

**ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND FAIR TREATMENT - A LACUNA IN THE PROTECTION OF  
VICTIM RIGHTS**

*People by and large have lost confidence in the Criminal Justice System. Victims feel ignored and are crying for attention and Justice.* The victims constitute the most important as well as the most vulnerable entity in the Criminal Justice Administration. The victimology movement in the late 1970s and early 1980s of the US is accredited for placing at the forefront the plights of the victims by labeling them as the “Forgotten Entity” in the Criminal Justice System.

Upon infliction of a crime/offense, the victim seeks the aid of the Criminal Justice System by lodging a complaint. Ironically, instead of getting some relief from the system she is faced with many challenges and her trial of woes begins from there. The victims are often harassed by the police when they attempt to report the offenses committed against them. They are always denied a right to participate in the subsequent investigation process. They are granted no right to effectively coordinate with the prosecution during the trial of the offenders. Further they are not given any compensation and very importantly they are not even informed of the final result of the trial.

After the crime is reported and the criminal notion is brought into force; the entire focus tilts towards the accused, forgetting completely the victims’ rights and needs. Because of which the victims are termed as “Forgotten Entity” or “Marginalized Entity” in the Indian Criminal Justice System. The apathetic and emotionless behavior of Criminal Justice Administration vis-à-vis through agencies made so many victims suffer in silence.

United Nations Declaration of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power, 1985 directed its member states to incorporate four categories of rights for the victims in the justice delivery system of the respective state. They are;

1. Right to Access to Justice and Fair Treatment.
2. Right to Restitution of property.
3. Right to Compensation.
4. Right to necessary medical, Psychological and Social Assistance.

The foremost fundamental element is to provide 'Right to access to justice and fair treatment', meaning thereby the victims must be assured of hassle free access to the Justice mechanism and a prompt redress as provided for by national legislation for the injury they have suffered. Victims should be treated with compassion and their dignity also to be respected. Moreover the victims should be informed of the rights in seeking redress through such mechanisms and a detailed support from the governmental agencies viz, Police, Medical personnel, Public prosecutor, Judiciary and the state.

But the problem is that the victims are facing 'Secondary Victimization' at the hands of the above-mentioned governmental agencies. It is because of lack of dereliction of duty, myth and social stigma that are infused in the patriarchal society which are witnessed by the victims in their acts and deeds, which subsequently acts as a barrier to the victims in the process of getting fair treatment and justice. The a) Poor Police Participation; b) The failure to provide proper medical assistance; c) Lack of effective legal assistance by the public prosecutors and d) Lack of aid and assistance.

The above points hold true in India, it is widely believed that victims do not have sufficient legal rights and protections and are the most marginalized entity in the entire Criminal Justice System. There is no victims protection laws per se, there is a huge cry and need for the Victim Protection legislation, which should highlight on the areas of *Rights of Victims, Compensation paid to the victims, especially the procedures for instituting the case in the court and the*

*idea of aiding the private lawyers instead of Public prosecutors, choices should be given to victims, the need for the such introduction is because there is no level playing field for the Victims in par with the rights given to the Accused.*

*“A common law trial is and always should be an adversary proceeding”.* In order to have effective criminal dispensation of cases, there is an alarming need to have an effective model of the Criminal Justice System. In the adversarial system, fairness of trial is adequately assured by the judge by maintaining a position of neutrality and the offenders getting full opportunity of producing evidence and cross examining the witness. On the other hand, in the Inquisitorial system there is an effort to find out the truth with the best investigation tools and the rights of the victims are to be adequately protected. However, of late many countries have started adopting a hybrid model by blending both.

Therefore the significance and the fruits of the UN Declaration is that a person can be considered as a victim irrespective of the fact whether the perpetrator was identified, apprehended, prosecuted or convicted or not and regardless of the family and relationship between the perpetrator and victims. Therefore compensation needs to be granted to all victims irrespective of the result of the case if she has been sexually assaulted. So all these can be achieved and the victim can be enshrined with the access to justice and fair treatment only with the legislative indulgence in being the “Victim Protection Act” like that of an US Crime Victims Act, 2004. Further a Cyber Crime Cells have to be given proper training to deal with cybercrimes against women. Separate Investing Team in police to be formed in the state consisting not only police but also experts in the field of criminology. Separate Legislation has to be brought in to deal with “Honour Killings” on the basis of caste, class and gender. The transgenders are

**NAMELESS, FACELESS – FOUNDATION FOR VICTIM RIGHTS**

Reg. No. 139/2016

**Chairperson: U. Nirmala Rani** M.W.S., B.L.,  
Advocate

Flat G-1, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, B-9,

ARA Towers, 11<sup>th</sup> C Cross,

Thillai Nagar, Trichy - 620018

Phone no: 9442200616

voice.namelessfaceless@gmail.com

---

being killed in the name of Family honour. Bangkok general guidance for judges on applying a gender perspective in South East Asia by the International Commission of Jurists. It is also important to bring in a Vulnerable Witness Deposition Center has to be commissioned for the trial of Sexual assault cases thereby strengthening the 'Victim's Access Jurisprudence'.



**Violence free homes**

**Safe mobility**



**No hunger**

**Equal wages**



**Access to credit**

**Fight injustice**



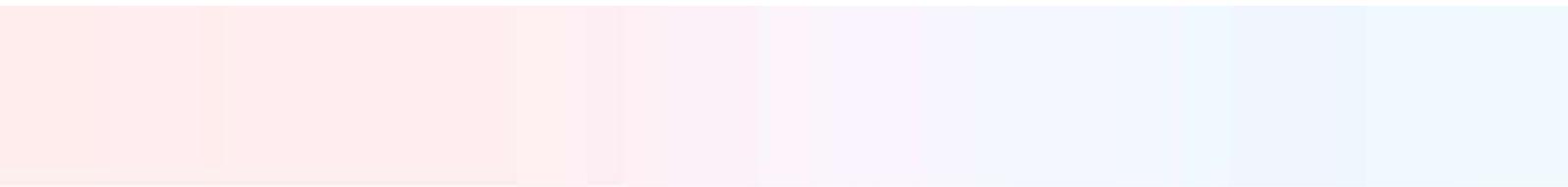
**Stop violence**

**No discrimination**

# **Tamil Nadu State New Policy for Women 2021 (Draft)**

**INVESTING TOGETHER IN BUILDING A  
FUTURE WE WANT**

**GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU**





# **Tamil Nadu State New Policy for Women 2021**

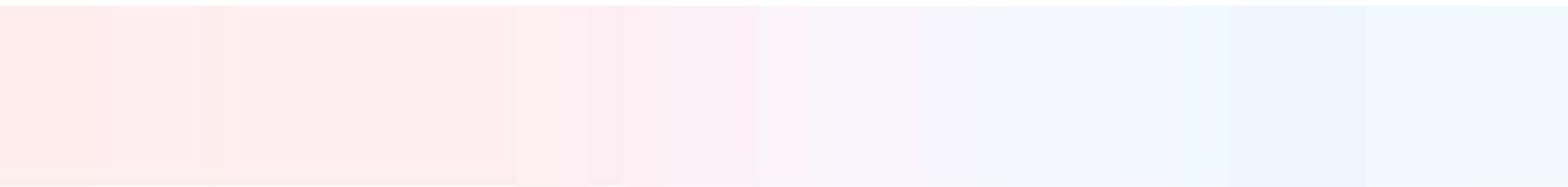
## **Department of Social Welfare and Women Empowerment**

15 December 2021

Submitted by Drafting Committee

### **Members**

1. Mrs. D Rathna IAS., Director, Directorate of Social welfare
2. Ms. R V Shajeevana, Additional Director, RD&PR Department
3. Dr G.N. Krupa, HoD, Health and Social Welfare Division, SPC
4. Dr R Sujatha, SDG, Consultant
5. Ms. Sherin Bosco, Psychosocial Expert
6. Dr P Sivakumar, Assistant Professor, RGNIYD
7. Dr Ramajayam, Assistant Professor, Bharthidasan University
8. Dr. R Gopinath, Principal Scientist, MSSRF



# *Tamil Nadu State New Policy for Women 2021*

## **Background/ Preamble**

Women's empowerment can be said to encompass five aspects: improving women's sense of self-worth; their right to have and determine choices in matters that concern them; their right to have access to opportunities and resources; their right to have the power to control their own lives, both within and outside the home; and their ability to influence their environment to ensure social justice and create an equitable social and economic order.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister M.K.Stalin while participating in the Grama Sabha of Pappampatti in Madurai District sets the mandate for the policy with the following resolution:

*"As a citizen with an elevated conscience, I will give due respect to women and children and respect their rights as equals, will not engage in sexual harassment or any kind of gender violence, will be supportive to the victims, make complaints against those who commit such acts, will create a dowry-free society, and will prevent incidents of female infanticide and foeticide. I promise to strive hard to create a strong Tamil Nadu without gender discrimination and where there is equality, brotherhood and strength from the bottom of my heart."*

The State shall broadly adopt WHO - RESPECT framework that speaks about Prevention of Violence against women and girls, facilitate collective programming with individuals, families and communities to address the multiple risk factors underlying Gender Based Violence and multiple forms of violence within families.

