



RAWCS Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

JUNE 2024

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1. Introduction

1.1 *Who we are*

- 1.1.1 Rotary Australia World Community Service Ltd (RAWCS) is a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC). We back doing good by supporting and facilitating a broad range of humanitarian and development projects, both in Australia and in developing countries. RAWCS administers three Tax Deductible funds:
1. **Rotary Australia Overseas Aid Fund (RAOAF):** This fund supports efforts by Rotary Clubs, Rotary Districts and other partners to deliver humanitarian assistance in developing countries. RAOAF focuses on both sustained development and immediate disaster response, working collaboratively with communities to deliver impactful, sustainable projects to meet identified needs.
 2. **Rotary Australia Benevolent Society (RABS):** RABS supports Rotary Clubs, Rotary Districts and other partners to respond to specific community challenges within Australia. It offers an avenue for wider community involvement through tax-deductible donations. The Rotary Australia Compassionate Grants Projects within RABS uses matching funds from donations, such as those provided by Dick Smith's Trust, to assist Australians facing hardship.
 3. **Rotary Australia Relief Fund (RARF):** This fund is dedicated to responding to national appeals and efficiently disbursing funds to appropriate aid projects. RARF's focus is on mobilising rapid support during national crises, such as natural disasters, providing a structured channel for public generosity to be transformed into effective aid. This fund acts as a hub for contributions from both Rotary and non-Rotary sources, ensuring swift and effective aid delivery to disaster-affected areas.

1.2 *Purpose*

- 1.2.1 At Rotary Australia World Community Service Ltd (RAWCS), we are dedicated to fostering an inclusive and diverse environment in which all individuals are valued, respected, and provided equal opportunities. Our commitment to diversity and inclusion is fundamental to achieving our vision of making a positive and lasting impact on communities in need, both in Australia and developing countries overseas.
- 1.2.2 This policy outlines our commitment to work in partnership with people with whom we engage. In particular, we are committed to individuals and groups who are vulnerable, marginalised and under-represented, to help empower them to be drivers of their own development and to inform our operations, programs and partnerships.
- 1.2.3 In this policy RAWCS commits to respect, protect and promote internationally recognised human rights for all, regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, indigeneity, disability, age, displacement, caste, gender, gender identity, sexuality, sexual orientation, poverty, class or socio-economic status. This includes our organisational commitments to gender equality and disability inclusion.

1.3 *Scope and Governance*

- 1.3.1 This policy applies to RAWCS and all of its administered funds and subsidiaries – referred inclusively within this policy as RAWCS.
- 1.3.2 This policy applies to all persons working for us or on our behalf in any capacity and at all times, including when representing RAWCS either within Australia or overseas.

- 1.3.3 This policy applies to all RAWCS staff, volunteers, Board members, committee members, suppliers and contractors. Within this policy all of these are represented by the term: **“our people”**.
- 1.3.4 This policy and its obligations extends to any persons who visit our premises, programs or activities within Australia and overseas.
- 1.3.5 RAWCS program partners are required to adhere to this policy through demonstrated alignment within their own policies and procedures. Program partners are responsible for ensuring their downstream partners also follow appropriate policies and procedures.

1.4 Policy References

This policy supports RAWCS’s compliance with the following:

1.4.1 Legislation (Australian Federal Laws):

- Age Discrimination Act 2004
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex discrimination Act 1984
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
- Fair Work Act 2009

Please always download the latest version from the website. Printed or saved copies may be out-of-date.

