



GENDER POLICY

January 2024- DECEMBER 2030



1. INTRODUCTION.

THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) recognizes that gender relations and inequalities are fundamental causes of lots of human rights violations. Women and girls do not enjoy the same status , power or access to or control over lots of opportunities and situations due to religious, cultural and societal set barriers. These challenges make women and girls most vulnerable to a lot of human rights violations compared to their male counterparts and this situation is unacceptable and goes contrary to several international and regional human rights guarantees that several states including Rwanda are bound by.

Principles of equity and social justice require us to work to ensure that everyone has equal opportunity for expressing and using their potential, irrespective of sex , age ,race ,color ,class ,caste, religion, ethnic background, sexual orientation ,HIV status or disability. THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) is fully committed to channeling energy, effort and resources into processes and activities that create a society that values women, men, girls and boys equally.

THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) has increasingly worked with a gender perspective over the years especially by tailoring activities that empower women and girl of reproductive age to demand and enjoy their sexual and reproductive health and rights .This experience has led us to acknowledge that women’s empowerment and the recognition of women’s rights as human rights are essential for sustainable development and can be empowering for everyone. It has also taught us that working with a gender perspective means involving and engaging men and boys in order to improve the status of women and girls .These lessons along with the need for improved learning and monitoring around gender issues and clear accountability mechanisms have guided the development of this gender policy.

Contributing to the respect, promotion and fulfillment of the rights of individuals and groups in line with international human rights framework and obligations of member states (THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)’s vision) provides an institutional framework for placing women’s rights and empowerment at the center of all our work.

This document therefore, provides guidance for operationalizing the strategic objectives on gender of fighting gendered human rights violations that target women and girls



specifically but also stands alone as an over-riding policy document on gender for all of THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI). The following sections of this document should be taken as a whole because this policy seeks to ensure greater consistency of gender principles, policies and practices across the Organisation and to provide accountability framework in relation to gender, against which all staff can be accountable against which THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) will audit itself.

1.1 PURPOSE.

Through this policy, THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) commits itself to ensure that gender equality is incorporated in all THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)'s work both as an end in itself as well as a means to advocate for the realization of human rights for all individuals. THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) seeks to promote equal realization of dignity and human rights for girls, women, boys and men. In the process of integrating gender equity and equality into all of its internal organizational processes, THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) expresses its commitment to promoting these values in the wider community. By articulating common standards and commitments, this harmonized policy aims to;

- Create a transparent and consistent message on THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)'s commitment to gender equality at national and international level and facilitate working relationships with national governments and other international organizations.
- Create synergies by combining the strengths, good practice and lessons learned to-date by THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) staff on gender.
- Facilitate more coordinated action by THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) staff members at country and international level.
- Streamline THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)'s programming considerations in relation to gender.
- Facilitate common gender accountability mechanisms for THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI).
- Facilitate the tailoring of implementation approaches to THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) office needs while concurrently producing comparable results



against THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)'s wide objectives for gender equality and women's empowerment.

- Provide credibility in engaging with partners and allies on gender at both programming and advocacy.

1.2 SCOPE

This policy expresses THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)'s organizational position on gender equality, and is intended to provide information on any and all other related policies. This policy applies to all aspects of THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)'s operations; employees, volunteers, Interns, contractors and supporters/partners.

1.3 PRINCIPLES AND GOALS

A rights-based approach towards challenges and issues affecting societies demands that we take analysis of those issues such as human rights violations and abuse beyond communities, government, private institutions and households to individual women, men, boys and girls as well as to the most vulnerable and marginalized groups.

Principles.

The achievement of gender equality requires that;

- Gender equality and equity are central to THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)'s being and doing;
- The empowerment of women and girls is recognized as fundamental to our mission;
- Every individual understands and demonstrates attitudes and behaviors that promote gender equality and equity;
- Adequate resources are allocated to gender work;
- All work is continuously monitored against gender indicators ;



-
- And the cross - cutting nature of gender concerns is recognized (gender equality is both everyone's responsibility and area that warrants specialized attention and resources).

Goals.

Human rights protection and promotion for all by enhancing gender equality and equity is the overall goal of this policy.

This gender policy aims to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment is central to THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)'s;

- Programs at all levels;
- Organizational culture and behaviors
- The people it serves
- And public image mainly.

The following pages lays out the specific objectives and strategies to achieve the above stated goals and THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)'s commitment in achieving gender equality and equity as an institution

This policy there fore provides the gender equality framework for all of THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)'s programs.

1.4 DEFINITIONS / MEANINGS ASCRIBED TO THE FOLLOWING TERMS AND ADOPTED BY THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI).