The State shall take up programming for synergy, combining multiple strategies and interventions at the individual, interpersonal, community and societal levels for sustained impact. The State shall build on on-going initiatives, integrating prevention activities into existing health, development and other existing sectoral programmes.

## **Vision**

Tamil Nadu would provide all women with access to all services and entitlements in an equitable manner, reduce discrimination and eliminate all forms of violence against women and provide them with equal opportunities for realizing their potential and aspirations



## **Mission**

Tamil Nadu would provide a safe, secure, healthy and aspirational environment to empower 3.2 crore women population in the State, through an operational convergence amongst departments thus bringing improvement in the development outcomes for women involving both the genders to work towards the common goal.

## **Guiding principles**

- Enhancing access to all services - health, education, employment, skilling and training
- Enabling environments that restructure gender norms and behaviour linked changes that would consider the aspirations, expectations and attitudes of all
- Empowering women and preparing from the adolescent stage their entry and transition to high end opportunities in high growth sectors
- Elimination of violence against women and build on a comprehensive and integrated framework that would have zero tolerance to any kind of discrimination and violence against women and girls.

## **Core Objectives**

The policy would be implemented over a period of 5 years and aims to:

1. Improve the nutritional outcomes of adolescents while addressing anemia and underweight by atleast half.
2. Bring additional 1 crore women into the SHG fold. Atleast 1,00,000 women enterprises would be formed by graduating from livelihoods through intensive mentoring and extensive networking and handholding through mentors.

3. Bridge the Digital gender Gap among women by increased internet accessibility and availability in both urban and rural areas.
4. To facilitate data driven and evidence based policy making, all Departments shall be committed to provide gender disaggregated data annually.
5. Decrease dropouts by 10% every year in secondary and by increasing tertiary enrollment rates of girl students by 5% every year.
6. Support to at least 1000 women Student researchers every year especially in STEM from amongst disadvantaged sections of society.
7. Reach out to 10,000 women to reduce the skill gap with the appropriate technology training to allow for lateral entry at the mid career level - second career entry for women who have quit their career for raising family or mobility issues.
8. Enhance Institutional credit access and availability to women in need through establishment of Women's Bank. (வாழ்ந்து காட்டு பெண்ணே).
9. Improve self worth of women through increased confidence levels by training all school and College students in martial arts. All schools, colleges and other institutions shall ensure non-discrimination of gender and move towards gender equality.
10. Promote entrepreneurship and innovation, inclusive targeting to handhold and mentor 1 lakh women owned enterprises.
11. Increased women's participation in workforce leading to 40% share of state GSDP
12. Provide safe and women friendly public spaces and work spaces including Government Departments with a functional Internal Complaints Committee and Local Complaints Committee with regular third party gender safety audit.
13. Ensure filing of FIRs and reporting within 24 hours of the crime incident coming to light.
14. Establish a system of Victim support to all cases of abuse that focuses on rehabilitation and identity protection at the first instance without delay to ensure that women do not feel abandoned. .
15. Make available support systems for women at every 10km radius who are in need of emotional support mechanisms.
16. All women Headed Households in Tamil Nadu would be covered under Social security schemes based on their requirement.
17. Improve sex ratio at birth in Tamil Nadu the best in India.

18. Encourage private, public sector listed companies, quasi government organizations, boards to provide 50% women in leadership positions
19. To encourage women to participate in political space without hindrance a finishing school to learn the basics of polity and various acts and provisions would be set up.
20. Strengthen women grievance redressal through a direct phone-in programme (சொல்வதைச் செய்வோம் programme) with the Hon'ble Chief Minister would be conducted once in six months.

## Present Scenario

- Tamil Nadu has the second-largest State economy in the country, with strong and consistent economic growth averaging about 8.5% since fiscal year (FY) 2006. Women's contribution in the paid economy is significant – female labor force participation rate (FLFPR) in the state is higher than the average recorded for India. The rural FLFPR for Tamil Nadu is 35.1%, which is 15.4% higher than the national figure. Urban FLFPR in TN is 23.6% that is 7.5% higher than all of India average. Though, women's effective participation in the workforce and their transition to formal employment opportunities continues to remain a challenge.
- Rate of Crimes against women per every 100000 female populations was 14.6 in 2019-20
- Conviction rate of crime against women was 18.3 in 2019-20
- Per Lakh women that have been subjected to dowry offences during the year 4.3 in 2019-20
- Conviction rate of women subject to dowry related offences is 7.7  
(refer annexure for detailed data)

## Stakeholders

The Social Welfare and Women Empowerment Department shall act as anchor department monitoring the implementation of the policy. The key stakeholders in implementing policy would be all Government departments; UN organizations, Educational Organizations, Academicians, Banks, Research and Training Institutions, NGOs in the field, Citizen Organizations, Rural and Urban Local Bodies, and Community based organizations.

All the Government Departments have a direct bearing in the implementation of the **Tamil Nadu State New Policy for Women 2021**

and shall align their departmental objectives towards achieving the vision of the Policy. The State through this policy is committed to adopt a just, humane, and sensitive approach in acknowledging, identifying, and addressing socio-economic vulnerabilities of women in order to protect them from different forms of discrimination and violence. This Policy aims to cover the entire women population of Tamil Nadu, however special focus shall be on:

- a. Women-headed households (single women, widows, and deserted women);
- b. Women from oppressed communities; (SC/ST);
- c. Women engaged in vulnerable occupations (sex work, rag picking, conservancy work, street vending, head-load vendors, and begging)
- d. Women in bondage (rice mills, brick kilns, etc)
- e. Women with disabilities
- f. Elderly women
- g. Women in informal sector of work (domestic workers, construction workers, daily wage works, salt-pan workers, agricultural labourers, casual labourers from different sectors among others)
- h. Women at workplace (formal sector)

### **Implementation strategies**

The core focus areas of empowerment would be based on the guiding principles stated above thus optimizing opportunities, leveraging on current strengths, and hinging on collaboration between key stakeholders. The four pillars of empowerment upon which the guiding principles of the policy would be based are:

1. Social
2. Economic
3. Political
4. Emotional



#### **1. Social**

Social empowerment of women is to be understood as the process of developing a sense of autonomy and self-confidence, and acting individually and collectively to change social relationships and the institutions and discourses that exclude women especially the poorest of the poor and keep them in poverty. Gender role deconstruction starts right from an early age

wherein parents and teachers play a key role. Women's empowerment and their ability to hold others to account, is strongly influenced by their individual assets (such as land, housing, livestock, savings) and capabilities of all types: human (such as good health and education), social (such as social belonging, a sense of identity, leadership relations) and psychological (self-esteem, self-confidence, the ability to imagine and aspire to a better future). Also important are women's collective assets and capabilities, such as voice, organisation, representation and identity.

### **1.1. Education and Research**

Equal access to education for women and girls will be ensured and initiatives taken to eliminate discrimination, universalize education, eradicate illiteracy, create a gender-sensitive educational system, increase enrolment and retention rates of girls and improve the quality of education to facilitate life-long learning as well as development of occupation/vocation/technical skills. Improving gender parity and reducing the gender gap in secondary and higher education would be a critical area. Sectoral time targets in existing policies will be achieved, with a special focus on girls and women, particularly those belonging to weaker sections including the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes/Other Backward Classes/Minorities. Gender sensitive curricula would be developed at all levels of educational system in order to reduce and address sex stereotyping that is one of the causes of gender discrimination.

1.1.1. Gender segregation cycle shall be reduced at home and schools so that boys and girls interact and learn from each other, and reduce the gender stereotypic beliefs, attitudes, and biases about and towards the other sex. Teachers will be trained and they would inturn conduct specific programmes for children in the form of gender club activities, competitions/crafts and cooking skills for both boys and girls and any innovative activity of the choice.

1.1.2. Reducing dropouts of girl children in secondary education by 10% every year and increasing enrolment by 5% in tertiary education.. Incentives shall be provided to girls from poor economic backgrounds to pursue higher education in any field of their choice.

- 1.1.2 At Least 3% interest subvention for educational loans given to Girl students pursuing higher education. Additional 0.5 % interest subvention to those students who took education in Tamil medium.
- 1.1.3 Career counselling facilities for girl students opting for higher education. Retired Teachers / College professors may be roped in at Village / ward levels (both urban and rural) to support them with information on career options available.
- 1.1.4 Tamil Nadu shall provide free/subsidized coaching classes for exams like JEE, CAT, UPSC, TNPSC and for higher management and technical courses to encourage women's participation
- 1.1.4 Safety and sanitary audit shall be conducted to arrest the phenomenon of child marriage so that the conditions responsible for safety such as threats of abuse and violence on the way to school
- 1.1.4 It will be mandatory for all - Govt and private educational institutes (schools and Colleges) to display on their campus, portals, websites information regarding various scholarships, career opportunities available. Roll of honour shall also be displayed
- 1.1.5. Women researchers to be supported with access to credit and facilitation of IP and also converting the research to products.
- 1.1.6. Teachers in schools and Colleges to be trained in counseling skills and refresher programmes conducted periodically
- 1.1.7. Martial arts training to be made mandatory to all girls in schools and Colleges.
- 1.1.8. Sports period will be made compulsory to all standards and participation of girls will be required without omission. Girl students who are excelling would be provided exclusive coaching facilities.
- 1.1.9. Women researchers pursuing women oriented themes would be provided with additional support.
- 1.1.10 Girls and women shall have equal opportunities to pursue educational courses and skill training as per their desire and there will be no gender segregation either in terms of educational opportunities or related skill trainings
- 1.1.11 A common digital repository of the research and studies conducted on gender oriented themes by educational institutions, research institutes, Government agencies/departments shall be set up.
- 1.1.12. Additional stipend for girls who are taking up skill training in no-gender stereotyped categories.

