



Gender Strategy

Green Resilient Agricultural-Centred

Private Sector Economic Development (GRAPE 2)

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Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CEDAW	The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
EU	European Union
GRAPE 2	Green Resilient Agricultural-Centered Private Sector Economic Development
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
GTA	Gender Transformative Approach
MoALD	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development
MoWCSC	Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens
SBCC	Social and Behaviour Change Communication
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
WEE	Women's Economic Empowerment

Executive Summary

This Gender Strategy establishes a comprehensive framework to integrate gender equality and social inclusion in the work of the GRAPE 2 project. It is aligned with the Government of Nepal's policy commitments, including the Gender Equality Policy (2021) and the Fifteenth Periodic Plan, as well as international frameworks such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the European Union Gender Action Plan III, and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) Feminist Development Policy.

Despite strong policy commitments, persistent gender inequalities continue to limit women's economic participation, decision-making power, and access to resources in Nepal. Structural barriers including unequal access to land, finance, and markets, disproportionate unpaid care responsibilities, and restrictive social norms continue to constrain women's ability to participate fully in economic and public life. These challenges are further compounded by intersecting forms of exclusion related to caste, ethnicity, disability, age, and geographic location.


In response, this strategy adopts a gender-transformative and intersectional approach that moves beyond participation toward addressing the root causes of inequality. It recognizes that sustainable change requires simultaneous shifts in individual agency, social norms, and institutional systems. The strategy is anchored in two mutually reinforcing pillars: transforming social norms and power structures and advancing inclusive economic participation and institutional change. Together, these pillars aim to strengthen women's agency, expand access to economic opportunities, and create enabling environments where women are recognized as economic actors and decision-makers.


The strategy further emphasizes the critical link between gender equality and climate resilience. Women are disproportionately affected by climate change due to existing inequalities, yet they remain underrepresented in climate decision-making processes. At the same time, women's knowledge, leadership, and participation are essential for effective and sustainable climate adaptation and mitigation. By promoting women's roles in green entrepreneurship, climate-smart agriculture, and sustainable value chains, GRAPE 2 contributes to both gender equality and environmental sustainability.


To operationalize this approach, the strategy introduces practical tools, including gender-integrated planning and monitoring frameworks, gender-responsive budgeting mechanisms, and targeted capacity-building interventions for partners and stakeholders. A results-based monitoring and evaluation system ensures that gender outcomes are tracked, measured, and continuously strengthened over the course of implementation.


Ultimately, this Gender Strategy positions GRAPE 2 to contribute to inclusive, resilient, and sustainable economic development in Nepal. By addressing structural inequalities, strengthening institutions, and shifting social norms, the project aims to ensure that women


and marginalized groups are not only included, but are actively shaping and leading Nepal’s emerging green economy.


 **KEY MESSAGES**


 **Making a business case for women.** Women’s economic participation is not only a human rights imperative but also a smart economic choice driving growth, productivity, innovation, and inclusive prosperity for Nepal.

 **Gender equality is central to climate-resilient economic development.** Sustainable and inclusive growth in Nepal cannot be achieved without addressing structural gender inequalities that limit women’s access to resources, opportunities, and decision-making.

 **Women are not beneficiaries, but economic actors and agents of change.** Strengthening women’s agency, leadership, and participation in green value chains is essential for building resilient and competitive local economies.

 **Transformative change requires both norm change and system change.** Addressing discriminatory social norms must go hand in hand with strengthening institutions, policies, and market systems to enable lasting impact.

 **Intersectionality is critical to leaving no one behind.** Gender inequalities are shaped by overlapping factors such as caste, ethnicity, disability, age, and geography, requiring tailored and inclusive approaches.

 **Private sector engagement is key to scaling women’s economic empowerment.** Building a strong business case for women and promoting inclusive market systems will drive sustainable and scalable impact.








 **Accountability and data are essential for results.** Gender-disaggregated data, gender-responsive budgeting, and continuous monitoring are critical to ensuring measurable progress toward gender-transformative outcomes.




Figure 1: Key messages of the GRAPE 2 Gender Strategy

General Definitions

The following definitions should be used to understand the document:

Table 1: Definitions of core concepts

Concept	Definitions
 <p>Gender</p>	<p>Gender refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, responsibilities, and expectations assigned to individuals based on their perceived sex. Gender encompasses not only the identities of "women" and "men" but also includes diverse gender identities and expressions, such as non-binary, transgender, and gender-diverse individuals.</p>
 <p>Intersectionality</p>	<p>Intersectionality is a framework that shows how social identities (e.g., gender, race, class, religion) overlap to create systems of power that can oppress or favour individuals. It recognizes that discrimination is experienced through the interplay of multiple identity traits, leading to unique experiences. This concept is vital for effectively addressing and mitigating discrimination and bias by emphasizing the interconnectedness of various forms of oppression.</p>
 <p>Gender roles and norms</p>	<p>Gender roles and norms refer to the socially constructed expectations and behaviours associated with being male or female in a given society. These roles and norms shape individuals' daily activities, responsibilities, and opportunities, often reinforcing gender inequalities.</p>
 <p>Structural Discrimination</p>	<p>Structural discrimination involves systematic policies, practices, and norms that perpetuate unequal treatment of marginalized groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, age, or disability. It is embedded in laws and policies, resulting in persistent advantages for some and disadvantages for others, affecting areas like employment, education, housing, and healthcare.</p>
 <p>Gender-sensitive</p>	<p>Gender-sensitive approaches recognize and address the distinct needs, roles, and challenges faced by men and women. These approaches integrate gender considerations into planning, implementation, and evaluation to promote equality and inclusivity. For example, scheduling trainings at times that accommodate women's care responsibilities ensures their participation.</p>
 <p>Gender Responsive</p>	<p>Gender-responsive approaches integrate gender norms, roles, and relations into planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation processes to promote gender equality. For example, training women as moderators ensures their inclusion and active participation, thereby empowering them and redefining gender roles.</p>

