



TRANSFORMING INEQUALITIES, TRANSFORMING LIVES
Save the Children Principles for Gender Equality

OUR MISSION is to inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children, and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives.

OUR VISION is a world where every child attains the right to survival, protection, development, and participation.

ENVISIONING GENDER EQUALITY

For Save the Children, realizing our vision means a world where all girls and boys can hold diverse hopes and dreams for their futures, and have equal opportunity to make these come true. Our vision is for a world where both girls and boys are safe from harm, where they are equally heard and valued, and where they have equal access and time to devote to education, to work, to rest, and to play. We strive for a world in which both girls and boys are healthy and nourished, growing up in safe and nurturing environments, and supported equally by male and female caregivers and mentors. Our vision is for girls and boys to support one another in playing an active and equal role in creating positive and sustainable change in their communities, their countries and across the globe.

GENDER MATTERS

Gender inequality is a root cause of many barriers to sustainable development around the world, and is an obstacle for fulfilling Save the Children's vision. This is demonstrated by the following facts:

Every year, 150 million girls and 73 million boys are subject to **sexual violence**¹

The **leading cause of death** amongst girls age 15-19 is medical complications relating to pregnancy and childbirth²

Of the **125 million** children who do not attend school, **70% are girls**³

There are **107** female child deaths for every **100** deaths of male children⁴

Women and children account for more than **75% of the refugees** and displaced persons in humanitarian crises⁵

Boys are at particular risk of being **recruited as child soldiers** or into gangs, as well as coming into conflict with the law. Additionally, boys are commonly denied a voice to express emotions

Gender-based and sexual violence, which disproportionately affects women and girls, increases during humanitarian crisis, and often turns into a deliberate **tactic of war** in armed conflicts⁶

Women make up **more than 60%** of all malnourished people⁷

Women and girls commonly face isolation through limited mobility, as well as a **lack of access to information and to participation** in decision making at the family, community and country levels

Gender inequalities cut across all thematic areas. While contexts and gender roles vary from place to place, inequalities occur everywhere.



GENDER EQUALITY

Gender equality refers to the absence of discrimination on the basis of sex.

For Save the Children, gender equality is when one sex is not routinely privileged or prioritized over the other, and all people are recognized, respected and valued for their capacities and potential as individuals and members of society. Further, gender equality is when girls, boys, women, and men have equal rights, obligations and opportunities to:

- Security and good health;
- A viable livelihood and dignified work;
- Participate in the care of home and dependent family members;
- Take active part in public and political life;
- Learn and participate in relevant education; and
- Live a life free from violence.

SAVE THE CHILDREN STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

Gender equality is a basic right for all people, including girls and boys. Based on this understanding, Save the Children believes that it is critical to directly address gender discrimination and promote gender equality in order to ensure that no harm comes to children, and to advance our vision for a world where every child attains their equal right to survival, protection, development, and participation.

SCOPE OF PRINCIPLES

Our Principles for Gender Equality guide Save the Children to ensure that we can program, advocate, partner, and organize for gender equality. This document itself is not a 'how-to' guide, but highlights Save the Children's key and guiding principles for engaging in gender equality work. It further clarifies why a focus on gender equality is fundamental for achieving our vision for all children, and the important role each of us must play in translating these Principles into action.

KEY APPROACHES FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Gender Sensitive: when the different needs, abilities, and opportunities of boys and girls, and men and women, are identified, considered and accounted for.

Save the Children believes all our work should be **gender sensitive as a minimum standard**.

Gender Transformative: when we use a gender sensitive approach and promote gender equality, while working with key stakeholders to identify, address, and positively transform the root causes of gender inequality for women and men, girls and boys.

Save the Children strives to utilize gender transformative approaches whenever possible across our programs, advocacy and organization.



GENDER IDENTITY

It is critical that diverse gender identities be accounted for and supported in all our work.

Gender identity refers to each person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond with their sex assigned at birth. When we talk about sex categories, we often talk about women and men, boys and girls, for simplicity's sake and because many gender norms are built around these traditional categories. It is important to remember that there are many different gender identities that do not fit into these categories and that are experienced by adults and children around the world.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Save the Children seeks to advance gender equality in all aspects of our work and across our organization, guided by the following **six principles**:

1 EQUALITY AS A RIGHT

Gender equality is an essential component of a child rights approach, and of critical importance in the fulfillment of our organizational mandate. This principle is upheld by international standards articulated by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

2 ADDRESSING ROOT CAUSES

It is critical to identify and work to transform the root causes of gender inequality; this requires addressing social norms and institutions which reinforce gender inequalities, as well as advocating for and fostering legislation and policies that promote gender equality.