1.1.13 Apprenticeship shall be provided to girls passing out from ITIs and Polytechnics along with a matching grant from the State

1.1.14 Industrial skills needs to be added in school curriculum through planned events

1.1.15 Skill training especially upskilling or reskilling courses for allowing women for lateral entry or reentry at a higher level after a career break.

1.1.16 To improve the Digital literacy rate among women digital a literacy program shall be implemented through CRP/CPs in local Panchayat level to train the handle online tools (what's app to internet browsing)



## 1.2. **Health, sanitation and nutrition**

Gender inequality and discrimination faced by women and girls puts their health and well-being at risk. Tamil Nadu shall ensure that all women and girls are able to overcome the barriers faced by them in accessing health information and services. The barriers could include restrictions on mobility; lack of access to decision-making power; lower literacy rates; discriminatory attitudes of communities and healthcare providers; and lack of training and awareness amongst healthcare providers and health systems of the specific health needs and challenges of women and girls.

1.2.1 Adolescent friendly health clinics (AFHCs) (**தோழி உனக்காக**) shall be established and use of such clinics to be transformed into health promotion hubs, to address adolescent health issues comprehensively beyond Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health.

1.2.2. The State shall adopt a gender transformative health strategy that recognizes women's reproductive rights along with her right to exercise choices in contraception, family planning methods and right to bodily autonomy and integrity including the right to legal and safe abortion.

1.2.3 Annual Mandatory Health check up for girls at school and colleges will be conducted which will include checkups such as blood tests (anemia), screening for cancer and NCDs, menstrual and gynecological issues.

1.2.4. Women/girls friendly facilities to be provided to all women in work places with napkin vending machines, incinerators, dust bins, waste paper for wrapping etc.

1.2.5 All public places, government offices to be provided with women friendly toilet facilities which have necessary hooks for holding a dupatta/bag, a place to keep napkins and a functioning latch.

1.2.6 Health care workers and caregivers are twice as likely to suffer from ill health and they shall be duly covered with a compulsory one week for every six month of completed service.

1.2.7 Protocols that are current and seeking to improve the knowledge amongst healthcare professionals shall be prepared and implemented to address their unique issues and special concerns.

1.2.8 Considering that Life Expectancy at Birth is higher for women, the geriatric services for women including preventive, curative, and rehabilitative healthcare shall be strengthened with appropriate government and public-private sector participation by offering community based palliative care.

1.2.9 Women's physical, emotional and mental health require attention considering the hormonal fluctuation from Menarche to Menopause (**M to M**) and the health department shall take up suitable programme interventions to ensure that the issues related during the periods like osteoporosis, cardiovascular diseases, depression are suitably addressed.

1.2.10 Nutritious and safe food through Public Distribution System (PDS) for households especially the unreached women and children with high nutritional vulnerabilities as envisaged in National Food Security Act, 2013 shall be made available such as additional pulses, millets, jaggery etc.

1.2.11 The State shall make targeted interventions in identified hotspots to tackle discrimination of girls at birth through sex selection, foeticide, infanticide that changes the sex ratio.

1.2.12 Nutrition shall be accorded utmost priority as women are at high risk for nutritional deficiencies and hence would be provided

nutritional literacy in all the stages of their life cycle and focused attention will be paid at every stage right from Ante-Natal Care (ANC) and Post Natal Care (PNC) for healthy foetal development to the needs of adolescent girls to the stage of elderly women. Interventions and services for addressing the intergenerational cycle of under-nutrition, with focus on nutritional care for the first 1000 days of the child after birth shall be strengthened and duly monitored at the highest level in the State. The community resource persons for nutrition shall be engaged for growth monitoring with the support of the community.

1.2.13 Improving the nutrition and health status of adolescent girls shall be accorded special focus and suitable strategies to end intra-household discrimination in nutritional matters with regard to girls and women shall be devised. Adolescents shall be engaged in schools under life skill education programmes that include physical, developmental and general health and hygiene including sexual health, apart from covering self-defense, culture and arts. Specific periods may be dedicated every week (with atleast 4 periods in a month) for these activities which shall not be substituted with any other subject matters.

1.2.14 Regular data on prevalence of nutritional deficiency in Children sex-wise (district wise data) and data on weight at birth (by sex) shall be ensured by periodical tracking by the health and ICDS departments at different levels to show results.

1.2.15 The service delivery of ICDS in preventing and reducing under-nutrition and promoting young child survival and development roles of ICDS & Health functionaries - ANMs, AWWs, ASHAs, AWHs and their team work with greater community involvement, especially at critical contact points shall be reviewed and strengthened. The Village Health, Nutrition and Sanitation Committee shall be responsible for this task and this shall be periodically monitored by the Block Medical Officer.

### **Geriatric care**

1.2.16 Considering the vulnerable status of elderly women, geriatric health care shall be given special attention in conformity with the National Policy on Senior Citizens 2011. Geriatric services including

preventive, curative, and rehabilitative healthcare shall be strengthened with appropriate government and public-private sector participation.

1.2.17 The State shall look towards providing emotional and psychological support to the elderly and ensuring safety. Community based support system shall be established with individual case based need assessment and support.

### 1.3. **Inter-sectionality**



1.3.1 All vulnerable, destitute and women belonging to minorities, differently abled, transgender, women headed households, deserted, widows, unattended elderly women shall be accorded priority while planning schemes and disaggregated data shall be furnished by the departments annually.

1.3.2 Differently abled young women and girls shall be given similar sex and relationships education in schools so that they are not vulnerable to exploitation and lacking in sufficient information to make informed choices.

1.3.3 Differently abled women would have the right to exercise reproductive and sexual health choices including the right to have children if they so desire.

1.3.4 An enabling environment for the differently abled women shall be provided so as to prevent discrimination in accessing reproductive health services, birth control and family planning and in having control over care and treatment.

1.3.5 Day care centre's for disabled and destitute children along with a Special Educator, under the JJ Act 2015 shall be established as there is a dearth of such facilities.

1.3.6 Adolescence being the age of sexual maturation, gender and sexual identity exploration, adolescents who do not conform to the binary cis-genders need special care and attention. Many of them also leave their family homes or are thrown out of homes due to this reason. Same is the case of children of convicts, children of sex

workers, children of migrant labourers, transgender and intersex adolescents who are often stigmatized or neglected by society and will be given special provisioning of care services.

1.3.7 Women-headed households shall be covered with social protection schemes to ensure that they are able to access the entitlements and benefits provided by the State.

## 1.4 Elimination of Violence

Violence adversely affects women's physical, sexual and reproductive, and mental health in domestic environment, public places and Institutions. Intimate partner violence and sexual violence can lead to unintended pregnancies, induced abortions (often conducted in unsafe conditions), and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. Intimate partner violence also increases the likelihood of miscarriage, pre-term births and low birth-weight babies when it occurs during pregnancy. Women subjected to violence are also at a higher risk of depression, anxiety disorders, alcohol use and attempted suicide.

The Sustainable Development Goals 5 Gender Equality and the Target 5.1 focuses on Ending Discrimination against women and girls and Target 5.2 speaks about, Ending all forms of violence against women and girls.

1.4.1 The State shall converge its efforts to address all forms of violence against women with a holistic perspective through a life cycle approach from womb to tomb in a continuum from the foetus to the elderly starting from sex selective termination of pregnancy, denial of education, child marriage to violence faced by women in private sphere of home, public spaces and at workplace. It shall identify and combat violence and abuse through a combination of laws, programs, and services with the support of diverse stakeholders. A common platform integrating the existing helplines, One stop centers, shelters, legal forums, counselling and support mechanisms available and every single case shall be tracked till its logical conclusion.

1.4.2 A unanimous resolution to boycott and expel anyone involved in crimes against women and children and hand them over to the police



will be taken by all the local bodies indicating zero tolerance for Gender Based Violence and prevent habitual offenders.

1.4.3 All educational institutions shall have a gender friendly environment and have campuses where violence against women and girls will be strictly viewed and action taken. A supportive environment in schools and colleges shall be created through a responsive Internal Complaints Committee that shall address discriminatory attitudes within the organization particularly those related to the issue of sexual harassment and intimidation of girls and young women.

