



POLICY

Achieving gender equality

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Preface

Gender justice is a means of, as well as a precondition for, overcoming poverty and inequality in their many forms. Yet, in many parts of the world, we are far from achieving equality and equal opportunities for men and women. Unequal living conditions and access to resources, traditional hierarchies, discriminatory laws as well as culturally-anchored practices restrict the possibilities of women and girls to achieve their human rights.

We would like to support women to participate more in society, to build up their skills so that they can play an equal role in political development and decision-making at all levels – local, national and international. The goal has to be to overcome global gender discrimination and inequality.

Apart from the improvement of the social, economic and legal situation of women and their empowerment, the social values and norms that promote patriarchal power relations and related ways of thinking and behaviour have to be queried if gender-specific discrimination is to be overcome. The gender roles fixed in the minds of most people and the social gendered division of labor that derives from these have to be called into question and overcome, so that women and girls can achieve an equal position in society.

Therefore, in its development policy and programme work, Brot für die Welt (Bread for the World) campaigns for gender equality. Additionally, Brot für die Welt and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe are sensitive to gender-based discrimination reflected in their own activities and they endeavour to not reinforce this unintentionally. Our policy paper “Achieving gender equality“ will bolster our commitment and activity in this regard and ensure their continuity.

We face a whole series of relatively new challenges: An increase in severe natural disasters, political crises and armed conflicts are toughening the lives of women and making it more difficult to achieve social conditions that would favour more gender equality. Contexts of violence, migration, displacement and expulsion are promoting gender-based and sexualised violence. The high dependence on humanitarian aid is making an increasing number of women vulnerable to sexual attacks and exploitation. Humanitarian aid has to take into account women’s needs and their requirement for protection.

In many countries at the moment there are trends towards autocracy, populism, and to national or group-specific selfishness (us first). These developments are causing standstills or even setbacks when it comes to efforts

towards gender equality, women’s rights and human rights. More and more countries are introducing laws to restrict the activities of non-governmental organisations, which campaign for justice and human rights. This has affected many feminist groups and women’s rights organisations. Strong voices that demand gender equality and the achievement of women’s rights and human rights from their governments are being silenced.

It is not only for women to campaign for gender equality. Men, especially young men, have to be more strongly integrated in the debate and understand why it is relevant to them. This calls for an examination of mainstream concepts of masculinity, the roles and privileges linked to being a man, as well as of possible changes in roles and attitudes that are necessary if power is to be re-distributed and privileges renounced. Gender-sensitive work with boys and men as a target group and the integration of boys and men as promoters of the change are therefore necessary.

We hope that this policy paper will support the staff of our organisation and our partner organisations in this respect and give guidance.

DR. H. C. CORNELIA FÜLLKRUG-WEITZEL

President, Brot für die Welt and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe

Introduction

This policy paper serves the continuation and further development of the implementation of gender equality and gender justice in the work of Brot für die Welt and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe in cooperation with the partner organisations. It defines Brot für die Welt and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe's positions and strategies regarding gender policy in the context of development policy and humanitarian aid.¹

The paper focuses on the achievement of gender equality, and more specifically on the empowerment of women and girls and their equal rights in church based development cooperation. Its objective is to support staff and the organisation's leadership in their task to campaign worldwide for gender justice, in particular for the equality of women and girls affected by marginalisation, poverty and catastrophes, in the dialog with the partners, in project work, advocacy, lobbying and public relations, as well as in the area of humanitarian aid.

Despite considerable positive developments, women and girls continue to be affected by discrimination and their human rights continue to be violated. While very 12th person in the world is a malnourished man or boy, every fifth is a malnourished woman or girl. Access to basic education has improved significantly for girls in the past two decades. Nonetheless, according to UN statistics, 58 million children still do not go to school and over half are girls. Globally, women are underrepresented in leadership positions in the area of politics as well as in the economy and society. However, they are overrepresented in the domestic work and care sectors and other areas where the work is poorly remunerated, working hours are long and social security is lacking. The widespread violence against women and girls worldwide is a particularly devastating indicator of how strongly rooted gender-based discrimination and injustice remain in our patriarchal societies.

In view of this reality, Brot für die Welt welcomes the fact that the fifth Sustainable Development Goal of the 2030 Agenda – “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” – has returned the issue of gender equality to the attention of the international community and supports all those striving for gender equality and gender justice. The targets of goal 5 take into account many of the

demands that women's movements have had for years, such as the eradication of all forms of violence against women and girls, the ensuring of equal opportunities in political, economic and public life, as well as of equal rights to economic resources and access to basic technologies. They aim also to guarantee general access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights and to relieve women and girls of the burden of unpaid housework and care-work. Gender mainstreaming is embedded in many of the agenda's other goals. It is a huge success that the global women's movements have been able to ensure at the global level that gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls comprise an autonomous 2030 Agenda goal. Goal 5 also provides an incentive to Brot für die Welt and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe to keep up its work towards gender equality.

Brot für die Welt and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe have a mission to participate in the ecumenical work for peace, justice and preserving God's creation. Their work centres on eradicating poverty in its many forms and standing up for a just world. Since the 1970s achieving gender equality has been an important part of the work. The first goal of Brot für die Welt strategy plan for 2016 to 2020 calls for a socio-ecological transformation to overcome poverty, reduce inequality and preserve God's creation. The strategy plan also includes the development of a policy paper on the subject of gender equality. This will be integrated into a strategy paper on eradicating gender-related discrimination (Goal 3.2) by 2018. Finally, the intention is to strengthen gender as a cross-cutting issue which will provide a link to other objectives of the strategy plan.

¹ — This policy paper does not refer to the measures for implementing gender equality in the organisation's internal structures. There is an equal opportunities officer who is responsible for implementing gender equality internally.