 <p>Gender-Transformative Approach</p>	<p>Strategies that aim to contribute to sustainable social and economic empowerment of women by addressing social norms and structural differences that contribute to gender inequality. These approaches seek to tackle the root causes of gender inequality and gender-based discrimination by eliminating gender-specific power hierarchies, and discriminatory gender norms, and structures.</p>
 <p>Gender Sensitization</p>	<p>Gender sensitization refers to the process of increasing awareness, understanding, and sensitivity towards gender issues and inequalities. It educates individuals about gender roles and their impact on society, aiming to promote equality by challenging discriminatory attitudes and practices. This process includes training, workshops, and campaigns to foster respect and inclusivity in workplaces, schools, and communities.</p>
 <p>Women's Economic Empowerment</p>	<p>Women's economic empowerment is understood as a situation where women have access to resources and the power and agency to make economic decisions about their resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access – A women's capacity to obtain greater economic resources, including access to the opportunities, services and assets. • Agency – A women's capacity to make decisions and act on opportunities that lead to the economic advancements. Agency refers not just to acting on opportunities and decision-making but also to a woman's ability to influence her surroundings and claim her rights.

Background

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion are fundamental to any development effort, as inequalities based on gender, caste, ethnicity, disability, and socio-economic status hinder sustainable and equitable development. Embedding gender-responsive strategies within development programmes helps ensure inclusivity, tackling the underlying drivers of exclusion rather than merely addressing its symptoms.

It is also a priority of the Government of Nepal, which envisions a “prosperous Nepal, happy Nepali” grounded in inclusive development. The government's Gender Equality Policy (2021) and the 15th Five-Year Plan (2019-2024) explicitly call for gender-responsive governance, women's economic empowerment, and greater participation of marginalized communities in national development. Nepal is also a signatory to international frameworks such as CEDAW and the SDGs, which further solidify its commitments to gender equality and social inclusion.

These national priorities are also articulated in German and European policies and strategies. Notably, the BMZ's Feminist Development Policy and the EU Gender Action Plan III (2021-2025) emphasize gender-transformative approaches and social norm changes. They prioritise the elimination of structural causes of inequality, the empowerment of women and marginalized populations, and the transformation of power structures through inclusive, intersectional,

rights-based approaches. BMZ's and EU's strategy underscores gender-transformative programming as essential for achieving sustainable, democratic, and inclusive development.

GRAPE 2 (Green Resilient Agricultural-Centered Private Sector Economic Development) is a private sector development project that aims to strengthen gender-transformative and climate-resilient, economic development in Nepal. The project closely aligns with the above-mentioned policies and strategies by advancing women's rights, access to resources, and representation in economic and decision-making spaces.

Specifically, GRAPE 2 promotes women's economic empowerment by providing tailored business development services, facilitating access to finance and markets, and strengthening women-led enterprises within green and climate-resilient value chains. It supports improved access to productive resources and economic opportunities, while also strengthening women's participation and leadership in local governance and economic decision-making platforms.

Furthermore, GRAPE 2 strengthens gender-responsive governance systems, including gender-responsive budgeting processes, and contributes to building enabling environments where women are recognized as economic actors and agents of change. The project also contributes to addressing the root causes of gender inequality by promoting social and behaviour change, engaging men and community actors, and supporting inclusive, multi-stakeholder partnerships across government, private sector, and civil society.

Why a Gender Strategy is Needed

This Gender Strategy is rooted in a comprehensive gender analysis conducted for the GRAPE 2 project. This analysis examined gender dynamics across social norms, policies, institutions, and household levels and highlighted deep-rooted gender disparities. Intersecting inequalities, driven by gender, caste, geography, and poverty, constrain the rights and opportunities of women and marginalized groups.

At the institutional and policy level, Nepal has established strong legal and policy frameworks for gender equality. However, implementation gaps persist due to limited capacity, weak enforcement mechanisms, and insufficient gender-responsive budgeting. At the same time, the analysis highlights emerging opportunities, including the growing role of women in entrepreneurship, increasing institutional attention to gender equality and social inclusion, and the potential to strengthen women's leadership in climate-resilient agriculture and green economic development.

At the household and community level, deeply rooted patriarchal norms, caste-based discrimination, and mobility restrictions continue to limit women's decision-making power, economic participation, and control over income. Women are also often discouraged from working outside their homes, travelling to markets, or engaging in business-related activities, particularly where their public mobility and interaction with men are socially questioned or negatively perceived. These norms restrict women's access to markets, networks, and wider

economic opportunities. These challenges are further intensified by male outmigration, which has led to the feminization of agriculture, increasing women’s workload without corresponding gains in agency or access to resources. Intersectional inequalities are particularly evident, as women from Dalit, Madhesi, and economically disadvantaged backgrounds face compounded barriers in education, employment, and access to services.