1.4.4 Schools/educational institutions should ensure setting up a task force to mainstream gender equality and capable of handling discrimination and violence against women and girls. The task force shall be evaluated on gender equality outcomes. Balar Panchayats shall be actively involved in this task.

1.4.5 Gender equality and sensitization shall be part of teacher training and "Gender the curriculum" approach shall be followed and reviewed periodically to ensure gender equal norms. Educational institutions shall be encouraged to develop forums for discussions to engage boys and men in dialogues to break gender stereotyping, bullying and violence.

1.4.6 Tamil Nadu shall pay greater attention to getting all the children from the poor families and special focus groups such as girls and children from the SC and ST communities that are out of school into school, and also, shall strive harder to attain and sustain higher quality in their primary schools. The scope of Kasturba Gandhi Ballika Vidyalaya shall be specifically extended in Educationally Backward Blocks (EBBs) to cover adolescent girls up-to 19 years so that they will be able to complete their school education, to arrest the challenge of dropout in the post elementary and lower secondary education.

1.4.7 The State shall ensure safety of women in stationary and mobile public spaces that are well lit. Annual third party Safety audit shall be conducted by the Department of Social Welfare and Women Empowerment. Suitable action has to be initiated by the local bodies

or institutions and connected departments shall ensure implementation and report shall be followed with the next audit.

1.4.8 All police stations shall have Counselors and women police beats and a conducive gender sensitive environment encouraging access.

1.4.9 The police can designate a Mahalir police volunteer at every local body to support women in distress and facilitate reporting in the case of gender based violence. The name and contact details of the designated person shall be displayed in prominent places for easy access.

1.4.10 The State shall set up an individual single tracking system in a 360 degree manner for all the cases registered at the WHL, police station or any other officially recognised sites so as to monitor speedy closure of the cases and instill confidence among women and girls that Gender based Violence will not be tolerated and strict action taken against the offenders.

1.4.11 The State shall provide victim/witness protection programmes to support affected women as the situation demands and as per predesigned Standard Operating Protocols.

1.4.12 In the case of habitual offenders of domestic violence due to inebriation, the Department with the local police department shall enroll them to a de-addiction programme and put them through counselling sessions.

1.4.13 According to The Prevention of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (commonly known as POSH) it is the legal obligation for all organizations with 10 or more employees to set up an Internal Complaints Committee POSH committee and make it functional.

1.4.14 Safety alarm devices /tools / panic buttons which shall act as deterrents and inform the nearby police stations when women in a public place are harmed may be devised and act as Emergency Response Support System (ERSS).

1.4.15 Alcohol and drug awareness in Education curriculum right from 5th std to colleges to address the problem scientifically.



## **1.5 Social protection**

The State shall ensure access to social protection programmes in terms of availability, accessibility and adequacy that reach those most in need.

1.5.1 The impact of intergenerational poverty is one of the prevalent reasons for forcing children, especially girls, into child marriage and so the State shall take adequate measures to provide social support nets to the poorest families or communities as a way of helping parents or families who do not want their daughters to get married early.

1.5.2 The State shall take steps to encourage intergenerational dialogues that can pave the way for long-term systemic change in transforming gender dynamics and end harmful social norms such as child marriage. Every year the State shall incentivize local bodies who come forward and ensure that their village/ town Panchayat/ municipality/ corporation is child marriage free and continue to maintain their status.

1.5.3 The State shall facilitate formation of adolescent girl groups at the community level to provide an opportunity and a platform to identify challenges affecting their lives, voice their concerns, and find evidence-based solutions in a safe environment.

1.5.4. Compulsory registration of all marriages. Those marriages held in religious sites shall also be duly registered by the concerned authorities.

1.5.5 Gender clubs can be formed to increase the awareness on gender equality, rights among both men and women at the urban and rural Local Bodies level to sensitize contemporary women issues and existing forms of criminal activities. These will also form as watchdogs to ensure that gender violations do not happen.

## 1.6. Social security

Tamil Nadu has a high number of single women headed households ( 13% in urban areas and 15% in rural areas), such as widows, abandoned women, divorced women, spinsters, unmarried mothers. All single and women headed households shall be considered under multiple deprivations category and suitably considered under social protection measures.

1.6.1 All single and women-headed households may be given 50 additional person-days of employment under MGNREGS.

1.6.2. Women under such categories shall be brought under a board to ensure entitlements cum insurance and other social security measures

1.6.3 Girl Children who are brought up in orphanages shall be registered under a common registry so that they become eligible for all government schemes such as first graduate allowance, marriage assistance etc. after 18 years. They shall be given priority in job melas, skill training and also be provided with an option to stay in any of the service homes with a minimum monthly allowance of Rs. 1000.

1.6.4 Children with congenital anomalies, Autism children and physically handicapped children are to be given special Pension to their mother's bank account, as it takes lot of expenditure, time and resource to take care of them.



1.6.5 Single women will be treated as family and would be eligible for Ration Cards.

## 1.7. Legal

1.7.1. Legal assistance at Local level to provide legal assistance to the deprived sections of the society at the grassroots level in all Village Panchayat/Town Panchayat/ Municipality / Corporation level across

the State to help to resolve long pending litigations. Eligible cases will be referred to DLSA for further assistance.

1.7.2 The State shall ensure in consultation with the judicial body on fast tracking of cases related to Gender Based violence(GBV)

1.7.3 The Judicial Academy shall engage with the women's organisations and women and children related departments to update them on the current laws applicable for the protection of women  
**(சட்டம் என்ன சொல்கிறது?)**

1.7.4 The Judicial Academy shall train at the panchayat level a Community Resource Person who will be able to create awareness on the protective laws for women.

1.7.5 The judiciary has the power to invalidate discriminatory laws and so the collective capacities shall be used to implement a law reform agenda that addresses the legal needs of women and girls so as to lead to better outcomes. Laws that impact women shall be taken up for review like land ownership and inheritance rights, succession, etc.

1.7.6 The state shall create effective mechanisms for network and convergence of relevant institutions/agencies like State Legal Services Authority (SLSA), District Legal Service Agency (DLSA), State Commission for Women, State commission for children and the Department of Social welfare and women empowerment will be strengthened suitably for providing easy and affordable access of justice to woman. SLSA, DLSA will create linkages with supportive institutions such as Shelter homes, One Stop Centers in order to give required legal aid to women staying in these homes.

1.7.7 The State through the State Law Commission shall facilitate periodic legal review and administrative reforms to ensure that the gaps in the existing laws, policies, and programmes are addressed especially for strengthening existing legislations, introducing new legislations.



1.7.8 The State shall initiate and take efforts to streamline data systems and collect disaggregated data, compile data through review of various data sources (Census, NFHS, NSS, NCRB, MoSPI) to develop a compatible and comprehensive database on Women to direct towards evidence based policy making.

## **1.8 Media**

1.8.1 Gender parity in the mass media i.e. print and electronic media, advertising world, film sector and new media shall be promoted by increasing the presence of women by 50% in the editorial positions.

1.8.2 Tamil Nadu shall set up women media centers at least one in the large urban cities to provide technical training and skill building to facilitate gender sensitive reporting to transform gender constructs, beliefs and norms. It shall encourage the entry of women in the media industry through promotion of journalism and mass media courses and ensuring adherence to equitable work conditions.

1.8.3 Tamil Nadu shall encourage gender Sensitive and non-discriminatory portrayal of women in all forms of media so that women are not represented in a demeaning or stereotypical manner. Private sector media networks shall also be sensitized and encouraged to portray empowering images of women with self-regulatory mechanisms.

1.8.4 The State encourages the use of new media applications like internet, facebook, twitter and mobile phone communication and information systems to benefit women while at the same time shall provide enough safeguards to protect the dignity and safety of women through its cybercrime interventions.

1.8.5. Any media projection that undermines the women empowerment concepts including the type/nature of language used shall carry a disclaimer / tag line that this is not promoted or prescribed by the State and any complaints or views regarding content may be reported. The State shall constitute a committee to review the contents periodically.



1.8.6 Media should be sensitized in use of gender sensitive and gender appropriate words/ language. Incase of reporting of violent incidents the identity of victim shall in no way be revealed, scenes/reports that are in contrary to the protective laws for women/ that are against women rights shall not be encouraged and stringent punishment will be given to those involved.

1.8.7 If there are scenes depicted which are not consonant with the laws but are part of the story then the connected legal provisions stating that this is wrong should be reflected in the screen or written in the bottom part of the page if it's in print. ( eg if there is a discussion or dialogue on dowry -it should be stated that it is legally wrong and those involved will be punished as per law or if a woman is assaulted then the helpline number may be displayed so that it also serves as an awareness builder)

1.8.8. Laws and rights related to women shall be projected by the media to create awareness.



## **1.9. Infrastructure**

1.9.1 The State shall provide a differently abled friendly infrastructure that is inclusive in nature and improve access to women and girls who are differently abled.

1.9.2 De-addiction centers shall be set up with all facilities providing state of art treatment and rehabilitation facilities.

