

नेपाल विकास समाज

**Nepal Development Society-NEDS Nepal**



**GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION  
(GESI) POLICY 2082 (2026)**

(Approved from the General Assembly of Dated January 10, 2025)



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Section-1: Preliminary</b> .....	
1. Introduction of NEDS Nepal.....	
2. Background.....	
3. Preface.....	
4. Name of the Policy.....	
5. Application of the GESI Policy.....	
6. Right to Interpret the Policy.....	
7. Policy Review, Revision, and Amendment.....	
8. Definitions and Explanation.....	
<b>Section-2: Aim, Objectives, Scope and Guiding Principle of GESI Policy</b> .....	
1. Aim of the GESI Policy.....	
2. Objectives of the GESI Policy.....	
3. Scope of the GESI Policy.....	
4. Guiding Principles.....	
<b>Section-3: GESI Mainstreaming, Practices and Promoting a Gender-Sensitive Organizational Culture</b>	
1. GESI Mainstreaming in General Membership.....	
2. GESI Mainstreaming in Executive Board.....	
3. GESI Mainstreaming in Advisory and Other Committees.....	
4. GESI Mainstreaming in Human Resource Management.....	
5. GESI Focal Person.....	
6. GESI Awareness and Orientation.....	
7. GESI Mainstreaming in Staff Recruitment.....	
8. Staff Facilities /Benefits.....	
9. Rewards and Promotion System.....	
10. Inclusive Workforce, Environment and Culture.....	
11. Encouragement and Support to Partners.....	
<b>Section-4: Roles in GESI Policy Implementation</b> .....	
1. Roles of Executive Committee.....	

- 2. Roles of Executive Director.....
- 3. Roles of GESI Focal Person.....
- 4. Roles of Employees, Interns, Volunteers, and Consultants.....

**Section-5: Complaint Handling, Reporting and Disciplinary Actions.....**

- 1. Commitment to Discipline and Reporting.....
- 2. GESI Complaint Handling Committee.....
- 3. Complaint Review, Safeguards, and Timelines.....
- 4. Disciplinary Actions and Outcomes.....

**Section-6: Future Direction and Glossary.....**

- 1. Future Direction.....
- 2. Glossary.....

## SECTION-1: PRELIMINARY

### 1. INTRODUCTION OF NEDS NEPAL

Nepal Development Society-NEDS Nepal is a non-profit, non-political, non-religious, and non-governmental, research-based social organization established in 2013 (BS 2070). The organization operates at national, provincial and district levels in Nepal, working in the areas of policy interventions, research, study and survey, capacity assessment & building, sustainable development, public health, policy advisory support and environmental management at different levels. NEDS Nepal strengthens the capacity of community peoples, civil society, government institutions, and the private sector. The organization works in close collaboration with government agencies and other national, regional, and international partners.

NEDS Nepal is officially registered with the District Administration Office (DAO), Bharatpur Chitwan District, on 18 August 2013, with registration number 14, and is affiliated with the Social Welfare Council (SWC) since 23 August 2013, with affiliation number 37768. The organization implements all its programs and activities in compliance with the Constitution of Nepal, prevailing national laws, policies, plans, and guidelines of the Government of Nepal.

Over the years, NEDS Nepal has evolved into a multidisciplinary research and development organization with strong technical, managerial, and research capacities. The organization is supported by a team of professionals with diverse expertise in public health, environment, agriculture, engineering, and social sciences.

### 2. BACKGROUND

Over the years, NEDS Nepal has evolved into a multidisciplinary research and development organization with strong technical, managerial, and research capacities. Gender equality, social inclusion, and good governance are core values and cross-cutting principles guiding all programs, operations, and institutional practices of NEDS Nepal. The organization recognizes and aligns its work with the Nepal constitutional guarantees of equality, non-discrimination, proportional inclusion, and social justice as protected in the Constitution of Nepal 2072, as well as national policies and strategies related to Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI).

NEDS Nepal is committed to ensuring meaningful participation of women, marginalized and disadvantaged peoples and persons with disabilities through promoting an inclusive, safe, and women-friendly working environment through removing the discrimination and gender-based violence. The organization also aligns its commitments with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions).

To ensure internal environment and project delivery are align with national and international standards and to institutionalize these commitments and safeguard the systematic integration of gender equality and social inclusion across its management systems programs and operations Nepal Development Society-NEDS Nepal has formulated ***Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Policy 2082***.

### **3. PREFACE**

1. In accordance with Section 7, Sub-point 30 (Provision for Formulation of Rules) of the Statute (Bidhan), 2070 of Nepal Development Society -NEDS Nepal, the ***Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Policy 2082*** has been formulated to institutionalize, promote, and regulate gender equality and social inclusion within the organizational systems, human resource practices, and program implementation of NEDS Nepal.
2. This policy has been duly **endorsed by the General Assembly of NEDS Nepal** and shall be implemented effectively and consistently across all levels of the organization.