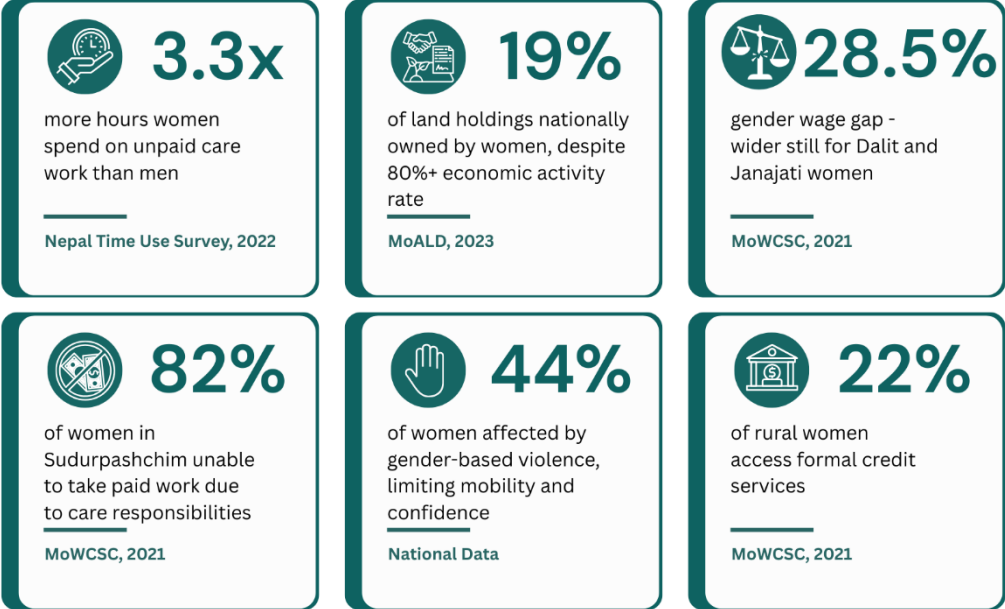


Figure 2: Key Gender Inequality Facts in Nepal

Outmigration of men from regions like Karnali and Sudurpashchim has led to the feminization of agriculture and informal sectors, without corresponding rights or resource access. Women from Dalit and other lower caste communities face active exclusion from community decision-making bodies (ADB, 2020), while dominant caste groups often monopolize leadership roles. Low female literacy. For example, 56.5% of women in Karnali are literate; the national average is 69.4% of women,

Training and entrepreneurship support systems often fail women, offering short-term, non-strategic programs disconnected from market realities. Women entrepreneurs frequently face stereotyping, low credibility, and limited visibility in male-dominated business spaces.

Therefore, this Gender Strategy is essential to ensure that GRAPE 2 interventions are not only inclusive but truly transformative in nature by addressing underlying power imbalances and fostering structural change within the private sector. It serves as a guiding framework for all project components to intentionally prioritize women’s agency, economic empowerment, and leadership.

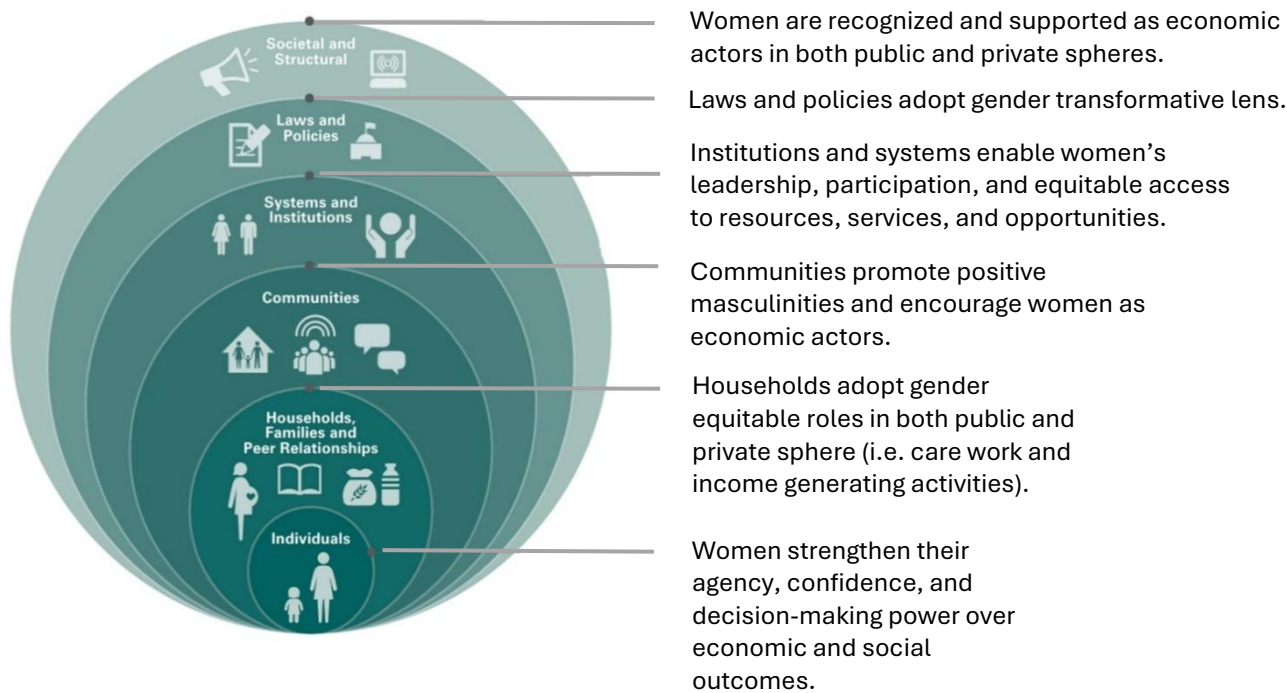


Figure 3: Pathways of gender-transformative change across individual, household, community, and system levels

