

# **Training of ANHDO Gender and Anti-Harassment / Policy and Practices**

## **Introduction:**

Purpose of this activity is to recognize the contribution and value of women in the workforce of ANHDO. To achieve this objective, the consultant researched similar organizations as well as international standards and norms. Within the existing time structure and the need to create these policies and procedures for ANHDO in a participatory manner, recommendations were created which were presented and reviewed by all ANHDO staff.

Every employee deserves to be treated with value and respect. The contribution of all ANHDO staff is essential to the success of the organization. However, we much recognize that all over the world, women face more discrimination and violence. In fact, more than 70 per cent of women all over the world face physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime, and the number is probably higher in Afghanistan.

In addition to this fact, it is difficult for women to discuss their needs to men. There are many reasons for this and many of these reasons are not likely to change in the short course. Therefore it is important to recognize this fact and create an environment that provides means for women staff to express their issues and concerns. Three main issues should be addressed:

1. Enabling Environment
2. Institutional/ Organizational Improvements
3. Building Capacities of Individuals

## **Creating an Enabling Environment**

Enabling environment in the context of gender mainstreaming requires preparing gender-sensitive policies and regulations that institutionalize the equitable participation of men and women as well as allocating gender responsive budgets that ensure steady and secure resources to support the necessary structures and programs for different genders.

Some of the following main challenges which should be addressed for creating an enabling environment, a. Areas in the worksite for women staff and women visitors; b. Number or percentage of women in decision making positions, such as senior management or board members; c. Budgets that reflect equitable spending on benefits for female staff; d. Anti-harassment policy and procedures.

While more and more women in Afghanistan are entering the workforce, once they have children, many women are forced to leave their work place because there is no way for them to care for their children. Some men are also facing the same issue but with older children who need a place to study or play after school and until their parents are finished working. For new mothers, it is more necessary as they need to feed their child every few hours. Currently most women working at ANHDO are either single or just recently married and likely will not be able to continue working once they have children. This contributes to a high turnover of staff and is an economic drain on the organization.

### **Institutional / Organizational Improvements**

In regards to targets for ANHDO for gender inclusion in staffing, it is recommended that the percentage of professional female staff should reach 20% of all professional staff within 5 years. There are currently 5 professional women on staff which is about 10%, so an increase to 20% would mean hiring at least one more professional woman each year for the next 5 years assuming the overall number of employees stays relatively constant.

### **Building Capacities of Individuals**

ANHDO has policies and procedures in place for the capacity development of their staff, at all levels. To achieve gender equity within the existing policies, there will be a need to give some priority to women who are requesting professional development training. All female staff, including support staff, should have the opportunity to benefit from training provided to ANHDO staff.

### **Recommendations:**

To achieve these goals, the following recommendations have been developed through discussions and literature review of other similar organizations and international norms.

### **Proposed Organizational Commitment**

ANHDO is committed to providing a work environment that is free of discrimination and harassment, where all individuals are treated with respect and dignity, can contribute fully to the mission of ANHDO, and have equal opportunities within the organization.

### **Purpose of Anti-harassment Policy**

The objectives of establishing an anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policy are to:

- Prevent harassment and discrimination by defining principles and standards of professional behavior.
- Set out the types of behavior that may be considered offensive and are prohibited by this policy
- To ensure that all members of ANHDO as well as the clients in the field are treated with respect and dignity.

## **Proposed Organizational Statement**

ANHDO promotes the economic and social empowerment of women in their offices and their programs. By actively focusing attention on the contributions that women make daily to the horticulture value chain, ANHDO supports efforts to ensure that their policies and programs promote and support women as important and significant contributors to agriculture and rural development.

## **Grievances**

A grievance arises when an employee has a concern of complaint against a fellow employee (including direct or indirect supervisor), an ANHDO policy or its application which he/she believes is unfair, inequitable or a hindrance to his/her effective job performance. An employee having grievance should follow these steps in order to address his/her grievance:

Step I: Every possible effort should be made by the employee and his/her immediate supervisor to resolve the situation. If this is unsuccessful, the grievance should be discussed with the next highest manager to address the grievance. If this also fails, the employee will be required to take the next step described below:

Step II: After the first step does not address employee's concern, he/she should discuss the issue with Human Resources Staff Department. For this, employee is required to obtain the Grievance Form available from Human Resources Staff Department, complete and sign it before submitting this form to the HR department. HR Staff will deal with each matter confidentially and will make serious efforts to address the employee's concerns by proposing a solution to the General Manager.

