

ODISHA STATE POLICY FOR GIRLS AND WOMEN-2014

The Odisha State Policy for Girls and Women has been formulated in order to provide a comprehensive and actionable framework for the overall development of girls and women. This is a document that is actionable and lays out specific issues that can be addressed comprehensively within a framework. The policy is inclusive of different opinions and has been framed subsequent to a desk review, review of national and other state policies on women & girls and series of consultations with various stakeholders which provided the insights for the formulation of this policy. The Policy considers a life cycle approach, covering concerns of girls and women at birth, infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood and during old age.

The Policy is divided into 7 key focus areas of survival, health and nutrition; education; livelihood (women in formal sector and informal sector); asset ownership; decision making, participation and political representation; safety, security and protection, and girls and women with special needs. Each focus area considers the situation analysis, followed by policy directives and further guiding principles and action points that translate the policy into action.

The Policy emphasises increased capacity building and strengthened institutional and legal framework for girls and women. The Policy will operate as an overarching guiding framework for planning and implementation by various state and non-state actors, so that the needs of girls and women are addressed affirmatively.

During the drafting, forty seven consultations were held: 19 at state and 28 at district levels, to draw inputs for the policy directives. The findings from these consultations along with desk review of schemes, programmes and initiatives for girls and women in the state and the gender gaps in health and social development indicators was the basis of the policy. The draft policy was shared with all the departments and meetings were held for feedback on specific policy directives with respect to each department. The members of civil society organisations, subject experts, academics, students, government field functionaries contributed in the policy formulation process.

Some key recommendations in the 7 focus areas

1. Survival, Health and Nutrition:

- i. Address adverse child sex ratio through area specific action plans; strengthen implementation of Pre Conception & Pre Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act, 1994 and organize community mobilization campaigns to promote value of girl child.
- ii. Promote the health of adolescent girls through facility and community based initiatives with specific interventions to address sexual and reproductive health issues, early marriage and pregnancy.
- iii. Broad base “*Mamata*” scheme to incentivize birth of girl child and remove the conditionality of two live births for the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) for an initial period of five years.
- iv. Address maternal mortality by creating conditions for safe delivery, especially in high burden areas. Mandate the conduct of maternal death audits.
- v. Establish and expand interventions to create awareness, prevent and treat cancers of reproductive organs like cervix and breast.

2. Education:

- i. Create Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) like hostels at each block, and upgrade existing KGBVs to secondary level by expanding capacity.
- ii. Provide incentives such as free text books, uniforms, safe transport and waiver of fees at secondary and higher secondary levels to all girls.
- iii. Provide scholarship to girls on merit cum means basis to continue education at higher secondary level and beyond.
- iv. Increase residential facilities for girls in junior colleges, degree colleges and universities, over a period of five years.
- v. Adopt a zero tolerance policy to ensure safety of girls and women in educational institutions through appropriate measures. Have adequate women staff at appropriate levels in educational institutions where girls reside in large numbers. Develop protocols and monitor standards of care to check and report any abuse.

3. Livelihood:

Formal sector

- i. Create a dedicated unit in Odisha State Employment Mission to promote and monitor women's skill development and job linked training.
- ii. Work towards flexible work schedules, maternity benefits, childcare support, separate toilet and crèche facilities at work places.

Informal sector

- iii. Encourage and promote women farmers. Accord high priority to technical skill building in agriculture related activities for women farmers.
- iv. Set up single window systems to provide comprehensive support to women farmers on crops, financial services, technology, inputs and market linkage.
- v. Promote resource centres at village level focusing on community led livelihoods for women.
- vi. Establish migrant support services for girls and women at source and destinations to enable them secure their rights and entitlements.
- vii. Promote training and technological interventions in cottage industries, traditional handicrafts and handloom and occupations such as fisheries, dairy, poultry and animal husbandry.

4. Asset Ownership:

- i. Reduce stamp duty for registration of land and house purchased in a woman's name and gift deeds of immovable property executed in favour of women.
- ii. Allot Ac. 0.04 decimal of homestead land in rural areas to women belonging to low income group and not possessing any house/ flat or homestead land who are either (i) widowed, unmarried, divorced or separated from husband by a decree or order of a Court or under any custom or usage having the force of law, having attained 45 years of age or more, or (ii) women with more than 40 percent disability, who have attained 30 years of age or more.
- iii. Extend land lease at nominal rates in favour of women's groups for productive activities. Allot cultivable/arable Government land on temporary lease basis to WSHGs for agriculture and horticulture purposes.

5. Decision Making, Participation and Political Representation:

- i. Organise Mahila Sabhas at Gram Panchayat (GP) level, promote women participation in *palli* and Gram Sabha. Make issues relating to girls and women including violence, a specific agenda in the Palli Sabha and Gram Sabha.

ii. Move appropriate and suitable amendments in the Odisha Gram Panchayat (GP), Panchayat Samiti (PS) and Zilla Parisad (ZP) Rules and Acts to remove any discriminatory practices that prohibit or restrict women to participate effectively.

iii. Institute special recognitions and awards for women achievers in different fields.

6. Safety, Security and Protection:

i. Establish a designated unit in the Home Department to guide, monitor and support investigations pertaining to violence against girls and women.

ii. Establish one stop crisis centres for survivors/victims of violence. Adopt standard protocol for comprehensive medico-legal response to sexual violence against girls and women.

iii. Design and operationalise a survivor protection scheme for girls and women victims/survivors of violence encompassing counselling, safe accommodation, rehabilitation and reintegration.

iv. Create appropriate mechanisms for universal registration of marriage.

v. Involve WSHGs as para legal workers and promote community level fora to track, monitor and report instances of violence and trafficking of girls and women.

7. Girls and Women with Special Needs

i. Accord high priority to care, protection, education and overall development of young orphans and abandoned girls.

ii. Take up special drive and or design specific programmes for enrollment in job oriented and placement linked skill building and training courses and programmes to cover girls and women with special needs so as to facilitate their gainful employment. Initiate special efforts towards covering girls and women in distress, in institutions, in contact and in conflict with law.

iii. Promote women's collectives and SHGs of women with disability, women in urban slums, from minority communities, disaster and conflict affected, and in institutions.