

Part 1 — Women's Rights and
Gender Equality



2021

CSO Accountability in Focus

How did our members score?



2.6 / 4

Out of the 15 Member reports reviewed in 2021.

This average was calculated using the scores given by the IRP when reviewing Member accountability reports. For more information please read our [reporting framework](#).

The realisation of gender equality is not only a matter of justice, but also vital for the socio-economic development of peaceful societies. Gender-equal access to crucial political and economic resources enables more people to participate fully in society and achieve their true potential. We define gender equality as equal ease of access to resources and opportunities regardless of gender, including economic participation and decision-making; and as the state of valuing different behaviours, aspirations and needs equally, regardless of gender.

““””

Gender-equal access ... enables more people to participate fully in society and achieve their true potential.

Where gender inequality exists, it is generally women who are excluded or disadvantaged in relation to decision-making and access to economic and social resources. According to UN Women, a recent global analysis on gender equality and women's rights shows that women and girls remain disproportionately affected by the socioeconomic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic, struggling with disproportionately high job and livelihood losses, education disruptions and increased burdens of unpaid care work. Women's health services, poorly funded even before the pandemic, faced major disruptions, undermining women's sexual and reproductive health. And despite women's central role in responding to COVID-19, including as front-line health workers, they are still largely bypassed for the leadership positions they deserve.

It is because of the exacerbation of gender inequality that this year's Accountability in Focus Report takes a look at what [our Members](#) are doing to address structural barriers to women's economic empowerment and to systematically integrate gender analysis in all their programmatic and organisational work. We believe that CSOs must promote behaviours and attitudes that ensure opportunities, rights and obligations of women and girls in all spheres of life.

Women's rights and gender equality is one of the Accountable Now's [12 Accountability Commitments](#).



CSOs must promote behaviours and attitudes that ensure opportunities, rights, and obligations of women and girls in all spheres of life.



Our commitment encourages our Members to reflect on questions like:

What action is your organisation carrying out to promote women's rights and gender equality?



How do you obtain, validate and analyse information about root causes of gender exclusion and inequality?



How does your organisation ensure fair recruitment and employment with regard to female hires? What is the gender pay gap in your organisation and what measures do you have in place to bridge that gap?



What relevant policies or procedures are in place? And most importantly, how do these work in practice?



Through these questions, we are encouraging our Members to assess and think about how they are promoting and advancing gender equality. Women's rights and gender equality must be promoted and also advanced by mainstreaming these elements into programmes, policies, structures and employment practices. Furthermore, regular and participatory gender systemic analyses should be conducted to make sure that organisations are on the right track.

Staff should also be supported with training on topics such as gender analysis, gender programming, gender equality and equity and gender identity, among others. Planning processes must include consultation with those marginalised due to their gender, in particular women and girls, to allow for contextual analysis of the barriers to their inclusion and identification of opportunities for their participation.

Lastly, CSOs should address men and boys as crucial stakeholders in prevailing social relations, and should involve a diverse group of stakeholders in the promotion and respect of women's rights.

How are our Members promoting women's rights and equality?

When reviewing our Members' accountability reports submitted in 2021, we can see that most of them have programmes that respond to women and girls specific needs and opportunities, while acknowledging their culture. The commitment of promoting women's rights and gender equality has been formalised through one or more policies. Mainstreaming gender equality at the organisational level is a crucial element that members have addressed through commitments to equal opportunities for women.



““””
How does your organisation practice being inclusive and protecting human rights, including promoting women's rights and gender equality, in accordance with commitments 1-2?

all **15**

Members provide **equal opportunities for women within the organisation**. 8 of them also recognise women's specific needs and ensure that they have opportunities to assert their rights.



13

Members have programmes that respond to women and girls specific needs and opportunities, while acknowledging their culture.

In 2021, we received 15 full accountability reports from our Members and when reviewing these, we were able to draw the following data:

11

organisations have at least one **policy addressing women's right and gender equality**.



6

organisations are explicitly committed to gender balance in **leadership and governance positions**.

4

measured their **gender pay gap** at headquarters only. 4 out of 5 identified a gender pay gap favouring men. 3 of them have planned actions to **bridge the gap**.

only **1**

Member measured its gender pay across all locations.

These numbers are a reflection of the importance that women's rights and gender equality have for our Members. It is important to highlight that just because an organisation does not have a policy, it does not mean that practices and actions are not taken to advance the commitment.

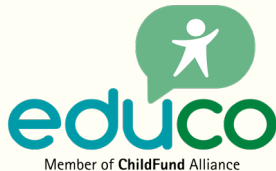


In the following pages, we will share concrete examples on how our Members are mainstreaming gender at programme and organisational levels, taking into account intersectionalities in gender inequality. Special attention is dedicated to the prevention of gender-based violence and how Members advocate for the special needs of women and girls. To finish we look at how progress on advancing women's rights and gender equality is measured. While Members have shared comprehensive information in their reports on advancing women's rights, a broader perspective to gender equality is also common across their approaches.

