

## ***GENDER / SOCIAL ASSESSMENT PLAN***



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Gender and social diversity are overlapping concepts that constitute analytical approaches for understanding the world around us. These approaches are dynamic and relevant to sustainable HRD management in industry for both ethical and practical reasons. The term gender is probably one of the most used and least understood or agreed upon particularly in the field of industry. The basic confusion relates to the difference between meaning of sex and gender. Whereas sex refers to the biological differences between women and men, gender is a social distinctive that is culture specific and changes across time. Similarly, social diversity, more neglected than gender in industry is an equally important concept. It not only refers to different ethnic groups but also to all the significant dimensions of social and biological differences that crosscut gender and ethnicity, such as wealth, age, status, class and cast. It is a force that influences industrial and social relationships on the basis of perceived differences, as a way of defining and understanding power relationships. Hence, while assuring or planning the gender issues, it is always imperative to study the related socio-economic issues.

There has been substantial progress made over the past two decades towards gender equality, however, on the economic side, serious imbalances in gender equality persist. Comparatively, populations of women at the senior management levels in trade/business policy making or trading are much lower. On the contrary, in the low paying, low status and semi-skilled range of employment, there is no dearth of women. The international statistics reveal that women in such categories are not only more numerous but usually work longer hours at lower pay than their male counterparts. Similarly, the women rarely have the opportunity to acquire the academic qualification and professional skills necessary to compete with men in employment sector. It is in this background that corporate social responsibilities should be carefully planned and implemented to suitably address the gender issues. The Canadian Government is very sensitive on these issues and has explicit policies for its trade and industry planning a venture anywhere in the world. The Medieval Glass Industries Ltd. is contemplating an industrial venture in Baddi area of the Solan district in the state of Himachal Pradesh in India.

## 2. THE PROPOSED PROJECT AREA

Baddi and Nallagarh industrial area are in the foothills of Himachal Pradesh. They are located at a distance of about 35 kms from Chandigarh. The project area is blessed with a newly declared national highway number 21A that is an extension of an old Manali highway number 21 connecting Chandigarh to hill resort of Manali. The project area has an already industrialized

township with an industrial history of about two decades. The area is experiencing a rapid expansion with about a dozen new industries already planning to come up in the area. The area is blessed with adequate infrastructure. Villages surround the industrial zones with population ranging between as low as 250 to 2000.

### **3. GENDER PLANNING**

The proposed project will have to live with the legislation, labor policies of both the Government of India as well as the Himachal Pradesh Government. Besides, the Canadian Government Guidelines and policies on gender issues will also have to be followed strictly. In view of this, the gender planning of the proposed project will cluster around the variables specifically defined in different local policies and also will have linkage with the CIDA Guidelines. The major planning components will be:

- **RECRUITMENT POLICY**

The recruitment policy of the organization will focus on appointment of the local population to the maximum possible extent. The organization will provide equal opportunity to both the genders at all the levels. Efforts will be made that the women should constitute to 35-40% of the total work force.

- **TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

The organization will provide training to its employees whether male or female. Considering the local social barriers, efforts will be made to train the female employees within factory premises, i.e. on the job training.

- **WOMEN SPECIFIC FACILITIES**

The proposed project will provide all the women specific facilities within its premises, major being, separate lavatory, wash rooms, change rooms etc. for the women. Arrangements of crèche and transportation will also be made.

- **SOCIAL SECURITY**

The employees of the organization will be brought in the following social security net:

- Provision of provident fund, pension, ESI, bonus, gratuity etc. as per local Government rules.
- Insurance of the workers under group insurance scheme.

- 30 days paid leave per annum in general and 90 days paid maternity leave to the women workers for pre and post delivery care.

- **PEER GROUP INTERACTION ENVIRONMENT**

The organization will create a women friendly environment within the organization. The male members will be briefed and trained on interaction with women. Strict regulations will be made to deal with offences such as absurd remarks, use of abusive language, and any other activities hurting the women dignity. The management will be given strict instruction to deal with these issues on priority basis.

- **DRESSING CODE**

The dressing code will be women friendly and local dressing systems will be kept in mind while designing the dress to be worn during working hours.

- **PERSONAL SAFETY MEASURES**

Both the male and female will be provided with equipments/gadgets to guard themselves against work accrued safety hazards.

- **WORKING HOURS**

The local tradition permits the women to work within sunrise and sunset. Accordingly, working shifts will be designed to accommodate women workers during these hours and in case extra hours are required in the evening, they will be provided with all the measures for personal safety up to reaching back their home.

- **OVERALL PROACTIVE MESURES TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY**

- Equal opportunity for both male and female in recruitment & promotion.
- Training & capacity building of the staff members for a safe and women friendly environment creation.
- Equal decision making power to both male and female workers at all the levels.
- Identification of more and more job opportunities for women.
- Equal wages to both male and female for discharging the same responsibility.

- Creation of women specific infrastructure e.g. toilet, change room, rest room crèche etc.
- Provision of normal holidays and 30 days paid leaves to the employees in general and 3 months fully paid maternity leaves to the female workers.
- Provision of health system coverage
- Provision for social security coverage as per local rules.
- Provision for personal safety while on job.
- Provision for transportation for employees coming from nearby areas.
- Provision for rules to address harassment of women workers by co-workers, Use of filthy and double meaning language by counterparts, Sexual advantage of colleagues and seniors, Work linked safety and health hazards.
- Reduce gap between men and women in the sector.
- Separate section for women in the canteen.
- Separate production floor for women
- Provision of appropriate dressing code acceptable to women as per local socio-cultural condition.

In view of the above, gender planning in the proposed project will not only live to the legislations and policies but also results in socio-economic fabric of the area. The project will demonstrate imitable example for gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment.