



STAR Kampuchea's Gender Equality Policy



1. Introduction

STAR Kampuchea is a Cambodian non-profit and non-partisan organization. It was established and registered in August 1997 and its mission is to build democracy by strengthening civil society organizations. Starting from the year of 2012 forwards, STAR Kampuchea will continuously cooperating with other existing networks such as NGO Forum, CHRAC, CRRT, and EISEI etc and work directly with our targeted communities by providing them skills, and means to advocate for good governance, the rule of law and a better livelihood. STAR Kampuchea is currently implementing three main programs: i) Advocacy for Good Governance Program (AGG); ii) Advocacy for Natural Resources Management Program (ANRM) and iii) Volunteer Action for Cambodia (VAC).

2- Goal of Gender Policy

The following principles and strategies symbolize our commitment to gender equality in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1949. It has been written down to help staff and partners to ensure that our work improves the lives of both vulnerable women and men by promoting gender equality. Gender equality should give women and men the same entitlements to all aspects of human development, including economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights; the same level of respect; the same opportunities to make choices; and the same level of power to shape the outcomes of these choices.

- STAR Kampuchea and its partners address disadvantaged/vulnerable people in the countryside. Our Basic work is to recognize that the equality between men and women is crucial to overcome poverty and injustice.
- STAR Kampuchea will apply gender equality in all of its activities.
- Our internal practices and ways of working will reflect our commitment to gender equality in all aspects and at all levels.

III. Strategies for achieving gender equality

A. Program strategies

Gender equality will permeate all activities such as research, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. We will address the issues of policies, practices, ideas and beliefs that perpetuate gender inequality and violence against women. All programs will incorporate attention to gender issues and will include gender-related objectives. The human rights based approach of gender equality will be highlighted in our communication and cooperation with partners and our target groups especially at the local and community level.

We will work with both men and women, together and separately. We will seek to ensure full participation of women in all programs and activities. Particularly, gender issues will be regularly included in capacity building activities, public education and campaigns. New forms of learning – especially gender-related skills – will be included in our activities.

B. Partnership strategies

- Possible partner organizations, target communities will be assessed on the basis of their commitment to gender equality.
- All STAR Kampuchea's partners will be encouraged to secure gender balance within the organization and programs. All partners should strive for open and respectful communication in order to understand different needs and ideas.
- Gender issues will regularly be included in meetings, training courses and activities with the partners and target communities.
- Community Management Committees shall be committed that at least 30% of women are involved actively in community development plans, works, activities and communication, in particular related to expression and decision making.
- Gender equity and equality shall be seriously considered and openly practice in all STAR Kampuchea's partners and its targeted communities in order to get gender balance and justice.

C. Internal strategies

- STAR Kampuchea will ensure a good gender balance at all levels of the organization and its bodies such as the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee. We will strive for a 50/50 balance.
- Women and men will have equal opportunities of capacity building in order to improve their knowledge, abilities and management skills. Staff members will be encouraged to join gender training. They will be invited to share learning and best practice on gender equality.
- Women and men will have the same opportunities to be promoted within the organization.
- Gender awareness will be used as a criterion for recruitment, promotion and evaluation of staff.
- Gender equality will be included in all decision making processes.
- Executive Committee members will be responsible to recognize and report about gender issues and to reward good practice within the organization.
- The organization will provide a family and friendly environment for all staff members
- The organization will be assigned a few staff to be gender focal point persons.

D. Role of the Gender Focal Person

- Coordinate work on gender mainstreaming;
- Facilitate the gender issues of others;
- Collect and distribute information;
- Act as a catalyst for policy implementation; and
- Link people together as they have associated with gender responsibility.
- Monitor and review key points of gender policy for his/her effective implementation.

- The responsibility for gender mainstreaming should be recognized as an institutional responsibility of all staff.
- The gender focal point person should be staff from any positions of the organization and should be actively and demonstrably supported by the whole management team.
- The gender focal point person does not need to be female.

4. Implementation:

- All STAR Kampuchea's activities shall be implemented in compliance with its policies, rules and project plan to ensure the access to basic gender equality
- Women shall be prioritized for a vacant position within the organization
- Any female staffs who have resigned from her position can reapply for the same position with **50% priority of admission.**
- This policy can be applied by the organization and all of its networks
- Intimate relationships between STAR Kampuchea's staff and staff of opposite sex shall be in compliance with Khmer Culture. In this regard, the staff with the position of program manager or higher, after they getting married, the couple is not allowed to work in the same program/unit. The reason is that STAR Kampuchea worries such relationship can cause nepotism among staff of the organization.
- The available budget of the organization will be used in monitoring the activities of gender mainstreaming.
- In STAR Kampuchea there is no discrimination against people infected with HIV/AIDS. Besides, STAR Kampuchea encourages its staff to regularly have their health status checked.
- Any staff member who succeeds in their work will be rewarded and encouraged.

5. Commitment

STAR Kampuchea will commit to the following:

- STAR Kampuchea's female staff who have to take her maternity leave shall submit an application form to STAR Kampuchea management via her immediate supervisor one week before taking her leave, so that her position can be temporarily taken by someone else. The staff can take 3-month maternity leave; one month before and 2 months after the date of delivering her baby. If the staff can work until the due date the staff can take 3-month leave after the date of delivering.
- According to the labor law, members of staff who have babies can take up to one hour per day for nursing her baby until the baby is one year old.
- Male staff is allowed to take 5-day paternity leave in addition to the annual leave.
- Members of staff of either sex can get equal amount of \$200 (Two hundred US dollar) per year as health benefit. This benefit cannot be paid to non-sick staff but can be transferred to the budget of the next year benefit. This health benefit can also be used when the staff's family (spouse and children) is sick. In addition, STAR Kampuchea has a policy to buy an insurance card for each member of staff.
- Each female member of staff has the right to get US \$80 (Eighty US Dollar) as maternal benefit.
- Each staff can get equal benefits depending on the availability of SK's budget during the following Khmer annual festivals: Pchum Ben Festival, Water Festival and Khmer New Year.
- STAR Kampuchea shall organize Woman's Rights Day as feast or other events, so all staff are invited to enjoy.

6. Monitoring

- The monitoring on gender practice will be conducted every year.

- A Gender Committee selected consists of the program managers, the gender focal point persons, and the deputy executive director. The role of this committee is to monitor the gender policy for effective implementation.

7. Ending

- The gender policy shall be reviewed every 3 years during the staff retreat. It is always valid until there is an amendment to this policy.
- All rules which are against this policy shall consider being invalid.

Executive Committees

1. **Ms. Doung Samphors**.....
2. **Mr. Hing Sokunthy**
3. **Mr. Te Sokkhoeun**
4. **Mr. Mak Seiha**

Revised Date: 27th March, 2012

Gender Focal Point Persons:

1. **Ms. Ou Ussa**

Chair Women of the Board of Directors

Ms. Prok Vanny

Executive Director

Chet Charya