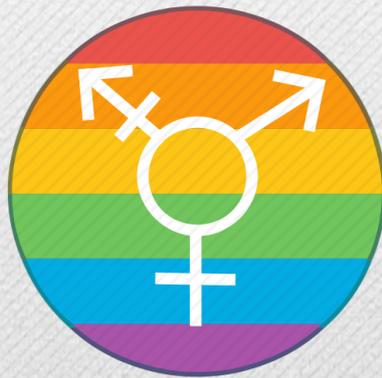


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# Gender POLICY

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**Indo-Global  
Social Service Society**

*August, 2019*

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## **PREAMBLE**

IGSSS strives for “A humane social order based on truth, justice, freedom, equity and integrity of the whole of creation in which basic human rights of every individual are upheld, in which the integrity of the family as a basic unit of the community is strengthened, where power, resources and the fruits of development are shared by all.”

IGSSS has always been committed towards gender equity in workspace. Gender Equity is also a strong thematic pillar of IGSSS and its goal is to “Ensure parity in opportunity, access and control over resources/entitlements irrespective of any gender.” IGSSS upholds the principles of gender parity in all its programs. Principles of social justice require us to work to ensure that everyone has equal opportunity for expressing and using their potential, irrespective of sex and orientation.

We acknowledge that gender identity is not binary and it is diverse. IGSSS accepts that gender is not only inclusive of men and women but it includes transitional identities too. Development affects women, men and transgenders differently and it has an impact on relations between them. A focus on gender is required to ensure that needs of women, transgender and men (set in the broader context of caste, class, ethnicity, race and religion) are given adequate attention. Hence, mainstreaming gender is one way of assessing the implications in any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY**

The overall objective for IGSSS’ Gender Policy is to mainstream gender into all IGSSS processes and policy decisions within the organisation and in its projects and programmes.

IGSSS seeks to provide equitable representation of and treatment to women, transgender and men within the organisation. It is the responsibility of each gender to ensure equity in relating with other gender and to provide them with all support to build a congenial environment. IGSSS shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate gender based discrimination in employment within the organisation and provide the same selection criteria, rights to promotion, job security, benefits and conditions of service, training, equal remuneration and equitable treatment. The policy will challenge the traditional gender power relations that, consciously or subconsciously, look upon women, other gender as inferior and thus subsume or categorises their needs and aspirations to be secondary. The second is about building the capacity of the staff or community members to challenge this unequal relation. The policy would also try to eliminate harassment on the basis of gender which is any act or threat that inflicts physical, sexual, or psychological harm because of their gender. With this IGSSS hopes to create, attract and retain gender sensitive staff that in turn would help achieve better man-woman-other gender relationships in the communities.

### **Objectives within IGSSS**

- Establish a gender sensitive culture within the organisation so as to enhance understanding and responsiveness of staff towards (gender) issues both within the Organisation and in the communities supported by IGSSS.
- Eliminate all forms of unfair and discriminatory practices based on gender (and also caste, race, disability and age) and foster a congenial work atmosphere.
- Ensure for equitable representation of women, transgender and men (especially from disadvantaged groups and minority communities) in different if not all cadres (including executives in the field and in the management echelons).



- To act as an effective deterrent against gender discrimination and harassment both in workplace and in programme intervention areas by setting up systems for appropriate handling of gender discrimination and instances of sexual harassment, if any.

With the help of its Gender Policy, IGSSS seeks to mainstream a gender perspective throughout its projects and programmes with partner organisations and VOs.

### Objectives with Partners and Stakeholders

- To ensure that IGSSS' policies/programmes take gender considerations into account in planning and implementation and, promote initiatives with a gender focus.
- To develop positive action to promote the full participation and empowerment of women and men in existing and future programmes so as to ensure that IGSSS' supported programmes benefit women and men equitably.
- To ensure that all development responses incorporate a gender perspective in assessment and evaluation.
- To include a gender perspective in all IGSSS' lobbying and communication work.

