



DIVERSITY, EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY

In congruence with the NDRMF Gender Policy

May 2018

This document presents as Diversity, Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy of the National Disaster Management Fund, approved by the Executive Committee to the Board of Directors of NDRMF in their 7th meeting held on April 22, 2018.

National Disaster Management Fund (NDRMF)

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

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| FIPs | Fund Implementation Partners |
| GM | General Manager |
| GRM | Grievance Redressal Mechanism |
| HR | Human Resource |
| NDRMF | National Disaster Risk Management Fund |
| PWDs | Persons with Disabilities |
| UN | United Nations |

Glossary of Terms

Affirmative Actions: Deliberate and usually short-term measures to discriminate in order to create a gender and persons with disabilities (PWDs) balance until parity is achieved.

Disability: An impairment that may be cognitive, developmental, intellectual, mental, physical, sensory, or some combination of these. It substantially affects a person's life activities and may be present from birth or occur during a person's lifetime.

Discrimination: Prejudicial treatment of an individual based on gender or disabilities stereotype.

Gender: The social relations between men and women, boys and girls in a given culture or location. Gender identity is learned.

Gender Awareness: Recognition that there is inequality in the conditions and positions of men and women, boys and girls, and that these inequalities are systemically caused and perpetuated.

Gender Balance: Equal representation and participation of women and men in all structures.

Gender Based Discrimination: Systematic bias in which a person is denied his or her rights because of being a woman, girl, boy or man.

Gender Bias: Prejudiced actions against women or men, boys or girls in the belief that the other sex is inferior or less deserving.

Gender Equality: Refers to the same status, rights and responsibilities for and equal sharing of power between women and men, such as, equal access to education, health, administrative and managerial positions, equal pay for work of equal value, etc.

Gender Gap: The gap between men and women in terms of how they benefit from education, employment, services, etc.

Gender Issues: Specific consequences of the inequality of women and men.

Gender Roles: Gender roles are culturally defined role. Both men and women play multiple roles in society. The gender roles of women can be identified as reproductive, productive and community managing roles, while men's are categorized as either productive or community politics. Gender roles are dynamic and change over time.

Gender Sensitivity: Awareness of, and respect for the needs, interests and sensibilities of women as women and men as men, e.g. not using derogatory language, avoiding stereotypes, avoiding patronizing language, providing facilities for both in public places in recognition of different needs etc.

Sex: The biological differences between women and men, such as women can give birth, and men provide sperm.

Person with Disabilities: Those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others (The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2002)

Introduction

The Pakistani society is largely multilingual, multi-ethnic and multicultural. Majorly of these diverse communities involve *Punjabi, Sindhi, Baloch, Pashtun, Seraiki, Mohajir, Kashmiri, Makrani*, and the ancient *Wakhi and Burusho* groups in the North.

The country's 48.76% population consists of women¹. Despite increases in recent years, female labor force participation in Pakistan is 25%², which represents a major loss of potential productivity. This has implications for women's empowerment, as working women are more likely to play a role in decision making processes³. There is a need to take affirmative actions⁴ to enhance women participation in the workforce.

As per 2017 census 0.48%⁵ population consist of persons with disabilities (PWDs). This data has been challenged by a number of organizations as the ratio of PWDs has fallen by 80% - the 1998 census reported 3.28m PWDs. In 1980s Pakistan made attempts to include PWDs. However, PWDs are still excluded from the workforce and the society⁶.

Being a rights based organization⁷, NDRMF values diversity; encourages fairness and justice; and promotes equal opportunities. Its commitment to diversity and equality applies across the board. Internally the values of inclusivity and equality are central to the way, individuals with diverse identities and backgrounds are recruited, respected and valued. Externally it is at the heart of its work and the relationship building.

NDRMF views diversity as a description of the visible and invisible differences that exist between individuals, such as, gender, ethnic⁸ origin, physical and mental ability, age, economic class, language, religious belief, sect followed education, family background and marital status, that lead to differential experiences, values, attitudes, ways of thinking, behaving, communicating and working.

The Policy Statement

NDRMF committed to take affirmative actions to ensure that all employees⁹ and prospective employees including equal opportunity group members have fair and equal access to employment, career development opportunities and benefits. All employees will be treated fairly, respectfully and valued to be able to give their best to the Fund.

Any kind of discrimination on the ground of gender, ethnic¹⁰ origin, physical and mental ability, age, economic class, language, religious belief, sect followed education, family background and marital status, caring responsibilities and job responsibilities will not be tolerated.

