

GENDER POLICY

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**PREMIERE
URGENCE
INTERNATIONALE**

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I. INTRODUCTION

Première Urgence Internationale (PUI) assists civilian victims, marginalized or excluded by the effects of war, natural disasters, and/or economic collapse. Our mandate, as a humanitarian association, is to defend fundamental human rights, as defined in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Our commitment is to empower survivors to take back their futures, recovering their autonomy and dignity, guaranteeing the protection of their universal and inalienable rights.

Promoting gender equality in humanitarian projects is a sine qua non condition for the success of our interventions. PUI places gender equality at the center of its actions and mandate because we know that we cannot provide a satisfactory humanitarian response until all people have the same chances, rights and opportunities.

In the health sector, WHO has described gender and gender inequality as two major social determinants of health care access¹. As such, the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights states that the exercise of the health right involves the principles of:

- Non-discrimination ;
- Equity;
- Equality, applying a gender perspective².

PUI is committed to ensuring that gender equality is fully integrated throughout its work as a universal human right, a goal in itself but also as a driver for personal and community resilience across all sectors.

II. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF APPLICATION

The objective of this policy is first and foremost to clarify PUI's commitments to promote a common, respectful, gender-sensitive culture among all its employees at the policy, institutional and operational levels.

At an operational level, the objective of this policy is to improve the impact and quality of PUI's interventions through a gender-transformative approach at all stages of the humanitarian response: planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, programs, projects and research conducted by PUI.

¹ WHO, *Gender and Health*, <https://www.who.int/fr/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/gender>

² United Nations, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, 1966

All of PUI's decision-making entities, and therefore all of its employees at headquarters and in the field, are responsible for ensuring that these commitments are implemented and adapted to the social, legal, cultural and political contexts of the countries in which PUI operates.

Developing a gender-transformative approach means, on the one hand, acquiring a framework and a methodology for analyzing gender roles and relationships, factors of influence, power dynamics, access to and control of resources according to gender, and the different levels of empowerment of people and communities. On the other hand, it is also a tool to analyze the level of integration of gender issues in the projects, actions and public and organizational policies of an institution or association. It is a methodology that allows for the implementation of cross-cutting and/or targeted actions to respond to the issues previously analyzed.

The inclusion of a gender-transformative approach is a process that must be accompanied in the short, medium and long term and can have different levels of complexity and involvement.

This policy is also complemented by a set of internal documents dealing with technical, operational and specific aspects related to gender issues (Gender-Based Violence, Gender Mainstreaming Approach, Gender Analysis, HR Policy, Quality of Interventions Policy, Code of Conduct & Ethical Policies, etc.).

III. PUI'S PRINCIPLES AND COMMITMENTS

INSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLES

PUI is committed to respecting and applying the following principles, necessary to achieve our commitments:

- ➔ PUI recognizes gender equality as a top priority;
- ➔ PUI recognizes that gender equality is fundamental to its mission and mandate;
- ➔ All interventions carried out by PUI take into account the context and respect the fundamental rights of all people, without discrimination;
- ➔ PUI collaborators ensure the inclusion and active participation of women, girls, boys, men and persons of gender X in all proposed interventions;
- ➔ PUI's intervention strategies, programs and policies are defined on the basis of a « gender analysis³ » conducted annually in all response contexts, whether emergency situations, development contexts, or headquarters, expatriate and national human resources policies;

³ The gender analysis pack, which includes a data sheet and implementation tools, is available on request

- ➔ PUI collaborators are committed to taking corrective action in any situation in which the institutional principles for promoting gender equality in PUI's policies, programs, projects, and research are not respected;
- ➔ PUI respects the fundamental humanitarian principle of « Do no harm » and commits to the prevention of and mitigation against any potential negative impacts that its actions might have (Protection mainstreaming⁴) in all its interventions;
- ➔ PUI employees are committed to reporting abuses and breaches of the Code of Conduct through management channels or the PUI's alert mechanism⁵.