1.4.2 International human rights treaties:

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
- The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
- Convention Concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation (ILO 111)
- The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- International Covenant of the Rights of Indigenous People
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Declaration of the Rights of the Child
- Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons
- Declaration on the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons, and
- Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief

1.4.3 RAWCS governance documents:

- Code of Conduct
- Gender Equity Policy
- Disability Inclusion Policy
- Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct
- Complaint Handling Policy and Procedure
- Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure
- Recruitment Policy and Guidelines

1.5 Definitions

Term	Definition
Diversity	The variety of differences among people and groups in society. Diversity can encompass a wide range of dimensions including race, religion, ethnicity, indigeneity, disability, age, displacement, caste, gender, gender identity, sexuality, sexual orientation, poverty, class, or socio-economic status.
Equity	The commitment to fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. This involves allocating resources and opportunities in a way that specifically addresses disparities, ensuring everyone has what they need to succeed and contribute effectively in all areas of life and development.
Inclusion	Refers to the proactive efforts made to ensure that all individuals and groups are welcomed, respected, and valued within the community. It emphasises the creation of environments where diverse people can participate fully in decision-making processes and development activities regardless of their race, religion, ethnicity, indigeneity, disability, age, displacement, caste, gender, gender identity, sexuality, sexual orientation, poverty, class, or socio-economic status.
Gender equality	Gender equality between men and women refers to women, girls, men and boys' equal enjoyment of, and access to, rights, responsibilities, resources and opportunities. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, and that the barriers or discrimination to achieving these are removed. Gender equality, more broadly (including people who do not identify as male or female), is that all people have equal enjoyment of, and access to, rights, responsibilities, resources and opportunities.
Gender identity	Refers to a deeply held internal and individual sense of gender. This could include: • Indeterminate: a person of indeterminate sex or gender is either someone whose biological sex cannot be unambiguously determined or someone who identifies as neither male nor female • Transgender: The term 'trans' is a general term for a person whose gender identity is different to their sex at birth • Intersex: The term 'intersex' refers to people who have genetic, hormonal or physical characteristics that are not exclusively 'male' or 'female'. A person who is intersex may identify as male, female, intersex or as being of indeterminate sex.) It is unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status under Australian Federal law.

Sexual orientation	Refers to a person's emotional or sexual attraction to another person, including, among others, the following identities: heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, asexual or same-sex attracted.
Disability	Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others
Child Safeguarding	Refers to the individual responsibility and duty of care of organisations to keep children safe and promote their wellbeing in the context of their program/organisation. This involves ensuring their staff, operations and programs do no harm to children or do not expose children to risk of harm or abuse.
Barriers	Barriers are physical/environmental, institutional, attitudinal, communication or economic obstacles to full inclusion in society.
Discrimination	Discrimination can be direct or indirect. Direct Discrimination is where a person is treated unfavourably because of certain personal attributes, including the persons race or ethnic background, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical features, marital status, pregnancy or potential pregnancy, breastfeeding requirements, social origin, parental and carer responsibilities, industrial activity, political or religious beliefs.

2. Principles

RAWCS is guided by the following specific principles in the promotion of diversity, equity and inclusion:

- 2.1.1 **Impartiality and openness:** We serve people impartially, according to objective assessments of their situations and the needs they express, irrespective of race, religion, ethnicity, indigeneity, disability, age, displacement, caste, gender, gender identity, sexuality, sexual orientation, poverty, class or socio-economic status, indeed without adverse distinction of any kind.
- 2.1.2 **Respect:** We recognise the value, dignity and diversity of each person. We respect religious traditions, culture, structures and customs in so far as they enhance and uphold the dignity of the human person.
- 2.1.3 **Participation:** We ensure that people we serve are involved in the design, management and implementation of our work, including the projects we support and the associated decisions from assessment through to evaluation.
- 2.1.4 **Empowerment:** We help people develop and realise their full potential, and build mutually respectful relations, so they can control and improve their quality of life. Through integral human development and empowerment, we will promote active, powerful local communities with members playing a significant role in civil society. In so doing we will strive to maximise and build upon local abilities and resources.

- 2.1.5 **Equality:** We commit to the promotion of equal enjoyment of, and access to, rights, responsibilities, resources and opportunities. To achieve equality, we will work to ensure that the interests, needs and priorities of all people are taken into consideration, and that the barriers or discrimination to achieving these are removed.

