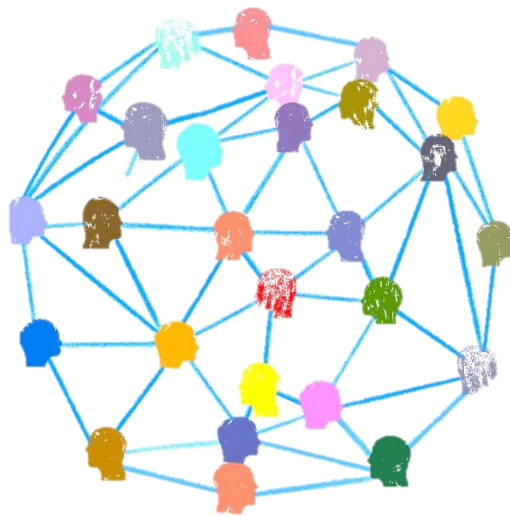


GENDER POLICY

Janathakshan (GTE) Ltd



Gender Policy

Date issued	1 st September 2024
Version	1 st Version
Last approved review	March 2025
Applicable to	The Gender Policy is applicable to all staff, management, and governing bodies of Janathakshan (GTE) Ltd, as well as partners and stakeholders engaged in programmatic activities with the organization.
Purpose	<p>The purpose of the Policy is to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that Janathakshan employees have a shared understanding and capacity to take a more gender-sensitive and responsive approach to all operations. 2. Ensuring gender equality is aimed at, and gender mainstreaming is embedded in the design and implementation of all projects, programs, and initiatives. 3. Ensure that individuals of all identities, including gender, have equal opportunities for professional growth and development. 4. Create a safe, respectful, inclusive, and gender transformative working culture in the organization. 5. Promote and foster open communication and dialogue about gender-related issues.
Related Policies, Procedures & Guidelines	<p>Policy provisions that support the gender policy of the organization.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR Policy • Leave Policy • PSEAH Policy • Child Protection Policy • M&E Policy • Employee Code of Conduct • Recruitment & Selection Policy • Safety and Security Policy • Flexible Working Arrangements Policy <p>National and International policies that support the gender policy of the organization.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Policy on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment, Sri Lankaⁱ • Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)ⁱⁱ

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Beijing Declaration and Platform for Actionⁱⁱⁱ• UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (Women, Peace, and Security)^{iv}• Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Goal 5 of the SDGs is dedicated to achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls^v• ILO Convention on Equal Remuneration^{vi}• ILO Convention on Discrimination (Employment and Occupation)^{vii}
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POLICY STATEMENT

Janathakshan strongly integrates gender equality as a fundamental element across all its operational activities. This commitment is reflected in our organizational policies, staff capacity development, recruitment practices, program design and implementation, and community engagement. At Janathakshan, we uphold gender equality as a core organizational value that informs every aspect of our operations. We are unequivocally committed to creating and maintaining a workplace where all individuals are afforded equal opportunities (regardless of gender), rights, and respect. Our programs, projects, and initiatives are purposefully designed and rigorously implemented to promote gender equity and inclusivity. We align our efforts with the National Policy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Sri Lanka and actively contribute to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 5 by mainstreaming gender.

PURPOSE

The Organizational Policy on Gender Equality at Janathakshan reflects the organizational commitment to take a cohesive and coordinated approach to be more gender mainstreamed in its operational activities.

The purpose of the Policy is to:

1. Ensure that Janathakshan employees have a shared understanding and capacity to take a more gender-sensitive and responsive approach to all operations.
2. Ensuring gender equality is aimed at, and gender mainstreaming is embedded in the design and implementation of all projects, programs, and initiatives.
3. Ensure that individuals of all identities, including gender, have equal opportunities for professional growth and development.
4. Create a safe, respectful, inclusive, and gender transformative working culture in the organization.
5. Promote and foster open communication and dialogue about gender-related issues.

SCOPE

Janathakshan's vision is 'Towards a Sustainable & Equitable Future'. The organization's mission is to foster innovative, environmentally sound technologies and solutions through respect for diversity, wider stakeholder mobilization, and evidence-based actions. Janthakshan puts gender equality at the center of all operations because of the organization's vision of a sustainable and equitable future.

Janathakshan recognized the importance of diversity, inclusion, and equity (DIE) in all its operational activities to ensure that no one is left behind and treated equally, and respected. This Organizational Policy on Gender Equality is designed to ensure equal opportunities, eliminate discrimination, enhance protection, and promote gender equity and inclusivity within our organization and all operations. This policy aims to establish guidelines and practices that support individuals with different gender identities and foster an environment free from sexual and gender-based bias, harassment, and inequality.

Through this policy, Janathakshan commits to ensuring that gender equality and equity are fully incorporated in all the organization's operational activities. Working with diverse stakeholders, Janathakshan seeks to promote

equal realization of dignity and human rights for all intersectionality, and the elimination of poverty and injustice.

The implementation of this policy will be based on the local legal environment. This is especially by considering the provisions of the Sri Lankan National Policy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. Furthermore, this policy is further consolidated with the provisions available in the organizational policies. Moreover, other international policies are also considered when addressing policy commitments.

DEFINITIONS

Gender

Gender refers to the roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society at a given time considers appropriate for men and women. In addition to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female, and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, gender also refers to the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities, and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/ time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed, and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. In most societies, there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context, as are other important criteria for socio-cultural analysis, including class, race, poverty level, ethnic group, sexual orientation, age, etc.^{viii}

Gender Equality

This refers to the equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of women and men, and girls and boys. 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, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development.^{ix}

Gender Equity

States parties are called upon to use exclusively the concepts of equality of women and men or gender equality and not to use the concept of gender equity in implementing their obligations under the Convention. The latter concept is used in some jurisdictions to refer to fair treatment of women and men, according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment, or treatment that is different but considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations, and opportunities^x.

Gender Sensitive

Gender sensitivity is gender is a means to reach set development goals, and addressing gender norms, roles, and access to resources in so far as needed to reach project goals^{xi}.

Gender Responsive

Gender responsive is addressing the different situations, roles, needs, and interests of women, men, girls, and boys in the design and implementation of activities, policies, and programs. A program, policy, or activity that is gender-responsive addresses gender-based barriers, respects gender differences, enables structures, systems, and methodologies to be sensitive to gender, ensures gender parity is a wider strategy to advance gender equality, and evolves to close gaps and eradicate gender-based discrimination^{xii}.

Gender Mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is the chosen approach of the United Nations system and international community toward realizing progress on women's and girls' rights, as a subset of human rights to which the United Nations dedicates itself. It is not a goal or objective on its own. It is a strategy for implementing greater equality for women and girls in relation to men and boys. Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing

the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies, or programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a way to make women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic, and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The goal is to achieve gender equality^{xiii}.

Gender Transformative

Gender transformative means that gender is central to promoting gender equality and achieving positive development outcomes. And it is aimed at transforming unequal gender relations to promote shared power, control of resources, decision-making, and support for women's empowerment^{xiv}.

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)

Sexual exploitation is any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. Sexual abuse means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions^{xv}.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

DO NO HARM - An approach that helps to identify unintended negative or positive impacts of humanitarian and development. It can be applied during planning, monitoring, and evaluation to ensure that the intervention does not worsen the situation but rather contributes to improving it. Do no harm is considered an essential basis for the work of organizations operating in humanitarian, development or peace contexts.

Janathakshan is fully committed to upholding the **Do No Harm** principle across all operations, including the design and implementation of programs and projects. As part of this commitment, a comprehensive **Risk Mitigation Matrix** is developed at the project design stage to proactively identify and assess any potential harm that may arise from programme activities. This matrix includes clearly defined mitigation measures aimed at preventing, minimizing, or addressing identified risks. All Janathakshan staff are responsible for integrating these mitigation measures into their respective implementation plans and are expected to adhere to them throughout the project lifecycle. This approach ensures that our interventions are ethically sound, context-sensitive, and do not inadvertently cause harm to communities, stakeholders, or the environment.

IMPARTIALITY - Priorities assistance based on need alone and in proportion to need. Organizations should not focus uniquely on a particular group if this focus is to the detriment of another group in the targeted community that is in need

NON-DISCRIMINATION - No one should be discriminated against on any grounds of diversity, including age, gender, race, color, ethnicity, sexual orientation, language, religion, disability, health status, political or other opinion, and national or social origin.

Janathakshan upholds strict non-discrimination and impartiality and does not exclude or neglect any individual or group on the basis of identity, background, or intersectional characteristics. All identification of target or beneficiary groups, stakeholder engagement processes, and staff recruitment practices shall be guided by the principles of inclusivity, equity, and relevance to the specific needs, capacities, and contextual realities of the community, program, or organization. Decisions related to program implementation and human resource management shall be based solely on objective criteria, including needs assessments, functional requirements, individual or group abilities, and the overall feasibility within the programmatic or organizational context.