Designated Equal Opportunity Groups

Currently following groups have been designated as equal opportunity groups:

- ❖ women;
- ❖ members of ethnic, religious and sectarian minorities;

¹ <http://www.pbs.gov.pk/content/provisional-summary-results-6th-population-and-housing-census-2017-0>

² ILO, Pakistan - Labor Force Survey 2014-2015 <http://www.ilo.org/surveydata/index.php/catalog/1044>

³ ADB Policy Briefs No. 70: ADB Policy Brief Female Labor Force Participation Pakistan, October 2016. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/209661/female-labor-force-participation-pakistan.pdf>

⁴ Action favoring those who tend to suffer from discrimination; positive discrimination.

⁵ The National 6th Population and Housing Census 2017 <http://www.pbs.gov.pk/content/provisional-summary-results-6th-population-and-housing-census-2017-0>

⁶ Leading to economic losses of as much as US\$11.9bn-15.4bn, or 4.9-6.3% of Pakistan's GDP. (Economist Intelligence Unit estimates based on analysis by Robert L. Metts, "Disability issues, trends and recommendations for the World Bank", World Bank, 2000.)

⁷ A rights-based organization applies human rights values and principles. It promotes participation, accountability and non-discrimination as much in its internal procedures as in its program activities.

⁸ Relating to a population subgroup (within a larger or dominant national or cultural group) with a common national or cultural tradition.

⁹ Part-time, full-time, or temporary, interns or volunteers.

¹⁰ Relating to a population subgroup (within a larger or dominant national or cultural group) with a common national or cultural tradition.

- ❖ Persons with disabilities.

Strategies

Equal opportunity strategies for these groups include recruitment programs; access to training; career development; benefits, and supportive environment that nurtures respect for equal opportunity groups.

Outcome

The policy is designed to achieve:

- ❖ a diverse and skilled workforce;
- ❖ improved employment access and participation by equal opportunity groups; and
- ❖ a culture that display fair workplace practices and behaviors.

The Key Policy Features

NDRMF is committed to:

- ❖ ensure gender equality and diversity at the workplace;
- ❖ create work environment that promotes dignity and respect; in which differences and the contributions are recognised and valued;
- ❖ make training, development, and progression opportunities equally available to all employees;
- ❖ zero tolerance for any form of intimidation, bullying, or harassment, and discipline those who breach the Policy;
- ❖ encourage employees discriminated against raise their concerns, so that corrective measures can be taken;
- ❖ regularly review all employment practices and procedures to make the Fund more diverse, just and fair.

Definitions

It is recognised that discrimination can be both direct and indirect. The direct and indirect discrimination can be defined as following. It should be noted that these are not necessarily legal definitions:

- Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than others (in the same or similar circumstances) and puts that person at a disadvantage position. It can be on the grounds of gender, ethnic, origin, physical and mental ability, age, economic class, language, religious belief, sect followed education, family background and marital status, caring responsibilities and/or job responsibilities.
- Indirect discrimination occurs when a condition, requirement, rule, policy or even a practice adversely affects one particular group considerably more than another, which cannot be justified in terms of the requirements for performing the job. In some instances PWDs, women, or religious minorities are treated less favourably than others to whom the reason does not apply.

Particular attention is drawn to the following aspects of the policy:

- Gender based discrimination covers discrimination on grounds of sex or marital status or notions associated with the role of men and women in society. The NDRMF is committed to the removal of potential discriminatory barriers at the workplace, which may adversely affect the progress of men and women at work.
- Discrimination on the ground of ethnicity covers discrimination based on colour, ethnic origins, or language spoken.
- Discrimination against persons with disabilities covers discrimination against PWDs on account of injury, illness or inherited conditions maybe disadvantaged in getting or keeping employment for which otherwise suitable.
- Religion based discrimination: covers discrimination related to a person's religious belief, sect or similar philosophical belief.

Implementation Framework

Following steps will be taken to ensure that employees, do not suffer unfair discrimination on the basis of areas mentioned in the policy.

Monitoring & Reporting

- ❖ The Policy will be posted at the Fund website;
- ❖ It will be communicated to all employees and job applicants;
- ❖ An efficient implementation system will be put in place to ensure proper implementation of the Policy;
- ❖ The policy monitoring reports will be shared with the management and staff;
- ❖ A section on the Policy implementation will be included in the NDRMF Annual Reports;
- ❖ The Policy will be reviewed, after 1.5-year and if needed revised.

