

GENDER POLICY

AGROGOTI SANGSTHA

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Back-ground:

Agrogoti Sangstha, like other social organizations, was formed through a social issue in 1988 at Krishnonagor union under Kaligonj P.S. in the district of Satkhira. During 1988, when the devastating cyclone hit the southern part of Satkhira and caused a heavy damage, a group of young volunteer tried to help and re-build the broken and damaged houses of the sufferers and formed a Social Organization named "Agrogoti Sangstha". They were experienced in various meeting, workshop, seminar and so many national and international N.G.O.s and Government Organizations and took part in programs of human education and health development, eradication of poverty and preservation of the coastal environment. In 1994, Agrogoti Sangstha established 10 parallel organization over the entire Krishnonagor and its surroundings and formed a forum named "Krishnonagor Development Forum". This forum has trained 700 men & women for implementing development programs in their own areas. The female members of the forum have formed a "Female Member Association" that has been trying to solve the problems of the women through Local Govt. Representative and the Government. At present, Agrogoti Sangstha along with different N.G.O.s & C.B.O.s of home and abroad have been working with their small credit loans. As a result, one kind of financial transaction has been increased. But the N.G.O.s & C.B.O.s have to go a long way for the sustainable development. Agrogoti Sangstha, besides the conventional programs, wants to make such a social movement where the voluntary assistants make a helpful environment for the development.

Legal status:

Year of origin: 1988

□ Registered with-

- Social welfare Directorate -Registration No.Sat-278/99
- NGO Affairs Bureau - Registration No. FD-1963/23.09.04

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!) Vision:

To establish such a fair and dynamic society where human rights will be protected through exercise of good Governance and eventually the developed livelihood will be ensured for every one in the society.

!!) Mission:

In order to implement its dream Agrogoti Sangstha wish to establish human rights through social movement, Widen the ethical values through sensitize social responsibility, ensure transparency and

accountability in development activities through ownership of the marginalized people and over all to establish a hunger and poverty free society.

!!!) Objectives of the Organization:

□ Short term Objectives:

- Create combined initiatives to reduce human Trafficking.
- Establish strong and effective Local Government.
- Ensure peoples ownership in the local planning for local Government.
- Establish Child rights.
- Establish a dynamic society without discrimination among man and woman right.
- Coordination with like-minded organization to shore experience enhances reciprocal capacity and strengthens development activities.
- Create self-leadership for wider social voluntarism.
- Giving facilities of vocational education for the adolescent who are underprivileged from Education.
- Aware about health care.
- Behavioral change from the boys and man about child and woman violation.
- Organize the marginalized people for their Socio-Economic development.
- Utilize the nearly extinct Folk culture as a media of development process.
- Protect the Coastal Environment
- Carrying out a social forestry program.

□ Long term Objectives:

Building capacity of the people to combat against property and all kind of irregularities to establish their command in the development process through ensuring the exercise of good Governance.

Concept: Gender

The World "Gender" means the socially constructed roles, status, expectation and relationship of women and men. Gender is an analytical tool for social analysis, as her class, race, ethnicity, cast, etc. Gender analysis focus on the comparative analysis between and men's relationship, status, roles and power relationship as the class analysis relates to rich and poor. Gender does not mean women. However the gender discussions often focus on women as an issue of development. In a development context we need to count on both women and men. Gender is a human right issue as well. Gender relations have evolved on the footing of power relations. The fifty percent of the women of the world do 67% work of the world. Whereas they are the owner of less than one percent of the world's resources and earn only ten percent of the world's income.

The major difference between gender and sex are

Sex	Gender
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sex is biological ➤ Sex is natural ➤ Sex is constraint. It remains the same everywhere. ➤ Sex cannot be changed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Gender is socio-cultural and it is man made. ➤ Human beings socially construct gender. ➤ Gender relations and identities vary from culture to culture. Community to community, time-to-time, place-to-place, age-to-age and family-to-family. ➤ Gender can be changed.

Gender does not refer to "Sex". Human beings are born either as a woman or a man with different sexual identity. And their gender identity is defined by the society as masculine and feminine.

Similarly, the word "gender equity" and "gender equality" do not suggest an equality based on sameness but rather one based difference.

Gender in Bangladesh

Bangladesh has a population of about 130 million in an area of 143,999 square kilometers. The gap between women and men is greater in terms of sexual division of labor, literacy rate, health and nutrition, economic and legal status, mobility, and access to and control over resources and income in Bangladesh than in many other countries.

A rural Woman of Bangladesh does 84% of unpaid household work, while men do only 21% (labor Force Survey, 1989). The life expectancy ratio at birth of woman: man is 58:58, and the literacy rate (age 15+, 1995) is 26:49 (Population Reference Bureau, Washington Dc, USA, 1999). Thirty one percent of adolescent girls of Bangladesh got married between the age of 15 to 19 years. (The Sangbad, Dhaka, 2000). These are a few statistics regarding the gender gap existing Bangladeshi society.

Introduction in context of gender issue

Agrogoti Sangstha has been working to change a view of women empowerment and their participation is the most important elements of development strategy. These are clearly reflected in the entire program Activities of the Organization. These elements of gender sensitivity are observed not only at the level of the people at the grassroots with whom the Organization works, but also at the level of its staff members since acceptance. Equal rights for women have been emphasized both in the administrative and staff policy as well as policies related to different development programs. Though much headway has been made in securing women's equal participation in all activities at the grassroots that have approved the status of the poor but due to some objective realities some level of achievement would not be attained within the organization itself. The formulation of this comprehensive gender policy is mean of the specific measures undertaken to deal with whatever gender gap that exists in the organization. The present policy is an improvement upon the previous administrative and staff policy and it incorporates some new measures, which would provide further opportunities for all employee of the organization.

Goal of the Gender Policy:

- Establish a friendly atmosphere in working areas where all staffs (male & female) can take part equally in development process.

Objectives of the Gender policy:

The objectives of the Gender policy are:

- To provide guidelines for creating an enabling environment for fostering a process of institutionalization of gender quality.
- To be use as a useful document for providing strategic directions in terms of programmatic and organizational planning, designing implementation and impact assessment.
- To take up necessary steps /programs to institutionalize gender in the organization.
- To ensure equality among all levels (male and female) staff of the organization.
- To ensure equal rights dignity and opportunities among all level of staff and their equal participation in all activities.
- To create a friendly and right-based environment to change and improve the status of women in the society.
- To undertake affirmative actions considering the historically created social backwardness and deprivation as well as specific needs of women.

- To ensure a gender sensitive environment in working area for all level of staffs.

Implementation Strategy

The gender issue would consider in the center of all activities of the Organization, No how it will individual activities. In every activities of the Organization the gender issue will incorporate. Because we think every development theory exist in gender approach.

In order to achieve the objectives of the gender policy the following strategy will apply-

- To sensitize all level of staffs about gender issue.
- To establish such a gender analytical structure so that in all level of activities the analysis of gender issue may ensure.
- To ensure the circulation of this gender manual in all level of staffs of Agrogoti Sangstha.
- At present the number of member in the general committee is 31 where 05 person are women. But gradually within the year of 2008 the number of women member will increase for equality.
- At present the number of member in the executive committee is 7 where 1 person is woman. But immediately the number of woman member will balance by increasing.
- **Areas of the policies:**

Affirmative actions have been undertaken for the female staff in the following areas:

- Recruitment, leave, promotion, posting, transfer, termination and dismissal;
- Financial and other material benefits;
- Infrastructure and some other special benefits;
- Staff development;
- Specific problems of the female staff
- Values and code of conduct. Workload; (Equal Rights, Ministration Period, Pregnancy Period, Breast feeding)
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- Information flow
- Monitoring & Evaluation

1. Recruitment, leave, promotion, posting, transfer, termination and dismissal

In the existing recruiting recruitment policy certain rules are equally applicable in case of the male and female staff. However, to increase the number of female staff the following affirmative actions have been taken:

1.1 Recruitment

The recruitment will proceed as per personnel policy with the proper handle by the recruitment committee)

- i) Recruitment must be balanced with the gender and it is not less than 30% for the female. The number of female staff in THE ORGANIZATION will be increased gradually. This increase will be at the field level as well as at all other levels of management.
- ii) Priority will be given to female candidates with equal educational qualification but relaxation in experience for the case of recruitment.
- iii) It must include at least two Female members in 5memberd recruitment committee.
- iv) For the recruitment of female staff the qualifying marks for both written and viva voce will be 50, while it will be consider marks 5 for female candidate.
- v) To achieve the target of increasing female staff, if necessary, applications will be invited from female candidates only.

- vi) In case of applicant must mention mother's name in his/her application along with father's name.

1.2 Leave

The policy for annual leave, medical leave, and casual leave are the same for both male and female staff. But there is a provision for maternity / Paternity leave for the female staff, which is follows:

Maternity:

A female staff will be entitled Two times of maternity leave with full pay as per Govt. rule during child birth and, if necessary, medical leave, annual leave and leave without pay may be added to this leave by approval of the authority.

Paternity:

To give mental support to his wife during childbirth and the succeeding days for postnatal care, here is also a provision for paternity leave for the male staff.

The male staff will be entitled to 10 (Ten) days' paternity leave with full pay during the period of childbirth of his wife

1.3 Promotion

Promotion can be defined as per gender basis where female is highly encouraged indication may be follow of service rule)

1.4 Posting and transfer

The rules of posting and transfer are same for the male female staff. But the following positive exceptions will be made for the female staff. The female staff can be reputed in nearest locality on aspect of communication with her locality and community easily. At the time of posting and transfer of a female employee, the workstation and place of residence of the husband/parents are to be taken into consideration.

During the period of pregnancy, i.e. from the first month till the fifth month after childbirth, the female staff is not to be transferred from her work place.

1.5 Dismissal

A staff, irrespective of sex, can be dismissed in accordance with the set service rules of the organization. But the male staff will be subject to dismissal for the following additional reason: If any male staff physically abuses or rapes a female staff and it is proved thereby, he will be dismissed immediately from his job.

