Program on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for nutrition, Entrepreneurship and Resilience in Bangladesh (PARTNER)

GENDER ACTION PLAN

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ABSTRACT

The Gender Action Plan for the PARTNER project serves as a comprehensive framework to address and integrate gender equality into agricultural development. Recognizing the significant yet often underrepresented role of women in agriculture, the plan outlines strategic initiatives aimed at promoting inclusivity, reducing disparities, and enhancing opportunities for all genders. It emphasizes capacity building, equitable resource access, and inclusive decision-making while fostering nutrition-sensitive and transformative agricultural practices. With specific objectives tied to Development and Learning Indicators (DLIs), the plan ensures systematic implementation, accountability, and monitoring through gender-disaggregated data. By empowering women and fostering partnerships, the plan aspires to achieve a sustainable, equitable, and productive agricultural sector that aligns with global development goals.

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PREFACE

Agriculture is the backbone of Bangladesh's economy, employing millions and contributing significantly to the nation's food security and economic stability. Yet, the role of women in this critical sector remains underrecognized and undervalued. The Gender Action Plan (GAP) for the PARTNER project emerges from the recognition of this gap and the urgent need to address it.

Developed through rigorous gender analysis, stakeholder consultations, and an evidence-based approach, the GAP is a roadmap for embedding gender equity at every level of agricultural development. This document outlines practical strategies for addressing barriers that limit women's access to resources, knowledge, and decision-making platforms. It sets specific goals, such as ensuring women's representation in leadership roles, facilitating equitable access to technology and finance, and fostering safer environments free from GBV.

One of the unique aspects of this plan is its alignment with the project's Development and Learning Indicators (DLIs), ensuring that every activity contributes to measurable and impactful outcomes. It introduces innovative solutions such as tailored digital tools, mentorship programs, and gender-sensitive policies, alongside traditional capacity-building approaches. The GAP also integrates mechanisms for continuous feedback, adaptation, and learning, reflecting the dynamic needs of the communities it serves.

This plan is not merely a compliance document; it is a vision for transformation. It calls upon all stakeholders—governments, development partners, private sector actors, and communities—to join forces in realizing a shared vision of an inclusive, equitable, and sustainable agricultural sector. The success of the GAP lies in its collaborative implementation, ensuring that no one is left behind in the journey toward gender equality.

As we embark on this transformative initiative, let this document inspire action, foster innovation, and reaffirm our commitment to building a brighter, more inclusive future for all.

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MESSEGE FROM PROGRAM COORDINATOR

It is with great pride and purpose that I present the Gender Action Plan (GAP) for the PARTNER project. This document encapsulates our unwavering commitment to fostering inclusivity, equality, and empowerment across Bangladesh's agricultural sector.

Women are the backbone of our rural economy, contributing significantly to food production, resource management, and household resilience. Yet, their contributions often go unrecognized, and their potential remains underutilized. The GAP is our response to this inequity—a call to action to address systemic barriers and ensure that all individuals, regardless of gender, can participate, lead, and thrive.

The GAP is built on five core pillars:

Inclusivity in Participation

Our plan sets ambitious targets for gender parity, ensuring women represent at least 40% of beneficiaries in training programs and 30% in leadership roles. These targets are not just numbers—they are our promise to level the playing field.

Empowerment Through Resources

We aim to dismantle barriers to resources such as land, finance, and technology, providing women with the tools they need to succeed. Tailored financial products, user-friendly digital tools, and mentorship opportunities are central to our strategy.

Safety and Respect

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) remains a critical challenge. The GAP prioritizes creating safe spaces, anonymous reporting channels, and comprehensive response protocols to protect women's dignity and well-being.

Collaborative Partnerships

Transformative change requires collective action. This plan fosters partnerships with government agencies, NGOs, private enterprises, and community leaders to amplify our impact and ensure sustainability.

Accountability and Monitoring

Using gender-disaggregated data and aligned with Development and Learning Indicators (DLIs), the GAP ensures that every intervention is measurable, transparent, and adaptable to emerging needs.

The GAP is more than a strategy; it is a commitment to the women of Bangladesh—those who till the soil, nurture communities, and aspire for a better future. By integrating gender-sensitive practices into every facet of the project, we not only promote equality but also enhance agricultural productivity, resilience, and sustainability.

This plan is a cornerstone of the PARTNER project's vision to create a thriving, equitable agricultural sector. However, success depends on us all. I urge every stakeholder, partner, and community member to embrace this plan with the passion and determination it deserves. Together, let us transform not just agriculture, but also the lives it sustains.

Thank you for your dedication and for being part of this journey.

With hope and solidarity,

Abul Kalam Azad
Program Coordinator, PARTNER Project

MESSAGE FROM GENDER SPECIALIST

It is an honor to introduce the Gender Action Plan (GAP) for the PARTNER project. As a gender specialist, I have witnessed firsthand the transformative power of integrating gender equality into development initiatives, particularly in agriculture. This plan reflects our collective efforts to create a more inclusive and equitable agricultural sector where both women and men have equal access to opportunities, resources, and benefits.

For far too long, women in agriculture have been marginalized despite their essential contributions. They are often at the forefront of farming activities, managing crops, livestock, and household responsibilities. Yet, women face persistent challenges such as limited access to land, finance, technology, and decision-making platforms. This plan is our strategic response to these challenges, ensuring that gender considerations are woven into every part of the PARTNER project.

The GAP is built on a deep understanding of the local gender dynamics and the specific needs of women in agriculture. Through this plan, we aim to:

Foster Equal Participation: Ensuring that women are equally represented in training, leadership roles, and decision-making processes.

Empower Women through Resources: Providing targeted interventions to remove barriers to resources and opportunities for women, ensuring they have the tools they need to succeed.

Prevent Gender-Based Violence (GBV): Establishing clear protocols and safe spaces to protect women from violence and abuse, both within and outside the project.

Promote Women's Leadership: Encouraging women's active participation in leadership roles within agricultural value chains, facilitating their growth as change-makers.

Ensure Accountability and Progress: Using gender-disaggregated data to track the plan's impact, ensuring that gender equity goals are met and adjusted as needed.

This plan aligns with global frameworks, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 5 on gender equality. By addressing gender disparities head-on, we will create a more sustainable, productive, and resilient agricultural system that benefits everyone.

I believe that the successful implementation of this plan will bring about lasting change, empowering women to take their rightful place as leaders, decision-makers, and contributors to agricultural transformation. But achieving this vision requires the commitment of all stakeholders—governments, organizations, communities, and individuals. Together, we can ensure that the PARTNER project creates a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable agricultural sector for all.

I look forward to working with all of you as we bring this vision to life and create a future where gender equality in agriculture is not just an aspiration, but a reality.

Thank you for your continued dedication to this critical cause.

With commitment and hope,

Dr. Nasiba Aktar
Gender Specialist,
PCU, PARTNER

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background

The Gender Action plan for the PARTNER project stems from a keen recognition of entrenched gender disparities in the agricultural landscape, where women often grapple with limited access to resources and opportunities. In alignment with the project's overarching goals of bolstering agricultural productivity and sustainability, the gender section plan takes a strategic leap to mainstream gender considerations. This strategic move is deemed crucial for unlocking inclusive and equitable outcomes, fostering social harmony, and aligning with broader development objectives like poverty alleviation and food security. The plan is not a one-size-fits-all approach; rather, it springs from extensive community consultations, ensuring tailored strategies that resonate with the specific needs and aspirations of the communities at the project's focal point. Emphasizing the pivotal role of capacity building, the plan envisages targeted training programs to heighten gender sensitivity among project stakeholders. It further underscores its commitment to accountability and transparency through a robust monitoring and evaluation framework that incorporates gender-disaggregated data. The PARTNER project, thus, stands poised to not only cultivate sustainable agriculture but also champion gender-responsive practices in its pursuit of transformative development.

