

KARBI ANGLONG BAPTIST CONVENTION

SAFEGUARDING & INCLUSION POLICY MANUAL

SI-001

GENDER POLICY

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1. Purpose

The Karbi Anglong Baptist Convention (KABC) recognizes the equal dignity and worth of women and men and values the contribution of both to the life, leadership, ministries, institutions, and work of the Convention.

The purpose of this Policy is to promote fairness, equal opportunity, dignity, respect, and meaningful participation regardless of gender.

KABC seeks to ensure that women and men are able to contribute their abilities, experience, knowledge, and leadership without being unfairly excluded or disadvantaged because of gender.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to KABC's:

- governance and administration;
- departments and ministries;
- programmes and projects;
- institutions;
- employees and workplace practices;
- Boards, Committees, Councils, Task Forces, and Working Groups;
- training and leadership development;
- community programmes and activities; and
- other work directly administered by KABC.

Member Associations and local churches are independently governed constituent bodies. KABC encourages them to uphold the principles of dignity, fairness, and equal opportunity expressed in this Policy, but this Policy does not automatically govern their internal administration unless they adopt it.

3. Guiding Principles

KABC's approach to gender shall be guided by:

- equal dignity and worth;

- fairness;
 - equal opportunity;
 - respect;
 - participation;
 - capability;
 - safety;
 - freedom from discrimination and harassment;
 - responsible leadership; and
 - compliance with applicable law.
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4. Equal Dignity

KABC affirms that women and men are equally valuable and deserving of dignity, respect, safety, and fair treatment.

No person should be treated as less capable, less worthy, or less deserving of respect merely because of gender.

The Convention shall seek to promote relationships and organizational practices that respect the contribution of both women and men.

5. Equal Opportunity

KABC is committed to providing equal opportunity regardless of gender and to considering people according to their capability and the genuine requirements of the responsibility concerned.

No person shall be disqualified from consideration for a position, responsibility, opportunity, programme, or leadership role solely on the basis of gender.

Decisions should be based on relevant considerations such as:

- capability;
- qualifications;
- experience;

- competence;
- character;
- suitability; and
- requirements of the responsibility concerned.

Equal opportunity does not mean that every person must receive the same role or outcome. It means that gender alone shall not be used as a reason to exclude an otherwise eligible person.

6. Institutional Basis

The equal opportunity principle in this Policy gives effect to the decision adopted by the General Body of the Karbi Anglong Baptist Convention at its meeting held on **14 March 2026**, affirming that equal opportunity shall be provided regardless of gender and that opportunity should be based on capability.

Resolution Reference:

KABC/46TH AGM/2026/DM/AGENDA/4/Recommendation for Approval/1-General Recommendation/g

This decision shall guide the interpretation and implementation of this Policy.

7. Governance and Leadership

KABC shall seek to provide fair opportunity for capable women and men to participate in governance, leadership, committees, programmes, institutions, and other areas of organizational responsibility.

Selection or appointment shall be based on the requirements of the responsibility concerned.

Gender shall not, by itself, be a ground for declaring an otherwise eligible person unsuitable for leadership or organizational responsibility.

KABC shall seek to identify and address unnecessary practices or assumptions that prevent capable persons from participating because of gender.

8. Employment

Employment-related equal opportunity shall be governed primarily by **HR-001 — Human Resources Policy**.

KABC's recruitment, appointment, remuneration, training, performance assessment, promotion, leadership development, and other employment practices shall be administered fairly and in accordance with applicable law.

This Policy reinforces, but does not duplicate, the detailed employment provisions of HR-001.

9. Participation in Programmes and Ministries

KABC shall seek to ensure that its programmes, projects, training, and development opportunities are accessible fairly to women and men according to their purpose and intended beneficiaries.

Programme planning should consider whether women or men face practical barriers to participation.

Such barriers may include, depending on the circumstances:

- timing and location;
- safety;
- family responsibilities;
- accessibility;
- social or economic circumstances;
- access to information;
- other practical limitations.

Where reasonable, programmes should be designed to reduce unnecessary barriers to participation.

10. Leadership Development

KABC shall encourage the development of capable leaders among both women and men.

Leadership development opportunities may include:

- training;
- mentoring;
- education;
- skills development;
- opportunities to serve;
- participation in committees and programmes;
- exposure to organizational responsibilities.

Where women or men have historically had fewer opportunities to participate in a particular area, KABC may take reasonable steps to improve access and encourage participation, consistent with capability, organizational needs, and applicable law.

11. Education, Training and Capacity Building

KABC shall promote fair access to education, training, scholarships, workshops, capacity-building programmes, and professional development opportunities that it administers or supports.

Selection criteria should be relevant to the purpose of the opportunity and should not unnecessarily exclude a person because of gender.

12. Respectful and Safe Environment

Every person participating in KABC's work has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

KABC shall not tolerate:

- unlawful gender discrimination;
- sexual harassment;
- sexual exploitation or abuse;
- bullying;
- intimidation;

- degrading treatment;
- unwanted sexual conduct; or
- retaliation against a person who raises a genuine concern.

Concerns shall be handled seriously, fairly, confidentially, and according to the appropriate KABC policy and applicable law.

13. Sexual Harassment

KABC is committed to providing workplaces and organizational environments free from sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment may include unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal, non-verbal, physical, written, or digital, where such conduct violates a person's dignity, creates an intimidating or hostile environment, or otherwise falls within the definition provided by applicable law.

KABC shall maintain the complaint and redressal mechanisms required by applicable law.

Detailed procedures concerning prevention, reporting, inquiry, and redressal of sexual harassment may be maintained separately where required.

14. Safeguarding

Gender considerations shall not reduce or replace KABC's safeguarding responsibilities.

