



Government of Karnataka

State Policy for the Empowerment of Women, 2014 (draft)

1. Preamble

The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. The Constitution not only grants equality to women, but also authorizes the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women. In the Policy “women” would cover adult women and adolescents girls.

Gender equality is recognized as a key human development issue. The social role prescribed for women since generations, has kept them confined within their home with the traditional role of motherhood & care of family. This has deprived women of accessing many developmental programmes. Development for women means the provision of equal opportunity & capabilities that enable them to assert their social, political & economic rights. It is hoped that through empowerment & measures for gender justice, the overall economic, political and social status of women will improve.

One of the Goal of Millennium Development Goals of United Nations is to Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women and the target is to eliminate gender disparity in primary, secondary education preferably by 2005 and in all levels of education not later than 2015. The indicators to achieve the goal are (i) Ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education; (ii) Ratio of literate women to men, 15-24 years old; (iii) Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector and (iv) Proportion of seats held by women in Legislative Assembly, Legislative Council, Zilla Panchayats, Taluk Panchayats and Gram Panchayats.

Evidence from across the world has shown that improvement in the status of women in social spheres including livelihood, health, and education are correlated with greater prosperity for the population as a whole and more successful development outcomes for entire states. Engaging women as successful and rightful participants in development is therefore important for not only for the advancement of the status of women and girls, but also for the overall social economic growth of the society.

The Goal of this Policy is to bring about holistic development, advancement in all fields and empowerment of women especially marginalised women including sex workers to a state so that in every field of life no differential exists between male and female. This policy will target to usher into an egalitarian society where women will have equal participation and contribution in all walks of life and all the

economic, social, demographic indicators will have no gender based differentials. Focus will also be given to specific needs of women belonging to the marginalised and vulnerable sections of the society, e.g. SC, ST, OBC, minorities, etc.

2. Objective

2.1 The Objective of this policy will be to encourage and ensure active participation of all its stakeholders for achieving holistic development and overall well-being of women. The objectives of this policy will be:-

- i) To create an environment through adequate social, economic and political policies conducive to holistic development of women so that they can realize and achieve their full potential, lead their life with dignity.
- ii) To empower women, through attitudinal change of men and the society at large, for equal participation in decision making and suggesting programme initiatives. To change present societal attitude and community practices which undermine women and ensure active participation of men and women at par.
- iii) To ensure meeting the targets of Millennium Development Goals which inter-alia includes Promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women.
- iv) To ensure support infrastructure and facilities conducive to their need for working women/women who work outside home in organised as well as unorganised sector.
- v) To ensure equal-access for women to health care, quality education up to highest level, career and vocational guidance, employment at all level, equal remuneration, occupational health and safety, social security, economic resources including common property, forest, land and other means of production and control over them and also in decision making wherever required.
- vi) To strengthen legal systems and infrastructure to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and to deliver justice without any delay.
- vii) Mainstreaming a gender perspective in the Development process and Plans.
- viii) To reduce all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls and to make the workplace in government as well as non-government sector free from sexual harassment for all women.
- ix) To strengthen infrastructure to provide benefit of all the Social legislations enacted so far for the women.
- x) To build and strengthen partnership with civil societies, women's organisations, Corporates and Institutions working for the women.
- xi) To ensure de-jure and de-facto enjoyment of all human rights including reproductive health right as well as sexual health right and fundamental freedom by women on equal basis with men in all sphere - political, social, legal, economic, cultural and civil.
- xii) To ensure inter-departmental and intra-departmental coordination and cooperation along with the participation of Local Bodies.

3. Policy Prescriptions

Judicial Legal Systems

3.1 Legal-judicial system will be made more responsive and gender sensitive to women's needs, especially in cases of domestic violence and personal assault. New laws will be enacted wherever there is inadequacy of legal framework and existing laws reviewed and strengthened to ensure that justice is quick and the punishment meted out to the culprits is commensurate with the severity of the offence. Efforts will be made for creating awareness on legal provisions and legal literacy among women in co-ordination with Legal Service authority. Government should promulgate specific legislation to set up separate court/fast track courts to try all cases of domestic violence and violence/atrocities against women. This is necessary to provide justice to women and to serve as a deterrent to the perpetrators of crime against women.

3.2 With the full participation of all stakeholders including community and social leaders, the Policy would aim to encourage mainstreaming of all Laws which has direct impact on women to eliminate discrimination against women.

3.3 The evolution of property rights in a patriarchal system has contributed to the subordinate status of women. The Policy would aim to encourage changes in laws relating to ownership of property and inheritance by evolving consensus in order to make them gender just.

