

Gender Policy

**Balasore Social Service Society
(BSSS)**



(REVISED IN-2024)

**Balasore Social Service Society
Vivekananda Marg
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Gender Policy of Balasore Social Service Society

Introduction

This policy document represents the organizational commitment to gender equality and it contains the principles and objectives that would guide BSSS's work and interventions as well as the work environment within the organization with a gender perspective. The document also reflects upon gender mainstreaming strategies which would help the organization to realize the goal of gender equality within the organization and in its work.

BSSS is strongly committed to ensuring gender equality and equity within the organization and all kinds of interventions it undertakes. We have made efforts to mainstream gender and equity concerns into our work, all the activities of the organization are supposed to be guided by concerns about gender, equity and democracy. This policy aims towards helping the organization in reinforcing its commitment towards promoting gender equality and is fundamental for all policies and policy decisions made by the organization to achieve the above goal.

The following three major areas are addressed and outlined in the Gender Policy:

- Goal, principles and objectives of gender policy
- Gender mainstreaming strategies
- Accountability and implementation mechanisms

Keywords:

Gender concerns

By gender concerns, we mean all forms of discrimination, injustice experienced in terms of access to opportunities, decision-making, benefits, resources on the grounds of sex, class, caste, race and religion.

Gender mainstreaming

Developing a common understanding on gender and gender relations, equity, equality, social justice and based on this understanding developing interventions/strategies and implementing the interventions/strategies into actions which contribute towards achieving the above.

Gender equality

This means that both men and women members in the organization enjoy equal opportunities, responsibilities, benefits and resources at all levels of work and decision-making process

Basic Principles:

We will work towards the goal of gender equality and equity by:

- Deepening our understanding of gender and gender relations.
- Giving emphasis and working towards women's empowerment and gender equality both within the organization interventions as well as within the organization.
- Promoting equal opportunities in all spheres; in its recruitment procedures, in the terms and conditions of employment for existing staff and staff personnel development policy and committed to having a healthy gender balance in the organizational team and creating a gender-equal work environment.
- Enhancing organizational capacity to achieve these aims.
- Devoting adequate resources (including human, information and time resources) for their realization.

The objectives of gender policy are outlined as follows:

- To adopt and develop an approach and strategy promoting gender equality within the organization and into all kinds of interventions based on a common understanding of gender rights and equality.
- To develop a strategy for incorporating a gender perspective into all kinds of work to ensure that the interventions undertaken by the organization help in promoting gender equality.
- To develop institutional capacity and knowledge to enable gender mainstreaming within the organization.
- To create a healthy work environment within the organization where every individual (both men and women) share equal opportunities and benefits, equitable participation at all levels of decision-making and is considered as an equal member and work without any discrimination.
- To help in gender mainstreaming for realizing the aim into practice.

Gender mainstreaming strategies and actions:

The following are the important strategies to facilitate gender mainstreaming at different levels:

a. Gender mainstreaming within the organization

Broad strategies:

- The organization shall always strive towards achieving a gender balance within the team and create a gender-equal healthy work environment that encourages women members to join in.
- Gender awareness and understanding along with knowledge on the concerned area will be emphasized recruitment of new member(s) in a different thematic team(s) of the organization.

- Efforts shall be made to ensure equitable participation of all the members of the organization (without any discrimination on gender lines) at all levels of the decision-making process.
- Ensure and provide support for the proper and fair working of the gender cell to address gender-related issues/concerns, create a healthy gender work environment and improve gender relations within the organization.
- Ensure availability of adequate resources (human, financial and information) at all levels for translating these goals and principles into practice.

To facilitate and ensure that gender mainstreaming within the organization is implemented effectively the organization would undertake the following actions.

