

*International Development
Partners Group, Nepal*

A Common Framework for **Gender Equality & Social Inclusion**



**Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
Working Group**

International Development Partners Group, Nepal

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Gender Equality
&
Social Inclusion

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Note from the GESI Working Group

This framework was developed to help build a common understanding between Development Partners (DPs) regarding gender equality and social inclusion. Nepal has achieved significant progress in addressing these issues, supported by positive national and international commitments. However, a large proportion of Nepal's population continues to be affected by discrimination. A more coherent approach among DPs will ensure further coordinated collective support to the Government of Nepal.

The Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Working Group, (renamed from Social Inclusion Action Group (SIAG) in March 2016), is one of the Working Groups under the Social Cluster of the International Development Partner Group (IDPG) (Refer to Annex 1 for the list of IDPG GESI Working Group members). The GESI Working Group aims to provide strategic advice and support to the IDPG and other development stakeholders on gender equality and social inclusion. USAID and UN Women are the current co-chairs, having taken over in March 2016 from Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the UN Resident Coordinator's Office.

Through financial support from SDC and USAID, the GESI Working Group commissioned national GESI expert Chhaya Jha to provide technical support to define the framework, with input from international GESI expert Dr. Lynn Bennett and GESI Working Group members. They reviewed the GESI guidelines, definitions, and tools used by various ministries and held consultations and discussions with a wide range of government, DPs and civil society stakeholders at the community, district and national levels – including workshops in five districts (one per region). In Kathmandu, the GESI Working Group held consultation workshops with DPs, INGOs, and Gender Focal Persons of various ministries. These consultations helped ensure that this framework is based on effective measures being practiced in Nepal and that it covers the key elements required to address challenges and enhance capacities of women, the poor, the vulnerable and the excluded.

The GESI Working Group believes that the development of a common understanding among GESI Working Group members and DPs, through this framework, will improve coordination and harmonization between DPs and lead to more effective support to state and non-state actors in the implementation of the “inclusion” vision embedded in the new constitution, and in delivering positive development impacts in a highly diverse Nepali society.

The GESI Working Group commits to support the Government of Nepal in its efforts to achieve this vision, and to work to achieve the GESI Working Group goal of “influencing the development partners and the government actors towards inclusive development outcomes.”

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Co-Chairs, GESI Working Group

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List of Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank	MOFSC	Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation
AIN	Association of International NGOs	MOH	Ministry of Health
BCC	Behavior Change Communication	MOUD	Ministry of Urban Development
CA	Constituent Assembly	MOWCSW	Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare
DAGs	Disadvantaged Groups	NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
DDC	District Development Committee	NPC	National Planning Commission
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	OBC	Other Backward Classes
DFID	Department for International Development	SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
DPs	Development Partners	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
FFA	Fund Flow Analysis	SIAG	Social Inclusion Action Group
FGD	Focus Group Discussion	SNV	Netherlands Development Organization Nepal
GBV	Gender-Based Violence	TYP	Three Year Plan
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
GoN	Government of Nepal	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
IDPG	International Development Partners Group	VDC	Village Development Committee
INGOs	International Non-Governmental Organizations	WB	The World Bank
LGBTI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex	WCO	Women and Children Office
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation		
MOFALD	Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development		





CHAPTER 1

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI): The Why and the What

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Rationale

As one of the Working Groups under the Social Cluster of the International Development Partner Group (IDPG), the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Working Group¹ serves as a conduit of learning and a coordination mechanism for development partners (DPs) working to support gender equality and social inclusion in Nepal. Its members believe that, although complex, when they are understood and operationalized within a specific cultural, historical and socio-economic context, gender equality and social inclusion can support transformational change.² Seeking to strengthen its networking and partnership with the Government of Nepal (GoN) agencies, and realizing that there had been some differences among development partners in their understanding of social inclusion/exclusion, the GESI Working Group decided to begin its second decade by developing a shared conceptual framework of gender equality and social inclusion/exclusion. This framework is an effort to do that: to clarify concepts, set out a theory of change and define key terms as a guide to practice.

1.1.2 Methodology

This framework document was developed under the guidance of the GESI Working Group and through wide consultations with a range of stakeholders. Meetings were held with the GESI Working Group to define the scope of the framework. Key government documents were analyzed, including the Constitution of 2015, the 14th Approach Paper of Three Year Plan, and the GESI guidelines of sectoral ministries. In Kathmandu, meetings were held with representatives of six ministries/departments, six civil society organizations and three national commissions. Fieldwork was

conducted in five districts³ covering different geographic regions in the country, to ensure that people from the Hills, Mountains and Tarai/Madhes were included. In total, 34 key informants were interviewed and 15 focus group discussions were facilitated with a total of 365 people of multiple castes, ethnicities and religious groups, of whom 73% were women and 27% men. Seven workshops were held: one in each district with civil society representatives and, in Kathmandu, one with INGOs and another with DPs and GoN representatives.

A structured request for information on organization- and program-related GESI policies and practices was sent to all INGO members of the Association of INGOs (AIN) and DP members of the IDPG. Of these, 13 responded. Based on the analysis of the collected information, a series of draft framework documents were shared with the GESI Working Group, with feedback incorporated into a final draft that was shared with all the GESI Working Group members at a workshop held in mid-October and endorsed by the Working Group in November. (Refer to “Background Report on Defining a Common GESI Framework” July 2016 for details of the methodology followed and Annex 2 for an overview of the list of people met).

1.2 Why is GESI so Important for Nepal?

1.2.1 Supporting the Constitution’s Promise of an Inclusive State

The Constitution of Nepal (2015) clearly envisions Nepal as an inclusive state and guarantees the right to equality for all its citizens.⁴ This is an important moment in Nepal’s development that offers the GESI Working Group an opportunity to help realize the constitution’s vision of inclusion and equality. Nepal, being a signatory to various inter-

¹ The GESI Working Group emerged from the Social Inclusion Action Group (SIAG), which was established in 2005 and has worked for the past decade to increase understanding of and commitment to gender equality and socially inclusive development practice. In a meeting on September 4, 2015, SIAG members renamed the group, expanded its core membership and renewed its commitment to gender equality and social inclusion.

² Naila Kabeer (2000) “Social Exclusion, Poverty and Discrimination: Towards an Analytical Framework”, IDS Bulletin 31(4).

³ Morang, Kaski, Banke, Dadeldhura and Dolakha.

⁴ The Preamble of the Constitution states: “Ending all forms of discrimination and oppression created by the feudalistic, autocratic, centralized, unitary system of governance, recognizing the multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious, multi-cultural and diverse regional characteristics, resolving to build an egalitarian society founded on the proportional inclusive and participatory principles in order to ensure economic equality, prosperity and social justice, by eliminating discrimination based on class, caste, region, language, religion and gender and all forms of caste-based untouchability. The Fundamental Rights under Right to Equality states: No discrimination shall be made in the application of general laws on grounds of origin, religion, race, caste, tribe, sex, physical condition, condition of health, marital status, pregnancy, economic condition, language or region, ideology or on similar other grounds. (3) The State shall not discriminate citizens on grounds of origin, religion, race, caste, tribe, sex, economic condition, language, region, ideology or on similar other grounds.”

national conventions, is also legally committed to gender equality and social inclusion. The GoN and DP have implemented various policies and programs in line with these mandates. The GoN GESI policies and guidelines adopted in seven sectors provide two key elements that are critical to transforming the promise of an inclusive state into a reality: 1) *the demonstration of government commitment to GESI and* 2) *practical guidance on what to do to support GESI.*

It is encouraging that so far seven major sectoral ministries (Agriculture, Education, Forest, Health, Federal Affairs and Local Development, Urban Development, Water Supply and Sanitation) have issued and are implementing GESI policies and guidelines and, in many cases, have established dedicated units with specially trained staff and systems to monitor results. In addition, the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MoWCSW) has almost finalized a Gender Equality Policy that will be applicable GoN-wide. While there is still room to further strengthen implementation at the sub-national level, field observations provide evidence that government officials working in the districts take directives from their central ministries seriously and try hard to implement them as best as they can.

1.2.2 Achieving Key Sustainable Development Goals

Welfare outcomes are improving steadily in Nepal – though at different rates for different groups. Although poverty levels have dropped dramatically across the board over the last several decades, there are still disparities based on social identity and location. For example, the Nepal Living Standards Survey (NLSS) 2011 found that the proportion of people living below the poverty line in Nepal had decreased from 31% in 2003-04 to 25% in 2010-11. However, the 2010–11 survey found that Dalits are bearing a much higher burden of poverty (42%) than non-Dalits (23%).⁵ Similarly, the Nepal Demographic Health Survey (NDHS) 2011 found that 40% of women in Nepal had no education (i.e. were illiterate), in comparison to only 14% of men, and that 60% of Tarai women have no education, compared to 32% of women in the Hills and Mountains. On an average day, women in Nepal spend just an hour less than men on income-generating work, while spending three times more time than men on unpaid work (6 hours spent by women compared to 1.5 hours spent by men).⁶

Of the 601 members in the Constituent Assembly, only 175 are women. In the civil service, only 10.6% were women in 2014, with the highest majority in a non-gazetted class.⁷ The NDHS and a recent Asia Foundation survey indicate that between 20% and 50% of Nepali women have experienced violence in their lifetime.⁸

Unless these disparities between women and men and different social groups are recognized and addressed, there is no way that Nepal can achieve its goal of inclusive growth, or reach Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 (elimination of absolute poverty and reduction of poverty by half) or SDG 5 (gender equality and empowerment of women and girls) by 2030. By working towards SDG 10 on reducing inequality (within and between countries) and SDG 16 (promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels), Nepal will also progress towards gender equality and social inclusion. The SDGs emphasize not only including the excluded, but also building and sustaining inclusive institutions and systems.

UN Resolution 70/1 “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” has resolved to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, and has pledged that no one will be left behind.⁹ 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets seek to realize the human rights of all, to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and to reach the furthest behind first.¹⁰

The central principle of the SDGs is to “Leave no one behind.” The SDGs demand that we go after the most difficult-to-reach groups, which often face not only poverty but disadvantages related to location, language, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, caste, ethnicity, or age. In fact, the National Planning Commission (NPC) report on the SDGs notes:¹¹

Nepal is marred by gender, social and geographical exclusion and inequality in Millennium Development Goals and human development outcomes and so needs to better target the delivery of development to the hardest to reach segments of society, those who have been excluded from development and those who have been overlooked.

⁵ CBS, 2011. Kathmandu: Central Bureau of Statistics, National Planning Commission, Government of Nepal.

⁶ Background Document for 6th April 2016, “DFID Nepal Support for the Economic Empowerment of Women and Girls – the Sabalaa Programme.”

⁷ Sahabagi et al, Progress of Women in Nepal (1995-2015), Substantive Equality, Non-Negotiable, UN Women.

⁸ Asia Foundation Study on Violence against Women (2010). NDHS, 2011, MoHP/GoN

⁹ This UN Resolution 70/1, signed by 193 countries including Nepal, commits to “a just, equitable, tolerant, open and socially inclusive world” in which the needs of the poorest, the most vulnerable, children, youth and all women and girls are met. UN Resolution 70/1, 21 October 2015

¹⁰ A RES 70/1 General, 21 October 2015 Transforming our world_the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.pdf, UN General Assembly; Resolution signed by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015

¹¹ NPC, 2015. Sustainable Development Goals, 2016-2030, National (Preliminary) Report, National Planning Commission, Page 5, Kathmandu.

The GESI Working Group fully supports this GoN priority, and the GESI conceptual framework set out in this publication is intended to help:

- i. Focus development attention on the overlapping layers of disadvantage that surround women, poor, the vulnerable and the excluded;
- ii. Analyze the barriers presented by each layer; and
- iii. Develop holistic, data-driven development approaches and interventions that successfully address multi-dimensional exclusion/deprivation.

In one sense GESI can be seen as a method of targeting, but it is much more than that. GESI is a *mindset, a process, and a set of desired outcomes* – a way of doing development with a focus on ensuring that no one is left out of development programs and government services, that are intended to be universal.

1.3 What is GESI? Areas of Convergence and Divergence

1.3.1 GESI Born in Nepal and Widely Practiced by GoN and DPs

Although most countries seek to address multidimensional poverty, gender inequality, exclusion and vulnerability through their development work, the GESI approach we are operationalizing in this framework is a unique product of Nepal. Its roots in GoN discourse first appeared during the early 1970s as a concern to ensure women's equal access to development benefits. With growing awareness and capacity among Nepali women, this has evolved over time into a demand for equal rights and representation in governance. After the first *Jana Andolan* (People's Movement) in 1990, which brought the restoration of multiparty democracy, Nepal's various social groups – including Adibasi/Janajatis, Dalits, Madhesis, Muslims and members of other minority religious groups, and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) community – began to make similar demands for substantive equality. These emerged even more forcefully during and after the 10-year armed conflict. The GESI approach is focused on delivering equal rights, opportunities, and mainstream services to all citizens rather than welfare to the needy. The approach also recognizes formal and informal institutions and, embedded in these institutions, power relations that disempower women, the poor, the vulnerable and the excluded.

The sub-sections below provide a brief review of the existing GESI-related mandates and practices that have been operationalized in Nepal.¹²

1.3.2 GESI Provisions by the State

National-level Provisions for GESI

Constitution of Nepal:

The Constitution of Nepal is a significant milestone for GESI and enshrines equal rights for women, the poor, the vulnerable and people from different social groups. Positive provisions include affirmative action to address historical disadvantage and a ban on sex or caste/ethnicity-based discrimination. The article on Rights of Women establishes for women the right to equal lineage; right to safe motherhood and reproductive health; right to participate in all bodies of the State; right to property and family affairs; and positive discrimination in education, health, employment and social security. It also makes any act of violence against women punishable by law. The Right to Equality further elaborates the special provisions by law for the protection, empowerment or development of citizens, including those described by the constitution as “socially or culturally backward.” The Right to Social Justice establishes the people's right to participate in state bodies on the basis of the principles of inclusion and proportional representation.

Approach Paper of 14th Three Year Plan:

In its Approach Paper for the 14th Three Year Plan (2016/17-2018/19), the GoN aims for economic prosperity with social justice. The Approach Paper recognizes that improving gender equality and addressing issues of “backward” regions, classes and communities and excluded groups requires conscious efforts, such as targeted programs, equitable distribution of resources, and social security for poverty reduction. It has dedicated chapters on gender equality and women's empowerment (6.1.1) and on inclusion (6.1.2), recognizing that these are cross-cutting themes. The Approach Paper emphasizes the meaningful participation of all citizens for Nepal's inclusive development and aims to improve the human development and empowerment index of those who have been economically and socially left behind. This includes Dalits, Adibasi/Janajatis, Madhesis, Tharus, Muslims, Other Backward Classes (OBC),¹³ minorities, the marginalized, persons with disabilities, gender and sexual minorities, farmers, laborers, people of backward regions and poor *Khas Aryas*.