Chapter 1

Challenges for achieving gender equality

1.1 Context

Gender relations worldwide reflect unequal power relations and firmly fixed hierarchies of values that privilege men and boys. Combined with other categories that reflect social inequality, such as disability or social origin (intersectionality) they have an impact on societies and mark all areas of life, including social institutions. This is true for both national and international institutions, whose political and economic activity reinforces gender inequality. For example, international trade policy disadvantages the economic activity of women while financial policy massively favours social inequality and exclusion. Gender roles and subsequent role stereotypes are thus cemented at local, national and international level.

Women are often stereotyped as being weak and dependent which prevents them from developing their potential and skills, while it can be a burden for men to always have to come across as strong, courageous and invulnerable. Stereotyping also has an impact on the relationship between genders. Deviations from the norm, which call into question the predominant understanding of masculinity and femininity as well as the relationship between men and women, including their sexual relations, are often seen as a threat to the existing (gender) order. Apart from restricting the variety of ways of living and the free development of personality, this can promote homophobia, which in turn can go as far as violating human rights in state legislation, as the homophobic legislative initiatives witnessed in certain African states show. In such circumstances, people are pushed into roles and patterns of behaviour that restrict their decision-making powers and development. At worst, they are also criminalised. Individuality and autonomy to shape one's own life are subordinate to social, cultural and historical frameworks and expectations that have established themselves over time. Masculine power, often associated with privileges for men, is thus maintained.

The current gender debates in academic circles and in society refer to this situation by arguing that there exist diverse sexual and gender identities that have to be acknowledged and considered if the existing discriminatory gender and power relations are to be overcome and if socially-constructed and restrictive gender roles are to be parted with. Sexuality and gender identity are understood as core elements of being human, protected by rights. This includes sexual self-determination. Discrimination and, even worse, criminalisation are human

rights violations, which have an impact on the societal participation of those affected and must be abolished.

This policy paper focuses on the empowerment and the equality of women and girls without actually taking up the current gender debates. The discourses on the diversity of gender identity, sexual orientation and self-determination and on the implications of the social construction of gender are becoming increasingly important but do not at the moment have a central significance for Brot für die Welt and the partner organisations' practical work. When time is appropriate, they will be taken up and debated within the context of the development cooperation of the churches. If different positions concerning issues about gender identities and/or sexual orientation become relevant in the context of cooperation, Brot für die Welt and the respective partner organization will enter into dialog. In accordance with the objective of the World Council of Churches (WCC), Brot für die Welt is committed to dialog about social-ethic questions among churches with different positions, the facilitation of safe spaces for critical theological and social-ethic reflections and the encouragement of an endogenous transformation process within churches of different positions. This happens on the basis of listening to each other, of respecting other ways of thinking and opinions, as well as of taking into account different historical, cultural and social contexts.

However, a partner organization that orally or in writing fuels exclusion, persecution or violence against people of other gender identities or sexual orientation violates international human rights standards as well as the principles of Brot für die Welt. In such a case, Brot für die Welt will initiate a binding conflict resolution process and consider the consequences for further cooperation.

In fragile contexts, humanitarian aid and development cooperation must support women and girls to safeguard their life (and survival) in circumstances that are usually violent and where there are stereotypical expectations with regard to gender relations. At the same time, women must have equal opportunities to bring their perspectives and demands into all processes that promote peace and aim at developing state structures and institutions.

1.2 Present and future challenges

Present power relations and thought and behavioural patterns have led to society ascribing men and women opposing but typical characteristics and skills, which are

repeated and confirmed in everyday practice. The effects are multi-faceted:

Girls are married off young and by force so that they can fulfil their ascribed role as mothers and housewives as early as possible. According to UN statistics, in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, about half of women aged between 20 and 24 are married off before their 18th birthday. In the 28 countries in which female genital mutilation (FGM) is practised (e.g. Egypt, Yemen and certain Sub-Saharan countries), 47 percent of women and girls are affected. Large numbers of female foetuses are aborted in India and China because women and girls are not valued by society and considered an economic burden. These statistics explain why women and girls of the MENA region, Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia are the most affected by gender inequality.

In other regions of the world, e.g. in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, in the East-Asian and Pacific region and particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean, the situation of women and girls tends to be better, but this does not mean that discrimination does not exist, especially with regard to access to services such as health and to resources such as land and loans, as well as control over these. In most countries of the world, including in the Global North, women receive less pay than men for the same work. The problem is particularly severe in the areas of housework and care-work, which women and girls all over the world carry out – largely unnoticed and unpaid – for their families and societies, often further increasing their risk of falling into poverty or remaining in it.

Achieving gender equality and realising women's rights is a global task. Gender equality exists in no country in the world, including Germany. Different cultural and regional contexts mean that the efforts towards achieving gender equality have to be tailored to individual local situations. Depending on context, the partner organisations have varying scope and potential that they can use in their work for gender equality. Strategies for action and solutions might well differ from those in the Global North.

One of the results of the conflicts and crises currently raging in many countries and regions of the world is that humanitarian aid and development cooperation efforts towards achieving gender equality are increasingly taking place in fragile contexts.

These are often characterised by displacement as well as increasing migration from rural regions to ever-growing cities. Crises, conflicts and disasters result in increasing numbers of people who are dependent on

humanitarian aid. The UN's 2015 State of the World Population report estimated the figure at over 100 million people. It is challenging for those administering humanitarian aid to not neglect the gender perspective when providing emergency aid to a growing number of people.

