

# Ghoghardiha Prakhand Swarajya Vikas Sangh (GPSVS)

## GENDER POLICY

### Background

GPSVS has its Gender policy formally written, approved and well executed. The Gender policy of GPSVS is an outcome of its own experience of working with community for last 35 years and good policy of other organizations. Right from the beginning, while working in **Madhubani** and different districts of Bihar it was observed that inequality between men and women is deep rooted and it is manifested in discrimination against women in different forms. This inequality is prevalent in almost all the sections of community. GPSVS made its policy to work effectively and sensitively to remove age old discrimination against women and ensure dignified life for them in equal to male members of the community. Gender policy of GPSVS shows its commitment to uplift the position of women by providing them enabling environment from their home to the public place/community. The overall effort is to provide an enabling environment for women for their development.

### Objectives of Gender Policy:

- To ensure dignified life for women of all castes/religion and age.
- To have definitive direction for the development of women in all walks of life.
- To provide a direction towards building gender-equity based agenda for development.
- To create equal opportunities and a conducive environment for development for women and men at community level.
- To promote equal representation and participation of women from all sections of the community in development.
- To increase the political participation of women political institutions(PRI/local bodies)

### Elements of Gender Policy:

#### ***What we mean by Gender...***

GPSVS understands that in most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in all activities of life as well as ownership on the resources required for self reliant life. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context, which also takes into consideration factors such as class, race, economic status, ethnic group and age. It considers both women and men and their

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relationships with each other but focuses on the women empowerment as they have to face gender bias and all kinds of discrimination causing secondary position in the society. GPSVS aims at mainstreaming gender/woman by creating an enabling working environment for women and make all staffs gender sensitive.

***Since GPSVS is working to improve education, health and livelihood status of the women so it works to involve girl/adolescent/women in educational programme, in RCH programme for better mother and child health and participation in natural resources management practices to secure livelihoods of deprived communities. It believes that without the participation of women the problem of environment cannot be solved.***

The gender policy is integrated in all other organizational policies. Gender policy is explicitly taken into consideration while designing any development programme and project. To achieve the above objectives the following strategies would be followed at organizational level and other level.

#### **At Organizational level:**

##### **□ Staff composition/representation**

- Ensuring equitable representation and participation of men and women in the core group, Board members and in various functional committees of the organization
- Ensuring the gender balance in staff composition also at all levels.
- Ensuring equal opportunities among male and female staff for personal growth, in promotion benefits, training and working conditions

#### **B) Workplace**

- Providing a safe and secure workplace for women staff, free from sexual harassment with a Gender Complaints committee to look into specific concerns following the provisions of all acts related **to sexual harassment and women security-Nirvaya Act**
- Providing an enabling and friendly work environment where both men and women enjoy and actively participate in work. This includes providing flexible working hours and allowing working from home, wherever possible
- Extending work related concessions and relaxations for women staff depending upon the situations and requirements giving relaxation over travel time for the next day for those in the field; ensuring security measures along with minimum basic facilities for women staff traveling in the field.
- Orientation to staff in the field based programs and advocacy initiatives towards increasing women's access, control and ownership over the natural resources.

- 4 months of Maternity Leave on full pay and under probation, she will be eligible for leave without pay for the same length of period.
- Men employees when their spouses have children shall be entitled for 30 days of leave either immediately after child birth or fifteen days before child birth and fifteen days after child birth for primary parenting and child nurturing. In case of miscarriage / abortion, women staff can avail 2-3 weeks of Maternity Leave with full pay and spouses are entitled for one week's leave.
- Furthering deliberate and intense efforts to promote participation of women and their collectives in various aspects of natural resource management.
- Facilitating participation and even representation of women in various institutional structures created for the management of natural resources like committees, user groups etc.
- Extending constant orientation of partners on gender perspectives as part of long-term gender goals like formal recognition of women's rights over resources like land, assets etc.
- Ensuring equal wages to equal work for both men and women in the works as part of the programs, where GPSVS is directly or indirectly involved.
- Making special efforts to constantly identify vulnerable women and provide them the necessary support and guidance for their welfare
- Sensitizing the men and mobilizing their support towards gender balance
- Building awareness and sensitivity by processing information and publishing communication material in diverse media to appeal different strata of people in our functional domain.
- Special drive for strengthening the capacity of adolescent girls for their better education, health and livelihood.

**C) Staff capacity building**

- Facilitating staff capacity building processes and trainings to enhance perspectives and conceptual clarity on Gender issues
- Ensuring that all trainings facilitated by the organization are gender-sensitive.-
- Conducting Gender trainings for both men and women; and ensuring participation of women in all the field level meetings and trainings

**D) Organizational policies and systems**

- Making all HR systems and policies gender-sensitive and responsive, and integrating gender indicators into staff performance appraisal systems.

- Ensuring that the conceptual clarity and sensitivity on gender issues will be one of the important selection criteria in recruitment processes and capacity building efforts of staff
- Initiating and building the advocacy around gender balance and making efforts to integrate gender concerns into the scaling up and mainstream developmental programs

**E) Staff benefits**

- Following all statutory requirements related to maternity and paternity leaves.
- Ensuring that staff access to and use of information technology is gender equitable

**Networking:**

- GPSVS would proactively make several efforts in promoting gender concerns in the work with partners. It involves extending support to partners in organizing training programs, conducting gender studies, preparing resource material, providing documentation support etc.
- Associating with networks and organizations working on this agenda.
- Supporting and expressing solidarity with partners at field level in taking up issues of discrimination or harassment against women

**Note-** *At present GPSVS has emerged as strong women based organization working for the welfare and rights of women based on its own gender policy. Its gender policy is open to any change influenced by local and global events if it ensures women progress and gender equity.*