Mainstreaming gender at programme and organisational levels

Gender integration in programmes and organisational work is common across Members. How gender is mainstreamed varies greatly. Some organisations have overarching diversity policies that address how gender lenses are applied in different areas. Others have policies with a narrower scope addressing separately gender mainstreaming in programmes on one hand, and internal practices such as equal employment opportunities on the other.

Beyond policies, Member organisations demonstrated practices that advance the commitment, for example, conducting gender analysis, providing equal opportunities within the organisations, and ensuring safety and non-discrimination. Some examples that illustrate the mainstreaming of gender:



Educo's [Gender Equity Policy](#) is applied globally and its implementation promoted by a Gender Equity Commission. One of the milestones of the Commission has been the appointment of a gender expert. In Bolivia, the Program "Protejerer" has developed a Gender Strategy which stipulates the positioning of the Programme and provides guidelines for the promotion of equitable gender relations, addressing strategies such as the analysis of relationships, the empowerment of girls and adolescent women and the promotion of positive masculinities in boys and adolescent men as well as in the adult population, men and women.



Restless Development's programmes and initiatives are based on gender awareness and a strong agency level commitment to gender equality. To support this, the [gender principles](#) guide the design and delivery of work. For example, "All programmes specifically address gender across the model, resourcing activities appropriately and not assuming that outcomes for all genders will be the same with the same activities". Also, a **Gender Committee** formed by staff members from across Hubs, drives different initiatives to increase understanding of the organisation's approach to gender and how it can become more gender transformative.



Amnesty International's International Secretariat formalises its commitment to providing equal opportunities in the workplace through the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy. Nine 'protected characteristics' including gender reassignment, sex/gender, and sexual orientation are considered in the guidance provided for recruitment interviews to ensure consistency and fairness.



The **World YWCA's** [Transgender Inclusion policy](#), addresses the needs of transgender and gender non-conforming employees and how to protect the rights and/or safety of such employees, maximizing the employee's workplace integration and minimizing stigmatization.



Plan International strengthens and **builds partnerships that promote respect for gender equality**, diversity, and inclusion. Engaging partners in joint approaches to promote gender equality, girls' rights, and inclusion, and expanding their partnership base, Plan International gives particular emphasis to representative groups such as women's and girls' rights movements, disabled people's organisations, indigenous rights movements, and LGBTIQ4 networks, among others.

Intersectional Gender Inequalities

Members acknowledged that gender interacts with other social identities to shape bias, therefore gender inequality cannot be tackled as a standalone issue. Members apply intersectional lenses when it comes to gender related work. Here is an example that illustrates this approach:



ChildFund New Zealand conducted gender and disability analyses which also considered **intersectional** biases such as ageism, ethnicity, caste, class, religion, colonial history, and sexual orientation. A tool was used to monitor, course-correct, and learn in this context.

Advocating for the specific needs of women and girls

Meaningful impact on structural and cultural causes of gender inequality is only possible through the aligned efforts of many actors at different levels, including governments and media. CSOs must play a role in supporting and amplifying women and girls full participation in society. Here some examples on how Members are doing this:



Plan International ensured that their work is relevant by **designing advocacy work based on the views of girls, young women and their communities** and by supporting their participation in and leadership of social mobilisation efforts including campaigns and other influencing platforms. Their [Girls Get Equal global campaign](#) advocated with girls and young women to secure meaningful platforms where they can use their voices to demand change.



The renovated **World YWCA [She Speaks engagement platform](#)** features contributions from women, young women and girls driving social change and transforming power structures for gender equality through everyday activism. A guidance toolkit was created in World YWCA's three official languages (English, French and Spanish) to best utilise the platform and raise the voices of young women.



Transparency International is increasingly and more systematically assessing the impact of corruption on women and men in their global programmes, with the generation and analysis of gender disaggregated data and the compilation of reports, papers and studies on gender and corruption. As part of Transparency International's **Global Corruption Barometer**, a gender analysis of its findings in Africa, Latin America and MENA was carried out.

Preventing gender-based violence

CSOs that understand the people and the communities they work for and with, and also their unique cultural context, are in a unique position to work towards ending gender-based violence and empowering people to understand their rights and be able to get help when they find themselves victims of abuse.



SOS Children's Villages International's family strengthening programmes promoted women's rights by facilitating access to economic empowerment opportunities and providing specialised services for survivors of domestic violence. In some countries, family strengthening teams implement services focused specifically on fathers: they provide educational programmes or set up support groups to prevent domestic violence and help fathers learn to be more involved in the care of their children.



The **World YWCA** shared a [toolkit](#) as part of the global advocacy campaign to end gender-based violence. The theme focused on COVID-19 and its impact on gender-based violence, especially marginalised and minority groups. This is a key strategic step to ensure that training and use of the methodology within YWCAs and in the broader human rights sector is strategic and purposeful.