- **Gender:** refers to the social differences between females and males throughout the life cycle that are learned, and though deeply rooted in every culture, are changeable over time , and have wide variations both within and between cultures. "Gender", along with class and race, determines the roles, power and resources for females and males in any culture. Historically, attention to gender relations has been driven by the need to address women's needs and circumstances as they are typically more disadvantaged than men.
- **Sex:** identifies the biological differences between men and women. For example, women can give birth, and men provide sperm. These sex roles are universal.
- **Gender equity:** *the process of being fair to women and men*



-
- **Gender equality:** equal rights, opportunities and outcomes for both men and women.
 - **Gender justice :** the ending of, and provision of redress for ,inequalities between men and women that result in women’s subordination to men .As a process ,it refers to accountability of social institutions that are set up to dispense justice ; as an outcome, It implies access to and control over resources ,combined with agency (the ability to make choices).
 - **Gender Integration:** involves the integration of gender equality concerns into the analysis and formulation of all of the organization’s policies, programs and projects. It includes initiatives to enable women and men equally to formulate and express their views and genuinely to participate in decision –making.
 - **Gender balance:** Theoretically, the degree to which men and women hold a full range of positions in a society or organization. However, most add that it should also include the element of *quality* alongside numbers, so as to avoid the token adding of members of either sex to make up numbers.
 - **Gender lens:** refers to adopting a perspective that firstly brings into focus the participation, needs and realities of both women and men, then accommodating these in planning and decision-making processes.
 - **Gender equality programming:** is an umbrella terms encompassing all strategies to achieve gender equality. Important examples include gender mainstreaming, gender analysis, prevention and response to GBV, Promotion and protection of human rights, empowerment of women and girls, and gender balance in the workplace.
 - **Gender mainstreaming:** is a globally recognized strategy for achieving equality. The economic and social council of the United Nations defined gender mainstreaming as assessing the implications for women and men of any planed action, including legislation, policies or programs, 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 design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetrated. This means THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) will apply gender to advocacy, human rights awareness and monitoring, strategic litigation, social justice and activism initiatives, communications etc because gender crosscuts all issues.



-
- **Gender based violence:** is a term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between females and males. The nature and extent of specific types of GBV vary across cultures, countries and regions. Examples include; sexual violence, including sexual exploitation/abuse and forced prostitution; domestic violence; trafficking ; forced /early marriages; harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation; widow inheritance and the list goes on.
 - **Sexual Exploitation:** According to the UN SGB definition, sexual exploitation is the abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes; this includes profiting monetarily, socially or politically from sexual exploitation of another.
 - **Sexual abuse:** the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, including inappropriate touching, by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.
 - **Women's empowerment:** involves awareness –raising ,building of self-confidence, expansion of choices, increased access to and control over resources and actions to transform the structures and institutions which reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination and inequality .Empowerment comes from within; women empower themselves. Increase women's power through power to; power with and power from within which focuses on utilizing individuals and collective strengths to work towards common goals without coercion or domination.

2. KEY DIMENSIONS OF GENDER EQUALITY AT GLHD

Despite all the beautiful articles in the various law books, constitutions and international regional human rights instruments that guarantee several rights, formal rights have not necessarily reflected actual rights or enjoyment of the same in practice. This consideration coupled with challenges such as under-representation of women in economic leadership, violence against and trafficking of women, among others shows that despite the legal framework, structural inequalities still persist.

Hence in regard to gender equality, THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) defines these key areas of accountability (dimensions);



2.1 Internal coherence and authenticity. THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) seeks to have its organizational policy and practices as closely aligned as possible with the gender justice standards it is expected of by its national and international partners.

2.2 The people it serves. The fundamental understanding that the practice and outworking of gender equality leads to effectiveness in social and economic development outcomes, is compelling. THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) therefore considers the pursuit and implementation of gender justice to be essential to its mission.

2.3 External frameworks, national laws, policies and international human rights conventions. THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) is legally obliged to comply with various Rwandan laws and policies relating to gender equality and protection against discrimination, harassment and violence as an accredited and licensed national NGO operating in Rwanda. THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) is required to adhere to not only national but also international and regional convention such as Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against women (CEDAW) ,Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR),the Maputo protocol to mention but a few.

