

EQUITY DIVERSITY INCLUSION AND BELONGING POLICY

Version 0001.00.b

Date Jun 2025

Scope All Employees, Trustees, Consultants, Volunteers, and others acting on behalf of Practical Action or its subsidiaries

NEXT REVIEW October 2027

CATEGORY A POLICY – 2 YEAR REVIEW

Approval required from	Board of Trustees
Policy Owner:	Head of Global Learning and Development
Responsible Director:	Chief Operating Officer
Approval date	June 2025
Queries	Contact the Policy Owner
Exceptions	Contact the Responsible Director

1. Roles and Responsibilities

- a. Clarifications on the policy content should be sought from the **Policy Owner**. Any changes required to the policy will be submitted through this the **Policy Owner** to the **Responsible Director**, for consideration.
- b. The **policy owner** is responsible for review of the policy every two years, with the next review scheduled for October 2027. Any questions or comments about this policy should be directed to the Head of Global Learning and Development.
- c. Derogations from this policy require the **advance written approval** of the **Responsible Director**.
- d. The **Responsible Director** will seek formal approval of significant changes to this policy from the **Practical Action Board of Trustees** or their delegated representatives.

2. Policy Statement

This policy applies to all Practical Action UK employees, Trustees, Consultants and others acting on behalf of Practical Action and its subsidiaries. Practical Action welcomes requests for the policy in alternative formats. This policy is available to all employees and external stakeholders via our website [Policies and commitments - Practical Action](#). All employees, including new hires, are made aware of this policy and their responsibilities for promoting equity and inclusion.

3. Introduction

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (EDIB) are integral to the intercultural relations and development work we undertake across our global network at Practical Action. They are essential for building trusting, mutually beneficial relationships and for maximising our impact on people and the planet. EDIB enhances our brand, reputation, and effectiveness.

Our organisational mission and vision, along with our values, inform our EDIB Policy. Together with our Code of Conduct and other relevant policies, the EDIB Policy shapes how we interact with all those we work with and supports compliance and risk management.

Our Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (EDIB) Strategy outlines our vision and provides a framework for implementing this policy. It sets out objectives and tools to ensure we fulfil our EDIB commitments.

The EDIB Policy is supported by the Practical Action Board of Trustees, the Chief Executive Officer, and the Global Leadership Team, who are ultimately accountable for its implementation. All staff, regardless of location, are required to uphold this policy in their behaviour and actions.

4. Equity at Practical Action

Equity at Practical Action means eradicating unjustified discrimination and promoting human rights and social justice. When we speak of equity, we mean treating people fairly, impartially, and without bias. We create conditions that encourage and value diversity and foster dignity and inclusion through a culturally sensitive approach.

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Equity does not mean treating everyone the same. Instead, it means treating people equitably, acknowledging and addressing imbalances through differentiated approaches where necessary and appropriate to achieve equality in its true form.

This policy applies globally wherever local conditions allow. Practical Action aims to meet local legislation and exceed it where feasible.

5. Valuing Diversity to Support Inclusion

Diversity acknowledges that while people share many similarities, they also differ in significant ways, including gender, age, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, religion, belief, socio-economic background, and other characteristics.

By understanding, valuing, and effectively managing diversity, we encourage greater participation, benefiting individuals, teams, and society at large. This contributes to our goal of fostering inclusion.

At Practical Action, inclusion is an active process that ensures conditions where all individuals can fully contribute to our work. It means making people feel welcomed, valued, and involved, particularly those who have been socially excluded, marginalised, or under-represented. Inclusion strengthens cultural relations and supports trust within our global community.

6. General Statements

Practical Action is committed to promoting equity, encouraging diversity, and fostering an inclusive culture.

Our commitment extends to ensuring that all staff, clients, partners, suppliers, and all those who meet our work are treated fairly, with dignity and respect, to maintain their trust and confidence in us. We strive to ensure no discrimination occurs based on age, disability (including HIV/AIDS status), sex and gender (including transgender and intersex identities), marital status, political opinion, race/ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, spent convictions, trade union activity or membership, work patterns, or other irrelevant grounds.

