Policy on Gender and Equality

Chairman, Board of Directors

Approved
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Definitions

As per the Belize National Gender Policy (2013), the terminology and expressions used in this policy document are defined as follows:

**Gender:** “The social constructed roles allocated respectively to women and men in particular societies and in particular historical and cultural contexts. “

**Gender Equality:** “This refers to non-discrimination on the grounds of a person’s sex.”

**Gender Equity:** “Ensuring fairness and justice in the distribution of resources, benefits and/or access to services between women and men. This approach recognizes that women and men have different needs across the life span.”

**Gender Mainstreaming:** “Refers to conveying the perceptions, knowledge, contributions, priorities and needs of both women and men to enrich development. The process includes assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It makes men and women’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation and monitoring of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres so that women and men benefit equality and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.”

**Human Rights:** “Basic rights and freedoms to which all humans are entitled. All humans are born free and equal in dignity and human rights. These rights follow suit with the designations outlined in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948).”

**Women Empowerment:** “Refers to behavioural change where women acquire the power to act freely, exercise their rights, and fulfil their potential as full and equal members of society. While empowerment is an individual behavioural change, it is achieved through appropriate gender mainstreaming.”

**Gender-based discrimination:** “Refers to any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex, gender identity or perceived social norms with a purpose of disenfranchising the human rights of others.”

**Gender-based violence:** “Violent and/or criminal behaviour directed at an individual or group based on sex, gender identity, or perceived norms of masculinity and femininity.”
1. Purpose
The purpose of this Policy document is to provide the Protected Areas Conservation Trust (PACT) with a framework to guide its effects in achieving gender equity and equality in all its Conservation, Sustainable Development and Climate Financing, Fiduciary Management and Technical work. Furthermore, the policy document also responds to the performance and social standards of Multilateral agreements and International Development Partners including IUCN, UNDP, GCF, AF, etc. This document specifies clear policy statement, objectives, definitions and principles to be utilized by PACT in the execution of its mandate.

2. Policy Statement
The Protected Areas Conservation Trust is committed to achieving gender equality and equity, ensuring that women and men human rights, values and opportunities are promoted and protected jointly during the development and execution of all PACT and Third-party investments, and ensuring that women and men are equal beneficiaries of such interventions. Pursuant to this, PACT must ensure that its Operational Policies and Guidelines, inclusive of its Strategic Plan and Personnel, Accounting and Investment Manuals, support national efforts in mainstreaming gender issues, women empowerment, respect for Diversity and Human Rights, and the elimination of Gender-based discrimination and violence.

3. Objectives
To achieve this, the following objectives will guide PACTs work in mainstreaming gender issues in Conservation, Sustainable Development and Climate Change:

- PACT will foster strategic alliances and partnerships with international, regional and national agencies, NGOs and private sector entities who’s mandate aligns to PACT’s Gender Policy, its Mission and Vision, as well as the National Gender Policy for Belize.

- Women participate with men as equal stakeholders and decision makers in the design, management and execution of PACT-funded and third-party projects.

- Women and men have equal access to goods, services, livelihood, and capacity building opportunities resulting from conservation, sustainable development and climate change interventions funded and/or facilitated by PACT.

- PACT’s internal operations and procedures will ensure that the human rights, professional development and income for both men and women are met equitably and without prejudice.

4. Principles
The Policy will be guided by the following principles adopted by PACT:
Good Governance
The promotion of good governance and adherence to the constitution of Belize, which guarantees human rights, fair labour and compensation and the rights of women.

Equity and Equality
Adherence to the principles of gender equity and equality in the participation, protection of rights, sharing of opportunities and benefits that result from PACT-funded or Third-party investments, projects and programmes.

Comprehensiveness and harmonization
On the premise that gender equality and equity requires a multi-sector approach, the internal and external operations of PACT is guided by its gender policy. Furthermore, to ensure harmonization with Local, National and International gender policies and laws, proper planning and consultation is paramount.

Accountability
The parties engaged in any local intervention, where PACT is a funder or partner, should be encouraged to prioritize the adherence of local and national gender related policies and laws while remaining cognizant of their role in meeting national obligations of the Declaration of Human Rights, The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Convention on the Rights of a Child. Sound Science, effective Monitoring and Evaluation tools should be utilized in demonstrating accountability.

Communication and Information Sharing
Communication strategies and mediums utilized by PACT is sensitive to the needs and requirements of both Men and Women. Information sharing of comparative data on how stakeholders are closing the gender gap in conservation, sustainability development and climate change will form a critical part of such strategies.

5. Gender Mainstreaming Procedures
The specific processes in which PACT will ensure that gender is being mainstreamed in its programmatic, internal operations, institutional governance structure, fiduciary management and stakeholder engagement work shall be detailed in its Investment Manual, Personnel Manual, Board of Directors Manual, Accounting Manual and Strategic Plan, respectively.