- Preparation of organizational plan for increasing gender sensitivity and capacity building of the staff members, which shall form a part of the overall organizational personnel development plan. The gender cell of the organization shall be primarily responsible for the implementation of the capacity building plan.
- The orientation of new staff members on the gender policy of the organization forming a part of the induction program.
- Provision of gender training, orientation workshops, adequate support and guidance to all the staff members to improve their understanding and strengthening of competency and knowledge regarding gender mainstreaming.
- Organize formal and informal meetings/discussions of the members on gender-related issues and concerns and approach and strategies to deal with emerging issues in different thematic areas at regular period of intervals.
- Ensure implementation of policies relating to maternity leave, paternity leave, health insurance, working hours etc. geared towards creating a gender-equal work environment.
- Undertake efforts to improve these policies as and whenever required aimed towards achieving the above objective.

b. Gender mainstreaming into work/interventions

Broad strategies:

- Demonstrate commitment to gender equality in all kinds of interventions undertaken by the organization and ensure that these interventions support the promotion of gender equality.
- Ensure full participation and empowerment and capacity building of women in all areas of work.

To ensure gender mainstreaming in work following areas would be given priority:

- The planning process in all thematic areas shall emphasize gender planning and analysis in all kinds of work and implement the plans in the field.

- Undertake a process of regular assessments/evaluations of the likely impact of the interventions on improving gender relations, empowerment, gender equality etc. and accordingly revise or improve strategies to move in the above-mentioned directions.
- The organization will be integrating Gender activities in ongoing programs with additional input of gender sensitization to all but with the special emphasis on CBO/PRI and SHG.
- Half-yearly review by Gender cell on the differences made by them and changes happened at the community level in decision-making level of women, access and control over movable and immovable resources.
- Building up and strengthening linkages with alliances and networks especially working on women's issues and develop understanding through cross-learning and experience sharing.

At the individual level:

- Ensure implementation of organization's policy and perspective related to gender into actions.
- Ensure to be informed about the gender policy of the organization
- Ensure that personal demeanor doesn't affect the dignity of other persons within the organization
- Give respect to fellow member's work, problems etc

Network partners:

- Concept sharing with the network partners
- Facilitate and organizing gender sensitization program for them
- Engage in lobbying and advocacy efforts if any found by any partners
- Facilitate in linking them to "Gender" based organizations in Orissa and India.

Implementation and Accountability

All staff shall be responsible for reflecting the principles and objectives adopted by the organization relating to gender equality in their work and behavior. BSSS shall always strive to apply and adhere to the same principles and objectives inside the organization as those promoted outside it.

- a. Ensuring access to grievance redressal systems and time to time review of grievance redressal systems.
- b. Ensuring that the middle and senior managers are responsible for developing gender perspective in the organization and the development programs

- c. Grievance Redressal Cell comprises at least 5 members committee of which 3 are women.
- d. Every week Grievance box will be opened to ensure addressing of all grievances and suggestions.
- e. 3 days will be taken for initial screening of gender issues by Gender cell
- f. The Applicant will be made updates on the redressal of his/her complaint within 30 days

Review process:

The program staff shall be responsible to ensure a routine review of the implementation of gender mainstreaming within interventions. This shall entail the process of review facilitated by the thematic teams in their respective area of work of the gender mainstreaming approach and strategies followed and impact of the interventions on gender equality, which shall represent the overall organizational commitment to gender equality.

Indicators and parameters:

It will be ensured that the planning process includes the preparation of measurable indicators to evaluate the outputs of interventions to be able to follow-up and review the impacts. These indicators shall include both quantitative as well as qualitative and shall be developed in all the thematic areas. Some of these indicators which would be widely used for assessment of our position are:

Achieving gender equality within the organization:

- Frequency of meeting of gender cell
- Frequency of gender concerns, issues featuring in the discussions.
- Follow-up actions undertaken on issues discussed
- Participation in workshop/training by the staff members
- Number of orientation-cum-workshops, discussions held within the organization and level of participation of the members' Team composition (gender ratio) within the organization
- Incidences of gender-related case
- Leadership roles
- Accommodation of gender concerns in organizational policies related to the work environment, benefits and security, recruitment etc.

Achieving gender equality in our work/interventions:

- Collection and analysis of gender disaggregated information and impacts undertaken in all areas
- Participation of marginalized women and men in the planning process
- Participation of marginalized women and men in the meetings organized

- Involvement of target group in different kinds of intervention
- Leadership roles
- Linkages established with women forums/alliances and sharing of experiences, learning BSSS practices a process and result assessment system which also helps to monitor the strategies and implications of processes towards gender quality in the organization as well as in work.