1.9.3 Transit hostels for women who travel on work or attend interviews or with respect to any of their prospects shall be provided by the local bodies and whether the presence of such facilities are gender friendly as per safety standards and commensurate with the requirements shall be ascertained by a Joint Review committee

1.9.4 Women shall have a voice in setting priorities in the design, planning and location of the infrastructure projects with a gender audit.

1.9.5 The State shall enable quality delivery of entitlement schemes such as housing as it becomes the top most priority for single women in rural and urban places apart from other basic services like health,

education and socio-economic security. As there are many housing schemes to address this issue but special category for single women shall be provided (Unmarried, Widow, Deserted, Separated and divorced) should be given with ownership.

1.9.6 All forms of Transport systems should be facilitated to be women friendly. In Buses the first half of the seats shall be earmarked for women and front exit/ entrance shall be used only by women.

1.9.7 Instant on / off boarding of public transport at remote locations / remote areas in cities without bothering about public bus stops.

1.9.8 To facilitate women street vendors who normally rely on public transport, to transport their freight, exclusive Buses (multi modal transport systems included) with carriage space to keep big bags, baskets, big vessels etc may be deployed.

## **2. Economic**

2.1. The important role played by women in secondary and tertiary sectors has been crucial to the development of these sectors. They shall be given comprehensive support in terms of labour legislation, social security and other support services to participate in various industrial sectors. Suitable measures shall be taken to enable women to work the night shift in factories and enable an environment with support services for security, transportation etc.

2.2 As women play a critical role in the agriculture and allied sectors, as producers, concentrated efforts shall be made to ensure that benefits of training, extension and various programmes reach them in proportion to their numbers. The programmes for training women in soil and seed conservation, social forestry, dairy development and other occupations allied to agriculture like horticulture, livestock including small animal husbandry, poultry, fisheries etc. will be expanded to benefit women workers in the agriculture sector. In Agriculture, particularly small scale women vegetable farmers (women) are losing their margin in transportation of their vegetable goods to market, so subsidized luggage fair would be given for such goods in local Government buses.

2.3 Women shall be given equal representation in the management of water bodies including membership in watershed committees and the release of water for agricultural purposes. Women agriculture workers shall have priority over biomass augmented from watersheds. Women shall be given 50% reservation in agricultural cooperatives and any such professional organizations and also have 50% at the leadership levels.

2.4 Women shall share an equal proportion of seats in management committees for exercising forest rights in the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2007.

2.5 Women farmers and agricultural labourers shall have access to use minor forest produce and firewood.

2.6 Traditional Women knowledge on conservation practices shall be recognized and integrated into the schemes of forest protection and conservation.

2.7 *In* order to augment and increase production of women farmers, adequate public investments to the tune of 50% shall be provided for technical and financial assistance to women farmers in the areas of micro-irrigation, land, and soil water conservation practices. Public subsidies in the areas of HYV seeds and other inputs included fertilizers and pesticides.

2.8 Academic Institutions, Private companies, PSUs have acres and acres of unused land fenced inside their institution could give such land on long lease for women farmers to cultivate food or their students could be encouraged to do farming thereby enabling them to earn while they learn. The produce could be used for internal consumption in mess and hostels or sold in local markets and the Entrepreneurship Cell in academic institutions could take lead.

2.9 Priorities shall be given for women's cooperatives in the areas of leasing in or sale of uncultivated lands.

2.10 Occupational segregation and gender pay gap shall be reduced by 50%.

2.11 Schemes and programmes shall be formed to promote women labour cooperatives and collective farming, especially among landless and marginal women labourers. Cooperatives shall be encouraged in the areas of post-harvest processing, marketing activities, non-farm activities such as animal husbandry, forestry.

2.12 Women farmers and agricultural workers shall be encouraged through special schemes on the production of vermi-compost and microbial fertilizers, nursery preparation of plantation materials and quality seeds. Special training programmes can be conducted, working capital can be extended for women farmers and agricultural workers on these aspects.

2.13 Women farmers shall be encouraged to produce nutrition rich crops that enhance local consumption and also get higher income and where possible federated as women farmer groups. Post harvest processing of these crops shall be promoted and 50% of the produce will be procured for distribution and use in the ICDS.

2.14 There is an unequal burden of unpaid care that undermines women's participation in the economy. The state recognizes the role of women's unpaid work in terms of economic and societal value and efforts will be undertaken to assess the actual time and contribution through periodic household surveys which will help in estimating the gender inequality in the household work and undertake suitable strategies to integrate unpaid work with major programmes. Further measures will be undertaken to free women's time for paid work through flexi timings, time-saving technologies, infrastructure, child/parental care services (Crèches) and child care/parental leave.

2.15 Effective safety nets mechanisms will be formulated for migrant women such as those working in construction, domestic servants; brick kilns plantations, along with protection of their entitlement of benefits such as BPL and ration cards, health and hygiene through toilet facilities, admission in local anganwadis and schools, regular health checkups including maternal and child care.

2.16 The State shall put in place a Joint monitoring mechanism with the Social welfare and women empowerment department, industries and labour department and other concerned departments to ensure the compliance of

mandatory laws like Maternity Benefit Act and The Sexual Harassment of Women at Work Place (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, and display of the rights and benefits of female employees provided by the organization. Provisions such as natal and post-natal benefits, child care facilities, flexitime, housing which impact women's productivity will also be encouraged.

2.17 All women employees shall be given leave during their menopause. This can be clubbed with the one year maternity leave. Women who have not availed the entire maternity leave can have the option of availing menopause leave during their career which will not extend beyond the maximum combined limit of one year.

2.18 Women will be eligible for Sick leave category outside CL for any 2 consecutive days per month which is compensatory. This shall be applicable till attain the age of menopause.

2.19 Women employees should be given an option to study any course of their choice relevant to their field of work in any university/ accredited Institutions and on successful completion they may be given an incentive for completion. The course duration shall not be less than one year.

2.20 Women are not given loan without male family members authorizing it especially husband, brother or father. Women should be provided collateral free loans.

## **2.2. Skilling**

2.2.1 The State shall support Skill training to Girls in any area of their choice with equal opportunities, financial and accommodation support. These training shall include Personality development and personal transformation to empower them to manage self and business. These will act as finishing schools, honing the skills to suit market requirement.

2.2.2 The State shall ensure that atleast 50% of opportunities and High end skilling of shall be provided in the new and emerging sectors to students in technical field.

2.2.3 The State shall open opportunities for women and girls for upskilling especially those who had a career break.

2.2.4 Girls completing education in Polytechnics and ITIs shall be provided with an apprenticeship in Industry to encourage them to take up jobs in the core sector

2.2.5 Facilitating Transition to Work: The informal nature of the labour market and the changing dynamics prevent adolescent girls in the later stages (who are nearing 18) to enter into the world of work. Tamil Nadu shall look at ways for integration of technical skills in the curriculum along with providing incentives to pursue courses that will smoothen the transition from education to work of adolescent girls in vulnerable communities.

## **2.3 Employment**

2.3.1 Exclusive job melas for women and girls in specific sectors shall be held and top industries/corporate shall be encouraged to participate and recruit.

2.3.2 Internship opportunities can be given in startups. This shall be organised as part of job melas.

2.3.3 Creche facilities to be compulsory in all working places and it shall be the responsibility of employers and these shall be subject to annual audit jointly by the labour and Social welfare and women empowerment.

2.3.4 Medical facilities/ doctor on call shall be made available in working areas and periodical medical check up shall be conducted.

### **Unorganised sector**

2.3.5 **Women** working in the unorganised shall be enrolled in the labour welfare boards that would offer them the required support in terms of social security and safety nets

2.2.6 The State Nodal centre for Occupational Health and Safety of Unorganised workers (SNC- OSH) shall provide training to the women and employers in the sector to ensure that impact of occupational health issues are minimised and in case of any issue can be linked to the public health system suitably. The number of such cases for which interventions done and the preventive activities undertaken maybe reported to the State Resource Centre for Women.

2.2.7 Industries or MSME or unorganised units that engage contract/outsourced labour shall be regularly monitored to ensure labour rights, wage parity, gender friendly work sites, non-exploitive conditions that covers social security and safety nets.

## 2.4 **Banking and insurance**

2.4.1 The State shall enable women to access the formal banking system with their own or collective collateral and develop a strategy for the financial institutions to address the significant gender gap by removing the constraints for accessing private finance.

2.4.2 The Government would provide interest subvention with priority to micro enterprises and the women entrepreneurs or any enterprise having 50% of women employed vertically in all positions. Such enterprises would have zero interest on successful repayment of the money lent through any formal financial institution.

2.4.3 The households with men addicted to alcohol may be considered for insurance under a special scheme which is proportional to the amount of alcohol consumed (can be tracked from the bottles) so that the insurance payout may benefit households and help them move out of their impoverished state due to continuous alcohol consumption. The consumers may be asked to provide legal id proof for purchase to deter youngsters and also to facilitate tracking for de-addiction. The funds thus collected under the scheme may be used towards costs for de-addiction of the victim and lump sum payment to the affected family incase of death of the husband.