### **4. NAME OF THE POLICY**

- The name of this policy shall be ***“Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Policy 2082 (2026)”***.

### **5. APPLICATION OF THE GESI POLICY, 2082**

1. This Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Policy shall come into effect from the date of its endorsement by the General Assembly of Nepal Development Society -NEDS Nepal.
2. This policy shall apply to all staff or employees at all levels, as well as to external consultants engaged by NEDS Nepal. This policy shall also apply to members of the Executive Committee. All staff or employees are expected to read, understand, and comply with the provisions outlined in this policy document.
3. The Executive Director (ED)/GESI Focal Person shall be responsible for ensuring that all functions and practices related to the implementation of the GESI Policy are carried out in accordance with this policy.

### **6. RIGHT TO INTERPRET THE POLICY**

1. The final authority to interpret the provisions of this policy shall rest with the Executive Committee of Nepal Development Society -NEDS Nepal, under the chairpersonship of the Executive Committee Chairperson, in accordance with NEDS Nepal Statute (Bidhan), 2070 of Section 7, Article-33)

### **7. POLICY REVIEW, REVISION, AND AMENDMENT**

1. This policy shall be reviewed periodically based on organizational needs, priorities, applicable legal frameworks, and contextual requirements. Any gaps, shortcomings, inadequacies or provision identified during the implementation of this policy may be revised or updated as necessary by the organization.

2. The Executive Committee of NEDS Nepal reserves the right to amend, revise, or modify this *Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Policy 2082*, in whole or in part. Any such amendments shall form an integral part of this policy and shall come into effect upon approval by the General Assembly, in accordance with NEDS Nepal Statute (Bidhan), 2070 of Section 4, Article-14)

## 8. DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATION

*Provided that subject or context does not refer to different meaning, the terms included in the policy are as follows:*

1. **“Statute (Bidhan)”** shall mean Nepal Development Society-NEDS Nepal Statute 2070
2. **“Policy”** shall mean “Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Policy (GESI) 2082 (2026)”
3. **“Organization”** shall mean Nepal Development Society-NEDS Nepal, Chitwan, Nepal which is registered at DAO, Chitwan in BS 2070
4. **“Executive Committee”** shall mean the NEDS Nepal governing body comprised of elected members from NEDS Nepal General Assembly
5. **“Member of Executive Committee”** refers to a member selected from the General Assembly of the organization and who can take part in the organization decision making procedures.
6. **“Employee or Staff”** shall mean any person employed by NEDS Nepal as staff which may be regular, fixed term, interns, volunteers’ consultants, trainees, or casual employment
7. **“Executive Director”** shall mean an individual appointed by the Executive Committee and who is entrusted with overall management responsibility at NEDS Nepal
8. **“Office”** shall mean the office of the organization, including central/head office and field offices.
9. **“GESI”** refer to Gender Equality and Social Inclusion—an approach that promotes equal rights, opportunities, and participation for all people, especially marginalized groups.
10. **“GESI Focal Person”** means an individual designated by the NEDS Nepal to lead the implementation of GESI policy provisions, support of GESI-responsive programs and budgets, and monitor progress to strengthen gender equality and social inclusion within the workplace.
11. **“Inclusion”** refers to the involvement of the socially excluded, marginalized and disadvantaged people and have equal opportunities and are treated fairly.
12. **“Gender”** refers to the socially constructed roles, responsibilities, behaviors, and attributes that a society considers appropriate for women, men, girls, boys, and people of diverse gender identities. Gender varies across cultures and changes over time.
13. **“Gender Equality”** means to the absence of discrimination on the basis of gender, in which individuals of all genders have equal social value, rights, responsibilities, opportunities, and access to resources. All people are recognized, respected, and valued regardless of gender

14. **“GESI Mainstreaming”** means a strategy or process to integrate women and men and inclusion considerations into policies, institutional systems, programs, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, research, study and organizational practices to ensure equitable outcomes.
15. **“Gender Balance”** means the ratio of women to men in any given situation. Gender balance is accomplished when there are approximately equal numbers of men and women.
16. **“Discrimination”** refers to any unfair, unjust, or harmful treatment of men and women or group based on gender, caste, ethnicity, disability, age, religion, or other identity traits.
17. **“Inclusive Workforce”** refers to a workforce that welcomes, values, and supports diversity, ensuring equal employment opportunities and a safe, respectful working environment for all staff.
18. **“Complaint Handling Committee”** It is a committee responsible for receiving, reviewing, and addressing complaints related to discrimination, exclusion, harassment, or any violation of GESI principles within the organization.
19. **“Prescribed or as prescribed”** means as prescribed or prescribed by this policy and the authorized committee or body under it.

## **SECTION-2:**

### **AIM, OBJECTIVES, SCOPE AND GUIDING PRINCIPLE OF THE POLICY**

#### **1. AIM OF THE GESI POLICY**

The Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Policy aims to provide clear policy and programmatic guidance to ensure the proactive and systematic integration of gender equality and social inclusion in all aspects of NEDS Nepal's work. Effective implementation of this policy is expected to foster a positive shift in the organizational culture and environment, promoting gender equality and inclusion both in principle and in practice.

