

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Strategy

2021 – 2023



**Government of Nepal
Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration
Provincial and Local Governance Support Programme
(PLGSP)**

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Background

The Provincial and Local Governance Support Programme (PLGSP) is a national flagship programme of the Government of Nepal (GoN) which aims to strengthen provincial and local governance systems and procedures and inter-governmental relationships to maximize benefits of cooperative federalism. The Programme's overarching goal is to contribute to ensure that all *Provincial and Local Governments are fully functional, sustainable, inclusive and accountable to their citizens*. Through the goal, the overall impact that the programme aims to achieve is to ensure that *all citizens receive quality and inclusive services at provincial and local level and enjoy better local infrastructures and economic prosperity*.

The Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration (MoFAGA) is the executing agency while the Offices of the Chief Minister and Council of Ministers (OCMCMs) at the provincial level are implementing agencies of PLGSP. The Programme is supported by international development partners, including the European Union, Norway, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United Nations. The objectives and outcomes of PLGSP are:

Objectives:

1. Strengthen provincial and local governance systems and procedures and IG relationships to maximize benefits of cooperative federalism for Nepali citizenry.
2. Enhance the capacity of provincial and local governments to deliver services and development outcomes effectively to citizens.

Outcomes:

1. Government institutions and IG mechanisms at all levels are fully functioning in support of federal governance as per the Constitution.
2. Provincial and local governments have efficient, effective, inclusive and accountable institutions.
3. Elected representatives and civil servants at provincial and local governments have the capacity and serve citizens to their satisfaction.

To achieve the goals, objectives, outcomes and outputs, it is imperative that the Programme adopts all possible measures to promote gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) - both through a mainstreaming approach and through targeted interventions. As highlighted in the PLGSP Programme Document, GESI mainstreaming is a means and not an end in itself for eliminating inequality and discrimination against women and excluded groups. Such an approach recognizes GESI as an objective that cuts across all aspects of governance. Therefore, mainstreaming GESI right from the start in all governance systems, procedures and processes and at every stage of development from initiating the development of policies, laws and plans, to programme/project conceptualization, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting is critical. Accordingly, all policies, programme and service delivery strategies will be both GESI sensitive and responsive in spirit as well as in practice thus facilitating and contributing to the transformation in social norms and behaviour, promoting GESI is essentially about addressing unequal power relations. Thus, GESI has been prioritized from the start of the Programme and will be mainstreamed in all approaches and programmes under PLGSP.

This PLGSP GESI Strategy outlines in further detail the specific GESI mainstreaming and targeting approaches to be implemented to ensure that all aspects of the PLGSP are both GESI sensitive and responsive, and that PLGSP contributes to enhanced institutional and individual capacities among Provincial and Local Governments (PLGs) to promote GESI during and beyond the scope and timeframe of the Programme.

Context

The Constitution of Nepal (2015) clearly envisions Nepal as an inclusive state and guarantees the right to equality, social justice and freedom from discrimination to all.¹ The Constitution of Nepal is a significant milestone for promotion of GESI to ensure equal rights for women, the poor, persons with disabilities, gender and sexual minorities, people living in geographically remote areas and people from other excluded or vulnerable groups².

A core aspect of the 2015 Constitution is ensuring that the policies and systems of Nepal are inclusive, particularly of the rights of women and historically excluded groups, calling for 'ending discriminations relating to class, caste, region, language, religion and gender' and to 'create an egalitarian society on the basis of the principles of proportional inclusion and participation, to ensure equitable economy, prosperity and social justice'³.

The Constitution explicitly provides a broader framework for ensuring GESI, i.e.: i) the principle of equality and non-discrimination; ii) Constitutional national commissions and human rights institutions, including the National Women Commission, National Dalit Commission, National Inclusion Commission, National Madhesi Commission, National Muslim Commission, National Indigenous Commission and National Human Rights Commissions; and iii) various fundamental rights of individuals and groups that address gender inequality and women's empowerment, i.e. Rights to Equality, Rights of women, provisions for positive discrimination towards women and assurance of special measures for women in education, health, employment and social security. Other positive provisions as per the Constitution includes affirmative action to address historical disadvantages and a prohibition of any sex or caste/ethnicity-based discrimination.

Along with that, Article 38 (3) ensures the protection of women from physical, mental, sexual, psychological and other forms of violence, exploitation or discrimination on grounds of origin, religion, race, caste, tribe, sex, economic condition, language, region, ideology or on other similar grounds. The Constitution identifies specific disadvantaged groups that have the right to participate in the functions of the state and equal access to public services, including socially or culturally backward women, Dalit, indigenous people, indigenous nationalities, Madhesi, Tharu, Muslim, oppressed class, Pichhada class, minorities, the marginalized, farmers, labours, youths, children, senior citizens, gender and sexual minorities, persons with disabilities, persons in pregnancy, incapacitated or helpless, backward region and indigent Khas Arya.⁴

The GoN has taken steps toward realizing the constitutional commitment of federalism and promoting GESI. The 15th Plan also reinforces the GoN's commitment to implement the constitutional provisions and have strong commitments for GESI. The Civil Service Amendment Act 2014 embraces inclusivity and

¹ The Constitution of Nepal, 2015, Constituent Assembly Secretariate, Singhdurbar.

² The PLGSP GESI Strategy adopts the definitions of excluded and vulnerable groups included in 'A Common Framework for Gender Equality & Social Inclusion in Nepal', developed by the International Development Partners Group, Nepal, as follows. It states that "Vulnerability can be removed/reduced by addressing specific, usually material, threats. In contrast, the causes of exclusion are structurally embedded in a particular society, economy and state and in peoples' worldview and thus, can take longer to change." Hence, 'excluded groups' include the poor of all castes, ethnicities, locations and sexes, as well women, Dalits, Adivasi/Janajatis, Madhesis, Muslims, people with disabilities, people from geographically remote areas, and persons without citizenship. The 'vulnerable' include children, youth, elderly, HIV/Aids affected, victims of natural disasters/conflict, sex workers, and victims of trafficking.

³ The Constitution of Nepal 2015

⁴ The Constitution of Nepal 2015

provides quotas for 45% of all civil service positions. Employees of these allocated 45% positions must comprise 33% women, 27% Adivasi Janajatis, 22% Madhesis, 9% Dalits, 5% persons with disabilities and 4% from other excluded groups. In addition, the provisions of the Local Government Operation Act [Section 24 (3 and 5)] makes it mandatory to ensure the participation of women, and excluded groups in the planning and implementation of development programmes.

While ensuring representation and participation of women and excluded groups in leadership and decision-making at all levels and spheres of society is a goal in itself, it is also proven to significantly contribute to more equal and inclusive development outcomes across sectors. Political representation of women and excluded groups has significantly increased after the federal restructuring of Nepal in line with the Constitution of 2015. The Constitution mandates that 40% of all elected representatives at the local level must be women, and 20% must be Dalit women. Similarly, it mandates that 33% of all elected representatives at the federal and provincial levels must be women, and provides additional representational quotas for other socially excluded groups.