THE RIGHT TO PROTECTION – The organizations are responsible for protecting all beneficiaries within their operation. Safety and security are principal concerns, and some people may be particularly vulnerable to abuse

and adverse discrimination due to their diverse identities and may require special measures of protection and assistance.

Janathakshan affirms the right of all stakeholders, including staff, partners, and community members, to be protected from gender-related risks across all operations of the organization. This commitment extends to all aspects of program design, implementation, and organizational practices. The organization shall take proactive measures to identify, prevent, and respond to any risks, threats, or incidents related to gender-based discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or abuse. All staff are expected to uphold this principle and contribute to creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all individuals, regardless of gender or gender identity.

PROVISIONS

1.1 Ensure that Janathakshan as a workplace provides equitable opportunities for employees and maintains an organizational culture that supports gender equity through the following activities.

- 1.1.1 Parental leave options for individuals of all gender identities.^{xvi}
- 1.1.2 Flexible working arrangements for staff.
- 1.1.3 Working options from home for staff on an agreed basis.
- 1.1.4 Regular review of policy, procedures, and strategies to ensure gender equity principles are maintained.
- 1.1.5 Encourage women candidates to apply for vacancies in publishing vacancy announcements.
- 1.1.6 Ensure that there is gender representation in all cross-functional teams, interview and assessment panels.
- 1.1.7 Ensure that gender equity exists with regard to the remuneration of employees.
- 1.1.8 Seek opportunities to encourage gender diversity in positions historically filled by gender stereotypes.
- 1.1.9 Designate an expert staff member (Gender specialist) to execute the gender policy with PSEAH and CH policies.
- 1.1.10 Staff capacity building on gender, PSEA, child protection, and other relevant areas.

1.2 Create a safe, respectful, inclusive, and gender transformative working culture and an enabling environment for employees within the organization through the following activities.

- 1.2.1 Sexual and gender-based violence/harassment against any employee of the organization is explicitly prohibited.
- 1.2.2 All allegations of Sexual and gender-based violence/harassment against any employee by anyone (including third parties) must be promptly reported to HR.
- 1.2.3 Employees who report the incident must be protected from any form of retaliation, and the confidentiality of the reports should be maintained. Employees have the right to report anonymously, as well as when necessary.
- 1.2.4 If the perpetrator is from a third party, sharing the information of the identity of the reporter and survivor with that third party is not allowed. Both reporters and survivors have the right to protect themselves from any further harm due to the reporting.
- 1.2.5 Ensure the actions taken for the incident are communicated to the employee who reported.
- 1.2.6 Employees at Janathakshan are encouraged to report any incidents of Sexual and gender-based violence/harassment against any employee, promptly and without fear of retaliation.
- 1.2.7 If an employee is found to have engaged in Sexual and gender-based violence/harassment against any employee, appropriate disciplinary measures will be taken with immediate adherence to the ZERO Tolerance Policy. Our Organizational Policy on PSEAH and Child Protection strongly implements Zero Tolerance for such actions.

1.3 Commitment to the service users

- 1.3.1 Integrate gender and power analysis and data disaggregated by gender, age, and other relevant intersectionalities into all projects and initiatives across the programme/project cycle.
- 1.3.2 Create collaborative relationships with organizations that specialize in human rights (such as women's rights, women-led movements, social justice, and human rights movements) and representative organizations (such as youth-led organizations, organizations for/of people with disabilities, etc.) to achieve shared goals and ensure the voices of marginalized and underserved have been heard.
- 1.3.3 Contribute to the development, implementation, learning, fundraising, and advocacy of gender equality and inclusion in partnership with key stakeholders (including other civil society organizations, the government, the private sector, and public and private donors).
- 1.3.4 Ensure that evaluations and reviews are conducted without harm, are participatory, and assess progress towards gender equality outcomes on a gender and age-disaggregated basis.

1.4 Protection for service users

- 1.4.1 All the stakeholders of the organization (including project beneficiaries) have the right to protect themselves from SEA. SEA against any stakeholder by any employee/consultant, or representative of the organization is explicitly prohibited.
- 1.4.2 The children (under 18 years) are also protected from the SEA by this policy.
- 1.4.3 This policy allows the activation of project-specific PSEA (Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse) mechanisms, including reporting based on the project context and donor requirements during the project periods.
- 1.4.4 Ensure the consideration of integration of good practices from project-specific PSEA implementations and during the time of reviewing the gender policy.
- 1.4.5 Ensure PSEA terms are included in all consultancy service agreements and employment agreements.
- 1.4.6 All the information obtained from project beneficiaries should be based on the written consent of the beneficiary.
- 1.4.7 If an employee is found to have engaged in SEA, appropriate disciplinary measures will be taken with immediate adherence to the ZERO Tolerance Policy.