¹² Refer to the Background Report on Defining GESI framework and Roadmap for detailed analysis of the Constitution of 2015, Approach Paper to 14th TYP, GESI guidelines and policy mandates of DPs, existing program and practices on GESI and inputs from the field work and consultations.

¹³ “Other Backward Classes” (OBC) are one caste grouping of Madhesi people covering more than 35 sub-caste groups, some of whom are economically well-off, while others are amongst the poorest in Nepal. Socially, all the OBC groups typically practice strong gender-based discriminatory practices. They have a federation and have chosen to call themselves “Other Backward Class.” Government documents have accepted the terminology.

GESI Policy/Strategies/Guidelines of Sectoral Ministries

Numerous GoN policies and guidelines – including the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development GESI Policy, the Ministry of Urban Development GESI Operational Guidelines, the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation GESI Strategy, the Ministry of Education Consolidated Equity Strategy, and the Ministry of Health GESI Operational Guidelines – recognize the need to address GESI issues programmatically and institutionally in order to achieve sector objectives.

All these sectoral GESI strategies and guidelines emphasize participation of women, Dalits, Adibasi/Janajatis, Madhesis, Muslims, persons with disability and excluded communities in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of sectoral policies, plans and programs. They recognize the need to identify the specific barriers faced by women, the poor, the vulnerable and the excluded in the sector concerned. Some of the measures these strategies emphasize include: VDC mapping; poverty mapping; participatory planning; social mobilization/empowerment; behavior change communication (BCC); user groups for service delivery; reservations in committees and key decision-making positions; capacity strengthening of individuals and communities; and basing review and planning processes on evidence of who is unreached and which areas are underserved.

All these guidelines demand disaggregated data and evidence. However, the lack of a universal, consistent and officially endorsed GoN categorization of social groups has resulted in different systems and levels of disaggregation being followed in different sectors. An umbrella GESI position paper from the GoN would help standardize categorization and reporting across sectors. It would enable sector-specific mandates at the ministry level to be more consistent and to address the deeper, structural aspects of discrimination against women, the poor, the vulnerable and the excluded, and marginalized social groups.

GoN Institutional Mechanisms for GESI

The GoN has created various institutional mechanisms and structures over the years to address gender equality and social inclusion issues, from the central to district and VDC levels. Table 1 presents the different mechanisms.

At the VDC/municipality level, these mechanisms have, in many cases, gradually become effective structures for channeling the voice of ward-level people into the local development planning process. At the higher levels, the established institutional mechanisms have experienced inadequate resources and weak institutional processes, and thus have not been sufficiently effective in protecting and furthering the cause of gender equality and social inclusion.

TABLE 1 : GoN Institutional Mechanisms for GESI

Level	GESI Mechanism
Central	National Planning Commission; Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MOWCSW) and its Department of Women Development; Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development (MOFALD) and its Dalit and Adibasi/Janajati coordination committees; constitutionally established National Commissions for Women, Dalits, Indigenous Nationalities, Madhesis, Muslims, Tharus and a National Inclusion Commission that is mandated to protect the rights of Khas Aryas, Pichardiaka (“backward”) class, persons with disabilities, senior citizens, labourers, peasants, minority and marginalized communities, people of the Karnali, and the indigent class; ¹⁴ Gender/GESI Focal Points in NPC, MOFALD, MOWCSW and the ministries of Education, Health, Urban Development, Forestry and Agriculture.
District	Women and Children Offices (WCOs), Social Committee with a Social Development Officer of District Development Committees (DDCs); Adibasi/Janajati District Coordination Committee and Dalit Class Upliftment District Coordination Committee, the Gender Mainstreaming Coordination Committee (GMCC), and the GESI Implementation Committee
VDC/ Municipality	Representative Integrated Planning Committees in each VDC; Ward Citizens’ Fora and Citizen Awareness Centres

Source: Adapted from UN Women information, GESI Operational Guidelines of MOUD and from the Sectoral Monograph series of ADB, DFID, WB and the Nepal Constitution (2015)

¹⁴ This list of National Commissions and the groups covered is taken from Section 259 (a) of the constitution.

1.3.3 GESI Policy Mandates and Practices of Development Partners in Nepal

Policies/Approaches/Tools

Mission orders, global policies and country or sector strategies make it mandatory for most DPs and INGOs to address women's empowerment, gender equality and social diversity issues. Most DPs have added Nepal-focused social inclusion guidance to global mandates in country-specific policy documents. Approaches common to the surveyed DPs and INGOs include: gender/GESI mainstreaming, targeted/focused service delivery, social mobilization/empowerment, group formation and capacity strengthening. Gender analysis, social analysis, participatory rapid appraisal (PRA), poverty mapping and social mapping – along with the use of the 14 steps of the District Development Committee (DDC) planning process – are among the tools that DPs use to identify and address the issues faced by women, the poor, the vulnerable and the excluded. Requiring that GESI-related outcomes be captured in project development objectives and results indicators and that community groups include at least 33% women with at least one woman in key positions in these groups are usual provisions in DP-supported programs/projects. Some projects also require that members of local minority/marginalized groups be included in community groups and represented in the executive committees. Rights-based advocacy, livelihoods development and service delivery approaches have been adopted by many DPs and INGOs. Many are also implementing special interventions to address violence against women and girls.

Budgeting/Financial Allocation/Expenditure Analysis

DPs use a range of tools for GESI-responsive budgeting and financial allocation/expenditure analysis. For example, UN Women supports the GoN's Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) process at the central level, with planning underway to localize the process at the district level. All DPs' support to the government is tracked through the Aid Management System Platform using the government's GRB classification (<http://amis.mof.gov.np/portal/>). SDC has a system of Fund Flow Analysis, and USAID has directives for GESI-related budget allocations – both of which seek to ensure that funds flow to support work with women and excluded groups.

Monitoring

DPs generally monitor access to services and representation in development activities. Disaggregation by sex is commonly practiced and, over the last decade, disaggregation by caste and ethnicity has also become more common. But the levels of disaggregation are inconsistent and often inadequate to capture the outcomes of the most deprived groups. Nor, in many cases, is the collected information

analyzed and used to improve the program and its impact on those groups.

Institutional Arrangements

Institutionally, most of the DPs and INGOs that responded to our survey have Gender, GESI or Social Development Advisors; affirmative action in recruitment for women and people of excluded social groups; internship policies for capacity enhancement of women and people from excluded and social groups; and maternity and paternity leave and mourning leave. In some agencies, the responsibility for GESI is spread across the whole organization. There are differences in that some DPs have full-time GESI advisors while others have only allocated a percentage of someone's time. (Refer to Annex 3 for an overview of commonalities and differences between DPs and the background report for more details).

Need for a Shared GESI Framework

The above discussion indicates the need for a shared GESI framework amongst the DPs. It is clear that understanding and providing strong development support for GESI is critical if Nepal is to transform its constitutional vision of an inclusive state into a reality on the ground, and if it is to ensure that no one is left behind in achieving the SDGs. Despite a common broad understanding that GESI is a way of targeting or reaching women and other excluded or disadvantaged groups that might in the normal course of things be "left behind" in the development process, there is a lack of consistency in concepts and definitions being used across sectors and agencies – especially in defining the "excluded" and "other disadvantaged groups" targeted by GESI initiatives.

Some members of the GESI Working Group have institutional mandates that require them to focus their work exclusively or primarily on a particular subset of the excluded, such as women or children or survivors of trafficking. There are also varied strategies for overcoming exclusion, with some DPs mainstreaming GESI in all their work and others preferring a few stand-alone GESI-focused projects in a more varied portfolio. Some focus their work on policies or on crosscutting governance or social justice issues, while others concentrate on improving the delivery of services to the excluded in specific sectors. All this variety at the implementation level is good, but the lack of a common framework and terminology can make it difficult for members of the GESI Working Group to address some of the fundamental structural issues underlying inequality and exclusion or to compare approaches to learn what works best to solve persistent problems. The GESI Working Group believes that the development of a common GESI framework will improve coordination and harmonization between DPs and lead to more effective support to state

and non-state actors seeking to implement the “inclusion” vision embedded in the new constitution and in the SDGs.

For this reason, the GESI Working Group initiated the idea of developing some common definitions and a shared GESI framework. However, it is important to emphasize that this framework is not prescriptive. It should serve as a common source of guidance while allowing room for legitimate differences in the mandates of different DPs, and for the technical differences in what is required to achieve GESI impact in different sectors.

1.3.4 Areas of Convergence

Harmony at the Goal Level

Even with all the complexities of the development process in Nepal and the need for diverse approaches, a number of areas of convergence have emerged, and these provide the foundation for the GESI Working Group’s vision of a common framework. Most powerful has been the harmony at the level of national goals. Section 1.3.2 above, documents how these early commitments at the national policy level have permeated through the sectoral ministries and departments and down to the district and VDC level.

This same harmony of overall goals is evident among the DPs. All focus on gender equality, with widespread support for promoting women’s health, education, and social, economic and political empowerment and combating gender-based violence/violence against women and girls. An interest in helping socially excluded groups is also prominent in the country programs of many DPs. DPs have been able to work with the government using the GESI approach, to build special mechanisms to improve access for Adibasi/Janajatis, Dalits, Muslims and Madhesis into major national programs in health, education, water and sanitation, forestry, roads, agriculture, microenterprise and urban development.

Broad Consensus on the Definition of GESI and Its Component Parts

After decades of work on mainstreaming gender equality and a vibrant national discourse on social inclusion/exclusion, the development community is in broad agreement about what gender equality and social inclusion/exclusion are and how they play out in Nepal.¹⁵

For “gender equality,” most definitions referred to “socially constructed power relations between men and women” and the “rebalancing” of these relations to ensure “equal rights, opportunities and respect for all individuals regardless of their gender and social identity.”¹⁶

By bringing in social identity as well as gender, this definition introduces the important concept of “intersectionality,” which is critical to understanding “social inclusion/exclusion.” The idea of intersectionality is that each individual’s identity has many layers, and each layer may confer either negative or positive status and may either block or open access to resources and power in a particular society. For example, a poor Brahmin woman may face barriers because of her poverty and her female gender, while she may be given some respect and advantage because of her Brahmin caste identity. Similarly, people with Adibasi/Janajati, Madhesi, Dalit or Muslim identity face greater challenges staying out of poverty, even if they are able to escape it temporarily, because certain conditions related to their untouchability status, ethnicity or religion limit their access to the critical social, economic and political networks and institutions (social capital) that help attain livelihood security. The concept of social exclusion helps explain the complex dynamics of social identity that go well beyond the impact of class and gender.¹⁷ In their responses to the survey, quite a few GESI Working Group members showed keen awareness of intersectionality and the additional complexity it adds to the issue of targeting and sensitive program design.¹⁸

The concept of intersectionality enables agencies whose institutional mandate is to work with specific groups (such as women or children) to address other crosscutting dimensions of identity that lead to exclusion. GESI Working Group members are aware of the diversity within their mandated target groups. Certain members of society will never be able to access development benefits or participate in governance as intended unless special attention is given to overcoming the additional barriers they face due to their caste/ethnic identity, their poverty or other aspects of their specific circumstances.

GESI Working Group members’ definitions given for social inclusion/exclusion also for the most part reflect similar thinking. Exclusion is understood as happening at the *system level*— as intergenerational and historically embedded in the formal and informal institutions that structure human inter-

¹⁵ The study team developed an instrument entitled “Matrix for mapping GESI definitions and tools applied by DPs and INGOs” (See Background Report on Defining Common GESI framework submitted to SDC, July 2016), which was administered to all GESI Working Group and AIN members. Of these, 13 members responded, with some giving very brief answers and leaving many questions unanswered, and others writing detailed responses and providing new insights. Government-related information was collected from documents and in a consultation workshop with GESI Focal Persons of different ministries.

¹⁶ ADB, DFID and WB used this specific phrasing, but rebalancing power relations was also mentioned by USAID, UN, SDC, GIZ, CARE, Oxfam and SNV. See Background Report on Defining Common GESI framework for the specific definitions used by different DP agencies and GoN ministries.

¹⁷ CDSA/TU, 2014, *Perspectives on Social Exclusion in Nepal*. Edited by Gurung, Tamang and Turin. Kathmandu, Nepal.

¹⁸ See Background Report on Defining Common GESI framework for details.

action and generally reflect the prevailing power relations in a given society.¹⁹ GESI Working Group members who responded to the survey understand gender inequality as a case of exclusion – where one set of identity groups (women and sexual and gender minorities) are not recognized as being of equal value and therefore not given equal access to resources and prevented from exercising their full human rights. Basically, the institutions and expected interpersonal relations of patriarchal society position men (performing hegemonic masculinities) as the historically dominant group.

In addition to gender, GESI Working Group members are also concerned with other aspects of social identity or other physical or situational characteristics that in present-day Nepal are associated with exclusion and deprivation. These include dimensions of social identity such as caste (Dalit, Other Backward Castes), ethnicity (Adibasi/Janajati, Tharu), region (Madhesi), religion (Muslim or followers of other non-Hindu religions) or gender identity/sexual orientation (LGBTI community) or an intersection of these different dimensions. All these groups face various forms of discrimination and can be defined as being *socially* excluded to different degrees.

Most survey respondents also listed among the excluded some groups defined by their *physical characteristics* (e.g. persons with disability), *life stage* (children, youth and older persons), their *location* (e.g. mountain/hill, rural, remote) or their *situation as victims* of natural or human-made catastrophes such as floods, earthquakes, climate change or conflict. While in many societies some of these groups (such as the persons with disability, and persons living with HIV/AIDS) may also face discrimination and social exclusion, for most of these groups their deprivations are a result of a particular *situation* (in some cases only temporary) that has reduced their ability to withstand shocks rather than their more deeply embedded social identity. For this reason, people whose disadvantage or risk of disadvantage is situational rather than structural can perhaps be best defined as “*vulnerable*” rather than “*excluded*.”

All DPs also seek to reach the poor through their programs, and most of them explicitly listed those in poverty as affected by exclusion – specifically by *economic* exclusion. Several respondents emphasized that *economic* exclusion encompasses the poor of all castes, ethnicities, locations and sexes. *Geographic* exclusion (remote areas, geographically difficult to access areas) was also addressed by many DPs.

It is clear that social inclusion demands something beyond

the elimination of exclusion. It requires a change in unequal relations based on respect and recognition of difference with equality.²⁰ The People’s Movements of 1990 and 2006 strengthened people’s voices for a just and inclusive society, and Nepal’s constitution of 2015 recognizes the need for mutual respect, recognition and inclusive social relations between and among groups, society and the State.

Although it does not capture all the complexities discussed in the preceding sections, the definition of GESI (Refer to Annex 4 for other some examples of definitions) used by the Ministry of Health and Population (now MoH) in its GESI Guidelines seems to capture the core elements of the concept and has been adapted and is offered as a common working definition to be used by the GESI Working Group members:

*Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) is a concept that addresses unequal power relations experienced by people on the grounds of gender, wealth, ability, location, caste/ethnicity, language and agency or a combination of these dimensions. It focuses on the need for action to re-balance these power relations, reduce disparities and ensure equal rights, opportunities and respect for all individuals regardless of their social identity.*²¹

1.3.5 Areas Where Concepts and Definitions are not yet Sufficiently Clear

Who Are the Excluded?

