

Disability & Inclusion Policy

Policy & Procedure Owner	CEO Office	
Approved by	ERFA Board of Directors	
Date Approved	Date of Last Revision	Next Review
28 October 2015	March 2023	March 2026

Abbreviations

ACFID	Australian Council for International Development
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
ERFA	Edmund Rice Foundation Australia
ERFK	Edmund Rice Foundation Kenya
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Definitions

ACFID Member	A not-for-profit organisation that has obtained accreditation with ACFID
Board Members	Voluntary directors of ERFA's Board
Donor	Members of the public including individuals or organisations who contribute to ERFA in cash or in-kind
Partner	Any organisation which has an MOU or contract with ERFA
Program	Programs are overarching development approaches and initiatives that set priorities and guide project outcomes, results and activities. Programs can comprise ministries or entities
Project	Projects are the development activities of a Program
Primary Stakeholder (beneficiary)	Children and adults who participate in and are directly impacted by ERFA partner projects
Staff	Employees, contractors, subcontractors, outworkers, apprentices and trainees, work experience students, volunteers and any other person who performs work for ERFA or ERFK
Stakeholder	Anyone who interacts with ERFA/ERFK and its Partners including but not limited to suppliers, contractors, volunteers, donors, etc.

Contact information

Chief Executive Officer	Bren Arkinstall - barkinstall@edmundrice.org
Programs Director	Emily Faller – ejfaller@edmundrice.org
ERFA Board Chair	Paul Gallagher – chair@erf.org.au
ERFA	www.erf.org.au or +61 7 3621 9649
ACFID	http://www.acfid.asn.au or +61 6 02 6285 1816

Contents Page

Section	Page
1.0 Introduction	3
2.0 Purpose	3
3.0 Definitions	3
4.0 Guiding Principles	3
5.0 Policy Commitments	4
6.0 Roles and Responsibilities	4
7.0 Related ERFA Policies and Documents	5

1.0 Introduction

ERFA is committed to the principle of inclusiveness in its Australian and in-country operations. ERFA believes that sustainable development and human rights are interdependent and recognises the equal right of all people to participate in all aspects of social, economic and political life. ERFA adopts and upholds the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (UNCRPD) to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

ERFA believes that respect for diversity is facilitated through the promotion of a better understanding of the diverse lived experiences and perspectives of people living with disability. ERFA recognises that there are specific barriers which may influence the diversity and inclusiveness of its work. For example, women and girls in developing nations living with disability face intersecting drivers of marginalisation and typically experience discrimination due to their gender, disability and consequent economic status. They also experience a greater risk of abuse and violence.

ERFA implements an inclusive development approach to its work.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of Edmund Rice Foundation Australia's Disability & Inclusion Policy is to ensure that all ERFA Australia-based personnel and all overseas Program personnel associated with the programs ERFA supports in-country, are aware of their responsibilities to promote and implement an inclusive organisation through:

- ERFA's commitment to recognising and promoting the rights of people living with a disability in accordance to the UNCRPD and UDHR; and
- The equal promotion, full participation and inclusion of all people.

3.0 Definitions

3.1 Disability

The UNCRPD defines disability as persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

3.2 Reasonable accommodations

Reasonable accommodation means necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

3.3 Disability-inclusive development

Disability-inclusive development provides opportunities for people with disabilities to participate on an equal basis with others and realise their full potential.

4.0 Guiding Principles

The guiding principles of the Disability & Inclusion Policy includes:

- All people have the right to equal and meaningful participation.
- Inclusive development that requires primary stakeholders, specifically those a part of vulnerable groups, to take an active role in consultation and decision making.
- Embracing the differences of, including and actively representing those affected by intersecting drivers of marginalisation and exclusion, including but not limited to socio-economic status, poverty, class, age, race, ethnicity, indigeneity, displacement, caste, gender, gender identity, sexuality, sexual orientation, marital status, physical and intellectual ability,

disability, political affiliation, religious affiliation and other characteristics of uniqueness.

5.0 Policy Commitments

Within the organisation ERFA is committed to:

- ensuring that equal opportunity exists in all areas of employment;
- providing any reasonable accommodations necessary to employ and/or engage with people with disabilities
- 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 to accommodate for employees' family and carer responsibilities, disability, religion and culture and work/life balance;
- the participation of people who have lived experience of disabilities to engage with the Board of Governors;
- accessible communication materials to the extent possible;
- capacity development of personnel to deliver inclusive development, through training, professional development and other avenues; and
- regular monitoring and evaluation of how ERFA upholds the principles and practices of inclusive development.