2.4 Finance and resource allocation. The objective of this key dimension for gender equality is to ensure that adequate resources are allocated to gender work across the organization. The following will be the strategies to achieve the objective;

- Commit a considerable level of support and resources to gender work and functions.
- Include a gender dimension in all finance guidelines, instructions and policies.
- Develop and refine tools and methods for assessing and reporting on gender-related investments at every level of the organization.
- Maintain and update annually qualitative and quantitative information on gender related expenditures



2.5 Public image .The objective of this gender equality dimension is that the external presentation of THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) should promote a balance of issues surrounding gender equality and equity. The following will be the strategies to achieve the public image objective;

- Gender analysis will be central to the development of all marketing, fundraising, sponsorship and campaigns work and gender concerns will be incorporated into activities wherever possible.
- Design fundraising proposal to fulfill THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)'s strategic goals and objectives on gender equality and equity.
- Inform donors about THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)'s gender goals and objectives and give positive examples of THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)'s gender work.
- As part of the recruitment of volunteers and identification of strategic partnerships, THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) will actively encourage the recruitment and partnerships of new relations who are gender sensitive.
- All materials and general communications will be formulated to reflect THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)'s goals and objectives on gender equality and equity, challenging gender stereotypes and recognizing diversity.
- Gender -sensitive language and images will be used in all internal and external communications.
- Whenever possible, women's and girls' voices will be heard in the first person.
- Ensure that women and men are proportionately represented during press briefings and other public relations activities.

2.6 Organizational development. The objective of this dimension is to ensure that gender equity and equality are central to THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)'s being and doing. The strategies to achieve that objective shall include;

- Ensure that specialized gender functions are in place and adequately resourced.



-
- Recognize knowledge related to areas of capacity for staff and build capabilities through the organization.
 - Build a common understanding around gender through induction and training.
 - Ensure that all training across the organization is gender sensitive.
 - Make all Human Resource systems and policies gender- sensitive and responsive, and integrate gender indicators into staff objectives, accountabilities and performance management systems.
 - Prioritize gender sensitivity in all terms of reference, Including TORs for external consultants.
 - Determine the nature, structure and causes of gender imbalances in staff throughout the organization and set targets for recruitment, retention and promotion of staff accordingly, particularly women in senior positions.
 - Develop strategies for reaching those targets ,including; affirmative action; career development opportunities including development posts, trainings and internal promotion; family friendly and flexible working policies to allow staff to fulfill caring responsibilities (including job-sharing, maternity, paternity and parental leave, ad policies on child care provision and /or subsidies for staff) ; sexual harassment policies; safe and secure transport and accommodation when traveling on official duties particularly for women staff; and equal pay for work of equal value.
 - Use information technology to facilitate home working ,flexible working hours and virtual working to strike a balance between home responsibilities and work;
 - Ensure that staff access to and use of information technology is gender equitable.

2.7 Programs. The objective of this gender equality dimension is ensured that all programs empower women's rights as human rights and to achieve that, THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) will implement the strategies listed herein after; Apply gender analysis at all stages of policy and programme work, including planning, implementation, impact assessment and development of measurable indicators.

1. Develop capacity of programme staff to carry out gender analysis.



-
2. Develop gender –sensitive approaches and methods of work which are empowering, building on lessons learnt from stepping stones, reflection and other participatory methodologies.
 3. Ensure programme and project staff take responsibility for promoting gender equality.
 4. Through accountability, learning and planning systems, monitor and evaluate programs for gender goals, and develop and employ good practice guidelines and indicators.
 5. Promote the creation of structures and opportunities for women’s participation in decision –making at all levels.
 6. Ensure that women’s and girls’ voices are heard in mainstream development processes.
 7. Undertake capacity building (e.g resources allocation, training, information, and networking) to strengthen women’s organizations and groups and organizations working towards gender equality.
 8. Promote, support and participate in the women’s movement to advocate for the implementation of the Beijing platform for Action and other national and international instruments for women’s rights.
 9. Include a gender equality perspective in all campaigns and influencing work.
 10. Support women and girls to secure their economic, social, political, civil and cultural rights.
 11. Promote women’s and girls’ independent access to and control over land, employment ,services and institutions, including their ability to exercise rights over their own bodies and find protection against violence.
 12. Develop, promote and use creative ways of engaging men and boys (and not only women and girls) as agents of change in the pursuit of gender equality.
 13. Support partners who are aligned to our gender principles, and work to inform and influence those who are not, with the option of breaking the alignment in cases where positive change fails to occur.

3. PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)’s GENDER POLICY COMMITMENTS

Website: www.thepinkboxinitiative.org | **Contacts:** +255 752 920 299 | **E-mail:** info@thepinkboxinitiative.org / thepinkboxglobal@gmail.com **Address:** Dar es Salaam/ Mwanza, Tanzania



THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) is committed to ensuring gender equality in all areas of the Organization, including staffing, management, decision making, thereby giving both men and women equal opportunity to shape the Organization and its work.

- THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) will recruit staff on the basis of merit. THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) is committed to achieving gender balance throughout all levels of the Organization so that all functions, levels of responsibility and influence are fair. All recruitment processes will give consideration to gender balance and ,where a male and female candidate for a position are considered for equal merit ,then gender balance will be taken into account in the final decision.
- THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)'s leadership will be committed to the integration of gender equality throughout the Organization.
- THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) will not permit within the Organization any discrimination on the basis of sex.
- THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) is committed to ensuring that its employees receive gender training to enable them to work in alignment with THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)'s gender policy.
- Men and women will receive equal pay for equal or similar work.
- Men and women will enjoy equal access to the organization's resources and opportunities, and disadvantages will be redressed where it exists.
- THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) will endeavor to ensure that all decision-making processes take into account the different personalities, styles and strengths of both men and women, so that all voices may be authentically heard.
- THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) is committed to ensuring THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)'s workplace is characterized by gender sensitivity .Inappropriate language and behavior will be addressed when it occurs.
- Where clear breaches of conduct in regard to gender justice occur, they will be addressed by supervisors with a view to improving understanding and conduct .Reported incidents of sexual or gender -based harassment will be investigated and, if substantiated, responses will be in accordance with applicable laws of Rwanda.



-
- THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) recognizes the equal value /importance of both women and men in parenting children, and is committed to providing reasonable and fair parental leave that supports both parents.
 - THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) will apply a gender lens to the planning and management of its Programs, and will endeavor to ensure that staff members represent THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)'s position on gender justice with grace and humility.
 - Promote gender equality as an explicit internationally recognized human right.
 - Address systemic and structural practices that create barriers to the realization of women's rights and gender equality; including prevention and response to gender violence and sexual exploitation and abuse.
 - Actively involve men and boys as allies in promoting gender equality.
 - Analyze and implement strategies to manage potential risks and harms to women, girls , boys and men.
 - Engage and coordinate with partners, governments, funders and civil society organizations to promote and support effective, creative and impactful ways to promote gender equality.
 - Monitor, evaluate and institutionalize organizational learning regarding specific gender equality results.
 - Actively hold ourselves and others accountable to gender equality standards.
 - Ensure that key organizational policies, systems and practices including but not limited to budgeting, human resource recruitment, training and management, and decision making support women's rights and gender equality.
 - Ensuring adequate funding to realize our commitments.
 - Apply these commitments within THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) and across all program areas using planning approaches and recognized gender sensitive tools and techniques such as gender analysis frameworks, collection of age /sex disaggregated data and results –focused design and evaluation.
 - THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) will endeavor to use gender -inclusive /neutral language in its publications.
 - THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) will apply a gender lens to planning, implementation and management of all THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)'s social and public events, to ensure that gender justice is maintained.



4. IMPLEMENTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

Relationships of inequality have in some instances been so entrenched in everyday ways of thinking and acting that they may appear “natural” and even necessary. PINK THE BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)’s advocacy contribution to the realization of human rights, and development for all also entails changing how society as a whole views men, women, girls and boys from a gender lens.

This section outlines the framework for the implementation of the gender policy. It provides guidelines on the responsibility of different parts of the Organisation for the achievement of gender equality. These are;

- The Executive Director will be accountable for the implementation of the policy.
- The Program manager of the organization will report on the implementation process annually to the staff of THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI), Board of trustees.
- Different project coordinators and heads of departments will demonstrate the will to implement the required attitudinal changes implied in the policy.
- Project coordinators are responsible for the implementation details for the programs.
- All staff will be expected to show a gender perspective in their work.
- The program manager will support the development of indicators and methodologies to monitor the gender policy (e.g. score cards).
- The organizational mechanisms and gender posts necessary for implementation of the gender policy will be put in a place and resourced.

5. MONITORING AND REVIEW.

- THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) will undertake an organizational gender audit on a 5 yearly basis.
- Throughout its performance appraisal process, PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) will monitor the conduct of its employees with regard to gender -related behavior.



-
- THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) will monitor the language and content of gender -specific or related material that it intends to publish. This will be done in consultation with THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI)'S gender working group (comprising the whole THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) team).
 - THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) will work with its development partners and other implementing partners to monitor progress on the application of gender justice principles within their organizations and program activities.
 - The board of THE PINK BOX INITIATIVE (PBI) will review the gender policy periodically, but at least every 5 years and /or at times when practice indicates the need for change.

6. CHANGE HISTORY.

DATE	MODIFICATION.