

# Introduction

Even though women constitute fifty percent of our population and play a major role in nurturing our society it is a fact that our society has been discriminating them and they have been subjected to inhuman treatment for ages. Discrimination against women is one of the heinous crime prevailing in our society, world over and obviously it is impeding process of human development. No sustainable development can be possible unless this discriminatory practice is wiped out at all level.

In our country and our region while addressing to the issue of Social Justice or Economic Justice, the foremost issue that emerge is the gender justice. Unless the issue of gender is addressed it will not be possible to achieve any positive result on any other issue concerning justice and development. Fortunately, during last few decades all over the world there have been growing movements to eliminate all forms of gender discrimination and it gives us hope for establishment of a justful society in the near future.

Sahabhagi Vikash Abhiyan, which works mostly with the marginalized sections of the society such as Dalit, Tribals, Small and Marginal farmers as well as landless Agricultural workers has been addressing to the issue of justice from it's very inception. Regarding addressing to the issue of gender discrimination, SVA has been constantly making efforts to improve it's effectiveness and quality of the intervention. SVA has been open to learn from the experience and work of other like minded organizations and thus it has been also constantly making endeavour to improve the quality of it's work. During the past several years, SVA had formulated several policy guidelines from time to time but they were not put into a consolidated and compiled form . Hence this document has been prepared by compiling such papers so that it will be used by the members, staff and volunteers as a guideline in management of all the programmes from time to time with a gender perspective. This paper also contains a few basic information so as to help the readers to understand the issue and the movement that has been going on at various level all over the world. It is hoped that this paper will be useful to everyone associated with SVA and contribute towards attaining our goal of a society free from hunger, poverty and injustice. As mentioned earlier, SVA has been always open to learning's and in this process SVA will be constantly upgrading it's policies so as to make itself more useful and effective.

Bhubaneswar  
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**Sahabhagi Vikash Abhiyan**

## Part-I

### UNDERSTANDING GENDER:

The word Gender is used to describe those characteristics of men and women which are Socially and Culturally determined. Essentially, there is distinction between sex and gender. It is believed that the different characterizations, roles, status accorded to men and women in the society are determined by biology (i.e. Sex). They are natural and can not be altered. However, as Ann Oakley, says, "Gender has no biological origin". Gender and sex both are two different things. The Differences between sex and gender are broadly as follows:.

#### Sex

- ✓ It is natural
- ✓ Sex is biological, refers to visible differences in genitalia and preventative function.
- ✓ It is constant, can not be changed.

#### Gender

- ✓ It is socio-cultural and man made.
- ✓ It refers to masculine and feminine qualities, behavior patterns, roles and responsibilities.
- ✓ It is variable, changes over the time, culture and family.

But in our country "Sex and Gender" are used as synonymous terms and the term is "Linga".

Again, from the above characteristics we have come across two divisions i.e : Natural Biological and Social sex.

Women can do everything what men do or expected of them to do with biological, sexual, functions like child bearing and breast feeding. We are born female or male, known as girls and boys, who later grow into women and men. We learn about appropriate behavior, attitudes, roles and activities, means and ways related to our lives. This learnt behavior forms gender identity and so also determines gender roles.

Further, gender roles vary from one culture to other, one social group to another existing in the same culture. Caste, age, class and socio-economic conditions also have effect on determining the status of both men and women. As societies are not stagnant, it changes over the period of time, so as the gender identity and pattern changes. Now the society functions in a complex form, the roles played by men and women also are determined by Socio-Political, Economic and Cultural factors. Therefore, understanding gender differentiation and gender discrimination help us to understand the complex ways in which society categorize us into female and male and assign corresponding roles.

**Ultimately this leads to the social basis for conflict and it's resolution.**

As gender determines the status and role of women and men, so also determines men-women relationship nexus. Thus, relation based on gender is known gender relation. The term gender relations refers to the relations of power between women and men which are revealed in a range of practices, ideas, representation including the division of labor, roles and resources between women and men and ascribing them of different abilities, attitudes, desires, personality traits, behavioral patterns and so on. Gender relations are both constituted by and help to constitute these practices and ideologies in

interaction with other structures of social hierarchy such as class, caste and race. They may be seen as largely socially constructed rather than biologically determined and as variable over time and place." (Bina Agrawal, 1996, A field of one's own Gender and Land Rights in South Asia, New Delhi: Cambridge University Press, P.

51 ) Gender relations take account of the issues of power and hierarchy within the family and the Society. Women perform different household tasks, earn livelihood, possess legal rights yet in most of the cultures, they have little ownership or control over resources (land, property, education, technical skill, market information, participatory approach in politics, taking decision). These factors place women in a subordinate position.

In addition to power/political hierarchy, the other identities like religion, caste, class, races or ethnic groups affect gender and gender relations. The Socio-Political and economic status differentiation also exists among men and women. Like propertied class and working class of men so also working class women differs from propertied class women in the Society. Engel pointed that the rich class women do not work outside the family, totally dependent on their husbands. They are property themselves. Their only important function is to produce heirs. On the other hand, the working class women are part of carrying livelihood, economy, attaining some amount of economic independence.

In this context it is important to discuss about "Gender division of Labour". It simply refers to allocation of different roles, responsibilities and tasks to women and men based on societal ideas of what men and women should do and are capable of doing.

Women's role encompasses work in following categories:

#### Productive Work:

Productive work refers to the production of goods and services for consumption and trade (all work done in factory, offices, farm, agricultural fields) especially which is paid or generate income. Both men and women get involved in productive works but most often women's work is less visible and less valued than men's work.

#### Reproductive work:

Reproductive work is categorized under two divisions- Biological and Social. Biological reproduction refers to giving birth to a child (only women can perform) and Social Reproductive work refers to all kinds of caring and nurturing activities to ensure human survival and maintenance like food preparation, collection of water, fuel collection, marketing, nursing, cleaning, washing, family health care etc. Although it is crucial for very survival yet it is seldom considered as "Real Work".