Accordingly, the elections of 2017 created a historical milestone for promoting GESI in Nepal's politics, with 14,352 (41%) women representatives elected at the local level, the highest number ever elected to public office. Among these, 6,500 are Dalit women⁵. Similarly, women were elected to 34% of seats in Provincial Assemblies, and to 33.5% of the seats in the Federal Parliament, including 32.7% in the House of Representatives and 37.3% in the National Assembly respectively. Dalit representation in the current House of Representatives is 7%, compared to 0.48% in 1991. Adivasi Janajatis and Madhesis made significant progress in the first provincial elections in 2017 with 22% Adivasi Janajatis, 16% Madhesis and 3% Muslims elected to Provincial Assemblies. Likewise, among those elected to the National Assembly, 12% are Dalits, 8% Madhesis and 22% Adivasi Janajati⁶.

GoN recently endorsed the Gender Equality Policy (2077) developed under the leadership of the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizen (MoWCSC). The Policy prioritizes the economic empowerment of women, ensuring their meaningful participation in all parts of society, and the elimination of gender based violence and harmful practices. The Social Inclusion Policy, drafted under leadership of MoFAGA, is currently undergoing the process of endorsement by the Parliament. The draft Policy aims to empower excluded and marginalized populations through their access to and participation in existing mechanisms and development benefits. The Sexual Harassment at Workplace Prevention Act, 2017, provides the legal framework to ensure a safe working environment for all. The integration of the Gender Responsive Budgeting principles in the budget management information system since 2007-08 was instrumental step of the government of Nepal.

Rationale

The remarkable developments in Nepal's governance systems, guaranteed by the Constitution, offer **several opportunities for societal transformation by reducing gender inequalities and social exclusion**, all with the potential to advance Nepal's national and international commitments, including to the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development with its core principle of leaving no one behind, as well as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the

⁵ Dalit – socio-economically the lowest and most underprivileged under the Hindu caste system (so called untouchable group in Nepal)

⁶ Election Commission, Nepal, 2017

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP), ILO Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal People, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention on the Political Rights of Women, and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to name a few.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) highlight the need to build “peaceful, just and inclusive societies” (SDG 16) based on a foundation of universal human rights, effective rule of law, access to justice, good governance and transparent, effective and accountable institutions at all levels⁷. Further, gender equality is asserted as a fundamental human right, and as an enabler of progress across all development efforts. Hence, gender equality is included as a dedicated SDG - Goal 5 on ‘Achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment’ - as well as integrated throughout the SDGs; including Goal 16, which aims to mainstream gender equality to ensure inclusive and equitable governance systems. Similarly, Goal 10 on reducing inequality within and among countries, includes targets to ‘empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all’, and to ‘ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices’. These are just a few concrete examples of the goals and targets of international commitments and conventions to which Nepal is a signatory.

Despite the significant progress Nepal has made in different sectors and areas, various development indicators still need further investment and dedicated interventions for women and excluded groups. The HDI value for women is 0.549 compared to 0.619 for men resulting in a total Gender Development Index (GDI) value of 0.886⁸. Poverty incidence decreased from 42% in 1996 to 25% in 2011 and 21.6% in 2015⁹. Despite the decline in overall poverty levels, as measured against the national poverty line, disparities based on location and social background have persisted. For example, around 42% Dalits (Hill Dalits 44% and Madhesi Dalits 38%), 41% Adivasi Janajatis (Hill Janajatis 28% and Terai Janajatis 26%), and 20% Muslims, compared to only 10% Hill Brahmins and 19% Terai Brahmins were below the poverty line in 2011.¹⁰

Gender, caste and ethnicity-based inequality and violence are still largely prevalent. In defacto, women in Nepal have limited access to and influence in decision making roles compared to men. Dalits and Adivasi Janajatis face caste-based and language-based discrimination. Despite the dedicated Act Relating to Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2017, there is room for improvement in terms of access to information, employment, equal recognition before the law, and sign language which is critical for accessible information.

Existing biases and discrimination against women, and the most excluded and vulnerable groups of Nepal limits the growth and equitable distribution of benefits of development interventions. Despite increasingly progressive legislation, there are instances of discrimination including Dalits are restricted in terms of what they can touch, where they can enter and which sectors they can work in. Language, geographical isolation or remoteness and lack of access to education and information limit the Janajatis’s access to development benefits. The Madhesi experienced political, economic and social

⁷ United Nations General Assembly, seventieth session (2015) Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1), Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015

⁸ Human Development Report, Nepal – 2020

⁹ UNDP. 2018. Poverty Reduction : Our Focus <https://www.np.undp.org/content/nepal/en/home/poverty-reduction.html>

¹⁰ Central Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Nepal Living Standard Survey. <https://cbs.gov.np/nepal-living-standard-survey-2010-11/>.

marginalization.¹¹ Despite official recognition of sexual and gender minorities by the Constitution (2015) and by government policies, LGBTIQ+ people still face different forms of stigma and discrimination in their families and societies.

Gendered social norms that devalue women compared to men remain a critical barrier, severely limiting women's voice and agency, access to and control over resources including knowledge and information. Violence against women and girls (VAW/G) and wage inequality remains high; and harmful discriminatory practices such as *Chhaupadi* and other forms of discrimination related to menstruation, child marriage, son preference, sex-selective abortions, higher rates of infant and child mortality for girls, dowry, and accusations of witchcraft and related persecution also remain prevalent throughout Nepal.

Furthermore, the intersectionality of patriarchy with other social and economic hierarchies (based on for example ethnicity, geography, physical ability, sexual orientation or age) privilege certain groups over others.¹² As a result, many women from excluded groups experience multiple forms and extent of discrimination¹³ and face additional barriers in accessing their rights and entitlements, including from justice mechanisms. Men from excluded groups experiencing multiple forms of discrimination also require further consideration and support to ensure social inclusion.

The deeply rooted gendered social norms and stereotypes have negatively influenced meaningful participation of women and excluded groups in governance and decision-making processes. The key impediments include, but are not limited to the lack of proper information among both duty bearers and rights holders about the existing laws and policies, and hurdles to accessing public services due to gender norms, behaviours, and attitudes, language barriers and caste/ethnic prejudices, among others. High level of public frustration has been reported regarding local public service delivery, including weak accountability of service providers.¹⁴

The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated and intensified already existing inequality, exclusion and discrimination. While the virus itself may not discriminate, the groups already left behind have faced additional burdens in terms of limited access to health care and compounded socio-economic impacts. In this context, it is even more important to re-examine structural drivers of inequality and exclusion and to refocus efforts to ensure that no one is left behind in development efforts. Enhanced focus on inclusive governance and service delivery will be vital to ensure an inclusive recovery from the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic.

The overall context of the country has provided an immense opportunity to materialize the government's commitments and practices to promote GESI in policy development, budgeting, planning and programme implementation, and service delivery. Thus, enhancing individual and institutional capacities to promote GESI in provincial and local governance is crucial to translate the constitutional provisions and contribute to GESI sensitive and responsive institutional arrangements, development programmes, structures and overall processes to build fully functional, sustainable, inclusive and accountable PLGs - the goal of PLGSP.

PLGSP GESI Strategy - Goals, Objectives, Approaches and Activities

¹¹ Asia Development Bank. 2020. GESI Diagnostic of selected sectors in Nepal

¹² United Nations Country Team Nepal. 2017. United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Nepal 2018 – 2022

¹³ CEDAW. 2019. Concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of Nepal, CEDAW/C/NPL/CO/6, 14 November 2018

¹⁴ Central Department of Anthropology, State of Inclusive Governance

PLGSP has included three specific outputs that directly contribute to GESI: Output 5: *Modernized PG systems enable horizontal and vertical accountability to all citizens and mainstream GESI*; Output 10: *Local Governments systems mainstream GESI in their service delivery*; and Output 11: *Local Government systems enable citizen engagement and inclusive participation*. These outputs are instrumental for strengthening the systems, capacities and accountability of PLGs towards GESI.