Gender relations in fragile contexts

Increasingly, poverty is concentrated in fragile regions or states affected by conflict, crisis and/or natural disasters. This trend will continue in future because the instability of fragile contexts increases the risk of poverty for people living in them. In such circumstances, it is particularly difficult for women and girls to overcome their discrimination. On the contrary: as states fail or are weak, people are more likely to turn to local practices, traditions and customs that tend to be patriarchal and discriminate against women and girls. Female genital mutilation, forced marriage and other forms of gender-based oppression and violence thus remain present as social norms and institutions. Weak governments are not in a position to counter this and strengthen women's rights.

In violent conflicts, images of masculinity and femininity are defined very narrowly and stereotypically: masculinity is associated with action – whether in a protective or hostile role but always in an active position. Femininity is associated with a victim's passive position. Men and women are guided by these images even if their real identities are often completely different. Thus, women and girls are increasingly contributing to the family income or even taking over full responsibility for providing for their families if the men are unemployed, fighting, forced to flee or dead.

Men can react to changes in gender relations with a heightened readiness to resort to violence. When changing conditions prevent them from fulfilling the traditional role of provider and protector of their families, they can feel threatened in their masculinity and its associated dominant position and try to re-establish this latter through violence.

In such circumstances, women and girls first need support and protection to improve and safeguard their lives. It is equally important, however, in efforts to overcome fragility to create conditions that ensure that women (and girls) can participate equally in the development of peaceful, equal societies. Women's empowerment must be part of the process and men have to acknowledge and allow this. This will only be possible if not only women and girls but also men and boys have the chance

to call into question gender stereotypes and re-define masculinity and femininity.

Dangers for refugees (women and girls)

According to the UNHCR, there are over 65 million people worldwide who are fleeing persecution and/or conflict and/or natural disasters.²

For men, women and children this is a traumatic experience that many are never able to fully overcome. About half of the refugees worldwide are women and girls. Reasons for fleeing include violence, displacement or natural disasters, as well as forced marriage, female genital mutilation and the many forms of violence and persecution forced upon women by families and partners in many parts of the world. Yet even as they flee, women might be subjected to sexualised and gender-based violence. There is a high risk that their lack of protection as they flee might be abused by human traffickers, other refugees, male relatives or state officials. Sexual harassment and rape are not infrequent and often lead to pregnancy. The European Women's Lobby (EWL) has reported on smugglers and human traffickers working together to force displaced women into prostitution.³ Even when women are able to reach their hoped-for destination, sexualised and gender-based violence is not uncommon because of overcrowded reception centres and conditions, including in Germany, that do not take the particular situation of women and girls into consideration.

Migration to cities

Population growth and migration are having an impact on the size of cities. The number of women moving from rural areas to urban centres is also growing. Many hope for better living and working conditions in cities as well as for better access to infrastructure and services. Another reason why many men and women are leaving rural areas is inadequate government support for smallholder agriculture. The engagement for policies which support smallholder agriculture instead of destroying it is one of the current challenges of *Brot für die Welt* and many partner organisations.

Other reasons for the migration of women include gender-related discrimination and gender-based and sexualised violence that many experience in their original

homes and environments. Young women fighting against forced marriage, for example, might harbour the hope that they will be able to escape their families' control and shape their own lives if they migrate. Since women in many parts of the world do not have a right to own land or to inherit, widows responsible for their children and households are sometimes forced to earn their living in the city, as are women whose polygamous husbands do not carry out their traditional duties to provide for them. However, these women's lives do not necessarily become easier in the city. Often, they can only find work in the informal sector. Their wages are low, the cost of living is high and their risks of being subjected to violence are increased because of their poor living conditions. Access to services, especially healthcare and education, is often not better than in rural areas. In these circumstances, the hope for a better life in the city is often not fulfilled. This is especially true for women and girls, but also for men and boys who migrate to the city.

Gender-based and sexualised violence

The high extent of gender-based and sexualised violence that women and girls in particular are subjected to worldwide poses a particular challenge to achieving gender equality. Gender relations and their inherent power structures and values promote violence of different types and degrees. Violence also affects transgender and lesbian women. In South Africa, for example, "corrective rapes" are carried out against them. Globally, girls and boys might be subjected to paedophilic violence. Domestic violence is present in all classes of society all over the world. About a third of women in the world have experienced physical and/or sexualised violence, mostly perpetrated by an intimate partner. The ideas and structures that favour these forms of violence are very similar all over the world.

In every war, gender-based and sexualised violence is used as a weapon with the aim of destroying a community. Often, the impact can still be felt in later generations. Both men and women can be subjected to this weapon of war. Thus, men might also be raped and humiliated. The goal is to break them physically and psychologically and degrade them to the symbolic status of woman. The estimated number of unreported cases is very high as many

² – UNHCR: Figures and statistics www.unhcr.de/service/zahlen-und-statistiken.html, 14.7.2016

³ – www.womenlobby.org/Asylum-is-not-gender-neutral-the-refugee-crisis-in-Europe-from-a-feminist?lang=en, 8.7.2016

victims of rape remain silence because of the shame and fear of being stigmatised, ostracised or even punished.⁴

In all its forms, gender-based and sexualised violence engenders fear which often prevents victims from actively standing up for their rights. The violence endangers their physical, mental and reproductive health and restricts their self-determination, physical integrity and participation in society.

1.3 Actors

Civil society

Since the 1990s, when the women's rights agenda was globally fixed in the context of various United Nations' (UN) conferences (for example the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit, the World Conference on Women in Beijing), the feminist movement has become more differentiated and developed in various directions. It must be remembered that there are women's movements and feminisms in the plural and that these are characterised by different discourses, goals and positions, which have never been so numerous as today. The connections between gender and other categories of social inequality (intersectionality), manifested in racism and class or caste discrimination, were largely established and introduced by movements in the Global South.

