

**Gender Analysis for Green Resilient
Agricultural-Centred Private Sector
Economic Development (GRAPE II) in
Nepal**



Title of the project	Green Resilient Agricultural-Centred Private Sector Economic Development (GRAPE II)
Country/countries	Nepal
Sector	Sustainable Economic Development
Commissioning party	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Recommendation for gender policy marker	GG-2
Purpose for conducting the gender analysis	<input type="checkbox"/> for a new project <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for a follow-on project <input type="checkbox"/> for a modification offer <input type="checkbox"/> for the GIZ portfolio in a country <input type="checkbox"/> other
Status of the gender analysis	<input type="checkbox"/> Provisional gender analysis <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Finalised gender analysis
Method conducting the gender analysis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Desk study <input type="checkbox"/> Desk study + data collection (e.g. on-site appraisal mission, interviews etc)
Involved Gender FP	<p>More than one option can be selected::</p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> at the project level: Ms Binija Nepal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *at the country level: Ms Milu Shree Shakya <input type="checkbox"/> *at the level of the department or regional division: Enter name <input type="checkbox"/> *of the responsible unit in GloBe: Enter name <input type="checkbox"/> of the sectoral department: Enter name <u>and</u> unit
	<p>* Please note: The Gender FP must be copied into all emails sent to the S+G Desk. For bilateral projects, the Gender FP of the country office should be involved; for regional projects, either the Gender FP of the country or area where the project has its headquarters, or the Gender FP of the department; for sectoral and global projects, the Gender FP of the responsible unit in GloBe.</p>
Other persons involved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> officer responsible for the commission <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> project member <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> appraisal mission team member <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> planning officer (Julia Karst) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> external consultant
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Chapter 1: Introduction

This report presents a comprehensive gender analysis of the Green Resilient Agriculture Productive Ecosystem (GRAPE-II) by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) Nepal. It highlights the current situation of women's participation in the economy, especially in agriculture, at local level in Karnali and Sudurpaschim provinces. It discusses the challenges they encounter, their potential, and the issues that need addressing to unlock their capabilities for their full participation in the sustainable economy. The analysis aims to illuminate the prevailing gender disparities, social norms, and gender roles in Nepal as a whole, with a specific focus on the agriculture sector. This report endeavours to evaluate the gender sensitivity and responsiveness of the personnel engaged in the GRAPE-II project, as well as its affiliated institutions and target groups. The overarching aim is to discern gender-specific barriers to guide the project's future strategic directions. The concluding chapter summarizes areas requiring further attention to enhance gender considerations within the project and provides pathways for integrating gender mainstreaming.

Against this backdrop, the report meticulously analyses the agriculture sector of Nepal and in the target region, implementing a gender perspective across meta (norms), macro (policy), meso (institutional), and micro (community and household) levels to examine the gender disparities and gaps to access critical productive resources, assets, services and opportunities. The research methodology encompasses a desk review of plans, policies, and reports issued by the Government of Nepal (GoN) at various administrative levels, and relevant literature review by following the gender analysis guidelines provided by the GIZ. Moreover, it provides insights into the complexities of gender and social inequalities and intersectionality, especially in the context of climate-vulnerable agriculture, and the challenges faced by marginal and rural communities. The recommendations aim to design gender-responsive/transformational interventions which the project can take to promote gender-inclusive and climate-resilient agricultural practices in targeted regions.

Chapter 2: Information on gender dimensions in the country or the region

2.1 Meta level (norms)

Nepal stands at a pivotal juncture in its pursuit towards gender equality, as outlined in its progressive 2015 Constitution¹. The document firmly upholds the principle of legal equality for all citizens, irrespective of diverse characteristics including gender, religion, caste, origin, race, tribe, sex, physical condition, health, marital status, pregnancy, economic status, language, region, ideology, or similar grounds. The country has made notable advancements in safeguarding women's rights and addressing gender-based disparities, aligning its endeavors with global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) benchmarks. Notably, Nepal has achieved a commendable 91.7% compliance rate in implementing legal frameworks aimed at promoting and monitoring gender equality, indicating significant progress. Moreover, Nepal's 2023 judiciary ruling on same-sex marriage demonstrates the nation's dedication to inclusivity and LGBTQ+ rights advocacy, positioning it as a global leader in addressing the societal challenges.

The constitution mandates that a minimum of one-third of elected representatives in the federal parliament must be women. Consequently, recent federal and local elections in Nepal 2022, revealed that women accounted for 33.81% of national parliamentary seats and achieved a representation rate of 40.75% at the local level. The adoption of reserved quotas emerges as a primary catalyst behind these notable advancements in gender and socially excluded group representation.

The National Planning Commission data from 2017 indicates that more than 8.1 million people are living in poverty, and 28.6% face multidimensional poverty. The region of Karnali is known to have the highest multidimensional poverty rate (51.2%).

It is evident that Nepal still grapples with significant gender disparities in its economic landscape. Despite the national Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) at 38.5% and Employment-to-Population Ratio (EPR) at 34.2%, for women, there exists a notable disparity between male and female participation. While male LFPR stands at 53.8% and EPR at 48.3%, female LFPR is significantly lower at 26.3% with an EPR of 22.9%. While there's been some progress in women's economic empowerment, notably in asset ownership rising from 20.5% in 2011 to 26% in 2016, the pace remains sluggish. This underscores the pressing need for Nepal to redouble efforts in addressing these gender disparities and fostering greater gender equality.

Analysis from the 2022 Nepal Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) offers further insights. It reveals disparities in employment rates among married men and women aged 15-49, with 98% of married men employed compared to 76% of married women. Additionally, only 48% of women receive cash

¹ Fundamental Rights and Duties, Constitution of Nepal; <https://lawcommission.gov.np/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Constitution-of-Nepal.pdf>

compensation for their labour. Despite an increase in married women's employment with age, from 55% at ages 15–19 to 85% at ages 40–44, they still face significant challenges, including earning less than their spouses in 71% of cases. Moreover, joint decision-making regarding women's earnings among married couples is prevalent, with only 44% of wives taking primary responsibility for income-related matters. Asset ownership remains a concern, with only 8% of women owning houses and 11% owning land, indicating persistent inequalities. Access to technology and finance also lags behind for women, with 49% possessing and using bank accounts or mobile phones for transactions, compared to 53% among men. Addressing these disparities requires comprehensive interventions aimed at promoting gender-inclusive economic policies and empowering women across all sectors of society.

The NDHS 2022, highlights concerning rates of gender-based violence in Nepal. Shockingly, 23% of women report experiencing physical violence, while 8% have faced sexual violence within the past year. Despite these alarming figures, only 28% of victims seek assistance, indicating significant barriers to accessing support services. These findings underscore the pervasive gender biases and persistent challenges that women continue to endure across the country. Intimate partner violence is also prevalent, with 35% of women encountering physical, sexual, or emotional abuse.

In essence, Nepalese societies operate within a patriarchal framework, characterized by societal norms that uphold male privilege and preference for sons to control resources. Marriage customs typically follow a patrilocal pattern, wherein the bride relocates to the groom's family after marriage. Additionally, entrenched systems such as the caste system, child marriage, and dowry practices persist. Despite the abolition of several superstitious customs such as Witchcraft, Chhaupadi² (menstrual stigmatisation), Kamalari (traditional system of bonded labour), Deuki (offering young girls to temples)³, Jhuma (Sherpa custom offering second daughter to Monastery)⁴, and Badi (Marginalized caste in Nepal, with women often forced into prostitution)⁵, remnants of these practices persist to varying degrees, perpetuating gender inequality and marginalization. In addition, Nepal continues to grapple with remnants of landlordism practices, including debt bondage arrangements such as Kamaiyas, Haliyas, and Harwaha Charwaha practices. These practices not only infringe upon individuals' fundamental rights but also impede access to education and resources while perpetuating gender-based violence.

Members of the sexual minority groups from LGBTQ+ community often face derogatory labels such as "Chakka" or "Hijada". Despite constitutional affirmation of equality, they often endure denial of basic rights, encounter barriers for social mobility, experience restricted access to education and employment, and face social scrutiny that undermines their acceptance within family, society, and institutions and exacerbating gender-based violence.

Multiple indicators highlight gender disparities in Nepal. For instance, in 2022, the country's ranking of 146th out of 193 nations in the Human Development Index (HDI)⁶, a comprehensive measure encompassing health, education, and standard of living, score of 0.601. Similarly, Nepal's Gender Inequality Index (GII), a composite metric gauging reproductive health, empowerment, and labor market engagement, positioned it at 111th among 132 economies. According to the National Statistics Office of Nepal⁷, the overall literacy rate stood at 76.2%, with male and female literacy rates recorded at 83.6% and 69.4%, respectively. Furthermore, Nepal exhibits a notable prevalence of child marriage⁸, ranking third in Asia and 17th globally, with 41% of women aged 20 to 24 entering marriage before reaching 18 years of age.

Encouragingly, there has been positive advancement in women's empowerment, particularly in administrative and managerial roles, largely attributed to reservations or quotas. However, women's representation within the bureaucratic sphere remains limited, with only 25% of government employees being women. These figures underscore the urgent need for Nepal to intensify efforts to address gender disparities and promote greater gender equality.

In Nepal, the societal structure is deeply entrenched with caste divisions, influencing discrimination and societal standing. High-caste Hindus, including Brahmins and Chhetris, indigenous Janajatis, historically marginalized Dalits, and Terai-based Madhesis reflect this hierarchical order. Despite constitutional prohibitions, caste-based discrimination persists, particularly impacting marginalized groups. Brahmins and Chhetris predominantly dominate mainstream politics and bureaucracy, overshadowing Janajatis, Madhesis, and Dalits. For instance, a woman from a poor Dalit community is already disadvantaged due

² Joshi S, 2021 Chhaupadi practice in Nepal: A literature review. Wiley Online Library

³ Deuki <https://www.eatmy.news/2021/08/about-deuki-pratha-nepali-culture-of.html>; Accessed on 16/03/2024

⁴ Jhuma <https://www.nationaldiscoverychannel.com/2014/10/about-jhuma-pratha.html>; Accessed on 16/03/2024

⁵ Badi Pratha, Third eye foundation, <https://volunteerssummernepal.org/badi-pratha> accessed on 19-06-2023

⁶ https://hdr.undp.org/system/files/documents/global-report-document/hdr2021-22pdf_1.pdf

⁷ CBS, National Population and Housing census 2021

⁸ Child marriage: https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/child_marriage_policy_brief_nepal.pdf

to being a woman, while her low social status and economic condition further limit her socio-cultural and economic opportunities, increasing vulnerability and exploitation. According to NDHS 2022, a higher percentage of women from Dalit (11%), Muslim (10%), and Madhesi (10%) ethnic groups have husbands or intimate partners who display three or more specified controlling behaviours, compared to women from Janajati (7%) and Brahmin/Chhetri (5%) groups. Data from NDHS 2022 underscores stark disparities across ethnic lines. Among Brahmin/Chhetri women, 14.6% have no education, contrasting with 36.4% of Dalit women, 21.6% of Janjati women, 34.2% of Madhesi women, and 60.2% of Muslim women lacking formal education. In terms of employment, 60.9% of Brahmin/Chhetri women are currently employed, whereas the percentages vary among other ethnic groups: 55.3% of Dalit women, 67.1% of Janjati women, 49.9% of Madhesi women, and 38.8% of Muslim women. Land ownership is significantly skewed, with 85.6% of Brahmin/Chhetri women not owning land, followed closely by Dalit women at 92.0%, Janjati women at 89.4%, Madhesi women at 88.8%, and Muslim women at 92.8%. Financial inclusion also varies, with Brahmin/Chhetri women leading at 60.6% having bank accounts or mobile phones, followed by Janjati women at 53.6%, Dalit women at 38.9%, Madhesi women at 37.9%, and Muslim women at 30.2%. In decision-making participation, Brahmin/Chhetri women demonstrate the highest rates, with 78.6% participating in healthcare decisions, 64.7% in household purchases, and 75.6% in family visits, while Muslim women exhibit lower rates. Physical violence experiences also vary significantly, with 14.3% of Brahmin/Chhetri women reporting violence in contrast, the percentages are higher among other ethnic groups, with Dalit women at 30.3%, Janjati women at 18.4%, Madhesi women at 33.3%, and Muslim women at 42.3%. These disparities underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions to address systemic inequalities and foster inclusivity across all ethnic backgrounds in Nepal.