Further, PLGSP will directly contribute to the following GESI related outcome and output indicators included in the PLGSP Programme Document:

PLGSP GESI-related Outcome-level indicators:

- Proportion of population who believe decision making is inclusive and responsive by sex, age and disability (SDG ref 16.7.2).
- Mechanism to hold public office accountable (social audit, public hearing and users committee NNGS 2018) adopted.
- Women and the Citizens from disadvantaged group empowered to participate in decision making process of local government.

PLGSP GESI-related Output-level indicators:

- # Provincial Governments conduct GESI audits;
- % of decisions making positions held by women in public institutions (SDG 16.7.2.1);
- % of Local Governments adopted codes of conduct to control exploitation and including sexual harassment;
- % of Provincial and Local Governments have endorsed a GESI strategy adopted by the executive body with an oversight committee and gender responsive budgeting.
- % of provincial assembly members aware of their mandated roles and functions including in federalism and GESI.

This PLGSP GESI strategy aims to ensure that the Programme will achieve the aforementioned outputs and indicators of PLGSP, as well as to integrate and mainstream GESI throughout all Programme outputs and activities. In doing so, the Programme will support in translating constitutional provisions and other normative commitments into concrete results and progress towards achieving GESI.

During the first two years of implementation, PLGSP has prioritized both GESI targeted and mainstreaming interventions in all three domain of change specifically focusing on women, the vulnerable, the excluded and the poor to (i) increase their access to services and opportunities, (ii) enhance their voices and participation, and contribute to addressing discriminatory practices, mind sets and norms and (iii) policies and that remove barriers. Among these initiatives are: initiated GESI audits at provincial and local levels; support to PLGs to internalize and institutionalize GESI sensitive tools such as Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) in the planning and prioritization of activities; technical and facilitation support to PLGs to prepare GESI strategy for governance at all level, including GESI friendly policies and guidance; facilitation in appointment of GESI focal points at PLGs and their capacity building; regular orientation, training and capacity building workshop on GESI for government officials and elected representatives; support to ensure participation of women and representatives from other excluded groups in planning, budgeting, policy formulation, including to conduct consultations and discussions with organizations/networks of women, people with disabilities, Dalits, LGBTQI groups and other excluded groups for effective GESI mainstreaming and improving capacities and accountability of PLGs towards GESI.

While this is a GESI Strategy for the PLGSP, the nature of the Programme and its objectives of providing institutional and capacity development support to all PLGs, makes the indirect scope of the Strategy broader. Throughout all of the Programme's support to PLGs, GESI will be mainstreamed. Accordingly, the Programme will aim to contribute to making policies, programmes and service delivery strategies of PLGs both GESI sensitive and responsive in spirit as well as in practice, thus facilitating and contributing to long-term transformation for more equal and inclusive governance and societies. By enhancing capacities of the PLGs, PLGSP will also contribute towards sustainability of gender sensitive and socially inclusive governance and service delivery at the provincial and local levels, as well as contribute to long-term societal transformations of gender-discriminatory and excluding norms and practices.

For this, GESI needs to be reflected and integrated in the organizational systems of PLGs, in building the leadership and capacities of elected representatives and officials, and in the policies, plans, decision-making, budgets, performance measures, monitoring and reporting of PLGs. Facilitating such a shift requires the Programme to adopt a comprehensive Strategy to integrate GESI in all Programme interventions. Hence, the PLGSP GESI Strategy outlines concrete approaches and actions to be adopted by the Programme to ensure GESI sensitivity and responsiveness directly in all PLGSP programming, and in support to enhance capacities and systems of PLGs. This includes GESI analysis, disaggregated data, monitoring and evaluation, capacity development efforts, management and institutional support, and engagement with civil society organizations representing women and excluded and vulnerable groups. Approaches to integrate GESI in PLGSP are outlined in further detail below.

In accordance with the vision and goal of PLGSP, and considering Nepal's current development context, the PLGSP GESI strategy will be instrumental for the Programme to achieve its overarching goal of functional, sustainable, inclusive and accountable provincial and local governance, through concrete guidance and actions to design and implement GESI sensitive and responsive programmes, plans, budgets and service delivery.

The immediate goal of the PLGSP GESI strategy is:

- To ensure and facilitate integration of GESI in all aspects of PLGSP management and implementation, thus contributing to achievements of the overall PLGSP goal of attaining Provincial and Local Governments that are fully functional, sustainable, inclusive and accountable to their citizens.

If the immediate goal is realized, this will significantly contribute to enhancing capacities and systems of PLGs to ensure the promotion of GESI, in line with national and international commitments and normative frameworks. If successful, this will result in sustainable, long-term improvements towards gender-responsive and inclusive governance, as well as sustained progress towards realization of rights and access to services and opportunities for all.

The specific objectives of the PLGSP GESI Strategy are:

- To mainstream GESI in all approaches and programmes of PLGSP, ensuring that a GESI sensitive and responsive approach is integrated throughout PLGSP implementation;
- To ensure GESI targeted activities are prioritized in PLGSP supported policies, plans, budgets, monitoring, evaluation and reporting at the Programme Coordination Unit (PCU), Provincial Programme Implementation Units (PPIUs) and Provincial Centers for Good Governance (PCGGs);

- To contribute to strengthening GESI institutional mechanisms in PLGSP and at the federal, provincial and local levels.
- To contribute to enhanced individual and institutional capacities on GESI of federal, provincial and local governments, strengthening GESI sensitivity and responsiveness of all policies, programmes, budgets and service delivery at Provincial and Local level;

In particular, the following objectives and strategies of the National Gender Equality Policy 2077 will provide dedicated guidance to implementation of the PLGSP GESI Strategy. Similarly, key objectives and strategies of the National Social Inclusion Policy will also guide PLGSP implementation, once the Policy is endorsed by Parliament.

Objectives of the National Gender Equality Policy 2077:

- Establish policy and structural mechanisms for socio-economic development of girls, adolescent girls and women;
- Establish gender equitable and just society by ending End all forms of gender discrimination, violence and exploitation;
- Develop gender accountable governance systems in all three tiers of governments through laws & policy provisions, institutional mechanisms and capacity building;
- Economic empowerment of women.

Relevant strategic actions identified for strategy 3 in the National Gender Equality Policy:

- Formulation and implementation of Gender accountable laws, policies, plan in federal, provincial and local levels;
- Capacity building program and plans for key actors for formulation and implementation of Gender Equality policy in all three tiers of government;
- Ensure institutionalization of Gender Responsive Budget (GRB);
- Orientation and capacity building of concerned government officials and stakeholders for gender sensitive, gender transformative and accountable budget process, policy formulation and its effective implementation in all three tiers of government;
- Integration of Gender equality and women empowerment component in all relevant policies and ensure its effective implementations;
- Establish and operationalize code of conduct and grievance handling mechanisms in public and private sectors to establish safe workplace for everyone;
- Establish and regularly update online GESI disaggregated data management system at local level.

