

Disability Inclusion Policy

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DOCUMENT VERSION

Date	Comments
11 November 2017	Draft document shared with Board
5 May 2018	Policy approved by Femili PNG Board

POLICY AMENDMENTS

This is a working document and subject to amendment. This Policy will be available in English only.

Any suggestions about this Policy should be directed to the Femili PNG Operations Manager or Chief Executive Officer/Senior Social Worker (CEO/SSW) so changes can be considered. When suggestions are raised, the matter will be raised with the Executive Management Committee (EMC) for consideration. Any amendments or changes to the Policy will be submitted to the Board for endorsement.

The Operations Manager is responsible for maintaining this document; including updating confirmed changes, informing staff of the changes, and disseminating the latest version across the organisation.

Any changes or amendments involve the following steps:

- Updating the Document Version table at the top of this page;
- Updating the relevant provision in this manual;
- Replacing the updated version of the manual eg. shared drives, Intranet;
- Printing a hard copy of the updated manual for the office;
- Communicating the changes to all staff; and
- Archiving the old version of manual.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Policy covers both Femili PNG and Friends of Femili PNG. For simplicity, the document will only refer to Femili PNG.

The document's content is informed by the *Papua New Guinea National Policy on Disability 2015-2025*, the *DFAT Disability Action Strategy 2017-2020*, the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol (2006)*, advice from *Inclusion Made Easy: A quick program guide to disability in development (CBM, 2012)*, and consultations with Femili PNG staff, disability organisations and other stakeholders in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

Femili PNG's values include respect, learning, empowerment, partnerships and human rights.¹ In line with these values, Femili PNG is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities who experience family and sexual violence (FSV) have equal access to Femili PNG services. Femili PNG acknowledges the value that people with lived experience of disability can bring to Femili PNG's work in disability inclusive case management.

1.1 Background

People with disabilities are likely to be at a heightened risk of family and sexual violence (FSV). Studies have found that people with disabilities, particularly women and girls with disabilities, are affected by abuse on a far greater scale than women and girls without disabilities, and are more likely to experience a wider range of violence, receive less support, and may be less able to defend themselves².

Within Papua New Guinea (PNG), it is estimated that approximately 15% of the population have a disability³. FSV rates in PNG are unacceptably high, impacting an estimated two-thirds of women and girls⁴. For women and girls with disabilities, their situation is often exacerbated by multiple and intersecting barriers such as; negative community attitudes and discrimination towards people with disabilities, poverty, low education levels, lack of knowledge and understanding on disability rights and inequality compared to their peers without disabilities. In PNG, people with disability lack recognition within society, face communication and attitudinal barriers when dealing with the police and courts and face physical challenges in accessing services⁵.

In addition to affecting people with existing disabilities, high rates of violence in PNG also leads to individuals acquiring disability. The vast majority of injuries (80-90%) in women presenting to health facilities in PNG are reported to be the result of domestic violence⁶. Many of these injuries will lead to permanent disability.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure the inclusion of people with disabilities in the delivery of Femili PNG's work. This includes:

- Promoting staff awareness of disability inclusion and their responsibilities with regard to this policy;

¹ For more information on Femili PNG's values see <http://www.femilipng.org/about-us-page/our-vision-mission-values-and-priorities/>

² International Network of Women with Disabilities (2010) Document on Violence Against Women with Disabilities, accessed via <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/inwwd>

³ Papua New Guinea Disability Information Sheet (September 2015) CBM Australia

⁴ Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development: Papua New Guinea Country Plan Summary 2014-2019, <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/pwspd-papua-new-guinea.pdf>

⁵ Disability inclusion consultations undertaken by Femili PNG in August 2017

⁶ Amnesty International 2006, Papua New Guinea: Violence against Women: Not Inevitable, Never Acceptable, accessed via <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ASA34/002/2006/en/>

- Ensuring that people with a disability affected by FSV in the places where we work are aware of and can access Femili PNG services;
- Ensuring the needs and rights of people with a disability are considered in the main activities of Femili PNG, including case management, outreach, communications, fundraising and advocacy; and
- Consideration of the ways in which the organisation can include people with a disability in its internal operations (i.e. logistics, administration, finance, governance and other roles).