4. Decision Making

4.1 Women's equality in power sharing and active participation in decision making, including decision making in political process at all levels will be ensured for the achievement of the goals of empowerment. All measures will be taken to guarantee women equal access to and full participation in decision making bodies at every level, including the legislative, executive, judicial, corporate, statutory bodies, as also the advisory Commissions, Committees, Boards and Trusts etc. Affirmative action such as reservations/quotas, including in higher legislative bodies, will be considered whenever necessary on a time bound basis. Women-friendly personnel policies will also be drawn up to encourage women to participate effectively in the developmental process.

5. Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in the Development Process

5.1 Policies, programmes and systems will be established to ensure mainstreaming of women's perspectives in all developmental processes, as catalysts, participants and recipients. Wherever there are gaps in policies and programmes, women specific interventions would be undertaken to bridge these. Coordinating and monitoring mechanisms will also be devised to assess from time to time the progress of such mainstreaming mechanisms. Women's issues and concerns as a result will specially be addressed and reflected in all concerned laws, sectoral policies, plans and programmes of action.

5.2 In development process gender perspective will be introduced in the department level first by the process of Gender Budgeting which will later be taken up to the Gram Panchayat level. Each Gram Panchayat will undertake their individual annual action plan which will accommodate gender budget and ensure achievement of Goal of this policy in planned phased manner. The Development process should be a bottom-up approach.

5.3 State Government will undertake annual action plan and annual achievable targets for implementing this policy. Government will undertake population policy planning also a part of overall development planning such as achieving of targeted different population indicators, namely Sex Ratio, Child Sex Ratio, Fertility Rate, Infant Mortality Rate, Under Five Mortality Rate, Maternal Mortality Rate, Safe Delivery/Institutional Delivery Rate, Nutritional status of girl child/women etc. Based on the Action Plan, Gender Responsive budgeting will be prepared for schemes to reach the targets. A Cell will be created to monitor the Gender Responsive Budgeting.

5.3 The whole development process should incorporate within itself, the concept of Gender Planning. Gender Budgeting should be followed strictly by all departments of the Government. Further, all schemes of the Government should be subject to Gender Auditing mandatorily at regular intervals.

5.4 There should be an independent evaluation of the gender component of all schemes. There should be a Gender Cell in all departments handling social sectors.

6. Economic Empowerment of women

Poverty Reduction

6.1 Since women comprise the majority of the population below the poverty line and are very often in situations of extreme poverty, given the harsh realities of intra-household and social discrimination, macroeconomic policies and poverty eradication programmes will specifically address the needs and problems of such women. There will be improved implementation of programmes which are already women oriented with special targets for women. Steps will be taken for mobilization of poor women and convergence of services, by offering them a range of economic and social options, along with necessary support measures to enhance their capabilities. Old age pension and other such financial assistance should be provided to all women irrespective of their income. Purchasing power of women should be improved.

Micro Credit

6.2 In order to enhance women's access to credit for consumption and production, the establishment of new and strengthening of existing micro-credit mechanisms and micro-finance institution will be undertaken so that the outreach of credit is enhanced. Other supportive measures would be taken to ensure adequate flow of credit through extant financial institutions and banks, so that all women below

poverty line have easy access to credit. Finance institutions and banks will promote women's SHGs purchase of land to do collective farming. Banks should have a certain percentage of Savings Bank Account and Loans reserved for women. There should be an exclusive State level Cooperative Bank for Women. It is also necessary to impart financial literacy to women so that there is financial inclusion. Efforts will be made to provide bank accounts to all women in the lines of Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana.

6.3 It is necessary to make financial credit available to women engaged in agriculture as well as Self Help Groups (SHGs) which are involved in agriculture. In this regard the District Banks as well as the Lead Bank should be given a target to supply credit to women engaged in agriculture and SHGs. If women are involved in organic agriculture they will be given concessions on priority basis.

Women and Economy

6.4 Women's perspectives will be included in designing and implementing macro-economic and social policies by institutionalizing their participation in such processes. Their contribution to socio-economic development as producers and workers will be recognized in the formal and informal sectors (including home based workers) and appropriate policies relating to employment and to her working conditions will be drawn up. Such measures could include reinterpretation and redefinition of conventional concepts of work wherever necessary e.g. in the Census records, to reflect women's contribution as producers and workers.

6.5 Poorna Shakti Kendra set up under the National Mission for Empowerment of Women is to be strengthened as one stop window for providing various services to women.