In rural Community these type of work usually requires a lot of manual labor and time consumption. It is almost the responsibility of women and girls except in a few Communities/Cultures.

## Community Work:

It involves collective organization of community events and services, festivals, ceremonies, celebrations, Community improvement activities, participation in groups and organization of local political activity etc. However the women will not be accepted for a leadership role in the community activities. For example women are one who organize and prepare all the details of many Community Celebrations but it is the men who would make speeches (Local politicians, leaders, male in most of the cases), men are more noticed and valued than women's Community Work.

On the basis of above three major types of work the following role concepts are used:

### Productive Role (earning):

- ✓ Work for pay in cash or kind.
- ✓ Anything with potential exchange value.

### Reproductive (Domestic) Role:

- ✓ Child bearing and rearing.
- ✓ Maintenance of home environment.
- ✓ Food Preparation, cleaning, washing, collection of water, fuel etc.
- ✓ Caring towards family members (elderly, sick, handicapped)

## Community Role:

### a. Management of

- ✓ Unpaid work for community benefit.
- ✓ Maintenance of Community goods and services.

### b. Politics includes

- ✓ Unpaid work for Community benefit.
- ✓ Decision making

## Gender Activity Profile and Workload.:

- ❖ When we study/observe men's and women's activities throughout a 24 hours of a day and Produce Activity Profiles, we can compare their actual workload and see the imbalance between their work.

Despite the considerable differences in the daily lives of different groups of people in different societies, a comparison of such Activity Profile across cultures have the following common points.

- ❖ Women usually work for longer hours.
- ❖ Women have more varied tasks, doing so many things at a time.

- ❖ Work (most of the work) for family is done by women.
- ❖ Women have less leisure/entertainment.
- ❖ Women are less involved in decision making,

It is observed that due to women's workload they can not participate in development projects and activities. There is a wide gap between women's high economic participation (unorganized) and their low political and social power execution.

The important task in a development project is to identify **practical** and **strategic** gender needs.

- a. Practical Gender Needs: They are responses to an Immediate Perceived necessity formed from concrete conditions, derived from women's position within the gender division of labor. These needs shared by all household members, identified specifically on practical gender needs. It includes needs for water provision, earning for household, health, housing, basic services like arrangement of family food provisions etc.
- b. Strategic needs: The needs to challenge the nature of men-women relationship and aim to overcome women's subordination. They may include needs for access to credit, other resources, alleviation of the responsibility of domestic labour, child care, removal of institutional discrimination such as rights to own land or property etc.

## Women and Development: Policy Approach since 1975.

In the early 1970s there had been a growing awareness among people regarding the role of women in the development process. With the Proclamation of the UN Decade for women in 1975, women's issues were widely discussed and focused. But at the same time a contradictory trend was marked on retrospective of activities over two decade's development. It was revealed that in the name of modernization process women's position in Third World countries including India was rather deteriorating.

As a result of these revelations, development workers, social activists, social feminist thinkers and agencies working at national and international level pointed out changing the orientation of development strategies. Development policies were aimed to address the basic needs of marginalized section, viz women. In view of women's important role in the family and in earning livelihood, it was decided to integrate women for promotion of development. For example the World Bank recognized the failure of development policies in considering economic role played by women. It went to the extent in developing the concept of "invisible women". "The work done by women is often unpaid and they tend not to work on the formal labour concept. Women themselves and the work they do are statistically uncollatable and therefore they remain invisible. Women are defined in terms of what they lacked: Paid work, Access to education and Health care etc." The resultant fact was that the absence of these factors enabled women being excluded from participating in the development of their societies. Therefore, the question was raised about integrating women into development process. The development policy was aimed at empowering women in overcoming the obstacles which kept them marginalized.

### Feminization of Poverty :

It was observed that in Developing Countries including India the concept of integrating women into the development process did not lead any significant improvement in the lives of women. During 1985 at the UN Conference held at Nairobi, observations were made as follows. "Although the first years of the women's Decade were blessed with relatively good economic conditions, in the developed countries as well as in the developing nations as the economic situation worsened, efforts towards bringing about equal participation of women in society slackened and new problems cropped up. As far as development is concerned there are indications that, when women did participate more actively in society, the benefits this brought them stood in stark contrast to the efforts they had put in."

In the early 1980's, because of the debt crisis along with the structural adjustment policies being implemented in Third World Countries at the instance of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, women were the worst sufferers. " The prices of staple food stuffs went up, people lost their jobs, cuts were made in public spending on education and health and women worked harder or took on more jobs. The number of women working in the informal sector went up; more women worked as prostitutes... .."

Thus experience shows that the price women pay for being integrated into the development process is to suffer the most. Apart from this women only had managed to get paid work in the unorganized sector or industries where they were lowly paid and were working in adverse

condition. For example, only a small amount of the funds were spent on projects aimed at supporting women. In majority of programmes there was no importance paid to the needs of women.

Therefore, the integration strategy on women's lives lied in false assumption that if productivity rises then so does the status of the individual both man and woman rise. But in reality it has been revealed that being integrated into the process of development does not mean the development of women.

According to UN Studies, it is pointed out that women do two thirds of the world's work, yet they receive only one tenth of global income and own only one percent of the means of production. As long as development planners and practitioners continue to make programmes which concentrate primarily on the optimal use of female labour in the various sectors and do not do anything about getting rid of the structures which cause women to be disadvantaged and discriminated against society, politics and the economy, there would not be any development that is desirable.