In the discussion above, we noted that most of the DPs involved in GESI work included three broad groups among those they seek to reach: 1) the *socially excluded*, including women; 2) those who are particularly *vulnerable* because of their location, physical/health status, age or the fact that they have been affected by human-made or natural disasters; and 3) the poor or *economically excluded*. But there has been a failure to distinguish consistently between these three sub-groups– especially between the socially or economically excluded and the vulnerable.

These excluded and vulnerable groups need to be ensured equal opportunities and benefits, and for that they need targeted assistance. There is also much evidence suggesting that it is women, the poor the vulnerable and the socially excluded who currently suffer the most from shock events like floods and earthquakes, and during vulnerable life stages such as childhood, youth and old age.²² However, it is important that the conceptual difference between so-

¹⁹ See Background Report on Defining Common GESI framework for details.

²⁰ CDSA/TU, 2014, *Perspectives on Social Exclusion in Nepal*. Edited by Gurung, Tamang and Turin. Kathmandu, Nepal.

²¹ Adapted from definition of GESI in *Operational Guidelines for Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Mainstreaming in the Health Sector*, MOHP/GoN, 2013. During the consultation workshop with DPs and GoN GESI Focal Persons, concern was expressed that use of the word “power” in the language of the definition may create a sense that gender equality is a limited-sum game wherein men and non-disadvantaged groups will lose if women and disadvantaged groups gain. But this concern is only valid when dominance and submission rather than democratic cooperation and negotiation are seen as the “natural” and socially acceptable relations between people

²² Social Inclusion Action Group, 2015, “Towards More Inclusive Disaster Relief in Nepal.”

cially constructed exclusion and situational vulnerability is kept in mind when interventions are being designed. With social and economic exclusion, there are deeper structural factors and mindsets that need to be addressed. Given the constitutional commitment to building an inclusive state, it is important that progress on reducing exclusion be monitored separately from progress on reducing vulnerability, and that the two are clearly distinguished when outcome objectives and indicators are framed.

Another reason for the prevailing confusion in DP definitions of the excluded stems from inconsistent lists of excluded groups issued at various times from different sources. There has been no clear statement from the government providing the conceptual basis on which GoN officially classifies groups as “excluded,” “marginalized” or “backward.” The 2015 constitution contains two lists of backward/excluded groups that the State has designated as in some way disadvantaged and therefore entitled to different types of government assistance. One list of disadvantaged groups (on the left hand side of table 2 below) appears in the section of the constitution on the “Right to Equality” and outlines all groups entitled to state protection, empowerment and development. The second list

(on the right hand side of table 2) is found in the section on “Right to Social Justice” and includes those for whom the State must make some sort of special provisions (affirmative action) to ensure their “right to participate in state bodies on the basis of inclusive principles.”

Thus, the constitution recognizes two different types of deficits in segments of Nepal’s population that require State redressal: 1) Groups with low levels of human development and poor access to economic and development opportunities (listed in the first column); and 2) Groups with low levels of political participation and representation (listed in the second column). Many groups appear in both columns and thus are presumed to lack both basic human and economic development as well as political representation. However, some – like the poor, farmers, laborers, youths, children, senior citizens, pregnant women, and incapacitated and helpless people and the rather unclear category of “oppressed people” – appear only in the first column and thus are presumed to have adequate political representation and not to require affirmative action from the state in that area. A number of these groups that appear only in the first column (e.g. youths, children, senior citizens and pregnant

TABLE 2 : Defining Eligibility for Welfare and Development Assistance and Affirmative Action in the 2015 Constitution

Groups covered by the Right to Equality (State Provisions for Welfare and Development Assistance)	Groups covered by the Right to Social Justice (State Provisions for Affirmative Action to Support Inclusive Participation in State Bodies)
The Poor	
Socio-culturally Backward Women	Socio-culturally Backward Women
Dalits	Dalits
Indigenous Peoples (<i>Adibasi/Janajati</i>)	Indigenous Peoples (<i>Adibasi/Janajati</i>)
Indigenous Nationalities (<i>Adibasi/Janajati</i>)	Indigenous Nationalities (<i>Adibasi/Janajati</i>)
Madhesis	Madhesis
Tharus	Tharus
Muslims	Muslims
Oppressed Classes (?)	
Backward Classes (OBC?)	Backward Class (OBC?)
Minorities	Minorities
Marginalized Communities	Marginalized Communities
Farmers/Peasants	
Labourers	
Youths	
Children	
Senior Citizens	
Gender and Sexual Minorities	Gender and Sexual Minorities
Persons with Disabilities	Persons with Disabilities
Persons in Pregnancy	
Incapacitated and Helpless People	
People from Backward Regions	People from Backward Regions
Poor <i>Khas Arya</i>	Poor <i>Khas Arya</i>

women) are groups that this framework has classified as vulnerable rather than excluded, since their disadvantage is situational rather than based on their social identity alone. But it is not clear that this is the basis for the constitution's classification since it has, for example, listed persons with disability in both columns.

As yet it is not clear what specific welfare or affirmative action provisions will be given to the groups on these two lists in table 2. However, the special provisions to be offered by the government would benefit from more refined targeting based on available government data on differentiated levels of deprivations among these various groups.

The lists generate other questions. For example, the constitution does not consider *all* women to be in need of government support to realize their right to equality and social justice, but only those from groups considered to be “socially and culturally lagging behind” – which are not specified. Many of the listed categories overlap – for example, the poor in general and the poor *Khas Arya*.²³ “Excluded groups” are listed as well as “marginalized groups;” however, the difference between the excluded and marginalized is not clear.²⁴ These two categories seem to overlap with each other and with many of the specific groups listed. The “ethnic group” and the “Madhesi” categories are also confusing.²⁵ There is no explanation of the difference between Indigenous People and Indigenous Nationalities, or between oppressed classes and marginalized communities. Furthermore, the reason for listing the Tharus as a separate group apart from *Adibasi*/

Janajatis rather than a specific sub-group within the larger *Adibasi/Janajati* category is not clear.

In general, at the sectoral level government definitions of the excluded groups they are targeting are more precise. The health sector GESI strategy, for example, defines excluded groups as “women, Dalits, indigenous Janajatis, Madhesi, Muslims, people with disabilities, senior citizens, and people living in remote regions who have not benefited from national development efforts.”²⁶

The DPs also generally work with narrower definitions of excluded groups. Yet, while there seems to be a core set of groups considered as “excluded” by most agencies, no clear distinction has yet been made between “social/political exclusion,” “economic exclusion” and “vulnerability.” In table 3, the first column lists the various groups targeted by the 13 DPs that responded to the survey; the second column indicates whether the group in question is considered to be 1) socially or politically excluded; 2) economically excluded/poor; or 3) vulnerable. The third column notes some of the unclear areas and how these might be addressed, and also highlights some of the complexities of intersectionality or overlapping identity.

As noted in table 3, all the DP respondents place women among the excluded and, in line with the SDGs, DPs target all women and not just those from certain disadvantaged (“socio-culturally backward”) social groups.²⁷ A number of DPs target Dalits and Janajatis. The constitution introduces

TABLE 3 : List of Excluded/Vulnerable Groups Currently Targeted by GESI Working Group Members

Group	Excluded or Vulnerable ²⁸	Comments
Women	Socially/Politically Excluded	<p>Almost all agencies and sectors focus on reaching women. It is recognized that some members of the GESI Working Group (like UN Women) are mandated to focus on women and not other disadvantaged or excluded groups per se. However, they are careful to look at different categories of women and target their support to the most socially excluded and vulnerable women.</p> <p>Although some minority groups are wealthy despite being cut off from overt political power or social recognition, most groups that are socially and politically excluded are also poor or economically excluded. In the case of women, although a woman may belong to a wealthy family and live in relative luxury, in traditional patriarchal cultures she would have very limited independent control over economic resources and in an important sense, she would be economically excluded as well.</p>

²³ Initially the constitution listed *Khas Arya* with no qualification here, but in response to protests, the constitution was amended so that these provisions cover only poor *Khas Arya*.

²⁴ Constitution of Nepal, 2015, Part 34 has defined marginalized communities as communities that are made politically, economically and socially backward, are unable to enjoy services and facilities because of discrimination and oppression, communities that are geographically remote and whose populations fall below the human development standards mentioned in Federal law.

²⁵ For example, the “ethnic groups” category should cover the Tharu ethnic group, the Adibasi (Indigenous People) category and “communities on the verge of extinction,” which probably refers to the Janajati groups that have been classified as “endangered” by NEFIN. The Madhesi category encompasses and thus overlaps with Other Backward Classes (a group of non-Dalit, but “low caste” and often quite poor groups in the Tarai. Tharus and the Madhesi Dalits. The Madhesi category also covers high caste Brahmins and Chhetris from the Tarai belt and members of the politically powerful, middle ranking Yadav caste – who have more opportunities compared to other Madhesi groups but still have far less options than hill groups.

²⁶ Source: *Operational Guidelines for Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Mainstreaming in the Health Sector*, MOHP/GoN, 2013.

²⁷ However, within the broad category of women, quite a few DPs do explicitly target women from disadvantaged groups.

²⁸ The categorization of excluded and vulnerable is based on the definition of exclusion and vulnerable discussed in this document.

Group	Excluded or Vulnerable	Comments
The poor of all social identities	Economically Excluded	Although some of the DPs did not explicitly list people in poverty in their survey responses, this is a group most DPs do target (depending on the program objectives).
Dalits	Socially/Politically Excluded	It may be helpful to distinguish between Hill Dalits and Tarai/Madhesi Dalits since they have different areas of deprivation. This would also allow Tarai/Madhesi Dalits to be included in the Madhesi category for tracking progress.
<i>Adibasi/Janajati</i>	Socially/Politically Excluded	<p>It may be helpful to distinguish between Hill and <i>Tarai Adibasi/Janajatis</i> for the same reason as noted above.</p> <p>Both the Multidimensional Exclusion Index²⁹ and the Multidimensional Social Inclusion Index³⁰ show wide variations in the welfare and political participation levels of different <i>Adibasi/Janajati</i> groups. Therefore, it may also be helpful to distinguish between <i>Adibasi/Janajati</i> groups on the basis of their relative deprivation, as NEFIN has done. Some groups are advanced, some extremely deprived and some almost extinct.</p> <p>It would also be helpful to understand why the constitution introduces a distinction between Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous Nationalities; why Tharus are listed as a separate group; and why the seemingly redundant category of “Ethnic groups” is included.</p>
Other Backward Classes (OBC)	Socially/Politically Excluded	<p>Not explicitly targeted by any members of the GESI Working Group who responded to the survey. According to the Multidimensional Exclusion Index, most of these groups are highly deprived; hence it may be worthwhile for the GESI Working Group members to review this with their agency management if they are working in the Tarai.</p> <p>Overlaps with Madhesi category.</p>
Madhesi	Socially/Politically Excluded	This category contains dominant as well as excluded and vulnerable groups – but <i>almost all</i> Madhesis suffer political exclusion in varying degrees.
Muslims	Socially/Politically Excluded	Logically, this should be “Muslims and other religious minorities,” but human development indicators of Muslim persons are poorer.
Sexual and Gender Minorities	Socially/Politically Excluded	Five different categories (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/ Transsexual, Intersex) are grouped together. Challenges and discrimination based on sexual orientation may differ from those based on gender identity.
Persons without citizenship	Socially/Politically Excluded	This group may grow because of some of the citizenship provisions that do not enable women to pass on citizenship to their children.
Persons with disabilities	Vulnerable/excluded if of excluded groups	The different kinds of mental and physical disabilities need to be better covered. Intersectionality applies. Persons with disabilities also face exclusion if they are members of socially excluded groups listed in this table.
People living in remote areas	Vulnerable	It is sometimes difficult to know how “remote areas” are defined. Sometimes the GoN specifies the Karnali Zone. Often DPs focus on districts with low connectivity and high poverty, but area-based targeting means that better-off groups in the poor areas will also be covered. Greater clarity would help in monitoring.
Children (boys and girls)	Vulnerable	Intersectionality applies. Children also face exclusion if they are members of socially excluded groups listed in this table.
Youth	Vulnerable	Intersectionality applies. Youths also face exclusion if they are members of socially excluded groups listed in this table.
Older persons	Vulnerable	Intersectionality applies. Older persons also face exclusion if they are members of socially excluded groups listed in this table.
HIV/AIDS affected	Vulnerable/Socially Excluded	The stigma attached to HIV/AIDS means that people with the illness also face social exclusion. Intersectionality applies. In addition, those affected with HIV/AIDS also face exclusion if they are members of socially excluded groups listed in this table.

²⁹ Bennett, Lynn and Dilip Parajuli, 2013. The Nepal Multidimensional Exclusion Index: Making smaller Social Groups Visible and Providing a Baseline for Tracking Results on Social Inclusion”, Himal Books, Kathmandu, Nepal.

³⁰ Das, Prof Arun K.L., et al., 2014. Nepal Social Inclusion Index: Diversity and Agenda for Inclusive Development. Central Department of Sociology/Anthropology, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Nepal.

Group	Excluded or Vulnerable	Comments
Sex workers, Trafficked people	Vulnerable/Socially/ Politically/Economically Excluded	All sex workers also face social exclusion. Intersectionality applies. All sex workers and trafficked people are excluded irrespective of their social identity. Their reasons for engaging in sex work and trafficking are often due to economic exclusion. They face political exclusion in terms of their lack of labour rights, and social exclusion in terms of social stigma. They are also vulnerable to harassment and violence.
People working in the informal sector or engaged in unsafe employment/ migration and unpaid care work	Vulnerable/Socially, Politically and Economically Excluded	Intersectionality applies. Persons working in informal, unsafe or unpaid sectors face economic exclusion from the formal economy, and political exclusion in terms of their lack of labour rights, and social exclusion in terms of social stigma or lack of recognition. They may also be vulnerable to harassment and violence in the workplace.
Earthquake or flood affected population	Vulnerable	Many members of the GESI Working Group are working with these groups. Intersectionality applies. Earthquake- or flood-affected populations are also excluded if they are members of socially excluded groups listed in this table.
The landless	Vulnerable	Those without land or with marginal landholdings. Intersectionality applies. Landless people are also excluded if they are members of socially excluded groups listed in this table.

several new sub-categories under the broad Adibasi/Janajati category. Some DPs target projects to the most disadvantaged, marginalized and endangered Janajati groups (as defined by the Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN)); but for the most part, the DPs have not made these distinctions. This may be an important improvement in identifying the truly excluded, since it has long been clear that some Janajati groups have suffered much greater welfare and human development deprivation than other Janajati groups like the Newars, the Gurungs and the Thakalis.