Theory of Change

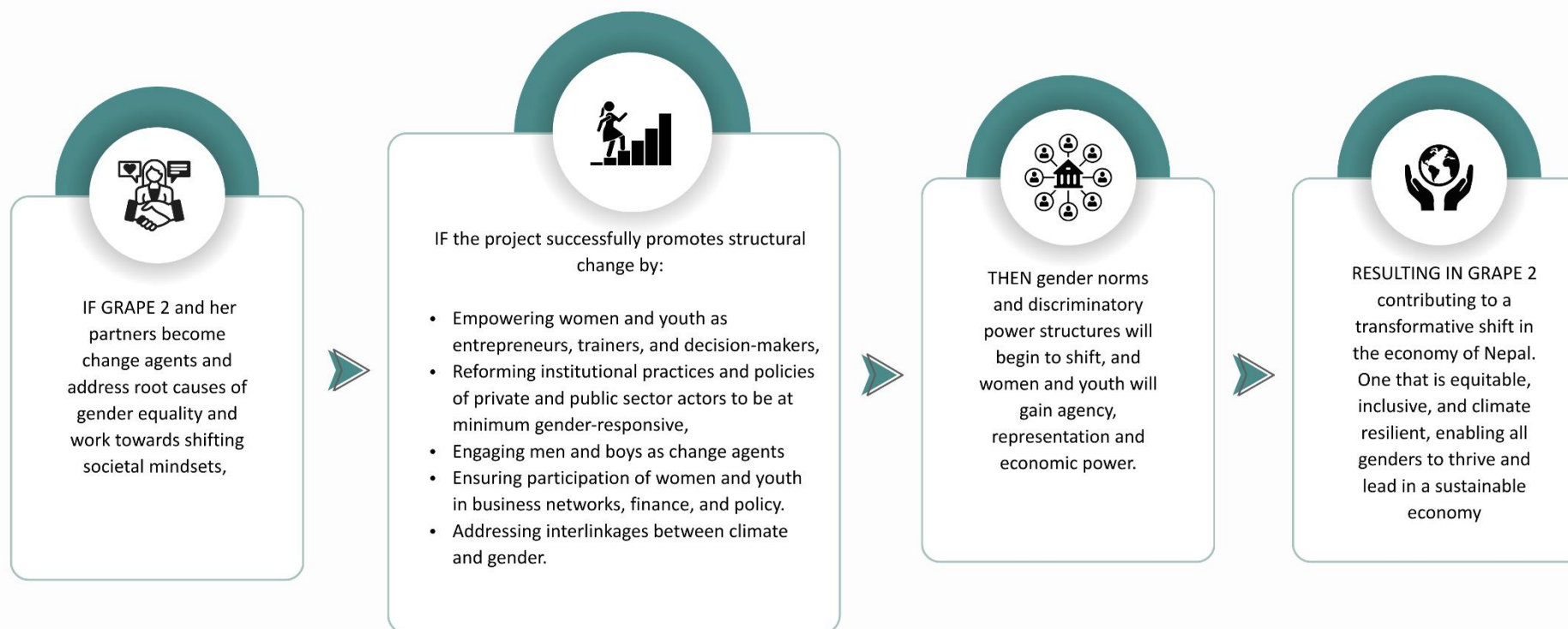


Figure 4: Theory of Change for GRAPE 2 Gender Strategy

Understanding the link between Gender and Climate

Gender and climate change are deeply interconnected, as climate impacts both reflect and reinforce existing social, economic, and power inequalities. In many rural and agricultural contexts, women depend on natural resources for their livelihoods (e.g. farming, firewood gathering, water collection), exposing them more directly to environmental changes, such as droughts, floods, and resource degradation. As climate pressures intensify, these responsibilities increase, limiting women's time, mobility, and opportunities for economic participation and leadership. At the same time, structural barriers, such as unequal access to land, finance, climate information, and technology further constrain their ability to adapt effectively – for example, switching crops, relocating, or rebuilding after disasters. Moreover, climate and environmental policies and decisions are often made without equal participation from women, even though they are heavily affected. This can lead to less effective or less equitable solutions.

It's not only about vulnerability—women also play a crucial role in climate solutions. Studies show that when women are involved in environmental decision-making, outcomes are often more sustainable. Empowering women (for example, through skills development, access to finance, and leadership opportunities) strengthens climate resilience overall. Supporting and celebrating women as green entrepreneurs not only advances climate objectives while also reshaping entrenched norms around women's economic participation and leadership. Integrating gender considerations into climate policy and finance helps create systems that recognize and value women as economic actors and agents of change.

By adopting a gender-transformative approach, climate action can move beyond addressing vulnerability and instead contribute to reshaping systems, institutions, and social norms. This enables more equitable access to resources and opportunities, strengthens community resilience, and supports inclusive, sustainable development.

Intersectional inclusion framework

GRAPE 2 adopts an intersectional inclusion framework that recognizes the multiple and overlapping identities and experiences that shape exclusion and marginalization. Overlapping social identities creates individualistic experiences of discrimination and privilege. Thus, it is essential to apply an intersectional lens while understanding the lived experiences of different target groups. This approach is especially essential as it ensures that policies and interventions are more inclusive and effective by addressing the compounded inequalities faced by women.

Our target groups are primarily women, youth, people with disability and men. While inclusion of marginalized groups and people from the LGBTQIA+ communities will also be attempted to be included in our work, they don't fall under the primary target category.

GRAPE 2 will approach intersectionality through an understanding of diversity across disability, caste/ethnicity, age (with a special focus on youth and adolescent girls) and geographic location (rural vs urban). The intersectional lens will help determine the state of women, youth and people with disability in our target location as well as the businesses we

work with. Thus, providing an insight into who are the ones who “can” do business and those who “can’t”.



Figure 5: Intersectional inclusion framework

Gender and Empowerment Continuum

Gender continuum is a scale that can be used to understand how gender inclusive a particular project or intervention is. From gender-unjust to gender-transformative, the further right any project aims or interventions falls, the more gender inclusive and empowering the project is. Thus, any project intending to support women or other marginalized groups but always fall within gender sensitive to gender transformative.