B. Rationale for Gender Inclusion in PARTNER

The rationale for gender inclusion in the PARTNER project is grounded in the understanding that gender equality is not only a fundamental human right but also an essential catalyst for sustainable development. Recognizing the multifaceted roles played by both men and women in agriculture, it is imperative to address existing gender disparities to unlock the full potential of the sector. Women, who constitute a significant portion of the agricultural workforce, often face barriers such as limited access to resources, information, and decision-making opportunities.

Incorporating gender perspectives into the project is not just a matter of compliance but a strategic imperative to enhance project effectiveness and impact. By promoting gender equality, the project aims to create a more inclusive and resilient agricultural system. Gender-inclusive practices contribute to increased productivity, improved livelihoods, and strengthened social fabric within communities.

Moreover, gender inclusion aligns with broader international commitments and frameworks, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that emphasize the importance of gender equality in achieving sustainable development. The PARTNER project recognizes that empowering women in agriculture goes beyond rectifying historical injustices; it is an investment in the future that fosters innovation, resilience, and community well-being. In essence, the rationale for gender inclusion in PARTNER is rooted in the belief that equitable development is not only morally right but also strategically advantageous for the project's overall success and sustainability.

C. Definition of Key Terms

Gender: Refers to socially constructed roles and responsibilities of women and men, and includes expectations held about characteristics, and likely behaviours of both men and women; the roles that we learn to fill from childhood onward.

Sex: Refers to the genetic and physiological characteristics and traits that indicate whether one is male or female.

Gender Equity: Refers to fairness and justice in the distribution of responsibilities and benefits between men and women (i.e., equal number of women and men on an organization's Board of Directors)

Gender Equality: Refers to the absence of discrimination on the basis of a person's sex in opportunities, the allocation of resources or benefits, or in access to services (i.e., equal participation and decision-making power by men and women on a Board of Directors).

Gender Equity is a first step towards the goal of Gender Equality.

Gender Mainstreaming: defined by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as: "… the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation,

policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women as well as of men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality." (From www.ilo.org)

Gender Sensitivity: Gender sensitivity involves an awareness and understanding of the different needs, roles, and constraints of women, men, girls, and boys.

Inclusivity: Inclusivity refers to the deliberate effort to involve and consider the perspectives and needs of all individuals, regardless of their gender.

Capacity Building: Capacity building involves enhancing the knowledge, skills, and abilities of project staff, partners, and stakeholders.

Gender Disaggregated Data: Gender disaggregated data involves collecting and analyzing information separately for different gender groups. This practice enables a detailed understanding of how project impacts, benefits, and challenges may vary among women, men, girls, and boys. Gender disaggregated data is crucial for evidence-based decision-making.

Feedback Mechanisms: Feedback mechanisms are structured processes for obtaining input, comments, and concerns from project participants. In the gender context, these mechanisms are designed to specifically capture the experiences and challenges faced by women participants, allowing for timely adjustments and improvements to project activities.

Transparency and Accountability: Transparency refers to openness and clarity in project processes, decision-making, and reporting. Accountability involves taking responsibility for the project's impact and outcomes. In the gender context, transparency and accountability ensure that gender-specific achievements, challenges, and lessons learned are shared with relevant stakeholders for scrutiny and improvement.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV): Gender-Based Violence refers to any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will and is based on socially ascribed gender differences. GBV encompasses physical, sexual, emotional, or economic violence, occurring in both public and private spheres.

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA): SEA means any inappropriate behavior of a person in power that takes advantage of someone vulnerable. This includes unwelcome sexual acts, coercion, harassment, or any form of sexual misconduct.

Sexual Harassment (SH): SH is any unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature that is offensive, humiliating, or creates an intimidating environment. It can be verbal, non-verbal, or physical and includes unwarranted advances, requests for sexual favors, or any other form of inappropriate conduct.

II. Objectives

Overall Goal:

The overall goal of the gender action plan within the PARTNER project is to create a sustainable and inclusive agricultural sector that champions gender equality, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of gender, have equitable access to opportunities, resources, and benefits throughout the project's implementation. The plan strives to address the specific needs and challenges faced by women in agriculture, aiming to foster an environment where women actively participate, lead, and benefit from project activities. Through targeted interventions, capacity-building initiatives, and continuous monitoring, the gender action plan seeks to contribute to broader societal changes by promoting a transformative and inclusive agricultural landscape.

Specific Objectives

Promoting Equal Participation: Ensure equal and meaningful participation of men and women in all project activities, with a focus on addressing barriers and challenges faced by women in agriculture.

Enhancing Access and Opportunities: Facilitate equitable access to project resources, opportunities, and benefits for both men and women, aiming to reduce gender disparities within the agricultural sector.

Capacity Building for Gender Sensitivity: Implement targeted capacity-building programs to enhance the gender responsiveness of project staff, partners, and stakeholders, fostering a more inclusive and sensitive approach.

Nutrition-Sensitive Approaches: Integrate nutrition-sensitive approaches into project activities to improve food security and contribute to the overall health and well-being of communities, with a specific focus on women's nutritional needs.

Transformative Impact: Foster transformative changes within the agricultural sector by recognizing and valuing the diverse roles of individuals, contributing to broader societal shifts in attitudes, practices, and opportunities.

Continuous Monitoring and Adaptation: Establish a robust monitoring and evaluation system to track gender mainstreaming progress, promptly address challenges faced by women participants, and adapt interventions based on ongoing findings.

Documentation and Transparency: Document and report on gender-specific achievements, challenges, and lessons learned, ensuring transparency and accountability in the gender mainstreaming efforts of the PARTNER project.

III. Gender Analysis

Overview of the Current Gender Landscape:

Demographic Overview: Provide a comprehensive overview of the gender composition within the project area, highlighting the distribution of men and women across age groups.

Economic Roles: Analyze the current roles of men and women in the local economy, specifically focusing on their involvement in agriculture and related activities.

Educational Attainment: Examine the educational levels of men and women in the project area, identifying any disparities that may exist.

Identification of Gender Barriers and Opportunities:

Access to Resources: Assess the extent of men and women's access to key resources such as land, credit, and technology, highlighting any existing gender-based disparities.

Decision-Making Power: Analyze the decision-making power within households and communities, emphasizing the roles of men and women in shaping agricultural and household-related choices.

Social and Cultural Norms: Identify prevalent social and cultural norms that may act as barriers or opportunities for gender equality in agriculture.

Stakeholder Analysis and Gender Roles:

Identification of Stakeholders: List and analyze key stakeholders involved in the project, emphasizing their gender-specific roles and influence.

Gender Roles in Agriculture: Detail the specific roles played by men and women in agricultural activities, considering both productive and reproductive aspects.

Power Dynamics: Examine power dynamics among different stakeholders, exploring how gender influences authority and decision-making within the project context.

The gender analysis will provide a nuanced understanding of the current gender landscape, uncovering barriers, opportunities, and the roles of various stakeholders. This knowledge will inform targeted

interventions and ensure that the PARTNER project effectively addresses gender-specific needs and challenges.