We are also committed to developing an awareness of how discrimination can be compounded when different characteristics intersect (e.g., race and gender, or disability and age). Practical Action actively promotes equity, equality, good relations, and inclusion, aligned with the *Equality Act 2010*ⁱ and other relevant legislation.

7. Discrimination

Discrimination is unacceptable at Practical Action. It occurs when decisions (whether consciously or unconsciously) disadvantage certain groups or individuals based on characteristics beyond their control. This includes direct and indirect discrimination, such as applying conditions or criteria that disproportionately impact certain groups.

We actively challenge stereotypes and unconscious biases to prevent discrimination.

Discrimination, whether conscious or unconscious, has no place in our organisation.

8. Positive Discrimination and Affirmative Action

While positive discrimination (favouring someone based on a protected characteristic) is generally unlawful in the UK, Practical Action may comply with local legislation requiring positive discrimination. In many countries, affirmative action (such as encouraging and providing special requirements for under-represented groups) is lawful and encouraged.

9. Recruitment and Selection

All recruitment decisions must reflect our commitment to promoting equity, encouraging diversity, and fostering inclusion. Advertisements must not unjustifiably discriminate and should be accessible to diverse applicants.

Practical Action welcomes applications from under-represented groups and guarantees interviews for applicants with disability who meet the essential criteria. We support discussions about any adjustments needed to enable participation in our work.

10. Performance Management

Our Equity Policy applies to all aspects of performance management, including development opportunities, career breaks, and succession planning. We encourage all staff to consider how equity, diversity, and inclusion can add value to their work and incorporate this into their performance objectives.

Performance decisions should be evidence-based and free from bias, assumptions, or stereotypes. Any decisions related to staff should focus on merit and fairness.

11. Primary Areas of Focus

While Practical Action's EDIB Policy covers all aspects of diversity, we have a primary focus on the following areas:

- **Age:** We value contributions from people of all ages and seek to avoid age discrimination. Our policies are designed to foster intergenerational learning and inclusion.
- **Disability:** Practical Action is committed to the inclusion of people with disability in our workforce and programmes, addressing barriers and making necessary adjustments to promote equality.
- **Gender and Sexual Orientation:** We support equality for all, including women, girls, and individuals with diverse gender identities and sexual orientations. Practical Action combats gender-based discrimination and promotes gender equality in all aspects of our work.
- **Socio-Economic Background:** We recognise the global issue of socio-economic inequality and its impact on access to opportunities. Practical Action is committed to increasing employment opportunities and participation for those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds through targeted initiatives and an action plan that addresses this inequality.

12. Bullying and Harassment

Bullying and harassment, including any actions that undermine dignity and respect, are not tolerated at Practical Action. We encourage all staff to speak up about any concerns using our

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procedures. Harassment based on protected characteristics, such as age, disability, race, gender, or sexual orientation, will be dealt with seriously and may result in disciplinary action.

13. Grievances and Concerns

Employees who feel they have been treated unfairly or have experienced unjustified discrimination have the right to raise their concerns under our grievance procedures. Practical Action expects all grievances to be handled with care, respect, and confidentiality.

14. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Legal Compliance

Practical Action monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of our Equity Policy and EDIB Strategy through various mechanisms, including equality data analysis, performance reviews, and regular assessments of progress against our targets. We comply with all relevant UK and international legislation to ensure we uphold the highest standards of equality and inclusion.

15. Linked Practical Action Policies [Policies and commitments - Practical Action UK Portal - NETconsent](#)

- Global Recruitment Policy v3
- Organisational Code of Conduct v4
- Gender Policy v3
- Global Grievance Policy v3
- Performance Improvement Policy v4
- Safeguarding Policy v4

16. Further reading and resources

- Equality Act 2010 [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK](#)

ⁱ Equality Act 2010 [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK](#)