Addressing Cultural Norms and Discrimination:

Addressing cultural norms and discrimination in Nepal necessitates a gender transformative approach, transcending surface-level interventions to tackle underlying structures perpetuating inequality. Despite notable progress, traditional beliefs relegating women to household roles hinder genuine parity. Concerted efforts through awareness campaigns and policy interventions are imperative to challenge these norms. However, resistance to change and deeply ingrained societal hierarchies pose significant obstacles. The hierarchical nature of society, favouring men in power dynamics, further complicates reform efforts. Traditional structures perpetuate discriminatory practices, hindering progress towards equality. Engaging with communities, leaders, and policymakers is crucial to foster positive social change. Through sustained collaboration, Nepal can aspire to realize genuine gender equality. Efforts aim to create a society where all individuals thrive, free from discrimination and gender-based constraints. A transformative approach acknowledges the necessity of challenging power imbalances and reshaping social norms. It entails confronting deeply ingrained beliefs and engaging diverse stakeholders in the journey towards equality. By addressing underlying structures, Nepal can pave the way for a more inclusive and equitable society.

2.2 Macro level (policies and laws)

Nepal positions itself as an advocate of gender equality and human rights by virtue of its substantial international pledges and national efforts. Its endorsement and adoption of various international conventions and protocols underscore its steadfast commitment to eradicating discrimination and fostering parity. These commitments have been operationalised through a comprehensive array of national and sub-national legislations and policies, forming a sturdy framework aimed at combatting gender-based discrimination and advancing gender equality.

Relevant International/Regional Commitments:

Nepal has made significant international commitments, including ratification and accession to various conventions and protocols. These commitments include the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Additionally, Nepal endorsed the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) and committed to the SDGs, specifically aiming for gender equality under SDG 5.

Enshrinement of Gender Equality in National/Sub-national Law:

Gender equality is a foundational principle in Nepal's legal and policy landscape, enshrined in the Constitution to guarantee equal rights and opportunities for all citizens, regardless of gender. This commitment is echoed in the Fifteenth Plan (Fiscal Year 2019/20 – 2023/24), which outlines Nepal's vision for a "Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali." This strategic plan emphasizes prosperity and well-being, with a

specific focus on advancing social sectors, prominently featuring gender equality as a cross-cutting concern.

The Constitution of Nepal, in its preamble stresses the rationale behind ending all forms of discrimination that is to “ensure economic equality”. Clause 8 of Article 60 mentions the need of a Federal Act on the distribution of revenues to utilize it “... in development works, reduction of regional imbalances, poverty and inequality, end of deprivation, and assistance to be made in the performance of contingent works and fulfilment of temporary needs.” Findings of the National Planning Commission (NPC) Assessment which addresses dimensions for Leave No One Behind (LNOB) notes progress is visible on decrease in the proportion of population living below the national poverty line and the proportion of population covered by social protection is increasing as well. However, progress on indicators such as households covered by formal financial services and those having property in women’s names have not changed in the past five years.

To address gender-related discrimination, Nepal has enacted crucial laws such as the Gender Equality Act of 2006, the Domestic Violence Act of 2009, The Sexual Harassment at Workplace (Prevention) Act, 2014 and the Civil Service (Amendment) Act of 2014. These legislations not only combat gender-based discrimination and violence but also promote diverse representation within the civil service and allocate resources to uplift marginalized communities. Moreover, national gender policies and strategies, including the National Gender Equality Policy (NGEP) 2077, have been developed to guide efforts in this area.

Implementation of Gender Equality Policies, Strategies, and Action Plans:

In Nepal, achieving gender equality is a collaborative effort involving various stakeholders, including government ministries and departments. These stakeholders actively engage in policy formulation, capacity-building, and the establishment of mechanisms to ensure a safe and inclusive workplace for all citizens. Key sectorial ministries, such as the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development (MoFALD), Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD), Ministry of Forest and Social Conservation (MoFSC), Ministry of Education (MoE), and Ministry of Health (MoH), have made significant strides in promoting GESI. These ministries have issued and implemented policies and guidelines and established dedicated units with trained staff to effectively implement, monitor, and evaluate these initiatives. The GESI strategies adopted by these ministries prioritize the participation and inclusion of marginalized groups, including women, Dalit, Adibasi/Janajati, Madhesi, Muslim, people with disabilities, and excluded communities. These strategies aim to address the specific barriers faced by these groups across various sectors, fostering a more equitable and inclusive society. UN Women has been instrumental in supporting these efforts, particularly through its partnership with the Nepal Administrative Staff College (NASC). Together, they are integrating Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) and Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) into the training curriculum for government officials. This initiative enhances the capacities of officials in line with the 14th Periodic Plan and SDGs, enabling them to design and deliver specialized courses on GESI and GRB for Class II and Class III Officers of the GoN.⁹

While there has been some progress in implementing gender-sensitive programs and initiatives—such as increasing girls' enrolment in schools, promoting women's participation in local governance, and combating gender-based violence—significant challenges remain in the effective implementation of gender policies. Despite having progressive policies in place, rigorous enforcement often falls short due to limited resource allocation, inadequate oversight mechanisms, and limited awareness of gender issues among government officials, stakeholders, and communities. Furthermore, challenges remain in implementing the policies effectively, including the non-prioritization of the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) portfolio by bureaucrats, inadequate training, and frequent job transfers, hindering progress in achieving GESI objectives across ministries¹⁰. However, a significant milestone has been achieved with the requirement for the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Framework to be considered in all decisions about governance and government operations¹¹, underscoring the integration of gender considerations across all aspects of governance.

Nepal's steadfast commitment to gender equality and human rights is underscored by its robust international commitments, treaty ratifications, and domestic policy frameworks. While the Gender Equality and Women Empowerment policy outlined in the 15th National Plan demonstrates ambition and aligns with international standards like CEDAW and the SDGs, it requires critical scrutiny in several areas. The policy's implementation framework lacks specific timelines and measurable indicators, making it difficult to

⁹Manual on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion and Gender Responsive Budgeting, https://un.org.np/sites/default/files/doc_publication/2019-10/np-manual-on-gender-si-compressed.pdf

¹⁰ USAID (2020) Nepal Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Analysis 2020

¹¹ <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2023-07/np-cgep-nepal-s.pdf>; Andrew Young School of Policy Studies (AYSPS). (2019).

monitor progress and hold stakeholders accountable. Additionally, despite acknowledging the importance of intersectionality, the policy falls short in providing concrete strategies and targeted interventions for women from multiple marginalized groups. The policy's approach to intersectionality could be more robust, with clearer strategies and targeted interventions needed for women from diverse backgrounds, including Dalits, indigenous communities, and LGBTQ+ individuals. The absence of a robust mechanism for collecting and analysing intersectional data further limits the policy's effectiveness in addressing the distinct challenges faced by these women. Moreover, the policy's reliance on collaboration with government agencies and development partners lacks clear roles and responsibilities, potentially leading to coordination challenges and inefficiencies. In conclusion, while the policy sets ambitious goals for gender equality and women's empowerment, its success hinges on addressing these critical gaps and adopting a more structured, inclusive, and actionable approach. Hence, it is essential to scrutinize policies rigorously to ensure they do not inadvertently perpetuate discrimination, particularly against marginalized population groups facing intersecting forms of bias.

Addressing Gender-Based Violence (GBV) is a priority in Nepal, with specialized mechanisms established by the Women's Commission, Nepal Police, and One-Stop Crisis Management Centers. These institutions provide vital support, assistance, and redressal for survivors of GBV, ensuring a coordinated and effective response to such incidents. Despite the progress made, challenges remain, particularly in the effective implementation of the Sexual Harassment at the Workplace (Elimination) Act (SH Act) enacted in 2015. There is a need to raise awareness of the Act's provisions among the general public and key stakeholders. The issuance of rules, regulations, and a code of conduct to support the Act's implementation by the government is still pending. Additionally, there is a lack of comprehensive data on the prevalence of violence and harassment, hindering monitoring and reporting related to the SH Act's implementation.¹²

In the provincial governance context, both Sudurpaschim and Karnali provinces have demonstrated significant efforts towards gender mainstreaming. In Sudurpaschim Province, the Provincial Government (PG) and Local Governments (LGs) have appointed GESI Focal Persons and initiated the drafting of GESI Audit Guidelines. A notable 93% of LGs in this province have adopted the GESI Strategy, and orientation programs on Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) have been conducted, showcasing efforts to enhance gender awareness and skills among officials. Additionally, 63% of LGs have adopted policies addressing sexual harassment, underscoring the recognition of gender-specific issues¹³.

Similarly, Karnali Province has implemented GESI Strategies across all 79 Local Governments, reflecting a comprehensive approach to gender mainstreaming. GESI and GRB Audits have been successfully conducted, indicating a commitment to improving gender responsiveness in governance practices. The endorsement of the GESI Policy for the year 2078 by the Provincial Government has further solidified this commitment, leading to GESI Audits being conducted by six provincial ministries. Collaborative efforts to advance gender equality and social inclusion are evident through meetings of GESI Focal Persons at both provincial and local government levels. Karnali Province has also initiated efforts to integrate GESI/GRB-sensitive policies, plans, programs, and budgets, demonstrating a systematic approach to gender considerations in governance. Finally, the training of local resource persons in GESI and GRB underscores the province's commitment to building local capacity for gender-responsive programming and policymaking.

In conclusion, while Nepal has made commendable efforts in advancing gender equality through policy formulation, capacity-building, and institutional mechanisms, yet robust enforcement is crucial. Prioritizing resource allocation and oversight mechanisms is essential for effective policy implementation. Capacity-building initiatives for officials and stakeholders are necessary to ensure program success. Enhanced coordination among agencies and communities fosters inclusive and sustainable interventions. Establishing a monitoring and evaluation system aids evidence-based decision-making and accountability. Collecting comprehensive GESI-segregated data is vital for targeted interventions and progress monitoring. Increased community engagement ensures contextually relevant and empowering interventions. Gender-responsive programs should prioritize women and marginalized groups' participation in decision-making processes. Strengthened coordination facilitates better alignment of efforts and resource allocation across sectors. Continuous improvement through systematic tracking of progress enhances gender equality initiatives' impact. Implementing these measures, Nepal can significantly advance its commitment to gender equality and social inclusion, fostering a more equitable and prosperous society for all.

¹² Strengthening Action against Violence and Harassment with Focus on Sexual Harassment in the World of Work in Nepal. https://www.ilo.org/kathmandu/whatwedo/projects/WCMS_752206/lang-en/index.htm

¹³ FINAL EVALUATION REPORT, Technical Assistance in Support of the Provincial and Local Governance Support Programme (TAP), 2023 <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskqke326/files/2024-01/undp-np-plgsp-evaluation-2023.pdf>

2.3 Meso level (institutions)

The Ministry of Women, Children, and Senior Citizens (MoWCSC) in Nepal is tasked with addressing gender disparities and empowering socially disadvantaged groups, including women, children, and senior citizens. The ministry's mandate involves mainstreaming Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) issues across government institutions and programs. MoWCSC develops policies, plans, and guidelines for areas related to its mandate. However, the ministry faces challenges due to limited human resources and budget allocations. Additionally, the Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration plays a role in enhancing access to services for socially and economically disadvantaged groups, managing federal civil service administration, and promoting social mobilization for empowering marginalized communities.

Various national commissions in Nepal, such as the National Women Commission (NWC), National Dalits Commission (NDC), Indigenous Nationalities Commission (INC), among others, are established to safeguard the rights of specific groups. These institutions strive to create an inclusive society, promote equal opportunities, and eliminate discrimination. Additionally, institutions like the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Election Commission, and Public Service Commission recognize the importance of gender equality and social inclusion within their activities. However, civil society organizations face challenges due to restrictive provisions within certain laws, such as the Electronic Transactions Act and National Broadcasting Regulations.

Nepal boasts numerous civil society organizations dedicated to advancing women's rights and gender equality, such as Women's Rehabilitation Center (WOREC), Saathi, among others. These organizations play a crucial role in advocating for policy changes and implementing programs to promote gender equality. However, they face challenges stemming from restrictive clauses in laws like the Electronic Transactions Act and National Broadcasting Regulations, which suppress freedom of expression and hinder access to information.

Several international organizations including the United Nations, Asian Development Bank, USAID, European Union and Finnish development cooperation are actively engaged in Nepal's effort to promote gender equality and social inclusion. Through collaborative platforms such as the Alliance of International NGOs and the International Development Partner's Group (IDPG) GESI working group, these organisations collaborate on initiatives, exchange knowledge, and support the GoN in addressing discrimination and promoting gender equality. The IDPG GESI working group operates within the broader GESI coordination framework, partners with various working groups to foster a unified approach to inclusivity in Nepal. Together, these entities prioritize understanding, coordination, and commitment to gender equality and inclusive policies, working alongside the Government of Nepal, development partners, civil society, and experts. Their collective efforts aim to advance the SDGs by addressing gender-based inequalities, promoting gender mainstreaming, and ensuring inclusivity. Specifically, the Working Group endeavours to empower women and marginalized groups, enabling them to actively participate, contribute to decision-making, and benefit from initiatives aimed at enhancing Nepal's social, economic, and political landscape.

2.4 Micro level (target groups)

The second phase of the GRAPE program, implemented by GIZ-Nepal, is dedicated to advancing gender-transformative climate-resilient economic development with a focus on the agricultural sector in the Sudurpaschim and Karnali provinces, which are recognized as the most vulnerable regions in Nepal according to the National Vulnerability and Risk Assessment Report.