In the context of Nepal, strategies and actions for promoting gender equality on the one hand, and social inclusion on the other, are often combined and the notion of GESI is frequently used. While both GE and SI are equally critical and fundamental for achieving the overall goals and objectives of PLGSP, as well as more equal and inclusive development outcomes at large, it is important to also differentiate the strategies and approaches required to achieve GE and SI. Gender equality is a state of balanced power relationship that gives equal rights, responsibilities, opportunities and decision – making authority to both women and men. Social Inclusion is deliberate and planned inclusion of historically excluded groups by addressing barriers embedded in the prevailing institutions, policies, systems, mindsets and values.¹⁵ For the purpose of this strategy, the term GESI is used to describe overall approaches, strategies and actions.

¹⁵ GESI Working Group, 2017 : Gender Equality and Social Inclusion, International Development Partners Group, Nepal

However, during its implementation, PLGSP will regularly identify different targeted approaches to advance GE and SI separately as and when required.

Approaches to integrate GESI in PLGSP

A two-pronged approach will be adopted to ensure GESI sensitivity and responsiveness throughout the PLGSP, and in contributing to more GESI sensitive and responsive policies, plans, budgets, programmes, service delivery, working culture and decision-making processes of PLGs:

- 1) **GESI mainstreaming** – integrating GESI throughout all PLGSP outputs and activities, and;
- 2) **GESI targeted interventions** - specifically focusing on promoting the rights and opportunities of women and excluded groups.

Mainstreaming: While there are only three dedicated PLGSP outputs focusing on GESI (and five output indicators), all 14 project outputs have specific components that relate and contribute in promoting and institutionalizing GESI in overall governance systems at federal, provincial and local levels, whether that be in legal frameworks or policies or in promoting participation of target groups representatives. PLGSP will make sure to review all related draft laws, policies, guidelines through a GESI lens/perspective and ensure the participation of women and other excluded groups in all processes. Keeping in mind Nepal's diversity, GESI mainstreaming and targeted interventions and support may differ between different Provinces and Local Governments. Context-specific strategies and implementation approaches will be identified in close consultation with PLGs, the PPIUs, PCGGs as well as women and excluded groups.

Targeting: In addition to GESI mainstreaming, a number of GESI targeted interventions have been identified and planned as part of the PLGSP to ensure and reinforce GESI within PLGs. The thrust of GESI targeted activities is to implement strategic interventions to expand the space for addressing GESI concerns in all aspects of provincial and local governance. This will include dedicated capacity development efforts focusing on GESI and societal transformation, policy, legal and institutional support to promote GESI, among others.

Key Approaches and Actions

The following key approaches and actions have been identified and will be prioritized to ensure integration of GESI throughout the PLGSP.

1. Analysis

GESI analysis has been identified as one of the first crucial steps in GESI mainstreaming, aiming to provide better understanding about different needs, concerns and issues of men and women, person with disabilities, gender and sexual minorities and other excluded groups, including related to power dynamics and relationship between them. Importantly, GESI analysis conducted by the Programme will also cover the role of historically dominant socio-political groups and possible incentives to engage them as 'allies' in promoting GESI. PLGSP will also explore the possibility of developing a standard GESI analysis tool to be utilized by all levels of government to inform their plans, programmes and budgets. GESI analysis has been conducted as an important segment of Programme development and will continue to be utilized in support of Programme interventions related to for example development of laws, policies, plans and budgets at all levels of government. A comprehensive component on GESI analysis will also be included in the comprehensive GESI training manual/package for PLGs to strengthen their internal capacity.

Objectives	Activities	GESI Strategy Indicator	PLGSP Outputs
1.1. Ensure PLGSP implementation is informed by comprehensive GESI analysis	1.1.1. Conduct annual GESI analysis of PLGSP implementation, including to identify target groups, causes and intersectionality of exclusion, key barriers and opportunities. This includes to identify which formal/informal institutional structures and systems support/hampers implementation of GESI related policies, provisions, programmes	Annual GESI analysis of PLGSP implementation conducted	All
	1.1.2. Conduct mapping of key stakeholders affecting GESI and unequal power relations, including their motivations and behaviours related to social, political and economic factors	Stakeholder mapping conducted	All
	1.1.3. Organize dedicated bi-annual sharing sessions on GESI in PLGSP for TA staff and key stakeholders to track progress and recommend for improvements	Bi-annual sharing on GESI in PLGSP organized	All
	1.1.4. Conduct annual budget review exercise of federal, provincial and local governments' budget allocations related to GESI	Annual budget review conducted	All
1.2. Support Federal, PLGs to strengthen their capacity for comprehensive GESI analysis to inform their work	1.2.1. Conduct GESI analysis of relevant laws, policies, programmes and budgets at federal, provincial and local level to inform reform/adaptation. This includes to assess and identify whether the existing policies, and programmes and budgets are addressing the underlying causes and barriers of women and other excluded and vulnerable groups – and identify potential areas for improvement to what extent and what could be done if not addressed by existing policies and programmes.	GESI analysis of relevant laws, policies, programmes and budgets conducted	Outputs 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 13, 14
	1.2.2. Develop and promote use of different participatory tools such as social mapping, well-being ranking, vulnerability assessment etc. to identify underlying causes of poverty and exclusion, and different issues for different groups at different spheres. Ensure to include the following information in GESI Analysis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the specific local context with regards to GESI? • Who are the excluded and vulnerable groups in the particular areas? (including formal/informal workers, access to resources/opportunities, participation/authority in formal/informal decision-making, etc.) • What are the underlying causes for inequality/exclusion, and barriers to achieve equality/inclusion? • Which specific interventions are required to address the issues? How the planned interventions will contribute to promote equality/inclusion?	Participatory tools are developed and promoted for use among PLGs	Outputs 2, 5, 9, 10, 11
	1.2.3. Include components on GESI analysis in capacity development initiatives for PLGs to enhance their internal understanding and capacity	GESI analysis component included in	Outputs 13, 14

		relevant capacity development initiatives for PLGs	
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2. Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Data:

In order to effectively promote GESI in PLGs, PLGSP will prioritize and ensure that results matrix, indicators and planned activities of its Annual Strategic Implementation Plans address the barriers of women, excluded and vulnerable groups by both building the capacities of PLG representatives and officials, as well as through transforming formal and informal institutions. The following measures will be adopted to ensure GESI sensitive and responsive implementation of PLGSP, as well as promote GESI sensitive and responsive planning, programming and budgeting at the provincial and local levels.

Further, the Programme will collect, analyze and utilize GESI disaggregated data of participants in Programme activities, based on sex, age, caste/religion, disability, etc. throughout all steps of programming. The disaggregated data will be collected and presented regularly through GESI disaggregated reporting formats. Disaggregated data is critical to ensure gender sensitive planning and to regularly monitor and evaluate the impact of PLGs' efforts on men, women and excluded groups to make necessary adjustment if required. Hence, the Programme will provide dedicated institutional and capacity development support to PLGs to strengthen internal capacity to collect, manage, analyze and use disaggregated data to inform programmes, plans and budgets, all based on the demands and needs of PLGs.