Quite a few DPs also listed the Madhesis among the excluded, but there is a need to revisit this category, as it encompasses and therefore overlaps with Madhesi Dalits, Tarai Adibasi/Janajati, Muslims, and Other Backward Classes. All these sub-groups can be considered as excluded. However, the Madhesi category also covers well-off and politically connected groups like Madhesi Brahmins and Chhetris and members of the middle-ranking and powerful Yadav caste. Hence, the use of this category for targeting welfare and development provisions promised in the constitution's section on the right to equality is problematic. However, the Madhesi category could reasonably be used to target provisions to ensure political representation in the section on the right to social justice. It is interesting that, in the responses to the survey, none of the DPs mentioned the Other Backward Classes in their list of excluded groups, though many of these groups are extremely poor and, though they are not considered "untouchable," they do suffer caste discrimination. Quite a few DPs are

concerned about people from remote or backward regions, persons with disabilities and sexual and gender minorities, with some DPs also mentioning older persons as a vulnerable group of concern. Many DPs recognize that the people with strong agency within these large groups of the excluded e.g. women, Dalits, Janajatis, tend to disproportionately benefit, increasing the gap between them and the most vulnerable/marginalized within that sub-group.

There are clearly many inconsistencies between table 2 – drawn from the constitution – and table 3 – listing the groups targeted in existing DP initiatives that the GESI Working Group, the GoN GESI Focal Points, and others from government may wish to explore. However, the key points here are:

- 1) The need for conceptual clarity on the distinction between *exclusion* (socio/political and economic) and *vulnerability* and
- 2) Agreement on a core set of groups that are of concern to members of the GESI Working Group.

As noted above, it is perfectly legitimate for DPs and sectoral ministries with mandates to serve certain groups to do so – as long as they are careful to ensure that their work reaches the poor and members of socially excluded and most vulnerable groups within their mandated target group. In the meantime, the list in table 3 may serve as an interim guide to further work on identifying the "core" excluded and vulnerable groups in Nepal – and some of the remaining issues that the GESI Working Group may need to discuss.



CHAPTER 2

Toward a Shared Theory of Change: Getting from Inequality and Exclusion to Equality and Inclusion

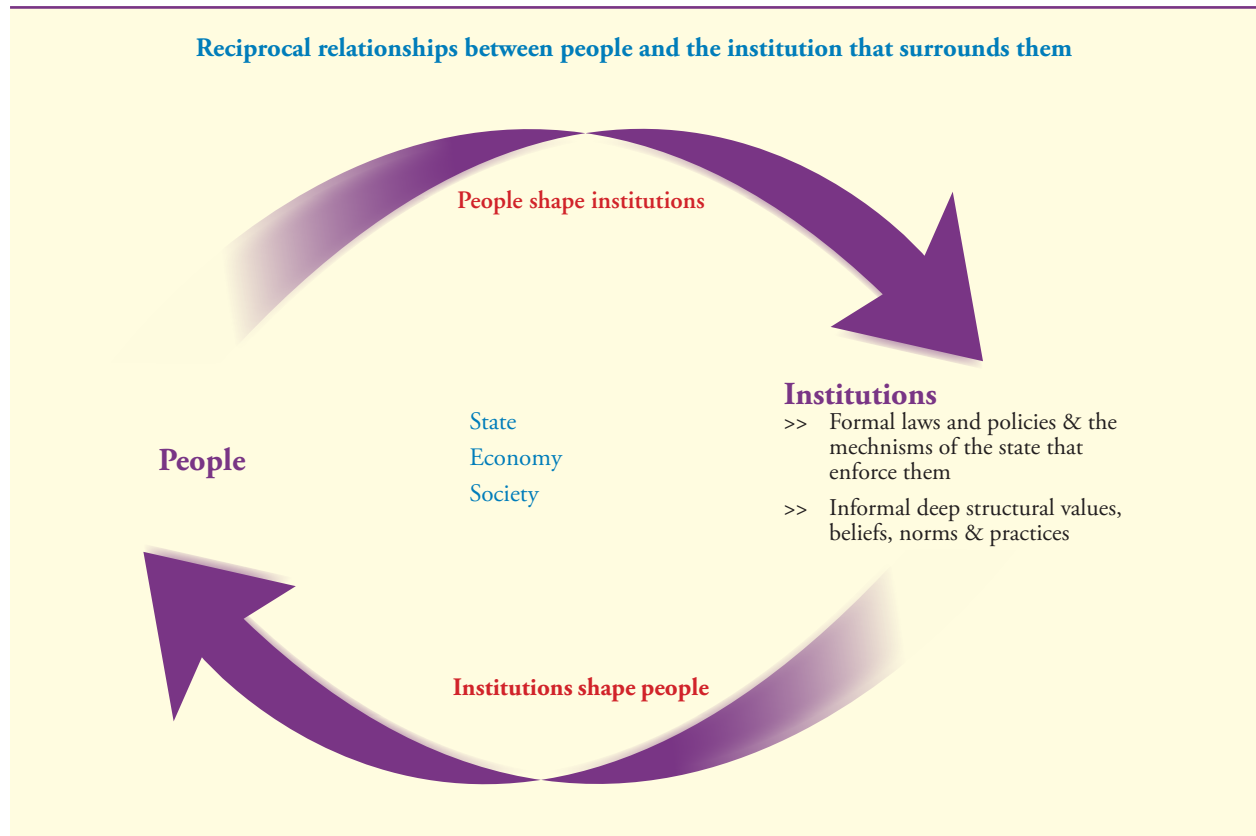
Not all members of the GESI Working Group have an explicit Theory of Change (ToC) that guides their work, and among those that do, there are a number of different theories in use. Nonetheless, there seems to be considerable harmony between the various concepts about how exclusion happens and how development interventions can help individuals and groups overcome exclusion – and help societies become more inclusive. (Refer to Annex 5 for a discussion on the different ToCs used by some DPs and INGOs in the GESI Working Group).

The series of graphics (Figure 1, Figure 2 and Figure 4) presented below offers one way of thinking broadly about how exclusion happened in the first place and how it can be overcome. They offer some suggestions about the key domains where change needs to come and the kinds of in-

terventions needed. Figure 4 in particular should be helpful at the strategic level in identifying issues and key sectors through which a given DP's country program can support inclusion in Nepal. (Refer to Annex 6, which presents a ToC used in an actual project in Nepal).

Figure 1 illustrates the reciprocal relationship between people and the state, economy and society in which they live and the institutions that impact them.³¹ We know that it is people who shape the political, economic and social institutions that surround them – and that in turn, these institutions or systems shape people by laying out their expected roles and the privileges and obligations attached to those roles. It is often useful to think of institutions as the “rules of the game that determine human interactions.”³² As noted in the discussion above, some of these institutions

Figure 1: From Exclusion to Inclusion: People shape Institutions; Institutions shape People



³¹ The boundaries of the state, the economy and society are not co-terminous (and this can be a source of conflict), but these three domains are closely intertwined and often reinforce each other.

³² Douglass C. North. 1990. *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*. Cambridge University Press.

are formal –including the constitution itself, the laws and policies of the state and the mechanisms of the government that enforce and implement them. Equal to, or perhaps even more powerful than the formal institutions, are the informal institutions like patriarchy and gender norms, social perceptions regarding women/girls, men/boys, the caste hierarchy, the norms of hospitality, loyalty and politeness and the webs of mutual obligation entailed by kinship and political networks. These kinds of institutions are harder for outsiders to see and understand because they are generally implicit or assumed by the people within them. Often, like gender roles, they are so taken for granted that focused efforts at awareness raising and attitudinal change are needed to make them visible to those whose world-views they have shaped – and thereby amenable to critical analysis and change.

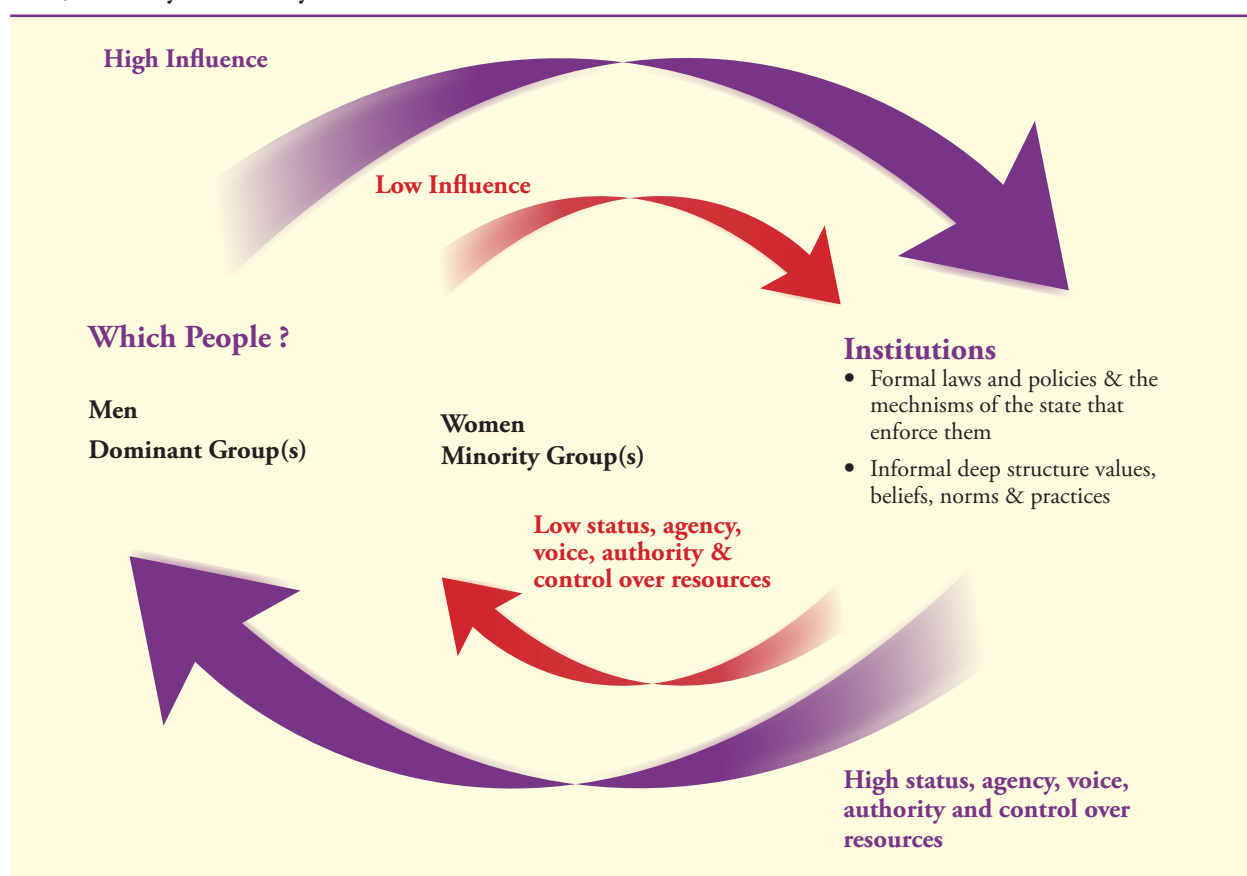
Figure 2 illustrates that, in each society, those with more power and status have more influence on shaping the rules of the game in their favor and thus perpetuating their dominance. This is not necessarily a conscious plan on the part of the dominant group or groups. At a certain point it may

have been functional for collective survival, but over time this dominance becomes naturalized – justified by the prevailing values and beliefs and understood by those within it as part of the natural or divine world rather than something humanly constructed. That is one reason that some forms of exclusion are so hard to change.

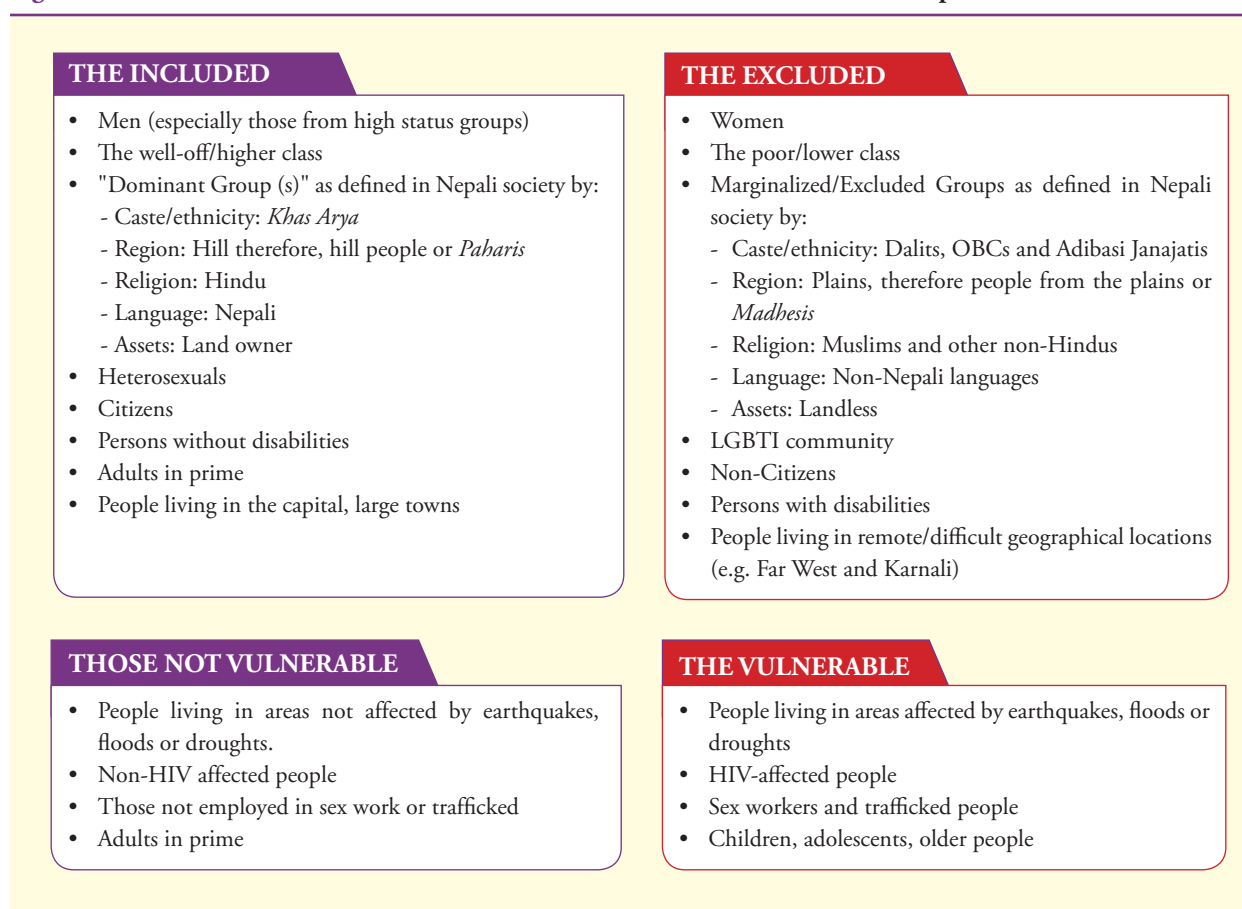
Basically, to have strong influence on the institutions of one's society and state is a large part of what it means to be included. In comparison to women and LGBTI persons, men are always among the included – to varying degrees, depending on the other dimensions of their identity.³³ But the other social determinants of dominance differ across societies and over time. Figure 3 sums up the current specifics of social inclusion/exclusion and vulnerability in Nepal, based on the preceding discussion.