IV. Gender-Responsive Planning and Design

DLI wise Integration of Gender Considerations in Project Design

Incorporating gender considerations in DLIs and Outputs involves systematically integrating a gender perspective into the design and implementation of each development indicator and project output. This proactive approach ensures that the diverse needs, roles, and opportunities of both women and men are explicitly addressed, contributing to a more equitable and effective agricultural transformation in the PARTNER project.

DLI 1: Development, Rollout & Adoption of GAP Standards in Fruit and Vegetable Production
- Incorporate a gender-sensitive analysis into the development of GAP standards for fruit and vegetable production, addressing the specific needs and constraints faced by women.
- Ensure the inclusion of women farmers in training programs for GAP certification, targeting a minimum of 40% representation.
- Establish a monitoring system that tracks the gender composition of certified farms, aiming for equitable outcomes for both men and women.

DLI 2: Development & Adoption of High Yielding Rice Varieties
- Integrate a gender perspective in the development and adoption of stress-tolerant rice varieties, recognizing and addressing women's roles in rice cultivation.
- Facilitate the active participation of women in seed multiplication networks and marketing initiatives, with a target of at least 30% representation.
- Monitor the adoption of high-yielding rice varieties, disaggregated by gender, and address any disparities identified.

DLI 3: Crop Diversification towards Non-Rice Cereals, Pulses, Oilseeds, and Horticulture Crops
- Conduct gender-responsive research for stress-tolerant varieties in non-rice crops, taking into account women's preferences and roles in agriculture.
- Ensure the active involvement of women in seed/sapling multiplication networks, setting a target of 35% participation.
- Monitor the expansion of non-rice crops, with a focus on tracking the proportion of women involved and addressing gender-specific challenges.

DLI 4: Adoption of Improved & Efficient Irrigation Technologies by Farmers
- Develop irrigation policies and plans that explicitly address gender-specific barriers and needs.
- Promote the adoption of efficient irrigation technologies among women farmers through targeted outreach, aiming for a 40% increase in adoption rates.
- Regularly assess and address gender disparities in the adoption of irrigation technologies.

DLI 5: Expansion of Digital Agricultural Service (KSC, e-Voucher)
- Design digital extension services that are user-friendly and accessible, considering women's literacy levels and technological access.
- Ensure that at least 30% of farmers receiving e-vouchers are women, providing tailored training and support to enhance their participation.
- Monitor the participation of women in digital services and proactively address gender-based barriers.

DLI 6: Accreditation of Seed Certification & Food Safety
- Develop accreditation processes that explicitly consider gender-specific needs in seed certification and food safety.

- Promote equal representation of women in laboratories and testing processes, setting a target of 40% participation.
- Monitor and address any gender disparities identified in accredited testing processes.

DLI 7: Promotion of Agri-Food Entrepreneurship for Youth and Women
- Establish partnerships and training programs with a focus on promoting women and youth entrepreneurship in agriculture, targeting at least 60% women beneficiaries.
- Provide mentorship and support networks tailored to women and youth entrepreneurs, recognizing their unique needs.
- Regularly assess the success rates and challenges faced by women and youth entrepreneurs, adjusting support mechanisms accordingly.

DLI 8: Increase of R&D Activities for New Technologies and Innovations
- Allocate research budgets with a gender-responsive approach, aiming for a 35% increase in funding for projects benefiting women farmers.
- Foster collaborations with research labs that prioritize gender-inclusive innovation and technology transfer.
- Monitor the gender composition of research teams, ensuring at least 30% representation of women.

DLI 9: Establishment & Operationalization of VC Promotional Bodies for Selected Commodities
- Develop policies for value chain promotion that explicitly address gender disparities, actively promoting women's participation and leadership.
- Establish value chain-specific promotional bodies with a minimum of 50% women representation.
- Monitor the representation of women in promotional bodies and ensure their active involvement in decision-making processes.

DLI 10: Quality Information System
- Provide training for staff in gender-disaggregated data collection and analysis.
- Develop guidelines and protocols for gender-sensitive data collection and reporting within the quality information system.
- Regularly assess the integration of gender considerations in data collection processes, ensuring that information systems reflect the needs and realities of women farmers.

Tailoring interventions to address the specific needs of women and men.

In the PARTNER project, tailoring interventions means understanding and responding to the unique needs of women and men at every stage of development, ensuring a more inclusive and impactful agricultural transformation. Through targeted strategies for each DLI, the project aspires to promote gender equality and enhance the effectiveness of its initiatives.

DLI 1: Development, Rollout & Adoption of GAP Standards in Fruit and Vegetable Production:

Conduct a gender-sensitive analysis during the development of GAP standards, recognizing the distinct needs and constraints of women in fruit and vegetable production. Prioritize the inclusion of women farmers in training programs for GAP certification, ensuring a representation of at least 40%. Establish a monitoring system to track the gender composition of certified farms, ensuring equitable outcomes for men and women.

DLI 2: Development & Adoption of High Yielding Rice Varieties:

Integrate a gender perspective in the development and adoption of stress-tolerant rice varieties, addressing women's roles in rice cultivation. Facilitate women's participation in seed multiplication networks and marketing initiatives, with a target of at least 30% representation. Monitor the adoption of high-yielding rice varieties, disaggregated by gender, and address any disparities.

DLI 3: Crop Diversification towards Non-Rice Cereals, Pulses, Oilseeds, and Horticulture Crops:

Conduct gender-responsive research for stress-tolerant varieties in non-rice crops, considering women's preferences and roles. Ensure women's involvement in seed/sapling multiplication networks, targeting a participation rate of 35%. Monitor the expansion of non-rice crops, tracking the proportion of women involved and addressing gender-specific challenges.

DLI 4: Adoption of Improved & Efficient Irrigation Technologies by Farmers:

Develop irrigation policies and plans that address gender-specific barriers and needs. Promote the adoption of efficient irrigation technologies among women farmers through targeted outreach, aiming for a 40% increase in adoption rates. Regularly assess and address gender disparities in the adoption of irrigation technologies.

DLI 5: Expansion of Digital Agricultural Service (KSC, e-Voucher):

Design digital extension services that are user-friendly and accessible, considering women's literacy levels and technological access. Ensure at least 30% of farmers receiving e-vouchers are women, providing tailored training and support. Monitor the participation of women in digital services and address gender-based barriers.

DLI 6: Accreditation of Seed Certification & Food Safety:

Develop accreditation processes that consider gender-specific needs in seed certification and food safety. Promote equal representation of women in laboratories and testing processes, setting a target of 40% participation. Monitor and address any gender disparities in accredited testing processes.

DLI 7: Promotion of Agri-Food Entrepreneurship for Youth and Women:

Establish partnerships and training programs focusing on women and youth entrepreneurship in agriculture, with at least 60% of beneficiaries being women. Provide mentorship and support networks tailored to women and youth entrepreneurs. Regularly assess the success rates and challenges faced by women and youth entrepreneurs and adjust support mechanisms accordingly.

DLI 8: Increase of R&D Activities for New Technologies and Innovations:

Allocate research budgets with a gender-responsive approach, aiming for a 35% increase in funding for projects benefiting women farmers. Foster collaborations with research labs that prioritize gender-inclusive innovation and technology transfer. Monitor the gender composition of research teams, ensuring at least 30% representation of women.

DLI 9: Establishment & Operationalization of VC Promotional Bodies for Selected Commodities:

Develop policies for value chain promotion that address gender disparities, promoting women's participation and leadership. Establish value chain-specific promotional bodies with a minimum of 50% women representation. Monitor the representation of women in promotional bodies and ensure their active involvement in decision-making.

