

Progressio gender policy

Principles

- I. Progressio is committed to promoting gender justice through all of its work.
- II. Progressio believes that gender differences between human beings are socially constructed rather than biologically determined i.e simply male and female— and that they can change.
 - A. Gender differences are defined culturally, socially, economically and historically – and can be further affected by race, class, age, religion, ethnicity and sexual orientation. For instance, certain male attributes are often given a more positive value than female ones, and cultural norms can have far-reaching consequences, particularly for women.
- III. Progressio believes that, as affirmed in the Vienna Declaration on Human Rights of 1993¹, women's rights are human rights.
 - B. Gender differences are defined by relationships of power and powerlessness. Women and girls suffer inequality and discrimination, and become disproportionately affected by both poverty and oppression both in our own society and those in which we work. Although less recognised, men and boys too can be negatively affected by prevailing ideals of masculinity.
- IV. Progressio's approach to gender recognises women and men as agents of change.
 - A. Progressio programmes and projects will be designed with the active participation of those that they are meant to benefit, and they will work towards empowering women and girls as much as possible.
 - B. Working with men is essential. Men benefit from analysing the roots of gender relations. They can challenge cultural norms regarding masculinities which lead to injustice and gender-based violence. They can strategise for behaviour change, and they can promote positive images of masculinity, such as fatherhood and equal responsibility in both the public and private sphere.
- V. The different roles that women and men play in a community and the degree to which differences have been taken into account, can affect the success or failure of development interventions.
- VI. Progressio recognises that the gender impact of its work will vary across projects. Accordingly, Progressio's work will range from being gender aware

¹ The human rights of women and of the girl-child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. The full and equal participation of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life, at the national, regional and international levels, and the eradication of all forms of discrimination on grounds of sex are priority objectives of the international community. [http://www.unhcr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/\(Symbol\)/A.CONF.157.23.En](http://www.unhcr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/(Symbol)/A.CONF.157.23.En)

to being gender transformative as often as possible. By 'gender aware' Progressio means making sure it's work does not inadvertently have a negative impact on gender relations. By 'gender transformative', Progressio means having a positive impact on unequal gender relations.

Goal

Progressio will contribute to the creation of a society where men and women equally benefit from development opportunities, where their rights are equally respected and fulfilled, and where they can exert control over their lives.

Purpose

To that end, Progressio will integrate a transformative gender perspective in all its work.

Results

1. TRAINING

By 2009 Progressio will offer its new and existing staff, and DWs ongoing gender training and follow up.

2. COMMUNICATIONS

By 2009 Progressio will systematically promote gender issues in its external communications, with a focus on women leaders, women on faith and masculinities work.

3. SYSTEMS

By 2012 Progressio will have reviewed all its systems in order to make sure that they integrate a clear gender perspective, in line with the overall policy.

4. PROGRAMME ACTIVITY

By 2010, there will be more good examples of gender mainstreaming in our work.

5. LEARNING

By 2012 Progressio will have facilitated gender learning processes, both internally and externally.

6. M&E

By 2010 Progressio will be monitoring and evaluating its gender impact on the ground through the RICA framework.

Approved by SMT November 2008.