6.6 Globalization has presented new challenges for the realization of the goal of women's equality, the gender impact of which has not been systematically evaluated fully. However, from the micro-level studies that were commissioned by the Department of Women & Child Development, it is evident that there is a need for re-framing policies for access to employment and quality of employment. Benefits of the growing global economy have been unevenly distributed leading to wider economic disparities, the feminization of poverty, increased gender inequality through often deteriorating working conditions and unsafe working environment especially in the informal economy and rural areas. Strategies will be designed to enhance the capacity of women and empower them to meet the negative social and economic impacts, which may flow from the globalization process.

6.7 There should be at least 33% reservation for women in Police during recruitment. Further, there should be at least one woman Director in the Boards of State PSUs/Corporations/Boards. It is desirable to provide job for women in private sector so as to reach at least 30% during recruitment and promotion.

6.8 Women working in the unorganised sector face a lot of challenges. Firstly they have indefinite nature of work and their security is also a matter of concern. Hence their life should be made safe and secure and they should be given opportunities to improve their living conditions. Social security such as equal wages and pension should be given to women and men working in the unorganised sector. Further, where women working in the unorganised sector assemble, arrangements will be made for toilets, water and shed. Many a time women working in the unorganised sector are more vulnerable to sexual harassment. In case such incidents happen, the agent who hires them will be responsible for the same. For their healthcare, health camps will be organised in the urban and rural areas. These women will be included in the health schemes being implemented by the Government and provided all health facilities. Further, there are possibilities of accident at the places of work; therefore accident insurance as well as health insurance will be made available to them.

Women and Agriculture

6.9 In view of the critical role of women as producers in the agriculture and allied sectors, concentrated efforts will be made to ensure that benefits of training, extension and various programmes will reach them in proportion to their large contribution to the sector. The programmes for training women in soil conservation, social forestry, dairy development and other occupations allied to agriculture like horticulture, livestock including small animal husbandry, poultry, fisheries etc. will be expanded to benefit women workers in the agriculture sector. Holding land titles should not be a criterion for women to access agriculture related training. Efforts to be made to ensure that women are entitled to land rights and Government land titles should be either in joint names or in the name of women. Awareness of nutrition for women in agriculture and health issues for adolescent girls should be promoted.

Women and Industry

6.10 The important role played by women in electronics, information technology and food processing and agro industry and textiles has been crucial to the development of these sectors. The Government will ensure that women are given comprehensive support in terms of labour legislation, social security measures and other support services to facilitate them to participate in various industrial employments.

6.11 Women at present cannot work in night shift in factories even if they wish to. Suitable measures will be taken to enable women to work on the night shift in factories. This will be accompanied with support services for security, transportation etc. A monitoring mechanism should be set up to ensure that women are not exploited in the SEZ or in the private sector, where labour laws are not applicable.

6.12 A special training for small scale industries and self-employment will be given to women. Women entrepreneurs will be given training in communication skills necessary for business. Lecture of successful entrepreneurs will be arranged in

order to promote entrepreneurship among women. The District Industries Centre should encourage women entrepreneurs and a single window facility will be set up for necessary applications, permits, approvals, financial assistance, etc. A provision will be made to reserve 10% plots for women entrepreneurs in SEZs and upcoming Industrial Parks.

Support Services

6.13 The provision of support services for women, like child care facilities, including crèches at work places and educational institutions, homes for the aged and the disabled will be expanded and improved to create an enabling environment and to ensure their full cooperation in social, political and economic life. Women-friendly human resource development policies will also be drawn up to encourage women to participate effectively in the developmental process.

7. Social Empowerment of Women

Education

7.1 Equal access to education for women and girls will be ensured. Special measures will be taken to eliminate discrimination, universalize education, eradicate illiteracy, create a gender-sensitive educational system, increase enrolment and retention rates of girls and improve the quality of education to facilitate life-long learning as well as development of occupation/vocational/technical skills by women till the sub-district levels. Special efforts will be made to provide adequate facilities for imparting job oriented / vocational education and to encourage women to undertake such courses to improve their livelihood opportunities. Reducing the gender gap in secondary and higher education would be a focus area. Sectoral time targets in existing policies will be achieved, with a special focus on girls and women, particularly those belonging to weaker sections including the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes/Other Backward Classes/Minorities. Gender sensitive curricula would be developed at all levels of educational system in order to address sex stereotyping as one of the causes of gender discrimination. Open school and distance learning, at all levels, will be promoted along with the formal system. Orientation programme for gender sensitisation for teachers, students, and staff in educational institutions will be provided level wise. Every educational institution should have a Committee or a Women Cell to look into the complaints of sexual harassment. Hostels for girl students should be provided separately.