## **2.5 Livelihood**

2.5.1. Tamil Nadu shall focus on providing/improving access to physical, social and financial endowment that will help overcome unequal distribution and give opportunities to organize and generate business.

2.5.2 Hand Holding and mentoring shall be provided by the State to all the targeted 1 lakh women entrepreneurs by Industry experts.

2.5.3 The State shall focus on starting and supporting collective enterprises to help to mobilize and empower members of the society through their common interest, common resource planning and improved access to social services.

2.5.4 The State shall design programmes to reach out to very poor women from marginalised and vulnerable communities who live/work in remote areas and often excluded from financial services and or even basic services and help them move out of poverty.

2.5.5 The State has a sizable number of women involved in agriculture and land-based activities with limited exposure to modern skill training and technologies. The State shall expand employment opportunities for women outside the traditional job pool to overcome the problem of occupational segregation and also increase efficiency and income in the existing jobs.

2.5.6 Exclusive portal to support women's brand and women's product lines including online, ecommerce advertising shall be included as part of the financing support. State shall provide financial grants for marketing upto a minimum of 12.5. lakh as fees.

2.5.7 Women graduating from livelihood as micro entrepreneurs would be provided support for participation in seminars, workshops, symposiums or short training courses upto a maximum of Rs.one lakh. This shall exclude travel or any incidental expenses.

2.5.8 Federations or cooperatives or Collectives would be provided with mentoring and technical support and a common brand. The cost towards branding, collective supply chain management, and marketing would be borne by the Government.

2.5.9 Like SHGs, women cohorts would be created for peer-to- peer learning and sharing. This would facilitate women from non-competing businesses for them to be able to share openly.

## **2.6. Industry and Startups**

Women supportive policies are very much part of the social justice mission and cost Vs benefits metrics will not be applied even if these policies are designed for profit oriented industries/startups.

2.6.1 Tamil Nadu to encourage women Startups, it shall ensure that at least one or more women investors be included in the investment group so that the diversity of gender in the decision-making group and that there is a likelihood that women seekers of funds will get a fairer hearing and possibly receive more favourable decisions.

2.6.2 Task based work systems instead of time based wherever feasible.

2.2.3 Anganwadi attached Creche facility industrially dense areas and urban locales to help women working in small companies and shops - sustainable model to be worked out.

2.2.4 Government can help setting up kid/women care modules if an establishment has 50 plus women working there. This will be helpful for meme.

2.2.5 Compulsory off for 2 days per week for women.

2.2.6 Women entrepreneurs find it difficult to get things done when it comes to every aspect of building a company. A women specific district wise help center/portal to be established preferably with an accountable call center.

2.2.7 Establishing a women specific equity fund/debt fund by Government and deploying through private investors.

2.2.8 Subsidized costs in all company establishment services, co-working spaces, incubators etc

2.2.9 One of the major difficulties women startups face is market access. Government should encourage potential buyers with possible benefits and also providing innovative market access platforms and free tech tools.

2.2.10 There are very few women founders in high profile scalable businesses. A study to be done on this phenomenon and appropriate action items to be implemented.

2.2.11 Women getting married with 3 plus years of proper work experience or startup establishment would be given with some additional encouragement incentives by the Government. This will help a decent percentage of women to think of getting into a work/venture mode before getting married.

2.2.12 During pregnancy/child birth breaks innovative courses and practical learnings can be given to them with the objective of keeping them updated with their line of profession and bouncing back to jobs easily.

2.2.13 Free / Subsidy in state/national/international exposure with a cap on maximum financial support.

2.2.14 Women mentors also would be made available who would empathise and understand the challenges faced by women and provide directions and handholding support to the budding entrepreneurs.

2.2.15 Women focused Think Tank conclaves with the objective of bringing out issues, ideas and connections to work in a collaborative manner would be set up.

2.2.16 Social entrepreneurs who are working in women centric areas would be offered support.

2.2.17 To celebrate entrepreneurship, women centric awards on yearly basis to support the women entrepreneurs, startups and the ecosystem would be launched.

## **2.3 Climate change**

2.7.1 Mitigation and management of natural disasters is critical from the gender perspective as floods, droughts etc. impact women severely exposing them to social and economic vulnerabilities. Tamil Nadu shall adopt holistic gender specific strategies in disaster management and prevention aiming at their safety, well-being, health and rehabilitation.

2.7.2 As women are highly affected by climate change, environmental degradation, distress migration and displacement in times of natural calamities, policies and programmes for environment, conservation and restoration shall compulsorily incorporate gender concerns. The disaster relief kits shall include feminine hygiene products, shelters should have women friendly toilets and relief measures should prioritize women centric issues and address localized needs if any.

2.7.3 The State shall facilitate systems to enable equitable ownership, control and use of natural resources and secure the asset base of marginalised poor women to counter poverty and climate shocks.

2.7.4 The State shall take measures to comprehensively address unscientific use the adverse implications of crop selection, use of chemicals and pesticides etc on women's health and their surrounding environment. Women would be trained in bio-inputs production and management to facilitate organic farming.

2.7.5 Environmental friendly, renewable, non-conventional energy, green energy sources shall be promoted and made affordable and accessible to rural households for their basic household activities.

2.7.6 Modernised fish storage crates, Solar fish dryers, food processing technology involving women drudgery reduction tools may be provided to women farmers/ fishers.

2.7.7 Atleast 5% of micro enterprises shall be run on environment friendly technologies.

2.7.8 Sustained awareness creation would be done to increase the capacity of local women, SHGs, elected women representatives to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

### 3. Political

The state shall strive to "establish a society with no place for dominance" (ஆதிக்கமற்ற சமுதாயம் அமைத்தே தீருவோம்) a gender neutral society where women shall have equal rights in socio-political, economic and cultural and property. The political empowerment of women becomes particularly pertinent in a patriarchal society and efforts shall be taken to modernize the socio-political, economic and cultural institutions with the sense of equanimity. The ideals of social justice do not mean only providing the reservation of seats for the marginalized, excluded communities in the legislative bodies. But gender equality and liberty are two major concerns to be addressed within the larger broader framework of social justice. The objective primarily is on **Political participation, Political engagement and also on Political representation that purely depends on their choice that should inevitably lead to Political Impact.**

3.1.1 Registered political parties to provide 33.3% women representation horizontally and vertically.

3.1.2 To provide minimum 33.3 % of seats to women through reservation at Assembly and Parliament elections as the State has already provided 50% reservation for women in Local Bodies.

3.1.2 To facilitate and encourage more women to take an informed choice to enter into politics 6 months certificate courses with 3 months internship in local bodies will be conducted on the options available and what are the roles expected out of the positions. They should be fully equipped to meet the challenges in Office if they chose to contest. Once elected to Office this training will help women to independently handle office affairs themselves, rather than relying on male family members to discharge their functions effectively. These will act as finishing schools.

3.1.3 Elected Women Local Body representatives may be taken for experiential learning programmes conducted within and outside the State thereby providing a platform to adopt innovative strategies in their local bodies.

3.1.4 Women political representatives shall be provided an enabling environment for women elected representatives to discharge their functions effectively.

3.1.5 Women political representatives especially those belonging to the disadvantaged sections whenever they get affected by physical, psychological and social discrimination will be given due protection by the District Administration immediately as top priority.

3.1.6 Awareness shall be given to all the members in the legislative bodies at all the levels, officials about gender equality and Human rights through women's rights organizations and UN Organizations .

3.1.7 All elected representatives shall be encouraged to achieve the goals stated in the Sustainable Development Goal 5 to understand the necessity for development based on gender equality.

3.1.8 The State shall improve the basic infrastructure of the offices of Local Bodies to be gender friendly or at least gender neutral.

3.1.9 Local Body meetings shall be digitally recorded to improve efficiency and transparency along with safety and security measures especially areas where social and personal animosities are high for the elected women representatives. This would enable the women elected representatives to serve their duties without fear and with consciousness and safety.

#### **4. Emotional**

The policy aims to touch upon Psychological or Emotional empowerment of girls and women includes independence, informed decision making ability, and Positive self evolution as well as having ability to self- regulate her own

life as an individual and not as a constructed feminine identity of subservience to family or society or infection of imitation.

4.1. Mental health is a highly gendered issue, with depression twice as prevalent amongst women, and low-income women in particular. A community based intervention combined with the District Mental Health Programme shall be initiated. The State shall follow a systematic approach to provide requisite screening, care and treatment especially at primary level - the Local Bodies with close coordination with the community based organizations.

4.2 The State shall enhance the competence of primary health care providers to recognize and treat mental health consequences of domestic violence, sexual abuse, and acute and chronic stress in women. Primary Health centers shall be trained to deal with Gender based Violence and report first instance of violence to the concerned police officials.

4.3 SHGs capacity building programmes largely cover decision making, communication skills, assertiveness, positive self evolution, among other life skill training. Adolescent girls and Women who are not yet covered shall be suitably trained and made aware through appropriate capacity building programmes.

## **5. General Support**

5.1 An exclusive website will be launched with all information relevant to women, especially on the opportunities available for women in education, scholarship, Skill training and placements, career/job opportunities, mentoring, concessions and various Government schemes.