3 HOLISTIC APPROACHES

Acknowledging that gender equality is about relationships, transformative gender approaches require working with whole communities, and at all levels, equally engaging female and male stakeholders in culturally-sensitive gender equality policy and program work.

4 MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION

Girls and boys are active citizens. They must be equally engaged in dialogue around gender and have equal opportunity to participate and to promote gender equality.

5 INDEPENDENT & CROSS CUTTING

Gender is both an independent area of focus, as well as a critical priority across our thematic areas of focus, global initiatives and breakthroughs. Gender equality must be a central focus across our work, as well as across all parts and levels of our organization.

6 COLLABORATION & LEARNING

Integrating gender analysis in our research and work opens up new insights and innovative solutions to development challenges that would not otherwise be possible without a gender-focused approach. It is essential to foster and participate in communities of practice, collaborate with organizations and stakeholders working on gender, translate what we learn into practice, and to share learnings widely.



GENDER ROLES

Gender roles are behaviours, attitudes and actions that society feels are appropriate or inappropriate for a man or woman, boy or girl, according to cultural norms and traditions.

Gender roles are neither static nor universal but vary between cultures, over time, between generations, and in relation to other social identities such as social class, socio-economic status, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and health status. Gender roles and equality may also shift with processes of urbanization or industrialization, and the fluid nature of gender roles requires careful and ongoing gender analysis.

APPLYING OUR GENDER PRINCIPLES WITHIN OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

Guided by our Theory of Change, Save the Children is committed to the promotion and advancement of gender equality throughout our development and humanitarian programming, advocacy, partnerships, and organization.

To act on this commitment, **Save the Children will:**

Be the Voice

Save the Children will be the voice for gender equality through our advocacy campaigns, and by promoting legislation and policies that support gender equality for girls and boys, women and men.

Be the Innovator

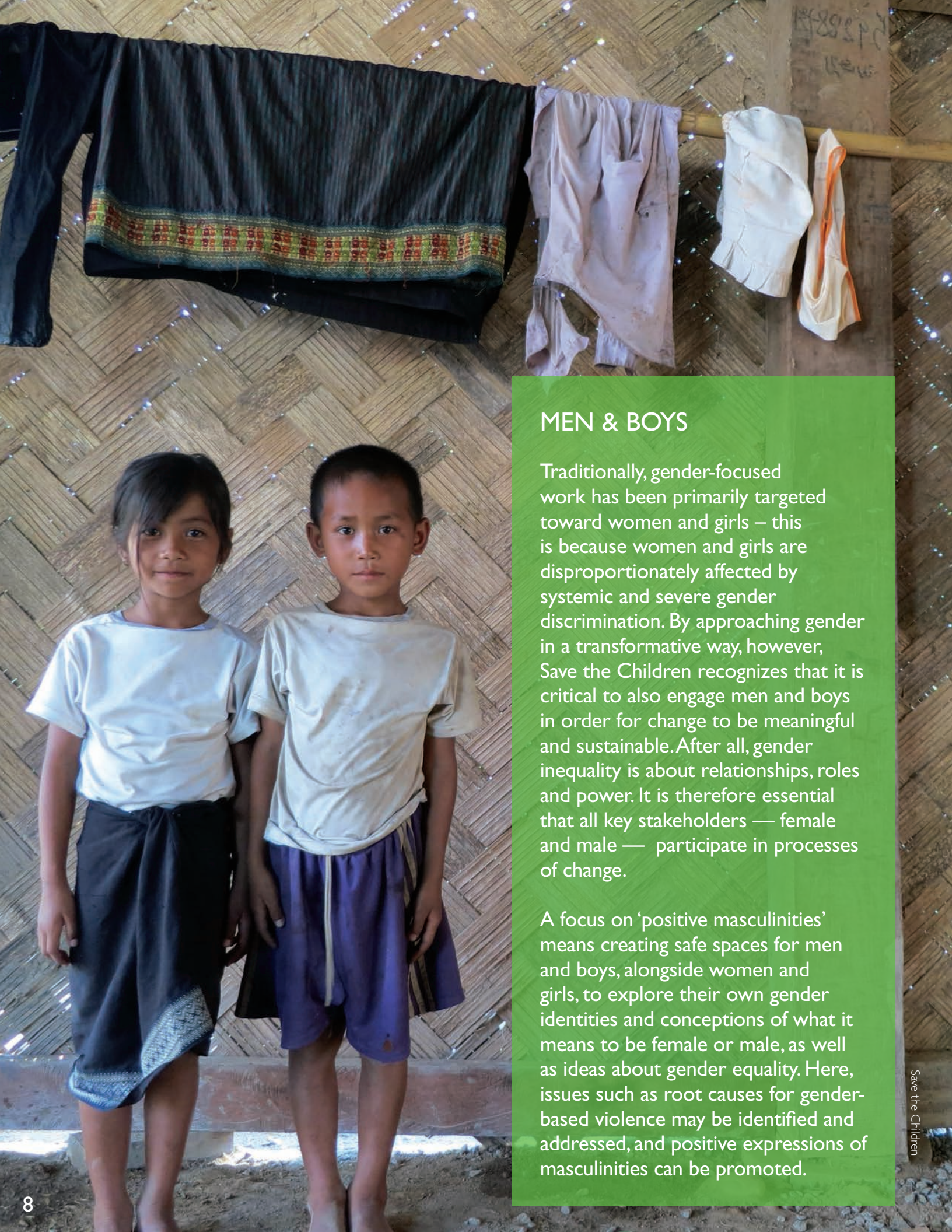
Save the Children will be the innovator for high-impact and high-quality programming, by identifying and addressing the root causes of gender inequalities and thereby supporting girls and boys in fulfilling their equal rights.

