

Gender Policy of ASED HABIGONJ



ASED HABIGONJ

(Association for Socio Economic Development)

Shrabon Vila, House # 5485/3, Rajnagar R/A, Hobiganj – 3300, Bangladesh

Mobile No. 01711975443, Email: asedbd.org@gmail.com,

Website www.asedbd.org

Gender Policy

Edited by:
Jafar Iqbal Chowdhury
Chief Executive

In cooperation of
ASED Habigonj Gender Committee



Advocate Mohammad Ilias
President



Jafar Iqbal Chowdhury
Chief Executive



Faruque Uddin Chowdhury
EC Member



Jamil Mustaque
EC Member

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ASED Gender Policy

1. Introduction

ASED Habigonj is a right based non-govt. development organization. The organization has been working for establishing the rights of the deprived people specially women, children and differently-abled people since its inception in 1991. From this long experience ASED learnt that, establishment of deprived people's rights is not possible without establishing a just and equal society. And the vision of establishing an equal is not possible society denying or ignoring women's rights and keeping women out of the mainstream. Based on this ideological realization, ASED has given importance to gender issues in all its works. ASED thinks that the issue of giving importance to the gender issue needs to be ensured not only outside, but first and foremost within the organization. Basically, this gender policy is being formulated to make it more cohesive and statutory out of this need.

2. Rationale:

Considering its nature and scope of work, ASED has decided to formulate the Gender Policy following the below mentioned specific causes:

- A) Analysis of the status and position between men and women in different countries shows that women are victims of discrimination. This inequality and inferiority of women extends to the family, society and the state. That is why gender is a development issue that explains the differences and inequalities that arise between women and men through the process of socialization. Gender analysis of development trends through social change presents the issue of equal opportunity to enjoy development results including women's participation in all resources. It also highlights the important contribution and potential of women in development activities.
In this context, "gender" is placing special emphasis on gender equality. The reflection of equality between men and women must be appropriate at the family, society and state level. Considering all these issues, it is necessary to formulate a timely gender policy to provide necessary guidance to all the employees involved in the activities of the organization.
- B) The organization supports international and national women's development charters and policies. In the light of CEDAW, Beijing Platform for Action, National Women Development Policy of Bangladesh and other broader commitments, an effective gender policy is needed to build the organization's culture and activities.
- C) Ethical commitment and mission and vision of ASED are consistent with the principles of gender equality, which requires a gender policy to ensure its proper implementation.
- D) The organization believes that a gender-sensitive environment and culture will help increase the efficiency of women and men in the organization and thus maintain a multidimensional outcome in the organization's activities.
- E) With the proper implementation of the Gender Policy, the women's development activities already undertaken by ASED will be further intensified and new dimensions will be added to future activities.

3. Principles of Gender Policy:

This gender policy has been formulated based on the below mentioned basic principles:

- A. In line with this policy, ASED will make strong efforts to ensure gender equality and justice in all its programs.
- B. Gender policy will be clearly reflected in all other current / future policies / rules of ASED and if there is any contradiction of gender policy with any other policy, steps will be taken to amend other policy.
- C. The issue of gender equality will be considered as an integral part of all the activities of ASED, not separately.

4. Goal and objectives of Gender Policy

4.1 Goal:

The policy seeks to create a gender-sensitive environment within the organization by changing any gender biasness and practices, as well as will contribute in establishing a society of gender equality through equal participation of men and women at all levels of organizational planning, program implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

4.2 Objectives:

4.2.1 Organizational Objectives

- a. To take necessary steps to bring gender issue into the mainstream of ASED and to allocate resources as per demand.
- b. To create a gender sensitive environment considering the interests and needs of male and female employees at all levels of the organization.
- c. To increase gender awareness and skills of women and men workers at all levels.
- d. To create accountability by identifying the roles and responsibilities of all in the organization to ensure the implementation of gender policy.
- e. Ensuring equality of gender relations at all levels of the organization.
- f. To ensure equal participation, equal rights and equal opportunities for men and women in all fields.
- g. To take positive steps considering the social backwardness, deprivation and special needs of historically created women.
- h. To create favorable conditions and environment for the change of status and position of women.
- i. Institutionalization of Gender and Development.