#### **2. OBJECTIVES OF THE GESI POLICY**

The Gender Equality and Social Inclusion of NEDS Nepal, Chitwan provides guidance to integrate gender equality within the organization structure, policy formulation, program development, budget allocation, program implementation, advocacy, monitoring and evaluation. This policy has been formulated for the purpose of united, inclusion, gender balance, equality and prosperous work place with opportunities for all.

The policy ensure that the organization's work promotes and integrates gender perspective, principles throughout its operations and programs ensuring that it operates in a fair, inclusive, and effective manner.

1. It promotes inclusivity and equality framework for ensuring GESI is mainstreamed across NEDS Nepal program planning and implementation, budgeting, strategies and policy development, M&E, organizational practices, decision and actions, executive functions and staff management
2. It builds a gender-balanced and socially inclusive workforce and foster an environment where all staff individuals, regardless of gender, caste/ ethnicity, religion, disability, marginalized and disadvantaged groups have equal opportunities to work and are treated fairly.
3. It develops a friendly work environment that values, respect, diversity, equity, and inclusion as well as inclusive workforce. NEDS Nepal recognizes its human resources as its greatest strength and most valuable asset.
4. It ensures the responsibility, accountability, transparency, inclusiveness and compliance to meet legal, ethical, and donor requirements related to GESI
5. It focuses to strengthen staff capacity on GESI, protection of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, safeguarding through orientation, awareness, empowerment

### 3. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

Nepal continues to experience persistent gender inequality and social exclusion based on gender, caste/ethnicity, age, culture, religion, language, geographic location, and other intersecting factors. Inequalities between women and men, and girls and boys, are largely socially constructed and reinforced through social norms, and institutional practices.

The GESI Policy provides a guiding framework for promoting equitable, inclusive, and non-discriminatory practices within NEDS Nepal and across all its programs, projects, and interventions as well as structure, operation and management. NEDS Nepal's overarching vision is to contribute to the creation of a just and inclusive society in which all women and men can equally exercise their rights, access opportunities, and participate meaningfully in overcoming gender inequality and social exclusion.

In line with this vision, NEDS Nepal has formulated this *Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Policy 2082*, which includes policy directives and serves as an internal guiding framework for realizing gender equality and social inclusion within the organizational programs, structure, operation and management systems of NEDS Nepal.

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Policy applies to all level's employees and any other representatives acting on behalf of NEDS Nepal but limited to:

1. The Chairperson and members of the Executive Committee
2. All Employees or staff at all levels
3. All consultants, visitors, volunteers and interns
4. All service providers engaged by NEDS Nepal
5. All partners and partnership arrangements
6. All beneficiaries, community members, and stakeholders engaged in by NEDS Nepal's programs or interventions
7. All projects, programs, and field-based activities implemented by NEDS Nepal
8. During travel, trainings, meetings, or any official or unofficial setting related to organizational work.

*Note: GESI principles need to be learned but internalized through continuous practices to achieve gender equality and inclusion*

### 4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE GESI POLICY

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) is fundamentally a human rights issue. NEDS Nepal is committed to promoting gender equality, equity, accountability participation and social inclusion, with particular attention to marginalized, and disadvantaged groups, through its research, studies, program planning and budgeting, policy formulation, advocacy, and institutional practices.

In addressing gender inequality and social exclusion, the Government of Nepal (GoN) has demonstrated strong commitment through constitutional provisions, national laws, policies, and international treaties and conventions to which Nepal is a signatory. In alignment with these commitments, NEDS Nepal is guided by relevant international, regional, and national

policies, goals, conventions, and declarations to promote gender equality and social inclusion within the workplace and in all programmatic interventions.

At the international level, NEDS Nepal aligns its work with key human rights and development frameworks, including but not limited to:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993)
- Relevant United Nations (UN) conventions, initiatives, and commitments
- The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (2000–2015), particularly Goal 3: *Promote gender equality and empower women*
- The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (2015–2030), particularly Goal 5: *Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls*

NEDS Nepal is committed to complying with and promoting all relevant Government of Nepal policies, laws, and strategies related to GESI. The Constitution of Nepal guarantees fundamental rights and duties, including the Right against Untouchability and Discrimination (Article 24) and the Rights of Women (Article 38). In addition, NEDS Nepal aligns its practices with key national legal instruments, including but not limited to:

- The Gender Equality Act, 2006
- The Domestic Violence (Crime and Punishment) Act, 2008
- The National Women Commission Act, 2007

These guiding principles form the foundation for integrating gender equality and social inclusion across all organizational policies, programs, projects, and operational systems of NEDS Nepal.

