

THE SWALLOWS IB POLICY ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY

Adopted 2010-06-17

This policy is written to clarify The Swallows' position on sexual orientation and gender identity and the belief in the strong relation between sexual orientation/gender identity and human rights. This policy can be used in the collaboration with partners in South, at The Swallows' or partners' activities related to human rights and in the day-to-day work.

For The Swallows India Bangladesh solidarity is based on recognition of the equal worth of all, no matter ethnicity, caste, religion, ability, sexual orientation or gender identity. We work to promote human rights, with a special focus on marginalised groups.

The Swallows believes that people have the right to decide their sexual preferences, have a private life and freely choose partner without being subjected to discrimination. Discrimination due to sexual orientation or gender identity is prevalent around the world. This is something The Swallows strongly oppose on the basis of each person's fundamental human rights.

Sweden has an international policy on sexual and reproductive health and rights and this is something that all development aid partners should work towards. This policy states:

"all people, irrespective of sex, age, ethnicity, disability, gender identity or sexual orientation, have a right to their own body and sexuality." (Sweden's international Policy on sexual and reproductive health and rights, Government Offices of Sweden, 2006)

The Swedish international policy also states the importance of:

"the general human rights principle of non-discrimination on sexual or other grounds, such as sexual orientation or gender identity. This principle is fundamental to all human rights." (Sweden's international Policy on sexual and reproductive health and rights, Government Offices of Sweden, 2006)

The Swallows shares the statements and recommendations given by The Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights:

"The hetero norm restricts and infringes the rights of LGBT people. Infringing people's rights affects their health, their position in the labour market, their educational opportunities, their political participation and their access to social networks. All projects intended directly or indirectly to fight poverty should review whether their activities maintain or even reinforce prevailing heteronormative concepts of gender and sexuality. From an anti-poverty perspective, the long-term gains will be greater if heteronormativity is challenged."(RFSL, 2009)

The word heteronorm refers to when heterosexuality is being looked upon as the normal in a society and exclude other groups of people, which lead to discrimination. LGBT stands for Lesbian,

Gay, Bisexual and Transgender.

To think about in the internal and external work:

- Not to focus on the negative aspects of sexuality (such as diseases and violence).
- That the conversations and written material should not reproduce heteronormativity.
- Not to take for granted that the person before you is heterosexual. Do also not take for granted a persons' gender identity or experiences. Ask open questions, for example if the person has a partner or what kind of relationship the person has.
- Do not express your opinions on another persons' sexuality or gender identity.

The Swallows' policy on sexual orientation is based on the fundamental values of The Swallows and also on the policies of Forum Syd and Sida/The Swedish government. All activities conducted by The Swallows or financed by The Swallows should follow this policy.