In terms of education, women in both provinces face notably lower literacy rates compared to men, with only 69.4% of women in Karnali and 68.2% in Sudurpaschim being literate, as opposed to 85.4% and 83.3% of men, respectively. This highlights a significant gender gap in educational attainment⁷.

Moreover, the employment landscape exhibits stark disparities, with fewer women engaged in economically active roles compared to men. Labor force participation rates in both provinces reveal this trend, with only 16.4% of women in Karnali and 15.7% in Sudurpaschim participating in the workforce, compared to 42.8% and 45.6% of men, respectively. According to the NDHS (2022), access to healthcare also presents challenges, particularly for women facing familial permission barriers. In Karnali, 37.6% of women encounter difficulties accessing healthcare due to familial constraints, while the figure stands at 11.2% in Sudurpaschim. In Karnali, 19% of women (15-49 years) refrained from participating in social activities (excluding religious visits), school, or work due to their last menstruation in the last 12 months, while in Sudurpaschim, this percentage is higher at 41% which surpasses the national average of 9%¹⁴.

¹⁴Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019 <https://www.unicef.org/nepal/media/11081/file/Nepal%20MICS%202019%20Final%20Report.pdf>

Economic autonomy remains a concern, as only a minority of women have control over their earnings in both provinces - 32.7% in Karnali and 37.2% in Sudurpaschim. In Karnali, 9.5% of women aged 15 to 49 report experiencing sexual violence, which surpasses the national average of 7.5%. In Sudurpaschim, the rate is lower at 4.4%. Physical violence rates are also noteworthy, with Karnali at 16.7% and Sudurpaschim at 16.1%, both below the national average. Intimate partner violence rates in these provinces are lower than the national average, with Karnali reporting 24% and Sudurpaschim reporting 20%. While observing the other demographic and HDI related indicators mentioned above these rates may seem relatively lower than the national, this potentially might have occurred due to underreporting, emphasizing the need for further research. Disparities in property ownership further compound gender inequalities, with significantly fewer women owning homes and land compared to men in both provinces. Home ownership for women stands at 6.6% in Karnali and 3.3% in Sudurpaschim, while land ownership is a little higher at 10% and 4.7%, respectively. Conversely, men owning homes is 15.4% in Karnali and 9.2% in Sudurpaschim, with land ownership at 19.9% and 10.3% respectively. Lastly, while a considerable proportion of women own mobile phones in both provinces, usage for financial transactions and bank account ownership remains low. Only 3.4% of women in Karnali and 3.3% in Sudurpaschim utilize mobile phones for financial transactions, with 37.5% and 42.4% having bank accounts, respectively. Smartphone ownership among women is also notable, with 43.2% in Karnali and 42.2% in Sudurpaschim possessing smartphones¹⁵.

In Nepal there are 627,887 (9.4%) households engaged in small-scale enterprises outside of agriculture, with no paid employees. Among these, 55% are predominantly operated by males and 45% by females. Province wise, the highest and lowest proportions of households involved in such enterprises are found in Bagmati, with 153,522 (24.5%), and Karnali, with 32,463 (5.2%) households respectively. In Sudurpaschim, there are 5,516 (8.1%) households engaged in such enterprises. In terms of female-operated businesses, Karnali comprises 46.5%, whereas Sudurpaschim comprises 40.9%¹⁶.

In Karnali Province, 22.2% of rural women require over an hour to access the nearest health facility, compared to 13.4% in Sudurpashchim Province—both figures surpassing the national average of 8.9%. This underscores the pronounced accessibility challenges these provinces encounter in healthcare provision. Moreover, a significant majority of rural women in these regions predominantly rely on walking to reach health facilities, highlighting the pressing need for enhanced accessibility and infrastructure development. Furthermore, Karnali and Sudurpashchim Provinces lag behind in health facility deliveries, with rates of 72% and 87%, respectively. This is in stark contrast to Bagmati and Gandaki Provinces, where the rates soar to 88%, underscoring disparities in healthcare access across provinces. In Karnali Province, 10.1% of women aged 20-49 have a thin nutritional status (BMI < 18.5), slightly lower than the national average of 10.3%. Meanwhile, in Sudurpashchim Province, the prevalence is higher at 15.1%, indicating a greater proportion of women with inadequate nutritional levels compared to the national and Karnali averages. These findings highlight varying nutritional challenges across regions, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions to improve women's nutritional status, particularly in Sudurpashchim Province.

In conclusion, these findings underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions to address gender inequalities, promote women's empowerment, and ensure their safety and well-being in Karnali and Sudurpaschim provinces.

Conclusions for the project

In essence, while Nepal has laid a strong foundation for gender equality through legislative frameworks and international commitments, sustained efforts are needed to challenge entrenched societal norms, address implementation gaps, and ensure inclusive development across all levels of society. Only through collaborative action involving government, civil society, international partners, and local communities can Nepal realize genuine gender equality, fostering a society where all individuals can thrive free from discrimination.

Recommendations:

1. **Enforce Legal Mandates:** Nepal must prioritize the rigorous enforcement of existing legislative frameworks and policy directives dedicated to advancing gender equality. This entails robust resource allocation and the establishment of comprehensive oversight mechanisms across all tiers of governance to ensure the effective implementation of gender-sensitive policies.
2. **Challenge problematic norms:** Nepal should proactively address the entrenched socio-cultural norms perpetuating gender disparities, including patriarchal structures, caste-based discrimination, and entrenched traditional practices. To achieve this, targeted awareness campaigns and

¹⁵ Nepal Demographic Health survey (NDHS2) 022

¹⁶Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) Nepal, National Population and Housing census 2021

community mobilization efforts must be orchestrated for government officials, policymakers, community leaders, educators, parents, and the public. These campaigns aim to catalyse transformative shifts towards more inclusive gender norms and practices.

3. **Promote Economic Agency:** Nepal ought to spearhead initiatives aimed at fostering economic empowerment among women, with a particular emphasis on narrowing the gender gap in employment and economic opportunities. This necessitates the rollout of programs such as skill enhancement initiatives, entrepreneurship incubation, and facilitating equitable access to financial resources and asset ownership for women.
4. **Combat Gender-Based Violence:** Nepal needs to bolster its legal infrastructure and support services to combat gender-based violence comprehensively. This includes the enactment of robust legislation and the establishment of holistic support mechanisms tailored to the diverse needs of survivors. Concurrently, strategic advocacy campaigns must challenge ingrained societal attitudes and promote norms that reject all forms of gender-based violence.
5. **Enhance GESI-Disaggregated Data Collection:** Nepal should prioritize the enhancement of data collection methodologies to capture the nuanced experiences of women and marginalized groups comprehensively. By leveraging GESI-disaggregated data, policymakers can craft evidence-based interventions that address the multifaceted challenges faced by diverse communities effectively.
6. **Investing in marginalised groups:** The federal structure provides opportunity to strategically address gender and social inclusion-based disparities at sub-national levels – therefore, focus should be laid on investing in the marginalised groups for their agency building, while generating support from sub-national elected representatives for ensuring necessary planning and budgeting on contextual gender equality concerns need prioritisation.

Chapter 3: Gender dimensions in the sector

3.1 Meta Level

The agricultural sector in Nepal serves as a vital component of the economy, supporting livelihoods for a substantial portion of the population. It's crucial to acknowledge the significant contribution of this sector, as highlighted by data from the Economic Activities Report 2020/21, which indicates that agriculture accounts for 25.8% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Additionally, recent census data from 2021¹⁷ underscores the essential role of agriculture, with 50.1% of individuals aged 10 years and above actively involved in agricultural activities. Notably, women comprise 53.9% of the agricultural workforce and economically active women are 6.8% more likely to work in Agriculture sector, emphasizing their crucial role in sustaining agricultural productivity and ensuring food security.

Despite their substantial presence, women in agriculture often encounter systemic barriers that undermine their full participation and recognition within the sector. Engaged in diverse farming activities, ranging from seed planting to post-harvest processes, women face numerous challenges that hinder their empowerment and equitable engagement. Gender disparities persist across various dimensions of Nepal's agricultural landscape, limiting women's access to resources, opportunities, and decision-making power.

Furthermore, studies examining gender dynamics in Nepal's agricultural sector highlight women's limited awareness of government policies and programs aimed at supporting smallholder women farmers. Even when aware of these initiatives, women often encounter significant barriers in accessing benefits due to complex eligibility criteria and administrative procedures. These challenges are compounded by intersecting factors such as class, caste, and ethnicity, which further marginalize women and hinder their participation in decision-making processes.

Structural barriers such as limited land ownership, restricted access to credit, and insufficient extension services disproportionately affect women in Nepal's agricultural sector, perpetuating their economic vulnerability. Research indicates that in 2015, only 31 percent of female farmers received extension services compared to 69 percent of male farmers¹⁷. This discrepancy can be attributed to the predominant presence of male front-line extension workers, resulting in information and messages that may not effectively reach vulnerable women farmers, especially in remote areas where they may feel uncomfortable accessing these services. Moreover, entrenched social norms and cultural practices reinforce traditional gender roles, constraining women's autonomy and mobility within agricultural domains. Despite efforts to promote gender equality in agriculture, persistent gendered and structural constraints within male-dominated systems, including limited access to resources, the lack of gender-friendly technologies, the perception of women primarily as supportive rather than active farmers with agency, and decision-making

¹⁷ NPC. 2015. Post disaster needs assessment: Vol. B: Sector reports, Nepal earthquake 2015. Kathmandu. www.npc.gov.np.

authority, which adversely impact agricultural productivity and land management^{18,19}. Furthermore, women's participation in agriculture often remains informal, insecure, or under-compensated. Despite their significant contributions to crop production and post-harvest activities, women typically receive wages approximately 25% lower than men, despite legal mandates for equal pay. This exacerbates gender inequalities within the agricultural sector, necessitating comprehensive measures to promote gender-responsive policies and practices.

The changing dynamics of agricultural roles in Nepal are closely linked to male out-migration, resulting in the feminization of agriculture. With men leaving rural areas, women increasingly shoulder the burden of agricultural work, leading to an intensified workload alongside existing responsibilities for unpaid care and domestic labor. The Nepalese government has acknowledged the labor shortages in the agricultural sector, particularly due to male out-migration, and has implemented initiatives to promote farm mechanization. In 2014, they introduced an agricultural farm mechanization policy and have since formulated additional promotion policies to incentivize the adoption of modern farming technologies. These policies include subsidies aimed at encouraging farmers to invest in mechanized equipment. However, there are concerns that these subsidy programs predominantly benefit male-headed households because female-headed households (FH-HHs) often have limited interactions with extension agents and institutions, resulting in reduced access to information and support. This highlights the need for more inclusive approaches that address the specific challenges faced by FH-HHs. To ensure gender equality and women's empowerment in agriculture, the government should focus on developing gender-responsive farm mechanization policies that enhance women's participation in technology selection, adoption, and management. This would promote sustainable agricultural development by addressing the unique needs of female farmers and fostering gender equality in the sector.²⁰ This scenario limits women's engagement with agricultural advisory services and exacerbates gender disparities within the sector.

Recent research underscores the productivity gap between male-headed and female-headed households, with male-headed households demonstrating agricultural productivity levels 29.6% higher.²¹ This disparity is often attributed to the out-migration of male household members, depriving female-headed households of crucial farm laborers. These findings underscore the broader challenges faced by women farmers and underscore the urgent need for gender-responsive approaches to address them.

It's essential to recognize the diverse needs and priorities of men and women in agriculture, shaped by their respective roles and responsibilities. Women, often tasked with family health, nutrition, and food security, prioritize cultivating diverse food crops to meet these needs. In contrast, men may prioritize crops with higher commercial value. Understanding these differences is crucial for designing interventions that address the unique challenges faced by women in agriculture.

Climate change presents added challenges to gender equality in agriculture, particularly impacting women who play critical roles as primary caregivers, water and fuel gatherers, and food producers. Their duties for family health and well-being increasingly suffer due to climate-related disruptions to food production and availability. Moreover, women often bear the brunt of gathering water and fuelwood, tasks that become more arduous with climate change altering precipitation patterns and depleting natural resources. Additionally, as primary contributors to food production, women are disproportionately affected by climate-related agricultural challenges, such as crop failures, pest infestations, and soil degradation, jeopardizing food security for their families and communities.

In conclusion, addressing gender disparities in Nepal's agricultural sector requires holistic and gender-transformative approaches. It is imperative to dismantle systemic barriers, promote equitable access to resources and opportunities, and foster women's empowerment in decision-making processes. Introducing a gender-transformative perspective entails recognizing and addressing the structural inequalities that impede women's full participation and contribution to agriculture. Moreover, climate change exacerbates existing gender inequalities in agriculture, underscoring the urgent need for gender-sensitive climate adaptation and mitigation strategies. Only through concerted efforts can we achieve inclusive and sustainable development in Nepal's agricultural sector.