DLI 10: Quality Information System:

Provide training for staff in gender-disaggregated data collection and analysis. Develop guidelines and protocols for gender-sensitive data collection and reporting within the quality information system. Regularly assess the integration of gender considerations in data collection processes and ensure that information systems reflect the needs and realities of women farmers.

By addressing the specific needs of women and men in each DLI, the PARTNER project aims to tailor interventions for maximum impact, promoting inclusivity, and fostering gender equality throughout the agricultural development initiatives.

V. Capacity Building

Incorporating a comprehensive training approach, Section III.A focuses on empowering both project staff and beneficiaries within the PARTNER project. By offering tailored programs, we aim to instill a deep understanding of gender mainstreaming principles, promote gender-sensitive practices among beneficiaries, and address gender-based violence through specialized training. These initiatives ensure a holistic and inclusive approach to gender considerations at every stage of project implementation.

Training Programs

- Training for Project Staff on Gender Mainstreaming
- Develop and conduct mandatory training sessions for all project staff members on the principles and importance of gender mainstreaming.
- Include modules covering gender-sensitive analysis, inclusive project design, and effective implementation strategies.
- Ensure that staff understands how gender considerations relate to their specific roles within the project.

Capacity Building for Beneficiaries on Gender-Sensitive Practices

- Design comprehensive capacity-building programs targeting project beneficiaries, with a focus on farmers and community members.
- Integrate gender-sensitive agricultural practices into existing training modules related to GAP standards, rice cultivation, crop diversification, irrigation technologies, and digital services.
- Incorporate practical demonstrations, workshops, and interactive sessions to enhance understanding and application.

Specialized Training for Addressing Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

- Develop specialized training modules to raise awareness about GBV issues within the project context.
- Train project staff, community leaders, and beneficiaries on recognizing, preventing, and addressing GBV.
- Collaborate with local organizations or experts in GBV prevention to provide targeted and culturally sensitive training sessions.
- Establish clear reporting mechanisms and support systems for individuals experiencing or witnessing GBV incidents.

These training programs aim to build the capacity of both project staff and beneficiaries, fostering a gender-responsive approach at every level of the PARTNER project.

VI. Gender-Responsive Monitoring and Evaluation

Regular monitoring and evaluation will be conducted to track the progress of gender mainstreaming across all DLIs. Gender-disaggregated data will be collected and analyzed at each stage of project implementation. Feedback mechanisms will be established to ensure that challenges faced by women participants are addressed promptly. Adjustments to the gender action plan will be made based on the findings of the monitoring and evaluation processes.

Objective:

Track and assess the progress of gender mainstreaming efforts across all Development and Learning Indicators (DLIs) in the PARTNER project.

Key Components:

a. Regular Data Collection:

Conduct regular data collection at each stage of project implementation, ensuring gender-disaggregated data is systematically collected for all DLIs.

Integrate gender-specific indicators into routine data collection processes.

b. Analysis of Gender-Disaggregated Data:

Analyze gender-disaggregated data to identify trends, disparities, and areas of improvement.

Assess the impact of project activities on both men and women, considering the specific needs and constraints of each group.

c. Feedback Mechanisms:

Establish feedback mechanisms to gather insights from women participants regarding their experiences, challenges, and suggestions.

Implement surveys, focus group discussions, and interviews to collect qualitative feedback.

d. Stakeholder Engagement:

Engage with project stakeholders, including women's groups, community leaders, and local authorities, to gather perspectives on gender mainstreaming. Hold regular meetings to discuss gender-related issues and ensure community involvement in decision-making processes.

e. Monitoring of Gender Action Plan (GAP) Implementation:

Monitor the implementation of the Gender Action Plan to ensure that planned activities are carried out effectively. Assess the alignment of GAP with the evolving needs and priorities of women participants.

f. Review of Gender-Responsive Policies:

Regularly review project policies and procedures to ensure they remain gender-responsive. Assess the effectiveness of policies in addressing gender disparities and promoting inclusivity.

g. Capacity Building Evaluation:

Evaluate the impact of capacity-building initiatives on enhancing gender responsiveness among project staff, partners, and stakeholders. Collect feedback on the relevance and effectiveness of training programs.

h. Incident Reporting and Response:

Establish a reporting system for gender-related incidents and challenges faced by women participants.

Develop a responsive mechanism to address reported incidents promptly.

i. Adjustments to the Gender Action Plan:

Based on the findings of monitoring and evaluation processes, make necessary adjustments to the Gender Action Plan. Ensure that the plan remains adaptive and responsive to emerging gender-related issues.

j. Frequency of Monitoring:

Implement continuous monitoring throughout the project lifecycle. Conduct periodic comprehensive reviews at key milestones.

k. Reporting:

Compile gender-disaggregated data and monitoring findings into regular project reports. Share insights, lessons learned, and recommended adjustments through official project communication channels.

l. Capacity Building for Monitoring and Evaluation:

Provide training to project staff involved in monitoring and evaluation on gender-sensitive data collection and analysis. Enhance the capacity of monitoring teams to effectively integrate gender considerations into their work.

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m. Documentation and Learning:

Document best practices, challenges, and lessons learned in gender mainstreaming. Facilitate knowledge-sharing sessions to promote continuous learning and improvement. By implementing this comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan, the PARTNER project can ensure the effective integration of gender considerations across all DLIs, fostering an inclusive and equitable agricultural development initiative.

VII. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

In the pursuit of fostering gender equality, the PARTNER project is dedicated to a comprehensive Gender Action Plan. This plan is strategically designed to address the diverse needs of women and men in agriculture, promoting inclusivity and equal opportunities. By integrating gender considerations across project activities, engaging stakeholders, and forging partnerships, PARTNER aims to create a transformative impact within the agricultural sector, contributing to broader societal changes. Through dedicated monitoring, evaluation, and collaborative efforts, the project seeks to build an agricultural landscape that is not only productive but also equitable and empowering for all.

A. Collaboration with Gender Experts and Organizations

Establishing collaborations with recognized gender experts and organizations specializing in gender issues. Conducting joint workshops, training sessions, and knowledge-sharing initiatives with partner organizations to enhance expertise in gender mainstreaming.

B. Engaging Local Communities and Beneficiaries

Implementing community engagement strategies to gather insights on local gender dynamics, challenges, and opportunities. Organizing community forums, focus group discussions, and consultations to ensure the active participation of local communities in shaping gender-sensitive interventions.

C. Strengthening Partnerships for Gender Equality

Forging partnerships with governmental agencies, NGOs, and private entities committed to promoting gender equality in the agricultural sector. Collaborating on joint projects, initiatives, and advocacy campaigns to collectively address gender disparities and contribute to broader societal transformations.

D. Gender Focal Point for Each Project Area

Appointing a dedicated gender focal point for each project area to ensure focused attention on gender mainstreaming. Providing training and resources to the gender focal points to enhance their capacity in addressing gender-specific issues within their respective project areas.

VIII. Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

A. Establishing a GBV Prevention Strategy:

The PARTNER project acknowledges the critical importance of preventing gender-based violence (GBV) and is dedicated to formulating a robust prevention strategy. This entails conducting community-wide awareness campaigns to educate and sensitize individuals about GBV prevention. Workshops and training sessions focused on promoting respectful behavior, challenging harmful gender norms, and fostering positive masculinity and femininity will be integral components of the prevention strategy.