***Based on international and national policies, laws, goals, and declarations, NEDS Nepal focuses on the following key guiding principles to promote gender equality and inclusion:***

### ***1. Participation and Inclusion***

NEDS Nepal ensures meaningful participation and inclusion of men, women, age group, caste/ethnic, religion, marginalized, and disadvantaged groups in organizational and partner policies, projects programs, structure, operation and management.

### ***2. Equality and Non-Discrimination***

Every individual affiliated with NEDS Nepal shall be treated with dignity and respect and shall not face discrimination based on position, disability, gender, caste/ethnicity, age, religion, language, geographic location, economic status, or any other identity factor. All individuals shall benefit equally from the organization's policies, programs, and activities.

### ***3. Do No Harm***

NEDS Nepal ensures that all programs, activities, decisions, recommendations, and behaviors do not harm women, men, girls, boys, disability, or other disadvantaged and marginalized groups. All interventions must avoid reinforcing harmful norms and practices.

### ***4. Rights-Based Approach***

NEDS Nepal adopts a rights-based approach to mainstream gender equality and social inclusion into policies, programs, structure, management and organizational practices. This approach promotes and protects empowerment, equality, participation, accountability, transparency, and non-discrimination.

### ***5. Gender as Cross-Cutting and Mainstreamed***

Gender equality is a cross-cutting and mainstreamed principle across all policies, programs, budgets, and organizational systems of NEDS Nepal. Gender concerns shall be considered in every sector, program, operation, decision, and activity of the organization.

### ***6. Accountability and Transparency***

This policy is binding on all individuals associated with NEDS Nepal. Both institutional and individual accountability mechanisms shall ensure the effective implementation of the GESI policy. Staff, partners, and stakeholders are responsible for practicing and promoting inclusive behaviors.

### ***7. Accessibility***

NEDS Nepal is committed to providing equal access and opportunities to individuals with diverse backgrounds, capabilities, and abilities. Project, programs, services, and organizational processes shall be designed to be accessible to all women and men

### ***8. Collaboration and Learning***

The organization is committed to strengthening GESI outcomes through continuous learning, collaboration, and knowledge exchange. Integrating gender awareness, analysis, sensitivity and inclusion analysis into research, studies, programs, and policies facilitates new insights and innovative solutions.

## **SECTION-3:**

### **GESI MAINSTREAMING, PRACTICES AND PROMOTING A GENDER-SENSITIVE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE**

GESI values and principles shall be continuously internalized, practiced, and institutionalized to promote gender equality and inclusion across the organization. This provides a guiding framework for promoting equitable, inclusive, and non-discriminatory practices.

NEDS' Nepal mainstreams GESI at all institutional levels, including general membership, the Executive Board, the formation of advisory and sub-committees, organization operation and management, programs, projects, and within the overall workplace environment.

#### **1. GESI Mainstreaming in General Membership**

- Membership in NEDS Nepal is open to interested individuals who support the organization's values, adhere to its norms, and demonstrate a commitment to contributing to its organizational goals.
- Any citizen of Nepal irrespective of age, gender, caste/ethnicity, language, religion, disability status, or geographic location is eligible to become a general of NEDS Nepal.
- Decisions regarding membership are made exclusively by the NEDS Nepal Executive Committee in accordance with established procedures and the provisions outlined in the NEDS Nepal Bidhan 2070 (Amendment 2077)
- Priority for membership shall be given to individuals who are closely associated, involved, or engaged with NEDS Nepal's programs and initiatives.

#### **2. GESI Mainstreaming in Executive Board**

- No office employee or staff member of NEDS Nepal shall be eligible to serve as a member of the Executive Board.
- At least one of the following key positions Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, or Treasurer shall be held by a woman.
- The Executive Board shall ensure equitable participation of individuals from diverse groups, considering gender, age, caste/ethnicity, background, and occupation.
- Female representation on the EB shall be maintained at a minimum of 40 percent

#### **3. GESI Mainstreaming in Advisory and Other Committees**

- All advisory committees, subject committees, and sub-committees of NEDS Nepal shall include at least 33 percent female representation.
- Each subject committee or sub-committee shall be led by a qualified subject expert.
- GESI principles and considerations shall be applied in the formation and functioning of all advisory committees, subject committees, and sub-committees.

#### **4. GESI Mainstreaming in Human Resource Management**

- NEDS Nepal treats all employees or staff equally, enjoy their self-respect, and values their roles and contributions.
- NEDS Nepal promote equal employment opportunities, a diverse and gender-balanced work-force at institutional and program levels.
- NEDS Nepal encourages both female and male university graduates to apply for internships and volunteer positions and involve qualified, experienced, and diverse individuals as consultants.
- Equal employment opportunities are provided to all eligible candidates; however, priority is given to Female, disadvantaged, and marginalized groups, as well as NEDS Nepal members and partner organization members.
- The organization is committed to increasing the representation of women from Dalit, persons with disabilities, disadvantaged, and marginalized groups.
- Equal opportunities for career advancement shall be ensured to women and men through promotion, increased responsibilities, and adjustments in salary and/or grade based on merit.
- NEDS Nepal promotes a culture of continuous learning and development and shall provide equal opportunities to employee or staff in enhancing skills and professional competencies through capacity-building activities.
- NEDS Nepal shall establish safe, accessible, confidential, and gender-sensitive complaint handling mechanisms and staff or employee who file complaints shall be protected from retaliation.
- NEDS Nepal shall pursue the gender balance while forming the different committee and task force.