3. Policy Commitments

3.1 *Organisational culture and behaviour*

- 3.1.1 We maintain a culture of inclusive, safe and protective environments for all our people and the communities and individuals we work with, particularly those most vulnerable to exclusion.
- 3.1.2 We uphold a zero-tolerance to, and take all reasonable and proportionate action to eliminate, any forms of violence, discrimination, harassment, abuse or victimisation.
- 3.1.3 We value, promote and increase awareness of diversity and inclusion within work practices at all levels including decision making, planning, and employment.
- 3.1.4 We have in place organisational policies and practices that reflect and respect the diversity within RAWCS, our partners and the communities we serve.
- 3.1.5 We ensure all our people understand and comply with the RAWCS Code of Conduct and other policies and procedures.

3.2 *Working with partners on development and humanitarian programs*

- 3.2.1 We assess and manage the risk of exclusion and inequity in the course of our work in Australia and overseas and encourage and support partners to do the same in delivering aid and development projects. We ensure assessments, contextual analysis, management and mitigation of risk, and our monitoring of these risks, address marginalised and vulnerable groups. We actively prevent exclusion in all our work and ensure that we include all communities where there is a need.
- 3.2.2 We conduct, analyse and respond to monitoring and evaluation of our programs to track progress towards, and impact on, equality and empowerment and to ensure we avoid, at all costs, exacerbating inequalities. We incorporate data disaggregated by gender, age and other relevant diversity factors.
- 3.2.3 We undertake proactive analysis of equity issues across all stages of the program cycle and use this knowledge to inform program planning and design and organisational practices. We share knowledge and practices within RAWCS with partners and with broader stakeholders.

3.3 *Work with the communities*

- 3.3.1 We ensure all work in partnerships with, and communication with (including marketing, fundraising and advocacy), the communities we work with respects the dignity of every person in those communities.

3.4 Gender equality

- 3.4.1 RAWCS commits to the empowerment of women and girls, as we recognise this is key to redressing the power imbalances and inequalities that exist, and to achieving gender equality. We commit to:
- Adopt zero-tolerance to violence against any person based on their gender.
 - Recruit and retain our people with a commitment to gender equality. Ensure women are represented in leadership roles, decision making, planning, and employment; and training for all our people in women's empowerment.
 - Engage with partners to ensure they have, or are supported to develop, capacity to promote women's empowerment and gender equality.
 - Collect, analyse and respond to gender disaggregated data to inform the work we do. Ensure program monitoring, evaluations and reviews assess progress towards gender equity outcomes.

3.5 First Nations people

- 3.5.1 RAWCS recognise that respect for First Nations' knowledge, cultures and traditional practices, in Australia and worldwide, contributes to sustainable and equitable development and care for our common home. We commit to:
- Recognise and promote the inherent rights, dignity and well-being of the First Nations peoples of the world in line with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.
 - Recognise First Nations people's right to self-determination and in doing so consult with them on decisions that affect them.
 - Identify and address barriers that may prevent First Nations peoples from accessing and equally benefiting from our work.
 - Reducing potential negative impact of our work on First Nations peoples.

3.6 Disability inclusion

- 3.6.1 RAWCS recognises that disability is a complex, multidimensional development issue. We recognise that people living with disabilities are disproportionately represented among the most disadvantaged. We commit to:
- Enhance the dignity, safety, well-being, resilience, influence and independence of people with disabilities.
 - Work to identify and address barriers for people with disabilities, including social, physical and attitudinal.
 - Engage with disability representatives' organisations as the experts in identifying and responding to access barriers and support the empowerment of people with disabilities to inform, direct and lead their own development.
 - Collect, analyse and respond to disability disaggregated data to inform the work we do and monitor our progress in promoting empowerment.
- 3.6.2 We promote full, equitable and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of our programs and projects, to help ensure equitable benefits to persons with disabilities.

3.7 *Child Safeguarding*

- 3.7.1 RAWCS recognises that children are particularly vulnerable to exclusion and inequity. We commit to:
- Protect the rights of children and keeping them safe from harm and abuse, as documented in our Child Protection Policy.
 - Work with children so that their voices can be heard, empower them to engage with decisions that impact them and to realise their full potential.

3.8 *Elderly people*

- 3.8.1 RAWCS recognises that membership of Australian Rotary clubs is made of senior Australians. At the time of writing this policy, the average age of Australian Rotarian is 71 and it is like many other jurisdictions. RAWCS respects and appreciates the deep experience and expertise of each Rotarian, most of whom give a large amount of their personal time as volunteers to advance the cause of Rotary. We commit to:
- Protect the rights of the elderly and keeping them safe from harm and abuse. Work with the elderly so that their voices can be heard, empower them to engage with decisions that impact them and to realise their full potential.

4. Recruitment and employment

- 4.1.1 We ensure all human resource policies, guidelines, procedures and practices promote diversity, equity and inclusion, including:
- Conduct equitable and inclusive recruitment practices that promotes a diverse workforce in line with RAWCS Recruitment Policies and Procedures , which documents our commitments to attract, hire and retain a diverse workforce.
 - Provide equal employment opportunities within RAWCS by identifying and removing unlawful barriers to participation and progression in employment.
 - Not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies in line with Australia's federal anti-discrimination laws.
- 4.1.2 We ensure an inclusive, accessible and safe work environment for all our people. We will provide reasonable accommodations to ensure workplace accessibility and equal opportunity to our premises, equipment or facilities, and perform the requirements of the assigned job or task.
- 4.1.3 We ensure an environment for our people and employment and volunteer applicants that is free of discrimination in relation to all forms of employment, including conditions of recruitment, hiring and employment, continuance of employment, career advancement and safe and healthy working conditions.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
National Board of Directors	• Ultimate accountability for our organisational policies • Guiding governance and culture of RAWCS through strategic leadership • Approving this policy and holding the CEO accountable to how effectively this policy is implemented.
CEO	• Ensuring this policy is upheld • Informing the Board of any concerns relating to diversity, equity and inclusions, and giving progress reports • Ensuring all our people are accountable to this policy
National Manager Projects & Volunteers	• Ensuring all project participants are aware of, and comply with this policy. • Fostering a culture of integrity by actively promoting and supporting whistleblowing channels to report unethical behaviour or policy violations.
All our people	• Understanding and following this policy and related procedures • Ensuring that your actions are in line with this policy, and that your work reflects the Guiding Principles and Policy Commitments above • Not encouraging others (directly or indirectly) to breach this policy • Reporting any breach to your supervisor/manager.

6. Failure to comply with this Policy

- 6.1.1 We treat seriously all reported incidents of alleged unlawful discrimination or victimisation.
- 6.1.2 Proven allegations of improper conduct and non-compliance of this Policy by our people, partners, or representatives may result in disciplinary action, including termination of contract or employment and/or legal action.

7. Policy Distribution

- 7.1.1 This policy will be available on our website and shared with our people.
- 7.1.2 We will ensure that all our people are notified of and made aware that they are required to follow this policy.

8. Review

- 8.1.1 We are committed to continuous improvement to our policy, procedures and practices. This policy will be reviewed at least every three years by the CEO and approved by the National Board of Directors to ensure it is working in practice and updated as required.
- 8.1.2 Feedback on this and other policies is openly encouraged from our people, partners, stakeholders and the communities we work with. Feedback, as well as emerging good practice and collaborative lessons learnt across the development sector, will be used to strengthen this and related policies and procedures.

9. More information

9.1. If you have a query about this policy or need more information, you can contact us via:

- email: info@rawcs.org.au
- phone: +61 2 8833 8306
- post: Rotary Australia World Community Service Ltd
25/1 Maitland Place
Maitland Place
Norwest NSW 2153
Australia

Name	RAWCS Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
Policy Category	Board
Version Number	Version 1
Approval Date	16th June 2024
Details of Approval Authority	National Board of Directors
Policy Owner	CEO
Frequency of Review	3 years
Next Review Date	16th June 2027

Document Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Description