Figure 4 presents three different clusters of GESI interventions intended to deliver change in the immediate term (in blue), medium term (in green) and long-term (in red) – all leading to a more inclusive state and society. These are generic interventions that would need to be tailored to fit

Figure 2: From Exclusion to Inclusion: Which People have the most influence on the Institutions that shape the State, Economy and Society?



³³ While both a Dalit man and a KhasArya man would be superior to women from their respective groups, a Dalit man would be subordinate to a KhasArya man (other things being equal). However, in the dimension of ritual purity, a KhasArya woman would actually be superior to a Dalit man. Also, women and men not performing traditional hetero-normative roles of masculinity and femininity are seen as subordinate masculinities (gay, transgender, feminine men) or non-performing femininities (lesbian, transgender, masculine women). Femininity is always subordinate to masculinity, but non-performing femininities are considered sub-ordinate to performing femininities.

Figure 3: From Exclusion to Inclusion: Who are the Included and the Excluded in Nepal?

Source: Based on evidence provided by DPs for developing this framework and discussion with GoN and DPs

the specific needs of women, poor, vulnerable and excluded groups in different places, and the different opportunities for action at different historical moments. The GESI Working Group has identified three areas or sets of rights as central to achieving gender equality and social inclusion:

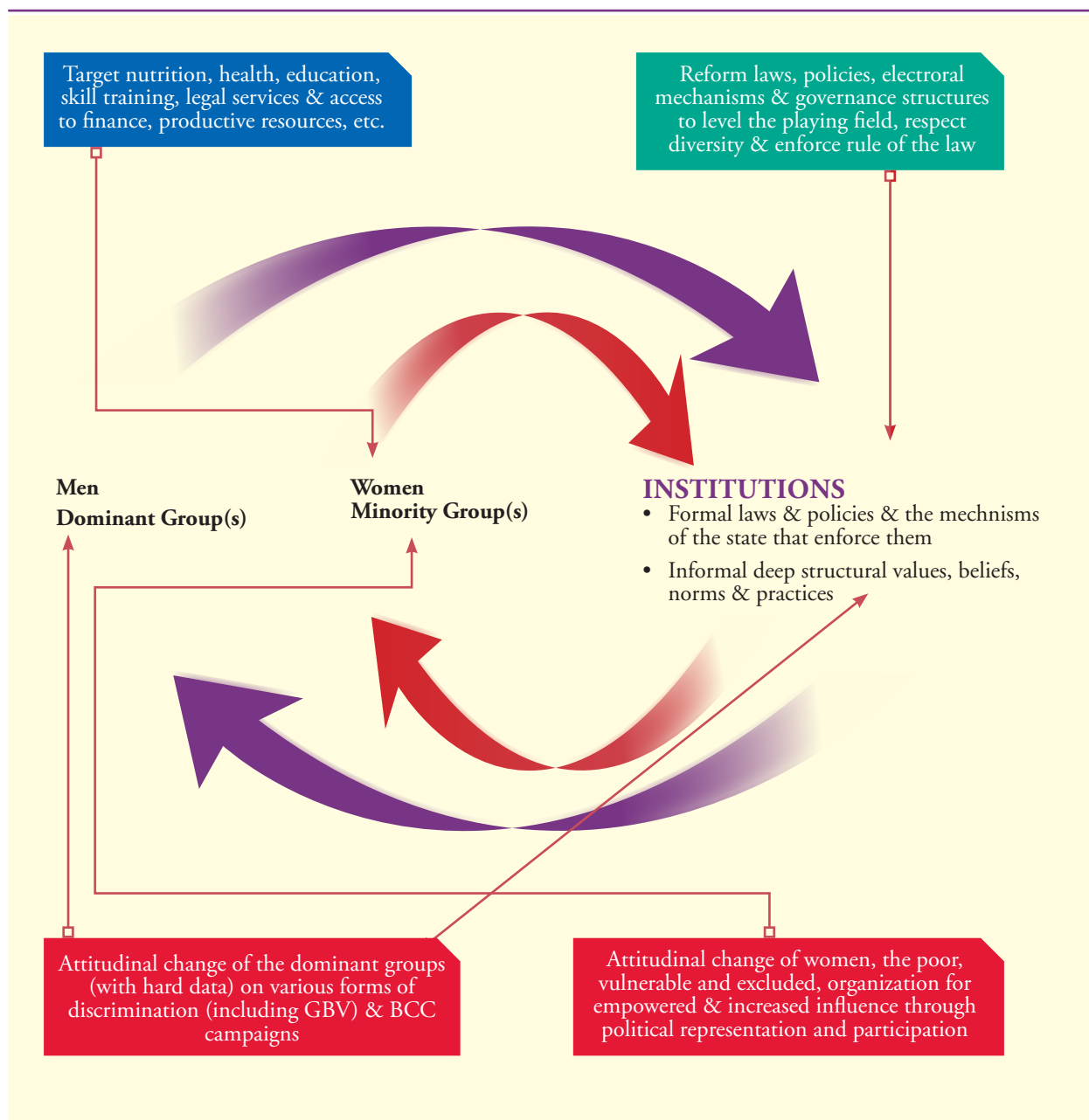
1. The right to be represented and participate in decision-making
2. The right to equitable human development and
3. The right to recognition of cultural and linguistic diversity.³⁴

These are all addressed through the interventions set out in Figure 4. "Reforms in laws, policies, electoral mechanisms and governance structures to level the playing field" and efforts to "increase the influence (of women, poor, vulnerable and the excluded) through political representation" will help support the rights of women, poor, vulnerable and the excluded groups "to be represented and participate in decision-making." The second dimension – the "right to equitable human development" – is addressed in figure 4 by "targeting nutrition, health, education, skill training, legal services and access to finance and productive resources to

women and minority groups." The third dimension – the "right to recognition of cultural and linguistic diversity" – is addressed through awareness-raising among the powerful as well as among women, poor, vulnerable and the excluded and by legal reforms to ensure that all state institutions support and embody "respect for diversity."

While the details of the approach can change with the context and opportunities of the particular historical moment, several parts of the approach to GESI implementation remain the same no matter what the country circumstances. One constant element is that some of the interventions will be directed towards people and others towards the surrounding *institutions* that shape and perpetuate the exclusionary status quo. First, there is a need for immediate interventions to be directed to women, poor, vulnerable and the excluded groups to help make up for their historic deficit of human resources and economic opportunities and to help them understand their situation and organize to change it. Representation and participation of women, poor, the vulnerable and the excluded in local and national decision-making, access and use of services and resources

³⁴ Terms of Reference (for) A Consultant for Defining an Operational Framework for Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) (for the) Social Inclusion Action Group (SIAG). January 6, 2016. SDC/Swiss Embassy, Nepal. Page 2. Note: the SIAG that commissioned this framework has since renamed itself as the GESI Working Group.

Figure 4: What can We do to “Rebalance Power” and Reduce Exclusion?

for equitable human development and recognition of cultural and linguistic diversity are some key elements that need to be in place for this to happen. At the same time, the dominant groups also need to be made aware of the dynamics of exclusion and their part in overcoming it. At the institutional level, there must be new laws and policies and systems put in place to hold the government accountable for enforcing these changes.

Finally, and most challenging, there must be internal changes in peoples' values, beliefs and practices – and this internal change must encompass both those who were formerly dominant and those who were formerly excluded. The post-conflict and constitution-writing period has forced greater awareness of the long-term nature of deep

socio-political changes, such as the shift from an exclusionary to an inclusive society and state.

To change something as deeply embedded as gender inequality and social exclusion, it is essential to work simultaneously on two different timeframes. First there is need for **immediate action** through programs and projects to ensure that *women, poor, vulnerable and the excluded people get access to human development assets and services to build their capacities and voice*. This would include things like the right to participate in decision-making, the right to equitable human development and recognition of cultural and linguistic diversity. But at the same time, support must be given to the slower, **longer-term work** of *changing the systems that currently determine access and rights to these things (e.g. decision making, hu-*

man development, cultural recognition) to remove unconscious barriers and sources of discrimination.

GoN and DPs are used to the first element in the change process: targeting services and opportunities to people who have been marginalized i.e. women, poor, vulnerable and the excluded. But often they are less aware of how the overall set of deeply embedded cultural expectations and learned social behaviors continue to bias the outcomes for members of marginalized groups. Even when they are aware, the significant resources, intense effort and longer time frame required may deter them. The new constitution lays out an overarching set of expectations about the relationship between the individual

and the state – basically charging the state with ensuring that all citizens have the same rights and can actually realize them. The test will be to translate the constitutional language and intent into practical steps that become encoded in law and policy and, eventually, in daily behaviors and attitudes. GESI processes, policies and mainstreaming – as well as targeted programs – can help fill the gap between the inclusive intentions of the constitution and some of the traditional behaviors and interests that continue to perpetuate exclusion (For guidance on how to translate the abstract principles and ideas in these ToCs into the specificity and practical detail needed for effective implementation see Annex 6).





CHAPTER 3

3. How to “Do” (Operationalize) GESI?

This section³⁵ presents key recommended measures for DPs to incorporate in their own programs and when working with GoN and other stakeholders, including non-state actors, to ensure that GESI is addressed at the policy and institutional levels and in the detailed planning, programming, budgeting, implementation, monitoring and reporting steps.

GESI mainstreaming can only be fully achieved where there is effective governance, efficient service delivery, adequate financing and political commitment and where gender equality issues and social inclusion are addressed within wider policy and institutional frameworks.

DPs support GoN to deliver services to its citizens in an equitable manner and to strengthen citizens’ capacity to access and use such services. Various good practices developed over the years globally and in Nepal have helped improve inclusion results. These include mandatory policy provisions for inclusive representation – from local-level user groups all the way to the national legislature – to ensure that different perspectives influence decisions. They also include well-being ranking and proxy means testing (indicator targeting), which have improved targeting of program interventions. Social mobilization based on individual and collective empowerment has proved effective in building the voice of women, the vulnerable, the excluded and the poor as well as their capacity to influence decisions. Both targeted and GESI-responsive mainstream interventions have increased access to services, enhanced voice and even begun to address discriminatory mindsets. Initiatives on GESI-responsive budgeting, workforce diversity, and accountability systems have all provided good lessons. The measures suggested below are based on these lessons drawn from the review of GoN, DPs and INGO documents and on the suggestions that emerged during the consultations and fieldwork carried out to help define this framework.³⁶

The sub-sections below provide suggestions on how to integrate GESI into policies, situational analyses, planning, programming, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), reporting, and the institutional arrangements of implementing agencies. The measures suggested are applicable to DPs in their work internally and to their work with the GoN and civil society. Some common key measures to

be implemented by DPs in their own programs and projects are suggested. The actions that DPs undertake jointly with GoN are specified more detail in the background report to support operationalization.

3.1 Measures for Integrating GESI in Policies

Policies are statements of intent that should flow consistently from the highest levels (e.g. the constitution and legal framework of Nepal, the many instruments of the UN Human Rights Framework, as well as the varied mandates of DPs and I/NGO development agencies) down to the more concrete procedures and regulations that frame how these intents should actually be realized. Unless GESI concerns are considered and addressed at all stages – from high-level vision to the “nitty gritty” details of implementation – the goal of gender equality and social inclusion is not likely to be realized. Policies need to be based on an understanding of the assumptions, beliefs and situations of women and men from different social groups so as to be responsive to their needs. Policy development should be informed by awareness of the differences in the extent to which women and people of different social groups are able to access resources and services, and their authority to make decisions that affect their access.

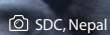
Moreover, in addition to the need for *vertical continuity* from the aspirational level to the ground level of the policy process, *horizontal coordination* is also critical between and among the many government, DPs and I/NGO actors that need to work together for successful implementation. The institutional mandates and interests of these (and other) actors need to be understood so that a common frame or set of policies and procedures within which the work will be done can be negotiated.

In developing a set of GESI-responsive policies, the following dimensions should be taken into consideration:

- The abilities of and constraints faced by women, the poor, and vulnerable and excluded people in accessing and using services.
- The impact of gender, income, caste/ethnicity, religion and location on the need for, access to and use of services, and the conditions and priorities of target groups.

³⁵ This section is informed by the Gender and Social Exclusion Assessment monograph series published by ADB, DFID, WB, 2011 and by the inputs collected during the course of this work.

³⁶ Refer Background Report on Defining a Common GESI Framework and Roadmap for GESI WG, July 2016 for details of findings and analysis.



- The differentiated strategies and approaches needed to promote access and use by different target groups and, where no target groups are defined, by women, poor, vulnerable and excluded people.
- A human rights-based approach should be mainstreamed, as it ensures that the powerless and voiceless groups are positioned as key actors and that their rights are protected and promoted.

effectively planned resources and actions have reached women, the poor, the vulnerable and the excluded; and (if M&E findings show the need)

- v. Adjustment/redesign and continued M&E.

The discussion below focuses on GESI integration in project cycle management for DPs and also provides some recommendations to DPs to support the GoN in integrating those measures in their programs and projects.

3.2 GESI Integration in Project/ Program Cycle

Five steps are essential for mainstreaming GESI in the project/ program cycle:

- i. Identifying the specific groups of women, poor, excluded and the vulnerable and the reasons for their exclusion/ vulnerability regarding access to services and opportunities;
- ii. Designing policy-and/or program-level responses that attempt to address the barriers in the program cycle;
- iii. Implementation;
- iv. Monitoring and evaluation to check whether and how

3.2.1 Identify the Specific Groups of Excluded and Vulnerable

Identify the people in the intervention area (program/ project area or nationally) who experience a) historical, inter-generational exclusion, b) economic exclusion and c) those who are vulnerable due to their age (e.g. children, older persons), disease (e.g. HIV/AIDS), abilities (e.g. persons living with physical and mental disabilities), exposure to disaster or conflict or those who face particularly high risk (e.g. sex workers, trafficked women). People who experience an intersection of such dimensions (e.g. a Dalit woman who is poor and disabled) should also be identified.