1.3 Definitions

Femili PNG staff and representatives:	This refers to anyone who represents Femili PNG including, but not limited to, staff, volunteers, contractors, visitors and Board members.
Person with a Disability:	In line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol (2006): 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.
Reasonable adjustments:	This refers to modifications to activities, methods of communication, infrastructure or processes to accommodate the needs of people with disability. An adjustment is considered 'reasonable' if it is feasible (i.e. within the skills and resources of the organisation) and relevant to the organisation.

2.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Femili PNG's Disability Inclusion Policy and practices adhere to the following guiding principles:

2.1 Human Rights

Taking a human rights based approach to disability inclusion, Femili PNG is committed to promoting equal rights for people with a disability, and their equitable inclusion in all aspects of society. This includes in its role as an employer, service provider, registered charity and incorporated organisation.

As well as ensuring equal opportunity for people with disabilities, human rights includes both respect and the absence of discrimination. Consideration for people with disabilities will be given in all Femili PNG activities and policies.

2.2 Awareness

All Femili PNG staff and representatives should have an awareness of disability inclusion, including understanding the needs of people with a disability who may interact with the organisation as clients, employees, volunteers, partners, donors or members of the public.

2.3 Participation

Meaningful participation of people with disability is essential for genuine empowerment and change in the community. Meaningful participation ensures that people with disabilities participate and benefit from Femili PNG's development efforts and leads to broader benefits for families and communities.

Femili PNG acknowledges that people with disabilities and their representative organisations (Disabled People's Organisations, or DPOs) can provide perspectives based on their experiences of living with disabilities, to inform Femili PNG disability-inclusive activities.

2.4 Comprehensive Accessibility

Central to disability inclusion is the removal of 'barriers' to enable people with disabilities access to services, and opportunities to participate equally. Comprehensive accessibility ensures that barriers to access and participation are identified and addressed. Barriers can be related to the physical environment (e.g. stairs), communication (e.g. lack of information in multiple formats including Braille, no sign language interpreter in training workshops), institutional barriers (e.g. organisational policies) and attitudes (e.g. negative attitudes regarding disabilities). Negative attitudes and prejudice towards people with disabilities are often the most significant barriers.

Femili PNG will work to reduce barriers faced by people with a disability, to improve access to services as well as encourage participation within all levels of Femili PNG; from Board management, implementing staff, volunteers and representatives.

2.5 Twin-track

A twin track approach aims to ensure that Femili PNG is both inclusive of and benefits people with disabilities. A twin track approach involves implementing two concurrent initiatives:

1. Disability mainstreaming: ensuring that the organisation and its programs include a disability perspective and are fully accessible to and inclusive of people with disability.
2. Disability-specific initiatives: activities specifically targeted at people with disability, in order to increase their empowerment and participation (e.g. conducting outreach with Disabled People's Organisations, supporting individuals to access specific medical/rehabilitation interventions where available to manage injuries/and or impairments, provision of adaptive devices etc). It is recognised that without adequate support and access to health services, injuries sustained may become permanent impairments.

Femili PNG will take a twin-track approach, i.e. implementing disability-inclusion through mainstream and targeted efforts.

3.0 POLICY STATEMENTS

- 3.1 Femili PNG is committed to ensuring people with a disability have equal access to our services.
- 3.2 Femili PNG acknowledges the diversity that disability brings to all areas of the organisation.
- 3.3 Recognising that the physical and social contexts of people with a disability are diverse, Femili PNG will consider these in the operationalisation of disability inclusion. For example, the way the policy is implemented in Canberra may be different to the way it is implemented in Lae.
- 3.4 Femili PNG recognises that failure to uphold the human rights of people with disabilities is more likely to occur where an organisation lacks the culture, ethics, leadership, policies and professionalism to promote disability inclusion.