### Women's movements in the Third World: A bargain for fairer development policies:

A bargain for fairer development policies following the aftermath of UN Decade for women where there were various reforms carried out by Governments and a few Development policies were implemented. One of the most important development during this period was the voice raised by Women Organizations about women's role in the field of decision making process. But the globalization and economic liberalization had tremendous impact on women's live and struggle for their survival. Yet, the positive aspect was that women for the first time started working together through small grass roots forums/platforms like self-help groups, local organizations and networks at regional / state / national and International level. Although, these organizations /forums differ in their conceptual thinking and activities yet they are based on certain basic common principles. The modernization process had led to changes in societal structures and a decline in women's lives and working conditions. Resultantly, women all over the world had taken practical action as well as made critical analysis of why society discriminates against them as women and started the process of assertion.

Since the beginning of 1980's the progressive women emphasized on the adverse impact of globalization in deteriorating women's situation and on the other hand the social structures which underpinned this impoverishment. At the same time women were questioning the prevailing model of development with its focus on growth and modernization. Vandana Siva, the Indian environmentalist/Sociologist puts it, "The prevailing model based in global exclusion or exploitation of women, whether they be from the West or elsewhere. On the degradation, plundering and destruction of nature and on the exploitation and destruction of other cultures." In this way , women's organizations and networks are now discussing about the alternative societal and economic models which are free from sex bias and can cater to the needs of women and the environment.

## Women's vision on Development from their point of view:

After '85's Nairobi conference, women's organizations held, "we want a World where inequality based on class, gender and race is absent from every country, and from the relationships among countries. We want a World where basic needs become basic rights and where poverty and all forms of violence are eliminated. Each person will have the opportunity to develop her or his full potential creating and women's values of nurturance and solidarity will characterize human relationships. In such a world women's reproductive role will be redefined: child care will be shared by men, women and society as a whole. We want a World where the massive resources now used in the production of the means of destruction will be directed to areas where they help to relieve oppression both inside and outside the home ( . . . ) only by sharpening the links between equality, development and peace can we show that the "**basic rights**" of the poor and the transformation of the institutions that subordinate women are inextricably linked. They can be achieved together through the self empowerment of women." The fourth UN conference at Beijing in 1995 was convened in the context of the impact of globalization after the fall of State Socialism. Here also the need for increased economic growth was pushed and without identifying who would be the beneficiaries. It was observed over other three World Conferences that the development issues of Environment, Human Right, Population and Poverty, can not be discussed without consideration of issues of gender. Conversely, gender related issues including the roles, responsibilities and men-women relationship can not be discussed outside the context of economic, social and political development.

Simply, this "feminization of development" has linkage on improving the quality of development with feminist concerns. They put emphasis on the eradication of socio- economic injustice, combined with appropriate and responsible management and use of resources, that all forms of discrimination against women be removed; women must participate in the structuring of their societies.

## **Incorporating gender dimension into Development:**

1. A Gender based approach requires analysis of local situations. In order to understand the differences that exist between men and women, between various sub-groups within communities, we have to look into the series of factors like work pattern, knowledge and skills as well as social status of the communities.
2. Understanding power structures and recognizing the arrangements of rights and responsibilities that exist in the community. It can change over the time.

### **Important Gender issues being recognized.**

- ❖ Protecting women's access to resources and improving their bargaining positions in the household would be the primary concern.
- ❖ To avoid involving women in project activities that bind them to extra unpaid work without adequate compensation.
- ❖ Efforts ought to be made to improve the quality of women's participation.
- ❖ Gender training/sensitization at work place.
- ❖ Employment of more female staff in management positions and extension work ( who have gender training)
- ❖ Helping women in finding alternate source of income.

## **The need of Gender approach:**

The gender based approach focuses on women and men rather than considering women in isolation. It highlights the following points;

- ❖ The conventions and hierarchies which reinforce dominant position in the family and community.
- ❖ Differences between women's and men's interests even within the same household. (How these are played).
- ❖ The way gender roles and relations change as a result of economic forces, migration for work and other socio- economic trends.

Therefore gender approach provides a total picture of women's role within the family and community and explain why many of the development projects involving women have failed. It is difficult to raise sensitive issues to do with confronting social and cultural norms and challenges to power structures that Communities, Government and other Institutions are generally reluctant to do.

## **Status of women in India:**

The principles of gender equality and gender justice have been fundamental to Indian thinking and incorporated in the Indian Constitution's Preamble, Fundamental Rights and Directive State Principles. Article 14 guarantees justice-social, economic and political as well as equality before law and ensures non-discrimination on the basis of sex. Article 15 (3) empowers the state to make special provisions for the promotion of the welfare and development of women.

Yet, the experience since Independence has made it clear that there exists a wide gulf between our Constitutional provisions and the de facto situation of women in India. The balance of gender equality, justice and equity continued to be pro-man. Indian women still continue to bear the burden of poverty, illiteracy, economic marginalisation, exclusion from decision making, lack of access to resources, discrimination and violence at domestic front as well as in the societal framework.

In this context we can have a discussion on major factors which are held responsible for women's marginalized status, which are as follows:

**Poverty:** The changing economic scenario in the country especially in since 1990-91 has increased the hardship for women who suffer a reduction in their income and employment opportunities and withdrawal of social subsidies such as the Public Distribution System, Primary Health and Education.

**Employment:** The productive role of women in the national economy is not recognized and under- enumerated. Today, most of the women work in informal and unorganized sector as agricultural labourers, domestic labour, in home based industries, construction and other related contract work. Due to the gender division of labour, women are relegated to work against the norms of labour legislation, wage and job security. Very often women face sexual harassment at workplaces. Therefore, employment opportunity for women have been always very low and further deteriorated due to the globalization of the economy.

**Land ownership, housing and settlement:** The growth model of development and existing patriarchal values in the society is mainly responsible for the distress of women. Particularly the rural women living in fragile economic zones, Displaced and refugee women, Dalit and women of urban slums are the worst sufferers.

**Health Services:** Women's health needs are inadequately addressed by the health care systems in the country combined with structural poverty, poor nutrition, and unequal access to food, water and sanitary facilities.