In practice, in both the Global South and the Global North, feminist and political gender-specific civil society organisations and initiatives have emerged at local, regional or national level. Depending on cultural and regional contexts and interests, they contribute in different ways to achieving gender equality. They tend to be issue-based, focussed for instance on combatting gender-based and sexualised violence or realising women's land rights or they might defend the interests of specific groups, such as domestic workers or indigenous women. Some are part of international networks.

In view of the diversity of approaches and interests, the feminist movements are working on networking at all levels and developing a common agenda for gender equality that is firmly rooted in civil society. This has

succeeded in the United Nations context, for example, whereby feminist organisations have managed through their commitment and lobbying to fix a separate development goal for equal rights and the empowerment of women and girls in the 2030 Agenda.

Brot für die Welt supports and accompanies such processes at all levels. It also supports many civil society organisations – faith based and not – whose structures and practices often are shaped by patriarchal ways of thinking. It is an important task for these organisations to make gender equality part of their structures, instruments and programmes with a view to gender mainstreaming.

Patriarchal patterns of thinking are widespread in the internal structures of churches on every continent, as is – frequently – the systematic discrimination of women. These are highlighted particularly by the frequent rejection of the ordination of women and the exclusion of women from leadership positions and decision-making processes, with the consequence that existing discriminating structures in the Church and in society are cemented. However, on every continent, there also exist both churches and faith based organisations that practice and promote gender equity at all levels. These should be strengthened and networked.

National governments

It has already been pointed out that there are major differences, depending on continents and regions, when it comes to the status of women and girls in society and realising their rights. Women's equality is written into many national constitutions but not necessarily reflected in the respective legislation, either because of inadequate legislation or because existing laws are not implemented or are themselves discriminatory in part. A World Bank study found that laws in 155 of 173 countries limited women's economic activity in one way or another. Many states have passed laws to combat gender-based and sexualised violence, but do not implement them enough. Often it is women's organisations, including Brot für die Welt partner organisations that fill the gaps and lobby governments to pass and implement laws and/or to make good

4 – During the Bosnian War (1992 – 1995) between 20,000 and 50,000 women of all ages were raped and tortured. In 1994, during the Rwandan genocide between 250,000 and 500,000 women were raped and tortured. Thousands of girls and women were raped in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in the Ivory Coast after the presidential elections of 2010 and in the Libyan Civil War of 2011 (Medica Mondiale, 2013).

on international agreements for achieving gender equality that they might have signed.

International community

At international level, especially at the United Nations, there are a series of conventions and other types of agreements that strengthen the rights of women and girls and demand gender equality. These include the women's rights convention (CEDAW, 1979), the action platform of Beijing (1995), the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security (2000) and its follow-up resolutions, the Declaration adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna (1993) and the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). The Millennium Development Goals have also helped to improve the situation of women and girls. Since autumn 2015, the fifth goal of the 2030 Agenda on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls has been providing a basis to make progress on the matter of gender equality. At regional level, and also that of the European Union (EU), there exist other agreements that pursue similar goals. Women's organisations and other civil society organisations and networks accompany the implementation of agreements through advocacy and lobbying to promote women's rights and gender equality.

At UN level, for example at the sessions of the Women's Rights Commission, progressive attitudes to gender equality and sexual self-determination are encountering increased hostility from an alliance of autocratic, conservative and fundamentalist governments (e.g. the Vatican, Russia, Islamic states, but also Hungary and Poland). There is particular opposition to the realisation of sexual and reproductive rights. This alliance also receives support from civil society, especially from conservative and fundamentalist evangelical forces in the United States of America.

With respect to the current debate about sexual diversity and gender identity, it should be underlined that in summer 2016 the UN Human Rights Commission created the position of an independent expert for the protection of homosexual, bisexual and transgender people (LGBT) from violence and discrimination. Thus, the work on this subject has been institutionalised in the UN.

Chapter 2

Experiences and positions: We're not starting from scratch

2.1 Previous experiences

Since the 1970s, the discussion about the role of women in development processes has gained more significance internationally, with the 1979 Women's Rights Convention, the four global conferences on women that took place between 1975 and 1995 and the 1993 UN World Conference on Human Rights providing the framework. The role and status of women have been on the agenda of the international ecumenical movement since its very beginnings. When the World Council of Churches was founded in 1948, a commission was set up to look into the working and living conditions of women more thoroughly. Since 1954, there has been a separate department on the subject of men and women in the Church (WCC) and society. Later international discourses (Berlin Sexism Conference 1974 and the Sheffield consultation about the "Community of Women and Men in the Church") laid the ground for the issues of gender equality, community and marriage and family to be broadened in the overall church context and grounded theologically.

An important discussion about the role of women in the development process was conducted during the Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women that the World Council of Churches proclaimed in 1987. In Germany, it was mainly women in the Association of Protestant Development Services (AG KED) member organisations who began to explore the situation of men and women and their different roles and to define gender relations as power relations. This discussion process gave rise in 1993 to a guiding framework entitled "Towards Gender Orientation in Development Cooperation: Principles and Guidelines of the Association of the Churches' Development Services – AG KED." This stated that crucial preconditions for women to be able to live in dignity were better working and living conditions, the abolishment of discrimination and violence against women, as well as the protection and realisation of their human rights. The idea was that development programmes should be based on these criteria and that women should actively and responsibly participate in developing and implementing them. This was the first

policy paper outlining common normative foundations for promoting and empowering women that the member organisations of the AG KED joined up to agree to.