## **Anti-Harassment**

ANHDO strictly prohibits all forms of harassment directed to any of its employees by anyone, including any supervisor, co-worker, donor or public. Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical or visual, that is based on a person's

protected status, including sex, color, race, ancestry, religion, national origin, disability, health status, sexual orientation, or other protected conduct that effects employment conditions, that interfere unreasonably with any individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Any employee who believes that he or she has been subjected to, or has witnessed harassment is encouraged and requested to report the offence to the HR Manager on a confidential basis, providing such details as the name of the suspected harasser, date of the offence, location, and type of harassment committed. The HR Manager will investigate the complaint on a confidential basis to determine whether ANHDO's harassment policy has been violated and, if so, appropriate disciplinary procedures will be taken, including immediate dismissal.

## **Sexual Harassment**

In addition to the Anti-Harassment policy, ANHDO believes that sexual harassment should receive special recognition. ANHDO promotes the right of every employee to work in an environment free of sexual harassment. To this end, sexual harassment by and of employees is prohibited and this policy applies to all ANHDO employees.

Sexual harassment is defined as any unsolicited and unwelcome sexually oriented behavior, which may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- a) An implied or expressed threat of punishment for refusal to comply with a sexually
- b) oriented request,
- c) A demand for sexual favors in return for (continued) employment or more favorable
- d) employment treatment,
- e) Demeaning and unwelcome remarks, jokes or verbal abuse of a sexual nature, about a person's attire, body or sexual orientation,
- f) Displaying of pornographic or sexist pictures or materials,
- g) Unwelcome physical contact or offensive gestures.

Employees encountering sexual harassment shall report the incident(s) (including dates, time and nature of the behavior and any witnesses) to their direct supervisor or HR Manager.

The HR department shall ensure that all complaints regarding sexual harassment are investigated promptly and take whatever steps are necessary to have the harassment stopped. If deemed appropriate, disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including termination. In all cases, the manager of human resources department must be notified of the harassment.

## **Recruitment and Staffing:**

It is sometimes difficult for a woman candidate for a job to interview with an interview team of only men. It can be more stressful for female candidate than a male candidate in this situation. Therefore, if there is a woman candidate for a position, it is recommended to have an ANHDO female staff person on the interview committee. This will also demonstrate to any potentially new male employees that there are professional female staff members at ANHDO.

Additionally, there may be a situation where there is a female candidate that is well qualified for a position but there is a male candidate who has even more education or experience. In this case, if it is determined that the female candidate is fully qualified for the position, she should be given preference for the position.

## **Education & Capacity Building**

Assuming that there are female staff members applying for the staff development program for university study, the acceptance of ANHDO staff in this program should have an equal percentage or number of male and female staff participating

The same principle should be applied to staff capacity building training. Equal opportunity for female and male staff members to participate in capacity building training such as Word Processing, Excel, Professional Writing and others that enhance their capacity for their current position at ANHDO.

## **Work Environment and Practices:**

Nursery, Kindergarten or Crèche Facility: There is need for a dedicated area where babies and young children are cared for during the working day. Ideally, it would have a separate toilet facility for the caring of babies and young children. It should be for women and children only and would then also serve as a space for women to take a short break during the day, if experiencing monthly medical issues.

Communications mechanism: It is recommended to implement a Women's Council which would include all of the professional women working at ANHDO. This group of women would meet once a month to discuss any issues that they are experiencing at the work place. An Office Gender Focal point would be selected from the group to take any issues and/or concerns to the General Manager for action. I would suggest that the Office Gender Focal Point be either the most senior female office staff person or a delegate chosen by the most senior female staff person.

Women's Travel. As the number of training activities for women farmers in the field increases, it is also likely that there will be increased travel of women to the field, as training for women farmers is

most effective with conducted by a female trainer. Cultural norms for female travel should be respected and implemented.

### **Training on Gender Awareness:**

There should be a training for all staff every 6 months on issues regarding gender awareness and gender inclusion in AHNDO programs. There are a couple of organizations that can organize this type of training. One is the Women for Women Afghanistan organization, and another is NAEC faculty in Kabul.