**Violence against women:** Women of India experience enormous levels of violence in their day to day lives within the family, community, workplace, public places and custodial institutions. Current development priorities like Big Dam Project, Mining, Forest and Wild life Protection programmes etc cause huge displacement . Growing communalism, cross country terrorism, caste, class, race feuds, also contribute to the increase of violence against women in India.

**Political Participation:** Women are severely under-represented in all policy making forums across the country. The 73rd and 74th constitutional Amendments have provided reservation of one third of all seats and posts of chairpersons for women in local self governing institutions yet, it is not enough where the half of the total population constitutes women.

**Education:** According to the Directive Principles of State Policy, universalisation of elementary education was to be attained by 1960. But it has not yet been achieved even after elapse of more than five decades of independence. Education is a basic indicator reflecting the level of development of any region. It is also important for gender development as female educational status relates to child care, access to health, fertility, reproduction, mortality rate and so on. In addition to this fact education enables economic and political participation of women. Thus, low level of literacy among women and girls is one of the important factors in gender backwardness. Further the difference between female and male literacy rates is used to indicate gender gap in literacy rates. Wide gap in literacy levels between male and female indicates the specific gender dimension of the educational backwardness of the country.

**Dalits and Tribal:** Dalits (suppressed) and tribal women constitute the most backward section in India. They comprise primarily the scheduled castes and lowest castes listed for upliftment and protective discriminations by the state.

It is felt that the Dalit women are thrice alienated on the basis of class, caste and gender. The fundamental issues of the tribal or adivasies are those of land, forest, and water resources. Total violation of existing protective land laws, increasing rate of displacement in the name of development, deprivation of traditional rights and integrationist approach of state which results in identity loss are some of the key concerns of tribal women in particular.

Apart from the above discussed factors we have to look into the indicators deterring development are demographic, literacy rate, mortality rate, age at marriage and fertility, work participation rate, which correspondingly correlate to the demographic, educational, health, social cultural and economic status of women.

Table: 1  
Sex Ratio of India ( 1901-2001)  
(Female per 1000 Males)

Year	Ratio
1901	972
1911	964
1921	955
1931	950
1941	945
1951	946
1961	941
1971	930
1981	934
1991	927
2001	933

Source: Census of India 2001

Sex Ratio is a composite indicator of women's health, nutrition and survival status, table-I clearly indicates that in India, sex ratio has been constantly declining ever since 1901 and this shows the decline in the status given to the women in India.

Table-2  
Literacy Rate of India since 1951 to 2001

Year	Persons	Male	Female
1951	18.33	27.16	8.86
1961	28.30	40.40	15.35
1971	34.45	45.96	21.97
1981	43.57	56.38	29.76
1991	52.21	64.13	39.29
2001	65.38	75.85	54.16

Source: Census of India,2001 (Provisional Population Total)

Literacy is one of the important characteristics for demographic analysis, Table-2 shows the trend of growth in literacy rate for each decade. During 2001 the total literacy rate is substantially higher than the previous decade, yet there is still a wider gap between male and female literacy rate. This also indicates the lower level of development of women as against their male counterparts.

Table-3  
 Infant mortality Rate of India since 1981 to 1998

Year	Rural	Urban	Total
1981	119	62	110
1982	114	65	105
1983	114	66	105
1984	113	66	104
1985	107	59	97
1986	105	62	96
1987	104	61	95
1988	102	62	94
1989	98	58	91
1990	86	50	80
1991	87	53	80
1992	85	53	79
1993	82	45	74
1994	80	52	74
1995	80	48	74
1996	77	46	72
1997	77	45	71
1998	77	45	72
	2.86	2.43	2.8

Note: Average annual growth rate (in percentage)

Source: Health Statistics of Orissa-2001, Directorate of Health Services, Bhubaneswar: As Per Sample Registration System.

Table-4  
 Health Profile of Gender of India

Life expectancy at birth (years)	1971	1981	1994
Male	46.4	50.9	59.7
Female	44.7	50.0	60.0
Infant Mortality Rate (Per 1000 live births)	1978	1988	1997
Male	123	96	70.3
Female	131	93	72.2
Child mortality Rate (per 1000 live births under 5 years age)	1970	1985	1997
Male	51.7	36.6	23.2
Female	55.1	40.4	25.3
Maternal Mortality Rate (per 100000 live births)	1980	1993	1997
	468	437	408

Source: Sample Registration System (SRS) estimates, office of Registrar General and Census Commissioner, New Delhi, Planning Commission and Economic Survey 1999-2000.

India's performance in women's health is a little better and slightly superior to the average of the other developing countries. Yet it is worse indication to the average all medium human developed countries. The obsession and preference for boy child results in the neglect of girls and female infants in India. The inhuman practice of female infanticide the scientific sex determination based on selective foeticide results the decline of girls from the population. High mortality rate among female children also reflects the various socio- cultural biases operating in the care and nurturance of girls right from infancy. Besides natural morbidity rate, life expectancy at birth are the factors which substantiated gender inequalities, in the arena of health care.

The age at marriage and fertility rate among women are also two important indicators for health status of women. It is observed that getting married at an early age has adverse effect on health, risk to lives of mother as well as the child. Further early marriage leads to longer period of fertility and number of pregnancies which also affects general health conditions of women .

### Work participation Indicators:

Work is defined as participation in any economically productive activity with or without compensation, wages or profit. The main workers combined with marginal workers are termed as the workers in Census of India 2001. In India there are 402,512,190 persons enumerated as workers out of which 313,173,394 are main workers and 89,338,796 are marginal workers. There are 622,738,869 persons reported as non-workers. Sex wise, there are 275,463,736 male workers and 127,048,454 female workers. The sex ratio of workers i.e number of female workers per 1000 male workers is only 461 in India. The table 5 clearly shows the trend.

