

Maiwand social services Association for Afghanistan (MSSAA)

Gender Policy



1. Goal and Objectives of the policy

Goal: The goal of the policy is to mainstream gender and practice a gender sensitive approach within **MSSAA** and its beneficiaries through its projects implementing in Afghanistan.

Objectives:

1. To undertake affirmative action considering deprivation as well as other specific needs of women.
2. To create conducive environment to change and improve the status of women in the organization.
3. To ensure equality among male and female staff at all levels of the organization.
4. To ensure equal rights and opportunities for male and female staff and their equal participation in all activities.
5. To provide a guide map for strategic direction for institutionalization of gender equality.
6. To effectively incorporate a gender perspective in all interventions that influence goals, strategies, resource allocation and outcomes.
7. To ensure that all decision-making and all practices are informed by gender equality analysis.
8. To move towards the achievement of gender equity or substantive equality for women and men through the empowerment of women.
9. To develop institutional capacity and knowledge for gender mainstreaming within the organization and among the partner organizations.

1. Gender mainstreaming

A-Gender mainstreaming in programs and projects:

Empowerment of women and their participation in decision making and management of organization are the most important elements in **MSSAA**. These are clearly reflected in all programs activities and staffing of **MSSAA**. Equal rights of women should be emphasized both in the administrative and human resource policies as well as policies related to different development program of the organization. Though, many efforts have been made in securing women's equal participation in all activities at the grassroots level. The present policy will incorporate some new measures which would provide further opportunities to the women.

B-Gender mainstreaming in Human Resource Management:

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In order to develop women and mainstream gender in the organization actions should be taken in the following areas:

1) Recruitment, Leave, Promotion, Posting, Transfer, Termination and Dismissal.

In **MSSAA**'s HR policy certain rules are equally applicable in case of male and female staff. However, to increase the number of female staff the following actions has to be taken:

- a) Recruitment: Although the organization currently has sufficient number of the female staff, in order to keep this status or increase further the number of female staff, **MSSAA** will positively discriminate hiring of female staff.
- b) Priority will be given to female candidates with equal educational qualification and experience in case of recruitment.
- c) In the job announcements it should be clearly written that **"women are encouraged to apply for the specific job"** or **"only female should apply"**.

Leave:

The policy for annual leave and casual leave are the same for both male and female staff. In addition, **MSSAA** is committed to approve and award the maternity leave to the eligible female staff, as follows: a female staff will be entitled to 40 day's maternity leave with full pay.

Posting and Transfer:

Regarding posting and transfer the rules are the same for male and female staff, but the following positive exceptions will be made for the female staff:

- Female staff will be provided enough time to consult with their family regarding transfer and posting of the job;
- In case the organization could afford the position within the current premises, priority will be given to female staff.

Infrastructural and other special benefits:

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

- There will be a separate guest room and toilet for the female staff in the organization guest house.
- After childbirth, for a period of one year and a half a female staff is entitled to an extra half an hour break during office hours to take care of her child.
- While attending training, female participants will be allowed to take her baby with herself to the training center. She may also accompany an attendant but all expenses are to be incurred by the employee.

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2. Gender Capacity building

a- Gender Capacity building for staff:

For the capacity building, **MSSAA** provides equal opportunities to female employees to participate in training courses, seminars and workshops both in country and abroad within the organizational capabilities and resources.

b- MSSAA's Inter-Organizational Capacity building:

- Providing equal opportunities for women capacity building with special focus at professional development.
- Ensuring sufficient space for women in all the decision-making bodies within the organization and providing for equal representation of women at all levels.
- Setting targets for reaching gender parity in staffing at various levels
- Changing recruitment criteria and procedures to incorporate the objectives of the gender policy.
- Creating gender working groups to contribute to gender perspectives in the production of tools and methodologies
- Initiating dialogue on gender issues with other relevant bodies.
- Providing qualified personnel and adequate resources within the organization to plan and implement gender mainstreaming in the organization's programs and projects, as well as in its own structures and practices, and to assist the management in the process of institutionalizing the gender equality process

3. Gender specific programming:

In developmental interventions **MSSAA** will focus on:

- 1) Greater awareness of gender issues to be developed to arrive at a common understanding of gender and related terms.
- 2) Development of institutional guidelines for gender mainstreaming.
- 3) Development of a mechanism to screen all newly developed projects with a gender perspective.
- 4) Devising and implementing gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for every stage of the project.
- 5) Women's empowerment as a priority
- 6) Promotion of the programs that aim at enhancing access to opportunities and resources and increasing women's control over resources and decision-making;
- 7) Capacity building trainings to women at all levels
- 8) Ensuring equal pro-active participation of women and men in all projects and at all levels.

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- 9) Design action research projects to refine **MSSAA**'s program interventions and support strategies
- 10) Promotion of efforts to develop strategic alliances with other human rights groups and organizations, civil society, people and government authorities in respect to gender.
- 11) Dissemination of **MSSAA**'s gender literature, data, training modules and policy to relevant stakeholders.

6. Responsibility for policy monitoring and evaluation:

MSSAA management is responsible for the implementation of policy on gender, and for promoting gender awareness and sensitivity throughout the organization. Furthermore, senior management of organization will directly follow the implementation of gender policy and the evaluation will be conducted annually.