KATHMANDU UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MEDICAL SCIENCES

DHULIKHEL HOSPITAL (DH)

Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) Policy

A. Background

Poverty and gender inequality and exclusion are interrelated and exacerbate the other. Due to gender discrimination and exclusion, women and excluded groups are especially vulnerable to and the worst affected by poverty.

Women and girls and excluded groups do not enjoy the same status, power or access to and control over resources as men and boys and those who are included in different levels of social system.

In the contest of Nepal, though poverty levels have dropped across the board level, the government statistics clearly depict that women in general and men and women from excluded groups are comparatively poorer and have low representation in social and political structures and employment. Discrimination, inequalities and exclusion are at the heart of this problem.

The government and non-government organizations have realized the need of gender equality and social inclusion to attain sustainable and equitable development for all. Efforts have been made towards making development more inclusive by setting-up policy frameworks and including provisions of equality in the constitution.

The Constitution of Nepal (2073 BS) clearly envisions Nepal as an inclusive state and guarantees the right to equality for all its citizens. The Constitution includes provisions that support gender equality and social inclusion. It has a separate article for women's fundamental rights (Article 20) and is more inclusive toward people from Janajati, Dalit, Tharu and Madhesi ethnicity, caste and identity. It sets forth the right to equality and to rights against untouchability, racial discrimination, and exploitation (e.g., forced labor). It also authorizes the State to implement measures for the "protection, empowerment and advancement of women, Dalits, indigenous nationalities, and Madhesis

Nepal has undertaken a number of international commitments to nondiscrimination, gender equality, and social justice:

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which was ratified by Nepal in 1991, includes articles on the elimination of discrimination in public life, civil status, education, employment, health care, and other aspects of social and economic life.

Nepal has also undertaken commitments to address other grounds for disadvantage. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1971, obliges Nepal to secure the human rights of Dalits, who have faced caste-based discrimination for centuries and continue to do so despite its legal prohibition.

Nepal's 2007 ratification of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People and International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 169 (Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention) shows its commitment to the rights of indigenous nationalities.

B. Policy Overview

DHULIKHEL HOSPITAL (DH) recognizes that gender relations and inequalities are fundamental causes of poverty. Caste and ethnicity are also critical determinants of poverty. Women and socially excluded groups experience poverty and inequality to a greater degree.

DHULIKHEL HOSPITAL (DH) guided by "the principles of social equity, sustainable development and harmony with nature. Through its trained staff, it provides cost effective, compassionate and quality health care services" which can only be achieved when every community member, irrespective of sex, class, caste, faith, ethnic background, HIV status or disability have equal opportunity for development and to participate in development.

Discrimination, inequalities and exclusion on the basis of gender and social-economic status, caste, ethnicity and indigenous nationalities are encountered at different levels and manifested in various subtle as well as open ways within the organization and the communities that we serve. DHULIKHEL HOSPITAL (DH) is committed to and strongly advocates the principles of equality, non-discrimination, inclusion and social justice. This requires us to work to ensure equality and inclusion at at levels of our organization. This policy will serve as guidance for DHULIKHEL HOSPITAL (DH) to work towards addressing issues of inequalities, discrimination and exclusion within the organization and in our programs.

C. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define the main approach of DHULIKHEL HOSPITAL (DH) to address gender and inclusion issues in all areas of organization, including governance, staffing, management and programs.

The Policy will foster a positive and respectful culture and workplace environment that will enhance the performance of all employees and provide a guidance to make our programs more inclusive.

D. Definitions/Terminology

Gender: Refers to the socially constructed roles and identities of men and women as well as the relationships between them. These roles change over time and vary by culture. In Nepal, women face unequal power relations and gender-based barriers due to a patriarchal society.

Sex: The biological differences between men and women which are universal and determined at birth.

Gender equity: The process of being fair to women and men.

Gender equality: Gender equality refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration. Usually women and girls are at a disadvantage. However, gender equality is not a 'women's issue' but an issue that sometimes also requires a special focus on the needs of men and boys. Depending on the context males may be specifically disadvantaged or suffer different disadvantages to women and girls. It is therefore important to look at people's needs from the perspective of both women and men.