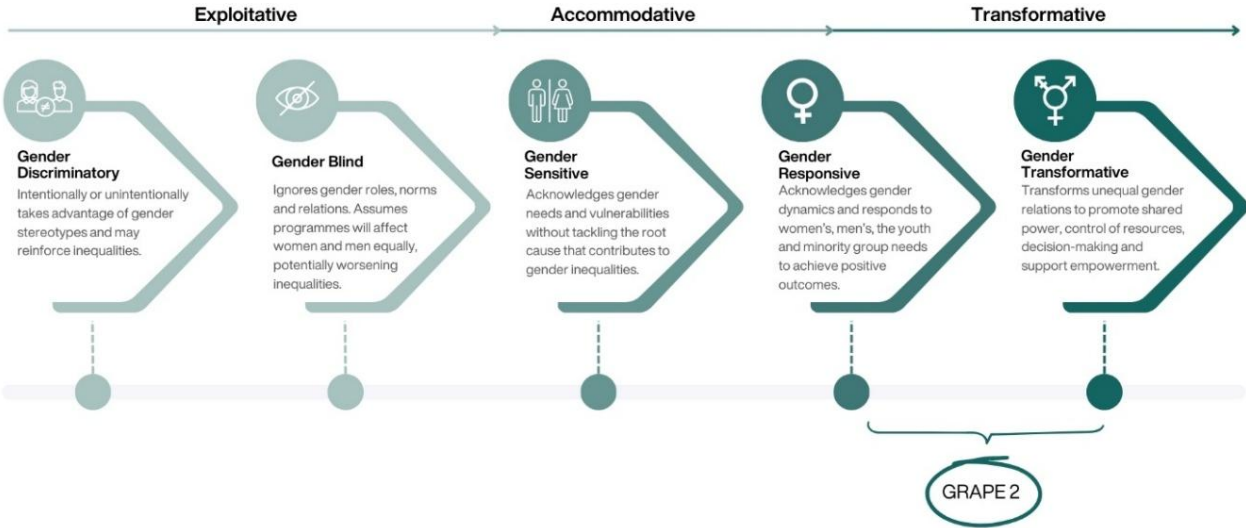


Figure 6: Gender Continuum

GRAPE 2 is a GG2 project, meaning its principal objective is to promote gender equality and empower women. Therefore, all interventions should be gender-responsive, informed by gender-disaggregated data, and designed to steadily move towards gender-transformative change, where true empowerment can be achieved. Therefore, reaching women is not enough. As illustrated in figure no. 7, true empowerment and transformation require moving beyond access toward benefit and influence.

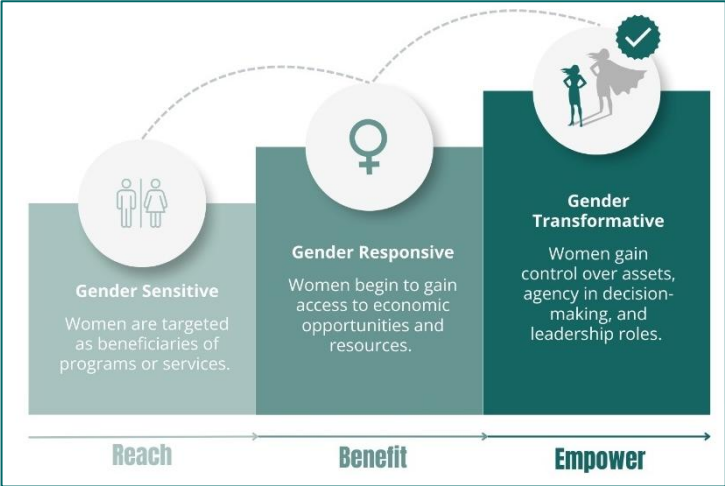


Figure 7: Empowerment in the Gender Continuum

At minimum, we must ensure that the project is gender responsive, i.e. women benefit and project interventions help women reach an equal playing field as men. Nevertheless, as a GG-2 project, GRAPE 2 strives to be gender-transformative, ensuring that women’s inclusion results in empowerment by designing interventions which embeds structural and lasting shifts in economic roles, systems, and social norms.

Gender Strategy

The GRAPE 2 Gender Strategy adopts a gender-transformative approach that goes beyond addressing immediate access gaps to actively tackling the structural and social barriers identified. This includes strengthening women’s access to productive assets, finance, and business development services; promoting equitable participation in decision-making at household, community, and institutional levels; and addressing discriminatory norms through targeted social dialogue and behaviour change interventions.

It aims to transform structural inequalities and dismantle discriminatory norms that perpetuate gender-based disadvantage, thereby fostering a future where individuals across all social groups can contribute to and benefit from development in an equitable and sustainable manner.

The strategy is anchored in two complementary pillars that jointly address both the social and economic dimensions of inequality.

The graphic features a slogan 'Strong women, stronger economies' with an icon of a woman flexing her arm. Below it is a vision statement: 'VISION: A just, inclusive and climate resilient economy, where women and youth equally participate as empowered economic actors and change agents.' accompanied by a globe icon.

Figure 8: GRAPE 2 gender strategy slogan and vision

Strategic Pillar 1 - Transforming Social Norms and Power Structures for Gender Equality

This pillar focuses on addressing the root causes of gender inequality by transforming discriminatory social norms, power relations, and everyday practices that limit women's agency and participation. It emphasizes working with change agents, including feminist organizations, community leaders, and men and boys, to foster gender-transformative mindsets. Through inclusive and intersectional approaches, the pillar promotes representation of women and marginalized groups in decision-making spaces, while ensuring that interventions are context-sensitive, do not reinforce existing inequalities, and proactively address potential resistance and gender backlash.