4.2.2 Program Related Objectives

- A) To meet the regular and strategic needs of the target population, especially women, by ensuring gender observation and analysis at all levels including problem / demand identification, plan adoption, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the organization's activities and projects.
- B) To make the materials prepared for monitoring, evaluation, reporting, training and communication of the organization gender friendly.
- C) To take active action against obstacles to women's development such as violence against women, extremist activities and other obstructive elements.
- D) The work of raising gender awareness is family and community based and gradually expands to other levels.
- E) Establish a network of similar organizations / forums / expert groups for the purpose of strongly involving gender issues in activities and projects.
- F) Design and implementation of gender sensitization projects.

5. Areas and Scopes

Positives initiatives and steps should be taken for women staff members with respect to below mentioned areas:

- i. Financial and other benefits
- ii. Recruitment, Posting & Transfer, Termination & Leaves
- iii. Material and other structural facilities
- iv. Staff Development
- v. Addressing specific problems of women staff
- vi. Safety
- vii. Values and Code of Conduct

5.1 Financial and other benefits:

In the light of the financial and personnel management policy of the organization, all male and female employees will be entitled to the same benefits. However, in the case of vehicles, some special benefits will be given to women workers. Like –

- A. If necessary, field level female workers will be entitled to get a motorcycle (note that this facility does not apply to all male workers).
- B. Women employees working in the central office will get priority in coming and going in the office car.
- C. In the case of women workers, a program coordinator or a female worker of the same level will be entitled to use the vehicle for field inspection. (Note that this benefit may not apply to male employees at this stage). Even female employees below the rank of program coordinator with the approval of the chief executive or department head in special cases will be entitled to use the vehicle for field trips.
- D. A female worker will be preferred to use an off-payment vehicle to travel for medical check-ups from the seventh month of pregnancy to the time of childbirth.
- E. The co-operation of male colleagues in night work and special travel facilities should be provided.
- F. No female worker can be forced to ride a bicycle / motorcycle.

5.2 Recruitment, Posting, Termination & Leaves:

Staff recruitment and management related issues of the organization will be handled in the light of the HR policy, which will be equally applicable to all employees. However, considering the gender issue, the following are some of the positive steps that need to be taken.

5.2.1 Recruitment:

- A. The number of women workers will be gradually increased. This increase will be made not only at the field level, but at all levels of management (including the executive council).
- B. The recruitment notification should mention "Women applicants will be given priority".
- C. Preference will be given to female candidates in case of male and female candidates with the same educational qualifications and equivalent experience.
- D. The standard for passing the written and oral examinations for recruitment of staff may be 50 for men but 45 for women to fill the reserved posts.
- E. 10% posts should be reserved for women.
- F. Women candidates of all religions, castes and tribes should be given equal importance in recruitment.
- G. In order to achieve the target of recruitment of women workers, in some cases, applications will be invited only from women candidates.
- H. Both male and female candidates must mention mother's name along with father's name in the application form for the job.
- I. In the personal documents of all male employees, the name of the wife will be mentioned along with the name of the parents if married and the name of both the parents if unmarried. In case of female worker, if married, the name of the husband will be mentioned with the parents and if unmarried, the name of both the parents will be mentioned.

5.2.2 Posting and Transfer

In these cases, the same policy will be followed for male and female employees in the light of the company's staff policy. However, in the case of women workers, the following are some positive exceptions:

- A. Women workers will also be taken into consideration at the place of work / position of their father, mother or husband at the time of posting and transfer. Similarly, a male worker will be considered for his wife's workplace at the time of transfer.
- B. During pregnancy i.e. from the first month to 5 (five) months after the birth of a child, a woman worker cannot be transferred from the area where she is working.

5.2.3 Termination:

According to the organizational policy, all workers of the organizations, men and women may be terminated from their jobs for certain reasons. However, male employees may be fired for one additional reason:

- A. If a male employee sexually harasses / physically abuses / harasses a female employee and it is proved subject to proper investigation, then that male employee will be terminated.

5.2.4 Leave:

The provision of annual leave, sick leave, casual leave shall be the same for all male and female employees of the organization. But the provision of maternity leave for female workers will be as follows-

Maternity leave:

The maternity leave given to a female worker during childbirth is called maternity leave. Permanent employees, who have been working in the organization for at least 1 year, will be entitled to get this leave for one and a half months (45 days). This leave will be with full salary. If the tenure of a temporary / contract / part-time / project female worker is less than nine months at the time of delivery, she will not be eligible for this paid leave. A female employee working in the company can enjoy this leave maximum 02 (two) times. If any female worker has 01 (one) living child before joining the company, she can enjoy this leave on 01 (one) time self-pay. If a female worker has 02 (two) children, she will not be included in this leave. If the number of surviving children of a female worker falls below 02 (two) due to an accident, that worker will be able to enjoy maternity leave.

