people. This policy will guide the integration of gender equality into all Equitas programs, activities, materials, overall organizational culture and partnerships.

This policy is a living document that sets a standard and vision for gender equality work internally and programmatically at Equitas.

*Language describing sexual and gender diversity is context-specific and changes over time. Equitas acknowledges that 2SLGBTQI+ might not be how people describe themselves in different contexts.




DEFINITION OF GENDER EQUALITY

A holistic, intersectional, and inclusive vision of gender equality is necessary to eradicate gender inequalities.

Gender inequality is a global phenomenon, varying in form based on historical, political and regional contexts. In substance, gender inequalities are rooted in patriarchal systems, and can be informed by other oppressive systems, such as, but not limited to, **exploitative economic systems, white supremacy, racism, colonialism, ableism, and ageism.**

Gender equality:

- 
- Is a key element of non-discrimination and equality, and it is essential to realizing human rights
 - Refers to the equal and equitable realization of rights, responsibilities and opportunities irrespective of one's gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual characteristics or sexual orientation
 - Aims to transform gender power relations and to share and redistribute power more equitably
 - Means fair and just gender systems at all levels including but not limited to social, economic and political levels
 - Is not just a women's issue
 - Is both a human rights issue and a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people and nature-centered development

A GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE/FEMINIST APPROACH

- Includes the gender inequalities affecting women and girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people
- Integrates a non-binary understanding of gender
- Is trans-inclusive
- Acknowledges the diversity of intersecting identities, and does not consider women and girls or 2SLGBTQI+ communities as homogenous groups
- Acknowledges that patriarchal systems can look different in different communities, cultures, contexts and times and that societies across the world have long history of gender norms and structures
- Recognizes how colonial and settler-state gender norms have contributed to the reproduction of specific forms of patriarchy in settler states (such as in Canada) and around the world
- Includes work on harmful and positive traits of masculinities
- Integrates and is grounded in an analysis stemming from:
 - a human rights-based approach
 - an intersectional approach
 - a decolonial approach
 - an anti-racist approach

COMMITMENTS



PROGRAMMING

Equitas will ensure that all of its programs integrate a gender transformative/feminist approach that addresses gender inequalities and targets root causes to advance gender equality, social justice and human rights through co-construction with partners.

PARTNERSHIPS

Equitas will ensure that partnerships are sustainable, equitable and based on shared responsibility. Equitas acknowledges the power and privilege it holds as a Canadian organization. Equitas is committed to actively questioning its role and responsibilities, to keep unlearning, learning and transforming itself to build more inclusive, equitable, and just partnerships.



GOVERNANCE

Equitas will ensure that its governance culture and structures reflect its commitment to gender equality and create the optimal conditions for an inclusive, safe, respectful and supportive environment for women and 2SLGBTQI+ people, particularly marginalized women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people.

ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICES

Equitas will ensure an inclusive, respectful, supportive, and safe work environment for all and pay close attention to the specific barriers to participation of women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people.



MONITORING, EVALUATION, LEARNING AND REVIEW

The implementation of the Gender Equality Policy will be:

Monitored and evaluated	ONCE PER YEAR
Reviewed	EVERY FIVE YEARS

This policy emphasizes a localized approach and aims to support existing movements embedded in communities within which Equitas works.



[**CLICK TO READ THE FULL POLICY**](#)