- Work with organizations that serve as change agents, especially feminist/gender responsive organizations or those heavily involved in gender equality efforts.
- Identify and design interventions that tackle root causes of gender inequality, address discriminatory social norms, and foster gender-transformative societal mindsets.
- Understand the multidimensional and intersectional forms of discrimination and provide tailored support to affected groups.
- Involve men and boys as change agents to support long-term mindset shifts around gender roles.
- Champion individuals who are breaking gender stereotypes and amplify their voices as visible role models.
- Ensure representation of women, youth and people with disability specially around the conversations pertaining to them. For e.g.: task force, panels, conferences, committees, etc.
- Understand daily gendered nuances and inequalities in access to time, resources, and services, ensuring interventions do not exacerbate burdens such as time poverty.
- Anticipate and address potential resistance and gender backlash by designing context-sensitive approaches that engage communities constructively, promote dialogue, and frame gender equality as a shared social and economic benefit.



Business case for women – Duna Tapari Enterprise

What it is: A women-led enterprise producing eco-friendly duna tapari, built by Ms. Bhawana Magar. Despite resistance from her family and community, she expanded the business into a large-scale employment-generating enterprise.

Why it's powerful:

- Challenges restrictive gender norms by demonstrating that women can successfully lead and scale businesses.
- Creates inclusive employment opportunities, including for women and persons with disabilities.
- Uses self-learning, peer networks, and digital platforms to access markets and grow the enterprise.
- Encourages greater community acceptance of women entrepreneurs through visible economic success and leadership.

Impact: Transformed community perceptions around women entrepreneurs, generated jobs for more than 500 people, and strengthened women's visibility as business owners, employers, and decision-makers within the local economy.

Business takeaway: Duna Tapari Enterprise demonstrates how women-led businesses can become powerful drivers of social norm change. By creating visible leadership, employment, and economic success, such enterprises help shift perceptions around women's roles in entrepreneurship, decision-making, and public life, while promoting more inclusive and gender-transformative local economies.

Figure 9: Business Case for Women - Duna Tapari Enterprise

Strategic Pillar 2 - Advancing Inclusive Economic Participation and Institutional Change

This pillar aims to strengthen women's economic empowerment by improving access to resources, markets, networks and leadership opportunities, while addressing systemic barriers within institutions and economic systems. It focuses on supporting gender-responsive governance, including budgeting and policy processes, and building a strong business case for women as economic actors. By integrating gender into climate and economic policies, promoting data-driven decision-making, and scaling gender-transformative practices, the pillar seeks to create enabling environments where women and marginalized groups can actively participate in and shape sustainable economic development.

- Support government efforts to recognize and promote women as economic actors. For e.g.: advocate for increased budget allocations, strengthen gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) practices at federal, provincial and local levels, capacitate gender focal person as and when required, etc.
- Build a strong business case for women as entrepreneurs.
- Provide women and marginalized groups with improved access to resources and invest in their leadership and entrepreneurship to strengthen their role in building climate resilience and shaping the entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- Identify, document and scale gender-transformative approaches and practices.

- Use gender-disaggregated data to inform decision-making and accountability across project components.
- Mainstream gender in climate and economic policy (and vice versa)



Business case for women – Chetana Sana Kisan Cooperative

What it is: A women-led cooperative based in Dhangadhi with around 2,500 farmer members, focused on savings, loans, and the dairy value chain. Members collectively invest in agriculture and access more stable market opportunities through the cooperative structure.

Why it's powerful:

- Expands women's access to finance, markets, and economic networks through collective savings and loans.
- Strengthens women's leadership and ownership within agricultural value chains and cooperative governance.
- Operates a structured dairy system, coordinating milk collection, quality control, and sales with DDC.
- Encourages youth engagement and long-term participation in agriculture and local enterprise development.

Impact: Improves household incomes through reliable dairy markets while increasing women's economic participation, leadership, and decision-making power within both households and local institutions.

Business takeaway: Chetana Sana Kisan demonstrates that women-led cooperatives are not only socially impactful but also economically strategic. By improving access to finance, strengthening market linkages, and building collective leadership, such models create more inclusive and resilient local economies while reinforcing the business case for investing in women as key economic actors..

Figure 10: Business Case for Women - Chetana Sana Kisan Cooperative

How the pillars work together

For empowerment to manifest, interventions need to address social and gender norms on all levels of social reality: the individual, relational, cultural and structural levels. A holistic framework for social change is offered by the model of the 'four quadrants of change' created by Ken Wilber (2000) and adapted by various gender scholars and activists. The framework consists of two major dimensions organizing societal systems: the individual or collective dimension and the inside/subjective or outside/objective dimension. GRAPE 2 applies the Four Quadrants of Change framework, which highlights that gender-transformative change must occur across multiple, interconnected level:

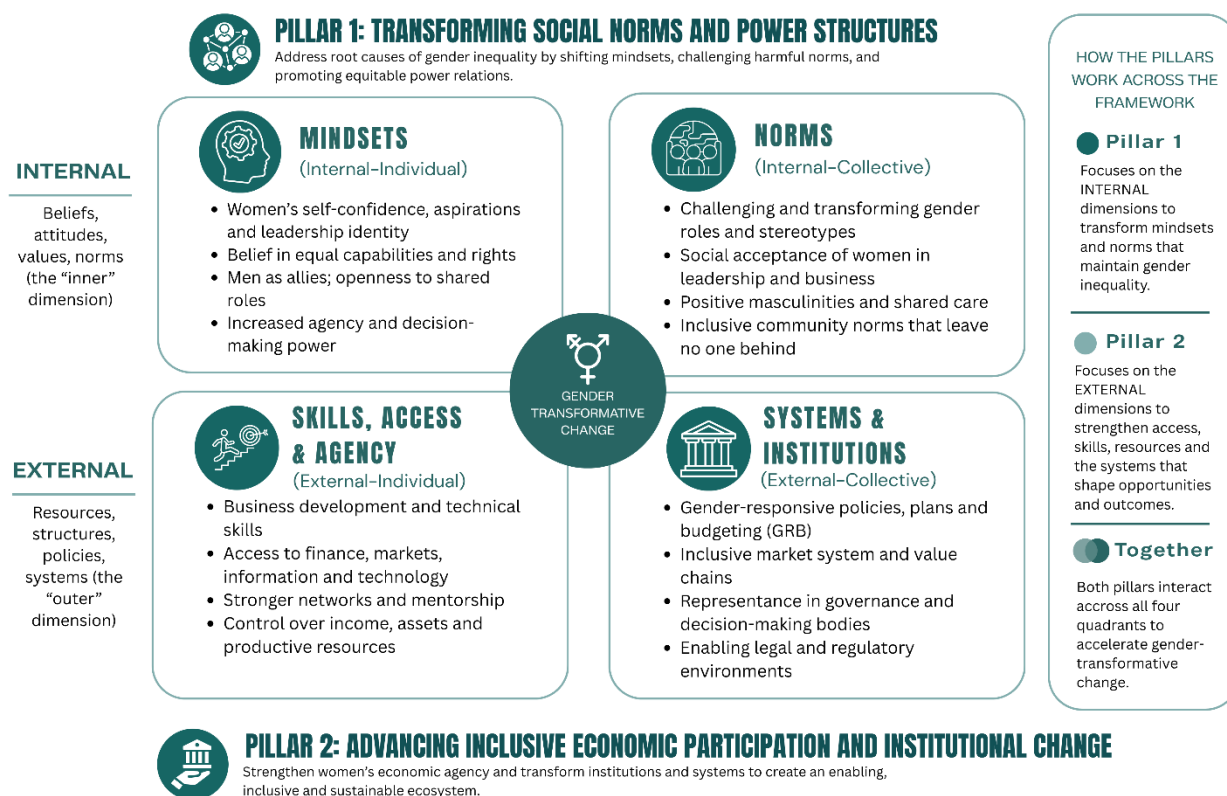


Figure 11: Integrated Framework for Gender-Transformative Change Across Individual, Collective, Internal, and External Dimensions

Visual and Written Representation Guidelines

It is essential that both the written and visual portrayals of women, youth and people with disabilities in our materials reflect empowerment and leadership.

Dos and Don’ts Checklist

- Showcase women and youth in roles of leadership and active decision-making. For example, portray women as entrepreneurs, innovators, or community leaders, rather than in passive or purely supportive roles.
- Avoid depictions that reinforce the narrative that women must “do it all” (e.g., handling both household duties and professional responsibilities flawlessly), as this can place unrealistic burdens on them.
- Emphasize positive masculinity. Share stories where men are allies who support their partners and promote gender equality in everyday life.
- Avoid imagery or language that reinforces toxic masculinity or traditional gender stereotypes. We want to move away from any depiction that might suggest rigid gender norms.

In essence, all visuals and written content should celebrate the empowerment of women and youth, portraying them as capable agents of change.

Activities per Output

This section outlines how the Gender Strategy is translated into concrete actions across GRAPE 2 outputs. The activities presented below are designed to operationalize the two strategic pillars by linking gender-transformative intent with practical interventions.

Interventions related to awareness and social engagement primarily contribute to transforming social norms and power structures (Strategic Pillar 1), while those focused on business development, market systems, and governance contribute to advancing inclusive economic participation and institutional change (Strategic Pillar 2). At the same time, many of these activities are inherently cross-cutting, as they simultaneously address individual agency and systemic barriers. The table below provides illustrative examples of gender-responsive and gender-transformative approaches across key outputs.

Table 2: Output wise interventions and their desired results

Output	Interventions	Desired Results
<p>Business Development Services (BDS)</p> <p>Strengthen the economic empowerment of women and marginalized entrepreneurs by enhancing their business capacity and agency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tailored business development services for women (finance, e-commerce, legal, etc.) ○ Support integration into existing peer networks as well as establish new women entrepreneurs' network. ○ Integration of the Gender Transformative SME Loop approach to provide firsthand coaching and training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Norms around women's business ownership is challenged. ○ Enhanced women's access as well as agency. ○ Improved structures for collective bargaining power of women, people with disability and youth.
<p>Market Linkages</p> <p>Strengthen women's and marginalized groups' access to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Facilitate connections between women-led SMEs and larger market actors through trade fairs, digital platforms, and procurement facilitation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prioritizes women and excluded groups in market access strategies. ○ Promotes fair trade and procurement systems that reward inclusivity.

Output	Interventions	Desired Results
<p>equitable and inclusive markets that recognize and support their specific needs and potential.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish or strengthen women-friendly collection centers and cooperatives with governance safeguards. ○ Build women’s capacity in pricing, quality standards, and value chain competitiveness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Creates systemic shifts by supporting female-led value chains. ○ Challenges male dominance in value chain governance by promoting women’s leadership roles in producer groups. ○ Builds systems where women are not only suppliers but decision-makers in local economic ecosystems.
<p>Governance</p> <p>Embed gender-responsive governance and financing mechanisms in local and provincial government systems to ensure sustainable and accountable progress toward gender equity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Capacity building of local official on Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) and Climate Budget Tagging (CBT). ○ Develop gender responsive budgeting guidebook to support implementation. ○ Facilitate participatory municipal budget planning processes with women, youth, and marginalized groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shifts decision-making power by institutionalizing inclusive planning and budget practices. ○ Makes visible and reallocates resources to address gender gaps. ○ Strengthens local accountability by involving community monitoring groups. ○ Elevates gender equity from programmatic activity to a core governance principle.
<p>Awareness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Roll out integrated SBCC campaigns focusing on care work, women’s leadership, and GBV prevention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Engages whole communities including men and boys to question rigid gender roles.