3.2 Macro level

¹⁸ Bhawana, K.C. and Race, D., 2020. Women's approach to farming in the context of feminization of agriculture: A case study from the middle hills of Nepal. *World Development Perspectives*, 20, p.100260.

¹⁹ Devkota, R., Pant, L.P., Hambly Odame, H. et al. Rethinking gender mainstreaming in agricultural innovation policy in Nepal: a critical gender analysis. *Agric Hum Values* 39, 1373–1390 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10460-022-10326-1>

²⁰ Paudel, G.P., Gartaula, H. and Craufurd, P., 2020. Gender differentiated small-scale farm mechanization in Nepal hills: An application of exogenous switching treatment regression. *Technology in Society*, 61, p.101250.

²¹ Songsermsawas, T., Kafle, K. and Winters, P., 2023. Decomposing the impacts of an agricultural value chain development project by ethnicity and gender in nepal. *World Development*, 168, p.106259.

Gender equality holds significant importance in the international discourse surrounding the agriculture sector, particularly in the context of SDG 5: Gender Equality, and SDG 2: Zero Hunger. Recognizing the vital contributions of women to agriculture and rural economies, SDG 5 emphasizes the need to eliminate gender disparities and empower women and girls in all aspects of life, including access to resources, education, healthcare, and participation in decision-making processes. Such gender equal opportunities in the agriculture could address barriers that prevent women from fully participating in agricultural activities, accessing productive resources like land and finance, and benefiting from agricultural value chains. Moreover, gender-responsive agricultural policies and programs are essential for promoting inclusive growth, reducing poverty, and ensuring the well-being of rural communities worldwide, aligning with the broader agenda of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 2, which aims to end hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture. For the purpose of ensuring no one is left behind, a National Level Results Framework has been developed which aims support all three tiers of the Federal, Provincial and Local governments to create a favorable policy, institutional and programmatic environment to lend support to reach those who are left behind in relation to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Review of documents indicate ongoing efforts at ensuring LNOB and ‘mainstreaming the SDGs in the plans and policies at the sub-national level, numerous challenges still remain in the existing framework for implementation of the SDGs and focusing on LNOB²². Some of the core challenges include, (i) Need for identification of marginalized groups at the local levels, (ii) Limited implementation of good policies, (iii) Need to strengthen Provincial and Local Governments, (iv) Need for realigning the periodic planning processes at the Province and Local levels, (v) Need for strengthening capacity of local organizations, especially for promoting locally led development focusing on the SDG and LNOB Goals, (vi) Urgent need for strengthening and systematizing the M&E Framework to address gaps in disaggregated data.²³

Until the early 1980s, Nepal's agricultural policies predominantly favoured men, leaving women farmers marginalized in development initiatives. However, the declaration of the Decade of Women by the United Nations from 1975 to 1985, coinciding with Nepal's sixth Five-Year Plan (1980-85), marked a significant shift towards recognizing the productive role of women in national development plans for the first time. Subsequently, Nepal has progressively endeavoured to integrate women and address gender disparities in the agricultural sector through successive national plans. Despite efforts such as training programs and quotas to enhance women's participation, challenges persist in effectively translating policies into actionable initiatives. The establishment of the Women Farmers' Development Division under the Ministry of Agriculture aimed to mainstream gender issues, yet implementation gaps and accessibility issues have hindered its effectiveness. While strategies like promoting women's groups and improving access to resources have been introduced, obstacles such as financial institution requirements for husband signatures and limited information dissemination continue to impede progress towards gender equality in agriculture. Several major agricultural policies in Nepal have incorporated gender analysis and specific provisions to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the agricultural sector. For instance, the National Agriculture Policy of 2004 set the ambitious target of achieving 50% women's participation in all interventions, institutions, and organizations. It also introduced initiatives such as mobile training camps tailored to facilitate women's involvement in training sessions. Similarly, the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy of 2006 emphasized increasing women's access to inputs and services for high-value production and Agro-enterprises, along with providing technical knowledge and support for the adoption of water-saving irrigation technologies. The strategy also focused on capacity building through mobile training sessions and the development of women technicians to better reach women farmers. Moreover, the Nepal Agricultural Extension Strategy of 2007 aimed to reduce constraints related to women's mobility, access to information, skills, credit, and services. Despite being old, these policies and strategies still remain active and continue to shape interventions in the sector. Given the new federal system in the country, there is a pressing need to revise and update these policies and strategies to ensure they remain relevant and effective in addressing current challenges and opportunities in Nepal's agricultural landscape.

The Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management in Agriculture: Priority Framework for Action (2011–2020) identified gender equity as a cross-cutting priority and acknowledged the vulnerabilities of women and marginalized groups to climate extremes. While it encouraged gender-sensitive agriculture technology for climate adaptation, it lacked regular budgeting provisions for adaptation and mechanisms for gender mainstreaming and women's participation in planning and monitoring²⁴.

²²<https://www.adccn.org.np/>

²³*ibid*

²⁴ Chhetri, B.P. and Ghimire, S., 2023. Gender differentiated impacts of climate change on agriculture in Nepal: A review. *Innovations in Agriculture*, 6, pp.01-01.

Nepal Agricultural Research Centre (NARC)'s strategic vision for agricultural research from 2011 to 2030 addresses the need for gender-sensitive research, development, and technology dissemination, aiming to generate additional employment opportunities for women in seed production and value chains. It recognizes gender-differentiated roles in agriculture and the impact of climate change, with provisions for women's inclusion. It emphasizes gender-sensitive research and development of agricultural technologies, along with capacity building for women farmers. However, it does not specify financial provisions for these efforts. The National Seed Vision (2013-2025) aims to create an enabling environment for promoting gender equality in collaboration with private and civil society organizations, along with measures to minimise entry barriers for women and disadvantaged groups in seed value chains. It aims for inclusive development by ensuring women's participation and recognizing gender-differentiated roles and climate change impacts. However, it lacks specific measures to promote women's access to suitable seed varieties and does not address budgeting and monitoring provisions.

The 15th National Plan endeavours to institutionalize gender-responsive budget systems, understanding the crucial need for equitable representation and the mitigation of gender disparities within governance structures. However, despite this ambition, a study by the UNDP reveals concerning findings. In Karnali Province, only 7% of programs were identified as directly gender-responsive, with 21% being indirectly responsive, leaving a staggering 72% neutral in terms of gender considerations. This glaring disparity highlights the urgent need to address gender disparities and foster social inclusion in local development initiatives²⁵.

While many policies have made strides in addressing gender disparities in Nepal's agricultural sector, some have faced challenges in fully integrating gender perspectives. For example, the ongoing Irrigation Policy, which was revised in 2013, has yet to comprehensively address gender divisions in labor and decision-making processes. While the policy emphasizes gender inclusion, it overlooks the gender-differentiated impacts of climate change. Although it promotes women's representation in user committees, it lacks provisions for their meaningful involvement in planning, budgeting, and monitoring processes.

On the other hand, the Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS), spanning from 2015 to 2035, outlines ambitious goals such as increasing women's land ownership and promoting women's organizations and cooperatives for technology dissemination and marketing. Developed by the Ministry of Agricultural and Livestock Development (MoALD) with support from 13 development partners, ADS was approved by the Government of Nepal on July 26, 2015, as a key policy framework for agricultural transformation. It aims to create a self-reliant, sustainable, competitive, and inclusive agricultural sector driving economic growth and enhancing livelihoods and food security. ADS focuses on governance, productivity, profitable commercialization, and competitiveness to accelerate agricultural growth.

The Land Use Policy, related to the Ministry of Land Management, Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation (MoLCPA), emphasizes gender inclusivity in Land Use Plans and mandates local community participation. It aims for fair and sustainable land use practices that are crucial for both land management and agricultural development, benefiting women and marginalized communities. The National Land Policy of 2019, under the purview of MoLCPA, prioritizes women's land rights, providing fee concessions for land transfers to women and ensuring inclusive land rights for vulnerable groups while addressing environmental challenges like food security and infrastructure.

Aligned with this focus on inclusivity and empowerment, the Cooperatives Act of 2017, overseen by MoLCPA, advances gender equality by offering tax exemptions and extending financial and technical support for cooperative farming, which is vital for agricultural development. It particularly benefits marginalized groups and women, and it stipulates that a minimum of thirty-three percent of the Board of Directors in Cooperative Organizations must be women. Moreover, Nepal's National Cooperative Policy of 2012 has an explicit provision for gender and social inclusion, committing to offering vocational and skills training for women cooperative members to ensure quality performance.

3.3 Meso Level

In Nepal, agricultural governance operates through three tiers: federal, provincial, and local, each with distinct roles and challenges. At the federal level, the Ministry of Agriculture focuses on policy formulation and international collaboration. Provinces tailor policies to regional needs, addressing issues like agribusiness, disease control and infrastructure. Local governments execute policies, with district-level offices crucial for dissemination and gender mainstreaming. Additionally, I/NGOs contribute expertise and resources, though their impact can be limited by logistical and sustainability concerns.

²⁵ Local governments in Nepal's Karnali Province mainstreaming gender-responsive budgeting, 2023 <https://undpnepal.medium.com/local-governments-in-nepals-karnali-province-mainstreaming-gender-responsive-budgeting-4c93d9e96382>

Despite the involvement of various actors at different levels, a significant gap persists in addressing gender disparities within institutions. This gap stems from limited integration of gender considerations into institutional practices, insufficient capacity for gender analysis and mainstreaming, fragmented approaches, and cultural and structural barriers. Closing this gap requires concerted efforts from all actors, including strengthening capacity, fostering collaboration, and prioritizing gender equality as a core organizational value across local, national, regional, and international levels.

Agricultural development issues in Nepal are multidimensional, encompassing crop, livestock, and horticulture sectors, along with processing, distribution, and trade. Effective plans and policies necessitate cooperation and coordination among key stakeholders, emphasizing gender-inclusive and implementable approaches. Gender-responsive/transformational outcomes demand strengthening across all institutions and bodies vertically and horizontally. While current efforts from the GoN, external development partners, and NGOs address various interventions, they often remain compartmentalized, requiring a holistic, multi-dimensional focus. The country's federal restructuring further underscores the need for cohesive strategies that align with local, provincial, and national levels. Despite efforts since 1960, agricultural growth lags behind neighbouring countries. The ADS seeks to boost agricultural growth and gender equity, contingent on supportive policies aligned with federal structures. Enhancing stakeholder participation, fostering public-private partnerships, promoting commercialization, building institutional capacity, and incorporating evidence-based, gender-sensitive policy revisions with appropriate legislative provisions are essential for advancing agricultural development and gender equity in Nepal.

3.4 Micro Level

In the western provinces of Karnali and Sudurpaschim in Nepal, women are primary contributors of the agricultural sector, constituting a significant portion of the economically active workforce. In Karnali, over 55% of agricultural workers are female, representing a 13% higher likelihood of women engaging in agriculture compared to men. Similarly, in Sudurpaschim, around 60% of the workforce is female, with an 18.8% higher likelihood of women participating in agricultural activities than men⁷. These figures underscore the invaluable role of women in driving agricultural productivity in these regions.

However, despite their substantial contribution, women in these areas face numerous challenges that hinder their full participation and benefit from the agricultural sector. Gender disparities persist in access to resources such as land, credit, and agricultural inputs, limiting women's ability to maximize their productivity and income. The phenomenon of male migration further complicates gender dynamics in the sector. A recent research delves into the intricate implications of labour migration for the social inclusion of women in agriculture within western Nepal. Through a comprehensive mixed-methods approach, the study unveils the nuanced dynamics shaping women's participation in community activities amidst the absence of migrant men. The findings reveal diverse experiences influenced by intersecting identities such as gender, caste/ethnicity, kinship, age, and economic status. Particularly vulnerable are young women from nuclear, low-caste, and economically disadvantaged households, who face compounded challenges and limited access to avenues of participation. Additionally, the study underscores the enduring influence of caste and kinship networks in mediating women's access to community resources. Based on these insights, several recommendations can be proposed to address the challenges faced by left-behind women in migrant households in western Nepal. Policies and interventions should acknowledge the diverse experiences of women and consider their caste/ethnicity, age, family structure, and economic status. Efforts must be made to reduce resource and time barriers for disadvantaged women, enabling their participation in community activities and decision-making. Empowering women who assume traditionally masculine roles due to male migration is crucial, along with strengthening their relational normative structures to ensure access to resources. It is essential to promote meaningful participation of women in development programs, challenge traditional kinship institutions, and ensure inclusive participation across all social groups. Additionally, investigating migration reasons and tailoring interventions accordingly, along with expanding data collection to understand intra-household dynamics, can offer valuable insights for policy formulation. Transformative policy efforts addressing the root causes of gender and social inequalities, especially focusing on women from lower socioeconomic and community status backgrounds, are essential to advance women's empowerment in rural Nepal.²⁶

Moreover, insights from focus group discussion of a study²⁷ conducted in 2020 in Doti and Dadeldhura districts of the Sudurpaschim province shed light on the multifaceted effects of gender disparities on

S., Upadhyaya, R., van der Geest, K., Adhikari, Y. and Büttner, M., 2024. Rural out-migration and water governance: Gender and social relations mediate and sustain irrigation systems in Nepal. *World Development*, 177, p.106544.

women's workload and agency in rural settings. Women participants express concerns about the escalating burden of responsibilities they face, especially in the absence of male counterparts, leading to an overall increase in their workload. Additionally, persistent wage disparities, with women receiving lower compensation for comparable work, underscore the prevalence of gender-based wage discrimination despite constitutional guarantees of equal pay. These revelations emphasize the urgent need for addressing gender inequalities in the western Nepal.