In 2007, Brot für die Welt and the Protestant Development Service (EED) adopted the common gender strategy "Bridging the gap between theory and practice" to implement the gender perspectives in the work of both organisations. The strategy referred to the guiding framework as a relevant policy document but also took into account the progress of the development debate from WID (Women in Development) to GAD (Gender and Development). Thus, the focus no longer lay solely on women and their role in development processes but also on gender relations and the dismantling of their inherent inequalities, including with the help of gender mainstreaming.⁵

In 2011, an evaluation of how the gender strategy had been implemented in both organisations was conducted. It found that both had been successful in using the gender strategy in dialog with the partner organisations and both had created important cross-sectoral structures. It highlighted the staff's high sense of responsibility and know-how, the anchoring of the gender perspective in cross-sectoral structures and positive steps in the project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages. However, the report identified gaps with regard to implementation in both organisations, including in the processes, subject areas, working instruments, planning, public relations, lobbying and advocacy work. The recommendation was to develop a gender policy that would have a general binding character and legitimise gender-related policy measures both internally and externally. This policy paper is the result of this key recommendation.

2.2 Gender justice: What guides us

Gender equality and the promotion of gender justice is a path to overcoming hunger and poverty. For Brot für die Welt this means that all human beings regardless of gender identity and clichéd roles should throughout their entire lives have the same opportunities and rights to live their life as they choose, to deploy their skills and to

⁵ — Since the Fourth Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, gender mainstreaming has been established as a strategy for achieving gender equality. At EU level, gender mainstreaming has been anchored in a legally-binding way since the 1999 Amsterdam Treaty. In 2003, the Social Service Agency of the Protestant Church adopted its concept on gender mainstreaming as an action strategy. The discussion about gender and its implementation as a cross-cutting issue began at the beginning of the 1990s.

shape political, economic and social life on an equal basis. This takes into account both practical and strategic gender interests.⁶ Furthermore, in fragile contexts, both the survival and protection of the population, especially of women and girls, must be safeguarded.

As well as considering the human rights perspective, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe takes guidance from the international humanitarian standards and principles made concrete in various documents.⁷ The four humanitarian principles are: humanity, non-partisanship, neutrality and independence. Help and protection must be guaranteed regardless of ethnic identity, religion, nationality, political conviction, gender or other differentiating factors – the needs of the affected people is the only criterion for aid. In this sense, the principle of non-partisanship is linked to gender equality because it underlines that men and women must benefit not from the same but equally – on the basis of their special needs – from humanitarian aid.

The biblical mission provides a theological foundation to Brot für die Welt campaign for gender equality, since it unites all people and calls on them to stand up for justice, as depicted in the Old Testament by the idea of Shalom where people linked in unity and harmony can live a fulfilled and peaceful life.

In Genesis 1,26, it is explicitly stated that God created humanity, i.e. man and woman, in “his own image”. Modern concepts of dignity and inviolability of humans that count for all people are inspired by the biblical image of God. If every person is understood as an image of God this includes to the whole person regardless of gender identity.

The common marginalisation of widows in the Ancient Orient and Ancient Israel was overcome. The requirement that it become a duty to care for them turned into a central element of social legislation. The prophetic tradition of the people of Israel emphatically turned against the oppression of widows (Jer 7:6; Jer 22:3; Ez 22:7). It aimed for better, or equal, treatment of women, who without male relatives were barely considered people with rights.

This tendency, which is rooted in the Old Testament, towards men and women’s equal enjoyment of legal rights was given a new accent in the New Testament in the understanding of baptism: Baptism makes all people equal and unites them in Jesus Christ. “There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:28).

The Bible requires Christians to work for the new creation that began in Christ (2. Cor 5:17). This includes not allowing injustice, oppression and violence of any kind – including between the sexes – to be legitimised by the Bible and actively working towards the acknowledgement of equality between men and women, in accordance with faith.

Brot für die Welt is committed to the multi-faceted biblical legacy and its guiding principles, which aim for justice, freedom and human dignity. This commitment also includes learning and reflecting on the differentiation between the Bible’s fundamental teachings and contemporary ethical concepts. This also means being sensitive to different cultures while in dialog with faith based and secular partner organisations and talking about how to put these Biblical teachings into context today, taking into account that this can vary depending on the relationship between the Church and society in the respective countries.

2.3 Assessing the situation

Our societies are shaped by patriarchal structures and male hegemony and there is still a long way to go before gender equality is achieved globally. Consequently, women and girls remain more likely to be affected by poverty and marginalisation than men and boys. Since questions pertaining to women and gender have gained more importance in development policy and cooperation, women have become more visible as actors in the social, economic and political spheres and discrimination against women and girls are increasingly acknowledged and discussed

6 – Practical gender needs mean short-term measures that improve the lives of women and girls temporarily (e.g. water provision) but do not change gender relations and the social position of women and girls. Strategic gender relations, on the other hand, aim to dismantle the structural discrimination of women and girls, e.g. through legal equality. These change gender relations and improve the position of women and girls.

7 – SPHERE-Handbook (2011), IASC Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action (2006), GenCap: Integrating gender concerns into the objectives and activities for disaster prevention (2012)

in public. However, in many countries policy that is gender-sensitive and counters structural and institutional gender injustice at all levels is implemented only gingerly.

More and more, the debate on gender equality is integrating men but the redistribution of power and the dismantling of privileges will not take place without powerful men resisting, controversial debates within societies and political setbacks.

To successfully strengthen women's rights and demand equality in fragile contexts shaped by conflict, crisis, displacement and migration, the links between fragility, gender and conflict have to be analysed precisely. The structural causes for gender inequality have to be addressed in such an analysis, just as much as the consequences that images of masculinity based on dominance and hegemony can have on the spreading of conflicts and violence. Also, there has to be an active countering of violence and exploitation. In this context, the actors of humanitarian aid and development cooperation have to give more attention to gender equality as an important aspect for maintaining and building peaceful societies.

The current tendencies in favour of autocracy, populism, nationalism and isolation in many countries of the Global South and North make these analyses more difficult, these analyses. Instead of progress there have been setbacks with regard to equality and women's and human rights. The stagnation in the Women's Rights Commission has been hinted at. The fact that a growing number of states are controlling the activities of NGOs that campaign for justice and human rights with the help of restrictive laws is limiting the scope for action and the political commitment of many feminist and women's rights organisations (shrinking space).