- 3.5 Femili PNG operates in line with international evidence which indicates that people with disabilities are often reluctant to disclose abuse and rarely falsely claim abuse.
- 3.6 Femili PNG's staff and representatives are all responsible for ensuring our disability inclusion approach is understood and integrated into all areas of our work and our organisation's ethics and culture.
- 3.7 Femili PNG will work with our partners to increase understanding and knowledge of disability and the rights of people with disabilities, including advocacy to service providers to enable people with disabilities to gain access to services and facilities.
- 3.8 Femili PNG recognises that that people with disabilities and disabled people's organisations can provide perspectives on the experience of living with disabilities and ultimately are the experts on disability inclusion. Femili PNG will seek to draw on their knowledge.

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION

The following mechanisms will be used to implement Femili PNG's Disability Inclusion Policy:

4.1 Training and induction

All staff and representatives will be familiarised with the Disability Inclusion Policy as part of their induction process.

In line with the needs of their roles and responsibilities, Femili PNG will offer staff and representatives training on Disability Inclusion. It is preferable for training to be facilitated by a Papua New Guinean disabled person's organisation.

4.2 Recruitment and employment

Acknowledging the diversity that people with a disability can bring to an organisation, Femili PNG will encourage and support the employment of people with a disability within the organisation. This will include:

- a statement on job advertisements and on the organisation's website stating that Femili PNG is committed to fostering an inclusive work environment for all people, including those with a disability. For example, "People with a disability are encouraged to apply for all roles and positions within the organisation and, where possible, Femili PNG will make reasonable adjustments to ensure people with disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate."
- adjusting recruitment processes to ensure a person with a disability is able to equally participate in the recruitment process (i.e. conducting interviews in an accessible location or enabling participation via phone).
- where feasible, making reasonable adjustments to the work, or work environment, to enable the participation of people with a disability (some examples could include flexible work arrangements, adjustments to work stations and lighting, provision of assistive software, ensuring accessible office buildings, conference rooms, toilets etc).
- provide training and assistance on inclusive ways of working to existing staff so they can work effectively with people with disability in the workplace. Ensure existing staff are comfortable and well equipped to orient new employees and cater for any specific requirements they may have.
- where possible offer mentoring for new employees with disability, as a way to support self-development and contribute to development of the culture and values of Femili PNG.

4.3 Disability Focal Point

Femili PNG will identify a **Disability Focal Point** within the organisation who will act as a first point of contact for both internal and external parties on the Disability Inclusion Policy and resources. Existing staff or representatives with a disability will be given preference for this role.

4.4 Case management

Femili PNG's Case Management Policy and Procedure Manual (section 4.1.6) states that "clients who Femili PNG identifies as having been subjected to violence and abuse [must] have fair and equal access to Femili PNG services without discrimination for any reason, including age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, health status, race, religion, political affiliation or ethnicity".

In line with this, Femili PNG will make all possible arrangements to ensure that people with a disability are able to access the service and feel respected and supported. Examples include:

- ensuring that client consultations take place in an accessible setting;
- having access to a sign language translator;
- providing information in an accessible format;
- making available an advocate from a disabled persons organisation; and
- advocating to FSV service providers to enable people with disabilities to gain access to disability-inclusive services and facilities.

Femili PNG recognises that accessibility is not only about physical access, but also includes these concepts:

- **Approachable:** people with disabilities know services exist and feel comfortable to approach them;
- **Acceptable** and **appropriate:** barriers to communication are removed, and it is clear what is offered by services.
- **Affordable** and **available**⁷.

4.5 Comprehensive Accessibility

Where possible, Femili PNG will consider comprehensive accessibility for people with a disability in both its primary places of operation, other spaces it may use on occasion (i.e. meeting locations), Femili PNG communications, policies and ways of working. For instance, in terms of physical access, where modifications are not feasible (i.e. due to funding restrictions etc), Femili PNG will endeavor to make arrangements to ensure people with a disability are able to participate in its activities. For example, this may include seeking out training venues that are accessible, or providing information in an accessible format.

4.6 Data collection and reporting

Identification of people with a disability is based on self-identification. Information on client disability (mental and/or physical) is recorded on the Client Integrated Intake Form. Femili PNG is currently trialling a new version of this form which includes the Washington Group Short Set of Questions on Disability (see Appendix A). Recording of disability is optional and undertaken only with the informed consent of clients.