The following chapters introduce the fundamental elements of PUI's Gender Policy, namely the promotion of an approach that combines efforts to incorporate and target gender equality, as well as the creation of an organizational environment that allows gender issues to be meaningfully integrated into all areas of the association's work.

OPERATIONAL COMMITMENTS

Human Resources and Training

To ensure that employees are able to integrate a gender approach, PUI is committed to:

- ➔ Planning for the human, technical and financial resources needed to meet its responsibilities to gender mainstreaming and gender equality;
- ➔ Setting up training and sensitization mechanisms to provide tools to people working for/with PUI and to accompany them in the integration of the gender approach in their daily practices;
- ➔ Strengthening actions and policies that promote harmony between the private and professional lives of all people in the association, thus avoiding « glass ceilings » ;
- ➔ Implementing Human Resources actions that support gender equality and non-discrimination in recruitment, salary policy and participation of people at all levels and in all bodies of the association;
- ➔ Implementing inclusive internal and external communication (e.g. inclusive writing) and without gender stereotypes promoting messages in favor of gender equality.

Mainstreaming the Integration of Gender approaches

The gender approach must be mainstreamed into all departments, all sectors of intervention, programs, projects, strategies, and policies of PUI, regardless of the context and sectors of intervention. The objective is gender analysis: the measurement and evaluation of the impact of PUI's interventions at each stage of the project cycle management, from planning to evaluation. In concrete terms, this means that PUI is committed to:

⁴ Refer to the transversal protection pack, available on the GPS

⁵ Refer to PUI's Policy on Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment.

- ➔ Strengthening actions to prevent and respond to discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnic origin, religion, disability, and physical appearance in its programs;
- ➔ Preventing, and when possible taking action against gender-based violence and sexual abuse and exploitation, notably through the implementation and dissemination of the existing Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy (PSEAH);
- ➔ Conducting gender needs analysis in all its programs;
- ➔ Adapting projects, responses and actions to respond, in a non-discriminatory and non-stereotypical manner, to gender-specific needs and to reduce gender inequalities in access to and use of humanitarian services;
- ➔ Including the « gender annexes »⁶ of the gender approach as mandatory tools for annual strategic planning as well as existing projects programming, monitoring and evaluation;
- ➔ Developing and disseminate tools, guides, and best practices to raise awareness of gender issues within PUI's missions.

Specific actions to promote gender mainstreaming in PUI's actions are developed and reviewed annually when the protection mainstreaming framework is reviewed and deployed. Gender mainstreaming is part of the efforts and responsibilities of cross-cutting protection, which are reinforced within PUI's Quality Policy for Interventions and within the association's Protection Mainstreaming package.

⁶ Gender Mainstreaming Package, available on request.

IV. COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE STANDARDS

In recent years, the humanitarian community has made significant efforts to integrate gender issues into its work. Indeed, a significant number of framework documents and gender policies have been developed, although their implementation by humanitarian actors remains a challenge.

Various internationally accepted and recognized guidelines have also been produced and should be used as reference tools for the design and implementation of gender-sensitive humanitarian projects. It is essential for PUI to respect this set of standards and to ensure that they are the foundation and reference points in PUI's gender approach.

These framework documents include:

- ➔ The Inter-Agency Standing Committee's operational recommendations on gender mainstreaming (IASC)⁷ ;
- ➔ The IASC Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action (revised 2017) ;
- ➔ Sphere standards, addressing gender as a cross-cutting theme;
- ➔ Gender in humanitarian intervention, DG ECHO⁸ ;
- ➔ Numerous gender training modules, aimed at creating a gender lens⁹.

In addition, many institutional donors have integrated gender into the evaluation of project applications, and most international agencies regularly recruit gender experts. In addition, the IASC Gender Standby Capacity (GenCap) deploys gender focal points to support « Humanitarian Country Teams » and clusters in a number of humanitarian contexts.

In the same vein, WHO, UN Women, the European Union (DG ECHO), INSERM, Global Affairs Canada (GAC), the French Development Agency (AFD), the Global Protection Cluster (GPC), and the International Accounting Standards Committee (IASC) have also noted the importance of incorporating this integrated gender and rights approach into health policies in order to combat health inequalities.

