GENDER POLICY

SALMA ATTAH
FOUNDATION
FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS SUPPORT



SAFWGS

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Gender Policy

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Policy statement

SAFWGS exists to advance gender justice and the rights, education, leadership and economic empowerment of women and girls. This policy sets out how we put gender equality into practice in two places: in our own organisation, and in every programme, campaign and partnership we deliver.
We hold ourselves to the same standards we ask of government, communities and partners. A gender justice organisation that does not practise gender equality internally loses the trust of the people it serves.

Scope

This policy applies to the Board, staff, interns, fellows, volunteers, consultants and partner organisations, and to all SAFWGS programmes, research, communications and advocacy in Niger, Kaduna and Kano States, the Federal Capital Territory and online.

Key terms

Gender: the roles, behaviours and expectations that a society considers appropriate for women, men, girls and boys, which are learned and can change.
Gender equality: women, men, girls and boys have equal rights, responsibilities, opportunities and outcomes.
Gender equity: fair treatment that takes account of different needs and disadvantages, so that equality can be reached.
Gender mainstreaming: considering the different needs, priorities and experiences of women, men, girls and boys at every stage of a programme or decision.
Gender-based violence: any harmful act directed at someone because of their gender, including physical, sexual, emotional, economic and online violence and harmful practices.
Intersectionality: the way gender combines with age, disability, poverty, marital status, ethnicity, religion, location and other factors to shape a person's experience of discrimination.

Principles

- **Rights-based:** women and girls are rights-holders, not passive recipients of help
- **Leadership by women and girls:** the people most affected take part in designing, running and evaluating our work

- **Engaging men and boys:** men and boys are partners in change, as in our Boys as Allies work, without taking space or resources away from women and girls
- **Inclusion:** our work reaches women and girls who face more than one barrier, including girls with disabilities, out-of-school and married girls, and rural women
- **Do no harm:** we assess whether our work could expose women and girls to backlash or violence, and act to reduce that risk
- **Evidence and accountability:** we collect data that shows who benefits, and we report honestly on what changed and what did not

Gender equality inside SAFWGS

Recruitment and promotion. Job adverts use inclusive language and are shared through channels that reach women and other under-represented groups. Interview panels include at least one woman. Selection is based on merit and documented criteria.
Equal pay. Staff doing work of equal value receive equal pay and benefits, and the salary scale is reviewed each year for gender gaps.
Family-friendly work. SAFWGS provides maternity and paternity leave as set out in the HR Policy, supports breastfeeding mothers with breaks and a private space, and allows flexible working where the role permits.
Leadership and development. Training and development opportunities are offered fairly, and SAFWGS supports women staff to take on leadership roles.
Safe workplace. Sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination are serious misconduct and are handled under the HR Policy, the Adult Safeguarding and PSEA Policy and the Whistleblowing Policy.
Governance. The Board aims for a membership that reflects the women and girls SAFWGS serves, and reviews progress on this policy each year.

Gender in programmes

Every SAFWGS project, from design to evaluation, must:

- Start with a short gender and inclusion analysis that asks who is affected, who decides, who has access to resources, and what barriers different groups face
- Consult women and girls, and where relevant parents, traditional and religious leaders, schools and men and boys, before activities are finalised
- Plan sessions at times, places and in languages that women and girls can attend safely, including support for childcare, transport, menstrual health needs and disability access where possible
- Include gender-sensitive indicators and collect data disaggregated by sex, age and disability
- Budget for the costs of inclusion, safeguarding and accessibility
- Include a safeguarding risk check and referral options for survivors of gender-based violence
- Report results honestly, including where women and girls did not benefit as planned

Gender in advocacy and communications

- Present women and girls as leaders and agents of change, never as helpless or pitiful
- Use people's own words and stories only with informed consent, under the Communication and Visibility Policy
- Avoid stereotypes in language, images and examples, and use Hausa and other local languages accurately
- Base advocacy messages on evidence and cite sources

Partners and suppliers

SAFWGS prefers to work with partners and suppliers who share its commitment to gender equality. Partnership agreements include a commitment to this policy and to safeguarding, and SAFWGS supports partners to strengthen their own gender practice where needed.

Roles

- **Board:** approves this policy and reviews an annual report on its implementation
- **Executive Director:** is accountable for putting the policy into practice and resourcing it
- **Gender Officer:** advises on gender analysis, indicators and training, tracks implementation and prepares the annual report
- **Programme Manager and project leads:** apply this policy to every project and report on it
- **All staff and volunteers:** follow this policy in their own work and raise concerns

Training and monitoring

All staff and volunteers receive gender and inclusion training as part of their induction, with a refresher each year. Each year the Gender Officer reports to the Board on staff composition by sex, pay equity, gender analysis completed for projects, disaggregated programme data and any complaints received.

Contact and feedback

Questions, suggestions and concerns about gender equality at SAFWGS: gender@safwgs.org or +234 813 693 1762. Concerns about harassment, abuse or exploitation should be reported under the safeguarding or whistleblowing policies through info@safwgs.org.

Legal and policy framework

This policy is guided by the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the National Gender Policy, the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act 2015, the Child's Rights Act 2003, the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act 2018, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Maputo Protocol, and the Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal 5.

Related policies

- HR Policy
- Adult Safeguarding and PSEA Policy
- Child Safeguarding Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Communication and Visibility Policy

Approval

Approved by the Board of SAFWGS in November 2026. This policy will be reviewed in November 2027, or earlier if the law, a funder requirement or SAFWGS's work changes. Approved by the Board of Trustees of SAFWGS by resolution dated 12 November 2026. Signed copies are held by SAFWGS and are available to funders and partners on request.