

# **WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY POLICY**

## **PREAMBLE**

Women have been discriminated against since time immemorial due to patriarchal hegemony. It remains prevalent despite many binding international conventions. Across the globe, laws relating to reproductive rights, labour, education and health have been and are still used to oppress and exploit women. Despite laws in many countries pertaining to equal rights, the reality is that men enjoy higher levels of access to economic outcomes, and they are over represented in politics, and as cultural leaders and sporting figures.

## **VISION**

It is incumbent on those wishing to pursue a political agenda to address this inequity. The vision of the Global Greens, in alignment with the Global Greens Charter and in particular the principle of social justice, is as follows:

- Equality of all people
- Freedom from political, economic, social, and cultural discrimination
- The right to human dignity
- Equal access to, and ability to participate in, social, cultural, economic, political and ecological spheres
- Equal representation and participation in decision-making processes in all areas of political, social, cultural, intellectual and economic life
- All people should have the right to make informed choices about their education, health, sexual identity and reproduction
- Equal representation of women in key decision-making positions
- Equal pay for work of equal value
- Recognition of the significant amount of unpaid labour done by women
- Freedom from direct, indirect systemic discrimination, harassment, fear, violence and abuse
- Gender mainstreaming in all policies and binding legislation

## **OBJECTIVES**

Therefore, the Greens shall work for:

- Freedom from the oppression of the patriarchy enshrined in law
- Facilitate the reform of political processes to remove barriers to women's participation in order to achieve a society in which the voices and perspectives of all women are heard
- Change in the traditional role of men and women in society and the family to achieve full equality of men and women
- Ensure that women have a legal capacity at least equal to that of men and the same opportunities to exercise that capacity
- Ensuring women's social, cultural, economic, political and ecological equity

## **ACTION PLAN**

Therefore, the Greens shall:

### **Against Discrimination**

- Adopt appropriate legal and legislative frameworks and other measures prohibiting all discrimination against women
- Refrain from engaging in any act or practice of discrimination against women and ensure that public authorities and institutions act in conformity with this obligation
- Provide a comprehensive framework for challenging the various forces that have created and sustained discrimination against women
- Establish a new economic order based on equity and justice for the promotion of equality between men and women
- Eradicate all forms of racism, racial discrimination, and aggression toward women
- Recognise the social significance of maternity and the role of both parents in the family and in the upbringing of children
- The upbringing of children requires a sharing of responsibility between men and women and society as a whole, and that women's role in procreation shall not be a basis for discrimination
- Change current oppressive structures that are sometimes regarded as traditional roles in order for equality between men and women to be possible.

### **Political Rights**

- Eliminate discrimination against women in politics and public life
- Guarantee the rights to vote, to hold public office and to exercise public functions
- Ensure equal rights for women to represent their countries at the international level
- Ensure equal participation in organisations and associations related to the public and political life of the country
- Support organisations that are working to increase the participation of women in high-level positions
- Adopt quotas where necessary, for women in all spheres of life including social, cultural, economic and political representation

### **Policy Development**

- Ensure women's participation in the formulation of government policies and the implementation thereof
- Develop an action plan towards gender equality based on wide consultation with a variety of women, and ensure government priorities reflect the plan
- Set targets for the percentage of women in political parties and parliament
- Set targets for the percentage of women to be employed in the public service and senior management roles

### **Education**

- Make a provision that all girls and women have access to free education
- Eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure equal rights with men in the field of education

- Develop curricular materials, pedagogical methods and teacher training programmes that promote non-sexist attitudes on the part of teachers and students

### **Health**

- Enhance community-based women's health and sexual health services, including provision of accurate information on women's health issues at all life stages
- Make provision of free and safe pregnancy, maternity, childbirth and early childhood services, proactively inform women about the available choices of care, including support for home birth and midwife based services
- Enact legislation making forced sterilisation illegal, and enforce legislation prohibiting female circumcision or female genital mutilation

### **Marriage and Family Relations**

- Ensure that women have the same rights as men to enter into marriage, enter into it with their free and full consent, and have the same rights and responsibilities during marriage and at its dissolution
- Ensure equal rights and responsibilities as parents, irrespective of marital status, in matters relating to children; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount
- Ensure equal rights and responsibilities regarding guardianship, wardship, trusteeship and adoption of children, or similar institutions where these concepts exist in national legislation; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount
- Ensure the same personal rights as husband and wife, including the right to choose a family name, a profession and an occupation
- Ensure equal rights with men to acquire, change or retain nationality

### **Sexual and Reproductive Health**

- Ensure free access to contraception to all women
- Make safe and legal abortions available to all women
- Fund sex education, public health programmes and family planning services
- Support the right to choose, decriminalise abortion, and legislate to protect the right to have an abortion and ensure that all options to terminate a pregnancy are equally available
- Protect the freedom to choose to continue a pregnancy

### **Violence & Women's Safety**

- Strengthen legislation to protect women from sexual and gender-based violence and ensure implementation of laws on violence and harassment
- Legislation to minimise and manage domestic and family violence
- Ensure that the justice system is sensitive to the needs of all victims of sexual abuse
- Provide gender sensitisation training and programmes, with a special focus on school children and college students.
- Ensure synchronicity between women's empowerment and gender sensitisation policies and programs

### **Employment**

- Eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment
- Ensure the principle of equal pay for equal work for women
- Ensure the right to work as an inalienable right of all human beings

### **Sex Workers**

- Take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of trafficking in women and exploitation of sex workers, who are mostly women
- Support sex work being legal and regulated under civil law

### **Indigenous/Tribal Women**

- Work with indigenous and tribal women to recognise and support their leadership on social, environmental and economic issues, and implement programmes and policies to reduce existing social and economic disparities between the indigenous and non-indigenous women
- Ensure all health, education and other government policies recognise and aim to improve the well being indigenous and tribal women

### **Rural Women**

- Ensure the application of legal protections for women in rural areas
- Eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas to ensure their participation and advancement from rural development programmes

### **Portrayal of Women**

- Support a culture of respectful and empowering messages and images about women
- Support a positive and respectful view of women in advertising and other media, including the fashion industry; advocating a portrayal of a range of women's body types as healthy and normal
- Address sexism in the media and actively work to eradicate negative portrayals of women
- Promote education programmes to combat sexual objectification and exploitation of women in advertising

### **Women and Media**

- Explore regulations to ensure positive representation of women in media
- Develop a campaign on the importance of equality between men and women in a democratic society that addresses negative stereotypes of men and women.

### **References:**

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