



AFRUCA Equality and Diversity Policy

Equality and Diversity Statement

It is AFRUCA's policy not to discriminate against its workers and beneficiaries or service users on the basis of their gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability (including HIV positive/AIDS status), age or due to the fact that they are pregnant, a trade union member, a part-time worker or a fixed-term employee.

AFRUCA shall, at all times, strive to work within the spirit of the Equality Act 2010 as well as promoting best practice in equality, diversity and inclusion within our organisation. AFRUCA's long-term aim is that our workforce should reflect the community of users that we serve and that all our workers shall be offered equality of opportunities to enable them to achieve their full potential through training and development, promotion and career planning.

AFRUCA is committed to a programme of action to make this policy effective and to bring it to the attention of all its workers. The principle of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity applies equally to the treatment of visitors, clients, customers and suppliers by members of the workforce and also, in some circumstances, ex-workers.

The following paragraphs deal with the specific categories of workers and users and areas of work which AFRUCA has identified as potentially giving rise to equality issues and provide more specific guidance on the parameters of AFRUCA's policy and approach to equality and diversity.

1. To Whom does this Policy Apply?

1.1 This policy applies to AFRUCA's employees (whether permanent, temporary, casual, part-time or on fixed-term contracts), to ex-employees, to job applicants and to individuals such as agency staff and consultants and volunteers who are not our employees, but who work at AFRUCA (collectively "workers").

1.2 All workers have a duty to act in accordance with this policy, and therefore to treat colleagues and our service users with dignity at all times, and not to discriminate against or harass other members of staff, whether junior or senior to them, as well as our volunteers and service users. Employees may also be personally liable for any acts of discrimination prohibited by this policy that they commit, meaning that they can be sued by the victim.

1.3 The policy statement in paragraph 1.2 applies equally to the treatment of our visitors, our client base, users, customers and suppliers by our workers.

2. Personnel Responsible for Implementation of Policy

2.1 The CEO has overall responsibility for the effective operation of AFRUCA's equalities policy (EP) and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework prohibiting discrimination. The board has delegated day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review to the CEO.

2.2 Those working at a management level have a specific responsibility to set an appropriate standard of behaviour, to lead by example and to ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote the aims and objectives of AFRUCA with regard to equality. To facilitate this process, managers will be given training on equality awareness and recruitment and selection best practice.

2.3 All members of staff are responsible for the success of this policy and must ensure that they familiarise themselves with the policy and act in accordance with its aims and objectives. If an employee is involved in management or recruitment, or if they have any questions about the content or application of this policy, they should contact the CEO.

3. Scope and Purpose of The Policy

3.1 AFRUCA will not unlawfully discriminate on grounds of gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability or age, pregnancy, trade union membership, or part-time or fixed-term status.

3.2 This policy applies to the advertising of jobs and recruitment and selection, to training and development, opportunities for promotion, to conditions of service, benefits and facilities and pay; to health and safety and to conduct at work, to grievance and disciplinary procedures and to termination of employment, including redundancy.

3.3 AFRUCA will take appropriate steps to accommodate the requirements of workers' religions, cultures, and domestic responsibilities. Our parental leave policy, and flexible working policy, should be consulted for specific guidance on our approach to these issues and employees' entitlements.

4. Forms of Discrimination

4.1 Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally. Direct discrimination occurs where someone is put at a disadvantage for a reason related to one or more of the grounds set out in paragraph 3.1. For example, rejecting an applicant of one race because it is considered they would not "fit in" on the grounds of their race could be direct discrimination.

4.2 Indirect discrimination occurs where an individual is subject to an unjustified provision, criterion or practice which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of, for example, their sex or race. For example, a height requirement would be likely to eliminate proportionately more women than men. If this criterion cannot be objectively justified for a reason unconnected with sex, it would be indirectly discriminatory to women on the grounds of sex.

4.3 Discrimination also includes victimisation (less favourable treatment because of action taken to assert legal rights against discrimination or to assist a colleague in that regard) and harassment (see AFRUCA's bullying and harassment policy).

5. Recruitment and Selection

5.1 AFRUCA aims to ensure that no job applicant receives less favourable treatment on any of the unlawful grounds listed in paragraph 3.1. Recruitment procedures will be reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities and those sufficiently diverse sectors of the community are reached. Job selection criteria are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are justifiable on non-discriminatory grounds as being essential for the effective performance of the job.

5.2 AFRUCA shall take steps to ensure that knowledge of vacancies reaches a wide labour market and, where relevant, groups under-represented in AFRUCA. Where appropriate, use may be made of lawful exemptions to recruit suitably-qualified people to cater for the special needs of particular groups. Vacancy advertisements shall include an appropriate short statement on our equal opportunities policy and a copy of this policy shall be sent to those who enquire about vacancies.