Table-5  
Work Participation rate of India from 1961-2001

Year		Persons	Male	Female
1961	Total	42.98	57.20	27.90
	Rural	45.11	58.35	31.40
	Urban	33.44	52.36	11.11
1971	Total	33.06	52.61	12.06
	Rural	34.01	53.62	13.36
	Urban	29.32	48.80	6.65
1981	Total	36.70	52.62	19.67
	Rural	38.79	53.77	23.06
	Urban	29.99	49.06	8.31
1991	Total	37.50	51.61	22.77
	Rural	40.09	52.58	26.79
	Urban	30.16	48.92	9.19
2001	Total	39.26	51.93	25.68
	Rural	41.97	52.36	30.98
	Urban	32.23	50.85	11.85

Source: Census of India-2001

## Status of Women in Orissa

Women of Orissa through ages have traversed quite a long way. As a part of primarily Hindu culture women of Orissa are not different from women of other parts of India. They have been occupying subordinate and subservient positions in family, community and society. Since the cult of Lord Jagannath has been a pivot around which social life of Orissa has revolved, women's position has been influenced by the tenets of Jagannath cult which is a synthesis of Aryan Brahminic tradition, Buddhism, Jainism, Vaishnavism and Tantric practices. As lord Jagannath originally was a tribal deity, the cult contains elements of tribal faith and belief within the ambit of this all embracing cult, a few models of women are visualized. Inside the temple. There are three important goddesses each representing a model of woman. Laxmi represents all the virtues of a good house wife. The Laxmi Puran has left the message to the mass of common women of Orissa that they are homebound, dutiful housewives with limited opportunities to move out and mix with people outside.

The second model of woman was built around goddess Vimala. It is interpreted that women with exceptional power do have to occupy their positions in society, they can have edge over men.

The third goddess is Subhadra who is the sister of the two lords. Subhadra as a sister has been enjoying a privileged place, she is adored but dependent on her brothers.

Besides the goddess centred models there are other conceptualization of women in the cult of Jagannath. The Devadasies are supposed to be wedded to God and concurrently become lust objects of priests and politically powerful persons. As they are dedicated to God they have a respectable status but have low social profile.

The religious preachers by visualizing different role models for women prescribed norms so that they could reach sublime heights. The models also sought to make compromise among conflicting interests in society. Making women equal, subordinate and superior to men were all there but the theme of subordination was dominant. Both the general Hindu culture and the cult of Lord Jagannath placed women next to men with some exceptions which does not deny the common subordination status of women in Orissa.

Now we can delve into history to know their status. In history it has been depicted about the status of noble and royal women in political domain but failed to reflect about the common women who constitute the large majority.

The state was subjected to recurrent invasions from the Nandas and the Mauryas, the Mughals, the Afghans, the Marathas and the Britishers during ancient, medieval and British period. Material wealth, human resources were plundered and exploited very often causing misery and mass poverty. All these above mentioned factors, forces and imposing taboos and restrictions for women are contributed towards subordinate position of women. Apart from this difficulties are compounded because of the fact that the state has been prone to the vagaries of flood, drought, famine and cyclone from time to time. In these circumstances women toiled hard alongside men in the field of agriculture, petty business and trade for survival. It has been observed that, women in poor family were productive workers and continue to remain so till today.

With the advent of British Rule and exposure to Western Civilization, the state experienced renaissance in which certain positive changes for women were noticed. The practice of female infanticide among Kondh tribes of Phulbani and Ganjam districts and the practice of Sati were abolished. Child marriage was prohibited and widow marriage was introduced. Indian Penal Code was enacted to take up legal action for offences against women like abduction, rape, adultery, bigamy, cruelty, cheating, remarriage during life time of a wife etc. Women's education was encouraged and their economic status was elevated with the reorganization of right to property. All this caused a marked increase in the participation of women in education, freedom struggle and other socio-political activities. On the eve of independence there was 4.52 percent of literacy among the women in Orissa. Now it is grown into 50.97 percent.

After independence, the constitution of India enunciated the principles of equality between sexes. The Indian planning process including the state planning endeavor was there to give content to this ideology. Women's programmes have begun with poverty alleviation, extended itself to welfare oriented later include empowerment in development process; and women are recognized as productive agents, effective saver of net national income commensurate with their size and efficiency. This planning philosophy also animates the state planning process in Orissa.

Apart from these, a series of social legislations have been enacted from time to time for improving the status of women in the society but as it was rightly remarked by late prime minister Indira Gandhi, "The general texture of our society does not permit women to actually benefit from the rights which are theirs in theory." The status of women continues to remain low in the country more so in the state of Orissa.

Orissa is one of the poorest states of the country where 47.2 percent of the total population are living below the poverty line (2000).

Table-1 (Annexure-I) presents a comparative statement on percentage of population below the poverty line by major states and all India status.

Table-2  
Sex Ratio since 1001 to 2001 in India and Orissa

Year	Sex Ratio in India	Per 1000 males in Orissa
1001	972	1037
1911	964	1056
1921	955	1066
1931	950	1067
1941	945	1053
1951	946	1022
1961	941	1001
1971	930	988
1981	934	921
1991	927	971
2001	933	972

Source: Provisional Population Totals-Paper 2 of 2001. Women in the state constitute 49.29 percent of total population. Table-2 shows that female sex ratio has been declining steadily since 1921. Now it is 972 per 1000 males in the state.

Table-3

Literacy Rate in Orissa from 1951 to 2001

<b>Year</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
1951	15.80	27.32	4.52
1961	21.66	34.68	8.65
1971	26.18	38.29	13.92
1981	33.62	49.39	20.60
1991	49.09	63.09	34.68
2001	63.61	75.95	50.97

Source: Census of India, Series-22 Orissa, Provisional Population Status.

The female literacy rate in the state has increased from 4.52 percent in 1951 to 50.97 percent in 2001 but it is still much lower than the male literacy rate of 75.95 percent. According to 2001 census report 70 percent illiterate female population live in Malkanagiri, Koraput, Nawarangpur, Rayagada, Kalahandi and Nuapada districts of the state.