B. Protocols for Responding to GBV Incidents:

In response to GBV incidents, the project will implement clearly defined protocols. These protocols will delineate the step-by-step procedures to be followed when handling reported incidents, ensuring a victim-centered and trauma-informed approach. To enhance effectiveness, comprehensive training sessions will be conducted for project staff, community leaders, and local authorities. This training will familiarize them with the established protocols and equip them with the skills needed to offer empathetic support to survivors.

C. Creating Safe Spaces and Reporting Mechanisms:

Creating safe spaces where individuals feel secure to report GBV incidents is a priority for the PARTNER project. The establishment of anonymous reporting mechanisms, such as confidential hotlines or suggestion boxes, will be pivotal in encouraging survivors to come forward without fear of retaliation. Collaborative efforts with local organizations and law enforcement will be emphasized to ensure a coordinated and prompt response to reported incidents. By fostering a culture of zero tolerance for GBV within project areas, the project aims to contribute to safer and more secure communities.

In alignment with the DLI 7 of the PARTNER project, the initiatives for Women's Empowerment and Entrepreneurship focus on fostering leadership, providing tailored entrepreneurship programs, and ensuring equal access to economic opportunities for women in the agri-food sector. Through targeted training, mentorship, and supportive networks, we aim to empower women, enhance their entrepreneurial skills, and create an inclusive environment that contributes to the overall success and sustainability of the project.

Here's the alignment of the DLI and DLR with the sections detailing women's empowerment and entrepreneurship initiatives: DLI 7: Promotion of Agri-Food Entrepreneurship for Youth and Women:

Initiatives	DLR	Specific Actions
A. Initiatives to Promote Women's Leadership	7.1	
Leadership Training Programs	7.1.1	Tailor leadership programs to address gender-specific needs.
Mentorship Opportunities	7.1.2	Facilitate mentorship programs for aspiring women leaders.
Representation in Decision-Making	7.1.3	Advocate for increased women representation in decision-making.
Community Engagement	7.1.4	Encourage active participation of women in community initiatives.
Networking Events	7.1.5	Organize networking events to connect women leaders in agri-food.
Recognition Programs	7.1.6	Introduce recognition programs for achievements in agri-food leadership.
B. Entrepreneurship Programs for Women	7.2	
Skills Development Workshops	7.2.1	Conduct workshops tailored to women's needs in entrepreneurship.
Start-up Incubators	7.2.2	Establish start-up incubators specifically for women entrepreneurs.
Access to Finance	7.2.3	Facilitate access to financial resources for women entrepreneurs.
Market Linkages	7.2.4	Provide support in establishing market linkages for women entrepreneurs.
Capacity Building	7.2.5	Offer capacity-building programs to enhance entrepreneurial skills.
Peer Learning Platforms	7.2.6	Create platforms for peer learning and support among women entrepreneurs.
C. Ensuring Women's Access to Economic Opportunities	7.3	
Equal Employment Opportunities	7.3.1	Advocate for equal employment opportunities for women in agri-food.
Livelihood Programs	7.3.2	Implement livelihood programs targeting women in agri-food.
Access to Agricultural Resources	7.3.3	Ensure women's access to agricultural resources and inputs.
Market Access	7.3.4	Facilitate women's access to local and regional markets.
Social Protection Measures	7.3.5	Advocate for social protection measures benefiting women in agri-food.
Education and Training Opportunities	7.3.6	Promote educational and training opportunities for women in agri-food sectors.

This alignment ensures that each DLI and DLR is linked with specific initiatives aimed at promoting women's empowerment and entrepreneurship within the PARTNER project.

IX. Budgeting and Resource Allocation

The budgeting and resource allocation for the PARTNER project are intricately designed to align with the diverse Development and Learning Indicators (DLIs) aimed at fostering gender equality and inclusive agricultural development. The table below provides a snapshot of how financial resources are allocated to specific DLIs, ensuring a targeted and impactful approach in addressing gender disparities across various project activities.

DLI	Project Activity	Allocated Resources for Gender Equality
1	Development, Rollout & Adoption of GAP Standards	Conducting gender-sensitive analyses, targeted training programs
2	Development & Adoption of High Yielding Rice Varieties	Integrating gender perspectives, facilitating women's participation
3	Crop Diversification towards Non-Rice Crops	Funding gender-responsive research, supporting women's involvement
4	Adoption of Improved & Efficient Irrigation Technologies	Developing policies, promoting adoption among women farmers
5	Expansion of Digital Agricultural Service	Designing user-friendly services, ensuring women's participation
6	Accreditation of Seed Certification & Food Safety	Developing gender-specific accreditation processes, promoting equal representation
7	Promotion of Agri-Food Entrepreneurship	Establishing partnerships, allocating resources for women and youth
8	Increase of R&D Activities for New Technologies	Allocating a gender-responsive budget, fostering collaborations
9	Establishment & Operationalization of VC Promotional Bodies	Developing policies, allocating funds for women's representation
10	Quality Information System	Providing training, developing gender-sensitive data collection protocols

This strategic alignment ensures that financial resources are dedicated to activities that not only meet the project's objectives but also contribute significantly to promoting gender equality within the agricultural sector.

X. Communication and Awareness

A. Creating Gender-Inclusive Communication Strategies:
- Develop communication materials and messages that promote gender equality and inclusivity.
- Ensure language and imagery used in communication materials are respectful and non-discriminatory.
- Incorporate diverse voices and perspectives in project communications, highlighting the contributions of women and marginalized groups.
- Provide training to project staff on gender-sensitive communication techniques and strategies.

B. Raising Awareness on Gender Equality among Project Stakeholders:
- Organize workshops, seminars, and awareness campaigns to educate project stakeholders on gender equality issues.
- Facilitate discussions and dialogues to address gender stereotypes and promote understanding of gender dynamics.

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- Engage local communities through participatory approaches to raise awareness about the importance of gender equality in agricultural development.
- Collaborate with local leaders, women's groups, and civil society organizations to amplify messages on gender equality and women's empowerment.

These efforts aim to foster a supportive environment where gender equality is understood, valued, and actively promoted throughout the PARTNER project.

XI. Review and Adaptation Mechanism

A. Periodic Review of the Gender Action Plan:

- Conduct regular reviews of the Gender Action Plan to assess its effectiveness and relevance.
- Solicit feedback from project stakeholders, especially women participants, to gather insights on the plan's impact.
- Use gender-disaggregated data to evaluate the outcomes and identify areas for improvement.
- Collaborate with gender experts and organizations to conduct external reviews for an unbiased assessment.

B. Flexibility to Adapt Strategies Based on Feedback and Changes in Context:

- Establish a mechanism for continuous feedback from project participants and stakeholders.
- Monitor changes in the socio-economic and cultural context that may impact gender dynamics.
- Maintain flexibility in adapting gender strategies to address emerging challenges and opportunities.
- Ensure that lessons learned from monitoring and evaluations are used to refine and strengthen gender interventions.

This adaptive approach aims to enhance the responsiveness and effectiveness of the Gender Action Plan, ensuring that it remains dynamic and aligned with the evolving needs of the PARTNER project and its participants.

XII. Reporting and Documentation

A. Regular Gender-Disaggregated Reporting:

- Implement a system for collecting and analyzing gender-disaggregated data across all project activities.
- Include gender-specific indicators in project monitoring and evaluation frameworks.
- Generate periodic reports that highlight progress, challenges, and achievements in gender mainstreaming.
- Ensure transparency and accountability by sharing gender-disaggregated data with relevant stakeholders.

