



GENDER EQUALITY POLICY

Approved by Board: 5 February 2019

Next review date: February 2020

Managed on behalf of the CEO and Board by: Program
Manager

*Revisions to this version are identified on the last page

1. Purpose of this Policy

This policy outlines Interplast Australia & New Zealand's (Interplast's) commitment to advancing gender equality and equity in all of its activities (including programming, human resources, fundraising and communications) and organisational culture. This policy is intended to inform any and all other Interplast policies.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to the following people:

- Interplast staff members, contractors and consultants;
- Interplast volunteers¹;
- Interplast Board of Directors and Committee members;
- Partner organisations²; and
- Observers/visitors accompanying an Interplast activity.

3. Definitions

Gender refers to socially constructed roles and relationships between men and women which affect their ability and incentive to participate in development activities and leads to different project impacts for women and men. These roles are dynamic and change over time and cultures.

Gender equality refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognising the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is understood as a fundamental human rights issue.³

Gender equity refers to fairness in access to resources and in the distribution of benefits from development, according to the different needs of women, men, girls and boys. To ensure fairness, strategies and measures must often be available to compensate for

¹ Volunteers include medical volunteers (surgeons, anaesthetists, nurses and allied therapists) undertaking an activity overseas or participating in professional development in their own country or overseas and non-medical volunteers, such as those in administrative, promotional or fundraising roles.

² Partners are individuals, groups of people or organisations that collaborate with Interplast to achieve mutually agreed objectives in development activities.

³ UN Women <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.html>

women's historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from operating on a level playing field (*United Nations Population Fund*).

LGBTQI is an acronym for people who identify as a gender or sexual minority of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or intersex.

Sex refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that define men and women.

Intersex is a general term used for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with sex characteristics (including genitals, gonads and chromosome patterns) that do not fit with the typical binary notions of female or male (United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner).

Non-Binary, also known as genderqueer, is an all-encompassing category for gender identities that are not exclusively masculine or feminine and therefore outside the gender binary.

4. Legislative Framework and Standards

In alignment with the ACFID Code of Conduct, Interplast is committed to addressing the effect of gender inequalities and inequities as being fundamental to the attainment of human rights (*Section 2.3.1 of the Code – Participation, Empowerment & Local Ownership*).

Interplast's activities are aligned with the Australian Government *Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy (2016)*.

Interplast also adheres to the following Australian legislation and international conventions and frameworks:

- Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Act)⁴ Beijing Platform of Action (1995);
- Federal Sex Discrimination Act (1984), Australia;
- Equal Opportunity Amendment (Family Responsibilities) Act 2008;
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986; and
- United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women CEDAW (1979).

5. Policy Statement

Interplast acknowledges that gender equality is a human rights issue.

This policy is based on the following principles:

- ensuring all staff, volunteers, Board and Committee members have an understanding of gender issues and the principles outlined in this policy;
- working with women, men, boys, girls and non-binary individuals in all of their diversity to improve quality of life;
- respecting the values and cultures of the people Interplast works with;

⁴ Interplast refers to <http://www.wgea.gov.au/> for updated information and resources around gender equality in the workplace

- encouraging participation of women in all areas of Interplast’s work;
- recognising the close connection between gender and disability, and gender and poverty;
- promoting gender equality to key stakeholders;
- recognising that women, non-binary individuals and/or sexual minorities with disability often face multiple stigmatisation and challenges in gaining access to quality health services; and
- recognising that gender intersects with other aspects of identity such as religion, caste, disability, sexual orientation and ethnicity.

6. Policy in Practice

This policy will be embedded in Interplast’s organisational culture and practice and will therefore ensure that:

- a) access to Interplast’s program activities (for both clinical treatment and for training opportunities) is not limited by gender identity⁵;
- b) where possible, the different needs and priorities of girls, boys, women men, and non-binary individuals in all of their diversity are identified when implementing its program activities;
- c) gender analysis tools are used during planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of programs;
- d) data regarding program beneficiaries (patients and trainees) are reported with disaggregation for sex, age and disability status where possible and appropriate;
- e) information on its activities reflects Interplast’s commitment to gender equality, and where possible, influences changing attitudes and practices that reinforce gender-based stereotypes;
- f) staff, Board, volunteer and partner capacity, knowledge and attitudes in the area of gender equality are increased through access to information and training; and
- g) Interplast is a safe environment and supports family-friendly work practices that enable both men and women to participate fully in work and family life.
- h) the Gender Action Plan (developed in 2018, following a review of Interplast’s Gender Equality Policy and practices), championed by an internal, representative Gender Working Group, will work through 2019 to ensure that Interplast is actively addressing all issues raised through the review. This Plan looks at both Interplast’s organisational processes, as well as the delivery of its international programs.

7. Monitoring and Review of Policy

This policy will be monitored and reviewed in line with the process outlined in the Policy Framework. The Program Manager is accountable to the CEO and Board for managing and maintaining compliance with this policy.

⁵ Note that Interplast patients are prioritised for surgery based on clinical and functional need, and the likelihood that there will be a successful outcome of their surgery. Local medical trainees are selected based on who is available, noting that often there are very few female plastic surgeons and anaesthetists in many of the countries in which we work, and conversely few male nurses and allied health practitioners.

Where compliance issues are identified, the Program Manager will work with staff and other relevant stakeholders to address these issues promptly.

Through the Gender Working Group, an annual report to the Board will be made on progress against the 2018 Gender Action Plan.

Any updates and revisions to this policy must be endorsed by Program Manager and CEO before being submitted to the Interplast Board for its approval. Policy changes will be reflected, as necessary, in updated operational manuals.

List of Acronyms

ACFID	Australian Council for International Development
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
NGO	Non-government organisation
WHO	World Health Organisation