Paternity leave:

An employee will get 7 days leave before or after the delivery of his wife's child or both. This leave will be with full salary. If the tenure of any temporary / contract / part-time / project worker is less than 01 (one) year, he / she will not be eligible for this leave on paid basis. Note that an employee will be entitled to this leave for a maximum of two children.

5.2.5 Material and other structural facilities

The physical and special facilities that the company will provide for women workers on the basis of capacity are:

- A. All offices will have separate toilets for female staff.
- B. Women workers can refrain from using motorcycles / bicycles during pregnancy and up to four months after childbirth.
- C. From birth to one and a half years, female workers can go home for more than half an hour at lunch, that is, for a total of one and a half hours.
- D. While participating in the training, the female trainees will be able to bring her nursing baby and someone else to the training center to take care of the child if necessary, all the expenses of which must be borne by her.
- E. All the offices of the organization should have a Breastfeeding / Baby Corner as required.
- F. New staff need to be provided with gender training.
- G. During the period, you will have the freedom to do office work without field work for at least 03 (three) days and even take sick leave if necessary.
- H. Women and men workers should be given equal opportunities to bring their children to school.

5.3 Staff Development

For staff development, women and men employees should be given equal opportunities to get higher education inside and outside the country and to participate in trainings, seminars and workshops. In addition, in such training, it is necessary to ensure proportional representation of women workers during the election period and in gaining opportunities in training. We have to ensure that women workers working in the field are not deprived of these opportunities.

5.4 Addressing specific problems of female staff

- A. The organization will have a gender cell / committee / focal point to ensure gender equality within the organization.
- B. From this focal point any person inside or outside the organization can get the required information.
- C. Accepting complaints.
- D. Complaint investigation.
- E. Decision making.

5.5 Safety

Safety of women workers must be ensured.

5.6 Values and Code of Conduct

Values:

- A. Gender equality will be considered as one of the main values of the organization. Every employee must have trust in these values.
- B. The company will not specify any special job for women workers but will keep all kinds of jobs open for them.
- C. Direct / indirect derogatory remarks against female employees are prohibited and will be considered a punishable offense.
- D. A code of conduct will be developed to create a work environment suitable for both female and male employees. All employees will be bound by this Code of Conduct.
- E. In order to provide proper orientation on gender, the training course on "Women, Society and Development" should be made compulsory for all staff.

Code of Conduct:

- A. Female and male colleagues will treat each other with respect.
- B. Directly or indirectly abusing women workers will be considered a punishable offense

6. Gender in Work Place and Programmes

- A. No program will be taken in the organization by bypassing gender.
- B. In the planning and work of all programs / projects, specific steps for the advancement of women will be added and indicators will be set to identify the results of all these.
- C. Accurate reflection of women's development issues in all future program / project proposals and documents so that women have the right to equal participation and enjoy the same benefits.

- D. Men as well as women need to be included in the target population in the adoption of programs and in the workplace.
- E. The organization will make maximum efforts to include gender in every field, social, economic, cultural.
- F. Priority will be given to gender sensitive issues such as education, politics, electoral process, civil society, administration and local government, including taking steps to meet the daily needs of women.
- G. Resources need to be allocated for the adoption and implementation of annual plans to increase awareness and skills about the gender of the target population, including staff.
- H. Special measures need to be taken at institutional projects and other levels to prevent violence against women.
- I. The monitoring and evaluation system should include gender friendly indicators / criteria to monitor the application process of the organization for women's development.
- J. In establishing networking in gender equality activities, it is necessary to identify appropriate organizations / forums at the local, regional and national levels to ensure proper use of all those resources.

7. Advocacy:

- A. Efforts should be continued to make the men and women of the country gender sensitive through development agencies, various networks and the government.
- B. Every female and male worker should take initiative to communicate with the family, coordinate and make them gender sensitive.

8. Gender Policy Implementation Strategy

- A. A gender committee will be formed to implement the gender policy. The committee will have 40 per cent management level representation including the chief executive and 60 per cent frontline staff representation. However, 2/3 of the total members of the committee will be women. The main responsibilities of this committee are to adopt, implement, monitor the policy on a year-round basis, provide policy-making guidance on gender integration, manage the resources required for the implementation of gender policy and take initiatives to enhance efficiency where necessary.
- B. A Committee on Prevention of Violence against Women will be formed at the stage of organization management and program implementation, in which three people can be elected by ballot, two of whom must be women.
- C. There are two main steps that can be taken to improve gender skills. Namely- a) Appropriate inclusion of gender issues in all training programs; B) To arrange demand based training on gender.
- D. Preparation of gender-friendly checklists and identification of specific criteria based on discussions on gender inclusion at the planning, program implementation and evaluation stages.