Furthermore, the study uncovers significant disparities in participation rates in water user groups based on caste affiliations. Compared to households belonging to the Brahmin caste, those from the Chhetri or Dalit castes had substantially lower odds of participation in water user groups. This intersectionality between caste-based inequalities and access to community resources highlights the necessity for targeted interventions to address caste-based discrimination and foster inclusive participation in community governance structures in rural Nepal.

Conclusions for the project

Despite constituting a significant portion of Nepal's agricultural workforce, women face systemic barriers such as limited land ownership, restricted access to resources, and gender-based wage discrimination, restricted access to resources, particularly, caste-based discrimination that restricts inclusive participation and access to community resources. Aside from interventions specifically targeting women and marginalised groups, efforts at ensuring GESI responsiveness/transformation remain mostly cosmetic. These challenges hinder their empowerment and equitable engagement within the agricultural sector, highlighting the urgent need for comprehensive mitigation strategies. In this context, addressing gender disparities in Nepal's agricultural sector requires concerted efforts to promote gender-responsive policies, provide equal access to resources and opportunities, and foster women's empowerment in decision-making processes. Furthermore, robust policy frameworks and institutional efforts are essential to dismantle structural barriers and ensure effective implementation of gender-inclusive measures. Collaboration among stakeholders at all levels is crucial for translating policies into actionable initiatives that promote gender equality and women's empowerment in agriculture.

Recommendations:

1. **Enhance Policy Implementation:** Prioritize effective enforcement of existing gender-responsive policies and strategies within Nepal's agricultural sector to ensure tangible outcomes.
2. **Improve Access to Resources:** Focus on facilitating equal access to essential resources such as land, credit, extension services, and agricultural technologies for women farmers through targeted initiatives.
3. **Promote Women's Empowerment:** Implement capacity-building programs aimed at enhancing women's skills, knowledge, and leadership roles in agriculture, fostering their active participation and decision-making.
4. **Address Cultural Barriers:** Launch community-based awareness campaigns and initiatives to challenge and transform traditional gender norms and stereotypes that constrain women's engagement and agency in agricultural activities.
5. **Foster Collaboration:** Encourage collaborative efforts among government agencies, NGOs, international organizations, and local communities to comprehensively address gender disparities in agriculture, leveraging resources and expertise effectively.
6. **Combat Caste-Based Discrimination:** Implement targeted interventions to combat caste-based discrimination and promote inclusive participation in community governance structures in rural Nepal.
7. **Identifying the core Target Groups:** A core focus across federal and sub-national government must own GESI dimensions and its intersectionality – by identifying the core target groups, and working to transform the mindsets of policy makers, different institutions, service providers as well as service seekers.

Chapter 4: Gender-responsiveness, expertise & gender equality in the partner organisation

The second phase of the GRAPE programme in Western Nepal aims to promote sustainable agriculture and green economic development with a focus on women's economic empowerment. The Ministry of Land Management, Cooperatives, and Poverty Alleviation (MoLCPA) is a key partner in this initiative. MoLCPA is responsible for land administration, sustainable land resource management, and cooperative operations

²⁷ <https://www.lawcommission.gov.np/en/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/civil-service-rules-2>

in Nepal. MoLCPA's role extends to supporting entrepreneurship and poverty alleviation through various initiatives. These include facilitating access to land for marginalized farmers and farm laborers and promoting productive agricultural and entrepreneurial practices. This chapter examines MoLCPA's efforts in gender responsiveness, expertise, and gender equality. MoLCPA has shown commitment to gender equality by integrating various initiatives, such as appointing a Gender Focal Point, incorporating Gender Responsive Budgeting, and hiring a Sociologist. However, there is a need for comprehensive training programs to deepen staff understanding of gender equality issues, institutional support for mainstreaming gender equality, and financial and technical assistance to effectively implement gender equality initiatives. Under MoLCPA, employment is classified as civil service and is regulated by the Civil Service Act of 2049 (1993). This act has undergone amendments, including the Second Amendment Act of 2064 (2007) and the Eighth Amendment Rules of 2067 (2010), as well as the Civil Service Rules of 2050 (1993)²⁸. Female civil service employees are granted 60 days of paid maternity leave, which can be availed either before or after childbirth. They also have the provision to extend this leave by an additional 6 months, albeit without pay, as per the Civil Service Rules of 1993. While there is no explicit provision for maternity-related illness or complications, employees are entitled to 12 days of general sick leave annually. Male civil service employees, on the other hand, are entitled to 15 days of paid maternity care leave. However, there is no provision for part-time work rights specifically related to maternity. Furthermore, in workplaces with 50 or more employees, breastfeeding employees have the right to both time and an appropriate space for breastfeeding. The Civil Service Act of 1993 has provisions aimed at promoting inclusivity within the civil service by allocating a specific percentage of posts filled through open competition to various marginalized groups. As per the Act, 45% of these posts are reserved for women, Adibasi/Janjati, Madhesi, Dalit, disabled, and individuals from remote areas. The Second Amendment to the Act further refines this allocation among these groups by setting specific percentages. Women are allocated 33% of the reserved posts, Adibasi/Janjati are allocated 27%, Madhesi are allocated 22%, Dalit are allocated 9%, disabled individuals are allocated 5%, and individuals from backward areas are allocated 4%. However, despite these provisions, staffing under MoLCPA does not fully reflect these allocations. The Act also sets an age limit of 40 years for women and 35 years for others for entry into civil service. Certain positions are exclusively open to women as specified by government notifications. Civil servants falling under the reserved categories are provided with specific benefits, including a one-year probationary relaxation period, a one-year relaxation in the promotion period, and obsequies leave based on religious/cultural practices. Additionally, working couples have a provision to be stationed in the same district if vacancies allow. To further encourage female participation, the Public Service Commission (PSC) has a provision to waive the pre-qualification examination for eligible candidates applying for reserved seats.

While the ministry adheres to "The Sexual Harassment at Workplace (Prevention) Act, 2014 (2071)" to ensure a safe working environment, the mechanisms for its implementation within the ministry remain unclear. This lack of clarity, combined with the influence of a patriarchal society, can have significant implications for female employees. In a patriarchal society, power dynamics often favour men, making it challenging for female employees to report instances of sexual harassment without fear of retaliation or disbelief. The absence of a clear and well-defined mechanism can exacerbate these fears and further marginalize female employees, discouraging them from coming forward and seeking redress. The ambiguity in reporting procedures, support systems, and disciplinary actions can create an environment where instances of sexual harassment may go unnoticed or unaddressed. This situation perpetuates a culture of impunity, where perpetrators are not held accountable for their actions, and victims are left vulnerable and unsupported.

The Ministry holds a significant role in overseeing land management, cooperatives, and poverty alleviation initiatives in Nepal. While MoLCPA's policies are aligned with legal frameworks and gender equality guidelines, there is room for improvement in strengthening their implementation and enforcement from a gender perspective.

Within MoLCPA, there is an opportunity to enhance the institutional framework for equal opportunity and diversity management. Establishing a dedicated structure or unit to oversee gender equality initiatives could further bolster the ministry's commitment to fostering an inclusive environment. Such a structure could provide female employees with increased awareness of available support and assurance that they can assert their rights without fear of retaliation.

Emphasizing the importance of gender-sensitive approaches can promote an organizational culture that values gender equality and diversity. This could involve raising awareness among leadership, providing

[050-1993.pdf](https://www.lawcommission.gov.np/en/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/civil-service-rules-2050-1993.pdf)"<https://www.lawcommission.gov.np/en/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/civil-service-rules-2050-1993.pdf>"

clear guidance and support to address gender-specific barriers, and nurturing an environment where all employees feel valued and supported.

Upon reviewing MoLCPA's website, the focus appears to be predominantly on land management, with limited visibility given to cooperatives and poverty alleviation in their vision, goals, and objectives. From a gender-responsive perspective, this skewed emphasis may have implications for gender equality and women's empowerment. Ensuring that MoLCPA's vision, goals, and objectives more comprehensively reflect their commitment to all three sectors, including gender-responsive approaches, can enhance transparency and promote gender equality and women's empowerment across all areas of their mandate. Furthermore, the Ministry's Annual Progress Report for Fiscal Year 2078/079 highlights a lack of gender-sensitive reporting, including the absence of gender-disaggregated data and specific mention of women's contributions and concerns. Improving gender-sensitive reporting can provide valuable insights into the progress made towards achieving gender equality goals and help identify areas that require further attention.

Conclusions for the project

The MoLCPA exhibits a strong commitment to sustainable agriculture, economic development, and gender equality. Despite this commitment, there are significant gaps in the implementation and enforcement of gender-responsive policies. Challenges such as unclear mechanisms for preventing workplace harassment, disparities in staffing, and lack of gender-sensitive reporting persist, hindering progress towards gender equality and inclusive development.

Recommendations:

- **Strengthen the role of the existing gender focal point:** Strengthen the role of existing gender focal point within MoLCPA to focus on gender equality initiatives. This strengthening can drive efforts to foster an inclusive environment and champion gender equality across all activities by the ministry.
- **Enhance Gender Sensitivity Training:** Advocate for the development and implementation of comprehensive gender sensitivity training programs for MoLCPA staff. This training can raise awareness, promote understanding, and instill values that prioritize gender equality and diversity.
- **Improve Gender-Sensitive Reporting:** Advocate for the inclusion of gender-disaggregated data and specific mentions of women's contributions and concerns in MoLCPA's annual reports. Transparent and gender-sensitive reporting can facilitate monitoring progress and identifying areas needing attention.
- **Balanced Focus Across Mandated Sectors:** Advocate for a balanced approach in MoLCPA's vision, goals, and objectives to ensure equal emphasis on sustainable agriculture, cooperatives, poverty alleviation, and gender-responsive approaches. This balanced focus will reflect a holistic commitment to all mandated sectors.
- **Clarify Mechanisms for Workplace Harassment Prevention:** Advocate for the establishment of clear and well-defined procedures for reporting workplace harassment, along with robust support systems and disciplinary actions. Ensuring a safe and supportive working environment is crucial for the well-being and empowerment of all employees.

Chapter 5: Gender responsiveness & expertise in the project/ among project staff in the country

The GRAPE II project has the objective to strengthen gender-transformative, climate-resilient, local economic development in selected provinces of Nepal, which aligns with the Feminist Development Policy of the German Government (BMZ) and Nepal Government's vision of Gender equality.

5.1 Equal opportunities in the team

While the GIZ Nepal office lacks a dedicated guideline specifically addressing gender equality, including within the GRAPE II project, advancing gender equality stands as a core objective for GIZ. Within this framework, team members are guaranteed equitable opportunities, reflecting GIZ's dedication to fostering inclusivity and gender parity within its operations.

All team members benefit from staff development measures, including capacity-building opportunities and both national and international trainings, irrespective of their gender, caste/ethnicity, or disability. Training is provided based on individual capacity development needs, ensuring equitable access and opportunities for all staff. To promote gender equality, the project has implemented various measures to foster an inclusive environment, introducing the following initiatives and facilities:

- **Flexi work hours:** GIZ Nepal allows employees to request flexible working hours, which involve adjusting the start and end times of their workday while maintaining the same number of working hours. This arrangement offers flexibility in the employees' scheduled work hours.

- **Mobile/Remote work facility:** GIZ Nepal facilitates working from home when employees face challenges commuting to the office due to external factors. If an employee requests to work from home for personal reasons, must be approved by the supervisor.
- **Maternity/Paternity leave:** Pregnant women employed at GIZ Nepal are entitled to maternity leave of up to 98 calendar days, which can be utilized before and/or after childbirth. Male employees are granted paternity leave of 15 working days immediately following the birth of their child, or they can choose to take this leave within one month of the child's birth to provide care.
- **Breastfeeding room:** The GIZ Nepal office provides a breastfeeding room and offers a private space to support lactating mothers. Employees are given one hour per day for breastfeeding until their child reaches six months of age, providing flexibility to nurse either at the office or at home. However, the office does not provide creche facilities.
- **Zero tolerance to sexual harassment:** The project complies with the Workplace Harassment policy of GIZ Nepal.
- **Grievance mechanism:** In case of grievance related to sexual harassment an established complaint mechanism is in place for registering complaints pertaining to workplace or sexual harassment to ensure a safe and respectful work environment for all employees.