Objectives	Activities	GESI Strategy Indicators	PLGSP Outputs
2.1 PLGSP planning and budgeting is GESI sensitive and responsive	2.1.1. Develop annual PLGSP result matrix/log frame based on disaggregated data and GESI related evidences	PLGSP results matrix/log frames developed using GESI disaggregated data	All
	2.1.2. Maintain and regularly update disaggregated data on different relevant variables i.e. sex, disabilities, caste, ethnicity, geography, age and religion	PLGSP-related GESI disaggregated data regularly updated	All
	2.1.3. Ensure GESI perspectives and aspects are incorporated while designing, planning and implementing Programme activities at all levels through GESI analysis for identifying existing gaps	Programme activities are informed by GESI analysis	All
	2.1.4 Ensure to allocate adequate fund for GESI sensitive and responsive activities such as – reasonable accommodation, appropriate support to women and excluded groups – provision of care takers including logistic costs, GESI sensitive/ friendly infrastructure and spaces, such as provision of separate clean toilets, disable friendly infrascture.	At least 25% of PLGSP annual funds are allocated for GESI sensitive and responsive activities	All
2.2. Support PLGs for enhanced capacity to	2.2.1. Support the development/establishment of guidelines, structures, tools, and processes to ensure that the voices of the target groups i.e. women, the poor, the vulnerable and excluded and vulnerable groups and have	Guidelines, structures, tools, and processes are	Outputs 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14

integrate GESI in planning, programmes and budgets	opportunities to be part of planning processes and to provide their perspectives in planning through formal organized consultation and interaction workshops at different level as well as through informal conversations	developed and utilized by PLGs	
	2.2.2. Develop and promote use of different participatory methodologies to encourage women, and vulnerable and excluded and vulnerable groups to contribute in ward/local level planning processes, results matrix and log frames of the programme, and to identify barriers to their participation	Participatory methodologies are developed and utilized by PLGs	Outputs 2, 4, 5, 9, 11
	2.2.3. Promote the use of GRB as a tool (through trainings and support to develop and utilize relevant systems) to integrate GESI in planning and budgeting at provincial and local levels, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct gender/inclusion disaggregated analysis of incidence of revenue-raising and public expenditures Support to formulate/implement relevant GRB strategies, policies, tools and systems for PLGs Provide relevant support to PLGs to develop and use gender-responsive budget statements and medium-term frameworks of economic policy Support to conduct regular analysis of impact of budget on time-use 	PLGs have the necessary knowledge and systems to implement GRB	Outputs 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11
	2.2.4. Support PLGs to institutionalize collection, analysis and use of disaggregated data on different dimensions, i.e sex, disabilities, caste, ethnicity, geography and religion, and use it in planning, programming, budgeting, monitoring and reporting. This includes support to development of GESI Status Reports for PGs and GESI Indexes for LGs and support to strengthen data management, monitoring and reporting systems at all levels.	PLGs have enhanced systems and capacity to collect, analyse and use disaggregated data to inform planning, programming and budgeting	Outputs 5, 9, 10

3. Legal and Policy Development and Reform

PLGSP will provide required technical and facilitation support to PLGs to ensure that the different laws and policies developed are based on an understanding of the assumptions, beliefs, status and situation of women and men from different social groups to be responsive to their needs. The following dimensions will be considered and prioritized by the Programme in different steps of legal and policy development and its implementation for GESI sensitive and responsive laws and policies.

Objectives	Activities	GESI Strategy Indicators	PLGSP Outputs
3.1. Ensure all internal PLGSP policies, strategies, guidelines and	3.1.1. Facilitate GESI review/analysis of draft strategies, policies and laws to ensure alignment with national and international normative framework and commitments	GESI review/analysis of draft strategies, policies and laws conducted	All

tools are GESI sensitive and are informed by comprehensive GESI analysis	3.1.2. Ensure any legal or policy development related concept notes and ToRs adequately address and reflect GESI issues in its objectives, scope of work and tasks. Provide details in methodology section, i.e. composition of expert's team, reporting etc.	All relevant ToRs address and reflect GESI issues	All
	3.1.3. Ensure legal or policy formulation teams include GESI experts as key members of the teams	Legal/policy formulation teams include GESI experts	All
	3.1.4. As part of legal/policy review, organize dedicated consultations/discussions with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups of women, poor, vulnerable and excluded people to identify their perspectives and priorities which needs to be addressed by the laws/policies; • Relevant GESI specialists/experts at different level to make sure that all GESI related issues are well covered by the policy • Wider stakeholders, i.e. relevant government and non-government stakeholders, civil society organizations, in the specific sectors 	Dedicated consultations are organized with women and excluded groups, as well as GESI experts to inform legal/policy review	All
	3.1.5. Ensure that the following GESI dimensions are included in any relevant policy documents. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly define the target groups, and capacities of target groups • Highlights the GESI situation, including disaggregated data of women, vulnerable and excluded groups; their existing challenges and opportunities; identified options to address the challenges 	GESI is well reflected in relevant policy documents	All
	3.2. Provide required support to PLGs for GESI sensitive/ response formulation/ reform of policies, laws, strategies, guidelines and tools	3.2.1. Develop a model GESI Strategy/Policy for consideration by PLGs	Model GESI Strategy/Policy for PLGs developed
	3.2.2. Facilitate and provide required technical support to PLGs to develop/draft/adapt GESI Policy/ GESI strategy /GESI guidelines/ other GESI tools	Technical support provided to PLGs to develop/ draft/ adapt GESI strategy/ policy	Outputs 1, 4, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14
	3.2.3. Provide technical support and guidance to PLGs to integrate GESI perspectives and aspect in revising and formulating new policies, laws, guidelines, directives, based on their needs	Technical support provided to PLGs to integrate GESI perspectives when formulating/ revising policies, laws, guidelines and directives	Outputs 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14
	3.2.4. Support the PLGs to establish systems and structures to ensure GESI considerations are well reflected in formulation of policies/laws.	Support provided to PLGs to establish systems	Outputs 1, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11

		and structures to promote GESI	
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4. Capacity Development

One of the prioritized areas of work that PLGSP has identified to ensure GESI sensitive and responsive policies, programmes, budgets and service delivery is to enhance understanding and capacity related to GESI of PLG officials and elected representatives, as well as PLGSP staff. PLGSP will develop/adapt and customize GESI training modules and pedagogic materials targeting specific groups including both historically advantaged and disadvantaged groups, i.e. male leaders/elected representatives, officials engaged in planning and budgeting, or transformative leadership modules for all. PLGSP’s capacity development efforts will also include mentoring and on-the-job support to identify, understand and address key challenges and opportunities for promoting transformative change for GESI. Such capacity development efforts will also contribute to the sustainability of efforts to promote GESI, as the capacity will remain in place beyond the scope of the Programme. Effectiveness of PLGSP capacity development initiatives will be continuously monitored and assessed. Lessons learnt and recommendations will inform the development and implementation of new innovative capacity development initiatives and approaches to enhance effectiveness and results.

Through its capacity development efforts, PLGSP will also place a strong emphasis on **promoting enhanced capacity, and meaningful participation and engagement of women and representatives from excluded groups in governance and decision-making processes** as an important strategy to make sure that the different needs and concerns of women and excluded groups are identified and considered throughout the Programme cycle. Through its activities at the provincial and local level, including trainings, consultations and interactions, PLGSP will promote diversity and meaningful participation of women and excluded groups to provide better platforms for GESI-sensitive and responsive decision-making, and, in turn, policies, programmes and services.

While noting that this requires broader societal shifts, including at the household and community levels, PLGSP will take a number of concrete steps to promote more meaningful participation and engagement of women and excluded groups. For example, the Programme has developed and will use participation selection guidelines as a first step to ensure participation and engagement of women and excluded groups including orientations, trainings, workshops, mentoring and other capacity development initiatives in different areas are organize to strengthen capacity of the elected representatives and officials from these groups.