B. Documentation of Best Practices and Lessons Learned:

- Document best practices and successful interventions in gender mainstreaming throughout the project lifecycle.
- Compile case studies and success stories that demonstrate the impact of gender-sensitive approaches.
- Analyze lessons learned from gender initiatives and share them internally and externally.

- Use documentation to inform future project planning and contribute to knowledge sharing within the development community.
- By prioritizing regular reporting and documentation, the PARTNER project can track its gender mainstreaming efforts effectively, showcase achievements, and facilitate continuous learning and improvement in gender equality outcomes.

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Conclusion: Advancing Towards Gender Equality in PARTNER

The Gender Action Plan (GAP) for the PARTNER project represents a crucial step towards fostering a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable agricultural sector. Throughout the development of this plan, our commitment to gender equality has been unwavering, recognizing the diverse roles and needs of both men and women in agriculture. By aligning the GAP with the project's Development and Learning Indicators (DLIs), we ensure a systematic integration of gender considerations into every facet of our activities.

As we embark on this transformative journey, the overarching goal is clear: to cultivate an environment where women and men have equal opportunities, access, and benefits across all project interventions. The GAP not only focuses on addressing existing gender disparities but also aims to empower women and promote their active participation in decision-making processes.

Through tailored initiatives, capacity-building programs, and strategic partnerships, the GAP aims to dismantle barriers and create an atmosphere conducive to gender-sensitive agriculture. The specific objectives for each DLI provide a roadmap, guiding our efforts to address the unique challenges faced by women in fruit and vegetable production, rice cultivation, crop diversification, irrigation technologies, digital agricultural services, seed certification, agri-food entrepreneurship, R&D activities, value chain promotion, and quality information systems.

Moreover, the GAP emphasizes the integration of nutrition-sensitive approaches, contributing to enhanced food security and healthier communities. The project envisions a transformative impact that not only recognizes the diverse roles of individuals in agriculture but also catalyzes broader societal changes.

The commitment to regular monitoring and evaluation ensures that we stay accountable for our gender mainstreaming efforts. By collecting and analyzing gender-disaggregated data, we gain valuable insights, allowing us to promptly address challenges faced by women participants and make necessary adjustments to the plan. The capacity-building initiatives further fortify our resolve, ensuring that project staff, partners, and stakeholders are well-equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to implement gender-responsive practices.

Reporting and documentation become integral components of our commitment to transparency. By regularly sharing gender-specific achievements, challenges, and lessons learned with stakeholders, we contribute to a culture of openness and learning within the development community.

In conclusion, the Gender Action Plan for the PARTNER project is not just a document; it is a guiding force propelling us towards a future where gender equality is not just a goal but a reality. As we implement this plan, we are not only shaping the trajectory of agricultural development but also fostering a more inclusive and equitable society. Together, we embark on a journey that recognizes the inherent value and potential of every individual, irrespective of gender, contributing to a world where agriculture truly becomes a driver of positive change for all.
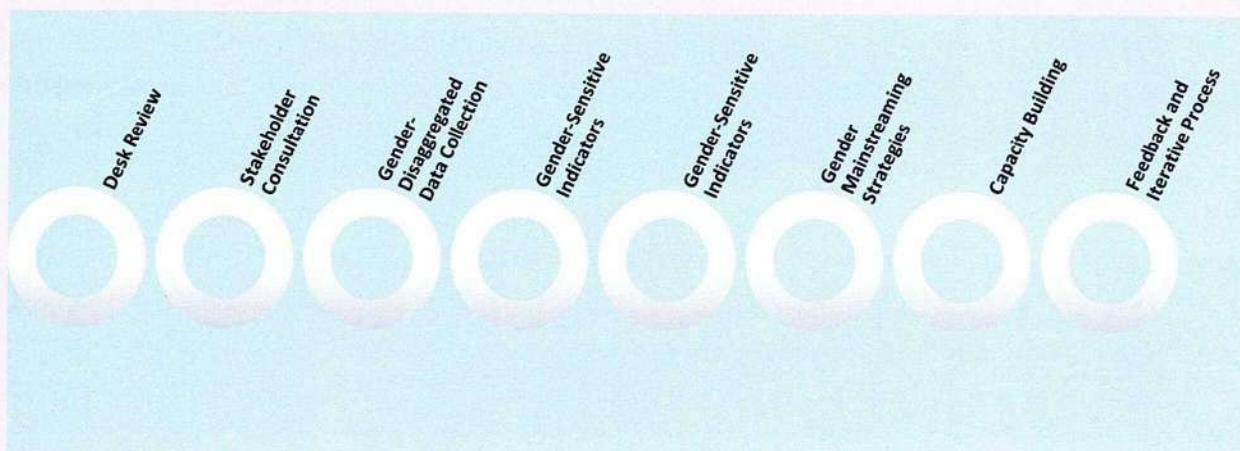
Annex 01 Gender Analysis: PARTNER Project

Executive Summary: Integrating Gender Analysis in the PARTNER Project

The PARTNER Project aims to foster agricultural development while upholding environmental and social safeguards. To ensure inclusivity and effectiveness, a comprehensive gender analysis was conducted across all Disbursement Link Indicators (DLIs) of the project. The analysis revealed critical gender dynamics, emphasizing the need to address disparities, promote women's empowerment, and integrate gender perspectives into project activities.

Key findings underscored the importance of integrating gender considerations across all project components. Women play pivotal roles in agriculture, natural resource management, and community well being, yet they often face disproportionate challenges and barriers. Recognizing and addressing these gender disparities is essential for achieving sustainable and equitable development outcomes.

Recommendations include mainstreaming gender-sensitive policies, ensuring women's meaningful participation in decision-making processes, and providing targeted support to address gender-specific barriers. By prioritizing gender equality and women's empowerment, the PARTNER Project can enhance its impact, promote social inclusivity, and contribute to sustainable development.

Methodology:

Desk Review — Stakeholder Consultation — Gender-Disaggregated Data Collection — Gender-Sensitive Indicators — Gender-Sensitive Indicators — Gender Mainstreaming Strategies — Capacity Building — Feedback and Iterative Process

Desk Review:
- Conduct a comprehensive review of project documents, including proposals, implementation plans, and monitoring reports, to identify gender-related objectives, gaps, and opportunities.
- Analyze relevant policies, guidelines, and frameworks to understand the gender mainstreaming approach adopted by the project.

Stakeholder Consultations:
- Engage with project stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organizations, community leaders, and beneficiaries, through interviews, focus group discussions, or surveys.
- Seek insights and perspectives on gender dynamics, challenges, and priorities within the project context.

Gender-Disaggregated Data Collection:
- Collect and analyze gender-disaggregated data from project monitoring and evaluation reports, surveys, and other sources to assess the differential impact of project activities on men and women.
- Identify areas where gender disparities exist and assess the extent to which project interventions address these disparities.

Gender-Sensitive Indicators:
- Develop gender-sensitive indicators to monitor and evaluate progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment across all DLIs of the project.

- Ensure that indicators capture both quantitative and qualitative aspects of gender outcomes and impacts.

Gender Mainstreaming Strategies:
- Integrate gender considerations into project planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation processes to ensure that gender equality objectives are effectively addressed.
- Identify specific strategies and actions to promote women's participation, leadership, and decision-making within project activities.

Capacity Building:
- Provide capacity-building initiatives to project staff and stakeholders on gender mainstreaming, gender analysis, and women's empowerment strategies.
- Offer training workshops, seminars, or webinars to enhance understanding and awareness of gender issues and best practices.