Recruitment & Staff Development

- ❖ NDRMF will comply with 'The Disabled Persons Employment and Rehabilitation Ordinance 1981' that fixed 2% employment quota for PWDs¹¹;
- ❖ Initially, 20% quota has been fixed for women. An incremental approach will be taken and this quota will increase gradually. Efforts will be made to recruit more women at all levels of the Fund;
- ❖ Prior to any recruitment, the Human Resource (HR) Unit as well as respective Unit or Group Head will analyze ratio equal opportunity group members in the Unit or Group, and if needed, take appropriate steps to achieve gender balance and diversity targets;
- ❖ All job adverts will clearly state that 'NDRMF encourages women and PWDs to apply';
- ❖ Gender balance will be maintained in the selection panel. These members will be oriented on equality and diversity issues;
- ❖ Understanding of gender and diversity issues will be an important criteria for recruitment. During the recruitment process the attitude of the potential employee will be assessed in terms of gender sensitivity, diversity, inclusiveness, and justice;
- ❖ Questions that assess competencies, skills and attitude of the candidate regarding gender equality and diversity will be included in the tests/interviews;
- ❖ The equal opportunity groups will be taken into consideration when deciding who to recruit or promote; however, only in the instance where two or more candidates who are 'as qualified as' one another and who are equally as capable of doing the job. The abilities, merits, and qualifications of all candidates will be considered, and the individual from equal opportunities groups will be selected to improve equality and diversity at the workplace;
- ❖ All employees will be provided with equal opportunity to apply for available jobs, higher duties, job rotation schemes and flexible working arrangements;
- ❖ All employees will be provided with appropriate and accessible learning opportunities in line with the Fund's needs;
- ❖ Persons with diverse background and members of equal opportunity groups will be recruited at all levels;
- ❖ The HR policies will ensure that recruitment, selection and promotion processes are open, competitive and based on merit and the best applicant is selected for the job;
- ❖ Fair allocation of workloads to be ensured.

Work Environment

- ❖ To change attitude and behaviors of staff, The HR Unit will organize mandatory 'gender equality' and 'inclusiveness and diversity' training for all staff members;
- ❖ In order to create a fair work environment, open discussions on discrimination and gender based violence will be encouraged;
- ❖ Special training will be provided to meet special development needs of employees from equal opportunity groups;

¹¹ www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1423974101_958.pdf

- ❖ Special measures will be taken to make facilities like washrooms, workstation, food facilities and other work related amenities accessible to the PWDs;
- ❖ Access to flexible working arrangements that assist staff in balancing work and family commitments will be provided. NDRMF's flexible work practices will include temporary part time work options, job sharing, leave without pay, personal careers' leave, maternity leave and paternity leave;
- ❖ Respect for different religions followed by team members to be promoted. Employees will be given due space to celebrate/observe their religious festivities like *Eid*, *Aashoor*, Christmas, Easter, *Holi*, *Dewali*, *Besakhi* and any other relevant events.

Grievance Redressal Mechanism

- ❖ Disciplinary actions will be taken who breach the Policy;
- ❖ The Grievance redressal mechanism (GRM) put in place by HR will deal with grievances;
- ❖ All complaints will be dealt promptly and fairly and swiftly investigated and actions necessary under normal grievance procedures will be initiated;
- ❖ Victimization of individuals who make complaints regarding discrimination on the basis of areas covered by the Policy statement will not be tolerated. In this regards serious disciplinary including termination of employment will be taken.

Responsibility and Accountability

The Policy applies to all Units and Groups, and to all staff members. It is the responsibility of each team member.

The Senior Management

The Chief Executive Officer has statutory responsibility for the successful implementation of the Policy. Corporate responsibility is delegated to HR and General Managers. However, every employee is responsible to actively promote equality and inclusiveness within her/his own sphere of responsibility prevent discrimination at the workplace.

The Human Resource Unit

HR is responsible for putting system in place to implement the Policy. Put GRM in place. Investigate complaints regarding discrimination and initiate action where necessary under GRM. If needed, discipline team member who breach the Policy.

Inform all employees that the Policy is operational. Ensure that the Policy is included in new employees' induction packs. Organize mandatory equality and diversity training for all employees including management.

Continuously assess processes and ensure they are not discriminatory. It needed, refine processes. Monitor implementation of the Policy and report back to the senior management.

The Employee

Discrimination prevention is a joint responsibility. They must treat others with dignity and respect. All employees have to comply with the Policy.

Any staff member who believes that s/he has been subjected to any form of discrimination or who witnesses others being subjected to discrimination is encouraged to promptly report the incident(s) to the GR committee. (Please refer to the Grievance Redressal Policy.)

The Supervisor

All supervisors will make every effort to maintain a work environment that is free from any form of discrimination. Supervisors are expected to take all allegations of discrimination, seriously, and immediately refer the matter to the manager (for informal settlement of grievances) or grievance redressal committee (for formal redressal).