5.2 An app (பெண்ணே உனக்காக) or technological intervention to enable information and support systems for girl children that will be provided through a life-cycle based approach. Targeted information and interventions are possible when all girl children are tracked as soon as they are delivered in hospitals. They can be provided with requisite linkage with schemes/ programmes. This will be the affirmative action for girl child protection.

5.3 A Gender Observatory (Gen-O) shall be constituted and vested with the responsibility of maintaining a repository of Gender related research

done by academic institutions /research bodies/agencies/Government departments for evidence based policy making. Gender budgeting, Gender audit, Gender labs and performance of Orange lens shall be monitored through Gen-O.

## **6. Monitoring, Research and Evaluation**

The implementation of the policy shall be monitored on a regular basis. Each strategy shall be converted into actionable points which should be measured and followed up intensely.

6.1 A High Level Women Empowerment Committee (HLWEC) would be set up to monitor the implementation of the Policy. The members of the HLEC would be as follows.

1. Chief Secretary to Government - Chairperson
2. Secretary, Social Welfare and women empowerment Department - Member Convenor
3. Secretary Finance - Member
4. Secretary RD&PR- member
5. Secretary, MAWS dept- Member
6. Secretary, Health Dept- Member
7. Secretary, Planning & Development - Member
8. Secretary, Labour and skill Development - Member
9. Secretary, MSME department- Member
10. ADGP- CWC-Member
11. UN women- Member
12. UNICEF- Member
13. The World Bank - Member
14. Director of Social Welfare - Member Secretary
15. Project Director, ICDS - Member
16. SLBC-Member

The HLWEC would meet every six months and review the progress, suggest mid-term course corrections, identify areas of in-depth study/ evaluation in policy implementation.

Annual Performance Report of the Policy shall be tabled in the HLWEC.

### **6.2 Evaluation**

Concurrent evaluation of the policy implementation would be done through a third party and results discussed during the HLWEC.

### **6.3 Data, Finance, policy Research**

6.3.1 Women studies and topics related to women would be facilitated with data. The Department of Economics and Statistics shall provide gender disaggregated administrative data annually of the State.

Gender Budgeting shall be introduced at all the levels of government ministries, Departments and public sector units and thrust should be given to the private sector to adhere to the state women policy.

6.3.2 A functional gender budget cell shall be constituted in every department and the gender based situation analysis of the scheme shall be submitted to the Finance Department - Gender Cell for consolidation before the State budget. Evaluate or Review all a Plan/ Project/ Scheme/Programmes both existing and proposed with a 'gender lens'/'Orange lens' before intervention or implementation.

6.3.3 The State shall allocate budgets specifically for programmes that aims at prevention and protection of women from discrimination and violence.

6.3.4 A feasibility study shall be carried out to start the women development banks/councils, so as to increase the economic empowerment of women which would reflect their relevance in the political sphere.

6.3.5 It shall document and evaluate the adoption and scale-up issues in order to innovate and strengthen evidence-informed programming and support a community of practice among programme developers and implementers to facilitate learning and knowledge sharing. All policies, programmes and schemes of the departments will be reviewed under the gender lens and classified as gender blind, gender sensitive, gender neutral, gender transformative.

**Detailed implementation Guidelines and required fund allocations will be issued by the concerned Department and they shall be responsible for ensuring the expected outcomes of the policy are met within the specified policy period.**

## **Conclusion**

This Policy is valid for a period of 10 years from the date of its notification or till a new policy is formulated. However, amendments in this policy could be made with the approval of cabinet without affecting the beneficiaries already covered under the policy. This policy shall be reviewed after five years.



**Back drop**

The Social Welfare and Nutritious department of Tamil Nadu was renamed as the Social Welfare and Women Empowerment to give additional thrust and indicative of affirmative action related to gender. The present policy has been created based on a widespread consultative process with regional representation from the political parties, civil society organisations, academia and research institutions. It is to be highlighted that there was an Interagency Expert Group of UN agencies like UNICEF, UNWOMEN, World Bank. Two consultations for the policy were held in Chennai, one in Madurai and one in Coimbatore. Efforts were made to include women and men from different sections to make the policy inclusive that captures the aspirations of the women in the State. The State shall take up programming for synergy, combining multiple strategies and interventions at the individual, interpersonal, community and societal levels for sustained impact. The State shall build on on-going initiatives, integrating prevention activities into existing health, development and other existing sectoral programmes.

### Landscape at a glance

### SOME VITAL GENDER RELATED DATA

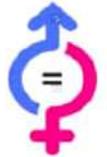
S.No	Indicators	2019 – 2020	Source
1	Rate of Crimes against women per every 100000 female populations	14.6	SCRB
2	Conviction rate of crime against Women	18.3	SCRB
4.	Per Lakh women that have been subjected to dowry offences during the year	4.5	SCRB
5.	Conviction rate of women subject to dowry related offences.	7.7	SCRB
6.	Sex Ratio at Birth (females per 1000males)	942	DPH
7.	Female to male ratio of average wages/salary earning received during the preceding calendar month among regular wage salaried employees (rural +urban)	0.74	PLFS
9.	Proportion of crime against women to total crime reported in the country during the calendar year	1.3	SCRB
10.	Per Lakh women who have experienced sexual crime during the year (in %)	19.9	SCRB
11.	Per Lakh women who have experienced cruelty/Physical violence by husband or her relatives during the calendar year (%)	13.20	SCRB
12.	Conviction rate of cruelty by husband or his relatives	9.4	SCRB
13.	Proportion of sexual crime against girls, children to total crime against children during the calendar year	57.3	SCRB
14.	Proportion of Trafficking of girl children to total children trafficked during the calendar year	51	SCRB
15.	Child Sex Ratio (0-6 years) 2011 (per 1000 male births)	943	DPH
16.	Proportion of cases reported under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (early marriage of children below 18 years of age)total crime against children, 2015	1.1	SCRB
17.	Conviction rate of cases reported under prohibition of child marriage act	0	SCRB
18.	Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life	-	-
19.	Proportion of seats held by women in national Parliament, State Legislation and Local Self Government – (Assembly)	9.33	State Election
20.	Proportion of seats held by women in national Parliament, State Legislation and Local Self Government – (PRI)	52.99	

21.	Proportion of seats held by women in national Parliament, State Legislation and Local Self Government – (Lok sabha)	7.89	ECI
22.	Proportion of seats held by women in national Parliament, State Legislation and Local Self government – (Rajya sabha)	11.1	ECI
23.	Female labour force participation rate (LFPR)-Urban areas - (4th Quarter)	24.2	PFLS
24.	Percentage of currently married women(15-49 years) who use modern methods of family planning	68.8	DFW
25.	Operational land holdings – <b>Female (Area in '000Hectares)</b>	1036.2	Agri Census
26.	Operational land holdings - <b>Female -Number of holdings (In lakh numbers)</b>	15.60	Agri Census
27.	Agricultural wages (genderwise) – <b>Female</b>	254	DOES
28.	Agricultural wages (genderwise) – <b>Male</b>	277	DOES
29.	Exclusive Women SHGs in Bank linked SHGs (in lakhs)	7.66	TNDCW
30.	Percentage of women employed in IT and ITeS industry, 2017-18	35	TNeGA
31.	Maternal Mortality Ratio GOI	60	SRS
32.	Maternal Mortality Ratio (State)	57	HMIS
33.	Percentage of women aged 15 - 49 years who received antenatal care, four times or more (Period 5 years/1 year) – ( Central)	81.1	NFHS
34.	Percentage of women aged 15 - 49 years who received antenatal care, four times or more (Period 5 years/1 year) – ( State)	85.49	TN HMIS
35.	Percentage of currently married women (15-49 years) who use any modern family planning methods – ( <b>GOI</b> )	52.6	NFHS
36.	Percentage of currently married women (15-49 years) who use any modern family planning methods - ( <b>State</b> )	-	DFW
37.	Percentage of women aged 15-19 years who were already mothers or pregnant. – ( <b>Central</b> )	5	SRS
38.	Percentage of women aged 15-19 years who were already mothers or pregnant. – ( <b>State</b> )	1.16	TN HMIS
39.	Percentage of Institutional Births(5 years/1 years). – ( <b>Central</b> )	98.9	NFHS
40.	Percentage of Institutional Births(5 years/1 years). – ( <b>State</b> )	99.94	TN HMIS
41.	Percentage of currently married women (15-49 years) who use any modern family planning methods – ( <b>Central</b> )	52.6	NFHS
42.	Percentage of currently married women (15-49 years) who use any modern family planning methods – ( <b>State</b> )	-	DFW
43.	Percentage of TB cases successfully treated(cured plus treatment completed) among TB cases notified to the national health authorities during a specified period	-	RNTCP

