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Arab NGO Network for Development
شبكة المنظمات العربية غير الحكومية للتنمية

GENDER POLICY POSITION

Human rights and gender are two concepts that cannot be dissociated from one another. Indeed, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states unequivocally that men and women have equal human rights. In addition, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995 states in the first paragraph of its mission statement that “Equality between women and men is a matter of human rights and a condition for social justice and is also a necessary and fundamental pre-requisite for equality, development and peace”. In the regional context, the Arab Human Development Reports have repeatedly made it clear that gender inequality remains one of the core challenges facing development.

The Arab NGO Network for Development realizes this context and adopts the outcomes of the Beijing Declaration and Plan of Action. In this respect, ANND’s vision integrates the aim of realizing gender equality coupled with gender empowerment in order to put an end to women’s oppression and exclusion in Arab countries. ANND’s founding members included a significant number of women organizations, which ANND seeks to engage on the national, regional and international levels, and ensure their representation to be at the forefront of debates on democracy, human rights, development, and globalization which are pursued by the network.

ANND aims at contributing to two main goals:

- **Gender equality:** ANND advocates policies that eliminate discrimination against women in all spheres (economic, social, political, and cultural) , and therefore the realization of equal human rights for women.
- **Gender representation:** ANND works towards the increase in women’s participation in decision-making both in private and public institutions, which can ensure women-led concrete actions to change policies and enhance women’s access to resources.

Based on the above-mentioned, ANND takes the following steps:

- Promote gender equality and gendered perspectives within its program areas such as development, democracy and human rights, and trade and globalization.
- Work towards engaging women, girls, and women organizations through all aspects of our programs’ ’s planning and implementation.
- Adopt organizational practices and policies that promote gender equality, ensure equal opportunity in recruitment, protect women against harassment and discrimination, and guarantee accountability in cases of violation.

ANND strategies related to gender policy promotion:

Internal strategies (addressing internal structures):

- Address the skills and awareness of ANND staff, coordination committee, and member organizations in relation to gender issues
- Adopt family-friendly work practices that enable women and men to fully participate in work and family life
- Promote women's participation and leadership in decision making within ANND at all levels

External strategies (addressing ANND programs and partnerships):

- Promote partnerships with organizations that actively promote policies and programs that advocate gender equality
- Reach out to more women's organizations to join ANND as full members
- Take opportunity of national, regional, and international meetings, especially those in which ANND is an organizer, to promote dialogue around gender equality and related mechanisms
- Support ANND members' activities that tackle the issues of reducing feminized poverty; ending violence against women; improve women's access to literacy and various levels and types of education (technical, vocational and tertiary) and health services (such as maternal and child health, primary health care and disease control); achieving gender equality in democratic governance; and establishing legal frameworks to combat violence and achieve gender equality
- Contribute to strengthening existent networks and organizations that aim at giving women a more efficient voice as well as train women to reach leadership positions
- Contribute to awareness raising related to gender issues through all ANND programs
- Contribute to deepening the understanding of gender, gender relations, and culture in Arab countries, including the role of men and address beliefs and policies that hinder women's entitlement to decent livelihoods and full human rights in the Arab region
- Use ANND advocacy and lobbying opportunities to articulate women's needs and priorities and play an active role in promoting their interests.