5.2 Gender overview of the team members

The project demonstrates commitment to Gender Equality, Disability Inclusion, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI). To oversee the gender issues in the project, two technical staffs (female and male) are currently delivering in tandem the responsibilities of gender focal person as needed. However, further steps are required to enhance inclusion, as only one team member has a disability, and only 16% of team members representing marginalized castes and ethnic groups. The gender analysis of the GRAPE project's team distribution (see Table 1) reveals significant gender imbalances across different levels of management. At the high managerial level, there is a notable disparity with males predominantly occupying positions of authority. This is particularly evident with no females in the Head of Program role and fewer females in other managerial positions compared to their male counterparts. Similarly, at the middle level, males continue to dominate, with twice as many males as females serving as Technical Advisors. While the gender gap narrows slightly at the Officer level, males still outnumber females. Moreover, at the non-officer level, roles such as Driver and Office Helper are predominantly held by males, with only one female represented in the Office Helper role. These findings highlight the need for targeted efforts to address gender disparities and promote gender equality within the project's workforce.

Table: 1 Gender disaggregation of current employees in the GRAPE project

Level	Designation/position	Male n(%)*	Female n(%)	Total n(%)
High Managerial level	Head of Program	1(100)	0	1(100)
	Component Manager	2(66.66)	1(33.33)	3(100)
	Finance Manager/ Senior Finance	2(100)	0	2(100)
	Sub Total	5(83.33)	1(16.66)	6(100)
Middle level	Technical Advisor (+ international)	10(66.66)	5(33.33)	15(100)
	Sub Total	10(66.66)	5(33.33)	15(100)
Officer level	Admin and Finance Advisor	3(60)	2(40)	5(100)
	Admin Assistant	1(100)	0	1(100)
	Sub Total	4(66.66)	2(33.33)	6(100)
Non-officer	Driver	6(100)	0	6(100)
	Office Helper	3(75)	1(25)	4(100)
	Sub Total	9(90)	1(10)	10(100)
	Grand total	28(75.67)	9(24.32)	37(100)

*n(%)= number (percentage)

Besides, subtle gender-specific disadvantages and patterns of discrimination are evident within the organization. Women in leadership roles may not always be perceived as equal to their male counterparts. The distinct differences in how colleagues are addressed reflect underlying gender biases and stereotypes within the organization. Referring to males as 'sir' positions them with authority and respect, reinforcing traditional gender roles that equate masculinity with power and leadership. On the other hand, addressing females as 'baini' (sister) diminishes their professional status, placing them in a familial or subordinate role. This gendered language not only perpetuates inequality but also contributes to a workplace culture

where women may feel undervalued and marginalized. Addressing these linguistic disparities is crucial in promoting gender equality and fostering an inclusive and respectful work environment. Furthermore, a significant senior-junior gap exists, with younger colleagues, often disproportionately women, facing challenges in having their requests met by senior colleagues. This disparity can hinder collaboration, limit mentorship opportunities, and obstruct effective communication, creating a work environment that may prioritize age or seniority over merit. Addressing this gap is essential to promote gender equality, encourage inclusivity, and establish a workplace where all employees can effectively collaborate and contribute.

5.3 Analysis of the Result framework

The result framework module aims to promote gender-transformative, climate-resilient, local economic development in selected provinces of Nepal. It focuses on key indicators such as changing perceptions of women's economic roles, increasing municipal investments in gender-responsive initiatives, promoting women-led businesses, and fostering private sector partnerships for women's economic empowerment. Outputs are designed with a gender-transformative approach, encompassing capacity building, community dialogues, business development services, and market linkages. Assumptions underpinning the framework include ensuring 30% representation of women in public-private dialogues at municipal or provincial levels, as well as maintaining a 65% share of women among supported entrepreneurs.

To amplify its impact, the module can benefit from several enhancements. Early baseline data collection would establish a clear starting point for measuring progress against indicators. Diverse stakeholder engagement, particularly involving women, youth, and marginalized groups, would enrich project outcomes and foster inclusive decision-making. Targeted capacity-building programs, such as training in climate-resilient technologies and entrepreneurship for women and youth, could empower local communities. A well-designed monitoring and evaluation framework would enable timely adjustments and ensure accountability. Strengthening partnerships with local organizations and leveraging their resources would extend the project's reach and sustainability. Incorporating storytelling and success narratives in communication campaigns could inspire broader participation and awareness. Additionally, engaging with policymakers for advocacy on gender-responsive policies and embedding project initiatives into long-term local economic strategies would enhance the project's lasting impact.

For a more gender-transformative approach, revisions to the module's indicators and outputs can be made to explicitly target gender disparities, women's empowerment, and gender equality in local economic development. For example, Module Goal Indicator 1 could aim for a 50% increase in women's active participation and leadership within the entrepreneur ecosystem by 2028. Municipalities could be encouraged to allocate at least 15% of their annual budgets to projects benefiting women-led enterprises and gender-responsive initiatives by 2028. Support could be provided for the establishment or growth of 800 businesses, with a focus on women-led and youth-led enterprises in climate-resilient sectors by 2028. Partnerships could be established with private sector companies committed to women's economic empowerment, targeting a 25% increase in the export volume of women-led agricultural products by 2028. Outputs could be revised to develop communication campaigns highlighting women entrepreneurs, offer capacity-building programs tailored for women, provide targeted business development services to women-led enterprises, prioritize partnerships with gender-responsive private sector organizations, and focus on training programs that equip women and youth with skills in innovative technologies and management practices. These enhancements would ensure a comprehensive and truly gender-transformative approach to local economic development in Nepal.

Conclusions for the project

The GRAPE II project in Nepal demonstrates a commitment to gender equality and social inclusion through various initiatives and measures. However, the gender analysis reveals significant disparities in gender representation across different levels of management, indicating a need for targeted efforts to address these imbalances and promote gender equality within the project's workforce. While the result framework aims to promote gender-transformative, climate-resilient, local economic development, there is a scope for enhancement to explicitly target gender disparities, women's empowerment, and gender equality. By implementing following recommendations, the GRAPE II project can further enhance its gender responsiveness and expertise, fostering a more inclusive and equitable work environment while achieving its objectives of promoting sustainable agricultural systems and local green economic growth in Nepal.

Recommendations:

- **Enhancing Social Inclusion in Project Team Composition:** Increase representation of team members with disabilities and individuals from marginalized castes and ethnic groups through targeted recruitment and inclusive workplace practices.

- **Gender Equity in Leadership Roles:** Implement strategies to address the gender imbalance at managerial and high managerial levels by promoting women to leadership positions and fostering an inclusive work environment.
- **Gender-Sensitive Language Training:** Conduct training sessions to address the use of gender-specific language and promote respectful and inclusive communication within the organization.
- **Senior-Junior Collaboration:** Encourage collaboration between senior and junior colleagues, particularly women, to foster mentorship opportunities and effective communication.
- **Gender-Responsive Result Framework:** Enhance the result framework to explicitly target gender disparities, women's empowerment, and gender equality in local economic development. This includes revising indicators and outputs to set ambitious goals for women's participation and leadership in the entrepreneur ecosystem, municipal investments in women-led enterprises, and partnerships with gender-responsive private sector organizations.
- **Baseline Data Collection:** Conduct early baseline data collection to establish clear starting points for measuring progress against gender equality and social inclusion indicators.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Engage diverse stakeholders, including women, youth, and marginalized groups, in project activities to enrich outcomes and foster inclusive decision-making.
- **Capacity-Building Programs:** Implement targeted capacity-building programs focusing on climate-resilient technologies and entrepreneurship for women and youth to empower local communities.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Develop a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to enable timely adjustments and ensure accountability in gender-responsive initiatives.
- **Partnership Strengthening:** Strengthen partnerships with local organizations and leverage their resources to extend the project's reach and sustainability.
- **Policy Advocacy:** Engage with policymakers for advocacy on gender-responsive policies and embed project initiatives into long-term local economic strategies.

Chapter 6: Measures for a gender responsive/transformational project design

1. Summary of the results of the analysis and conclusions for the project	2. Measures to promote gender equality	3. Measures to prevent or reduce possible unintended negative impacts
<p>While Nepal has laid a strong foundation for gender equality through legislative frameworks and international commitments, sustained efforts are needed to challenge entrenched societal norms, address implementation gaps, and ensure inclusive development across all levels of society. Only through collaborative action involving government, civil society, international partners, and local communities can Nepal realize genuine gender equality, fostering a society where all individuals can thrive free from discrimination.</p> <p>Despite constituting a significant portion of Nepal's agricultural workforce, women face systemic barriers such as limited land ownership, restricted access to resources, and gender-based wage discrimination, restricted access to resources, particularly, caste-based discrimination that restricts inclusive participation and access to community resources. Aside from interventions specifically targeting women and marginalised groups, efforts at ensuring GESI responsiveness/transformation remain mostly cosmetic. These challenges hinder their empowerment and equitable engagement within the agricultural sector, highlighting the urgent need for comprehensive mitigation strategies. In this context, addressing gender disparities in Nepal's agricultural sector requires concerted efforts to promote gender-responsive policies, provide equal access to resources and opportunities, and foster women's empowerment in decision-making processes. Furthermore, robust policy frameworks and institutional efforts are essential to dismantle structural barriers and ensure effective implementation of gender-inclusive measures. Collaboration among stakeholders at all levels is crucial for translating policies into actionable initiatives that promote gender equality and women's empowerment in agriculture.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforce Legal Mandates: Nepal must prioritize the rigorous enforcement of existing legislative frameworks and policy directives dedicated to advancing gender equality. This entails robust resource allocation and the establishment of comprehensive oversight mechanisms across all tiers of governance to ensure the effective implementation of gender-sensitive policies. • Promote Economic Agency: Nepal ought to spearhead initiatives aimed at fostering economic empowerment among women, with a particular emphasis on narrowing the gender gap in employment and economic opportunities. This necessitates the rollout of programs such as skill enhancement initiatives, entrepreneurship incubation, and facilitating equitable access to financial resources and asset ownership for women. • Enhance GESI-Disaggregated Data Collection: Nepal should prioritize the enhancement of data collection methodologies to capture the nuanced experiences of women and marginalized groups comprehensively. By leveraging GESI-disaggregated data, policymakers can craft evidence-based interventions that address the multifaceted challenges faced by diverse communities effectively. • Investing in Marginalised Groups: The federal structure provides an opportunity to strategically address gender and social inclusion-based disparities at sub-national levels. Therefore, focus should be laid on investing in the marginalized groups for their agency building, while generating support from sub-national elected representatives for ensuring necessary planning and budgeting on contextual gender equality concerns need prioritization. • Enhance Policy Implementation: Prioritize effective enforcement of existing gender-responsive policies and strategies within Nepal's agricultural sector to ensure tangible outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge Deep-Seated Norms: Nepal should proactively address the entrenched socio-cultural norms perpetuating gender disparities, including patriarchal structures, caste-based discrimination, and entrenched traditional practices. To achieve this, targeted awareness campaigns and community mobilization efforts must be orchestrated for government officials, policymakers, community leaders, educators, parents, and the public. These campaigns aim to catalyze transformative shifts towards more inclusive gender norms and practices. • Combat Gender-Based Violence: Nepal needs to bolster its legal infrastructure and support services to combat gender-based violence comprehensively. This includes the enactment of robust legislation and the establishment of holistic support mechanisms tailored to the diverse needs of survivors. Concurrently, strategic advocacy campaigns must challenge ingrained societal attitudes and promote norms that reject all forms of gender-based violence. • Address Cultural Barriers: Launch community-based awareness campaigns and initiatives to challenge and transform traditional gender norms and stereotypes that constrain women's engagement and agency in agricultural activities. • Combat Caste-Based Discrimination: Implement targeted interventions to combat caste-based discrimination and promote inclusive participation in community governance structures in rural Nepal. • Identifying the core Target Groups: A core focus across federal and sub-national government must own GESI dimensions and its intersectionality – by identifying the core target groups, and working to transform the mindsets of policy makers, different institutions, service providers as well as service seekers.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve Access to Resources: Focus on facilitating equal access to essential resources such as land, credit, extension services, and agricultural technologies for women farmers through targeted initiatives. • Promote Women's Empowerment: Implement capacity-building programs aimed at enhancing women's skills, knowledge, and leadership roles in agriculture, fostering their active participation and decision-making. • Foster Collaboration: Encourage collaborative efforts among government agencies, NGOs, international organizations, and local communities to comprehensively address gender disparities in agriculture, leveraging resources and expertise effectively. 	
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I. Methodology		
<p>Module objective of GRAPE-II project: Gender-transformative, climate-resilient, and biodiversity-friendly local economic development is strengthened in selected provinces of Nepal.</p>	Overarching project measures	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender-Responsive Training Programs: Implement training programs that focus on enhancing women's skills and capacities in climate-resilient and biodiversity-friendly agricultural practices, entrepreneurship, and natural resource management. • Access to Climate-Resilient Technologies: Facilitate access to climate-resilient agricultural technologies and practices, such as drought-resistant crops, water-saving irrigation systems, and renewable energy solutions, prioritizing women farmers and local communities. • Promotion of Sustainable Livelihoods: Support the development and scaling-up of eco-friendly and sustainable livelihood opportunities, including eco-tourism, organic farming, and green enterprises, with a focus on empowering women and marginalized groups. • Community-Based Natural Resource Management: Encourage community-based natural resource management initiatives that promote biodiversity conservation, sustainable land use, and ecosystem restoration, involving active participation of women and local communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness and Advocacy Campaigns: Launch awareness and advocacy campaigns to challenge and transform traditional gender norms, raise awareness about climate change impacts, and promote biodiversity conservation among policymakers, community leaders, and the public. • Policy and Regulatory Frameworks: Advocate for the development and implementation of gender-responsive policies, laws, and regulations that support climate-resilient and biodiversity-friendly local economic development in selected provinces. • Inclusive Governance and Decision-Making: Strengthen inclusive governance structures and mechanisms that ensure the meaningful participation of women, indigenous peoples, and marginalized communities in decision-making processes related to local economic development, climate action, and biodiversity conservation. • Risk Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies: Develop and implement climate change adaptation and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening Local Value Chains: Foster the development of local value chains that promote gender equality, climate resilience, and biodiversity conservation, linking small-scale producers to markets and promoting sustainable consumption and production practices. 	<p>disaster risk reduction strategies that prioritize the protection of vulnerable populations, including women, from climate-related hazards and promote resilient livelihoods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and Evaluation Systems: Establish robust monitoring and evaluation systems to track progress, measure the impact of interventions on gender equality, climate resilience, and biodiversity conservation, and inform evidence-based policy and programmatic decisions.
Measures for output 1: Output 1 – Mindset Change: Relevant stakeholders of the business ecosystem of selected municipalities embrace women’s capacities to run/manage successful businesses.		
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Capacity-Building Workshops: Organize workshops and training programs aimed at enhancing awareness and understanding among stakeholders about the value and capabilities of women entrepreneurs. These workshops can cover topics like gender equality, women's entrepreneurship, and the benefits of diverse leadership. 2. Success Stories and Role Models: Highlight and promote success stories of women entrepreneurs who have excelled in their businesses. Creating visibility for these role models can inspire other women and change perceptions among stakeholders. 3. Networking and Mentorship Programs: Facilitate networking events and mentorship programs that connect women entrepreneurs with experienced business leaders, investors, and mentors. This can help in building confidence, sharing knowledge, and fostering supportive relationships. 4. Policy Advocacy and Collaboration: Engage in policy advocacy efforts to influence local government policies and programs that support women's entrepreneurship. Collaborate with policymakers, business associations, and civil society organizations to create an enabling environment for women-led businesses. 5. Awareness Campaigns: Launch targeted awareness campaigns through media, social media, and community events to promote the benefits of women's entrepreneurship and challenge gender stereotypes in the business sector. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Addressing Gender Bias: Implement training and awareness programs to address unconscious bias and stereotypes that may hinder women's participation and leadership in the business ecosystem. Encourage stakeholders to recognize and challenge these biases in their interactions and decision-making processes. 2. Inclusive Policies and Practices: Ensure that business associations, chambers of commerce, and other relevant organizations adopt inclusive policies and practices that promote gender equality and support women entrepreneurs. 3. Monitoring and Accountability Mechanisms: Establish monitoring and accountability mechanisms to track progress on gender equality commitments and ensure adherence to inclusive practices within the business ecosystem. 4. Feedback and Grievance Redressal Systems: Develop feedback and grievance redressal systems where women entrepreneurs and stakeholders can report discrimination, harassment, or any barriers they face in the business ecosystem. Ensure timely and appropriate actions to address these issues. 5. Continuous Learning and Adaptation: Foster a culture of continuous learning and adaptation by regularly reviewing and updating strategies, policies, and programs based on feedback, data, and changing needs to ensure sustained progress towards gender equality in the business ecosystem.
Measures for output 2: Local governance /enabling environment: Local governments promote gender-responsive, climate-resilient, biodiversity-friendly local economic development.		
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Capacity Building for Local Governments: Organize training and capacity-building programs for local government officials on 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Capacity Building for Local Governments: Organize training and capacity-building programs for local