## **UNDERSTANDING KEY TERMINOLOGIES**

The word “**gender**” refers to the socially determined ideas and practices of what it is to be female, male, or of an identity that does not necessarily fits in the established gender norms,

**Gender equity** is ensuring parity in opportunity, access and control over resources/entitlements irrespective of any gender.

“**Gender discrimination**” is the systematic, unfavourable treatment of individuals on the basis of their gender, which denies those rights, opportunities or resources.

## **MAINSTREAMING STRATEGIES FOR GENDER EQUITY**

IGSSS is committed to make this Gender Policy an integral part of all organisational policies, programmes and projects and would involve building a culture that understands and respects gender related concerns. To achieve this, the policy recommends following:

### **A) Affirmative Actions for Gender Balanced Organisational Composition**

- Giving top priority to recruiting and retaining adequate women and transgender staff at all levels to ensure gender balance in staffing pattern.
- Ensuring equal opportunities among staff, irrespective of gender, in working conditions, for personal growth, in promotion benefits, and training.
- Ensuring equitable representation and participation of men, transgender and women in the Executive Board, Senior Management Team, and various functional committees of the organisation.
- Advocate a **gender balance** among contracted consultants/advisors / partners / contractors.



## **B) Capacity Building of Staff on Gender Issues**

Implement a **gender capacity development strategy** to improve the staff's understanding of gender concepts, gender equality issues and current debates on gender and development with a view to promoting gender equality in all IGSSS initiatives and activities; and enhance the skills of staff to integrate concrete initiatives and activities into their programme of work.

## **C) Building a Gender Sensitive Workplace**

- Providing a safe and secure workplace for each staff, free from sexual harassment/discrimination with a Internal Complaints Committee in existence to deter and prevent harassment through dissemination of information/rules and also for investigating into cases of sexual harassment/discrimination when they are reported and ensuring justice.
- Extending work related concessions and relaxations for women, transgender staff depending upon the situations and requirements; e.g. providing secure transport facilities when they work late hours; ensuring security measures along with minimum basic facilities for staff while traveling in the field, flexible working hours and provisions for working from home under special circumstances.

## **D) Organisational Policies and Systems to Reflect Gender Needs.**

- Making all HR systems and policies gender-sensitive and responsive, and integrating gender indicators into staff performance appraisal systems.
- Ensuring equal wages for equal work for each gender.
- Incorporating and explicitly mentioning gender sensitivity as an essential element in the tasks/job profiles in all terms of reference, including TORs for external consultants.
- 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.
- In all programmes gender segregated data will be ensured.
- Gender and development content will be added to the organisation's staff orientation course as part of HR procedure. Selected technical modules oriented to operational staff will also be developed.
- Integrate gender equality considerations into external communication strategies and ensure that all publications and information materials use gender-sensitive language.

## **E) Ensuring Women Participation/Empowerment in Intervention Areas.**

- Strategic orientation to staff in the field based programs and advocacy initiatives towards increasing women's, transgender's access, control and ownership over the natural resources, processes and organisations.
- Efforts should be made to integrate gender concerns into the scaling up of and mainstreaming developmental programs.
- All IGSSS programmes will be prepared after gender analysis as a part of overall situational analysis based on clear guidelines. IGSSS will also carry out Gender audits as a mandatory process for its major flag ship programmes.



## **RESPONSIBILITY FOR OPERATIONALIZATION**

HR department for internal mainstreaming with staff / contractors / Consultants and program department for mainstreaming in programs and working with partners.

## **COMPLAINTS AND REDRESSAL SYSTEM**

The complaints of gender discrimination can be filed with the Grievance redressal Cell as per the process mentioned in HR policy. The organisation already has an Internal Complaints Committee that is responsible to deal with the complaints of sexual harassment in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the Supreme Court of India relating to sexual harassment of female workers at work places.