Health

7.2 A holistic approach to women's health which includes both nutrition and health services will be adopted and special attention will be given to the needs of women and the girl at all stages of the life cycle. The reduction of infant mortality and maternal mortality, which are sensitive indicators of human development, is a priority concern. This policy reiterates the national demographic goals for Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) set out in the National Population Policy 2000. Women should have access to comprehensive, affordable

and quality health care. Measures will be adopted that take into account the reproductive rights of women to enable them to exercise informed choices, their vulnerability to sexual and health problems together with endemic, infectious and communicable diseases such as malaria, TB, and water borne diseases as well as hypertension and cardio-pulmonary diseases. The social, developmental and health consequences of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases will be tackled from a gender perspective.

7.3 To effectively meet problems of infant and maternal mortality, and early marriage the availability of good and accurate data at micro level on deaths, birth and marriages is required. Strict implementation of registration of births and deaths would be ensured and registration of marriages would be made compulsory. Focus should also be given to health of women living in urban slums.

7.4 In accordance with the commitment of the National Population Policy to population stabilization, this Policy recognizes the critical need of men and women to have access to safe, effective and affordable methods of family planning of their choice and the need to suitably address the issues of early marriages and spacing of children. Interventions such as spread of education, compulsory registration of marriage and other special programmes should impact on delaying the age of marriage so that child marriages are eliminated. The focus of health programmes will be expanded from the existing programme on Maternal and Child Health to include both adolescent and older women.

7.5 Women's traditional knowledge about health care and nutrition will be recognized through proper documentation and its use will be encouraged. The use of Indian and alternative systems of medicine will be enhanced within the framework of overall health infrastructure available for women.

7.6 It is important to recognise that women as survivors of violence face huge trauma and psychological affects. As a result, there is an increase in the women succumbing to mental distress, which is often ignored, or taken as an issue, that women can cope with. This attitude both in the private and public domain needs to change; therefore, women's mental health needs to be recognised as an issue of deep concern, requiring special attention.

Nutrition

7.7 In view of the high risk of malnutrition and disease that women face at all the three critical stages viz., infancy and childhood, adolescent and reproductive phase, focussed attention would be paid to meeting the nutritional needs of women at all stages of the life cycle. This is also important in view of the critical link between the health of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women with the health of infant and young children. Special efforts will be made to tackle the problem of macro and micro nutrient deficiencies especially amongst pregnant and lactating women as it leads to various diseases and disabilities. The Public Distribution System should be diversified to cover region-specific cereals.

7.8 Intra-household discrimination in nutritional matters vis-à-vis girls and women will be sought to be ended through appropriate strategies. Widespread use of nutrition education would be made to address the issues of intra-household imbalances in nutrition and the special needs of pregnant and lactating women. Women's participation will also be ensured in the planning, superintendence and delivery of the system.

Drinking Water and Sanitation

7.9 Special attention will be given to the needs of women in the provision of safe drinking water, sewage disposal, toilet facilities and sanitation within accessible reach of households, especially in rural areas, tribal hamlets and urban slums. Women's participation will be ensured in the planning, delivery and maintenance of such services. Attention needs to be given for separate adequate toilet facilities with water in schools and other public places like bus stands, shopping malls, etc. which is properly maintained and well lighted, to ensure security.

Housing and Shelter

7.10 Women's perspectives will be included in housing policies, planning of housing colonies and provision of shelter both in rural and urban areas. Special attention will be given for providing adequate and safe housing and accommodation for women including single women, heads of households, working women, students, apprentices and trainees. Focus will be given on providing housing facilities to women belonging to Economically Weaker Sections. Measures will be put in place to ensure that women in institutions and in working hostels and elsewhere are safe in their residential environments and free from sexual vulnerability. Safe rest rooms with drinking water, sanitation, a medical assistance facility in bus stands especially in moffusil/rural areas for women who travel to other places and wait for connecting buses/ transport. The housing schemes for poor being implemented by the Government should be allotted in the name of women.

Environment and Climate Change

7.11 Women will be involved and their perspectives reflected in the policies and programmes for environment, conservation and restoration. Considering the impact of environmental factors on their livelihoods, women's participation will be ensured in the conservation of the environment and control of environmental degradation. The vast majority of rural women still depend on the locally available non-commercial sources of energy such as animal dung, crop waste and fuel wood. In order to ensure the efficient use of these energy resources in an environmental friendly manner, the Policy will aim at promoting the programmes of non-conventional energy resources. Women will be involved in spreading the use of solar energy, biogas, smokeless Chula's and other rural application so as to have a visible impact of these measures in influencing eco system and in changing the life styles of rural women. Activities which lead to higher carbon emission

should be discouraged and encourage women to adopt sustainable practices for efficient energy use.