Measuring progress on advancing women's rights and gender equality

The vast amount of work done by CSOs on advancing women's rights and gender equality, begs the question: how are CSOs measuring progress? As gender work gets mainstreamed in programmatic work, it becomes more challenging to grasp what progress is made specifically on advancing women's rights and gender equality.

Members' organisations disaggregated gender in M&E systems, so that gender specific challenges and opportunities are identified. CSOs aim to prioritise those programmes that prove to be addressing root causes of gender inequality.

Here are two examples from Member organisations on how they sought to better understand what progress their programmes had from a gender perspective:



World Vision International strengthened its **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Policy** and adopted **30 indicators** which are used to track implementation. WVI tightened up the requirements for gender disaggregation in their programme management system; this will address some of the gaps that were faced in comprehensively analysing how their impact on children's well-being is broken down by gender and other dimensions of inclusion.



Plan International's Gender Transformative Marker was introduced as a **more robust measure of Gender Transformative Programming and Influencing**. It provides a structured review process that allows for collective reflection, ensures common understanding and builds the capacity of staff and partners. Of the small sample of projects that were evaluated and uploaded by the end of FY20, 53% are Gender Transformative and 40% are Gender Aware. Gender Transformative projects include addressing the root causes of gender inequality and reshaping unequal power relations. Gender Aware projects address practical gender and exclusion issues, but do not tackle root causes.

Gender Pay Gap

Measuring progress on advancing women's rights and gender equality at the organisational level, is key for CSOs to understand the real impact of internal policies and processes on fighting gender inequality internally. Commitments to ensure balanced leadership representation, safe spaces for people of all genders to speak up, and strong policy frameworks on ensuring a safe workplace environment are some of the mechanisms CSOs have. But how to assess the impact of these mechanisms in advancing women's rights and gender equality at organisational level remains a challenge.

One seemingly simple indicator in this area is the gender pay gap. The gender pay gap is defined as the difference between the average gross hourly earnings of men and women expressed as a percentage of the average gross hourly earnings of men. This is an area for improvement where our members are still starting to make progress. Only one Member measured it across all its offices. Four Members measured the gender pay gap in their headquarters only. Challenges around obtaining data and diverse salary scales across countries were identified as the main hindrances for gender pay calculation. Members also questioned the comparability of salaries across regions.

These examples provide some insights on how to overcome challenges around comparability and publication of data:



ChildFund Australia carried out a gender pay gap analysis across 7 offices ([methodology and further detail in their report pp. 22](#)). Although the results showed no systematic gender pay gaps for most of the offices, in the two offices that did show a gender pay gap, targeted recruitment and annual remuneration reviews are planned to close those gaps.



Greenpeace International. Greenpeace UK shares [gender pay gap information](#) annually on its website.

References

1. [Accountable Now](#) is a global membership platform. We support civil society organisations (CSOs) in being transparent, responsive to stakeholders, and focused on delivering impact. Together with Members and partners, we aim to engage CSOs in conversation on how to advance accountability practices, through reporting, workshops, projects, and more.
2. Dynamic Accountability is an approach that is encouraging organisations to practice accountability in a more dynamic, continuous, horizontal, and inclusive process. Dynamic Accountability involves redressing unequal power dynamics and building mutual partnerships with every stakeholder that has an impact or is impacted by the work of the organisation. Dynamic Accountability underpins Accountable Now's entire [accountability framework](#), including our [12 Accountability Commitments](#).
3. See **EDUCO's** 2020 Accountability report [here](#) for more examples of how they are addressing gender inequalities.
4. See **Restless Development's** 2019/2020 Accountability report [here](#) to see more initiatives aiding in their goal to become a gender transformative organisation.
5. See **Amnesty International's** 2020 Accountability report [here](#) to learn more about how they provide equal opportunities.
6. See **World YWCA's** 2019/2020 Accountability report [here](#) for more examples of how they are advocating for women, young women, and girls.
7. See **Plan International's** 2019/2020 Accountability report [here](#) to learn how they are building partnerships that promote respect for gender equality.
8. See **ChildFund New Zealand's** 2019/2020 Accountability report [here](#) to find out more about how they are applying an intersectional lens in their work.
9. See **Transparency International's** 2019 Accountability report [here](#) to learn how they are conducting gender analysis across their network.
10. See **SOS Children's Villages International's** 2019 Accountability report [here](#) to find out more about how they are promoting women's rights.
11. See **World Vision International's** 2020 Accountability report [here](#) to see how they are strengthening their gender equality and social inclusion policies.
12. See **ChildFund Australia's** 2019/2020 Accountability report [here](#) to learn about how they are strengthening their gender equality and social inclusion policies.
13. See **Greenpeace International's** 2020 Accountability report [here](#) to see how they are being transparent about their gender pay gap.





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