1.5 Commitment to Program Implementation

- 1.5.1 Dedicated staff expertise for executing gender mainstreaming in all programmes in all program implementations.
- 1.5.2 As part of the programming process, identify potential risk factors related to gender and implement a mechanism to reduce these risks, avoid harm as well, and take deliberate action to mitigate these unintended risks, regardless of sectoral focus, across all program contexts.
- 1.5.3 Include contextual context-specific action plan on gender in all program design.
- 1.5.4 Allocate sufficient budgets for gender equality in the program design to provide the operational environment to implement gender mainstreamed activities and gender-related risk mitigation measures during the implementation.
- 1.5.5 Facilitate project staff and ensure the implementation, monitoring, and reporting of gender related risk mitigation measures and gender action plans in program implementation.
- 1.5.6 Integrate gender in M&E plans and systems for program implementations and reporting.
- 1.5.7 Generate knowledge management products for lessons learnt on gender mainstreaming in program implementation and utilize them in fundraising and program designing aspects of the organization.

POLICY OPERATIONALIZATION

Who is responsible for implementing this policy	
Team/Individual	Responsible for
Chief Executive Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Championing the policy • Leadership support, including logistic allocations for implementing the policy

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhering to policy
Senior Executive Team (SET)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing policy • Approving the policy • Adhering to policy • Operational support, including logistic allocations for implementing the policy • Communicating policy organizationally • Advising and assisting managers and supervisors in addressing issues
Gender Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing policy • Adhering to policy • Executing gender mainstreaming plans (including risk mapping/activity design/ Implementation strategies/ monitoring and evaluation/communication) for all implementation efforts. • Providing regular training/awareness in relation to gender equity
All Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhering to policy • Attending regular training/awareness programs • Implementing M&E and communicating gender mainstreaming efforts within program implementation
Suppliers/ Consultants/ Contractors/Vendors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhering to policy

REVIEW AND EVALUATION

- This Gender Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations.
- Feedback from employees, relevant stakeholders, and external experts, and lessons learnt and good practices from the program implementation shall be sought to inform policy improvements and adjustments.
- Lessons learnt from program implementation will be considered and included in the policy amendments.

ANNEXTURE

ⁱ https://srilanka.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/sri_lanka_national_policy_gewe_english.pdf

ⁱⁱ CEDAW is often referred to as the international bill of rights for women. It obligates states parties to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all areas of life, including politics, education, employment, healthcare, and more.

<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/cedaw.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ Adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, this landmark document sets out a comprehensive agenda for advancing gender equality. It covers 12 critical areas, such as women and poverty, violence against women, and the role of women in conflict resolution.

https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/PFA_E_Final_WEB.pdf

^{iv} This resolution acknowledges the disproportionate impact of armed conflict on women and emphasizes the importance of women's participation in peace and security efforts. Subsequent resolutions have further expanded on this theme.

<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/720/18/PDF/N0072018.pdf?OpenElement>

^v The SDGs include targets related to ending violence against women, promoting women's economic empowerment, and ensuring access to education and healthcare. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

^{vi} This International Labour Organization (ILO) convention aims to ensure equal pay for equal work and work of equal value for men and women.

https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312245:NO

^{vii} This convention seeks to eliminate discrimination in employment and occupation based on gender, among other factors.

https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_Ilo_Code:C111

^{viii} <https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/mod/glossary/showentry.php?eid=48>

^{ix} <https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/mod/glossary/showentry.php?eid=54>

^x <https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/mod/glossary/showentry.php?eid=55>

^{xi} <https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/mod/glossary/showentry.php?eid=28>

^{xii} <https://inee.org/resources/inee-guidance-note-gender>

^{xiii} <https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/mod/glossary/showentry.php?eid=61>

^{xiv} <https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/mod/glossary/showentry.php?eid=28>

^{xv} https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/sites/default/files/migrated/2018-09/un_protocol_on_sea_allegations_involving_implementing_partners_final.pdf

^{xvi} Janathakshana Human Resource Policy

The updated version of the policy was adopted by Janathakshana (GTE) Ltd, on this day of 1st April 2025

Dr. Janaka Hemathilaka

CEO/Executive Director