

SD Strategies Gender Equality Plan & Equal Opportunities Policy

Effective version as of March 2024



Note: This policy is, in part verbatim, modeled on the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Gender Equality in Public Life, the IDI Gender Strategy, and the GIZ Gender Strategy. These and other key sources can be found in the references at the end of this document.

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1. Introduction: Gender equality and Equal Opportunities as a benchmark of SD Strategies

Gender equality is one of the key values of our company. It is also a key objective, often explicit as project goal, of the work we do. And it serves as one of our central motivations. As we see it, gender equality is a prerequisite for, and driver of, sustainable development toward a viable future for our society, at the local, national, and international levels.

At SD Strategies, we take a gender-sensitive, and wherever required gender-differentiated, approach. We take consistent action to eliminate gender-based discrimination and foster equal rights and opportunities for everyone, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

Gender equality was already adopted by the UN General Assembly in its Universal Declaration of Human Rights on 10 December 1948. Still, we are far from its full realization today. Gender equality is neither a given nor something that will be realized on its own. It entails a conscious approach to the transformation of gender relations. It calls for active engagement of everyone. Gender equality is also enshrined in Article 3 of the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany, the home country of our headquarters, to which we feel deeply committed.

Gender equality and the elimination of gender-based discrimination and disadvantages are core objectives and guiding principles of UN, European, and German development policies. By aligning our work, strategies, and processes with these objectives and principles, and advising and working with our partners on how to design and implement measures to realize gender equality, we are contributing to several national and international agreements, including:

- the 2030 Agenda ("Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls," SDG 5),
- the European Consensus on Development ("The EU and its Member States will promote women's and girls' rights, gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls and their protection as a priority across all areas of action," Principle 15), and
- the German Sustainable Development Strategy.

The promotion of gender equality and the elimination of gender-based disadvantages and discrimination are two strategic pillars of our corporate policy orientation, which is reflected in our services and our company's equal-opportunity policy.

Equal opportunity within SD Strategies is both a declaration of what we believe in and a human resources policy directive. We work with other people without any distinction in terms of gender, marital status, skin color, religion or worldview, culture, education, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or nationality.

2. Vision, Scope, and Objectives

a. Our Vision and Mission

Our aspiration is a gender-responsive organization leading by example.

b. Scope

The SD Strategies Gender Equality Plan and Equal Opportunity policy serves as a framework to be implemented within the entire company as well as all projects taken up by SD Strategies. It is the guiding framework for all members of the SD Strategies workforce. The strategy also serves as a basic source of reference and guidance for our partners and as a set of binding instructions for our subcontractors. The gender strategy is based on our vision, corporate values, and guiding principles.

c. Key Policy Objectives

Mainstreaming Gender in Decision-making

Applying a gender lens in decision-making can contribute to a more informed view of SD Strategies' work and enable decision-makers to assess opportunities to narrow gender gaps. We aim to incorporate gender equality in our planning, design, implementation, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation as a matter of routine. For us this means going beyond a gender-balanced and inclusive representation in decision-making roles to include the quality of decisions made.

Political will and accountability

We pay close attention to the clear positioning of the company on gender equality, and how all staff members and partners commit to realizing gender equality and promote and follow up on the implementation of the gender strategy in their area of responsibility.

Corporate culture

We strive to make the patterns of behavior, codes of conduct, and processes that promote and enhance gender equality within the company visible and represent them inside and outside of SD Strategies.

Gender competence

We aim to enhance the skills and gender knowledge of the SD Strategies workforce to apply and use the relevant instruments and approaches for actively contributing to gender equality and the elimination of gender-based disadvantages and discrimination.

Process adjustment

We strive to use gender-sensitive and gender-differentiated design of all procedures and instruments at the Head Office and in the field structure, especially HR

management, commission, and quality management as well as results and impact monitoring.

Equal opportunities within the company

We endeavor to promote potential, equal rights, and opportunities for all employees and members of the workforce, irrespective of their gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity. We aim to create a balanced gender ratio for the different job categories and assignments within the company.

3. Implementation

The strategic framework of the gender strategy is binding for all organizational units and everyone who works for SD Strategies. Taking the key policy objectives as the starting point, the strategy is implemented in a manner suited to the mandates, fields, and forms of work in each project as well as general organizational management and procedures.

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