Efforts will also be made to facilitate participation of women and excluded groups, such as by considering timing, location, facilities, resource persons, language, etc. Placing an emphasis on existing power relations, PLGSP will also engage with men and representatives from groups not considered as excluded to understand different perspectives, and enhance awareness and ownership of GESI and promote a more enabling and inclusive environment for all. Considering the complexities of the notions of meaningful engagement and participation, and the underlying power relations and structural barriers influencing this, PLGSP will regularly engage with and learn from other relevant initiatives working for inclusive governance and promoting GESI, including the IDPG GESI Working Group.

Objectives	Activities	GESI Strategy Indicators	PLGSP Outputs
4.1. Ensure all PLGSP capacity	4.1.1. Manuals and Materials	Relevant capacity materials on GESI	All

<p>development initiatives are GESI sensitive and responsive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop/adapt GESI and inclusive governance training manual and pedagogic materials, including gender transformative approach for building capacity of all provincial and local government staff and elected representatives • Develop dedicated training materials on transformative leadership for PLG officials and elected representatives • Include dedicated, contextualized sessions/discussions on GESI in all relevant thematic trainings/workshops and interactions organized by PLGSP 	<p>developed and utilized</p>	
	<p>4.1.2. Participant selection The composition of capacity development participants must be gender sensitive and socially inclusive. Hence, PLGSP will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect and update disaggregated information of target groups, i.e. sex, disabilities, caste, ethnicity, geography, age and religion • Special provisions to encourage the participation of women and people from excluded groups • Invitations should encourage to send capacity development participants that are women or people from excluded groups • In case of not adequately inclusive participation from government agencies, increase the number of participants from women and excluded groups 	<p>Participants of capacity development initiatives reflect equality and diversity</p>	<p>All</p>
	<p>4.1.3. Resource Persons PLGSP will develop a brief guideline for selection of resource persons throughout all capacity development initiatives, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority should be given to Resource person from local communities with good understanding of the local culture and context • Gender balanced and inclusive selection of resource persons (with emphasis on parity and diversity) • If only one Resource person is required, then Resource person should be GESI aware and sensitive which should be clearly mentioned in ToR. 	<p>Resource persons of capacity development initiatives reflect equality and diversity</p>	<p>All</p>
	<p>4.1.4. Venues and Timing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of gender and disability sensitive venues (safe, provisions of accessible • venue for persons with disabilities, provisions of separate, clean and disability friendly toilets for men and women, etc.) • Ensure to set times that suit all participants, including women with young children, those 	<p>Venues and timings for capacity development initiatives are well suited to all participants</p>	<p>All</p>

	<p>engaged in other work, including domestic/care work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of care takers for participants with young children 		
	<p>4.1.5. Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that Resource Persons and participants use GESI sensitive language, with no use of socio-culturally biased/discriminatory proverbs, jokes or offensive terminology Ensure accessible information including provision with sign language interpreter, brail if required Provision of translation to local languages, if required. 	GESI sensitive language is used in all capacity development initiatives	All
	<p>4.1.6. Organize basic and comprehensive GESI orientations/inductions/trainings to all PLGSP staff and provide relevant GESI updates on a regular basis</p>	Basic and comprehensive GESI orientations/ inductions/ trainings provided to all PLGSP staff	All
4.2. Support to enhance capacities of PLGs to promote GESI	<p>4.2.1. Conduct mandatory orientations, trainings, mentoring and capacity building workshops and exposures on GESI for government officials and elected representatives of Provincial and Local level</p>	Basic GESI capacity development initiatives organized for government officials and elected representatives	Outputs 13, 14
	<p>4.2.2. Organized targeted capacity development initiatives for select groups of officials and elected representatives - i.e. Male elected representatives/ male leaders; women elected representatives, including from Dalit and other excluded groups on key areas. This will include dedicated support to 'GESI Champions' at the provincial and local levels.</p>	Targeted GESI capacity development initiatives organized for select groups of officials and elected representatives	Outputs 13, 14
	<p>4.2.3. Enhance institutional capacities of Provincial Centers for Good Governance through dedicated support to establish the PCGGs as long-term capacity development centers with strong ownership among Provincial Governments and capacity to provide technical support and guidance, promote the use of relevant tools and systems, and engage with CSO for GESI-related monitoring and accountability</p>	PCGGs have enhanced capacity and are owned by the PGs to continue to perform their roles beyond the scope of PLGSP	Output 7

5. Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting within PLGSP follows the conceptual framework of the Programme Theory of Change, focusing on people, changes in the relevant groups' assets/income, and access to services and opportunities. The changes in the voices of target groups and their ability to influence will be

measured and documented using both quantitative and qualitative data. PLGSP will measure and analyze progress against GESI related indicators regularly to check whether the Programme has been effective in promoting and mainstreaming GESI in the provincial and local governance systems and to inform any adjustments required. PLGSP has developed a GESI monitoring checklist on different components of the Programme which will be used regularly at all levels to assess quality of GESI mainstreaming throughout the Programme. PLGSP will prioritize and make sure that M & E teams at all level are inclusive, with representation of women and people from excluded groups. The Programme will also provide dedicated capacity development support to PLGs to enhance their capacity for standardized and effective monitoring and evaluation. For example, the Programme will explore the possibility to develop a model guideline for GESI-sensitive monitoring, reporting and evaluation for PLGs.

Objectives	Activities	GESI Strategy Indicators	PLGSP Output
5.1. GESI sensitive monitoring, reporting and evaluation is ensured throughout PLGSP	5.1.1. Monitoring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GESI sensitive and inclusive monitoring teams, i.e., provisions of including GESI experts/GESI focal points (in case of unavailability of GESI expert other staff with GESI knowledge should be included in monitoring team) • Consultation with different stakeholders including target groups • Ensure to maintain and include disaggregated data based on sex, caste, caste, geography, religion • Evidences about the changes in issues affecting women and excluded and vulnerable groups 	PLGSP monitoring teams and processes are GESI sensitive	All
	5.1.2. Reporting Develop and use of GESI sensitive reporting formats, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disaggregated data of participants in Programme initiatives • Impact result on lives of women and excluded groups • Case studies and voices of women and people from excluded groups • Documentation of good practices from GESI perspectives • Documentation of the impact on the lives of the target beneficiary groups Based on the above, PLGSP will prepare an annual GESI assessment taking stock of progress, challenges and opportunities for improvements.	PLGSP reporting is GESI sensitive PLGSP prepares an annual GESI assessment	All
	5.1.3. Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GESI sensitive and inclusive evaluation teams (provision of GESI specialist/expert) • Provision of GESI orientation to evaluation teams • Ensure to include questions on GESI linked with the programme • Ensure to collect feedback from direct beneficiaries and other relevant stakeholders, 	PLGSP evaluation teams and processes are GESI sensitive	

	<p>especially women and people from excluded groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation data disaggregated by sex, caste, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability and other relevant variables 		
5.2. Support PLGs to enhance institutional and individual capacities and systems for GESI sensitive monitoring, reporting and evaluation	5.2.1. Organize dedicated capacity development initiatives on GESI sensitive monitoring, reporting and evaluation for focal points at PLGs	PLG focal points have enhanced capacity for GESI sensitive monitoring, reporting and evaluation	All
	5.2.2. Develop systems and tools on GESI sensitive monitoring, reporting and evaluation for adaptation and adoption by PLGs, including a model guideline for GESI-sensitive monitoring, reporting and evaluation for PLGs	Systems, tools and guidelines on GESI sensitive monitoring, reporting and evaluation are developed and utilized by PLGs	All

6. Institutional and Management Level:

Existing policies and practices within PLGSP will be regularly reviewed to assess and find ways to address barriers to promote GESI within PLGSP. PLGSP leadership and management is committed to develop and effectively implement GESI sensitive policies and provisions, including related to HR and prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, to ensure and promote equality and diversity within Programme. The Programme will also organize regular capacity development initiatives on GESI to PLGSP staff and management to enhance their understanding and sensitivity on GESI and to well integrate GESI throughout PLGSP institutions and management. Further, the Programme will provide dedicated institutional and management support to PLGs to promote equality, diversity and an enabling working environment for all.

