

## **Gender Equality (2011)**

### Policy Statement

The core Quaker Testimonies - simplicity, equality, peace, integrity, community and ecological sustainability - continue to evolve out of a lived experience of our shared effort to live out these values in the broad human community. These are standards to which we, as Friends, hold ourselves to account. A commitment to equality of persons, including gender equality, is an operating principle of CFSC, both in governance and in program.

We recognize that eliminating gender inequality and cultivating and practicing a culture of gender equality requires changes in the thinking and behaviour of both men and women, and affects relationships in all age groups. In keeping with our practice of partnership, Quakers do not prescribe changes to others, but support them in the activities and strategies that they choose through their own processes of gender analysis (including analysis of decision - making, realization of human rights, access to resources and knowledge) and community development. CFSC also shares what Friends' have learned in our own efforts to become a more equal community.

### Governance and operations

Friends have had a commitment to "equality of persons" from our beginnings, and have grown deeper in our interpretation of what that means over generations (class, gender, race, religion, political belief, sexual orientation, etc.), as we have come to more deeply understand and challenge how we have been taught within society to accept certain forms of discrimination. CFSC is committed to being an organization that welcomes people with diverse experience and identities in all roles as the knowledge gained from such can but make us more whole, compassionate, and responsive to the needs of the world. Implementation of this commitment rests with all who serve on CFSC, but in particular, the Personnel Committee and Nominating Committee which have specific roles in identifying staff and volunteers to serve the organization.

### Overseas development and gender equality

In its overseas development work, CFSC specifically upholds the following objectives:

- To advance women's equal participation with men as decision makers in shaping the sustainable development of their societies;
- To support women and girls in the realization of their full human rights; and
- To reduce gender inequalities in access to and control over the resources and benefits of development.

To meet these objectives, CFSC undertakes the following procedures:

- CFSC requires that potential overseas development partners address the following questions: How are women involved in decision-making? How are gender barriers addressed in implementation so that women benefit? How was the project concept developed, and how were men and women involved in that

development? How are benefits made accessible to everyone, regardless of race, religion, ethnic affiliation, gender, age?

- During visits to overseas development partners, CFSC arranges for opportunities for women to speak to us in absence of men, and vice versa, and we monitor equality indicators that have been co-developed with the partner in the early phase of implementation.
- Where the need and opportunity arises, CFSC assists partners to get training in relevant skills, usually from resource people local to them.
- If, after sincere dialogue with a partner (or potential partner, if at an early stage), we do not see evidence of a commitment to gender equality bring the relationship to an end.
- The Program Committee that is engaged in an overseas development partnership is responsible for implementing this policy, and for educating staff and volunteers regarding it.