For gender mainstreaming below mentioned 2 strategies will be initiated:

- A. Accurate reflection of gender equality in all policies and another is to take specific steps for proper reflection of women's needs and interests in all programs / projects including special programs for women's development.

- B. The interests and involvement of both men and women will be considered in the creation of regular communication tools, initiatives and messages focusing on the role, challenges and problems of women.

9. Steps to be taken after formulation of Gender Policy

- A. Approval and adoption of gender policy by the Executive Council.
- B. Gender Committee, Committee on Prevention of Violence against Women and Terms of Reference (TOR) of the two committees are ready.
- C. To arrange gender training for the staff as per the plan in phases.
- D. Distribute the gender policy among all.
- E. Involvement of gender issues in the minutes of all employees.
- F. To formulate a five-year gender action plan with the participation of staff at all levels.
- G. Keeping gender as a regular agenda in monthly / quarterly meetings.
- H. Monitoring the implementation situation of gender policy. The Gender Committee will be responsible for all these matters.
- I. Bringing necessary amendments in the policy as per the need and time demand.
- J. To provide orientation to all staff in this regard for the implementation of gender policy.
- K. Identify strong organizations / forums at the local level in setting up networking.

Annexures: Gender Terminology

Gender Blind:

Gender blindness is the denial of physically and socially created gender-based differences and the inequality that results from meeting the needs and interests of men and women. Gender blindness does not consciously consider all these differences. Conventional gender relations have a biased attitude and exclude women and give stability to the benefit of men.

Gender blindness has developed from the following behaviors:

- A. Dividing or compartmentalizing means to divide the social realities of men and women into different categories; As if one of them is completely different from the other and has nothing to do with the other. That is why compartmentalizing is to establish the traditional dichotomy between men and women. For example, men are skilled in technical matters and women are skilled in social matters, men are skilled in aggregate level and women are skilled in fine subjects.
- B. Aggregating means bringing together different classes / groups in such a way that the differences and inequalities between those classes / groups such as family, poor class, labor forces etc. are no longer visible. As a result of this aggregation, the needs and interests of men and women are seen together and no difference is seen.
- C. Exclusion refers to the implication and finalization of imposed gender traits and relationships (i.e., to treat them as immutable). As a result, emphasis is placed on the physical characteristics of men and women as an argument for perpetuating the conventional distribution of wealth, opportunities and rights.
- D. Depoliticization refers to the general tendency to involve women in personal life and men in public life outside of political activities.

Gender Aware

Gender awareness is about recognizing the participation of women and men in all kinds of activities and recognizing the differences in opportunities and barriers for both due to differences in their needs, interests and priorities. Gender-conscious policies are developed as a result of rethinking the concepts and application of gender blind policies through education and experience on gender analysis and gender differences.

Gender Neutral

Being aware of gender does not necessarily mean adopting gender-equitable policies. Be aware of the differences between the needs and interests of men and women and correctly determine the prevailing gender-based distribution of wealth and responsibilities that may not change that gender relationship. Such policies contribute to the correction of the male-dominated environment. These changes can be ensured without compromising the real needs and benefits of both women and men socially.

Gender Specific:

Utilizing knowledge of gender differences to meet the real needs of women or men.

Gender Redistribute:

Redistributes wealth and responsibilities aimed at eliminating conventional inequalities between men and women or both, and seeks to change conventional gender roles and identities.

Gender Disadvantage:

Here the collective impact of past and present inequality on women and the social, political, economic and health indicators inequality between men and women are defined as being limited to women and men in terms of opportunities and property rights.

Being a woman or a man, women under the same class or socio-economic class suffer the same difficulties as men. These difficulties are exacerbated for women by gender inequality in the allocation of resources and responsibilities.

Gender refers to the ability of some groups to consider their own ideals, prejudices, bigotry and preconceived notions applicable to all and universally. That is why they are forced to face such difficulties which are not necessary for them in view of the real situation of the target population.

Gender Equity:

Gender equity is the process of being fair to women and men. To ensure fairness, strategies and measures must often be available to compensate for women's historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from otherwise operating on a level playing field. Equity leads to equality.

Gender Mainstreaming:

Gender mainstreaming has been embraced internationally as a strategy towards realising gender equality. It involves the integration of a gender perspective into the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, regulatory measures and spending programmes, with a view to promoting equality between women and men, and combating discrimination.

