



## Diversity & Inclusiveness Policy

<b>Policy &amp; Procedure Owner</b>	CEO Office	
<b>Approved By</b>	Board	
<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Date of Last Revision</b>	<b>Next Review</b>
17 September 2018	August 2018	August 2020

### Introduction

Edmund Rice Foundation Australia's (ERFA) Diversity & Inclusiveness Policy is grounded in ERFA's vision for access to quality education and life-long learning opportunities for all, supporting empowered communities that determine their own futures. The Policy underpins ERFA's commitment to being inclusive and offering support in a spirit of human solidarity regardless of race, culture, gender, health status and religious or political beliefs.

ERFA believes that sustainable development and human rights are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. Therefore, diversity and inclusiveness belong in a human rights context.

ERFA is committed to its Australia based and in-country project personnel (its human capital) as its most precious assets. This human capital comprises the collective sum of the individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, inventiveness, innovation, self-expression, unique capabilities and talents of ERFA's Australia based and in-country project personnel.

### Context

Edmund Rice Foundation Australia's Diversity & Inclusiveness Policy is grounded in the United Nations Development Programme's [10<sup>th</sup> Global Goal for Sustainable Development](#) – *Reduced Inequalities: reduced inequality within and among nations*. Of particular relevance for ERFA's work in developing countries are the following targets of the 10<sup>th</sup> Global Goal:

- Promote Universal Social, Economic and Political Inclusion
  - By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.
- Reduce Income Inequalities
  - By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population.
- Ensure Equal Opportunities and End Discrimination
  - Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard.

ERFA's Disability & Inclusiveness Policy is also informed by:

- The [ACFID Code of Conduct Commitment 2.4](#): *We promote the empowerment of people with disabilities*
- [DFAT Disability Action Strategy 2017 - 2020](#)

## **Related Policies**

ERFA's Diversity and Inclusiveness Policy is to be read in conjunction with ERFA's:

- Complaints Handling Policy
- Gender Equality & Female Empowerment Policy
- Harassment Policy
- Human Resource Policy
- Occupational Health & Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to articulate ERFA's commitment to the principles of diversity and inclusiveness in its Australia and in-country operations and its expectation that these principles will be adhered to by the programs it supports.

ERFA's Diversity & Inclusiveness Policy establishes standards of behaviour expected of all Australia based and in-country program personnel.

## **Policy**

With respect to diversity and inclusiveness, ERFA is committed to:

- fostering, cultivating and preserving a culture of diversity and inclusion
- the treatment of all persons with dignity and respect at all times
- embracing differences in age, race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, marital status, physical and intellectual ability, disability, political affiliation, religious affiliation, socio-economic status and other characteristics of uniqueness
- respecting the cultures, customs and beliefs of the in-country communities it seeks to serve
- ensuring wide community participation in the planning of the programs it supports
- promoting healthy workplace responsibilities and behaviours and empowering staff and volunteers to manage their relationships in the workplace and resolve workplace concerns and conflicts as early as possible to create a positive workplace culture
- promoting the resolution of concerns and conflict through consultation, cooperation and collaborative discussion
- the prevention of bullying, discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment), vilification and victimisation

Diversity awareness training opportunities are to be provided for Australia based and in-country program personnel.

Any staff member or volunteer who believes they have been subjected to any kind of discrimination that conflicts with ERFA's Diversity & Inclusiveness Policy should follow the procedures set out in ERFA's Complaints Handling Policy.

## **Disability**

ERFA's commitment to persons living with a disability is informed by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

ERFA believes that respect for diversity and the elimination of negative attitudes towards disability are facilitated through the promotion of a better understanding of the diverse lived experiences and perspectives of people living with disability.

ERFA is aware that women and girls in developing nations living with disability often face multiple

forms of discrimination due to their gender, disability and consequent economic status and often face a greater risk of abuse and violence. Such inequalities impact on access to education, employment, health services and decision-making. Consequently, women and girls are over-represented amongst those living in poverty. Children living with disability face significant barriers to enjoying the same rights and freedoms as their peers and often face greater risks of abuse.

ERFA is committed to:

- promotion of the dignity and well-being of people living with disability
- the belief that people living with disability share the same rights and freedoms as all persons
- enabling the participation of people living with disability in decision making in project design and all stages of the project cycle
- considering issues of disability and inclusion for people living with disability in project design, appraisal, monitoring and evaluation
- the support of projects with a specific outreach to and advocacy for people living with disability
- the inclusion of people with disability in its employment policy

### **Equal Opportunity - Employment**

With respect to equal employment opportunity principles and practice, ERFA is committed to:

- ensuring that equal opportunity exists in all areas of employment
- recruitment and selection decisions based on merit according to qualifications, skills, abilities, experience and aptitudes and not affected by irrelevant personal characteristics
- provision of employment conditions and opportunities for professional development without discrimination
- provision of a working environment free from discrimination, bullying, sexual harassment, and racial and religious vilification
- provision of reasonable flexibility in working arrangements, especially where needed to accommodate employees' family and carer responsibilities, disability, religion and culture and work/life balance
- the right to raise issues or to make an enquiry or complaint in a reasonable and respectful manner without being victimised

### **Diversity & Inclusiveness and Development Education**

ERFA affirms the critical role of education in transforming and liberating lives; education that enables the development of self-sustaining, healthy individuals and communities who are thus empowered to determine their own futures. Hence, education is an indispensable component for the achievement of ERFA's diversity and inclusiveness policy commitments. The specific educational context for the realization of these commitments is Development Education, which enables people to understand and participate in tackling the root causes of injustices and inequalities in their communities. Key components in Development Education include human rights, social justice and inclusive education. Hence, education in diversity and inclusiveness must be an essential component in Development Education. For maximum effectiveness, this education needs to encompass whole communities.

To ensure funded programs' adherence to its diversity and inclusiveness policy commitments, ERFA requires that program funding applications must include a program professional development plan for the provision of staff and volunteer education and training in cross cutting issues, including disability & inclusiveness and the promotion of human rights, across the funded period. Applications must also be accompanied by copies of program policies addressing these cross cutting issues. Details of relevant education and training delivered must be included in Quarterly Monitoring

Reports and Annual Acquittal Reports. These reports must also profile the personnel who delivered the training and the participants. Program adherence to the above requirements will also be reviewed during field monitoring and program visits.

**Relevant Commonwealth Legislation**

- Age Discrimination Act 2004
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984

ERFA is aware that there are also Australian state and territory laws that cover discrimination.