Finally, in an effort to improve programs and measure results, some agencies have adopted gender markers, such as that of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee¹⁰.

⁷ <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2020-09/The%20Gender%20Handbook%20for%20Humanitarian%20Action.pdf>

⁸ https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/gender_thematic_policy_document_fr.pdf

⁹ <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-training>

¹⁰ <https://iascgenderwithagemarker.com/en/home/>

V. ANNEX - GLOSSARY¹¹

DIVERSITY

Diversity refers to different values, attitudes, cultural perspectives, beliefs, ethnic backgrounds, nationalities, sexual orientations, gender identity, ability, health, social status, skill and other specific personal characteristics. Whilst age and gender dimensions are present in everyone, other characteristics vary from person to person. These differences must be recognized, understood and valued...in each specific context and operation in order to ensure protection for all people. (UNHCR).

EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

The empowerment of women concerns women gaining power and control over their own lives. It involves awarenessraising, building self-confidence, expansion of choices, increased access to and control over resources and actions to transform the structures and institutions that reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination and inequality. (UN-Women. 2001. 'Important Concepts Underlying Gender Mainstreaming', utilized in IASC GBV Guidelines 2015)

GENDER

Gender refers to the socially-constructed differences between females and males — and the relationships between and among them — throughout their life cycle. They are context- and time-specific and change over time, within and across cultures. Gender, together with age group, sexual orientation and gender identity, determines roles, responsibilities, power and access to resources. This is also affected by other diversity factors such as disability, social class, race, caste, ethnic or religious background, economic wealth, marital status, migrant status, displacement situation and urban/rural setting. (Revised definition from the IASC Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action 2006)

GENDER EQUALITY

Gender equality, or equality between women and men, refers to the equal enjoyment by women and men, girls and boys, of rights, opportunities, resources and rewards. Equality does not mean that women, men, girls and boys are the same; but that their enjoyment of rights, opportunities and life chances are not governed or limited by whether they were born female or male. (IASC Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action 2006)

¹¹ *The Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action, IASC, 2017*

GENDER IDENTITY

Gender identity refers to a person's innate, deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond to the person's physiology or designated sex at birth. (UNAIDS Terminology Guidelines)

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Gender mainstreaming is a strategy for achieving gender equality. Gender mainstreaming is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality. (Economic and Social Council Agreed Conclusions 1997/2)

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Gender-based violence (GBV) "is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will and that is based on socially-ascribed (i.e., gender) differences between males and females. It includes acts that inflict physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty. These acts can occur in public or in private."

LGBTI/SEXUAL AND GENDER MINORITIES

LGBTI stands for "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex" persons. Whilst these terms have increasing global resonance, in different cultures other terms may be used to describe people who form same-sex relationships and those who exhibit non-binary gender identities. In a human rights context, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people face both common and distinct challenges. Intersex people (those born with atypical sex characteristics) suffer many of the same kinds of human rights violations as LGBT people.

PROTECTION

Protection refers to all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the intrinsic rights of all individuals in accordance with international law — international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law — taking into account differences in age, gender, minority or other background. (IASC Emergency Directors Group Preliminary Guidance Note: Protection and Accountability to Affected Populations in the Humanitarian Programme Cycle).

SEX

The physical and biological characteristics that distinguish males and females. It refers to a person's anatomy and physical attributes such as external and internal reproductive sex organs. (UN-Women 2017 Gender Equality Glossary)

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE

Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) is a common acronym in the humanitarian world referring to acts of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse committed by United Nations, NGO and inter-governmental personnel against the affected population. PSEA refers to the protection from sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian staff. Refer to the PSEA website for more information and tools

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Sexual orientation refers to a person's capacity for emotional, romantic and sexual attraction for another person. It refers to attractions towards individuals of a different sex/gender or of the same sex/gender. There are three predominant sexual orientations: same sex/gender (homosexuality), towards the opposite sex/gender (heterosexuality) or towards both sexes/genders (bisexuality). (UN-Women 2017 Gender Equality Glossary)