Science and Technology

7.12 Programmes will be strengthened to bring about a greater involvement of women in science and technology. These will include measures to motivate girls to take up science and technology for higher education and also ensure that development projects with scientific and technical inputs involve women fully. Efforts to develop a scientific temper and awareness will also be stepped up. Special measures would be taken for their training in areas where they have special skills like communication and information technology. Efforts to develop appropriate technologies suited to women's needs as well as to reduce their drudgery will be given a special focus too. There should be emphasis for women to take up science courses.

Women in Difficult Circumstances

7.13 In recognition of the diversity of women's situations and in acknowledgement of the needs of specially disadvantaged groups, measures and programmes will be undertaken to provide them with special assistance. These groups include women in extreme poverty, destitute women, women in conflict situations; women affected by natural calamities, women in less developed regions, women with disabilities, widows, elderly women, single women in difficult circumstances, women heading households, those displaced from employment, migrants, women who are victims of marital violence, deserted women and women in sex work, etc. Ensure housing and access to all basic rights for women in sex work and devadasi and that violation of their rights and discrimination is not meted out to them, by enforcement agencies, the medical fraternity and other public institutions. Social evils such as child marriage, dowry deaths and prevalence of devadasi system will be mitigated. Measures to mitigate these practices will be formulated.

8. Violence against women

8.1 All forms of violence against women, physical and mental, whether at domestic or societal levels, including those arising from customs, traditions or accepted practices shall be dealt with effectively with a view to eliminate its incidence. Institutions and mechanisms/schemes for assistance will be created and strengthened for prevention of such violence, including sexual harassment at work place and customs like dowry; for the rehabilitation of the victims of violence and for taking effective action against the perpetrators of such violence. Any case of reported sexual harassment must be dealt in the strictest possible manner as per the recently enacted Sexual Harassment of Women at workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 and stringent disciplinary action should be initiated against the offender. However to avert any such cases, extensive gender sensitization training along with proper mechanism of monitoring internalization of spirit of such training must be evolved. Special emphasis will also be laid on programmes and measures to deal with trafficking in women and girls. A Pooled

fund should be maintained for providing compensation for victims of sexual violence and other atrocities.

8.2 Violence against women can have implication on her health including physical, mental, sexual and reproductive health. Hence one stop crisis Centres will be set up preferably in public hospitals for psychological counselling, medical and other social assistance. Sensitisation and training of medical and health professionals with regard to sexual and other violence against women and girls is necessary.

8.3 Action Plans for addressing violence against women may be drawn up at the District level and implemented with the help of District level Coordination Committee involving various government agencies and NGOs. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) will be devised for all stakeholders (Police, Legal Aid, Lawyers, Counsellors, and Doctors) in dealing with cases of violence against women and girls. Trauma centres to be created within hospitals and in Public Health Centres already in existence with expertise in handling women related cases.

8.4 Provision of infrastructure and shelters for protection of homeless and mentally unstable homeless women will be provided. Separate shelters/homes for mentally handicapped/disabled women and girl children will be established. Further, a strong database of all victims of violence is to be developed.

8.5 Violence against street children, mentally and unstable and homeless children, child labour should be attended without any exception. A Committee at the District level under the chairpersonship of the District Magistrate along with one police officer at the level of Superintendent of Police, Senior Medical Officer of the district, representative of local NGOs will be constituted in this regard. One Stop Crisis Centre should also attend to such cases.

8.6 Women and Law – Though many Laws and Acts have been made for the safety and security and empowerment of women, there are still challenges in their effective implementation. The main reasons are (i) Women's ignorance about their rights, (ii) Complicated legal procedures, (iii) Ambiguities in Laws/Acts, (iv) Lack of effective and competent legal advice, (v) Lack of coordination of medical science, forensics, police, government machinery, court, NGOs, etc. with women. Hence various measures will be worked out to improve the coordination within the judicial system and to make amendments in the Laws/Acts. In order to create an enabling environment for women after marriage, an appropriate legislation to have right over parental home should be formulated so that if there is any domestic violence/dowry demand, etc. she can go back to her parental house.