Table-4 (A)

## Work Participation rate of Orissa: 1961-2001

Year		Person	Male	Female
1961	Total	43.66	60.75	26.58
	Rural	44.07	61.02	27.38
	Urban	37.52	57.21	13.12
1971	Total	33.19	55.62	10.47
	Rural	33.40	56.11	10.72
	Urban	30.94	50.73	7.52
1981	Total	38.01	55.86	19.81
	Rural	38.90	56.68	21.09
	Urban	31.36	50.14	9.49
1991	Total	37.53	53.79	20.79
	Urban	29.67	48.36	8.10
2001	Total	38.88	52.75	24.62
	Rural	40.33	53.38	27.10
	Urban	30.66	49.37	9.76

Source: Census of India-2001

Note: Work participation here is used as the proportion of workers to total population and not to the conventional proportion of labour force to total population.

In Orissa the total number of workers are 14,272,764, out of which 9,818,471 are males and 4,454,293 are females (2001). Thus, the sex ratio of workers comes to 454 for Orissa which is marginally less than the national average of 461. The Table-4(A) on work Participation rate of Orissa clearly shows the low work participation of female in comparison to their Male counterparts.

Table-4 (B)

## Employment in the organized sector:

Sl.No	Year	Public Sector		Private Sector		Total organized sector employees.	Women employees in org. Sector	% of women employees to total employees
		Total	Women	Total	Women			
1.	1998	712	82	99	11	811	93	11.5
2.	1999	709	83	93	10	802	93	11.6
3.	2000	711	89	87	10	798	99	12.4
4.	2001	717	92	89	10	806	102	12.7
5.	2002	692	93	79	10	771	103	13.4

Source: Directorate of Employment , Bhubneswar, Orissa. During 2001, 8.06 lakh employees including 1.02 lakh female were engaged in the organized sector in Orissa. By the end of 2002, the employment in the organized public sector of the state was about 6.92 lakh and 0.79 lakh respectively while the women employees to the total employees in the public sector and in the

organized private sector were about 13.4% and 12.7 respectively. Women employees constituted 13.4% of total employees in the organized sector at the end of 2002 as against 12.7% at the end of 2001 in the state.

In public sector the No. of women employees increased from 0.92 lakh in 2001 to 0.93 lakh in 2002, while the No. of women employees in the organized private sector remained almost same for the last four years.

Table-4©

Total Female workers of Orissa.

<b>Workers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Total workers	31.21
Main workers	34.93
Marginal workers	65.07
Workers in Organized Sector	73.8

Source-2001 census, Orissa.

According to 2001 census 31.21% of the total workers in Orissa are women. The main workers and marginal workers among females constitute 34.93% and 65.07% of the total female workers respectively. The unorganized primary sector which includes agriculture, animal husbandry, fishery, forestry, plantation and other allied activities absorb 73.8% of the total female workers. Besides the unpaid economic activities of women and their contribution in the domestic sector remain unreported and are categorized under unorganized sector. In those domain it is found that women suffer from discriminative wage structures and they earn less than men. The marginalisation of women in the work force suggest the economic backwardness of women and their exclusion from mainstream of development process despite women specific plans implemented from time to time.

Table-5(A)

Infant Mortality Rates (IMRS) of Orissa from 1981 to 1998

Year	Rural	Urban	Total
1981	140	69	135
1982	137	64	132
1983	131	73	126
1984	135	84	131
1985	137	84	132
1986	127	75	123
1987	131	75	126
1988	126	69	122
1989	125	78	121
1990	127	68	122
1991	129	71	124

1992	118	80	115
1993	115	69	110
1994	108	66	103
1995	107	65	103
1996	99	65	96
1997	100	65	96
1998	101	66	98
r	-2.02	-0.75	-2.02

Note: r =Average annual growth rate ( in Percent)

Source: Health Statistics of Orissa-2001, Directorate of Health Services, Bhubaneswar: As per Sample Registration System.

Table-5(B)

Birth Rate, Death Rate and Infant mortality rate in Orissa.

Year	CBR	CDR	IMR
1981	33.1	13.1	135
1991	28.8	12.8	124
1995	27.8	10.8	103
1996	27.0	10.8	96
1997	26.5	10.9	96
1998	25.7	11.1	98
1999	24.1	10.6	97
2000	24.3	10.5	96

CBR-Crude Birth Rate

CDR-Crude Death Rate

IMR-Infant Mortality Rate

Source: Economic Survey 2002-2003, Orissa

### Violence against Women:

Under this backdrop the unequal position of women can be observed clearly. For last two decades in spite of efforts to maintain greater equality between men and women, a parallel growth of violence against women is at the receiving end.

On the other hand there was no systematic record of different types of atrocities against women made available till late 80's. During that period women usually did not report atrocities against them due to lack of education, awareness, attached social stigma and other social pressures on them. In due course of time the advancement of technology like print, electronic, satellite media they became aware to some extent. In this context Government of Orissa has created a State Commission for women in Panchayati Raj Department. Since 1993 it has been working with the objective of compiling information about violence against women in Orissa, coordinating and mobilizing public opinion against such social offences.

In this context, a brief account of violence against women in Orissa is presented in Table-6(A)

and 6 (B)

### Reported cases of violence against women in Orissa.

Type of violence cases	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Rape	250	309	326	405	422	562	617	683	796	816	753
Molestation	912	944	902	1064	1123	1238	1281	1363	1410	1555	1661
Eve Teasing	NA	NA	106	131	150	140	169	176	194	183	154
Kidnapping Abduction	295	299	252	314	295	325	468	405	446	429	358
Dowry Suicide	60	71	49	45	43	39	37	54	55	30	41
Dowry homicide	80	98	155	187	265	314	354	324	387	382	448
Dowry Torture	126	214	252	376	488	565	710	727	901	875	889
Non-Dowry	215	183	168	207	302	377	405	413	491	445	452
Immoral trafficking	11	9	12	8	13	24	16	11	11	26	18
Total	1999	2127	2222	2737	3101	3584	4057	4156	4707	4741	4774

Source: White paper on Police Administration (1990 to 2000)  
N.A- Not Available.