	<p>gender-responsive, climate-resilient, and biodiversity-friendly policies and practices. This will enhance their understanding and skills to integrate these principles into local economic development planning and implementation.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Policy Development and Implementation: Support local governments in developing and implementing gender-responsive, climate-resilient, and biodiversity-friendly policies, strategies, and action plans that prioritize sustainable and inclusive economic growth. 3. Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration: Foster partnerships and collaboration between local governments, civil society organizations, community groups, and the private sector to co-create solutions and initiatives that promote gender equality, climate resilience, and biodiversity conservation in local economic development. 4. Resource Mobilization and Financing: Assist local governments in accessing and mobilizing financial resources, including grants, loans, and public-private partnerships, to support the implementation of gender-responsive, climate-resilient, and biodiversity-friendly initiatives. 	<p>government officials on gender-responsive, climate-resilient, and biodiversity-friendly policies and practices. This will enhance their understanding and skills to integrate these principles into local economic development planning and implementation.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Policy Development and Implementation: Support local governments in developing and implementing gender-responsive, climate-resilient, and biodiversity-friendly policies, strategies, and action plans that prioritize sustainable and inclusive economic growth. 3. Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration: Foster partnerships and collaboration between local governments, civil society organizations, community groups, and the private sector to co-create solutions and initiatives that promote gender equality, climate resilience, and biodiversity conservation in local economic development. 4. Resource Mobilization and Financing: Assist local governments in accessing and mobilizing financial resources, including grants, loans, and public-private partnerships, to support the implementation of gender-responsive, climate-resilient, and biodiversity-friendly initiatives.
Measures for output 3: Business Development: Innovative businesses with high relevance for the development of climate resilient agricultural value chains have received gender-transformative business development services.		
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gender-Responsive Business Training: Implement specialized training programs focused on gender-transformative business development services tailored for innovative businesses in climate-resilient agricultural value chains. These programs should cover topics such as gender equality, sustainable agriculture practices, and business management skills. 2. Access to Financial Resources: Facilitate access to financial resources, including grants, loans, and investment opportunities, specifically targeted for innovative businesses in climate-resilient agricultural value chains. Prioritize funding mechanisms that support gender-transformative approaches and promote women's entrepreneurship. 3. Technical Assistance and Mentorship: Provide technical assistance, mentorship, and coaching services to innovative businesses, offering guidance on business planning, product development, market access, and climate-resilient agricultural practices. Engage experienced business mentors and experts with knowledge in gender-responsive and sustainable agriculture. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gender Sensitization and Awareness: Conduct gender sensitization and awareness sessions for business development service providers, mentors, and stakeholders involved in supporting innovative businesses. Address unconscious biases, stereotypes, and barriers that may hinder women's participation and success in climate-resilient agricultural value chains. 2. Monitoring and Evaluation: Establish monitoring and evaluation systems to assess the effectiveness and impact of gender-transformative business development services on innovative businesses in climate-resilient agricultural value chains. Regularly review progress, identify challenges, and adapt strategies as needed to ensure inclusivity and effectiveness. 3. Feedback and Grievance Mechanisms: Develop transparent feedback and grievance mechanisms where innovative businesses, especially women-led enterprises, can voice their concerns, provide feedback, and seek redressal regarding the business development

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Networking and Partnership Building: Organize networking events, business forums, and matchmaking sessions to connect innovative businesses with potential partners, suppliers, distributors, and investors interested in climate-resilient agricultural value chains. Foster collaborations that promote gender equality and environmental sustainability. 5. Innovation Challenges and Competitions: Launch innovation challenges, competitions, and incubation programs aimed at supporting and scaling innovative solutions in climate-resilient agricultural value chains. Encourage the participation of women-led businesses and solutions that prioritize gender-transformative approaches. 	<p>services received. Ensure timely and appropriate responses to address issues and improve service delivery.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Capacity Building for Service Providers: Offer capacity-building programs for business development service providers to enhance their skills and knowledge in delivering gender-transformative services, climate resilience, and sustainable agricultural practices to innovative businesses. 5. Policy Advocacy and Supportive Frameworks: Advocate for supportive policies, regulations, and incentives that promote gender equality, innovation, and climate resilience in agricultural value chains. Collaborate with policymakers, industry associations, and relevant stakeholders to create an enabling environment for innovative businesses.
<p align="center">Measures for output 4: Partnerships for market linkages Partnerships with the private sector foster national and international market linkages in climate-resilient agricultural value chains with a focus on women economic empowerment.</p>		
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Private Sector Engagement and Collaboration: Establish partnerships and collaborations with private sector companies, agribusinesses, and value chain actors to promote national and international market linkages for climate-resilient agricultural products. Encourage private sector investments in women-led and climate-resilient agricultural enterprises. 2. Market Access Workshops and Trade Fairs: Organize market access workshops, trade fairs, and business matchmaking events that connect women farmers and agribusinesses with potential buyers, exporters, distributors, and retailers. Facilitate networking opportunities and business negotiations to secure market linkages. 3. Capacity Building and Training: Offer capacity-building and training programs for women farmers, entrepreneurs, and value chain actors to enhance their knowledge and skills in accessing and navigating national and international markets. Provide training on market trends, quality standards, branding, and export procedures. 4. Financial and Technical Support: Provide financial and technical support to women-led agricultural enterprises to meet market requirements, improve product quality, and scale production capacity. Facilitate access to grants, loans, 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gender-Sensitive Market Analysis: Conduct gender-sensitive market assessments to identify barriers, opportunities, and gaps in market linkages for women farmers and entrepreneurs in climate-resilient agricultural value chains. Use insights to tailor interventions and strategies that address specific needs and challenges. 2. Policy Advocacy and Inclusive Policies: Advocate for supportive policies, regulations, and incentives that encourage private sector engagement, market linkages, and women's economic empowerment in climate-resilient agricultural value chains. Collaborate with policymakers and industry stakeholders to create an enabling environment for inclusive market development. 3. Monitoring and Evaluation Systems: Establish robust monitoring and evaluation systems to track progress, measure impact, and ensure accountability in fostering partnerships for market linkages in climate-resilient agricultural value chains. Regularly review performance indicators and adapt strategies based on feedback and results. 4. Risk Mitigation and Business Continuity Planning: Develop risk mitigation strategies and

	<p>and technical assistance tailored for market-oriented agricultural initiatives.</p> <p>5. Promotion of Climate-Resilient Products: Promote the benefits and value of climate-resilient agricultural products through marketing campaigns, product branding, and certifications. Highlight the environmental sustainability and quality of products to attract national and international buyers interested in responsible sourcing.</p>	<p>business continuity plans to address potential challenges, disruptions, and risks associated with market linkages. Provide training and support to women farmers and entrepreneurs in building resilient business models and supply chains.</p> <p>5. Feedback and Grievance Redressal Mechanisms: Implement transparent feedback and grievance redressal mechanisms where women farmers, entrepreneurs, and stakeholders can report issues, seek assistance, and provide feedback related to market linkages and partnership engagements. Ensure timely responses and appropriate actions to address concerns.</p>
<p>Measures for output 5: Upscaling of best practice The upscaling of best practices for gender-transformative, climate-resilient and biodiversity-friendly local economic development has been strengthened.</p>		
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Documentation and Knowledge Sharing: Document and share success stories, case studies, and best practices related to gender-transformative, climate-resilient, and biodiversity-friendly local economic development. Disseminate this information through workshops, seminars, webinars, publications, and digital platforms to inspire and guide other stakeholders. 2. Capacity Building and Training Programs: Organize capacity-building and training programs to equip local governments, community organizations, businesses, and other stakeholders with the knowledge, skills, and tools needed to adopt and implement best practices in climate-resilient and biodiversity-friendly local economic development. 3. Partnership and Collaboration: Foster partnerships and collaborations among various stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organizations, private sector entities, and community groups, to collectively upscale and replicate successful initiatives and interventions in gender-transformative, climate-resilient, and biodiversity-friendly local economic development. 4. Innovation and Technology Adoption: Encourage the adoption of innovative technologies, practices, and solutions that promote gender equality, climate resilience, and biodiversity conservation in local economic activities. Support pilot projects and demonstrations to showcase the feasibility and benefits of scaling up these innovations. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Risk Assessment and Management: Conduct risk assessments to identify potential challenges, barriers, and risks associated with upscaling best practices. Develop risk mitigation strategies and contingency plans to address these challenges and ensure the smooth implementation and sustainability of scaled-up initiatives. 2. Stakeholder Engagement and Feedback Mechanisms: Engage stakeholders at all levels, including beneficiaries, community members, local leaders, and experts, in the upscaling process. Implement feedback mechanisms to capture insights, suggestions, and concerns, and use this feedback to refine and adapt strategies for effective upscaling. 3. Capacity Assessment and Strengthening: Regularly assess the capacity of implementing agencies, local governments, and community organizations involved in upscaling initiatives. Provide targeted capacity-building support to address capacity gaps and build the skills and competencies needed for successful implementation. 4. Documentation of Lessons Learned: Continuously document and analyze lessons learned, challenges faced, and solutions adopted during the upscaling of best practices. Share these insights with relevant stakeholders to inform future programming, policy development, and strategic planning in gender-