9. Rights of the Girl Child

9.1 All forms of discrimination against the girl child and violation of her rights shall be eliminated by undertaking strong measures both preventive and punitive within and outside the family. As per Census 2011, the Child Sex Ratio in Karnataka is 948 (950 in rural areas and 946 in urban areas). In 2001, the Child Sex Ratio was 946 (949 in rural areas and 940 in urban areas). In a decade, there

has been only a marginal increase in Child Sex Ratio which is a matter of concern. This calls for strict enforcement of laws against prenatal sex selection and the practices of female foeticide and female infanticide. Similarly there should be strict action from the preventive side as well as stringent enforcement of laws to curb child marriage, child abuse and child prostitution etc. Removal of discrimination in the treatment of the girl child within the family and outside and projection of a positive image of the girl child will be actively fostered. There will be special emphasis on the needs of the girl child and earmarking of substantial investments in the areas relating to food and nutrition, health and education, and in vocational education. In implementing programmes for eliminating child labour, there will be a special focus on girl children. Special protective measures will be taken up for girl children and adolescent girls in view of the increasing occurrence of crimes. Training in self-defence should be provided.

10. Mass Media

10.1 Media will be used to portray images consistent with human dignity of girls and women. The Policy will specifically strive to remove demeaning, degrading and negative conventional stereotypical images of women and violence against women. Private sector partners and media networks will be involved at all levels to ensure equal access for women particularly in the area of information and communication technologies. The media will be enforced to follow laws and codes of conduct, professional guidelines and other self-regulatory mechanisms to remove gender stereotypes and undignified portrayal of women.

10.2 Special resources should be set aside to encourage and involve civil society organisations to contribute in developing appropriate messages and programmes which are gender sensitive and bring out the patriarchal values prevalent in society, which are responsible for discriminative and oppressive behaviour towards women. It would be useful to have guidelines for the media so that girls and women's portrayal is positive and there will be restraining in sensationalising news or the objectification and commodification of women.

11. Operational Strategies

Action Plans

11.1 The State Government will draw up time bound Action Plans for translating the Policy into a set of concrete actions, through a participatory process of consultation with Centre/State Departments of Women and Child Development and National /State Commissions for Women, the Local Bodies and Gram Sabhas. The Plans will specifically include the following: -

- i) Measurable goals to be achieved by 2020.
- ii) Identification and commitment of resources.
- iii) Responsibilities for implementation of action points.

iv) Structures and mechanisms to ensure efficient monitoring, evaluation (concurrent and impact evaluation) review and gender impact assessment of action points and policies.

v) Introduction of a gender perspective in the planning process through bottom-up approach by involving the Local Bodies.

vi) State Government will take the lead to garner funds for effectively implementing Action Plans which will be translated into schemes, programmes and projects.

11.2 In order to support better planning and programme formulation and adequate allocation of resources, Gender Development Indices (GDI) will be developed by networking with specialized agencies. These could be analysed and studied in depth in order to substantively/rationally input into all developmental programmes for women. Gender auditing and development of evaluation mechanisms will also be undertaken alongside.

11.3 Collection, maintenance and data analytics of gender disaggregated data by all primary data collecting agencies of the Central and State Governments as well as Research and Academic Institutions in the Public and Private Sectors will be undertaken. Data and information gaps in vital areas reflecting the status of women will be sought to be filled in by these immediately. All Departments/Corporations/Banks and financial institutions etc. will be advised to collect, collate, disseminate, maintain/publish and analyse data related to programmes and benefits on a gender disaggregated basis. This will help in meaningful planning and evaluation of policies.

12. Institutional Mechanisms

12.1 Institutional mechanisms, to promote the advancement of women, which exist at the State level, will be strengthened. These will be through interventions as may be appropriate and will relate to, among others, provision of adequate resources, training and advocacy skills to effectively influence macro-policies, legislation, programmes etc. to achieve the empowerment of women. Accurate and information systems will be put in place for periodic, effective monitoring and evaluation of women related programmes. In this regard it is necessary to have capacity building for Gender sensitive Plans.

12.2 A State Gender Council will be formed to oversee the operationalization of the Policy on a regular basis. The State Gender Council will be headed by the Hon'ble Chief Minister and be broad in composition having representatives from the concerned Departments, State Commissions for Women, Social Welfare Boards, representatives of Non-Government Organizations, Women's Organisations, Corporate Sector, financing institutions, academics, experts and social activists etc. This Council will review the progress made in implementing the Policy twice a year. The State Gender Council should also act as an apex body to suggest proactive policy initiatives and corrective measures as well as to monitor the schemes with respect to gender component.