#### **5. GESI Focal Person**

- To ensure the GESI mainstreaming, organization practice and promote gender sensitive organization culture, GESI Focal Personal shall assigned and GESI Focal Person shall review and/or audit all programs and policies prior to final approval.

#### **6. GESI Awareness and Orientation**

- All newly recruited staff or employee shall receive orientation, training or briefing on the GESI Policy 2082 to develop gender friendly environment.
- The GESI Focal Person, in coordination with the Executive Director, shall conduct regular capacity-building initiatives, including training, coaching, and orientation, in office operations, and programming

#### **7. GESI Mainstreaming in Staff Recruitment**

- NEDS Nepal shall use GESI-friendly recruitment channels, including social media,

the organizational website, and job portals, to ensure wider outreach and equal access, particularly for women and candidates from marginalized groups.

- NEDS Nepal considers gender balance, caste/ethnicity, qualification, experience, and background in staff recruitment. Recruitment processes shall comply with the GESI Policy 2082
- A fair balance between internal and external candidates shall be maintained, ensuring transparency and equal opportunity. Internal competition may be used where appropriate to fill vacant positions.
- A three-member recruitment committee shall be formed, with mandatory representation of at least one woman, comprising:
  - Member from the Executive Committee-1
  - The HR Unit/Sector or Executive Director-1
  - A Program Expert from the relevant unit-

## **8. Staff Facilities/Benefits**

NEDS Nepal shall adopt supportive measures to address the specific needs of women staff during pregnancy, maternity, hospitalization, postnatal, and lactation periods and Paternity leave shall also be provided to support mothers and assist with childcare, in accordance with prevailing Government of Nepal policies.

### **a) Pregnancy Period**

- Female employees or staff who have completed eight (8) months of pregnancy shall not be required to undertake compulsory field travel.
- The Female employees or staff who have completed eight-month period, such female employees may utilize earned leave and/or take leave without pay until childbirth.
- Flexible working hours shall be provided to pregnant female employees or staff with children below two (2) years of age, allowing them to start or leave work up to one (1) hour earlier or later, as per the Human Resource Policy.
- NEDS Nepal may provide a one-month advance salary (to that employees or staff whose probation period is completed) during pregnancy or maternity leave, and in cases of staff or immediate family hospitalization (parents, parents-in-law, spouse, or children), as per Human Resource Policy.

### **b) Maternity Leave**

- All Female employees or staff working in the NEDS Nepal shall be entitled to Ninety-eight (98) calendar days of paid maternity leave
- In cases of post-delivery complications or medical condition, NEDS Nepal shall be entitled to one additional month (30 calendar days) of paid leave upon recommendation of a registered medical practitioner.

- All Female employees or staff working in the NEDS Nepal shall be entitled to thirty (30) days of unpaid maternity leave upon the approval of Executive Director
- Maternity Leave may be availed/provisioned up to two times during the employee's tenure at NEDS Nepal.

**c) Breastfeeding Provision**

- Breastfeeding mothers shall be entitled to one hour per day for breastfeeding until the child reaches six months of age.
- For children aged six months to two years, breastfeeding mothers shall be entitled to thirty (30) minutes per day.
- NEDS Nepal shall make provisions for a breastfeeding corner and, where feasible, a day-care facility.

**d) Paternity Leave**

- Male employees shall be entitled to fifteen calendar days of paid paternity leave to support the mother and assist with childcare.
- Paternity leave may be availed/provisioned up to two times during the employee's tenure at NEDS Nepal.
- In the event of the mother's death within 60 days of childbirth, male employee may take paid maternity leave for the remaining maternity leave period to care for the child.

**9. Rewards and Promotion System**

- The EC shall annually recognize outstanding staff performance (best staff of the year) and long-term service (exceeding five years). The type of reward shall be determined by the Executive Committee.
- NEDS Nepal encourages employees to pursue further education and professional development through partnerships with universities and training institutions.
- Internal promotion to vacant positions shall be based on recommendation by the line manager and approval by the Executive Director in consultation with EC.
- NEDS Nepal maintains a complaint handling system and feedback mechanism to promote transparency, accountability, and stakeholder engagement

**10. Inclusive Workforce, Environment and Culture**

1. All employee or staff including senior management, shall understand and apply the GESI values and principles including the GESI Policy 2082 in their work to ensure a gender-friendly environment and culture.
2. NEDS Nepal shall make ensure its office space is friendly to all employees or staff ensuring a hygienic safe, respectful, and harassment-free workplace and actively participate in work as per their position assigned

