



# GENDER POLICY KAIROS

## **Gender Policy of KAIROS**

### **A. Organization**

Kannur Association for Integrated Rural Organisation and Support (KAIROS), a registered society under the society registration Act XXI of 1860 is the social work department of diocese of Kannur. Though the organisation of KAIROS was unofficially working in the area since 1989 as the regional wing of Calicut Diocese social service society, it started independent involvement in 1999. The area of operation covers the civil districts of Kannur and Kasargod, the northern civil districts of Kerala. KAIROS is working with the dalits, fisher folk, marginal farmers, agricultural wage earners, women, children and tribals. In the process of development, women and men have equal role to play and to take responsibility. In all the intervention areas, it is the need of the hour to have gender equity for the just sharing and owning up of the outcome of development initiatives.

### **B. Gender policy of KAIROS**

KAIROS recognizes that gender relations and inequalities are fundamental causes of poverty. Women and girls do not enjoy the same status, power or access to and control over resources as men and boys. This situation is unacceptable. Principles of equity and social justice require us to work to ensure that everyone has equal opportunity for expressing and using their potential, irrespective of sex, age, race, colour, class, caste, religion, ethnic background, sexual orientation, HIV status or disability. KAIROS is committed to channelize energy, effort and resources into processes that create a society that values women, men, girls and boys equally. KAIROS has increasingly worked with a gender perspective over the years. This experience has led us to acknowledge that women's empowerment and the recognition of women's rights as human rights are essential for sustainable development and can be empowering for everyone. It has also taught us that working with a gender perspective means involving and engaging men and boys in order to improve the status of women and girls. These lessons – along with the need for improved learning and monitoring around gender issues and clear accountability mechanisms – have guided the development of our gender policy.

### **Principles, goals and objectives**

KAIROS focus is on gender, men and women, specifically on women. Gender refers to the roles, responsibilities, needs, interests and capacities of both men and women. These are influenced by social and cultural factors. Therefore the term "gender" does not replace the term "sex" which refers exclusively to biological differences. Men and women often play different roles in society and accordingly they may have different needs. A gender perspective is required to ensure that men's and women's specific needs, vulnerabilities and capacities (set in the broader context of class, ethnicity, race and religion) are recognized and addressed. This policy establishes the basis for KAIROS to ensure that the gender differences are taken into account and dealt with in relation to core program.

### **Principles**

The achievement of gender equality requires that:

- Gender equality and equity is the key to KAIROS being and doing;
- The empowerment of women and girls is recognized as fundamental to our mission;
- Every individual needs to understand and demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors that promote gender equality and equity;
- Adequate resources are allocated to gender work;
- All work is continuously monitored against gender indicators;
- And the cross-cutting nature of gender concerns is recognized (gender Equality is both everyone's responsibility and an area that warrants specialized attention and resources).

### **Goals**

The gender policy aims to ensure gender equality and women's empowerment in all levels at organizational as well as in programs of KAIROS

### **Objective**

- A. All programmes empower women and promote women's rights as human rights
- B. To create equal opportunities and a conducive environment for women and men at work place

### **Strategies**

- 1.1. Apply gender analysis at all stages of policy and program work, including planning, implementation, impact assessment and development of measurable gender indicators.
- 1.2. Develop capacity of program staff to carry out gender analysis.
- 1.3. Develop gender-sensitive approaches and methods of work which are empowering using participatory methodologies.
- 1.4. Ensure program staff takes responsibility for promoting gender equality
- 1.5. Promote the creation of structures and opportunities for women's participation in decision-making.
- 1.6. Ensure that women's and girls' voices are heard in mainstream development processes.
- 1.7. Undertake capacity building (e.g. resource allocation, training, information, networking) to strengthen women's federations and groups, and organizations working towards gender equality.
- 1.8. Promote, support and participate in the women's movement to advocate for implementation of the national and international instruments for women's rights.
- 1.9. Include a gender equality perspective in all campaign and influencing work.
- 1.10. Support women and girls to secure their economic, social, political, civil and cultural rights.
- 1.11. Promote women's and girls' independent access to and control over land, employment, services and institutions, including their ability to exercise rights over their own bodies and find protection against violence.
- 1.12. Develop, promote and use creative ways of engaging men and boys (and not only women and girls) as agents of change in the pursuit of gender equality.

## **2. Elements of Gender Policy:**

*What we mean by Gender...*

KAIROS understands that gender refers to the attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the socio-cultural relationships between women and men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context specific and changeable. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in activities undertaken, access to and control over resources as well as decision-making opportunities. 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. KAIROS adopts gender perspective, which means focusing on both women and men and their relationships with each other and resources. In addition, it means working with a global perspective that allows for and appreciates regional diversity. The organization aims at mainstreaming gender by creating an enabling working environment that in turn attracts and helps to retain gender sensitive staff. KAIROS is working to strengthen the unprivileged people and their socio economic development and with the natural resources management practices to secure livelihoods of deprived communities in the districts of Kannur and Kasargod. It means achieving a better analysis of patterns of use, knowledge and skills regarding conservation and sustainable integral development of the people and of the natural resources. Only with a gender perspective can a complete picture of human relationships and ecosystems be built up. The gender policy is an integral part of all its organizational policies, programmes and projects and involves building a culture that understands the issues and policies, which respect diversity and gender, related concerns. A mere statement of policy and objectives does not ensure the concerns relating to addressing the gender. Towards achieving the above objectives, clear indicators need to be defined to evaluate and assess the organization's commitment towards gender equity on a periodic basis.

