

DISABILITY, GENDER AND AGE POLICY

GOOFIRM FOUNDATION(GOOFIRM)
31ST July 2025

INTRODUCTION

GOOFIRM is committed to promoting a culture of inclusivity, diversity, and equal opportunities for all individuals, including those with disabilities. Our vision is a world in which all people can lead dignified lives. Inclusion of vulnerable and marginalised people, including Persons with Disabilities (PWD), and all other services aligns with GOOFIRM's core values and mission.

This policy sets forth GOOFIRM's different levels of commitment with regard to Disability, Gender & Age, and the changes to be made in how the organisation works, including with its partners, in line with our strategies. These commitments apply to the whole GOOFIRM network, and are to be taken into account at operational, technical and advocacy levels, and notably in technical and operational strategies, programming policies, etc.

Disability: Over one billion people worldwide have a disability, i.e. an estimated one in four households has a family member with a disability.

Gender and disability: Global prevalence is higher for women than men. In low and middle income countries, women are estimated to comprise up to three quarters of people with disabilities.

Age and disability: Of an estimated 58 million out-of-school children at primary level, one-third have a disability, with girls far less likely than boys to be enrolled in or attend school.

Between 40% and 68% of young women with disabilities will experience sexual violence before the age of 18. So, in order to leave no one behind, humanitarian and development actions need to take widespread discrimination on the grounds of disability, gender and age into account, and proactively engage in removing barriers to equal opportunities.

POLICY STATEMENT

GOOFIRM strives to include everyone, focusing on the most vulnerable and including people and groups discriminated against or at high risk of discrimination, and champion each person's fundamental rights. GOOFIRM advocates inclusion and meaningful participation of all, upholding diversity, fairness and individual choice.

Furthermore, GOOFIRM value difference.

In situations of poverty and exclusion, conflict and disaster GOOFIRM responds, with people with disabilities and vulnerable groups, to their essential needs, improving living conditions and promoting respect for their dignity and fundamental rights.

In its actions, GOOFIRM pays specific attention to nine factors generating inequalities:

disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, geographical location, ethnic origin, religion, political opinion.

These factors generating inequalities tend to reinforce each other when they intersect, combining into situations of multiple vulnerabilities and exclusion. GOOFIRM chooses to focus on certain of these factors depending on the context and the goal of the intervention, prevailing perceptions and beliefs and existing and ingrained power relations.

SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to all workers engaged by GOOFIRM, including employees, interns, volunteers, Directors, contractors, and covers all aspects of our operations, including recruitment, training, programme development, communication, and events.

CORE COMMITMENTS

This policy is aimed at elevating disability and promoting action both internally and externally with our implementing partners, to improve the lives of people living with disabilities and those who care for them.

We will consider disability and accessibility in all the business- and people-related decisions we make in recruitment, programme development and in fostering an environment that supports people with disabilities.

We will do this through:

a) Commitment to Equal Opportunity

GOOFIRM is dedicated to providing equal opportunities for individuals with disabilities in all areas of our organisation. We recognise that disability is a natural part of human diversity and that everyone, regardless of their abilities, should have the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to our work.

We are committed to providing reasonable accommodations for employees, volunteers, and partners with disabilities to ensure they can fully participate in our programmes, activities, and work environment.

We will ensure that all GOOFIRM recruitment and hiring practices are free from discrimination and that job applicants with disabilities are given the same consideration as others.

b) Accessible Programmes and Services

GOOFIRM is committed to making our programmes and services accessible to individuals with disabilities. This includes:

- Reviewing and modifying programme materials, events, and activities to ensure they are accessible to people with a range of disabilities (e.g., physical, sensory, cognitive, and mental health conditions).

- Ensuring that GOOFIRM's website, digital platforms, and other communication tools are accessible, including making text content available in alternative formats (e.g., screen reader-compatible text, captioned videos, etc.).
- Providing accessible transportation, facilities, and meeting spaces whenever possible, and ensuring physical environments meet accessibility standards.

c) Awareness and Training

GOOFIRM will provide ongoing training and development to colleagues, volunteers, and programme partners as necessary to raise awareness about disability issues and foster an inclusive workplace and environment.

d) Reasonable Accommodation

GOOFIRM recognises that employees, volunteers, or programme participants with disabilities may require adjustments or accommodation to fully participate in the workplace or programme activities. We are committed to providing reasonable accommodations, including but not limited to:

- Adjustments to workspaces or tools
- Modifications to work schedules or duties, where necessary, to enable employees to fulfil their roles.
- Support for communication needs, such as sign language interpreters or captioning services.

Requests for accommodations will be handled with sensitivity, respect, and in compliance with applicable laws and best practices.

e) Non-Discrimination

GOOFIRM strictly prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Discrimination in hiring, promotion, or employment practices.
- Harassment, bullying, or marginalisation based on disability status.
- Failure to provide reasonable accommodations or modifications that would enable individuals with disabilities to participate fully in programmes or activities.

Any complaints of discrimination will be taken seriously, investigated thoroughly, and addressed promptly to ensure that all individuals are treated with dignity and respect.

f) Engagement and Feedback

GOOFIRM actively seeks feedback from individuals with disabilities to improve our practices and ensure that our programmes, services, and facilities meet their needs. This includes:

- Regular consultations with disability advocacy groups, staff, and programme participants to assess barriers and identify areas for improvement.
- Accessible mechanisms in place for employees, volunteers, and participants to provide feedback or raise concerns about accessibility or discrimination.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

GOOFIRM will regularly review and monitor the effectiveness of this policy, including:

- Evaluating the accessibility of GOOFIRM programmes and services, identifying areas for improvement, and implementing necessary changes.
- Tracking and reporting on disability inclusion efforts and outcomes, ensuring that our practices remain aligned with legal requirements and best practices.

ACCOUNTABILITY

GOOFIRM's leadership team is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented and upheld throughout the organisation. All colleagues and partners are expected to contribute to a culture of inclusivity, respect, and accessibility in their roles.

CONCLUSION

GOOFIRM strives to be a leader in creating a diverse and inclusive environment, where individuals with disabilities have an equal opportunity to contribute, thrive, and succeed. Through this policy, we reaffirm our commitment to removing barriers and fostering an accessible, supportive, and respectful environment for all.

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains relevant and effective in meeting the needs of all individuals within the GOOFIRM community. This policy must be read in line with GOOFIRM's other policies and procedures.

This policy enters into force on July 21, 2025, after validation from the Board of Directors. It formalizes all existing control mechanisms and procedures that have been established so far.

Winchester Nkongho WINYAWOKO
Board Chairman
GOOFIRM