Against this backdrop, dialog with partner organisations that campaign for gender equality and/or are affected by gender inequality and the support of dialog between them are important contributions that Brot für die Welt makes alongside its promotion of concrete measures in the debate on gender equality. Because achieving gender equality remains a huge task and challenge in Germany and in the countries in which Brot für die Welt partner organisations are active, this provides a forum for dialog in which gender policy-related themes and measures that are relevant and feasible for the partners in their respective contexts can be identified. The fact that Brot für die Welt has long-term partnerships makes it easier to discuss gender equality, which in any case can only be achieved via a process.

Brot für die Welt can build on the experiences of its predecessor organisations, which worked intensively on the questions of gender equality in cooperation with the partner organisations. In keeping with the guidelines of the Lutheran World Federation on gender equality, Brot für die Welt has affirmed as a leading objective: Gender justice implies the protection and promotion of the dignity of women and men who, being created in the image of God, are co-responsible stewards of creation. Gender justice is expressed through equality and balanced power relations between women and men and the elimination of the institutional, cultural and interpersonal systems of privilege and oppression that sustain discrimination.”

Chapter 3

Gender justice

3.1 Previous experiences

Brot für die Welt regards gender equality as an autonomous development goal and as a contribution to a just and peaceful society. It is necessary to acknowledge and take into account the gender-based causes and effects of marginalisation and poverty in order to abolish them. If they are to be successful, strategies for creating gender justice must focus on the empowerment of women and girls so that they can participate equally in society, politics and the economy. Further on, there must be a focus on the dismantling of structural and institutionally-rooted gender injustice and on the transformation of existing discriminating gender relations to the positive. Therefore, Brot für die Welt supports faith based organisations and other civil society organisations and networks in the Global South whose work is organised along these strategic lines. Achieving gender justice is either the main goal of their work or it is treated as a cross-cutting issue in connection with other key themes, e.g. food and nutrition security. Those affected always play an active role in the initiated processes.

On grounds of their discrimination, women and girls tend to be the focus of projects to achieve gender equality but men and boys are also affected and addressed. Without them, the desired societal changes will not be able to take place. Brot für die Welt therefore, promotes gender-sensitive work with men to help strengthen the role of men and boys as change agents.

Brot für die Welt supports the commitment of the partner organisations for gender equality in the form of rights-based work at the grassroots level and/or political lobbying and advocacy at local, national and international level. The latter takes place particularly through (feminist) organisations committed to the empowerment of women and girls, the realisation of human and women's rights and to achieving gender equality. Therefore, the promotion of such organisations by Brot für die Welt is very important.

3.2 Key areas

Brot für die Welt emphasises certain key areas for working on gender equality. These are levers for eradicating the gender inequality that exists in many of the contexts in which the partner organisations are active. The different key areas are closely linked and often mutually

dependent, as made clear by the description of projects which represent examples of the partner organisations' work on the issue of gender equality (see box below).

Legal equality

This means that equality is recognised by law and discrimination is banned. Brot für die Welt supports partner organisations that campaign for legal equality de jure as well as de facto according to the situation in respective countries.

Equal access to and control over resources

This means that there is equal access to and control over vital resources, e.g. land, water, technologies and knowledge that facilitate the generation of income, safeguard human existence and support peaceful co-existence. The partner organisations, particularly in rural areas, are campaigning for the removal of restrictions on access to resources and control over them on the grounds of gender so that women and girls can be economically independent, as well as have the autonomy and right to shape their own lives.

Equal participation and decision-making power

These guarantee an equal participation in society and the enjoyment of individual life choices. Brot für die Welt supports partner organisations that campaign for the strengthening of women and girls' agency so that they can be actors in politics, society and the economy and can realise their human rights.

Autonomy to shape one's own life and freedom from violence

Autonomy and freedom from gender-based and sexualised violence is a precondition for a self-determined life. Depending on respective contexts, the partner organisations support women and girls as well as men and boys in the struggle against domestic violence or war-related violence.

Development of social values and norms that call into question patriarchal power relations, thought and behavioural patterns

Gender-based discrimination and human rights violations can only be overcome if discriminatory social practices, values and norms are challenged and abolished. Brot für die Welt supports partner organisations that work towards raising awareness about these connections

Project examples

Gender justice in a rural context

Nijera Kori, a partner organisation in Bangladesh, supports the social mobilisation of the landless rural population. It aims at increasing both the participation of the landless in decision-making processes and their access to resources, e.g. state-administered wasteland and social services. Nijera Kori follows a consistent gender mainstreaming approach. Women and men are organised in grassroots groups that in the first instance are separated from each other. These groups discuss violence against women and gender equality and agree upon strategies to effect change in the way the genders interact. The men and women come together to realise their social and economic rights through campaigning and lobbying. It is difficult to actually achieve the access to wasteland that the landless are legally entitled to because of the interests of influential families. If a land conflict is solved in favour of the landless though, men and women become equal tenants. They develop collective self-administered economic projects for working the land, which put into practice a way of managing work, means of production and income that is guided by the principles of gender equality. Regular evaluations from a gender perspective facilitate institutional learning.

Men are changing

Ecumenical HIV and AIDS Initiatives and Advocacy (EHAIA) is a World Council of Churches programme that raises awareness for HIV and AIDS in churches and communities mainly in Africa. The connection between gender inequality, gender-based and sexualised violence and the spreading of HIV plays an important role in this context. Tackling the role and situation of men and addressing a “transformative masculinity” have become increasingly important in the sensitisation process. Men are given space to exchange ideas about their understanding of their role and to call into question and alter their behaviour. A further innovative approach is “contextual Bible

studies” that can be used to explore themes such as sexuality and gender-based violence. Apart from offering workshops and training sessions to specific groups, EHAIA provides advice to HIV-positive children and youths, AIDS widows, widowers and orphans, as well as to sexual minorities and other marginalised groups such as prisoners and sex-workers.