More comprehensive data will allow us to improve our service processes in line with the needs of our clients. Asking these questions at intake will also enable specialised care and referrals that are tailored to the needs of individual clients.

⁷ Frawley, P, Dyson S and Robinson S (2017), *Whatever it takes? Access for women with disabilities to domestic and family violence services: Key findings and future directions*, ANROWS: Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety.

We will seek to include people with disabilities in our client satisfaction survey samples, recognised that service improvement must be informed by people with disabilities who have used our service.

Femili PNG will provide information on its clients with disability in its internal monthly reports, as well as six-monthly progress reports to DFAT and *Pacific Women*. This will also assist Femili PNG to track if more people with disability are accessing our services.

4.7 Advocacy, outreach and communication

Where possible, Femili PNG will be an advocate for survivors of family and sexual violence with disabilities. It will advocate directly to FSV service providers, promote on its website, directly through its staff, members and volunteers and other communications materials, the needs of this client group, and the activities that are being undertaken to address these.

Femili PNG will ensure inclusion of people with disability in its outreach and community awareness sessions, and seek to conduct outreach sessions specifically for people with disability. They will be organised in partnership with local disability organisations wherever possible.

Femili PNG's Disability Inclusion Policy will be publicly available to all and accessible on our website. We will share the policies with willing partner organisations to assist them to develop their own disability inclusion policies.

Femili PNG will also work to ensure that its own communication materials, both printed and web based, are accessible for people with a disability.

4.8 Partnerships

Femili PNG will work with local disabled people's organisations to ensure its policies reflect the developing understanding of disability inclusion in the local context. Femili PNG will seek to strengthen its engagement and consider entering into formal partnerships with organisations such as the PNG Assembly of Disabled Persons and the Morobe Disabled People's Organisation..

We will also seek out partnerships with single line DPOs such as the PNG Deaf association. Then, when a sign language interpreter is required, the PNG Deaf association could recommend on registered sign language interpreters.

Femili PNG will also seek to strengthen its case management services by entering into partnerships with disability service providers such as Callan Services, Morobe Special Education Resource Centre, the National Orthotics and Prosthetics Service (NOPS) in Lae centre and Chesire Rehabilitation Services.

The local disabled people's organisation (Morobe Disabled People's Organisation) is already part of the referral system in Lae. Additionally, the partnership may also include active participation in events, research and advocacy relevant to Femili PNG's objects.

5.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW

Monitoring of the implementation of this Policy is the responsibility of all staff, led by the CEO/SSW and overseen by Femili PNG's Executive Management Committee, and at the highest level its Board. It will be reviewed and updated as required.

Appendix A – Washington Group Short Set of Questions on Disability

Before administering the survey, read out the following statement: “The next questions ask about difficulties you may have doing certain activities because of a ‘HEALTH PROBLEM’ in the last 6 months.”

1. Do you have difficulty seeing, even if wearing glasses?
 - a. No - no difficulty
 - b. Yes - some difficulty
 - c. Yes - a lot of difficulty
 - d. Cannot do at all

2. Do you have difficulty hearing, even if using a hearing aid?
 - a. No - no difficulty
 - b. Yes - some difficulty
 - c. Yes - a lot of difficulty
 - d. Cannot do at all

3. Do you have difficulty walking or climbing steps?
 - a. No - no difficulty
 - b. Yes - some difficulty
 - c. Yes - a lot of difficulty
 - d. Cannot do at all

4. Do you have difficulty remembering or concentrating?
 - a. No - no difficulty
 - b. Yes - some difficulty
 - c. Yes - a lot of difficulty
 - d. Cannot do at all

5. Do you have difficulty (with self-care such as) washing all over or dressing?
 - a. No - no difficulty
 - b. Yes - some difficulty
 - c. Yes - a lot of difficulty
 - d. Cannot do at all

6. Using your usual (customary) language, do you have difficulty communicating, for example understanding or being understood?
 - a. No - no difficulty
 - b. Yes - some difficulty
 - c. Yes - a lot of difficulty
 - d. Cannot do at all