

GENDER AND SOCIAL INCLUSION AT THE HEART OF SPEAK UP AFRICA

BACKGROUND

For several years, programs such as the World Summit for Social Development Program of Action, the International Conference on Population and Development, and the Beijing Platform for Action have been put in place to reduce gender inequalities and promote social inclusion. Despite these efforts, there is still a long way to go before women and girls can fully enjoy their rights. In West Africa, the statistics for certain cultural practices such as early marriage¹ and female genital mutilation² (FGM) are still worrying. The security situation in the Sahel region is also a factor that delays the process of gender equality. In addition, gender-related barriers are not always taken into account in the implementation of health programs and projects at the national and regional levels, which reduces the expected impact on direct and indirect beneficiaries.

To address this matter, we have decided to become more involved in gender issues by putting in place a gender and social inclusion strategy to contribute to the well-being of our staff and populations. The implementation of this strategy will allow Speak Up Africa to not only be in line with international guidelines, but will also promote the effectiveness of our programs through the inclusion and consideration of the most vulnerable populations' specific needs.

PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGY

Driven by the desire to provide solutions to the most critical issues African populations face, Speak Up Africa has developed a strategy to provide equitable solutions for people by creating an institutional framework that integrates the concept of gender, equality and inclusion to help create a more fair and equal world.

VISION

To contribute to an inclusive society in which every man, woman and child is empowered to live a healthy and productive life.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES



CONSISTENCY

Consistent with national and international gender policies and strategies to which the organization is committed.



RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Analysis of gender equity and equality in all the organization's interventions. This will be done systematically in the design and monitoring of programs.



EQUITY

Stipulates that the specific needs of human resources will be taken into account in the recruitment, management and working conditions of staff, and in the assignment of roles and responsibilities.

1• <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/documents/684/Le-Mariage-des-Enfants-en-Afrique-de-l'Ouest-et-du-Centre.pdf>

2• https://wcaro.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/FR-UNFPA-ANALYSIS-ON-FGM-WEB%20%282%29_0.pdf

MAIN STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS



1

Accelerate capacity building and improve attitudes of staff and partners towards gender and social inclusion issues.



2

Strengthen the institutional system to better take into account gender and social inclusion.



3

Strengthen the consideration of gender and social inclusion in all programs.



4

Create an enabling environment for gender mainstreaming in national, regional and global policies and strategies.

IMPLEMENTATION AND PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

8 minimum standards for gender mainstreaming:

1 Internal institutional policy on equality and equity that frames all operations and programs.

2 Supportive organizational culture and capacity building on equality and equity issues, with dedicated resources.

3 Gender analyses for every project, engaging a diverse range of stakeholders and using findings to inform partnerships, design, and implementation.

4 Allocation of organizational and program budget resources to meet gender mainstreaming and capacity building needs.

5 Collect, analyze, and use sex- and age-disaggregated data for all applicable programs and organizational data collection processes.

6 Develop and track specific indicators to measure progress toward gender equality.

7 **Do not harm** principle of performing risk assessments and develop corresponding mitigation and response strategies.

8 Establish accountability mechanisms to monitor the status of gender equality within organizational practices and programming.

This strategy will initially span over a period of three years (2022-2024). Its implementation will be based on a strategic action plan that also takes into account gender markers for programmatic aspects. For its full success, this strategy requires the support of all employees and partners of the organization who will become ambassadors of Speak Up Africa's vision.