Gender-specific humanitarian aid for displaced people

Humanitarian assistance is administered according to gender-specific needs. For instance, households run by women or girls in the Central African Republic, Haiti, Syria and Europe are given targeted support since they are at particular risk of violence. Also, the access of women and girls to paid work is limited.

In refugee camps in Jordan with a predominantly Syrian population, „dignity kits“ that have basic hygiene supplies for women (sanitary pads), accessories and abayas, i.e. headscarves, are distributed. The camps also have prayer rooms for women. To ensure that women and girls will be able to benefit from psychological and social services, these are often offered in the form of handicraft or cooking groups. These activities tend to be acceptable for women and girls in many of their societies of origin and thus other relatives (men and women) will allow them to take part so long as there is a guarantee that only women participate.

In many contexts (Ukraine, DR Congo, South Sudan, Jordan, Turkey) there is psychological and social support for refugees and internally displaced people. This is usually directed at traumatised people who are often survivors of violence, predominantly women and girls. Those affected have often experienced gender-based and sexualised violence in their countries of origin (perpetrated by family members or soldiers), as they were fleeing or in the centres for refugees or hosting communities.

among populations and politicians and campaign for a change of consciousness and behaviour in women and girls as well as in men and boys.

Thanks to the positive changes in the above-mentioned areas, women will be further strengthened and gender equality will be achieved, including – and

particularly – in the situations of uncertainty for displaced people or migrants that tend to dominate fragile contexts. The active participation of women (and girls) in peace processes and reconstruction is particularly important. The UN Security Council’s Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security provides a relevant framework for this. Women who are present and get involved make use of their right to participate in society and can make a significant contribution to the stabilisation or reconstruction of their communities.

Men too can change if they tackle gender equality and become conscious of how gender relations and role distribution also shape and restrict their own lives. An increasing number of men and boys seem prepared to look critically at the way their own identities are defined by their gender and are seeking ways to create more harmonious, respectful and tolerant relationships with women, children and other men. The equal treatment of others also enables men to gain freedom and improve their partnerships.

Humanitarian aid

Considering the amount of conflicts which exist and the frequency of natural disasters it can be assumed that the need for humanitarian aid will continue to grow. Some of the main target groups of humanitarian aid are refugees or internally displaced people. Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe and the partner organisations work in accordance with the standards and principles of humanitarian aid, which stipulate that when defining priorities of assistance, people’s needs must be the only criterion.

Crises and conflicts have different effects on the affected people because their vulnerability, resources, possibilities and coping strategies vary considerably. Thus, considering gender aspects is an essential part of good program development for humanitarian aid must reach all parts of the affected population – women and girls need equal access to it. Therefore, it is necessary to ask them specifically about their needs and those of their communities. Women and girls need to participate in defining the measures for their protection and support as well as in implementing them.

One example of gender-specific protection and assistance measures is the building of separate latrines for women and men in refugee camps, which are lockable and well-lit. Those for women should be located close to their accommodation so that they are at bay from attacks.

Humanitarian aid is also an area in which human and women’s rights can be strengthened and gender equality promoted.

Educational work, public relations and lobbying in Germany

Church communities and the general public are sensitised to the significance of gender equality for peaceful and just societies and for preserving God’s creation. This includes calling for and encouraging reflection on gender relations and the attribution of respective roles. It also includes taking into account different points of view, interests and needs to ensure that women and men have the same possibilities of influence. It is part of the educational work and awareness raising to transmit the idea that unjust structures and undesirable trends in politics, society and the business sector have different impacts on men and women, that gender roles in other cultures are often defined differently from Germany and that, correspondingly, strategies for action and solutions are not always the same. Brot für die Welt gender related education and public relations work offers a counterbalance to the growing anti-feminist and conservative tendencies that are currently mobilising against gender studies and gender mainstreaming discrediting them as “gender ideology” in many countries including Germany. Partner organisations in Germany can thus also be encouraged to explore the subject of gender in their work.

In its lobbying of the German government, Brot für die Welt calls for the gender perspective to be taken into account in German, European and international development policy and cooperation. The 2030 Agenda has created a framework that envisages the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of women and girls. The current Gender Action Plan 2016 – 2020 of the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) takes its cue from the goals of the 2030 Agenda and its gender-sensitive implementation. In cooperation with other civil society organisations, Brot für die Welt campaigns for gender equality, as envisaged in the Gender Action Plan, to be implemented consistently in Germany’s development cooperation.

3.3 Gender mainstreaming

Since the end of the 1980s, gender mainstreaming has been established as a strategy for achieving gender

equality in state and non-state, including church based, development cooperation. The Fourth World Conference on Women, which took place in Beijing in 1995, confirmed the significance of gender mainstreaming as a successful strategy for achieving equality. The Social Service Agency of the Protestant Church in Germany adopted its concept on gender mainstreaming as a strategy in 2003.

Gender mainstreaming⁸ ensures that women and men profit equally from development policy measures. Through gender mainstreaming, according to the definition of the Economic and Social Council of the UN, the needs and experiences of women and men become an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social areas, so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The underlying understanding is that every political decision or project-related measure has a gender-specific consequence that must not be ignored if inequality is to be abolished.

Systematic gender analyses which explore the different living situations of men and women provide the crucial precondition for identifying effective measures and strategies for promoting gender equality and implementing gender mainstreaming. Only when the results of a gender analysis are taken into account in the planning of projects and programmes and in awareness raising and political processes (advocacy, lobby) can these be developed in a way that is gender-specific, rooted in the entire project cycle and made visible in impact orientation. In order to do so, the partner organisations and Brot für die Welt and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe staff should have appropriate skills, which must be developed continuously.

