



NORWEGIAN CHURCH AID  
**GENDER JUSTICE  
POLICY**

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actalliance



Ali Ahmed Jamali runs a school for former beggars and other poor children in his local mosque. Khadijatul Qubra is five years old and attends second grade at the school. In Omarkot district only 13% of girls can read and write.

**PHOTO:** Håvard Bjelland/Norwegian Church Aid

### NORWEGIAN CHURCH AID

Our vision is: ***Together for a just world***

Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) provides humanitarian assistance and works for long-term development. In order to address the root causes of poverty, we advocate for just decisions by public authorities, businesses, and religious leaders. Our support is provided unconditionally, with no intention of influencing anyone's religious affiliation. Most of our work is undertaken together with local civil society partners — many of whom are faith-based actors.

NCA's long-term goals are to: 1) Save Lives (by creating resilient communities to protect lives), and 2) Seek Justice (by creating just societies to secure and fulfil human rights).

## INTRODUCTION

“**Gender** refers to the socially constructed characteristics of women and men – such as the norms, roles and relationships that exist between them. Gender expectations vary between cultures and can change over time”.<sup>1</sup> Gender also encompasses the unequal exercise of power between different gender roles.

NCA believes that gender awareness and gender sensitive methods increase the quality of our work and our total delivery. NCA is committed to promoting gender justice and gender equality in all our work. Gender should not be a barrier to obtaining rights and NCA recognises that women and girls are often most affected by gender inequality and discrimination. By placing gender justice at the centre of all NCA's work, NCA aims at safeguarding equal rights of women, men, girls and boys.

**Gender equality** is a human right achieved when women and men, girls and boys have equal rights, responsibilities, life prospects and opportunities, and the power and resources to shape their own lives and contribute to society. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same, but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities do not depend on whether they are born female or male. It implies that the interest, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration.

NCA works with faith actors and religious leaders as they play major roles in their societies in promoting justice and reducing poverty, inequalities and discrimination. They are potentially crucial actors to stand up for women's rights and promote gender justice. NCA supports these partners and other civil society actors in changing social gender norms by upholding equal rights and condoning gender-based violence.

As a member of the ACT Alliance, NCA is obligated by the *ACT Alliance Gender Justice Policy*, which outlines eight principles for how ACT members shall work to achieve gender justice.<sup>2</sup> This is complementary to the *ACT Code of Conduct for the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, Fraud and Corruption and Abuse of Power* that NCA has adopted.

NCA is also *Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability*<sup>3</sup> certified.

NCA's commitment to gender justice and gender equality is in alignment with *The Sustainable Development Goals (2030 Agenda)*, specifically *Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls*, but also the other goals. Other normative commitments include *The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)*.

<sup>1</sup> WHO, UN ECOSOC, UN Women: <http://www.who.int/gender-equity-rights/understanding/gender-definition/en/>

<sup>2</sup> ACT Gender Justice Policy, 2017, <http://actalliance.org/documents/act-gender-justice-policy/> (English, French, Spanish).

<sup>3</sup> <https://corehumanitarianstandard.org/the-standard>

## SCOPE

The NCA Gender Justice Policy applies to all NCA country offices and head office, and guides:

- NCA's policies and practice;
- NCA's three main working approaches; humanitarian response, long-term development and advocacy;
- NCA's collaboration and partnerships with local and global civil society partners, faith actors, networks, private sector and authorities worldwide;
- NCA's internal and external communication;
- NCA's financial planning and allocation of fiscal resources;
- Development of contextualized gender mainstreaming strategies.

The NCA Gender Justice Policy will be reviewed in conjunction with the current strategic period.



A women friendly police station with a GBV helpline in Mirpurkhas, Pakistan. Leader of the station, Mehnaz Awan, in front of her colleagues Yasmeen, Radhina, Sughra and Tehmina.

**PHOTO:** Håvard Bjelland/Norwegian Church Aid

## COMMITMENTS

NCA is committed to applying Gender Mainstreaming as an overall approach.