12.3 The State Women's Commission should be strengthened and its role needs to be enhanced. State Resource Centres for women, which has been established with mandates for collection and dissemination of information, undertaking research work, conducting surveys, implementing training and awareness generation programmes, etc. would need to be strengthened. These Centres will link up with Women's Studies Centres and other research and academic institutions through suitable information networking systems. These Centres will also undertake regular evaluation of all development programmes which focus on women in collaboration with Research Institutes/Universities.

12.4 While institutions at the district level will be strengthened, at the grass-roots, women will be helped by Government through its programmes to organize and strengthen into Self-Help Groups (SHGs) at the Anganwadi/Village/Town level. The women's groups will be helped to institutionalize themselves into registered societies and to join at the Panchayat/Municipal level. These societies will bring about synergistic implementation of all the social and economic development programmes by drawing resources made available through Government and Non-Government channels, including banks and financial institutions and by establishing a close interface with the Panchayats/Municipalities.

12.5 Availability of Institutional Services for women of different age groups will be rationalized. Government will consider providing such services to all the districts and if situation demands new Homes will be set up for the Districts where no such service is available at present. However, Government will consider launching of new scheme with existing inmates of different Government or NGO run Homes for rehabilitation of destitute girl child/women, by way of providing employment assistance or financial assistance, separate vocational and educational training for self-employment and empowerment. Support measures will be provided for adoption of girl child and there will be proper guidelines for adoption. Measures will be taken to stop illegal adoption.

12.6 To ensure that every woman will get an opportunity to live a dignified life, the Government will consider launching of new scheme for rehabilitation of women & girl child vulnerable to trafficking or trafficked or those who are compelled to take a hazardous job where she feels exploited. Victims of acid attacks and other such atrocities should be provided with social security/jobs.

12.7 At present there are several programmes run by different departments for the welfare of women as well as some programmes from where women also can be benefited; but the women belonging to marginalised category cannot access all the departments to suit her need. As a result of it, the women remain deprived of any benefit. State Government will ensure to establish convergence & facilitation centre/ Helpline; Service Centre/Information Hub up to the village level to bridge information gap among the women. For this purpose Government will consider upgrading the existing government infrastructures up to village level of different government departments.

12.8 The government through the department dealing with Women Development issues will initiate advocacy/workshops/seminars/awareness campaign on

women and child and gender issues intensively throughout the state involving all levels of administrations, printing & electronic media, NGOs/Community Based Organizations and communities.

12.9 It will be examined why there has been non-implementation of Joint ownership of land as women should have right over land and other tangible assets.

12.10 Before formulating any policies/schemes related to women, the Departments should consult the Department of Women and Child Development. Further Government Departments which are implementing schemes for women will be instructed to display women's charter in the office premises so that women are kept well informed about these schemes. Each concerned Department will make such charter and make necessary changes to it every year. It will be made mandatory for these Departments to submit the charter before 30th April of each year to Department of Women and Child Development. The Department of Women and Child Development will publish charter received from all Departments in a Report form and also upload the same in the Department's website.

13. Resource Management

13.1 Availability of adequate financial, human and market resources to implement the Policy will be managed by concerned Departments, financial credit institutions and banks, private sector, civil society and other connected institutions. This process will include:

(a) Assessment of benefits flowing to women and resource allocation to the programmes relating to them through an exercise of gender budgeting. Appropriate changes in policies will be made to optimize benefits to women under these schemes;

(b) Adequate resource allocation to develop and promote the policy outlined earlier based on (a) above by concerned Departments;

(c) Developing synergy between personnel of Health, Rural Development, Education and Women & Child Development Department at field level and other village level functionaries';

(d) Meeting credit needs by banks and financial credit institutions through suitable policy initiatives and development of new institutions in coordination with the Department of Women & Child Development.

13.2 The strategy of Women's Component Plan adopted in the Ninth Plan of ensuring that not less than 30% of benefits/funds flow to women from all Departments will be implemented effectively so that the needs and interests of women and girls are addressed by all concerned sectors. The Department of Women and Child Development being the nodal Department will monitor and review the progress of the implementation of the Component Plan from time to

time, in terms of both quality and quantity in collaboration with the Karnataka State Planning Board.

13.3 Efforts will be made to channelize private sector investments too, to support programmes and projects for advancement of women. The Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Funds of different corporate companies, of which 50% will be channelized to address women focussed issues in Karnataka.

13.4 The Government would urge the Private Sector Companies to bring out the details of their spending and other proactive measures undertaken for the benefit of women employees in their Annual Report.