Through partnerships and projects ERFA is committed to:

- promoting the UNCRPD and its principles;
- ensuring wide community participation in the planning of the programs it supports;
- enabling the participation of people living with disability in decision making in project design and all stages of the project cycle;
- ensuring the active involvement of vulnerable beneficiaries in Project design;
- considering issues of disability and inclusion for people living with disability in project design, appraisal, monitoring and evaluation;
- ensuring the reasonable accommodation of people with disabilities to fully participate in the project;
- acknowledging that beneficiaries who have intersecting vulnerabilities experience heightened barriers to exclusion;
- proactively including vulnerable, marginalised and excluded beneficiary segments in Project delivery;
- ensuring that Projects address the unique needs and wants of vulnerable beneficiaries;
- ensuring that Projects adopt processes to safeguard vulnerable beneficiaries from unintended harm;
- the support of projects with a specific outreach to and advocacy for people living with disability; and
- capacity development of partner personnel to deliver inclusive development, through training, feedback, capacity building plans, and other avenues.

6.0 Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Board Directors

The Board of Directors are responsible for:

- Ultimate accountability for this policy
- Approving this policy and holding the CEO accountable to how effective this policy is implemented

6.2 CEO

The CEO is responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy is upheld
- Informing the Board of any concerns relating to the commitments and principles outlined in this policy

6.3 ERFA Staff

- Understanding and following this policy and related procedures
- Ensuring that your actions are in line and reflect the guiding principles and policy commitments above

7.0 Related ERFA Policies and Documents

Related policies

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

Related documents

- Vulnerability Context Analysis Tool

Vulnerability Context Analysis Template

Date Implemented	Date of Last Revision	Next Review
December 2020	March 2023	March 2025

Vulnerability context analysis

To assist ERFA and its implementing Partners in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of its beneficiaries, it is necessary to keep a record of beneficiary sectors that may face unique risks or heightened vulnerabilities. Through using the documentation tool, Vulnerability Context Analysis (VCA), ERFA performs a contextual analysis of the specific drivers of marginalisation and exclusion affecting the communities of the individual Projects that it supports. This document compiles the following information for each of ERFA's supported Projects:

- Country context analysis: laws, political norms and cultural attitudes on a country-wide scale that affect vulnerable peoples. For example, laws that discriminate against sexual orientation, historical backgrounds of racial oppression, as in the case of apartheid in South Africa, or cultural attitudes that reinforce socio-economic divisions, as in the case of the caste system in India. International human rights groups such as [Amnesty International](#) and [Human Rights Watch](#) are good sources to obtain reliable accounts of human rights conditions around the world. Partners can also provide insightful accounts of country-level vulnerabilities in their funding applications under the sections 'Project need' and 'Project history'.
- Project context analysis: a Project-specific description of inequalities experienced by the communities they seek to support. In the context of development, all of the Projects that ERFA supports are initiated by their Partners with the intention of addressing inequalities and vulnerabilities of some kind. ERFA explicitly asks for Partners to elaborate on the underlying context, the needs and wants of the beneficiaries they wish to serve in funding applications reports under the headings 'Project need' and 'Project history'.
- Vulnerability factors: Partner descriptions of the specific vulnerable beneficiary segments whose wants and needs are addressed in their Project. This information is compiled from Partner's answers to the 'Project Beneficiaries' section of ERFA's Funding Application. See Section 4.0 Monitoring and Evaluation for the specific questions that Partners are asked.

Compiling information

The VCA is a continuously updated document that changes in accordance with a Project's vulnerability context. It is updated by the Programs and Compliance Officer at the following times:

- During the funding application assessment phase. Within ERFA's Funding Application, Projects are asked to list the marginalised and excluded groups that they support. The Project is also asked to explain how the vulnerable beneficiary segment participated in project design, how the Project addresses their rights, needs and inclusions and how the Project protects them from unintended harm.
- During the Quarterly Report assessment phase. The 'Challenges, Risks and Emerging Needs' section of ERFA's Quarterly Report gives Projects an opportunity to highlight emerging vulnerable beneficiary segments not discussed in their funding application or incorporated into their project design. The 'Cross-Cutting Policies' section asks Projects to detail any training conducted in the last quarter relating to ERFA's cross-cutting policies, including ERA's Child Protection Policy, Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy, Gender Equality & Female Empowerment Policy, Disability & Inclusion Policy, Protection of Human Rights Policy and Environmental Sustainability Policy. Insights into the needs of a Project's vulnerable groups, as well as new strategies for how to advance their inclusion or protect them from unintended harm, could be discovered during these training sessions.
- When a Project informs ERFA of changes to the complexion of their vulnerable beneficiary

groups or the complexion of the vulnerability context.

