



## **POLICY OF EQUALITY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN**

Adopted on June 12, 2012 by the Board of Directors

### **General Provisions**

1. Lawyers without Borders Canada (LWBC) adheres to the fundamental principles of equal rights and opportunities between women and men, and insists on the principle of non-discrimination, as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

LWBC thus recognizes that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, and that everyone is entitled to all the rights and liberties that are stated in the above mentioned instruments, without any distinctions, particularly related to their sex.

2. For LWBC, the application of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights especially implies the recognition of the fact that women and men have different needs and specificities.
3. LWBC recognizes that women and men can be victims of discriminatory behaviors because of their sex.

### **Equality between Men and Women within the Organization**

#### *Mission and Vision*

4. LWBC recognizes women as constituting one of the main vulnerable groups and therefore, LWBC aims to defend their human rights with the reinforcement of the access to justice and legal representation.
5. LWBC recognizes the principle of non-discrimination as a transversal one to all human rights and fundamental liberties which the organization intends to enforce, implement and promote so that justice is dispensed independently and fairly.
6. LWBC considers that the fact of putting an end to inequalities between men and women contributes to the end of injustice.
7. LWBC considers it essential to the achievement of equality between women and men that women can have control over their own destiny and on the decisions that affect their lives individually and collectively, particularly by reinforcing their capacities, autonomy, exercising their fundamental rights, their equal participation with men as decision-makers as well as their access and control over resources.

### *Governance*

8. LWBC makes its best efforts in order to maintain a balance between sexes within its Board of Directors, especially with the inclusion of this balance as a criterion during the selection process of candidates for the purpose of the elections of its administrators.
9. LWBC is committed to ensure that the Board of Directors is sensitive to the impacts of its discussions and decisions regarding the issue of equality between women and men.

### *Human Resources and organizational practices*

10. LWBC adheres to the principle of fairness regarding employment. For LWBC, employment equity is understood as the fact that women and men are treated justly and benefit from equal opportunities.
11. In its willingness to achieve a balance between women and men within its staff, LWBC favors, if equally skilled, the hiring of a person belonging to the gender minority within the organization at the moment of the hiring.

LWBC is committed, within its means and capabilities, to make its best efforts in order to create a working environment favorable to the conciliation between personal life and work of its employees.

12. In order to do so, LWBC implements policies of human resources and organizational practices that encourage the conciliation between personal life and work for women and men.
13. LWBC is committed to make its best efforts to establish a structure of management and decision-making that represents and includes women and men equally, in all the diversity of their needs and interests.
14. LWBC is committed to progressively set up processes which permit reinforcing competencies and commitment of the staff regarding equality between the sexes.
15. LWBC is particularly committed to offer to its employees access to training and any other pertinent and available tools on the issue of equality between sexes.
16. LWBC rejects all forms of harassment and is committed to putting forward clear procedures and policies regarding harassment against any employee, cooperant or volunteer of LWBC. The latter are encouraged to denounce, in good faith, to the direction or the person in charge, any form of harassment they are victim of, without being afraid of any kind of retaliation.

### **Equality between Women and Men during Activities**

#### *Programming and projects*

17. LWBC is committed to integrate, within its programming, a transversal and specific approach regarding equality between women and men.

This approach includes an analysis and investigation of results with regards to the specificity of the effects that the realization and the implementation of LWBC projects can have on women and men, taking into consideration the needs and strategic interests of women and men as well as the particularly vulnerable situation of women.

18. LWBC makes its best efforts to ensure that women can fully participate in the decision-making process within the framework of the projects that the organization carries out.

#### *Partnership*

19. LWBC makes its best efforts in order to develop, within its programming, partnerships with organizations interested in women's rights or working for the defense of equality between women and men.

With the implementation of the present article, LWBC makes sure that all partners are committed to the promotion and defense of equality between women and men.

20. With the objective of contributing to the increase of control for women over their own destiny and over the decisions that affect their lives individually and collectively, LWBC makes its best efforts to ensure women participation within its network of partners.

#### *Communications*

21. LWBC is committed, each time it is appropriate and the context permits it, to make its best efforts in order to use both feminine and masculine in its written communications.

#### *Monitoring and Evaluation*

22. LWBC commits itself to create a committee of equality between women and men that meets twice a year with the purpose of analyzing the different indicators from which the issues of discrimination, harassment, equity in hiring and all other issues concerning equality between women and men are evaluated.

This committee makes an assessment, issues recommendations and prepares an action plan to the administration and Board of Directors which will be later submitted to the staff and members of the organization.