Table 4: Measures for Integrating GESI in Policies

Activity/Task	Tools/Methods/Measures
Policy development	The concept note or ToR for the development of any policy will adequately address GESI issues (as outlined in this framework) in its objectives, scope of work and tasks. The directives for policy development will require that the team is familiar with the wider policy issues and debates in the particular sector and then examine these policy issues from the point of view of their impact on different social groups.
Policy formulation team	Policy development teams should include a GESI expert (or someone with social science training and country familiarity) who can recognize and respond to the constraints experienced by women, the poor and people from different excluded and vulnerable groups. All team members should receive a basic orientation on GESI.
Literature review	Literature reviews for policy development must cover GESI issues and describe related good practices and lessons learned.
Policy formulation process	The policy team will hold consultations and discussions with: 1) groups of women, poor, vulnerable and excluded people to identify their perspectives and priorities; 2) GESI experts to ensure that all GESI related issues are well covered; and 3) responsible government and non-government officials in the sector/theme.
Contents of policy documents	All parts of the policy document (including the methodology and document review) should clearly specify guidance on GESI mainstreaming. The context and situation analysis will give disaggregated data on the situation of women, poor, vulnerable and excluded people. The identification of challenges and opportunities will describe the barriers women, poor, vulnerable and excluded groups face in accessing and using services. The various options for addressing these challenges will be discussed. Targeted groups will be clearly defined using local terminology to the extent possible, rather than using general terms such as 'disadvantaged' or 'vulnerable' without clear definition of who they are. What assumptions are being made on women's roles, responsibilities, time, access to and control over resources? What are the assumptions on the capacity of the people from excluded groups to assume the additional work, expense or financial risk etc. required in order to benefit from the proposed policy?
Policy implementation	Frameworks prepared to implement a policy should be inclusive and should clearly mention which agency (and which officer within the agency) is responsible for implementing GESI-related activities. Analysis of the pros and cons of the proposed policy will include consideration of: Who is likely to have access to the benefits from these policies? Who is likely to control them? Who is likely to benefit less (unintended by the policy but may occur hence analysis is required) from this intervention? Built into the policy will be periodic empirical reviews of who has benefited – which women, men, girls, boys (with caste, class, location, ethnicity, age disaggregation). This will be part of the implementing agency's M&E.

Based on the existing data³⁷ and discussions with different stakeholders – including women, the poor, the vulnerable and people from different social groups – it is essential to identify who are the poor, who experiences vulnerability and/or exclusion based on social identity (e.g. Dalits, Muslims, Adibasi/Janajatis and Madhesis) and who is vulnerable because of their situation (age, illness, etc.). There must be a recognition that the people who suffer from any of these forms of exclusion or vulnerability and those who experience an intersectionality of political exclusion, social exclusion, economic exclusion and/or vulnerability, will require different approaches and strategies.

Because of the different ways that exclusion manifests itself among different groups, it will be essential to understand as deeply as possible the situation of women who experience gender-based exclusion, Dalits who experience caste-based exclusion, the different Adibasi/Janajati groups who experience culture- and language-based discrimination, Madhesis who experience political and identity-based exclusion, Muslims who are religious minorities, and people from remote regions who experience geographical exclusion.

3.2.2 Situational Analysis of Barriers and Capacities

Part of identifying the women, the poor and the excluded and vulnerable is a situational analysis that identifies the barriers and capacities of the people so identified. Not all Nepali

citizens have the same access to services and development opportunities. Nor do they all possess the same capacity to use these services or take advantage of the opportunities. There is great variation in the extent to which women, men, sexual and gender minorities, the poor, the excluded are able to access resources and services and in their authority to make decisions about their own lives. Hence, an understanding of the existing socio-economic situations of these diverse clients should inform all planning. It is essential to identify unreached groups of people and underserved areas and learn about the varied constraints experienced by different types of excluded and vulnerable groups when they seek to access services and the measures that have been successful in addressing these constraints.

DPs should follow these measures themselves as part of their own program preparation process and also facilitate state and non-state actors to implement these steps when required (*see table 5*).

DPs' Collaboration, Cooperation and Partnership for GoN's Situational Analysis Processes

The government agencies with which DPs work may need support to conduct these different levels of analysis to inform their programs. DPs, in consultation with GoN partners, should consider the stages at which they can best support GoN to use this kind of analysis. For example, before the five/three-year development plans are prepared by the

Table 5 : Measures for Integrating GESI in Situational Analysis

Task/Activity	Tools/Methods/Measures
Identify the excluded and the vulnerable and the causes of exclusion and vulnerability.	Use tools like poverty mapping, well-being ranking, social mapping, vulnerability assessment, underlying causes of poverty and other such PRA tools to identify the women, poor, the excluded and the vulnerable and causes of exclusion and vulnerability. Identify issues at the different spheres of society (household, community, market, state) so that interventions can be appropriately informed
Conduct a GESI analysis	Identify variables relevant to the theme/sector and then collect information regarding who is doing what type of work, who has access to what resources, who has the authority to make decisions and who makes the decisions regarding the use of the resources; who are included and excluded in institutional arrangements of the sector/theme concerned. ³⁸
Review policies and programs	Identify whether existing policies and programs are addressing the barriers of women, the poor, the vulnerable and the excluded; if yes, to what extent; if no, why not and what measures are required?
Analyse existing institutional structures and processes and informal institutions	What existing institutional structures and systems support implementation of GESI policies and programs? How well does the diversity of the staff reflect the population they serve? What are the levels of GESI competency (and commitment) amongst the staff?

³⁷ Required disaggregated data is at times challenging to find, but some sources include: Census VDC-level data, Ilaka-level and above data from Nepal Living Standard Survey (NLSS), sectoral databases of Ministries, national surveys like Nepal Labor Force Survey (NLFS), Nepal Demographic Health Survey (NDHS) conducted by government with support of DPs, by DPs, project baselines and other large programs and academic researchers.

³⁸ With sex, caste/ethnicity, location, income disaggregation. Information about other vulnerable groups like children, persons with disability should also be collected as relevant.

National Planning Commission and by DDCs and VDCs/municipalities, DPs can help ensure that the plans are informed by available disaggregated data and evidence-based analysis of GESI-related issues. There are possible opportunities with the state restructuring now in Nepal to provide support to the GoN for conducting these kinds of analysis – for example, by supporting the government’s SDG localization by addressing data gaps on GESI.

DPs might support GoN partners by:

- Supporting relevant GoN staff and sections to analyze disaggregated data and other available evidence³⁹ to assess which factors have constrained and supported women, poor, vulnerable and the excluded in accessing resources and opportunities provided by the state and other service providers.
- Assessing where services are available and unavailable; what distance and geographical barriers exist; and what social and cultural factors constrain access.
- Assessing practices, beliefs, values and traditions at family and community levels, and the divisions of labor, social expectations and differences in vulnerability and mobility for women and men and for different caste/ethnic groups. How have these constrained women, the poor, the vulnerable and the excluded from accessing resources, opportunities and services?
- Supporting GoN Focal Persons and GESI Units/Sections to strengthen GESI capacity within their sectors.

3.2.3 GESI-Responsive Planning

Before beginning to develop a project or program, it is important to understand who among the potential beneficiaries is doing what, who has access to what resources, who has the agency (i.e., the confidence and the authority to act) to influence decisions and who has actual decision-making power. A stakeholder analysis should be done, ensuring that agencies, groups and individuals working on GESI issues are also analyzed and their interests understood. These different types of analyses will provide the foundation for understanding family and community level realities as well as the overall political economy of the relevant development sector.

The planning process should be informed by field-level situational analysis (described above), which should use gender/

caste/ethnicity/location/income-disaggregated data and other evidence relevant for the program. Ideally, the planning process should ensure that the voices of the target group—including women, the poor, the vulnerable and the excluded within that group— all get a chance to influence the contents of the plan through informal conversations, as well as organized consultations and workshops at different levels.

Basically, this stage is where the barriers to access for different excluded groups are identified and mechanisms/approaches to overcome those barriers are thought through and built into the operation of the program/project. Program/project components and activities (including social mobilization, empowerment, requirements for inclusion of underrepresented groups in decision-making and benefit-sharing, strategies for addressing discriminatory and harmful social practices such as GBV, untouchability, chhaupadi, etc.) should be thought through in detail. During this stage, planners should consider 1) how the proposed program/project will affect women, the poor, the vulnerable, and the excluded, and 2) how existing GESI-related norms, attitudes, and behaviors will affect the process and outcomes envisioned by the program/project.

In order for DPs to effectively promote GESI, they should ensure that their Theory of Change, results matrices, indicators and planned activities address the identified barriers of women, poor and the excluded by working both on building people’s capacities and on changing informal and formal institutions to be more GESI-responsive and less discriminatory. (*see table 6*)

Collaborating with GoN to Integrate GESI in its Planning Processes

Where appropriate, DPs should collaborate with the GoN to integrate GESI into national and sub-national planning processes. For example, at the central level, there are a number of steps that the government takes to develop its periodic and annual plans. NPC prepares the five-or three-year periodic plans and directs the Ministries to prepare the annual plans, which they do based on the budget ceiling received from the Finance Ministry and NPC.⁴⁰ Proposals are forwarded to the NPC by line ministries in a prescribed format with a Logical Framework. Approved projects are included in the annual budget. At the local level, the 14 steps, as prescribed by MOFALD, are followed. VDC and municipality planning also follow the prescribed process.

³⁹ As mentioned above, work with CBS and the M&E section of NPC/Ministry/ Department to identify existing disaggregated data and evidence; refer to the government survey reports such as the census, NLSS, NDHS, NLFS and sectoral data sets like the HMIS, EMIS; refer to research done by different development agencies and the series of studies on Inclusion /exclusion done by TU with support for the Government of Norway. If necessary, primary evidence may have to be collected to build up on the existing information/data.

⁴⁰ The GoN has been preparing three-year plans, instead of five year plans, since 2007 due to the political transition in Nepal.

Table 6 : Measures for GESI Responsive Planning

Task/Activity	Tools/Methods/Measures
Develop Theory of Change/Results matrix/Logframe based on disaggregated data and GESI-related evidence	Use a methodology that encourages women, the poor, the vulnerable and the excluded to contribute to the theory of change and the results matrix.
Ensure that the hierarchy of objectives (outcome/purpose, results/outputs) is formulated in a manner that recognizes the differentiated issues of women, the poor, the vulnerable and the excluded	Consultations should capture different voices; evidence and analysis done in preparation for the planning should be used to define objectives and statements.
Outcome indicators that can track shifts in discriminatory practices and changes in the relevant dimensions of socio-economic well-being should be developed. These indicators demand data that is disaggregated by the relevant social and economic categories.	Appropriately disaggregated baseline data on the key outcome indicators should be collected during the preparatory stage.

Civil society organizations (e.g. NGOs, community-based organizations, representative organizations, federations, user groups) have a key role in ensuring that the participation of women, the poor, the vulnerable and the excluded are facilitated at the correct places in the processes. DPs should work with civil society organizations to help engage and motivate the community, including the target group, to identify their existing status, requirements and interests. GESI-related practices that hamper development should be discussed by the people so that such issues can be addressed in the design process.⁴¹

3.2.4 GESI in Programming and Budgeting

A commitment of financial resources to GESI-related activities is an essential element of mainstreaming GESI, reflecting the spending choices the concerned organization has made with its available resources.

Program/project design and implementation should recognize that abilities, interests and needs will almost certainly vary, based on the ground realities of gender/caste/ethnicity/location and that these differences require flexibility in responses. Where programs have adapted their strategies to such differences in the beneficiary population (e.g. through subsidies, employment opportunities, and land-lease arrangements for the poor), specific groups have indeed benefited. However, targeted interventions should be eventually mainstreamed into universal programs. The goal is for mainstream programs (which account for a much larger share of government and DP expenditure than targeted programs) to become truly “universal” by addressing the

barriers constraining women, the poor and the excluded. A dual approach should be taken of both mainstreaming GESI considerations into standard programs/projects and by targeting excluded and vulnerable groups, where needed, through GESI-specific programs/projects.

Proper fiscal management is based on a thorough consideration of needs, strategic mandate, and programmatic and cost effectiveness. Thus, rigorous, disaggregated data collection and M&E will help ensure that finite DP and GoN resources are used to support GESI in the most effective and efficient ways possible.

Collaborating with the GoN on Integrating GESI in its Budgeting Processes

- The series of steps guiding the GoN’s budgetary process present important opportunities for integrating GESI. For example, when the NPC issues guidelines directing ministries and line agencies in the formulation of their program budgets, it works in close coordination with the Ministry of Finance (MOF), to identify ministry-specific and sector-specific budgets. Clearly, this is a strategic point where evidence on the importance of inclusive growth and development presented to the key actors may be helpful to ensure that GESI activities get the funding and attention they deserve.
- Field work and consultations indicate that the government’s annual budget speech – covering : 1) expenditures in support of “inclusive development and targeted programmes”; 2) the gender-responsive

⁴¹ Not all CSOs are able to properly engage and motivate communities, and there can be some issues related to the identification of target groups: power relations also play a role at this level. DPs should take this into consideration when they commission a CSO, to ensure the participation of target groups; proper training on GESI for CSOs may also be required.

Table 7: Measures for GESI-Responsive Programming and Financial Budgeting

Task/Activity	Tools/Methods/Measures
Mainstream GESI in program/project activities	Ensure that the identified activities address <i>people</i> (provide and opportunities services to and strengthen voice of women, the poor, the vulnerable and the excluded) and also work on <i>systems</i> (changing inequitable social norms and discriminatory formal policies). Project activities must recognize that there is likely to be cultural and language diversity among the project beneficiaries and that the project needs to respond to these differences.
Advocate for activities that are both targeted and mainstreamed	Provide evidence for including activities that target specific groups, to facilitate their improved access to program resources and benefits and plan for eventually mainstreaming these activities into non-targeted, mainstream programs.
Include GESI-related capacity strengthening interventions for the implementing agency(s)	Include orientation and training activities to strengthen skills and competencies of program staff, stakeholders and target groups. Train a core group of selected staff on deeper GESI analytical skills so they in turn can provide technical support to others.
Allocate sufficient financial resources	Sufficient budget allocations should be made for these activities. Estimate required human and financial resources for activities on GESI awareness for women and men (including of different social groups) and capacity building of women and members of excluded groups at the program and organization levels. For both program staff and beneficiaries, include resources required to support childcare responsibilities, field escorts for security reasons and appropriate support based on the specific constraints/responsibilities faced by women and people from excluded groups. Allocate sufficient resources to support recruitment, training, and institutional capacity building of a diverse and gender-balanced staff. Include sufficient budget and time to build linkages and networking to strengthen different interest groups and ensure that communication materials can be produced in several languages if need be.

budget (GRB) exercise; and 3) pro-poor expenditures – could be another opportunity for DPs to support the ministries they work with to 1) undertake consultative processes with relevant departments, central- and field-level staff and diverse service users; and 2) review and analyze quantitative evidence on what has been achieved and what else is required to address the barriers and constraints of women, the poor and the excluded.

- It may be useful for DPs to do collective work with MOF, the Gender Responsive Budgeting Committee, sectoral ministries and concerned stakeholders who are interested in tracking budgets, to design and implement an additional tool for financial allocation/expenditure analysis.⁴² This would analyze budget allocation and expenditure for direct, indirect and neutral support to women, the poor, the vulnerable and excluded social groups. It would identify what activities have been planned and implemented to address the barriers experienced in accessing services, resources and benefits

from a sector by women, the poor, the vulnerable and the excluded.

3.2.5 GESI and Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

Monitoring, reporting and evaluation should follow the conceptual frame of the Theory of Change. First focusing on *people*, changes in relevant groups' assets/income, human development outcomes, access to services and changes in voice and ability to influence should be measured and documented, using both quantitative and qualitative data. Second, changes in *systems* (including both informal behavior and formal policies and structures) should be documented.