Exclusion: Describes the experience of groups that are systematically and historically disadvantaged because of discrimination based on gender, caste, ethnicity, physical abilities,

HIV status, or faith. Exclusion occurs in public (formal) institutions such as the legal or Education system, as well as social (informal) institutions such as communities and households.

Excluded groups: socially and economically disadvantaged groups such as Dalit, Janajati, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV and AIDS and religious minorities.

Social Inclusion: The removal of institutional barriers and the enhancement of incentives to increase access by diverse individuals and groups to development opportunities. This requires changes in policies, rules, and social practices and shifts in people's perspectives and behavior toward excluded groups.

E. Policy Values and Principles

DHULIKHEL HOSPITAL (DH)'s GESI policy will be guided by the values and principles of equality. These include:

a) Fairness and equal treatment for all, with special attention to the specific needs and capabilities of women and excluded groups
b) Empowerment of women and excluded groups is central to achieving gender and social equality
c) Integrate Gender Mainstreaming and Social Inclusion in all programs and at all levels of organization

F. Areas of Implementation

1. Organisational Structures, staffing and organizational development

Objective: *DHULIKHEL HOSPITAL (DH)'s organizational commitment to gender equity and social inclusion will bereflected in DHULIKHEL HOSPITAL (DH)'s board and staff composition.*

Strategies

- Ensure representation of women and members of excluded groups in the board, different committees and management structure of DHULIKHEL HOSPITAL (DH)
- Ensure participation of women and excluded groups in decision-making at all levels of the organization

- Arrange positive discrimination/affirmative action provisions for women and excluded groups while making staff recruitments
- Make all HR systems and policies gender-sensitive and responsive, and make policy provisions to address specific needs of female employees (such as maternal leave, breastfeeding break, flexible working hours) and male employees (such as paternal leave)
- Retention and promotion of female employees and employees from excluded groups in senior positions
- Include gender-related behaviour as one of the areas during performance appraisal
- Ensure equal pay for men and women for equal or similar work
- Ensure equal access to organization's resources and opportunities

- Build understanding and capacity of board and staff on gender and inclusion through

induction and training.

- Recognize knowledge and skill related to gender and social inclusion as one of the core areas of staff capacity and build staff capacity in gender and inclusion
- Ensure that all trainings conducted by DHULIKHEL HOSPITAL (DH) are gender-sensitive

2. Programs

Objective: *All programs empower and promote the rights of women and excluded groups and Gender and Inclusion is integrated in all the projects as cross-cutting issue*

Strategies:

- Include women and excluded groups at all stages of program, including planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation
- Ensure that the primary beneficiaries/participants/target groups of all project are women and excluded groups
- Develop capacity of programme staff on gender mainstreaming and inclusion
- Develop gender-sensitive approaches and methods of work which are participatory and empowering and value the dignity of every individual. This would also include making appropriate provisions to promote participation of women and excluded groups (such as persons with disabilities) in the programs implemented by DHULIKHEL HOSPITAL (DH). Also,provide equality of opportunities for women and excluded groups in programs and eliminate any existing disparities
- Ensure programme staff take responsibility for promoting gender equality and social inclusion
- Undertake capacity building (e.g. resource allocation, training, information, networking) to strengthen women's groups and Networks working towards gender equality
- Promote, support and participate in advocacy events and networks that promote rights of women and socially excluded groups, including ethic and religious minorities
- 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
- Use gender-sensitive languages in internal and external reports
- Seek partnership, collaboration and alliance opportunities with funding and strategic partners who align with our gender and inclusion principles

G. Implementation and Accountability

The board and management of DHULIKHEL HOSPITAL (DH) will be accountable for the implementation of this policy. Program heads will report to the Director and the Director will report to the board onthe implementation process of this policy annually.

All the staff will be responsible to practice and demonstrate gender sensitivity in written and verbal language used within the organization and in the communities that we serve.

H. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed when the practice indicates the need for change.