#### Table-6 (B)

Year wise and subject wise Registration and Disposed off cases (1993 to 2003) State Commission for Women, Orissa . Annexure-II

Whatever the statistics given in above two tables It is clear that the tables present a picture of cases reported. Thus, there is the possibility of happening of many more cases which are not reported till now.

## Areas to be supported in development process (planning).

By Gender specific development we understand that women have to be empowered so that they can participate equally in development processes and exercise their rights. This approach is an important attempt for creating a just society, for the marginalized group viz. women. Before going to empowering women they must have realized the following aspects;

- Women must be conscious of their existence and that they are constituting an important part of the Society.
- Women's right to self determination and independence has to be realized.
- Women must have the opportunity to realize their own interests in the society. Women must have access to and control over important material and non-material resources.

## PART-II

### Gender Policy in the SVA Network

#### Structure of SVA.

Sahabhagi Vikash Abhiyan (Campaign for Participatory Development) is a voluntary organization registered under Society Registration Act (1860) in the year of 1995. It comprises of Community based grass root organizations, local voluntary organizations, SHGs, Youth Clubs, Mahila Mandals, Forest Protection and Management forums, Farmer's organizations etc. Also several social activists, campaign leaders are the constituting members of SVA.

SVA functions all over the State of Orissa though the operational area/field is focused in Western Part of Orissa constituting four districts namely Kalahandi, Nuapada, Baragarh, and Bolangir. SVA as the organization has General Body, Governing Body and a Co-ordination Committee. Similarly, the member organizations have their own General Body, Governing Body and Coordination Committees. SVA supports the member organizations for their capacity building in the field of Sustainable Agriculture, Environment and ecological restoration, Poverty alleviation, Strengthening local Self Governance and allied activities.

#### Action on Women's issues undertaken by SVA :

Since its inception SVA has been concerned with the status of women in Orissa and Western Orissa in particular. The women of Western Orissa are hardworking and perform most of household work including collection of water, fuelwood, agricultural activities, looking after domestic animals, doing marketing and hundred of other activities to run the families. It is more important task that in many cases they are the sole bread earners for the family.

#### Women's Activities within the framework of SVA and member organizations (CBOs):

The following activities are undertaken by SVA:

1. Activities like Political empowerment of women through Panchayat Raj Institutions, awareness generation among the members of PRI on powers and functions of Panchayat and Gram Sabha.
2. Strengthening women's economic status through formation of women SHGs and by promoting various income generation activities.
3. Initiatives have been taken to identify the existing gender discrimination, violence against women and incorporate gender sensitivity and gender development in programme / project activities.
4. SVA actively participate in the local movements/campaigns where the women are more concerned and which are likely to affect their development.

## Rationale for SVA's Gender Policy:

SVA's focus on women is based on the assumption that women are the main change agents and addressing their basic needs and upgrading their economic condition will help to improve the status of family as well as the community they live in. Working with their basic needs, SVA realized that women's mobility, decision making power, access to resources are all controlled by men in their household. Therefore, redistribution of power through economic, social and political empowerment of women is essential to bring changes in the status of women.

SVA believes that to work effectively with village women it must evolve into an organization that employs both women and men who can work with diverse perspective and skills. Further more. SVA recognizes the fact that although it appears that men and women work under the same conditions, unequal power structures contributes in hindering women's full participation and establishing a gender unegalitarian work environment. Restrictions on women's free movement and association, combined with societal perception of women hold back progress of women and overall development of a nation. In order to address issues of gender bias, misconceptions, stereotyping and institutional injustices SVA needs a comprehensive gender policy to work towards it's goal of sustainable development and empowerment of women. Further SVA believes that **development of a gender policy will change what we know and how we think about women and men .**

## Policy Objectives:

SVA seeks to develop greater gender equity by working towards it's goals are poverty alleviation and empowerment of women.

The two main objectives of SVA 's policy on Gender are:

- To integrate gender and development /sustainable development approach in all its programmes, projects and policies and ensure gender equitable outcomes.
- To create a conducive environment within SVA for women and men to work on equal terms.

## Policy Components:

SVA will ensure its objectives by removing all kinds of discriminatory barriers against women and promoting their full and equal participation so that they are benefited equally from development processes at grassroots and at organizational levels. Furthermore, it is imperative that SVA looks not only into staff target group and Policies but also at its various programmes and examine critically whether or not a gender perspective is being implemented. Thus, ultimately gender equity should be achieved in three areas, individual attitudes and behaviour, programmatic outcomes and organizational system.

The policy is divided into two separate but interrelated components.

- Programmatic action to ensure full reorganization of women's contributions, gender specific problems and participation of women members on par with their male counterparts at all stages from initiating development activities to the outcomes of development.
- Organisational change by creating conducive environment within SVA for women and men staff and volunteers to work on equal terms in order to meet programme demands as well as improve programme quality.

## Policy requirements :

To ensure women's full participation in the development process, SVA will follow the following steps:

- **Planning:** SVA's programmes and activities will be based on a clear concept of gender relations and roles. Women's basic needs which generally include shelter, income, education and health care need to be addressed. Secondly attention must be given to their long term strategic interests such as legal and political rights, property rights, protection from domestic violence, decision making power, reproductive rights and control over resources and benefits.
- **Implementation:** Women's Participation must be a priority through out the implementation processes. It is important to realize that our social structures and institutions are inherently patriarchal. Therefore, a redefining and restructuring of social norms and institutions are necessary rather than insertion of a gender perspective into the existing system .