Feedback and Iterative Process:
- Solicit feedback from stakeholders throughout the gender analysis process to ensure inclusivity and relevance of findings.
- Incorporate stakeholder input into the analysis, with opportunities for adjustments and refinements based on feedback received.

By employing a participatory and gender-responsive approach to project design and implementation, the PARTNER Project can effectively address gender disparities, promote women's empowerment, and contribute to sustainable and inclusive development outcomes.

DLI-wise Gender Analysis, Key Findings, and Recommendations for PARTNER:
DLI 1: Development, Rollout & Adoption of GAP Standards in Fruit and Vegetable Production
Gender Analysis:
Women play a significant role in fruit and vegetable production, often contributing to various stages of the value chain.
Gender disparities exist in access to resources, information, and decision-making power within the agricultural sector.
Women face challenges such as limited access to extension services, credit, and markets, impacting their ability to adopt GAP standards effectively.

Key Findings:
Women's Participation: Women are actively involved in fruit and vegetable production but face constraints in accessing GAP standards development and training programs.

Access to Resources: Women have limited access to resources such as land, credit, and extension services, hindering their adoption of GAP practices.
Decision-making Power: Gender norms and cultural practices often limit women's decision-making authority within households and communities, affecting their ability to adopt new agricultural practices.

Recommendations:
Ensure Gender-Responsive Approaches: Integrate gender-sensitive criteria into GAP standards development and training programs to address the specific needs and challenges faced by women farmers.
Enhance Access to Resources: Provide targeted support to women farmers, including access to credit, extension services, and market linkages, to facilitate their adoption of GAP practices.
Promote Women's Participation: Implement outreach programs and capacity-building initiatives to increase women's participation in GAP certification schemes and decision-making processes.

DLI 2: Development & Adoption of High Yielding Rice Varieties
Gender Analysis:
Women are key contributors to rice production, particularly in tasks such as transplanting, weeding, and

harvesting.

Gender disparities exist in access to agricultural inputs, extension services, and land ownership, affecting women's adoption of high-yielding rice varieties.

Key Findings:

Access to Inputs: Women have limited access to high-quality seeds, fertilizers, and machinery, impacting their ability to adopt high-yielding rice varieties.

Extension Services: Extension services often do not reach women farmers due to gender biases and cultural barriers, hindering their adoption of new agricultural technologies.

Land Tenure: Women have insecure land tenure rights, restricting their decision-making power over agricultural activities and choice of crop varieties.

Recommendations:

Ensure Gender-Responsive Extension Services: Strengthen extension services to reach women farmers with information, training, and support on the adoption of high-yielding rice varieties.

Enhance Access to Inputs: Facilitate women's access to quality seeds, fertilizers, and machinery through targeted distribution programs and credit schemes.

Address Land Tenure Issues: Advocate for gender-equitable land tenure policies and ensure women's land rights to empower them in making decisions related to crop diversification.

DLI 3: Crop Diversification towards Non-Rice Cereals, Pulses, Oilseeds, and Horticulture Crops

Gender Analysis:

Women play critical roles in non-rice crop production, including seed selection, planting, and post-harvest activities.

Gender disparities persist in access to land, credit, and agricultural extension services, limiting women's participation in crop diversification initiatives.

Key Findings:

Limited Access to Inputs: Women face challenges in accessing quality seeds, fertilizers, and irrigation facilities, hampering their engagement in non-rice crop cultivation.

Knowledge and Training: Women have limited exposure to training programs and technical support on the cultivation and management of non-rice crops, hindering their adoption of new agricultural practices.

Market Access: Gender biases and cultural norms often restrict women's access to markets and decision-making roles in crop marketing activities, limiting their economic opportunities.

Recommendations:

Strengthen Access to Inputs: Ensure equitable access to agricultural inputs and technologies for women farmers through targeted distribution programs and credit facilities.

Enhance Training and Extension Services: Develop gender-responsive training programs and extension services to build women's capacity in non-rice crop production and management.

Promote Women's Market Participation: Facilitate women's access to markets and value chains through training on market linkages, collective marketing initiatives, and gender-inclusive policies.

These recommendations aim to address gender disparities and promote women's empowerment in agricultural development initiatives under the PARTNER project, ultimately contributing to improved productivity, livelihoods, and food security outcomes.

DLI 4: Adoption of Improved & Efficient Irrigation Technologies by Farmers

Gender Analysis:

Women are actively involved in irrigation activities, including water management, but often face challenges in accessing and adopting improved irrigation technologies.

Gender disparities exist in access to land, water rights, and decision-making power within irrigation systems, affecting women's participation and benefits from irrigation interventions.

Key Findings:

Access to Irrigation Technologies: Women have limited access to and control over irrigation technologies, including pumps, drip systems, and canal water, impacting their agricultural productivity and water management practices.

Water Rights: Women often have insecure water rights and limited participation in water users' associations, leading to unequal access to irrigation water and decision-making power.

Decision-making: Gender norms and cultural practices often limit women's involvement in irrigation planning, management, and decision-making processes, affecting the sustainability and effectiveness of irrigation interventions.

Recommendations:

Promote Gender-Responsive Irrigation Technologies: Ensure the design and dissemination of irrigation technologies consider women's specific needs and preferences, including their roles in water management and irrigation decision-making.

Strengthen Women's Participation: Facilitate women's participation in water users' associations and irrigation management committees to ensure their voices are heard in decision-making processes related to water allocation and management.

Enhance Capacity Building: Provide gender-sensitive training and extension services to women farmers on the use and maintenance of irrigation technologies, as well as water-efficient agricultural practices.

DLI 5: Expansion of Digital Agricultural Service (KSC, e Voucher)

Gender Analysis: Women farmers may face barriers in accessing and utilizing digital agricultural services due to factors such as limited digital literacy, access to mobile phones, and control over household resources.

Gender disparities may exist in the design and implementation of digital extension services, affecting the relevance and effectiveness of these interventions for women farmers.

Key Findings:

Digital Literacy: Women farmers may have lower levels of digital literacy compared to men, limiting their ability to access and utilize digital agricultural services such as e-vouchers and knowledge-sharing platforms.

Access to Mobile Phones: Women may have limited access to mobile phones due to factors such as affordability, ownership rights, and cultural norms, hindering their participation in digital extension programs.

Relevance of Services: Digital agricultural services may not always address the specific needs and priorities of women farmers, leading to limited uptake and impact on women's agricultural productivity and livelihoods.

Recommendations:

Gender-Responsive Design: Ensure that digital agricultural services are designed and implemented in a gender-responsive manner, considering women's preferences, needs, and constraints in accessing and utilizing digital technologies.

Improve Access: Provide targeted support to enhance women's access to mobile phones, internet connectivity, and digital literacy training, enabling them to benefit from digital extension services.

Engage Women Farmers: Actively involve women farmers in the design, development, and evaluation of digital agricultural services to ensure their relevance, accessibility, and effectiveness in addressing women's agricultural challenges and opportunities.

DLI 6: Accreditation of Seed Certification & Food Safety

Gender Analysis:

Women are involved in various stages of seed production and food processing but may face challenges in

accessing training, certification, and market opportunities in these sectors.

Gender disparities may exist in access to agricultural inputs, extension services, and market information, impacting women's participation and benefits in seed certification and food safety initiatives.

Key Findings:

Participation in Seed Certification: Women may be underrepresented in seed certification programs and training courses due to factors such as limited access to information, financial resources, and decision-making power within households.