- When new risks or inequalities to a Project's beneficiaries are discovered through regular monitoring and reporting.

Addressing vulnerabilities

The VCA is a crucial tool that aids ERFA in decision-making and safeguarding the needs of vulnerable, marginalised and excluded beneficiaries. The tool is used to:

- Assess Partners' cross-cutting policies: the VCA is a useful tool that provides a convenient snapshot of whether a prospective implementing Partner's safeguarding strategies are compliant with ERFA requirements. This in turn guides ERFA on how to best support the capacity of the project.
- Support proactive strategy decisions: individual Project context analyses provides insight on what are the best strategies ERFA can implement to ensure that vulnerable stakeholders are protected from unintended harm, and that marginalised and excluded stakeholders are actively included in Project design.
- Support Reactive strategy decisions: in the event of a safeguarding incident or the lodgment of a complaint that concerns the wellbeing or safety of a stakeholder, the VCA is a useful reference to help ERFA Staff understand why and how the incident may have transpired. In light of incidents or complaints, a Project's VCA can then be updated to reflect new vulnerabilities and improve its safeguarding capacity.

Allocate resources: through the VCA, ERFA Staff can help identify those Projects with a primary focus on the inclusion and representation of vulnerable beneficiaries (for example, a Project that specialises in supporting the development of small businesses run by women living with HIV/AIDS). ERFA is then able to appropriately allocate resources that meet the unique demands of these Projects (for example, a Project that specialises in the education of students living with a disability may require increased funds to transport students to a classroom or to conduct specialised disability training).

Section A: Program Responses

Program Title: Project Title

ERFA Supported Project?	[Insert details of ERFA's support for this project, i.e., whether ERFA supports the Project and the financial amount and duration of the support]
Country	
Country context analysis	
Project context analysis	
Vulnerable factor 1: gender	How did the marginalised/excluded group contribute to project design? [Insert Program answer]
	How will the Project address the rights, needs and inclusions of the vulnerable group? [Insert Program answer]
	How will the Project ensure the vulnerable group are protected from unintended harm? [Insert Program answer]
Vulnerable factor 2: disability	How did the marginalised/excluded group contribute to project design? [Insert Program answer]
	How will the Project address the rights, needs and inclusions of the vulnerable group? [Insert Program answer]
	How will the Project ensure the vulnerable group are protected from unintended harm? [Insert Program answer]
Vulnerable factor 3: [Insert]	How did the marginalised/excluded group contribute to project design? [Insert Program answer]
	How will the Project address the rights, needs and inclusions of the vulnerable group? [Insert Program answer]
	How will the Project ensure the vulnerable group are protected from unintended harm? [Insert Program answer]

Section B: ERFA Analysis

Country context analysis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are any key factors missing from the program response? 2. Are there any other research and/or statistics that should be included?
Project context analysis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are any key factors missing from the program response? 2. Are there any other research and/or statistics that should be included?
Vulnerable factor 1: gender	Please provide any further information regarding the contribution of this group to project design.
	Please provide any further information regarding how the Project will address the rights, needs and inclusions of the vulnerable group.
	Please provide any further information regarding how the Project will ensure the vulnerable group are protected from unintended harm.
Vulnerable factor 2: disability	Please provide any further information regarding the contribution of this group to project design.
	Please provide any further information regarding how the Project will address the rights, needs and inclusions of the vulnerable group.
	Please provide any further information regarding how the Project will ensure the vulnerable group are protected from unintended harm.
Vulnerable factor 3: [Insert]	Please provide any further information regarding the contribution of this group to project design.
	Please provide any further information regarding how the Project will address the rights, needs and inclusions of the vulnerable group.
	Please provide any further information regarding how the Project will ensure the vulnerable group are protected from unintended harm.