14. Legislation

14.1 The existing legislative structure will be reviewed and additional legislative measures taken by identified departments to implement the Policy. This will also involve a review of all existing laws including personal, customary and tribal laws, subordinate legislation, and related rules as well as executive and administrative regulations to eliminate all gender discriminatory references. The specific measures required would be evolved through a consultation process involving civil society, State Commission for Women and Department of Women and Child Development. In appropriate cases the consultation process would be widened to include other stakeholders too.

14.2 Effective implementation of legislation would be promoted by involving civil society and community. Appropriate changes in legislation will be undertaken, if necessary.

14.3 In addition, following other specific measures will be taken to implement the legislation effectively.

(a) Strict enforcement of all relevant legal provisions and speedy redressal of grievances will be ensured, with a special focus on violence and gender related atrocities.

(b) Measures to prevent and punish sexual harassment at the place of work, protection for women workers in the organized/unorganized sector and strict enforcement of relevant laws such as Equal Remuneration Act and Minimum Wages Act will be undertaken. With regard to sexual harassment at workplaces efforts will be made to ensure that in Karnataka at all workplaces, the managements should constitute Sexual Harassment Committees in their establishments. Similarly Government Departments will also be advised to do the same. The Justice Verma Committee recommendations will be implemented with due regard to addressing Violence against Women (VAW) in Karnataka.

(c) Crimes against women, their incidence, prevention, investigation, detection and prosecution will be regularly reviewed at all Crime Review Fora and Conferences at the State and District levels. Recognised, local, voluntary organizations will be

authorized to lodge complaints and facilitate registration, investigations and legal proceedings related to violence and atrocities against girls and women.

(d) Women's Cells in Police Stations, Encourage Women Police Stations Family Courts, Mahila Courts, Counselling Centres, Legal Aid Centres and Nyaya Panchayats will be strengthened and expanded to eliminate violence and atrocities against women. Similarly there should be a nodal officer in the Police Headquarters to monitor cases of atrocities against women and each Station House Officers should periodically report such cases to the Nodal Officer.

(e) Widespread dissemination of information on all aspects of legal rights, human rights and other entitlements of women, through specially designed legal literacy programmes and rights information programmes will be done.

(f) Need for a social audit of the implementing mechanism, its efficiency and efficacy and scope for changes based on the audit findings.

(g) Periodic review of the legislations, especially those which are state specific and amend the same if found redundant. Suggestions for change can be made to the Law Commission on legislations, which are ineffective and come under the purview of the Central Government.

15. Gender Sensitization

15.1 Training of personnel of executive, legislative and judicial wings of the State, with a special focus on policy and programme framers, implementation and development agencies, law enforcement machinery and the judiciary, as well as non-governmental organizations will be undertaken. Other measures will include:

(a) Promoting societal awareness of gender issues and women's human rights.

(b) Review of curriculum and educational materials to include gender education and human rights issues

(c) Removal of all references derogatory to the dignity of women from all public documents and legal instruments.

(d) Use of different forms of mass media to communicate social messages relating to women's equality and empowerment.

(e) Self Help Groups and NGOs and CBOs can be involved in gender sensitization programmes.

16. Panchayati Raj Institutions

16.1 The 73rd and 74th Amendments (1993) to the Indian Constitution have served as a breakthrough towards ensuring equal access and increased participation in political power structure for women. The PRIs will play a central role in the process of enhancing women's participation in public life. The PRIs and

the local self-Governments will be actively involved in the implementation and execution of the State Policy for Women at the grassroots level, in different Departments of the Government and importantly in educational institutions where the young minds are moulded and need exposure to concepts of gender equality. The capacity building initiatives taken up at the ATI and SIRD will be periodically reviewed through a gendered lens.

17. Partnership with the voluntary sector organizations/NGOs/CBOs

17.1 The involvement of voluntary organizations, associations, federations, trade unions, non-governmental organizations, women's organizations, as well as institutions dealing with education, training and research will be ensured in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and review of all policies and programmes affecting women. Towards this end, they will be provided with appropriate support related to resources and capacity building and facilitated to participate actively in the process of the empowerment of women.

18. International Cooperation

18.1 The Policy will aim at implementation of international obligations/commitments in all sectors on empowerment of women such as the UN-Women, Convention on All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD+5), The Beijing Platform for Action and other such instruments. International, regional and sub-regional cooperation towards the empowerment of women will continue to be encouraged through sharing of experiences, exchange of ideas and technology, networking with institutions and organizations and through bilateral and multi-lateral partnerships.

19. Best Practices

19.1 The Policy calls upon the State Government to study the Best Practices on Women Empowerment in all Departments of the State including other States.