DPs should seek to ensure that all monitoring and reporting and data collection for evaluations is disaggregated by poverty, sex, caste, ethnicity, location and other categories relevant to the specific project.⁴³ Monitoring and evaluation teams should be inclusive, with representation of women

⁴² This financial allocation analysis is a tool that is used for identifying the GESI responsiveness of the budget allocation and expenditure. This tool is different from the Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) practice of Government of Nepal and has been applied as a sub-activity of GRB in some project /program evaluations/assessments. The Financial Allocation analysis tool has been used in various assessments in Nepal (e.g. GESI Reflected in Child Health and Family Health Planning, FHD, CHD and NHSSP, 2013; Sectoral Perspectives of Gender and Social Inclusion sponsored by WB, ADB and DFID, 2012, GESI Impact Evaluation of MEDEP, DFAT/UNDP, 2014) and in some UN programs of South and South-East Asia (in Maldives, Indonesia, Philippines).

⁴³ It is hoped that this framework will facilitate the DPs to develop a standard set of categories for disaggregation by caste/ethnic group. Ideally there would be flexibility to allow more detailed disaggregation if required for a particular project, but always within a standard set of caste/ethnic categories that correspond with those used in the 2011 census. It would be important to work closely with GoN on this as the ultimate goal would be to establish a common standard.

and people from excluded communities as members. It is also advisable to involve a statistical expert in the design of the M&E system as their inputs on sample design could determine whether or not the project is able to produce lessons based on rigorous quantitative evidence. In addition to collecting the quantitative data needed to measure changes in the relevant *outcomes*, monitoring teams also should consult with community women and men, including those experiencing exclusion, representative organizations and others. Monitoring and evaluation should focus on the outcome or results of action, as well as on the *process* of implementation: what was done and how it was done, and – from a GESI perspective – with whom it was done.

Collaborating with the GoN to Integrate GESI in its M&E and Reporting Processes

- Ministries submit data, information and reports to NPC according to its monitoring, evaluation and reporting templates. These ask for disaggregation for certain indicators but not uniformly for all.

- DPs should work closely with NPC, building upon earlier initiatives (e.g. Poverty Monitoring Analysis System (PMAS) and District Poverty Monitoring Analysis System (DPMAS)) to ensure a common level of disaggregation by gender identity and social groups and for analysis of evidence responding to the GESI theory of change/GESI conceptual framework.

3.3 Institutional Arrangements for GESI

The rules and practices within organizations should be reviewed to identify ways in which social inequity is created and maintained. The extent to which GESI policy commitments are formulated and effectively implemented depends on the understanding, skills and commitment of the staff in policy-making, planning and implementation roles. Additionally, most organizations have official rules and procedures, but unofficial norms and practices operate informally and influence results.

Table 8: Measures for GESI-Responsive Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

Activity/Tasks	Tools/Methods/Measures
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome indicators and how they will be measured need to be clearly stated at the outset. Preferably a scientific baseline survey using these indicators and measuring the status of a representative sample of key groups before the project intervention will have already been collected and analysed as part of the project diagnosis and design. • The disaggregation framework should be clearly stated from the beginning. • The monitoring ToR should require both statistical and qualitative social science expertise and should clearly state GESI responsibilities. • Where possible, monitoring and evaluation should include participation of local stakeholders and target groups. • Disaggregated data and evidence about changes in issues affecting women, poor, vulnerable and the excluded should be collected and used to inform decisions.
Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reporting format should be developed using a GESI perspective. Disaggregated beneficiary data on relevant outcome indicators should be included. Comparisons of the relevant outcomes indicators for different social groups over time should be prepared periodically. Reports should include good practices, challenges, lessons learned and suggestions from a GESI perspective. Case studies including voices of women, the poor, the vulnerable and the excluded about their level of benefit from the entire project may provide good lessons.
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that evaluations include GESI-related questions that are linked to the project/program ToC and situational analysis. • Include a GESI expert in the evaluation team and seek to ensure that all evaluation team members have some understanding of GESI within the context of the project/program being evaluated. • Collect feedback from women and poor and excluded groups using appropriate tools. • Design and use instruments that clearly capture disaggregation and issues impacting women, the poor, vulnerable and excluded people. • Use both quantitative and qualitative methods whenever possible. • Prepare disaggregated data and an evaluation report that captures benefits to women, poor, vulnerable and excluded people and also documents remaining issues. • Include explicit documentation of the implications and impact on women, the poor, vulnerable and excluded people. • For any evaluation, develop a management response plan that includes actions to address GESI-related findings and recommendations.

Table 9 : Measures for GESI-Responsive Institutional Arrangements

Task/Activity	Tools/Methods/Measures
Institutional Arrangements	<p>Identify GESI work responsibilities at different levels and review them periodically to assess what has worked, what has not, and why.</p> <p>Identify through a participatory process what GESI responsibilities existing staff or teams can take on effectively. Determine what new skills and approaches are needed and design inputs and activities accordingly.</p> <p>Ensure that human resource policies are GESI responsive, with supportive provisions and processes.</p> <p>At a minimum, recruitment policies should include the following aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacancy notices should be posted in appropriate languages and disseminated using mediums to ensure that they are accessible to people who are usually excluded. • The ToR of the recruitment committee should include GESI responsibilities. Guidelines for GESI-responsive recruitment should be developed. • Members of the recruitment committee should have GESI expertise. • Candidates' merit should be assessed not only based on educational qualifications but also based on language skills, understanding of local dynamics, and experience. <p>Structure and location of GESI responsibility: Responsibility for GESI should be clearly given to a team/unit. Ideally, a trained GESI adviser will ensure technical support on GESI.</p> <p>Support for gender-specific personal responsibilities: Organizations should seek to provide reasonable facilities to allow male and female staff to fully participate in the workplace while also meeting personal and cultural obligations and needs. These may include: childcare facilities, breastfeeding time, flexible schedules, maternity and paternity leave, and/or flexibility to deal with personal or family crises. Policies of positive discrimination should be taken into consideration in staff recruitment.</p> <p>Promotion and transfer: Gender-sensitive criteria should be included in posting and transferring provisions of staff. Policies of positive discrimination should be considered while making such decisions.</p> <p>Grievance and redressal mechanisms: Grievance and redressal mechanisms should be developed in consultation with staff. Special mechanisms for handling sexual harassment and language/cultural/caste discrimination issues should be developed and made functional.</p> <p>Working culture should be GESI supportive, with zero tolerance of any discriminatory behavior, use of discriminatory language or gestures. A positive environment that appreciates the perspectives of a diverse group of staff should be promoted.</p> <p>Diversity: A diverse social profile should be promoted at each level of the organization, through positive recruitment practices. Diversity in staff should be promoted to ensure that different experiences and perspectives are available in the organization.</p> <p>ToRs: Job descriptions and ToRs should have GESI incorporated into objectives, responsibilities and required qualifications.</p> <p>Capacity building: Organizations should consistently seek to enhance GESI capacities and skills. Women and people from excluded groups may have higher capacity strengthening requirements that need to be considered, due to historical disadvantage and less exposure/experience.</p> <p>Staff performance evaluation: Staff performance evaluations should include an assessment of efforts to address GESI-related issues and GESI-sensitive behavior/actions within staff's area of responsibility.</p>





Annexes

Annex I: IDPG GESI Working Group Members *(in alphabetical order)*

- Asian Development Bank (ADB)
- Association of International NGOs (AIN)
- Department for International Development, UK (DFID)
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
- Embassy of Australia
- Embassy of Denmark
- Embassy of Finland
- Embassy of France
- Embassy of Norway
- Embassy of Switzerland
- European Union (EU)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRCO)
- United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- World Bank



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Annex 2: List of People Met

A. Central level

- A1. Government:** 17 (National Dalit Commission, National Human Rights Commission, National Women Commission, Ministry of Urban Development including Department of Water Supply and Sanitation and Department of Urban Development and Building Construction, Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development including Department of Local Infrastructure Development and Agricultural Road, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation, Ministry of Finance, National Planning Commission Secretariat, Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, Ministry of Health and Population)
- A2. Development Partners:** 10 (ADB, AIN, DFAT (over email), DFID, Embassy of Finland, Embassy of Switzerland/SDC, GIZ (over email), UNDP, UN Women, USAID)
- A3. Project/Program Staff:** 3 (Small Irrigation Program, Local Road Bridge Support Unit)
- A4. NGOs/CBOs/Federations/Committees:** 13 (National Federation of Disabled of Nepal, Dalit NGO Federation, Federation of Dalit Women, Islami Sangh, Muldhar Mahila Sewa Kendra, National Federation of Indigenous Nationalities, Nepal Indigenous Women Federation)

B. District Level







- B1. Government:** 48 (DADO - Dadeldhura, Banke, Dolakha, Kaski, Morang; DDC - Kaski, Morang, Dadeldhura, Banke; DEO - Banke, Kaski, Dolakha, Dadeldhura, Morang; DFO - Dolakha, Banke, Dadeldhura, Morang; DHO - Morang, Banke, Kaski, Dolakha; DLSO - Dadeldhura, Banke, Dolakha, Morang; DRO - Morang; WCDO - Dolakha, Kaski, Morang; DWSO - Dadeldhura, Morang, Kaski, Dolakha)
- B2. Development Partners:** 2 (UNICEF Dolakha)
- B3. Project/Program Staff:** 11 (KISSAN/USAID Banke, LGCDP Banke, LGCDP Kaski, MPDS Dadeldhura, PAF Morang, SajhedariBikasKaryakram/USAID Dolakha)
- B4. NGOs/CBOs/Association/Committees:** 21 (Dalit BargaUtthan District Coordination Committee (DBUDCC) Dolakha, UML-Maoists Morang, Deaf School Committee/Disable Association/Deaf Association Dolakha, District Disabled Welfare Service Committee Dadeldhura, RIC Dadeldhura, RVWRMP Dadeldhura)













Annex 3: Mapping of GESI Related Commonalities and Differences between Development Partners












The table below provides a quick overview⁴⁴ of the similarities and differences between Development Partners and INGOs regarding understanding of gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) concepts, definition of the excluded, the approaches adopted and tools used.

Concepts	Common understanding among DPs	Differences/Contradictions among DPs	Comments/Suggestions for Discussion
Definition of gender equality	 <p>It is understood by all that gender roles, responsibilities, opportunities and decision-making authority are established by socially constructed power relations between men and women. Gender equality is a state of balanced power relations that gives equal rights, responsibilities, opportunities and decision-making authority to women and men.</p>	 <p>Linked to other equity issues such as caste, ethnicity, location and age</p> <p>Concern that use of the word “power” in the language of the definition may create a sense that gender equality is a limited-sum game wherein men will lose if women gain. (RCO, USAID, UNFPA and some other DPs)</p> <p>Distinction between equality of opportunity and equity of outcomes (DfID)</p>	<p>This concern is only valid when dominance and submission rather than democratic cooperation and negotiation are seen as the “natural” and socially acceptable relation between people.</p>
Definition of Social Inclusion	 <p>Deliberate and planned inclusion of historically excluded groups by addressing barriers embedded in the prevailing institutions, policies, systems, mind-sets and values</p>	 <p>Some do not have definitions of SI (CARE, UN Women)</p> <p>Social inclusion is the process of improving the ability, opportunity and dignity of people, disadvantaged on the basis of their identity, to take part in society (WB)</p>	<p>Social Inclusion needs to be understood by all GESI Working Groups as a dimension of exclusion that intersects with other forms of exclusion like gender and poverty. Also there has to be clarity that social inclusion is not limited to representation.</p>
Definition of historically excluded	 <p>Historical discrimination against certain groups based on their gender, caste, ethnicity, language or location that is transmitted from generation to generation and leads to social, cultural, economic, political and legal exclusion of these groups.⁴⁵</p> <p>In short, exclusion is socially constructed.</p>	 <p>Does not include discrimination against LGBT community (unless this is considered to be implicit in the gender category).</p> <p>No clear distinction between excluded and vulnerable, so not always clear that vulnerable groups of concern to some GESI Working Group members/agencies (such as children, youths, elders, HIV-affected, the disabled, survivors of earthquakes, floods, human trafficking, etc.) are included in the GESI agenda</p>	<p>LGBT community should be explicitly included or it should be explained that they are included in the term “gender”.</p> <p>It is suggested that a clear distinction be drawn between those who are excluded based on historically transmitted discrimination and those who are vulnerable based on their life stage, their physical condition or some catastrophic external event that has happened to them. GESI Working Group needs to clarify that both categories are of concern</p> <p>(See row below)</p>

⁴⁴ A checklist was developed and all GESI WG members and AIN members requested to complete it. CARE, DFID, DFAT, GIZ, Helvetas, ADB, Oxfam, SDC, SNV, Norway, UN Women and USAID completed the checklist. World Bank provided information separately. Table is based on information provided by the DPs in the checklist and on information drawn through web-search.

⁴⁵ As discussed in June 8, 2016 consultation workshop with DPs and GoN Gender Focal Points

Concepts	Common understanding among DPs	Differences/Contradictions among DPs	Comments/Suggestions for Discussion
Definition of vulnerable	 <p>Vulnerability is situational</p>	 <p>No clear distinction between excluded and vulnerable but some GESI Working Group members and agencies do target certain groups who are vulnerable but not necessarily excluded.</p>	It is suggested that those GESI Working Group member agencies that do target the vulnerable as well as the excluded, make this clear in their results frameworks and take care to define each group and ensure that M&E measures progress for each group separately.
Who are the excluded	 <p>The <i>poor</i> of all castes, ethnicities, locations and sexes.</p> <p>Women, Dalits, Adivasi/Janajatis, Madhesis, Muslims, people with disabilities, and people from geographically remote areas, persons without citizenship</p>	 <p>Some agencies also target children, elderly, HIV Aids affected, disaster affected and therefore have included them among the excluded,</p>	It is suggested that GESI Working Group members and agencies working on exclusion be explicit about the difference between exclusion and vulnerability and say clearly that they are targeting both groups.
Who are the vulnerable	 <p>Children, youth, elderly, HIV Aids affected, earthquake affected, sex workers, trafficked people</p>	 <p>Differences in identifying who are vulnerable. Sometimes persons living with disability are listed among vulnerable, sometimes among the excluded.</p>	<p>The disabled, like those with HIV AIDS and the elderly sometimes fall into both categories as in some societies, they face both a physical threat and a negative social identity.</p> <p>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.</p>
Theory of Change	 <p>A more inclusive state and society can be fostered by strengthening capacities of and empowering people from historically excluded groups and by opening up democratic institutional space so that they can challenge the systems and structures that have excluded them, demand recognition and be represented in local and national decision-making processes that affects their lives.</p> <p>In short, an inclusive state and society emerges from the progressive realization of human rights.</p>	 <p>Not all agencies have a clear Theory of Change; but such a theory of how positive change (from exclusion to inclusion) comes about is often implicit in results matrices and log frames.</p>	

Concepts	Common understanding among DPs	Differences/Contradictions among DPs	Comments/Suggestions for Discussion
Approaches	 Women's empowerment, mainstreaming, targeted/focused service delivery, social mobilization, group formation, capacity strengthening  Intersectionality of gender and other forms of exclusion	 Identifying double disadvantaged groups, Target group %, Rights based advocacy, Livelihoods development, Service Delivery; addressing violence against women and girls;	Improved governance?
Tools	 Gender analysis, social analysis, use of different PRA tools for situation analysis, poverty mapping, social mapping implementation according to GESI guidelines of Ministries; 14 steps of DDC planning process	 Beneficiary Targeting with specific %; GESI analysis. Underlying Causes Of Poverty analysis, disadvantaged group mapping	
Planning, programming, budgeting	 Integration in objectives, indicators; at least 33% women, and at least one woman in key positions	 GRB, investment analysis, Fund flow analysis	
Monitoring	 Access to services, representation, disaggregation by sex	 Need and requirements of disaggregation (sometimes only by sex, some by caste/ethnicity, disability and location)	
Institutional issues	 GESI Focal Point, Affirmative action (esp for women), maternity and paternity leave	 Workforce diversity policy, recruitment focus on excluded social groups, internship policy for excluded social groups; HR facilities for child care, breast feeding, flexible time, job sharing, GESI in staff performance	

Key: ●: Full commonality ⊙: Partial commonality ○: Differences in understanding of concepts and approach



छाउपडी प्रथा अन्त्य
गरौं,
गोठमा हैन घरमा बसौं

Annex 4: Definitions of Terms from GoN Guidelines

The definitions provided below are sourced from GoN guidelines:

Source: Operational Guidelines for Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Mainstreaming in the Health Sector, Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP), 2013

Gender refers to the socially constructed power relations between women and men that establish the roles, responsibilities, opportunities and decision-making authority of women and men in society.

Gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) is a concept that addresses unequal power relations between women and men and between different social groups. The GESI approach to development focuses on the need for action to re-balance these power relations and ensure equal rights, opportunities and respect for all individuals regardless of their social identity.

Social inclusion is a process that ensures that those at risk of poverty and social exclusion gain the recognition, opportunities and resources they need to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life and to enjoy a standard of living and well-being that is considered normal in the society in which they live. It ensures that they participate more in decision making on matters that affect them and gain equal access to the resources, opportunities and services they need to enjoy their fundamental rights.

Source: Operational Guidelines for Mainstreaming GESI in MoUD, Ministry of Urban Development Government of Nepal, 2013

“Gender Equity” refers to the process of being fair to women and men. Gender equity means steps taken to achieve fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between women and men.

“Gender Equality” refers to a situation where all human beings are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by strict gender roles. The different behaviours, aspirations, and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally.

Source: Operational Guidelines for Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Mainstreaming in the Health Sector, Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP), 2013

Excluded groups are groups of people who have been systematically excluded over a long time due to economic, caste, ethnic, gender, disability, and geographic reasons and include sexual and gender minorities. The health sector GESI strategy defines excluded groups as “women, Dalits, indigenous Janajatis, Madhesi, Muslims, people with disabilities, senior citizens, and people living in remote regions who have not benefited from national development efforts.”

The poor are defined by the Nepal Living Standards Survey (NLSS) 2011 as households or persons who consume an average of less than 2,220 Kcal of food per person per day and spend less than NPR 11,929 per capita per year on food and less than NPR 7,332 per person on non-food items. MoHP’s Social Security Unit Guidelines (December 2012) define the poor as those who have sufficient food for more than six months but less than 12 months of each year. It defines the **extreme poor** as those who have sufficient food for less than six months of the year from their land, business or occupations.

Source: Operational Guidelines for Mainstreaming GESI in MoUD, Ministry of Urban Development Government of Nepal, 2013

“Excluded Groups” refer to women, Dalits, indigenous ethnic groups, Madhesi, Muslim, persons with disabilities, elderly people and people living in remote areas. (These groups) have been systematically excluded over a long time due to economic, caste, ethnic, gender, disability, and geographic reasons and include sexual and gender minorities.



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Annex 5: Key Ideas from Various DPs that Contribute to the Shared GESI Theory of Change

Much of the work DPs have done on GESI in Nepal since 2006 has envisioned three interrelated catalysts to change: 1) Increasing access to livelihood opportunities and benefits for women, the poor and excluded groups, 2) Providing a platform for women, the poor and excluded groups to meaningfully engage with, influence and hold accountable the institutions that shape their life options, and 3) Creating shifts in the “rules of the game” (i.e., both formal policies and the deeply ingrained mindsets and gender norms that influence informal everyday behavior) that perpetuate gender discrimination and social exclusion.⁴⁶

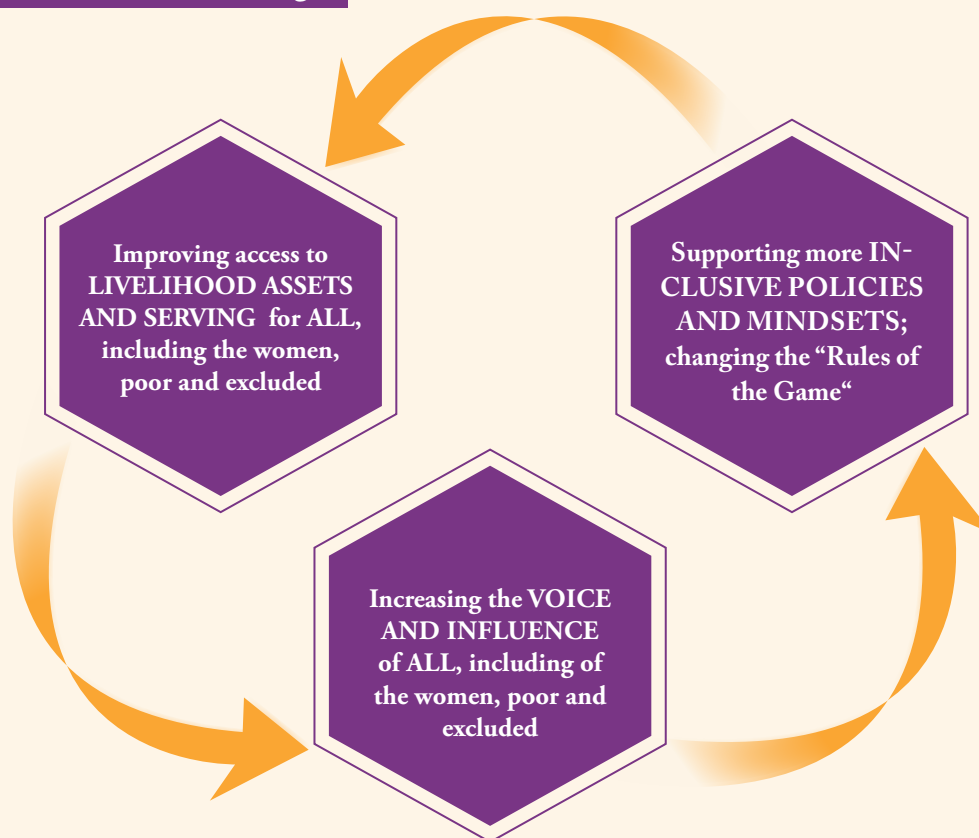
This framework is still used by DFID, ADB and WB and influences the thinking of SDC and SNV. It calls for action on two levels: 1) work at the micro-level directly with **people** and their need for both basic livelihood and some sense of agency and self-determination and; 2) work at the macro

level with the **systems**, policies and institutions that frame access to livelihood and agency.

This two-level approach is consistent with UN Women’s framework that focuses on the people level to reach the most vulnerable groups of women with “voice, agency and skills sets and the resilience to lead change in their families and communities” and on the systems level to counter the “institutionalized discriminatory norms and subordination of women.”⁴⁷

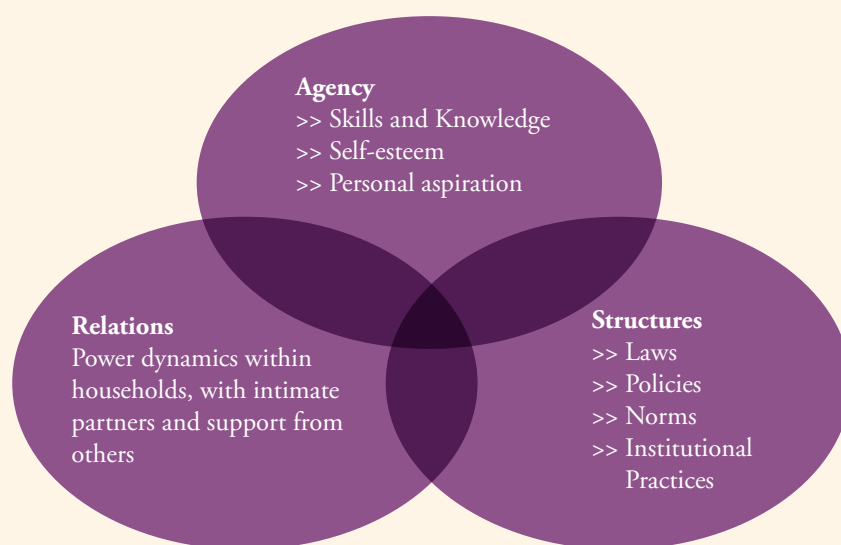
It also resonates with a newer framework for equity and inclusion contributed by CARE that focuses on supporting the agency of excluded individuals and groups to negotiate more evenly balanced power relationships and to challenge the formal and traditional structures that sustain unequal power relationships (*see Box 2*).

BOX 1: Three Domains of Change



⁴⁶ World Bank and DFID, 2006. Unequal Citizens: Gender, Caste and Ethnic Exclusion in Nepal – Summary, Kathmandu, Nepal. p. 9.

⁴⁷ The boundaries of the state, the economy and society are not co-terminous – and this can be a source of conflict – but these three domains are closely intertwined and often reinforce each other.

BOX 2: CARE Conceptual Framework for Equity and Inclusion

Transformative approaches or strategies that promote equal norms and structures as well as support equitable relationship between people of all/diverse genders, which facilitates transformative changes in the lives of impact groups to:

Build Agency:

an individual's aspirations, knowledge, skills and abilities;

Balance Relations:

power relationships within household, communities and systems to build stronger and more equitable relationships; and,

Challenge structures:

underlying structural and institutional barriers including power imbalances, discriminatory social norms, policies and institutions.

USAID's conception of the five dimensions of inclusion (i.e. 1. legal rights, policies and institutions; 2. cultural norms, beliefs and perceptions; 3. roles, responsibilities and time use; 4. access, use and control of resources, services and opportunities; and 5. Patterns of power and decision making) encompasses many of the same domains and implies that the process of inclusion would need interventions to bring change in all of them.

DFID has also added a new framework that is particularly useful in linking the inclusion agenda with the SDG commitment to "leave no one behind" (see Box 3). It too, calls for economic inclusion and improved access to basic services to improve the daily lives of excluded individuals and groups as rapidly as possible; it also calls for longer term work on the encompassing formal and informal structures, the social norms, discriminatory legislation and institutions, and exclusionary political settlements that continue to exclude and "leave behind" certain groups.

But this framework contains an additional element – better *understanding* based on data, context and evidence. This is extremely important for the GESI Working Group but has not yet received the collective attention that it needs. We will return to this in the discussion of the road map.

European Union: The EU is fully committed to the implementation of the four pivotal areas outlined in the Gender Action Plan (2016-2020) throughout EU external actions:

- i) Ensuring girls' and women's physical and psychological integrity
- ii) Promoting the social and economic rights / empowerment of women and girls
- iii) Strengthening girls' and women's voice and participation
- iv) Shifting the Institutional Culture to more effectively deliver on EU commitments

BOX 3: Leave No One Behind- DFID framework**Leave No One Behind- reaching those furthest behind first****Participation and Agency****Understand for action:***Data, context & Evidence*

Strengthen statistical capacity and use of **disaggregated** data to track and report progress

Establish **who is being** left behind, where, and why they are excluded

Build evidence to identify **what works** in different contexts

Empower for change:*Voice, Empowerment & Accountability*

Increase voice, choice and control. Engage in programme design, delivery, M&E and beneficiary feedback

Shift harmful **social norms** and reform discriminatory legislation and institutions

Support Civil Society to represent & support those left behind and **hold governments and implementers to account**

Include for opportunity:*Inclusive Growth, Institutions and services*

Promote **inclusive growth and economic inclusions**

Promote inclusive **political settlements, institutions, systems** and stability

Ensure access to **inclusive basic services**, accessible infrastructure and **social protection**

Partnerships and Accountability



Annex 6: A Project Level ToC that Translates Abstract Concepts into Monitorable Operational Reality

As a transition to section 3 that is focused on the “how to” of GESI, we offer in an example of a real ToC⁴⁸ for an actual project in Nepal. There have doubtless been many other similar project and program level ToCs developed in Nepal; but we highlight this one to illustrate the critical transition from the realm of abstract principles and ideas (in the earlier ToCs) to the specificity and practical detail of the implementation level. This is the stage where the set of project activities hypothesized in the ToC to bring or at least contribute to greater inclusion encounter the realities of many complex national and local power structures that may resist these changes. This is where efforts to understand the national and local context – and flexibility and creativity in tailoring the project design to respond to these many realities – is critical.

Even though this ToC lays out many of the details of implementation, it is still clearly linked with the more abstract ToCs we have reviewed. In the problem statement at the bottom of the figure and in the upper half at the level of impacts, outcomes and especially at the level of outputs, this ToC is consistent with the preceding framework in terms of what changes are sought and what is needed to bring change. The left hand side of the figure focuses on

people who need to be helped and the right on *institutions and organizations* that need to change. To support those changes the project is committing to produce improved *livelihoods and capacities* and greater voice and *ability to influence* for the excluded people and *more responsive and capable organizations and more equitable rules of the game* in the formal and informal institutions. These are all things we have been seeing in the earlier frameworks. But the strong operational focus here brings in a new element, which is *improved capacity on the part of the sectoral organizations* that will implement the project.

It is particularly in the analysis of the barriers and the laying out of specific interventions to counter them that this ToC goes beyond the abstract and generic nature of the ToC series (Figure 1, Figure 2 and Figure 4 in Section 2) and becomes a practical tool for implementing GESI in a particular project or program. Deep contextual knowledge and long hours of conversation with stakeholders at all levels are required to do this.

Example of a Theory of Change from a Poverty Reduction Programme: Empowerment of Women, Dalits, Indigenous Nationalities and Other Hard Core Poor through Micro-Enterprise Development Programme

⁴⁸ Inception Report, Impact Study on Empowerment of Women, Dalits, Indigenous Nationalities and Other Hard Core Poor through Micro-Enterprise Development, UNDP and DFAT, June 2016. This ToC was developed for the assessment of the GESI impact of the program and is not the ToC of MEDEP which is focused on poverty alleviation but has attempted to mainstream GESI to its fullest.