Where a matter involves a child, the **Child Protection Policy and Procedures** shall apply.

Where a person may be vulnerable because of age, disability, dependence, exploitation, or another circumstance, KABC shall respond with appropriate care and according to applicable safeguarding requirements.

15. Violence, Exploitation and Abuse

KABC does not tolerate violence, exploitation, abuse, coercion, or misuse of authority.

No person shall use:

- position;
- authority;
- financial influence;
- ministry responsibility;
- employment;
- programme access; or
- another relationship of trust

to exploit or improperly pressure another person.

Concerns involving possible criminal conduct or serious harm shall be handled in accordance with applicable law and KABC's safeguarding and reporting procedures.

16. Programme Planning

Departments, programmes, projects, and institutions should consider gender appropriately when planning activities.

This does not mean that every programme must have identical participation by women and men.

Rather, programme planners should consider:

- who the intended beneficiaries are;
- whether women and men have reasonable access;
- whether particular needs require different approaches;
- whether unnecessary barriers exist;
- whether participation is safe and respectful.

Programmes specifically designed for women, men, girls, or boys may be appropriate where their purpose or needs justify such an approach.

17. Women-Focused and Men-Focused Programmes

Nothing in this Policy prevents KABC from maintaining programmes specifically designed for women or men where there is a legitimate purpose.

For example, programmes may address:

- women's leadership and empowerment;
- men's responsibilities and wellbeing;
- maternal needs;
- fatherhood;
- particular health or social needs;
- ministry or community issues affecting one group differently.

Gender equality does not require KABC to ignore genuine differences in circumstances or needs.

18. Communication and Representation

KABC shall seek to communicate about women and men with dignity and respect.

Publications, photographs, videos, social media, reports, and other communications should avoid:

- degrading portrayals;
- unnecessary stereotypes;
- exploitative images;
- language that diminishes the dignity or contribution of a person because of gender.

KABC should seek to reflect the meaningful contribution of both women and men in its public communication.

19. Facilities and Practical Needs

Where reasonably practicable, KABC shall consider the different practical needs of women and men in workplaces, institutions, programmes, accommodation, travel, sanitation, safety, and other organizational arrangements.

Privacy, dignity, health, and safety shall be appropriately respected.

20. Pregnancy and Maternity

Pregnancy or maternity shall not by itself be a reason to exclude a woman from employment, training, leadership development, or another opportunity for which she is otherwise eligible.

Employment-related maternity rights and benefits shall be governed by **HR-002 — Leave Rules** and applicable law.

Reasonable consideration should be given to health, safety, and practical needs associated with pregnancy and maternity.

21. Responsibilities of Leaders

Persons holding leadership or supervisory responsibility shall:

- model respectful conduct;
 - provide fair opportunity;
 - avoid gender-based assumptions in decision-making;
 - address discrimination or harassment appropriately;
 - support safe participation;
 - take concerns seriously;
 - help create an organizational culture in which capable women and men can contribute meaningfully.
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22. Responsibilities of Employees and Participants

Every person participating in KABC's work is expected to:

- treat others with dignity and respect;
 - avoid discrimination and harassment;
 - respect appropriate personal boundaries;
 - support fair participation;
 - report serious concerns responsibly; and
 - comply with applicable KABC policies.
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23. Reporting Concerns

A person who experiences, witnesses, or becomes aware of possible gender discrimination, sexual harassment, exploitation, abuse, or another serious concern may report the matter through the appropriate KABC process.

Depending on the nature of the matter, this may include:

- the employment grievance process;
- **GP-003 — Ethical Concerns Reporting Policy;**
- Child Protection procedures;
- the statutory mechanism for sexual-harassment complaints; or
- another appropriate reporting channel.

No person shall suffer retaliation for raising a genuine concern in good faith.

24. Confidentiality

Reports and personal information arising under this Policy shall be handled with appropriate confidentiality.

Information shall be shared only with persons who reasonably need it for assessment, inquiry, safeguarding, decision-making, legal compliance, or another legitimate purpose.

Confidentiality shall be governed by **GP-004 — Confidentiality & Data Protection Policy** and applicable law.

25. Monitoring and Learning

KABC may periodically review how this Policy is being implemented.

Such review may consider, where appropriate:

- participation in leadership and decision-making;
- access to employment and development opportunities;
- programme participation;
- complaints or concerns;
- barriers identified through experience;
- areas requiring further awareness or training.

The purpose of monitoring is to improve fairness and participation, not merely to achieve numerical targets.

26. Compliance with Law

This Policy shall be implemented in accordance with applicable law.

Where the law establishes specific requirements concerning:

- equal opportunity;
- discrimination;
- sexual harassment;
- maternity;
- workplace safety;
- employment;
- safeguarding; or
- other related matters,

KABC shall comply with those requirements.

Where KABC provides a more favourable protection or opportunity, the approved KABC provision may continue subject to law.

27. Related Documents

This Policy should be read together with:

- Constitution of the Karbi Anglong Baptist Convention;

- GP-001 — Code of Conduct;
 - GP-002 — Conflict of Interest Policy;
 - GP-003 — Ethical Concerns Reporting Policy;
 - GP-004 — Confidentiality & Data Protection Policy;
 - HR-001 — Human Resources Policy;
 - HR-002 — Leave Rules;
 - Child Protection Policy and Procedures; and
 - applicable laws concerning employment, equality, safeguarding, and workplace conduct.
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28. Review and Amendment

This Policy shall be reviewed at least once every **three (3) years**, or earlier where necessary because of:

- changes in applicable law;
- decisions of the General Body;
- organizational developments;
- experience arising from implementation; or
- changes in related KABC policies.

Amendments shall be approved by the competent authority of KABC in accordance with its Constitution and governance arrangements.

29. Approval

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