2 Financial and other material benefits

All staffs will be entitled to equal pay scale, house rent, travel allowance, increment, training allowance, overseas travel allowance, transportation expense, medical facilities, telephone (According to Service rule), etc.

A female staff occupying the position of Program Coordinator (PC) or any female worker of the equivalent rank will be entitled to an official transport for field visit. Even a female employee below the rank of PC may able an office vehicle for field visits with the approval of the Executive Director or the Director.

3 Infrastructural and other special benefits

Some Infrastructural and special facilities to be offered by the organization to the female staff are as follows:

- i. There will be separate toilets for the female staff in all other offices of the organization.
- ii. While attending training, a female participant will be allowed to bring her baby along with her to the training center. She may also bring an attendant with her and all expenses on account of those are to be bared by the organization.

4. **Staff Development**

For staff development, the organization sends staff members to different institutions for skill development and provides opportunities to participate in training courses, seminars and workshops both at home and abroad. Participation of female staff in these staff development initiatives is ensured in proportion to gender-wise numerical strength in the organization and to ensure that the female staffs at the field level are not deprived of these facilities.

5. **Measures for Solving Specific Problems of the Female Staff**

A cell has been created to ensure gender equality within the organization. The major functions of the cell are to identify the problems faced by the female staff, take necessary steps to address those and forward recommendations to the management.

6. **Values and Code of Conduct**

- Gender equity is one of the core values of the organization. All staff of the organization should believe this value.
- There will be no gender division of work in the organization. Opportunity to participate in all works remains equally open irrespective of gender.
- Any comment, made directly or indirectly, which may cause humiliation to the female staff, is considered as a punishable offence.
- To create a congenial working atmosphere for both male and female staff, a set code of conduct has been prepared. All staff of the organization must abide by this code of conduct.
- To provide proper orientation about gender issues, the training on Women and Development' (offered by the organization) has been made mandatory for all its staff members.

7. **Workload;** (Equal Rights, Ministration Period, Pregnancy Period, Breast feeding)

Organization will take role in the Workload areas, which are as follows:

Equal Rights: As per service rule

Ministration Period: During the period of Ministration female staff will be permitted to do deskwork.

Pregnancy Period: As per service rule

Breast-feeding: In future Organization will arrange a day care center:

8. **Information flow**

A committee on gender will collect all sorts of information collectively from bottom to upper level in order to overcome misappropriation of any incident against men and women of the organization

9. **Monitoring & Evaluation**

A regular time basis of Monitoring will be arranged with the help of proper specific guideline and indicators to assess the present gender situation, which is friendly or not. In that assessment a format will be developed involving some common issues and indicators, after having the information the disciplinary

Committee will take proper initiative and necessary action as per rule. A mid term of evaluation will be arranged.

Program Level

Program:

Goal: To ensure equality and empowerment relation among males and females in the program/ project.

Objectives: To ensure active participation of female and sharing in the every sphere of project, prioritizing female's basic needs and strategic interest through analysis.

Project Planning:

- To ensure gender analysis during project planning.
- To give priority of women basic need and strategic interest in planning.
- To conduct PRA and take strategy for ensuring the participation of females from all sphere of society & reflecting their demand and opinion.

Implementation:

- To eliminate social and cultural constraints for ensuring women's participation in the project.
- To ensure equal participation and role of female in the implementation of the project.
- To ensure the access of female to information during implementation of the project.
- To increase the efficiency of female for active participation and role in implementing the project.

Monitoring and evaluation:

- To ensure equal participation of female in monitoring and evaluation of the project.
- To use specific form containing gender sensitive indicator for monitoring and evaluation.
- To ensure collection of gender based information and analyze progress of the project on the basis of collected information during monitoring and evaluation.
- To bring necessary change in the project for affirmative change of female's condition and position on the basis of females basic needs, strategic interest and gender-based information collected during monitoring and evaluation.

Impact study:

- To ensure use of gender sensitive indicator (qualitative and quantitative)
- In analyzing impact of the project about female's active participation and sharing can be ensured through following PRA.
- To analyze the noticeable changes in female's condition and position due to implementation of the project.

Policy Implementation and Monitoring

An individual division will have for implementation the total activities of the organization smoothly. It consists of at least 5 members including minimum 2 female members in different level of the organization.

The division will collect all kinks of information through the flow of collecting methods and take necessary action.

Every three month the committee will must be shared and accumulate the information and get together for discussion in a session.

Discussion on various agenda according the collective information and therefore solve and recommend for cases to the existing authority for take necessary action and implementation.

The Division takes initiative to take role for gender awareness through various campaigns and information dissemination among the working area. Each meeting can publish a circular and decision of the meeting to the all level of the offices.

Division will arrange orientation course on gender among the all level of staffs of the organization.

The rules must be followed the annual planning of the organization.

Monitoring:

A monitoring cell will be formed and the always guided by the Gender division, they will work need of the organization aspect with the help of proper monitoring tools and indicator setting.