**Gender mainstreaming** is a strategy to achieve gender equality and a process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, policy or programme, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women and men an integral dimension of design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes so that both women and men benefit and inequality is not perpetuated.<sup>4</sup> Gender mainstreaming is a process for quality assurance in which gender analysis is an important tool.

**Gender Analysis** highlights the differences between and among women, men, girls and boys in terms of their relative distribution of resources, opportunities, constraints and power in a given context. Performing gender analysis allows us to develop responses that are better suited to meet the needs and rights of different populations groups.

NCA is further committed to:

- Promote, protect and respect human rights for all, women, men, girls and boys.
- Promote strategies that guard against human rights violations perpetuated on the grounds of people's real or perceived gender identity.
- Promote gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment.
- Uphold values that fulfil the right to a life free from all forms of gender-based violence.
- Adhere to and implement NCA's Code of Conduct, including on preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse.
- Ensure gender balance in NCA management and Board.
- Ensure sufficient gender competence and resources (human and financial) in order to apply gender sensitivity methods and undertake gender analysis.



Vinjeru Mhango is a midwife working in the maternal unit at Lunjika Health Centre, Malawi.  
**PHOTO:** Kristine Flyvholm/Norwegian Church Aid

## FOCUS AREAS

### NCA programmes and advocacy:

- Apply the ACT Alliance Gender Inclusive Rights-Based Approaches Tool<sup>5</sup> to ensure that all NCA's programmes, policies and advocacy benefit men, women, girls and boys according to their different needs and rights.
- Promote and secure equal participation and representation of women, men, girls and boys in the design, planning, monitoring and evaluation.
- Engage men for gender equality and promote Positive Masculinities approaches.
- Focus particularly on the potential that lies in working with religious actors, also female religious actors, and faith alliances for gender justice in promoting women's rights and gender equality.<sup>6</sup>
- Actively involve NCA and partners in international, regional and national networks that promote gender equality.

### Within NCA:

- Promote and support an inclusive and non-discriminatory work environment for all - irrespective of gender, physical abilities, sexual orientation and other overlapping or intersecting social identities.
- Promote equal opportunities for obtaining responsibility, positions, competence and remuneration for men and women at all staff levels within the organisation.
- Ensure that training and capacity development on gender equality is provided for all staff.
- Ensure gender sensitive approaches in all internal and external communication.

<sup>5</sup> <http://actalliance.org/capacity-building/gender-inclusive-rights-based-manual/>

<sup>6</sup> [www.sidebysidegender.org](http://www.sidebysidegender.org)

## NCA POLICIES, STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

NCA expresses its commitment to gender equality and women's rights through several central policies and strategies, including:

- NCA Statement of Principles
- NCA Statutes
- NCA Global Strategy - Faith in Action
- NCA Political Platform
- NCA Humanitarian Strategy 2016-2020
- NCA Global Advocacy Strategy 2016-2020
- NCA Partnership Policy 2016
- NCA Programme Plan 2016-2020
- NCA WASH Policy
- ACT Alliance Gender Justice Policy
- NCA Gender Strategy and Tool box for gender assessment (forthcoming)

Several international humanitarian and development standards and national action plans, hold NCA accountable to ensure gender-sensitive programming and promote gender equality and women's rights, including:

- The Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability
- The SPHERE Standards
- Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Gender Handbook and related IASC guidelines, including the Guidelines for Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings
- OECD DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker
- Norwegian Action Plan for Women's Rights and Gender Equality in Development Cooperation (2016- 2020)
- Norwegian Action Plan for Implementation of UNSCR 1325 (2015-2018)
- Other national UNSCR 1325 action plans
- UN Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda 2030)
- Convention on Eliminating All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)



<http://actalliance.org/documents/act-gender-justice-policy/>

**Save lives:** We will work to create safe and resilient communities to protect and save the lives of people living in extreme poverty, fragility, and emergencies.

**Seek justice:** We will work to create inclusive and just societies to secure and fulfil the human rights of people living with inequality, insecurity, and oppression. We envision communities where people are active participants in their own development and organise themselves to claim their rights.

Norwegian Church Aid's global strategy "Faith in Action"



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