Objectives	Activities	GESI Strategy Indicators	PLGSP Output
6.1. GESI is integrated throughout all PLGSP institutions and management to create an enabling environment for all PLGSP staff	6.1. Effective implementation of the GESI strategy	GESI sensitive HR policies are in place	All
	6.1.1. Develop and implement GESI sensitive and responsive HR policies for ensuring gender parity and diversity in PLGSP		
	Enabling environment (6.1.2, 6.1.3, 6.1.4)	All PLGSP staff participate in trainings on GESI, GBV, PSEA	All
	6.1.2. Mandatory provision of training of all PLGSP staff on GESI, GBV, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, zero-tolerance on any form of discrimination		
	6.1.3. Establishment of internal complaint handling mechanism (user friendly and easily accessible grievance mechanism) and provision of related orientation to PLGSP staff	Internal PLGSP complaint handling mechanism established	All

	6.1.4. Provision of flexible working hours for pregnant women, lactating mothers and dedicated resting and lactating space for PLGSP staff	Flexible working hours provided to staff as per needs	All
	Accountability: (point 6.1.5 and 6.1.6) 6.1.5. Ensure to include specific GESI related targets in all job descriptions/ToR's and performance reviews of all PLGSP staff	GESI related targets included in all PLGSP staff ToRs and performance reviews	All
	6.1.6. GESI Focal Points <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure mandatory participation of GESI focal points/person in any policy and management related discussion and meetings • Ensure participation of GESI focal points/person in meetings/consultation related with program planning, budgeting, M & E etc. • Regular capacity building of GESI focal points on GESI, GRB, GBV and VAW, GESI mainstreaming in plans, programmes, policies etc. 	GESI focal points are appointed, have enhanced capacity and are actively engaged in relevant processes	All
6.2. Support integration of GESI at institutional and management levels of federal, PLGs	6.2.1. Develop model GESI sensitive HR policies and policies to prevent sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, to promote gender parity, diversity and an enabling working environment for all in PLGs, and organize orientations on these policies for elected representatives and officials at PLGs	Model GESI sensitive HR policies developed for PLGs	All
	6.2.2. Promote mandatory provision and provide dedicated support to GESI focal points (officer level) in concerned federal, provincial and local government line Ministries, departments, sections	PLG GESI focal points are appointed and have enhanced capacity	All
	6.2.3. Support and facilitate to institutionalize and conduct GESI Audits and Social Audits in PLGs	Guidelines for GESI Audits and Social Audits are developed for PLGs.	All
	6.2.4. Update 'Guidelines on GESI Mainstreaming in Governance' (Annex 16 and PLGSP ProgDoc) for consideration and use among PLGs	Updated 'Guidelines on GESI Mainstreaming in Governance' developed and utilized by PLGs	All
	6.2.5. Provide dedicated support to LGs to utilize special grants, with focus on women and excluded groups	Dedicated support is provided	All

7. Information Sharing and Awareness Raising:

As part of its implementation, the PLGSP will also develop information sharing and awareness raising materials for enhanced visibility and communication with key stakeholders and the public. The Programme will ensure that all such materials and communication efforts are GESI sensitive, as well as

developed dedicated GESI information and awareness raising materials. In addition, PLGSP will provide dedicated support to PLGs to enhance their capacities and processes for GESI sensitive communication, information sharing and awareness raising efforts.

Objectives	Activities		PLGSP Output
7.1. Ensure that all PLGSP information sharing and awareness raising materials are GESI sensitive	7.1.1. Ensure that all PLGSP information sharing and awareness-raising materials are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple, culturally sensitive, and locally contextualized • Captures the need/issues/problems and concerns of women and excluded groups • Use of GESI sensitive and local languages as much possible • Relevant and practical so that everyone can understand the essence of the messaging 	PLGSP awareness raising materials are GESI sensitive	All
	7.1.2. Develop and disseminate dedicated information sharing and awareness raising materials on GESI, including best practices on GESI by PLGs	GESI-specific information sharing and awareness raising materials developed and disseminated	All
7.2. Support PLGs to ensure GESI sensitive information sharing and awareness-raising	7.2.1. Provide dedicated capacity development support to PLGs to promote information sharing and awareness-raising materials that are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple, culturally sensitive, and locally contextualized • Captures the need/issues/problems and concerns of women and excluded groups • Use of GESI sensitive and local languages as much possible • Relevant and practical so that everyone can understand the essence of the messaging 	PLGs have enhanced capacity to develop and distribute GESI sensitive awareness raising materials	All
	7.2.2. Develop systems, tools and guidelines, and provide dedicated capacity development support for PLGs to ensure citizens rights to access to information at provincial and local level	Systems, tools, guidelines and capacity development initiatives on right to information are developed and utilized by PLGs	Outputs 2, 5, 6, 9, 11, 13, 14

8. Engagement with organizations working for the rights of women and excluded groups:

Engaging with civil society organizations promoting the rights of women and excluded groups will be crucial to ensure broader societal engagement for advancing GESI. As a Framework Programme of the Government of Nepal to support PLGs, PLGSP has a unique role to enhance constructive engagement between government and non-government actors in promoting GESI in line with the Constitution and national and sub-national laws, policies and plans. Organizations working for women's rights and rights of excluded groups will be engaged to the extent possible throughout the Programme cycle, including

through development of a policy for citizen engagement and community participation in LG decision-making processes, such as the 7-step planning process, establishment/strengthening of grievance handling mechanisms, and awareness-raising on citizen engagement processes and rights. The implementation of the Innovative Partnership Fund (IPF) will also include provisions for LGs to engage with civil society organizations.