5.3 To ensure that this policy is operating effectively with respect to recruitment and selection and the other areas identified in paragraph 3.2, and to identify those sections of the local community which may be under-represented in employment, AFRUCA may monitor applicants' sex, racial origins, gender, disability, sexual orientation and religion, and age as part of the recruitment procedure. AFRUCA may also maintain records of this data in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy. Ongoing monitoring and regular analysis of the data provide the basis for taking appropriate positive steps to eliminate unlawful direct and indirect discrimination and implement this policy.

6. Staff Training and Promotion and Conditions of Service

6.1 Staff training needs will be identified through regular staff appraisals. All workers will be given an equal opportunity and access to training to enable them to progress within AFRUCA. All promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit.

6.2 The composition and movement of workers at different levels will be regularly monitored to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels of the organisation. Where appropriate, steps will be taken to identify and remove unnecessary or unjustifiable barriers and to provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or under-represented groups.

6.3 Our conditions of service, benefits and facilities will be reviewed regularly to ensure that they are available to all workers who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.

7. Termination Of Employment

7.1 AFRUCA will monitor redundancy criteria and procedures to ensure that they are fair and objective and do not directly or indirectly discriminate against workers.

7.2 AFRUCA will also ensure that disciplinary procedures are carried out fairly and uniformly for all workers, whether they result in the giving of disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action.

8. Disability Discrimination

8.1 If an employee is disabled, or becomes disabled in the course of their employment with AFRUCA they are encouraged to tell AFRUCA about their condition. This is to enable AFRUCA to support the employee as much as possible. The employee may also wish to advise their Line Manager of any reasonable adjustments to their working conditions or duties which they consider to be necessary, or which would assist them in the performance of their duties. Their line manager may wish to consult with them and with their medical adviser(s) about possible reasonable adjustments. Careful consideration will be given to any such proposals and they will be accommodated where possible and proportionate to the needs of the employee's job. Nevertheless, there may be circumstances where it will not be reasonable for AFRUCA to accommodate the suggested adjustments and AFRUCA will ensure that it provides the employee with information as to the basis of its decision not to make any adjustments.

9. Fixed-Term Employees and Agency and Temporary Workers

AFRUCA will monitor its use of fixed-term employees and agency workers, and their conditions of service, to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits, training, promotion and permanent employment opportunities. AFRUCA will, where relevant, monitor their progress within AFRUCA to ensure that they are accessing permanent vacancies.

10. Part-time Workers

AFRUCA will monitor the conditions of service of part-time employees and their progression within AFRUCA to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits and training and promotion opportunities. AFRUCA will also ensure requests to alter working hours are dealt with appropriately under our flexible working procedure.

11. Breaches of the Policy

11.1 If an employee believes that they may have been disadvantaged on any of the unlawful grounds listed at paragraph 3.1, they are encouraged to raise the matter through AFRUCA's grievance procedure. If an employee believes that they may have been harassed on any of the unlawful grounds listed at paragraph 3.1, they are encouraged to raise the matter through AFRUCA's bullying and

harassment policy or through AFRUCA's grievance procedure. Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. Workers who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations of a breach in this policy which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under AFRUCA's Disciplinary Procedure.

11.2 If, after investigation, an employee is proven to have harassed any other worker on the grounds of sex, marital status, sexual orientation, religion or belief, race, disability or age or otherwise acted in breach of this policy, they will be subject to disciplinary action. In serious cases, such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal. AFRUCA will always take a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.

11.3 As this policy applies equally to AFRUCA workers' relations with visitors, clients, customers and suppliers, if, after investigation, an employee is proven to have discriminated against or harassed a client or supplier they will also be subject to disciplinary action which may lead to dismissal.

12. Monitoring And Revision Of Policy

This policy is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis by the CEO.

13. When Does This Policy Apply?

This policy applies to all conduct in the workplace and conduct outside of the workplace that is related to your work (e.g. at official meetings and events, webinars, community events and social interactions with colleagues and our service users) or which may impact on AFRUCA's reputation (e.g. the expression of views on social media, contrary to the commitments expressed in this policy, that could be linked to AFRUCA).

This policy is for guidance only and does not form part of your contract of employment

This Policy was last updated on 15th August 2020

**AFRUCA – Safeguarding Children
August 2020**

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY DECLARATION:

I have read and understood AFRUCA's Equality and Diversity Policy and agree to work to the expected standards. Regardless of my background and circumstances, I agree to treat all colleagues and visitors with respect and dignity while carrying out the duties and responsibilities of my role at AFRUCA.

Signature.....

Date.....

Print name.....

PLEASE RETURN TO AFRUCA ADMINISTRATIVE/HUMAN RESOURCES TEAM.