For this following systems would be put in place and necessary strategies would be tried out internally and externally

### **3. Organization Development**

#### **Objective**

Gender equality and equity is the key to KAIROS being and doing

#### **Strategies**

- 3.1. At all the present and future structures of KAIROS, there will be representation of women at least equal to national ratio.
- 3.2. At the levels of central team, regional and Vikasanasamithi key roles and responsibilities will be reserved at least equal to national ratio, for women
- 3.3. There shall be equal representation for men and women in planning, monitoring and evaluation process of KAIROS at its different levels, such as Vikasanasamithi, regional and central
- 3.4. Recruiting adequate women staff and ensuring the balance also at senior levels; with an objective of achieving a numerical gender balance in all posts at all levels
- 3.5. Ensuring equal opportunities among male and female staff for personal growth, in promotion benefits, training and working conditions
- 3.6. Ensure that specialized gender functions are in place and adequately resourced.
- 3.7. Recognize knowledge related to gender concerns and gender-related analysis as one of the core areas of capacity for staff and build capabilities throughout the agency.
- 3.8. Design strategies for capacity building in gender mainstreaming as part of institutional development program with special attention to staff training on gender analysis skills.

- 3.9. Make all HR systems and policies gender-sensitive and responsive, and integrate gender indicators into staff objectives, accountabilities and performance management systems.
- 3.10. Family friendly and flexible working policies to allow staff to fulfill caring responsibilities (including job-sharing, maternity, paternity and parental leave)
- 3.11. For the women staff, equal pay for work of equal value.
- 3.12. Use information technology to facilitate home working, flexible working hours and virtual working to strike a balance between home responsibilities and work.
- 3.13. Providing a safe and secure workplace for women staff, free from sexual harassment with a Gender Complaints committee to look into specific concerns.
- 3.14. Providing an enabling and friendly work environment where both men and women enjoy and actively participate in work. This includes providing flexible working hours.
- 3.15. Extending work related concessions and relaxations for women staff depending upon the situations and requirements; e.g. providing secure transport facilities when they work late hours; 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.
- 3.16. Reviewing the organizational structure, functioning, problems in relation to gender imbalances among staff and the work environment time to time and taking definite steps to address the same
- 3.17. Furthering deliberate and intense efforts to promote participation of women and their collectives in various aspects of programs and resource management.
- 3.18. Analysis of gender disaggregated roles and work patterns, and make special efforts to reduce the work load of women
- 3.19. Making special efforts to constantly identify vulnerable women and provide them the necessary support and guidance
- 3.20. Sensitizing the men and mobilizing their support towards gender balance
- 3.21. Building awareness and sensitivity by processing information and publishing communication material in diverse media to appeal different strata of people in our functional domain.

#### **4. Public Perspective**

##### **Objective**

The external presentation of KAIROS should promote a balanced view of the issues surrounding gender equality and equity.

##### **Strategies**

- 4.1. Gender analysis will be central to the development of all marketing, fundraising, sponsorship and campaigns work and gender concerns will be incorporated into activities wherever possible.
- 4.2. Design fundraising proposals and appeals to fulfill KAIROS strategic goals and objectives on gender equality and equity.
- 4.3. Inform donors about KAIROS gender goals and objectives and give positive examples of KAIROS gender work.
- 4.4. All materials and general communications will be formulated to reflect KAIROS goals and objectives on gender equality and equity, challenging gender stereotypes and recognizing diversity.

- 4.5. Gender-sensitive language and images will be used in all internal and external communications.
- 4.6. Whenever possible, women's and girls' voices will be heard in the first person.
- 4.7. KAIROS will keep on watching / observing / analyzing the changes at the levels of state/national and UN and will generate appropriate response in course of time

## **5. Finance and resource allocation**

### **Objective**

To allocate adequate resources to gender work in the organization

### **Strategies**

- 5.1. Commit a high level of support and resources to gender work and functions.
- 5.2. Include a gender dimension in all finance guidelines, instructions and policies.
- 5.3. Develop and refine tools and methods for assessing and reporting on gender-related investments at every level of the organization.

## **6. Implementation and accountability**

This section outlines the framework for the implementation of the gender policy. It provides guidelines on the responsibility of different parts of the organization for the achievement of gender equality.

The director of KAIROS will be accountable for the implementation of the policy.

- 6.1. The KAIROS directors will report on the implementation process annually to the governing body, with the review of its implementation report.
- 6.2. All staff will be expected to show a gender perspective in their work.

## **7. Enforcement Date**

The Gender Policy KAIROS will come in to force with effect from the date on which it is approved by the Governing Body.

## **8. Right of access to HR Policy Document.**

The KAIROS Staff will have access to the Gender Policy.

### **Conclusion**

To make development sustainable, participatory an integrated approach is pre requisite. In this, both men and women are equal and creative partners. In this process of making development integrated one, the isolated activities are not preferred. Collaboration and networking of potential development actors will help speedy achievement of the developmental goals and objectives set by the institutions. We will be sensitive to the gender question in all its involvements.