Build Partnerships

Save the Children will build partnerships for gender equality by collaborating with government, private sector and civil society organizations who share a common vision for gender equality. We will work with all partners to identify and implement best-practice solutions for overcoming inequalities that affect the rights of girls and boys.

Achieve results at scale

Save the Children will achieve results at scale by promoting gender equality across our organization through gender-sensitive organizational policies and practices.



MEN & BOYS

Traditionally, gender-focused work has been primarily targeted toward women and girls – this is because women and girls are disproportionately affected by systemic and severe gender discrimination. By approaching gender in a transformative way, however, Save the Children recognizes that it is critical to also engage men and boys in order for change to be meaningful and sustainable. After all, gender inequality is about relationships, roles and power. It is therefore essential that all key stakeholders — female and male — participate in processes of change.

A focus on ‘positive masculinities’ means creating safe spaces for men and boys, alongside women and girls, to explore their own gender identities and conceptions of what it means to be female or male, as well as ideas about gender equality. Here, issues such as root causes for gender-based violence may be identified and addressed, and positive expressions of masculinities can be promoted.



A FOCUS ON CAREGIVERS & EQUALITY

There is an inextricable connection between the well-being of mothers and their children – this is a vital link that Save the Children works to address, recognizing that healthy and empowered mothers are essential if we are to enable a world where all children can fulfill their rights and their potential. In focusing on women as mothers, Save the Children uses great care to ensure that those traditional gender norms that may be at the root of women’s vulnerability are not reinforced.

Though a focus on women’s roles as mothers is critical, Save the Children believes that this is only one piece of the puzzle. Evidence has clearly demonstrated that engaging men and boys around topics of caring fatherhood, parenting education, positive role modeling, and gender equality completes the circle of care that a gender-transformative approach demands to support the well-being of girls and boys. Save the Children believes that to meet the needs of girls and boys, secure the rights of the child, support maternal health, reduce gender-based and other forms of violence, and positively transform the lives of women and girls, boys and men, it is critical to enable a world of non-violent, equality minded, nurturing fathers⁸.

ENDNOTES

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3. Save the Children (2013) 'Girls Education', <http://www.savethechildren.org/site/c.8rKLIXMGIpI4E/b.6196511/>
4. Save the Children (2011) 'An Equal Start: Why Gender Equality Matters for Child Survival and Maternal Health'
5. UNICEF (2003) 'Health in Emergencies', http://www.unicef.org/health/index_emergencies.html
6. Inter-Agency Standing Committee (2005) 'Guidelines for Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings'. http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/content/subsidi/tf_gender/gbv.asp
7. World Food Program (2013) 'Hunger Stats', <http://www.wfp.org/hunger/stats>
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