Follow-up and monitoring:

The program staff shall be responsible for the implementation of the policy document in their day-to-day work and activities and shall be accountable for the outreach and impact of its objectives. To monitor the strategies and implications of the processes towards women empowerment and gender equality the thematic team shall use the process and result assessment system and undertake follow-up actions.

Who are the implementers and users of the gender policy?

The policy is designed to be used by all the program and administrative staff and management in their everyday work as a reference for planning, decision making and implementation of interventions. As such, the staff members and the management are the primary stakeholders of this policy. Besides, the other stakeholders include the community with whom we are working under the fold of different interventions.

Specific action-plans:

We shall work towards the objectives described in this policy by undertaking the broad actions mentioned below. It may be noted here that the policy document only mentions the broad areas of action and the document shall be used in preparing a detailed action plan which shall form a part of the annual organizational activity plan and personnel development plan.

Specific actions	Period
Orientation workshop to develop an understanding of gender concepts, gender relations, issues and concerns, gender mainstreaming, rights, international conventions and resolutions etc.	Annually
The orientation of new staff members on gender policy as a part of the induction program	At the time of joining of new members in the organization
Reflection on gender concerns, approach, strategies in overall organizational intervention with the planning of specific indicators for assessment	Shall be carried out during annual organizational planning and perspective planning(held once in two years)
Review of approach and strategies and assessment of implications of interventions in thematic areas	Quarterly
In-house self-reflection exercise of all the members	Annually
Training of civil society actors and others on gender issues	Annually
Building up gender expertise within the team	At least one member shall be encouraged to undertake relevant short term course, gender studies etc. every year

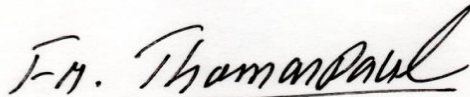
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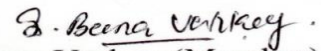
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Fr. Jose Areserril. (Member)



Fr. Paul Koonamparampath, (Member)



Beena Varkey (Member)



Mrs. Mita Mohanty, (Member)



Fr. Cherian Kizhikandayil, (Member)

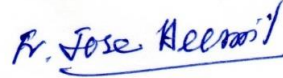


Roy Antony K. (Director)

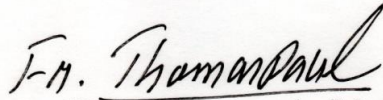
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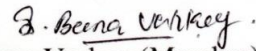
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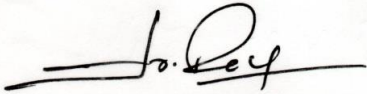
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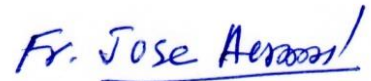
- All alerts must comply with the following reporting procedures:
The alert must in principle be reported in writing to be confirmed. The facts must be stated in a precise and objective manner. The author of the alert may also produce relevant documents that may support his/her alert to the concerned recipient of the alert. S/he is to be provided with an acknowledgment of receipt and is to be duly updated about the progress of the course of action on the alert received.
- The implicated person of the alert shall duly be informed about the alert concerning him/her as soon as the alert is recorded. However, the recipient of the alert holds all the right to delay this information in such situations in which certain precautions are deemed to be necessary to prevent manipulation and damage.
- The persons implicated by the alert has the right to defend himself or herself on the facts reported and may seek the assistance of relevant stakeholders during his hearing with the recipient of the alert.

Approval of the Governing Body

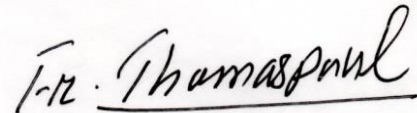
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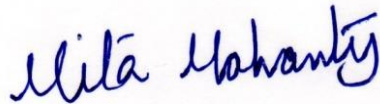
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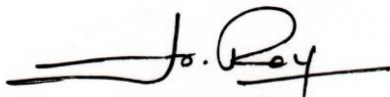
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