3. NEDS Nepal foster a culture of respect, dignity, and non-discrimination and take action against any form of discrimination, workplace violence and harassment (verbal, physical, sexual, or psychological) exclusion, or misconduct.
4. NEDS Nepal strictly prohibits discrimination based on gender, caste/ethnicity, age, religion, disabilities or language. All employees shall be treated with respect, dignity, and culturally sensitive language.
5. NEDS Nepal shall focus the GESI related job description while preparing job description and work performance appraisal of the employee.
6. NEDS' Nepal female employee or staff are entitled to maternity protection (pregnancy, child bearing and lactating), including leave, and benefits.
7. NEDS Nepal shall not procure vehicle, hotel, ticketing, repair and maintenance, printing, or stationery and other services from any provider, vendor or suppliers that employs children under 18 years of age.
8. All employee or staff shall not use inappropriate physical contact; bad touch, words, inappropriate activities or conversation in the workplace or community
9. All employee or staff shall not send, tell or take inappropriate SMS, photo, video and jokes as well as any inappropriate symbols, words, drawing, or pornographic pictures
10. All employee or staff shall report any concerns, unusual behavior, abuse of staff or volunteers to the GESI Focal Person or ED
11. All employee or staff shall not engage in any abuse, harassment, exploitation, exploitative, abusive, or corrupt relationships and activities that violet human.
12. NEDS' Nepal all programs, projects, policies, operations, and organizational decisions shall be gender-sensitive.
13. All employee or staff shall follow organization and Nepal government policies and guidelines for creation of a conducive working environment in the office and field
14. NEDS Nepal encourage institutional accountability, inclusive leadership, women empowerment, gender mainstream and participation from diverse groups.
15. All employees or staff shall comply with the Code of Conduct, rules and regulations of NEDS Nepal, Policies, and any lawful instructions issued by the ED. (***Refer Code of Conduct Policy 2082 and Anit-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption 2082 and Conflict of Interest Policy 2082***)

## **11. Encouragement and Support to Partners**

1. NEDS Nepal shall encourage and support partner organizations to review existing policies and guidelines to integrate GESI perspectives, or develop new policies
2. NEDS Nepal shall promote the development of GESI-responsive programs, organizational structures, management practices, and operational systems among its partner organizations.

## **SECTION- 4:**

### **ROLES IN GESI POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

#### **1. Roles of Executive Committee (EC)**

The Executive Committee provides leadership and oversight to ensure that GESI principles are embedded across NEDS Nepal's governance, policies, operations, and programs. Key roles and responsibilities include:

1. Approve, endorse, and oversee the implementation of the GESI Policy across all departments and programs.
2. Ensure organizational strategies, policies, and plans align with GESI commitments and promote equality and prevent discrimination based on gender, caste/ethnicity, disability, age, or other identity factors.
3. Promote accountability, transparency, fairness, gender mainstreaming, and non-discrimination in governance, management and organizational actions.
4. Integrate GESI considerations into program planning, implementation, budgeting, staffing, partnerships, and monitoring.
5. Promote equal opportunities, participation, and inclusive leadership practices, fostering a culture that respects diversity, dignity, and equality.
6. Ensure compliance with relevant national laws and donor requirements on gender equality, safeguarding, and social inclusion.
7. Ensure that the EC's decisions and actions advance gender equality and inclusion across organizational programs, operations, and management.

#### **2. Roles of Executive Director (ED)**

The Executive Director provides strategic guidance, technical leadership, and accountability for the integration of GESI across NEDS Nepal. Key roles and responsibilities include:

1. Provide strategic guidance, oversight, and technical leadership for GESI integration in policies, programs, budgets, structure, management and office operations.
2. Appoint a GESI Focal Person, promote gender-responsive practices and allocate necessary resources for effective policy implementation.
3. Support capacity-building activities and ensure all organizational decisions, strategies, and actions consider GESI implications.
4. Promote gender mainstreaming, an inclusive workforce, and safe, supportive work environments free from discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or abuse.
5. Address and support the resolution of GESI-related issues or concerns raised by staff, partners, stakeholders, or beneficiaries and ensure for corrective actions.
6. Promote equal participation and opportunities for women, men, youth, persons with disabilities, marginalized groups.
7. Ensure representation in leadership roles, recruitment panels, procurement committees, management committees, and advisory boards.
8. Present proposed amendments to the GESI Policy to the EC for approval.