Objectives	Activities	GESI Strategy Indicators	PLGSP Output
8.1. Women and excluded groups are actively engaged in and influence all aspects of PLGSP programming	8.1.1. Ensure engagement and influence of women and excluded groups in annual PLGSP planning (ASIP/P-ASIPs)	Women and excluded groups are consulted in PLGSP planning processes and their voices and opinions are incorporated	All
	8.1.2. Ensure participation of women and excluded groups in PLGSP monitoring and evaluation, including regular monitoring, mid-term review, third-party monitoring and final evaluation	Women and excluded groups are consulted in PLGSP monitoring and evaluation and their voices and opinions are incorporated	All
8.2. Women and excluded groups are increasingly engaged and participate in planning, decision-making and implementation of initiatives with PLGs	8.2.1. Develop a model policy for enhanced engagement and participation of women and excluded groups in different committees/groups in LGs, for LGs consideration	Model policy for engagement and participation of women and excluded groups in LG committees developed	Outputs 5 and 11
	8.2.2. Develop a model policy for enhanced engagement and participation of women and excluded groups in local level planning, including the seven-step planning process, for LGs consideration	Model policy for engagement and participation of women and excluded groups in PLG planning is developed	Outputs 5 and 11
	8.2.3. Include provision in IPF operational guideline to promote active engagement and participation of women and excluded groups in planning and implementation of IPF-funded initiatives	IPF operational guideline includes provision on participation of women and excluded groups	Output 12

These identified approaches are critical and crucial for PLGSP implementation to promote GESI sensitive and responsive governance at all three levels. Through its implementation, PLGSP will support in particular PLGs to develop, adopt and adapt the administrative systems, procedures and institutional and individual capacities required to promote GESI and ensure functionality, sustainability, inclusivity and accountability at all levels and across all sectors.

Arrangements for Monitoring and Evaluation of GESI Strategy Implementation :

A planned and systematic approach to GESI monitoring and evaluation will be put in place by PLGSP to ensure assess the effectiveness of GESI mainstreaming and targeted approaches as part of the Programme and to ensure quality and inclusive programs, policies and service provisions to the target groups. For example, GESI focal persons will be included in monitoring and evaluation teams to assess GESI mainstreaming and targeted approaches as part of PLGSP implementation. PLGSP will also conduct dedicated GESI reviews of the Programme, as well as regularly assess progress against the GESI-related indicators in the MEL Framework.

In addition to the Programme indicators, the PLGSP GESI Strategy includes a set of dedicated indicators to assess the internal effectiveness of efforts to promote GESI as part of the Programme. The GESI Specialist in the PCU, together with the GESI Experts in the seven PCGGs will be responsible to regularly monitor the implementation of the GESI Strategy, with support from the Coordination and Monitoring Specialist in the PCU and the Monitoring and Reporting Experts in the seven PPIUs.

The PLGSP GESI Strategy will be a living document. Based on lessons learned from Programme implementation, as well as good practices from other relevant development initiatives, the Programme will regularly review its approaches and actions to promote GESI. This will be of particular importance in the area of capacity development, where multiple related initiatives are currently being implemented with federal, provincial and local governments, with support from international development partners and I/NGOs. As part of its coordination efforts, MoFAGA/PCU will regularly engage with other key stakeholders to discuss progress, challenges, opportunities and emerging ideas to further advance GESI and inclusive governance at all levels. This will include close engagement with the IDPG GESI Working Group on the update of the 'Common GESI Framework' for Development Partners in Nepal.

Sustainability

In line with the intended impacts and goals of PLGSP, the Programme will contribute to building institutional and individual capacity on GESI among government officials and elected representatives at all levels. If the intended outcomes and outputs are achieved, including related to shifts in social norms and behaviours around GESI, this will significantly contribute to ensuring sustainability of GESI efforts at federal, provincial and local levels. PLGSP will also regularly engage with other key stakeholders engaged in promoting GESI and inclusive governance to gather lessons learned and good practices. This will both inform the implementation of PLGSP, as well as guide the design of future related programming.

Annex: ¹⁶ Guidelines on Mainstreaming GESI in governance

Area	Thematic Issues	How to mainstream
System	Institutions	Establishment of GESI architecture for ensuring focus on GESI issues
	Administration and Management	GESI friendly PSC exams
		HR policies for ensuring gender parity and diversity for GESI responsive change management of LGs
	Public Finance Management	Gender disaggregated analysis of incidence of revenue-raising and public expenditures , impact of budget on time-use, gender aware budget statements and gender-aware medium-term frameworks of economic policy
	Delivery of Service	Preparation of a menu of essential services that priorities women and DAGs
	GESI data Management	Collection and analysis of GESI disaggregated data for planning, budgeting, monitoring and reporting
Legal Frameworks	Laws & Policies	GESI analysis of laws and policies for reforms and legislations that impact women and DAGs
	Rules & Regulations	Development of GESI sensitive rules and regulations, standard operating procedures and guidelines for a uniform approach to addressing GESI issues
Capacity building	Generic	Development/adaptation of GESI and governance training manual and pedagogic materials for building capacity of all Municipal staff, elected representatives and communities
	Targeted Capacity Building for staff and Elected Representatives	Development/adaptation of GESI and governance training manual and pedagogic materials on GRB, GESI analysis and data, GESI mainstreaming, GBV/VAW and Sexual Harassment, Gender and Justice for relevant Municipal staff and elected representatives (men and women)
Participation & Partnership	Citizens (Esp Women and DAGs)	Development of guidelines/orientation for ensuring effective participation of citizens especially women and DAGs in planning and budgeting processes

	Civil Society groups	Identification and mobilization of civil society groups for advancing GESI issues in governance
	Interest Groups	Entering into a memorandum of understanding with organization of women, Dalits, ethnic, indigenous, persons with disabilities , LGBTQI + working on GESI and development issues
	Media	Encourage including media to meetings and field visits to encourage wide coverage and reporting on GESI issues DPs/INGOs/NGOs Partnering with multi-lateral and bi-lateral agencies to implement
	DPs/INGOs/NGOs	Partnering with multi-lateral and bi-lateral agencies to implement
Planning and Programming	Designing/Formulation Programmes	GESI analysis for identifying gaps and challenges through use of GESI disaggregated data and qualitative information
	GRB.	Use of GRB methodology for adequate budget allocation in programmes
	Indicators	Development of quantitative and qualitative GESI indicators to measure progress towards gender responsive SDGs
Implementation	Tracking Results and Expenditures	Use of qualitative GESI indicators and OECD-DAC gender coding to measure progress to track progress towards identified results and expenditures
	Monitoring	Periodic monitoring visits to examine challenges and success of implementation of plans and programmes
	Reporting	Development of reporting format for regular reporting
Information and communication	Timely and Relevant Information	Information on essential services, rules and regulations to be disseminated in local languages
	QQTBP (Quantity, Quality, Timely, Beneficiaries, Place)	Information on decisions that impact local populace especially women and DAGs to be communicated promptly on the principle of right to information and not on a need to know basis
Feedback	Public Audits and Hearings	Organize public audits and hearings critical issues related to good governance so that the public are made aware and can claim their rights as rights-holders

	Citizen Scorecard	Development of a Citizen-Scorecard for collecting feedback on LG service delivery for improving LG performance
	Social Accountability Tools	Use of Gender Safety Audits for ensuring gender based violence free Municipalities
ACCOUNTABILITY & TRANSPARENCY	Council Meetings and Reporting	Ensuring inclusion of the GESI agenda in meetings and reporting
	MCPM/MISA	Incorporating GESI dimensions in all aspects of LG self-assessments to locate GESI high on the governance agenda
	Compliance to International Commitments	Periodic GESI status reports to examine progress on the implementation of CEDAW, CRC, ICPD, Eliminating All Forms of Racial Discrimination, various ILO Conventions, UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples including UPR recommendations
KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT	Complaint Handling Mechanisms	Development of a user-friendly and easily accessible grievance redress mechanism and training Municipal staff to respond to grievance and documentation of responses
	Evaluation and Learning	Development of GESI evaluation tools and documentation of best practices and lessons learnt