Whether gender mainstreaming in Brot für die Welt practice holds what it promises should be discussed in connection with the question of how to deal with cross-cutting issues. This process has already begun with the creation of a draft strategy paper to deal with the cross-cutting issues of gender, inclusion and environmental impact.

3.4 Ensure continuity of work

Nowhere in the world have gender equality and human and women's rights been fully realised. The above-mentioned figures and situations show how deeply rooted gender-based discrimination still is in most societies. Brot für die Welt will continue to campaign for gender equality in cooperation with the partner organisations. It will continue to strengthen the dialog with the partners on the subject and will make more visible the gender perspective in its lobbying on different subjects. In so doing, the challenges connected with protecting women and girls as well as strengthening women's rights and the demand for gender equality in fragile contexts will be taken into account more intensively.

The promotion of gender equality focuses particularly on the fight against gender-based and sexualised violence in all its forms and contexts and the removal of the structural discrimination of women and girls. It is being conducted more strongly through the support of feminist organisations and networks, which according to their own respective thematic specialisation play a key role in political lobbying and advocacy for the empowerment of women and the demand for their rights as well as the creation of gender equality in institutions and society.

In conjunction with the strategy plan for 2016 to 2020, gender as a cross-cutting issue and the implementation of gender mainstreaming at Brot für die Welt and the partner organisations will be discussed and possibly altered accordingly. Further training for staff at all levels of the hierarchy and in all areas will be provided on a regular basis (again). The gender competence of the staff will thus be maintained, and promoted and recognised as a qualification.

Brot für die Welt is equipped with the following instruments that help to achieve gender equality either individually or in combination with each other, in line with the organisation's work as a whole:

⁸ — Gender mainstreaming includes achieving gender equality within an organisation as well as in the external work. At Brot für die Welt there is an equal opportunities officer who deals with the subject of gender equality within the organisation and a gender advisor responsible for the external area of work alongside a specialist group on gender. If the different areas intersect, the equal opportunities officer and the gender advisor work together.

- **Funding** helps partner organisations carry out and further develop their work according to the key areas outlined in Chapter 4.2. Funding is often accompanied by consultancy. Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe funds partner organisations in the context of humanitarian aid. The key areas outlined in Chapter 4.2 define the work according to the respective context and in accordance to the principles and standards of humanitarian aid.
- **Personnel secondment** places professionals who advise and support the partner organisations on issues related to gender politics, on the institutional anchoring of gender equality and/or its anchoring as a cross-cutting issue.
- **Consultancy** enables partner organisations to enhance their work on gender equality. Consultancy structures are mostly local and serve as multipliers.
- **Personnel development** offers staff the chance to brush up on their gender competence.
- **The scholarship programmes** help improve women's access to tertiary education. Furthermore, it can make efforts to support women in areas of study that are not typical for women.
- **The support of church groups and communities and organisations and initiatives in Germany** that carry out educational work in the area of development policy offers a framework for discussing gender equality in work conducted in Germany more intensively.
- Through publications, media work, websites and research trips, **public relations** can contribute to sensitising the public and church communities about the importance of humanitarian aid, development policy and cooperation that promotes gender equality.
- In the context of **lobbying and dialog regarding development policy**, Brot für die Welt communicates its concerns and demands on different subjects pertaining to gender politics and, with the partner organisations, addresses them in the context of respective national and international policy processes. Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, also in the context of lobbying and humanitarian dialog, communicates the key role of

gender awareness and gender justice for humanitarian aid and addresses them into policy processes at different levels.

The departments' strategic planning, which is based on the organisation's overall strategy plan, addresses the achieving of gender equality in their respective work and envisages the application of relevant instruments. When this is lacking or inadequate then there has to be some reflection on how to achieve the goal of gender equality.

As was already recommended in the evaluation of the gender strategy in 2011, Brot für die Welt will adopt a strategy plan on the basis of this gender policy, which in accordance with the organisation's strategic planning agrees to goals and indicators for implementing the gender policy in a binding manner.

Conclusion

Gender equality is a human right and its promotion is a means of overcoming hunger and poverty. A Brot für die Welt report (2008) stated that the equal participation of women improves both the situation of women as well as that of their environment. Education and the economic empowerment of women have a positive effect on a household's food security, health and income. The acknowledgement that gender roles, division of labour, hierarchies and power relations can be called into question and changed has an empowering impact that can also have an effect in fragile contexts and contribute to the building of peaceful societies. Thus, social transformation processes that also men will not be able to permanently evade can be set in motion. In the long run, these can also help to empower other disadvantaged groups. The achievement of gender equality thus contributes to the common good. At the same time, all forms of violence and exploitation must be actively worked against.

The sustainable development that Brot für die Welt campaigns for, taking into account poverty eradication, justice, preserving God's creation, as well as peace and security, cannot be achieved without gender equality.

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

AG KED	Arbeitsgemeinschaft Kirchlicher Entwicklungsdienst/Association for Church Development Service
BMZ	Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung/Federal Ministry for Economic Corporation and Development
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
EED	Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst/Protestant Development Service
EHAIA	Ecumenical HIV and AIDS Initiatives and Advocacy
EKD	Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland/Protestant Church in Germany
EU	European Union
EWL	European Womens Lobby
GAD	Gender and Development
LGBT	Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender
LWB	Lutherischer Weltbund/Lutheran World Federation
MENA-Region	Middle, East and Northern Africa Region
MDG(s)	Millenium Development Goal(s)
SDG(s)	Sustainable Development Goal(s)
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WID	Women in Development
WCC	World Council of Churches

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