### **3. Roles of GESI Focal Person**

The GESI Focal Person is responsible for supporting the effective implementation of the GESI Policy across NEDS Nepal. Key roles and responsibilities include:

1. Lead the implementation of the GESI Policy and ensure its alignment with organizational plans, programs, policies, and priorities as well as monitor the GESI integration to meet organizational requirements.
2. Promote a GESI-sensitive working environment and culture within the organization and assist the ED in ensuring consistent implementation of the policy at all levels
3. Support program units for GESI considerations in assessments, surveys, trainings, strategies, research, studies, strategies, plans, programs, monitoring, and reporting through consultation and guidance.
4. Ensure GESI responsibilities are incorporated into staff job descriptions and performance evaluations.
5. Develop tools, resources, and training to build the capacity of NEDS Nepal staff or employee and partners for GESI analysis and mainstreaming.
6. Address GESI-related concerns or issues raised by staff, partners, or stakeholders respectfully, confidentially, and conscientiously.
7. Initiate proposed amendments to the GESI Policy and submit them to the ED for consideration by the EC.

### **4. Roles of Employees, Interns, Volunteers, and Consultants**

All staff or employee, interns, volunteers, and consultants are responsible for integrating GESI principles into their daily work. Key roles and responsibilities include:

1. Demonstrate non-discriminatory, respectful, polite and inclusive behavior at all times, regardless of gender, age, position, roles, qualification, culture, religion, language, background, geographic location, or other identity factors.
2. Report any cases of discrimination, exclusion, sexual exploitation, abuse, harassment, or safeguarding concerns through the established complaint and reporting mechanisms.
3. Promote safe, inclusive, and accessible working environments, ensuring unbiased and non-discriminatory interactions with colleagues, seniors, juniors, stakeholders, and community members.
4. Demonstrate safe environment, professional and respectful behavior aligned with GESI principles, avoiding reinforcement of harmful gender stereotypes or cultural biases.
5. Respect and uphold human dignity, equality, and diversity, and actively participate in GESI-related orientation, capacity-building, and PSEAH training sessions.
6. Follow the provisions of the GESI Policy in their work, interactions, and organizational responsibilities

## **SECTION-5:**

### **COMPLAINT HANDLING, REPORTING AND DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

#### **1. Commitment to Discipline and Reporting**

Maintaining discipline is essential to ensure accountability, harmony, and professionalism within the organization. All employees and associated personnel shall comply with the organization's values, policies, and Code of Conduct while performing their duties.

All staff, employees, and individuals associated with NEDS Nepal are encouraged to report GESI-related concerns, including discrimination, sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, gender-based violence, or exclusion. Complaints may be submitted through suggestion boxes, hotline numbers, email, or direct reporting to the GESI Focal Person or the Executive Director. All complaints shall be handled confidentially, impartially, and in a timely manner. The GESI Focal Person shall receive complaints respectfully and facilitate resolution through the ***GESI Complaint Handling Committee***.

#### **2. GESI Complaint Handling Committee**

The Committee shall be responsible for receiving, reviewing, and addressing complaints to ensure effective implementation of the GESI Policy. The following member shall represent the GESI Complaint Handling Committee. Gender balance shall be considered in forming the Committee.

1. Executive Board Member – Coordinator
2. Executive Director/any staff assigned by ED – Member
3. GESI Focal Person – Member

#### **3. Complaint Review, Safeguards, and Timelines**

- All NEDS Nepal employees and associated staff shall have the right to submit confidential complaints to the Complaint Handling Committee. The Committee shall conduct an impartial hearing for both the complainant (victim) and the alleged perpetrator and take appropriate action to ensure fairness and justice.
- In cases of alleged misconduct, disciplinary proceedings shall be initiated within three (3) working days of the complaint being reported or brought to notice. A final decision shall be made within seven (7) working days from the date of initiation of the disciplinary process.
- Any individual experiencing gender-based violence (GBV) shall be able to access the grievance and complaint mechanism without fear of retaliation, loss of dignity, or intimidation, regardless of the alleged perpetrator's position.
- Members of the Complaint Handling Committee shall ensure that complainants feel safe, respected, and supported throughout and after the complaint handling process.

#### **4. Disciplinary Actions and Outcomes**

- Internal complaint mechanisms shall be managed at the organizational level. Where necessary, the Committee may make temporary administrative arrangements to minimize interaction between the complainant and the alleged perpetrator during the investigation.
- Minor grievances may be resolved informally and amicably, where appropriate, without compromising the rights or safety of the complainant.
- If the accused employee or staff member is found not guilty of misconduct, the committee shall be responsible to reinstated to their original position with full restoration of benefits from the date of suspension, and a clearance letter shall be issued with appropriate justification.
- If the employees or staff is found guilty of minor or major misconduct, the committee shall impose disciplinary actions in accordance with the severity of the offense to ensure corrective and preventive measures. Disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to, verbal warning, written warning, suspension, demotion, or termination of employment, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct.
- The Complaint Handling Committee shall maintain complete and confidential documentation of all complaints and disciplinary proceedings.

## SECTION-6: FUTURE DIRECTION AND GLOSSARY

### 1. FUTURE DIRECTION

NEDS Nepal will continue to prioritize to integrate GESI into all thematic areas. The organization will strengthen its commitment to Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) by fully institutionalizing GESI principles across governance, programs, partnerships, and organizational culture. The organization will prioritize evidence-based planning, regular capacity building, and accountability mechanisms to ensure meaningful inclusion of women, persons with disabilities, and marginalized groups.