44.	Percentage of people living with HIV currently receiving ART among the detected number of adults and children living with HIV	86	TANSACS
45.	Proportion of patients in the target age group(>30 years) in the community who are taking anti-Hypertensive medications in Government Health facilities.	1.7	NHM
46.	Percentage of population in the age group 15-49 who reported sought treatment out of total population in that age group having diabetes.	0.9	NHM
47.	Proportion of patient in the target age group (>30 years) in the community who had been screened for Cervical Cancer atleast once in last three years in Government Health facilities.	40	TNHMIS
48.	Total physicians, nurses and midwives sanctioned in public sector facilities per 10000population	-	-
49.	significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere	2.2	SCRB
50.	Per One lakh population subjected to Physical, Psychological, or sexual violence in previous 12 months	1.4	SCRB
51.	Crime rate of sexual assault on women per lakh population	1.4	SCRB
52.	Conviction rate of reported Murder	29	SCRB

**Violence free homes**

*No harassment*



**Safe neighbourhood**

**Right to live**



*Respect*

**Fight injustice**



**Equal wages**

**No discrimination**

**Social welfare and Women  
Empowerment Department**

**Government of Tamil Nadu**

3<sup>rd</sup> floor Naamakkal Kavignar Maaligai,  
Secretariat

Chennai 600009

Phone :

Email :



## FORUM FOR IT EMPLOYEES (F.I.T.E.) - Tamilnadu

Head Office : New Street, Kannamapet, CIT Nagar, Chennai, Tamil Nadu - 600017

Regd No. 3598/CNI, E-mail: [fiteorganization@gmail.com](mailto:fiteorganization@gmail.com). Website: [fiteorg.in](http://fiteorg.in)

---

### IT & ITES Industry in India:

Information Technology industry in India provides direct employment to around 45 lakhs workers. Among this, it consists of 36% women workers. The industry contributes 8% in the GDP of India. The revenue of the sector stands at US \$191 billion. It is one of the dream sector for the white collar jobs among the educated youths in India especially women. Surprisingly, the covid pandemic has opened another door for the women who has a long career break after marital life and child birth! Women workers with children have got flexible work from home option! Still there are many issues especially women workers face in the industry to be addressed.

We would like to high light the important demands:

- **Labour Laws:**

- While IT & ITES industry also comes under labour laws, they are often flouted with impunity. 8 hours working hours and job security are a dream for most of the workers. So, all the labour laws must be strictly enforced in the IT industry without any exemption to regulate layoff, retrenchment, working hours etc.,
- Contract Labour system must be stopped as the nature of work carried out in IT industry is of perennial nature.

- **Appraisal System:**

- Appraisal system is biased and not transparent. It gives room for injustice and illegal job terminations. So, Appraisal system must be scrapped and pay hike, promotion must be given based on seniority like in other industry.

- **Minimum Wage:**

- Particularly in small sized IT companies, workers are paid low wages like Rs. 5000 per month. Therefore there is a need to ensure that workers in IT and ITES establishments are paid a minimum wage of not less than Rs. 22,000/- per month with variable D.A based on the consumer price index.

- **Social Justice in private Sector:**

- At present only below 5% of workforce is from Scheduled Caste and Scheduled tribes are employed in IT sector. Considering this fact, the government should enforce reservation in private sector including IT & ITES.

- **Night Shift:**

- Women workers must be deployed in night shifts only with their consent. They face the problems of hormonal imbalances, lower estrogen levels, and irregular menstrual cycles, infertility etc., Government should bring in policy in general to regulate the night shift work keeping in mind the health care of the workers particularly women workers.

- **Gender Justice:**

- Women workers are the one who first face illegal job termination if the companies plan to reduce the workforce. Especially women face the discrimination based on their marital status, pregnancy status, and child birth etc. It must be ensured that these women workers employment rights are protected with appropriate labour law provisions. It must be ensured that women workers maternity legal rights are enforced fully irrespective of the size of the company.

- **Sexual Harassment at workplace:**

- Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplaces Act, 2013 (POSH) Act as amended must be strictly enforced.
- The implementation of current POSH act must be reviewed. Justice Verma Committee recommendations specific to Sexual harassment at workplace must be considered for implementation.



## FORUM FOR IT EMPLOYEES (F.I.T.E.) - Tamilnadu

Head Office : New Street, Kannamapet, CIT Nagar, Chennai, Tamil Nadu - 600017

Regd No. 3598/CNI, E-mail: [fiteorganization@gmail.com](mailto:fiteorganization@gmail.com). Website: [fiteorg.in](http://fiteorg.in)

---

- **Work from Home:**

- Since the beginning of covid pandemic entire IT industry has been working from home without any hindrance. Working at home has become a good employment option for many women workers who have children. Still, the work model is being exploitative in many ways. So, government should come up legal framework to regulate the work from home model and ensure the labour laws are followed. It should be ensured that the IT companies provide flexible work model especially for the benefit of working women.

- **Labour Unions:**

- IT Companies are directly or indirectly threaten the workers not to take part in union activities. It is completely against the constitutional right of the workers. Since there is no platform for raising their concerns, suicides due to various working conditions and personal issues are more among IT workers. Governments have to give directions to the IT companies to ensure that IT workers exercise their union rights.

- **Background Check:**

- Most of the IT companies recruit new workers only after the background verification of education, employment details of the job applicant in the previous companies goes through. This background verification is used as a tool to threaten the workers and suppress their voices against any injustice in the workplace. Government should come up legal provisions to regulate this background verification process in IT industry.

Parimala  
President  
Forum for IT-ITES Employees (FITE)  
9840713315  
[fiteorganization@gmail.com](mailto:fiteorganization@gmail.com)



### ***Decentralized & Intersectional GENDER BUDGETING***

“GENDER BUDGETING” is a powerful tool for achieving gender mainstreaming so as to ensure that benefits of development reach women as much as men. It is not an accounting exercise but an ongoing process of keeping a gender perspective in policy/ programme formulation, its implementation and review. Gender Budgeting entails dissection of the Government budgets to establish its gender differential impacts and to ensure that gender commitments are translated in to budgetary commitments. The way Government budgets allocate resources, has the potential to transform the gender inequalities in the State. Gender Budgeting is a tool for achieving gender mainstreaming, has been propagated.

Women marginalized by GENDER, CASTE and CLASS, REGIONAL LOCATION, RELIGION, PHYSICAL ABILITY, AGE, OCCUPATION, MARITAL STATUS - caught up as they are in a multiple web of discriminations, constitute the classical field for an intersectional analysis. And given their extra vulnerabilities, it is essential that specially focused schemes and projects, with adequate budgetary allocations, so that they do not get subsumed in general categories and even in general gender and marginalized categories. Hence it is very important that the learnings in Gender Responsive Budgeting, are taken further and be intersectionally integrated for the benefit of marginalized women. An effort towards INTERSECTIONAL Gender Budgeting will eventually become a stepping stone towards the process of “SOCIAL EQUITY BUDGETING”!

To strengthen the process of **GENDER BUDGETING** in the state, we propose the following suggestions for a decentralized and intersectional budgeting

- **Intersectional Gender Budgeting:** The process of gender responsive budget in the State should adopt a framework of social equity to address multi-dimensional vulnerability faced by women. The budget should provide disaggregated information on allocation of resources based on vulnerability indicators like –
  - a. Caste
  - b. Religion
  - c. Women headed households
  - d. Women with disability
  - e. Women engaged in vulnerable occupation
  - f. Women facing residential vulnerabilities (women in homeless situations and informal settlements)
  - g. Sexual and gender minorities



The State shall allocate at least 10% of its total annual 'Gender Budget Statement' exclusively for new innovative scheme for the most marginalized and vulnerable women in the State.

- **Decentralised Gender Budgeting:** The budget preparation process should be decentralised. The gender budgeting process should commence from the urban and rural local bodies.
  - To ensure participation from women, especially from most vulnerable sections, village/settlement level processes can be initiated
  - With absence of Area Sabha's in the urban areas; there is a need for engaging in community level process to ensure participation of women in the gender budget exercises
- **Institutionalising governance of gender budget**
  - Evolve an exclusive "Gender Budget Tracking Dashboard" – so that the flow of funds across states/ districts/ Taluks & Panchayats - for each scheme mentioned in Gender Budget Statement can be tracked.
  - Connect the Gender Budget Cell and women in the State, especially the most vulnerable women by strengthening synergy between government and civil society organizations
  - Capacity Building of officials in the gender cell of the different departments
  - Evaluation process of the gender budget to be carried out by constituting an 'Gender Budget Committee' comprising of women elected representatives, experts from civil society groups working with different vulnerable groups to ensure social inclusion
- **Accountability and Transparency:** The status of expenditure for the previous budget year should be made available in the current budget session – higher allocation does not imply higher rate of expenditure.
  - To evolve a 'Gender Budget Bill' to ensure accountability
  - Gender Audit to be exclusively carried out to assess the expenditure of the state. The findings of the gender audit should be presented
  - 'Status Report of Marginalized Women' to be presented in annual budget session to plan, allocate, analyse and evaluate the progress
  - Women-led access audit and social audit processes to be institutionalized with ombudsperson appointed to address grievances.

\*\*\*

*S.Kamatchi, Senior Researcher, SOCIAL WATCH - TAMILNADU  
Mobile: 9884607084, Email: kamakshi218@gmail.com*