Gender mainstreaming requires both integrating a gender perspective to the content of the different policies, and addressing the issue of representation of women and men in the given policy area.

Both dimensions – gender representation and gender responsive content - need to be taken into consideration in all phases of the policy-making process.

Practical Gender Need:

Practical gender needs arise from the real problems of women's daily life and performance. The practical gender needs that a woman faces (from morning to night) in her daily activities are related to her. In other words, the problems that women face in fulfilling their three types of roles can be overcome by meeting the realistic gender needs. Meeting realistic gender needs makes it easier for women to play a conventional gender role, reducing workload. As a result, women's quality of life improves to some extent, their daily workload is somewhat reduced and they can perform them more efficiently. Such as installing tubewells or pucca wells at home to alleviate the difficulty of collecting drinking water from far away women, saving fuel and labor by providing improved furnaces, providing health care to ensure safe motherhood, constructing pucca latrines to rid children of worms, women's health Providing literacy and training to make people aware of nutrition, alleviating some of the shortcomings of the world by involving women in income generating activities, etc. are examples of realistic gender needs. While improving the status of women by meeting realistic gender needs does not increase the expected status of women in society, ie existing gender inequality does not directly help change the status of women, nor does it challenge the traditional gender division of labor. This gender demand is practical in nature and responds to immediate needs. This demand can be met relatively easily and if the materials or ways to meet this demand are withdrawn, the status of women falls back to the previous state.

Strategic Gender Need:

The need for a change in the position of women in society compared to men is the emergence of women's strategic gender needs. Strategic gender needs are identified to analyze and address the inferior position of women compared to men and these needs seek to change the role of conventional gender. This gender demand of women challenges the inferior position of women in society as compared to men. In general, strategic gender demand is the demand that arises in order to eliminate the existing inequality or inequality between women and men in terms of power, rights, dignity, decision making, choice, opportunity, etc. Gender division of labor, power, dignity, control, acquisition of legal rights, equal pay, ownership of property and control over one's own income, self-control over one's own body and reproduction, liberation from domestic violence, etc. are associated with strategic gender needs. Realistic gender needs and strategic gender needs are both equally important and complementary to each other.

Difference Between Practical and Strategic Gender Need:

Practical Gender Needs	Strategic Gender Needs
Helps to play the role of existing gender i.e. improves quality of life, eases daily workload	Changes the role of existing gender. Establishes women's dignity, rights, control, power, choice, etc.
Immediately necessary, short-term and immediately fulfillable.	Long-term, not immediately payable or difficult to meet.
Different for different women based on specific context	The same is usually true for all women
Related to daily needs. Such as- food, nutrition, health, shelter, fuel, drinking water, safe motherhood etc.	Related to adverse conditions or lower breast position. Such as: women's dignity, rights, control and powerlessness
It is easy for women to identify.	Usually women cannot easily identify
Women are seen as beneficiaries.	Women are seen as the representative or driving force of change
The condition of women changes.	Improves the position of women
It does not change the conventional role of women or the subordinate position of women in society.	Helps empower women by changing their conventional roles.
Develops gender relations.	Develops gender relations between men and women.
It is possible to meet this demand by providing the necessary goods and services. Such as: food and nutrition assistance, installation of tube wells and pucca latrines, supply of improved stoves, provision of health care etc.	This need can be met through continuous efforts in the areas of education, awareness raising, organization, motivation, political participation, self-reliance, etc.
If the means, materials or conditions to meet this demand are withdrawn, the condition of women will return to the previous state.	Once this requirement is met or achieved, it cannot be revoked.

Gender Inequality and Difference:

Gender inequality is the predominance of male rights in areas that deprive and deprive women of equality-based opportunities. There are two types of gender inequality:

1. Direct and
2. Indirect.

Direct Gender Inequality:

- A. Inheritance of Wealth
- B. The rights of married women
- C. Right to employment
- D. Age of Retirement etc.

Indirect Gender Inequality:

- A. Neutral environment
- B. Not to employ women with child bearing capacity in case of recruitment
- C. Not taking women in supervisors and management or giving priority to men etc.

The qualities that characterize a person as individual, highlighting their individuality, uniqueness, difference are called differences. There are physical differences between men and women but discrimination has been created in terms of their rights, responsibilities.

Transformatory Potential

Transformatory Potential is a conceptual criterion that connects the everyday real needs of men and women and the larger goals of social change.

The End