NEDS Nepal will enhance monitoring, learning, and reporting systems to track GESI outcomes and inform continuous improvement. Moving forward, the organization will also foster strategic partnerships, adopt innovative and gender-responsive approaches, and align its policies and practices with national and international GESI standards to ensure sustainable and inclusive development impact.

### 2. GLOSSARY

1. **Accountability:** The obligation of the organization and its staff to act responsibly, transparently, and in accordance with GESI standards, and to respond to concerns raised by staff or employee and stakeholders.
2. **Do No Harm:** An approach that ensures programs and decisions do not create or worsen inequalities, discrimination, or social tensions.
3. **Gender: It** refers to the characteristics of women, men, girls and boys that are socially constructed. This includes norms, behaviors, activities, and roles associated with being a woman, man, girl or boy, as well as relationships with others. As a social construct, gender varies from society to society and can change over time. Gender is different from biological sex, which refers to the physical characteristics of males and females.
4. **Empowerment:** The process of increasing individuals' or groups' ability to make choices, exercise rights, control resources, and influence decisions that affect their lives.
5. **Gender Equity:** It is the process of being fair to women and men. Fair treatment of individuals based on their needs and circumstances to ensure equal outcomes. To ensure fairness, measures must be available to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that prevent men and women from otherwise operating on an equal basis.
6. **Gender Awareness: Understanding** how gender roles, relations, and power dynamics influence people's opportunities and experiences, and ensuring decisions and actions do not reinforce inequalities.

7. **Gender-Based Violence (GBV):** Any harmful act directed at an individual based on their gender. All types of abuse and is experienced disproportionately by the women. This includes psychological, physical, emotional, sexual, and economic violence such as murder, beating, sexual abuse, rape, torture, traditional harmful practices, violence related to exploitation, sexual harassment and bullying at work.
8. **Gender Sensitivity:** Gender Sensitivity means the ability to recognizing and respecting the different perceptions and interests, needs, roles, challenges, and power dynamics of individuals of all genders. Gender sensitivity is considered the beginning stage of gender awareness.
9. **Gender Analysis:** Gender Analysis is a systematic process of examining differences in the roles, responsibilities, access to resources, constraints, and opportunities of individuals based on gender. It helps identify gender inequalities, power relations, and barriers so that programs, policies, and decisions can be designed to promote equitable outcomes.
10. **Gender-Responsive Budget (GRB) :**It is a budgeting approach that systematically considers the different needs, roles, and priorities of women, men, and marginalized groups. It ensures that resources are allocated, planned, and monitored in ways that promote gender equality and social inclusion, addressing disparities and advancing equitable outcomes.
11. **Marginalized Groups: Populations** systematically excluded due to gender, caste, ethnicity, disability, geography, poverty, age, religion, sexual orientation, or other identity factors. Examples include women, persons with disabilities, Dalits, ethnic minorities, LGBTQI+
12. **Sex:** The biological and physical characteristics that classify individuals as female, male, or intersex at birth, including chromosomes, reproductive organs, and hormones.
13. **Sexual Violence:** Sexual Violence refers to any sexual act or attempts to obtain a sexual act through coercion, force, threats, manipulation, or abuse of power. It includes rape, attempted rape, sexual assault, unwanted touching, sexual harassment, exploitation, and any non-consensual sexual activity. It should be understood as any type of sexually explicit behavior or conduct carried out against the will of women or girls. It is a violation of human rights and a serious form of gender-based violence.
14. **Sexual Harassment:** It refers to any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, sexually suggestive comments, gestures, or conduct—whether verbal, non-verbal, physical, or digital—that creates an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or unsafe environment. It includes behavior that interferes with a person’s dignity, work, participation, or wellbeing, regardless of the perpetrator’s intent.

15. **Social Inclusion:** A process that ensures all individuals— especially socially excluded, marginalized and disadvantaged groups can participate in program activities, jobs, economic activities and share benefit equally from opportunities. It is a process of promoting opportunities, equality, access to resources, voice and respect for rights and positive interactions among individuals and groups.
16. **Intersectionality:** The understanding that individuals experience multiple, interconnected forms of discrimination or privilege based on overlapping identities such as gender, caste, ethnicity, disability, and age.
17. **Participation:** The meaningful and inclusive engagement of men and women, boys and girls especially various caste/ethnicity, disadvantage groups in program planning and implementation, budgeting, decision-making, actions and monitoring processes.
18. **People with Disability:** Individuals who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, sensory, or psychosocial impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation on an equal basis with others.
19. **Women-Friendly:** Women-Friendly refers to practices, services, environments, or policies that support the safety, dignity, participation, and wellbeing of women. This includes ensuring accessibility, respectful treatment, confidentiality, and equal opportunities for women in all organizational and program settings as well as can express their sentiments without any inhibition and can easily acquire information, services and facilities