Output	Interventions	Desired Results
<p>Challenge and shift harmful social norms, stereotypes, and power relations through creative, context-specific awareness campaigns and public engagement strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use local languages and storytelling formats, including street theatre, radio, and social media platforms. ○ Co-create campaigns with women, youth, and local influencers to ensure relevance and ownership. ○ Anticipate and address gender backlash and resistance through context-sensitive messaging that promotes shared social and economic benefits of gender equality. ○ Engage male champions, community leaders, and influencers as allies in shifting norms. ○ Create safe dialogue spaces to openly address skepticism and resistance within communities. ○ Monitor unintended negative effects of interventions and adapt approaches accordingly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Promotes positive alternatives (e.g. shared care, male allyship, female entrepreneurs). ○ Centres the voices of marginalized women and girls in shaping public discourse. ○ Shifts attitudes and community norms, creating enabling environments for gender-equitable behaviour. ○ Reduces resistance to gender equality interventions and strengthens community acceptance and ownership.
<p>Scaling Up Good Practices</p> <p>Identify, document, and scale locally rooted gender-transformative practices, models, and innovations to maximize reach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conduct participatory documentation of proven practices from pilot areas (e.g. youth innovation hubs). ○ Support peer-learning exchanges across municipalities and provinces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Values local knowledge and innovations led by marginalized groups. ○ Ensures the expansion of practices that structurally address inequality (e.g. collective land leasing, gender-balanced irrigation groups).

Output	Interventions	Desired Results
and sustainability across provinces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with provincial governments to integrate successful models into policy frameworks and budgets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enables policy feedback loops that institutionalize grassroots gains. Builds networks and solidarity across regions for collective advocacy.
Cross-cutting activities	<p><i>Awareness and understanding of GIZ staff and partners.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender 101 workshop for GIZ staff and partners Thematic days, such as International Women’s Day celebrations and 16 Days of Activism Gender-focused field visits Good Practice & Failure Labs with other GIZ projects Support of GIZ Nepal’s gender analysis in 2027 <p>Engagement in the GG2 project network within GIZ <i>Implementing, Monitoring and Evaluating Our Gender Strategy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collection of gender disaggregated and reporting as part of the GRAPE 2 Results Framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced gender awareness and knowledge among GIZ staff and partners Active engagement in gender-responsive practices Strengthened collaboration within the GG2 project network. Gender-disaggregated data is consistently collected, analysed, and reported, improving the quality and credibility of gender reporting. Gender mainstreaming efforts are well-coordinated and coherent.

Output	Interventions	Desired Results
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Evaluation and continuous updating of this Gender Strategy and a final internal gender assessment, including a Gender Continuum review to assess movement toward gender-transformative impact. ○ Coordination of all activities by gender specialist with support from project staff and partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continuous learning enables measurable progress toward gender-transformative impact.

Sustainability and Exit Strategy

- Institutionalization: Embed GRB and GTA tools into local development plans and annual budgeting.
- Capacity Transfer: Train local change agents (e.g. cooperatives, youth leaders and even civil society actors) to carry forward the work.
- Policy Integration: Advocate for successful practices to be scaled via provincial and national programs.
- Resource Linkages: Connect women-led businesses to revolving funds, green credit schemes, and cooperatives.
- Exit Plans: Outline post-project support channels and enable local ownership.

Risk and Mitigation Matrix

The following matrix identifies key risks that could limit gender-transformative outcomes and proposes mitigation measures to ensure that interventions remain inclusive, practical, and responsive to local realities. These risks should be reviewed regularly and addressed through continuous coordination with partners, communities, and relevant stakeholders.

Table 3: Risk and Mitigation Matrix

Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation Strategy
Resistance to norm change	High	Medium-High	Engage local leaders, religious figures, and men/boys early. Messaging should not be accusatory or extremely critical of the current practices.
Inadequate gender expertise in partner organizations	High	Medium-High	Gender sensitization trainings to all partners as well as GTA training where necessary. Additional of external technical support if needed.
Tokenistic participation of women	Medium-High	High	Ensure women are in decision-making roles and are in the forefront of communication (specially in case of business that are owned by women but managed by men).
Data quality issues (disaggregation gaps)	Medium	Medium	Embed gender markers in all data collection tools in fieldwork. Mandate partners to collect and report disaggregated data (gender, physical ability).

Conclusion

This Gender Strategy provides a comprehensive framework to guide GRAPE 2 in advancing gender equality and social inclusion across all components of the project. By combining evidence-based analysis, gender-transformative approaches, and practical implementation tools, the strategy ensures that interventions go beyond participation toward meaningful empowerment and systemic change.

Central to this strategy is the recognition that sustainable economic development cannot be achieved without addressing structural inequalities and shifting deeply rooted social norms. Through its dual focus on transforming power relations and strengthening inclusive economic systems, GRAPE 2 is well-positioned to contribute to long-term, equitable, and climate-resilient development outcomes.

Moving forward, the successful implementation of this strategy will depend on strong partnerships, continuous learning, and adaptive management. By embedding accountability, monitoring progress, and fostering ownership among stakeholders, GRAPE 2 aims to create lasting impact where women and marginalized groups are not only included but are leading change within Nepal's green entrepreneurial ecosystem.

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