## Mechanisms and Strategies :

To address women's practical needs and their strategic interests SVA will strive to develop appropriate strategies and mechanisms and take the necessary programmatic and staff related measures.

## Programme related measures:

To achieve its goal of gender equity SVA will:

- Develop ways to identify problematic areas and work with village women on issues of importance to them through participatory methods.
- Incorporate gender perspective in strategic planning of all programmes and projects in consultation with stake holders and screen all project proposals through " Gender Lens."
- Encourage men and women to share household and familial responsibilities equally.
- Improve women's access to information by using various media viz. popular theatre, (Nukkad Natak) melas (fairs and exhibitions) including print and electronic media.
- Continue to work to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity and improve female health and nutrition status.
- Create awareness on the Reproductive Rights and Reproductive Health Care Practices. Increase men's knowledge about women's health and encourage their positive participation in family planning and marriage practices.
- Raise awareness on HIV/AIDS and STDS on women and the role played by men in its transmission.
- Increase girls' access to primary and secondary education by creating an amiable environment and opportunities and develop gender-sensitive educational environment.
- Promote women's control over credit and income utilization and participation in family decision making
- Design projects and programmes which include introduction of appropriate technologies that benefit women and minimize their work burden.
- Explore women's indigenous knowledge of survival and resource management.
- Adopt women and environment friendly projects and minimize any hazardous activities that affect their health.
- Address the special needs of women and children during emergency relief operations.
- Continue Human Rights and legal Education Programme and through this motivate women to establish their right to property ownership. SVA will encourage women to form Social Action Committees to take collective social actions against gender violence, Protest any anti women declarations and actions. SVA will build allies for women's rights in the community and support women's organizations actively working to check violence against women.
- Identify and support group members to resist from receiving or giving dowry, register marriages and resist early marriages of their daughters.
- Impart education on Grass Root democracy (PRI) and encourage women to participate in all the local elections.
- Include gender issues, analysis in research studies and gender disaggregated data in SVA reporting.
- Create opportunities for professional development of women.

Steps to be taken in awareness building process in Gender Development.

- ❖ Short orientation courses for both male and female staff at Administration and field level. (Gender concept)
- ❖ Gender Relations:- ( The Relative position of men and women in the division of resources and responsibilities, benefits and rights, power and privilege.)
- ❖ Gender Division of labour:- (All types of work is categorized under (i) productive, (ii) reproductive and (iii) Community Work.

- Gender awareness training course at Organization and field levels:
- Human Resource Development at the Organization and field levels.

### Networking at District, State, National/International Levels:

SVA needs to develop network with a number of organisations, campaign movements and Social Activists who are working at local, regional, national and international level on Gender issues so as to strengthen it's activities at Grass roots level.

### Monitorings:

It is important to examine whether the steps and instruments are practised or not. The following are the steps.

There would be a monitoring unit in SVA and in case of each member organisation which would look into the matter whether the Policies are practised or not.

A brief summarized activity report reflecting the achievement, constraints and future planning and expectation of support from SVA would be prepared by members of concerned organisations. Such reports will be used for formulating future action plans of SVA.

SVA has developed a staff policy incorporating all the essential terms and conditions in detail throwing light to nature of job assignment, function, line of work, other employee's benefits, facilities etc.

SVA arranges a monthly staff meeting to discuss the general project status ( field level) and administrative matters at co-ordination level.

### **Staff Related Measures:**

SVA will actively support policies of actions to create an enabling environment for women staff to work on an equal footing along with their male counterparts.

### Recruitment of staff and Volunteers:

To encourage, develop and retain women in their career SVA will:

- Constitute recruitment boards with equal numbers of men and women wherever possible.
- Give preference to a woman candidate over a male candidate when both are equally qualified.
- Examine interview practices to ensure that interviewers encourage rather than discourage women candidates and closely monitor anti women bias during interviews.
- Develop and update a manual which describes SVA' s gender policies and procedures in Oriya and disseminate this to all staff and fulltime volunteers.
- Provide facilities, terms and conditions in a flexible way so as to encourage women to secure employment and to return to employment without detrimental when they make long breaks; e.g. Maternity and study leave etc.

- Provide specific training to encourage women to develop their career in supervisory and management posts; such training includes, management, communication skills and assertiveness.
- Develop staff expertise on gender and development by providing comprehensive training and exposure to appropriate programmes and ensure their advisory roles on gender issues in policy and project development and decision making process.
- Facilitate discussion among staff on gender issues through workshops and seminars. Introduce paternity leave to encourage shared child care responsibilities.
- Integrate gender perspective in all training programmes including ongoing activities.

### Personal Safety :

- Ensure special needs of women staff in work, specially during night travel and evening work.
- Allow flexibility towards staff during pregnancy, postpartum and lactational period.

### Conduct and counseling aspect :

As an organization, SVA demands that its staff must adhere to SVA's values and follow a code of conduct in keeping with the credibility and image of the organizations. In this regard SVA will:

- Encourage egalitarian, open and participatory environment and discourage culture of silence and fear. Women's voice will be given due importance in meetings and decision making processes .
- Incorporate gender sensitivity as one component of staff performance evaluations.
- Recognize women's work and achievements and challenge sexism in the institutional and individual level.
- Ensure an environment free from sexual harassment (which includes physical, verbal and non verbal) by adopting a strict policy of dealing with cases of sexual harassment with appropriate positive action.
- There would be Formulation of Committee Against Sexual Harassment (CASH) for each district and one at Bhubaneswar to deal with sexual harassment and other gender related problems. Develop clear procedures to be followed by this committee to protect the interest of the victim and give justice to everyone concerned.

Make each member within the organization (regardless of rank and seniority) accountable for his/her actions if it is contrary to the measures laid down in the Policy.

Compiled by: Mrs Kalpana Mishra

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