	<p>5. Policy Advocacy and Institutional Support: Advocate for supportive policies, regulations, and institutional frameworks that facilitate the upscaling of best practices in gender-transformative, climate-resilient, and biodiversity-friendly local economic development. Engage with policymakers and decision-makers to mainstream these practices into development plans and strategies.</p>	<p>transformative, climate-resilient, and biodiversity-friendly local economic development.</p>
<p>The MoLCPA is the partner organization, and key findings indicate (chapter 4):</p> <p>MoLCPA exhibits a strong commitment to sustainable agriculture, economic development, and gender equality. Despite this commitment, there are significant gaps in the implementation and enforcement of gender-responsive policies. Challenges such as unclear mechanisms for preventing workplace harassment, disparities in staffing, and lack of gender-sensitive reporting persist, hindering progress towards gender equality and inclusive development.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a Dedicated Unit for Gender Equality Initiatives: Advocate for the creation of a specialized unit within MoLCPA focused on gender equality initiatives. This unit can drive targeted efforts to foster an inclusive environment and champion gender equality across all ministry activities. 2. Enhance Gender Sensitivity Training: Advocate for the development and implementation of comprehensive gender sensitivity training programs for MoLCPA staff. This training can raise awareness, promote understanding, and instill values that prioritize gender equality and diversity. 3. Improve Gender-Sensitive Reporting: Advocate for the inclusion of gender-disaggregated data and specific mentions of women's contributions and concerns in MoLCPA's annual reports. Transparent and gender-sensitive reporting can facilitate monitoring progress and identifying areas needing attention. 4. Balanced Focus Across Mandated Sectors: Advocate for a balanced approach in MoLCPA's vision, goals, and objectives to ensure equal emphasis on sustainable agriculture, cooperatives, poverty alleviation, and gender-responsive approaches. This balanced focus will reflect a holistic commitment to all mandated sectors served and their satisfaction levels, to track the impact of gender-responsive initiatives and identify areas for improvement. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clarify Mechanisms for Workplace Harassment Prevention: Advocate for the establishment of clear and well-defined procedures for reporting workplace harassment, along with robust support systems and disciplinary actions. Ensuring a safe and supportive working environment is crucial for the well-being and empowerment of all employees.
<p>II. Results framework</p>		
<p>Key findings on gender expertise and responsiveness, in the project team (chapter 5) (internal gender mainstreaming)</p> <p>The GRAPE II project in Nepal demonstrates a commitment to gender equality and social inclusion through various initiatives and measures. However, the gender analysis reveals significant disparities in gender representation across different levels of management, indicating a need for targeted efforts to address these imbalances and promote gender equality within the project's workforce. While the result framework aims to</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gender Equity in Leadership Roles: Implement strategies to address the gender imbalance at managerial and high managerial levels by promoting women to leadership positions and fostering an inclusive work environment. 2. Gender-Sensitive Language Training: Conduct training sessions to address the use of gender-specific language and promote respectful and inclusive communication within the organization. 3. Senior-Junior Collaboration: Encourage collaboration between senior and junior colleagues, particularly women, 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gender-Responsive Result Framework: Enhance the result framework to explicitly target gender disparities, women's empowerment, and gender equality in local economic development. This includes revising indicators and outputs to set ambitious goals for women's participation and leadership in the entrepreneur ecosystem, municipal investments in women-led enterprises, and partnerships with gender-responsive private sector organizations. 2. Baseline Data Collection: Conduct early baseline data collection to establish clear starting points for measuring

<p>promote gender-transformative, climate-resilient, and biodiversity-friendly local economic development, there is a scope for enhancement to explicitly target gender disparities, women's empowerment, and gender equality</p>	<p>to foster mentorship opportunities and effective communication.</p> <p>4. Stakeholder Engagement: Engage diverse stakeholders, including women, youth, and marginalized groups, in project activities to enrich outcomes and foster inclusive decision-making.</p>	<p>progress against gender equality indicators. This will provide a foundation for tracking improvements and identifying areas requiring additional attention.</p>
<p>Level of results framework (outcome objective/ output level)</p> <p>In the output level GRAPE-II project has five objectives as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mindset Change: Relevant stakeholders of the business ecosystem of selected municipalities embrace women's capacities to run/manage successful businesses. 2. Local governance /enabling environment: Local governments promote gender-responsive, climate-resilient, biodiversity-friendly local economic development. 3. Business Development: Innovative businesses with high relevance for the development of climate resilient agricultural value chains have received gender-transformative business development services. 4. Partnerships for market linkages: Partnerships with the private sector foster national and international market linkages in climate-resilient agricultural value chains with a focus on women economic empowerment. 5. Upscaling of best practice: The upscaling of best practices for gender-transformative, climate-resilient and biodiversity-friendly local economic development has been strengthened. 	<p>Formulation of concrete gender indicators or criteria for embedding gender dimensions in the results framework</p> <p><i>Specific guiding questions</i></p> <p>The module's objectives and indicators provide a strong foundation for promoting gender-transformative, climate-resilient, and biodiversity-friendly local economic development in Nepal. To further enhance its impact and effectiveness, consider the following suggestions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Baseline Data Collection: Prioritize collecting baseline data early in the project timeline to accurately measure progress against the established indicators. 2. Stakeholder Engagement: Ensure active participation of women, youth, and marginalized groups in decision-making processes to ensure diverse perspectives and equitable outcomes. 3. Capacity Building: Expand capacity-building efforts to include training programs specifically tailored for women and youth in climate-resilient technologies, entrepreneurship, and business management. 4. Monitoring and Evaluation: Implement a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to track progress, identify challenges, and make timely adjustments to project activities. 5. Partnership Development: Strengthen partnerships with local NGOs, academia, and private sector organizations to leverage resources, expertise, and networks for greater impact. 6. Awareness Campaigns: Extend communication campaigns to include storytelling and success stories of women entrepreneurs and leaders to inspire and motivate others. 7. Policy Advocacy: Engage with policymakers at local, provincial, and national levels to advocate for gender-responsive policies and budget allocations in support of the project's objectives. 8. Sustainability Planning: Develop a sustainability plan to ensure that gender-transformative and climate-resilient practices are maintained beyond the project's lifespan, integrating them into long-term local economic development strategies. <p>Indicators for this project have already been identified as follows:</p> <p>Output indicator 1.1 5 communication campaigns to change mindsets on women's ability to run successful businesses reaching 50.000 people have been implemented.</p> <p>Output indicator 1.2 2.000 people participated in community dialogues on women's economic empowerment.</p> <p>Output indicator 2.1 3 structured gender-responsive formats for exchange and cooperation on gender-responsive, climate-resilient and nutrition-sensitive local economic development between local governments and stakeholders of the local entrepreneurial ecosystem have been institutionalized.</p> <p>Output indicator 2.2 15 municipalities have implemented action plans for local economic development promoting gender-transformation, climate-resilience and improved local nutrition based on a participatory analysis of competitive advantages.</p>	

	<p>Output indicator 3.1 500 existing businesses (thereof 65% women-led businesses and 50 % youth-led) have received business development services within the frame of a program that is gender-transformative and integrate climate-resilience and biodiversity concerns.</p> <p>Output indicator 3.2 500 potential business founders (thereof 50% belong to youths and 65% women) have been supported to start businesses in support of climate-resilient economic development in the frame of an incubation program.</p> <p>Output indicator 4.1 10 gender-responsive partnerships with private sector actors and/or multiple actors supporting market linkages and related business models in selected climate-resilient and agricultural value chains have been implemented.</p> <p>Output indicator 4.2 10 niche products have new or improved access to national or international markets in the frame of partnerships with the private sector.</p> <p>Output indicator 5.1 6 approaches (thereof 1 digital) for the upscaling of best practice for gender-transformative, climate-resilient and biodiversity-friendly local economic development on provincial, national and regional level have been institutionalized.</p> <p>Output indicator 5.2 25.000 value chain actors have been trained on gender-responsive innovative technologies and management practices for climate-resilient and biodiversity friendly production, processing and marketing.</p> <p>Besides these identified indicators, following indicators that can be used to measure progress in the gender-responsive/transformativ implementation of the project</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of Training Sessions Conducted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures the reach and effectiveness of capacity-building efforts across outputs. 2. Participant Satisfaction Rates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicates the quality and relevance of training and development programs across outputs. 3. Number of Policies Developed or Revised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflects the commitment and progress in policy development and implementation, particularly relevant for Local Governance/Enabling Environment and Business Development. 4. Amount of Funding Mobilized for Initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicates financial support and investment in the programs and projects across outputs. 5. Number of Partnerships Established with Stakeholders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates collaboration and engagement with relevant stakeholders, applicable across outputs. 6. Number of Women Entrepreneurs Supported: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflects the focus and impact on women's economic empowerment, relevant for Business Development and Partnerships for Market Linkages. 7. Reach and Engagement of Awareness Campaigns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures the effectiveness of communication and advocacy efforts, applicable across outputs. 8. Value of Contracts and Agreements Secured through Partnerships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflects the economic impact and market access achieved, particularly for Partnerships for Market Linkages. 9. Number of Innovative Technologies and Practices Adopted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicates the uptake of sustainable and innovative solutions, relevant for Upscaling of Best Practice and Business Development.
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	<p>10. Improvement in Business Performance and Growth Rates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures the success and scalability of supported businesses, particularly relevant for Business Development and Upscaling of Best Practice.
III. Gender marker	
<p>Which gender marker is assigned? Considering the findings from the analysis and the planned results matrix, it is recommended to assign the gender marker GG-2.</p>	<p>Rationale for the gender marker The gender analysis identified the project's main objective as gender transformative. Both the objective in the result matrix and all output-level indicators aim for gender equality. Therefore, gender marker GG-2 has been assigned.</p>
IV. Need for clarification	
<p>Aspect(s) that still need to be clarified; missing Information and/or data</p> <p>GESI disaggregated entrepreneurial activity related information.</p> <p>Youth engagement in agriculture entrepreneurship.</p>	<p>Formulation of the questions that need to be clarified</p> <p>How does gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and other intersecting factors influencing entrepreneurial activity and its outcomes?</p> <p>How can youths be engaged in agricultural entrepreneurship for the sustainable economic development of the country?</p>

Abbreviations

ADS:	Agriculture Development Strategy
AIN:	Alliance of International NGOs
BMI:	Body Mass Index
BMZ:	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
BPfA:	Beijing Platform for Action
CEAPRED:	Center for Environment and Agricultural Policy Research, Extension & Development
CEDAW:	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CRPD:	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CERD:	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
EDP:	External Development Partners
FH-HHs:	Female-Headed Households
FP:	Focal Person
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
GRAPE:	Green Resilient Agriculture Productive Ecosystem
GRB:	Gender-Responsive Budget
GII:	Gender Inequality Index
GIZ:	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GoN:	Government of Nepal
HDI:	Human Development Index
ICCPR:	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR:	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICIMOD:	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
IDPG:	International Development Partner's Group
INC:	Indigenous Nationalities Commission
INGOs:	International Non-Governmental Organisations
KIRDARC:	Karnali Integrated Rural Development And Research Centre
LFPR:	Labor Force Participation Rate
LGBTQI:	Lesbian Gay Bisexual Trans Queer Intersex
LGs:	Local Governments
LI-BIRD:	Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research, and Development
LNOB:	Leave No One Behind
MoALD:	Ministry of Agricultural and Livestock Development
MoE:	Ministry of Education
MoFALD:	Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development
MoFSC:	Ministry of Forest and Social Conservation
MoH:	Ministry of Health
MoLCPA:	Ministry of Land Management, Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation
MoUD:	Ministry of Urban Development
MoWCSC:	Ministry of Women, Children, and Senior Citizens
NASC:	Nepal Administrative Staff College
NDC:	National Dalits Commission
NDHS:	Nepal Demographic and Health Survey
NGEP:	National Gender Equality Policy
NGOs:	Non-Governmental Organisations
NHRC:	National Human Rights Commission
NPC:	National Planning Commission
NWC:	National Women Commission
PACE:	Partnership Aid Center
PG:	Provincial Government
SH:	Sexual Harassment
SDGs:	Sustainable Development Goals
UN:	United Nations
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
USAID:	U.S. Agency for International Development
WFP:	World Food Programme
WHR:	Women for Human Rights
WOREC:	Women's Rehabilitation Center

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