Training and Capacity Building: Women farmers and entrepreneurs may have limited access to training and capacity-building programs on seed certification standards, food safety regulations, and quality assurance practices, affecting their competitiveness in the seed and food markets.

Market Opportunities: Women-led seed enterprises and food processing units may face challenges in accessing formal markets, obtaining certification, and complying with food safety standards, limiting their ability to expand their businesses and improve their livelihoods.

Recommendations:

Gender-Inclusive Training Programs: Develop and implement gender-inclusive training and capacity-building programs on seed certification, food safety, and quality standards, targeting women farmers, entrepreneurs, and workers in the seed and food sectors.

Support Women's Enterprises: Provide targeted support and incentives to women-led seed enterprises and food processing units to enhance their competitiveness, compliance with certification requirements, and access to formal markets.

Strengthen Market Linkages: Facilitate market linkages, networking opportunities, and business support services for women farmers and entrepreneurs engaged in seed production and food processing, enabling them to access new markets, value chains, and income-generating opportunities.

DLI 7: Promotion of Agri-Food Entrepreneurship for Youth and Women

Gender Analysis:

Women and youth play important roles in agri-food entrepreneurship but may face barriers such as limited access to finance, training, and market opportunities.

Gender disparities may exist in entrepreneurship ecosystems, including access to business support services, networking platforms, and mentoring programs, affecting women and youth's ability to start and scale their agricultural enterprises.

Key Findings:

Access to Finance: Women and youth entrepreneurs may face challenges in accessing formal finance, credit, and investment opportunities due to factors such as collateral requirements, financial literacy, and gender biases in lending institutions.

Training and Capacity Building: Women and youth may lack access to entrepreneurship training, mentorship programs, and business development services, limiting their ability to develop viable business models, manage risks, and access new markets.

Market Opportunities: Women and youth-led agri-food enterprises may struggle to access markets, establish value-added partnerships, and comply with market standards and regulations, hindering their growth and competitiveness in the agricultural sector.

Recommendations:

Gender-Responsive Financing Mechanisms: Develop and implement gender-responsive financial products, such as women and youth-friendly loans, grants, and venture capital funds, to increase access to finance for women and youth entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector.

Entrepreneurship Training and Support: Provide targeted training, capacity-building, and mentorship programs for women and youth entrepreneurs, focusing on business planning, financial management, marketing strategies, and technology adoption.

Market Access and Networking: Facilitate market linkages, networking events, and business support

services for women and youth-led agri-food enterprises, enabling them to access new markets, value chains, and growth opportunities.

DLI 8: Increase of R&D Activities for New Technologies and Innovations

Gender Analysis: Women are often underrepresented in agricultural research and development (R&D) activities, including technology development, innovation, and knowledge generation.

Gender disparities may exist in access to research funding, training opportunities, and leadership positions within agricultural research institutions, limiting women's participation and contributions to R&D initiatives.

Key Findings:

Representation in R&D: Women researchers, scientists, and innovators may be underrepresented in agricultural R&D institutions, departments, and decision-making bodies, leading to gender biases in research priorities, methodologies, and outcomes.

Access to Resources: Women researchers may face challenges in accessing research funding, laboratory facilities, and equipment, as well as opportunities for career advancement, professional development, and

DLI 9: Establishment & Operationalization of VC Promotional Bodies for Selected Commodities

Gender Analysis: Evaluate the gender inclusivity of VC promotional bodies established for selected commodities under the PARTNER Project.

Key Findings:

Assess the level of women's participation (60%) and leadership within these bodies, as well as their capacity to address gender-specific needs and priorities.

Recommendations:

Promote women's representation in leadership roles within VC promotional bodies.

Ensure the integration of gender considerations in the activities and decision-making processes of these bodies.

Provide capacity-building support to enhance the gender responsiveness of VC promotional initiatives.

Establish mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the gender impact of VC promotional activities

DLI 10: Quality Information System

Gender Analysis: Analyze the gender inclusivity of the quality information system implemented as part of the PARTNER Project.

Key Findings:

Identify any gender disparities in access to and utilization of quality information among project stakeholders.

Recommendations:

Ensure that quality information systems are accessible and user-friendly for women and men alike.

Provide targeted training and capacity-building programs to enhance women's digital literacy and information access skills.

Incorporate gender-sensitive content and perspectives into the design and dissemination of quality information.

Establish feedback mechanisms to gather input from women and men on the relevance and usefulness of the information provided.

By integrating gender analysis across all DLIs, the PARTNER Project can enhance its gender responsiveness, promote women's empowerment, and advance gender equality outcomes in agricultural development. The recommendations provided aim to address gender disparities, leverage women's potential as agents of change, and foster inclusive and sustainable development outcomes for all.

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Annex 02 PARTNER GENDER RISK LOG

DLI	DLI Title	Gender-Related Risks	Examples	Mitigation
1	Development, Rollout & Adoption of GAP Standards in Fruit and Vegetable Production	Gender bias in GAP standards development	Limited consideration of women's farming practices in GAP standards.	Conduct gender-sensitive reviews of GAP standards development process to ensure inclusion of women's perspectives and farming practices. Involve women farmers in the development and review of GAP standards.
		Unequal access to GAP certification training	Insufficient opportunities for women farmers to participate in GAP certification training.	Implement targeted outreach programs to increase women's participation in GAP certification training. Provide scholarships or subsidies for women farmers to attend training sessions.
		Limited participation of women in GAP certification	Few women engaged in the certification process due to traditional gender roles.	Offer flexible training schedules to accommodate women's responsibilities. Provide childcare facilities during training sessions.
2	Development & Adoption of High Yielding Rice Varieties	Gender disparity in access to high-yielding varieties	Unequal distribution of new varieties, benefiting men more than women.	Implement quota systems or targeted outreach programs to ensure equitable distribution of new rice varieties to women farmers. Provide incentives for seed distributors to prioritize women farmers.
		Limited involvement of women in seed multiplication	Few women participating in seed multiplication programs.	Offer training programs specifically tailored for women on seed multiplication techniques. Provide access to credit or inputs for women interested in seed multiplication.
		Inadequate promotion of high-yielding varieties	Insufficient awareness campaigns targeting women farmers.	Develop targeted communication strategies to raise awareness among women farmers about the benefits of high-yielding rice varieties. Use women-led community groups or networks for dissemination of information.
3	Crop Diversification towards Non-Rice Cereals, Pulses, Oilseeds, and Horticulture Crops	Unequal access to non-rice crop trials	Limited participation of women in on-farm trials for non-rice crops.	Implement gender-sensitive selection criteria for participants in crop trials to ensure equitable representation of women farmers. Provide training and technical support specifically targeted at women for participation in crop trials.
		Limited engagement of women in seed multiplication	Few women involved in the multiplication of seeds for non-rice crops.	Establish women-led seed multiplication groups or cooperatives with access to credit and technical assistance. Offer incentives for companies or organizations to partner with women-led seed multiplication initiatives.

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DLI	DLI Title	Gender-Related Risks	Examples	Mitigation
		Gender bias in marketing network establishment	Unequal opportunities for women in establishing marketing networks.	Provide capacity-building training for women farmers on market linkages and network establishment. Facilitate women's participation in agricultural cooperatives or producer groups to enhance collective marketing efforts.
4	Adoption of Improved & Efficient Irrigation Technologies by Farmers	Gender disparity in irrigation technology adoption	Limited adoption of irrigation technologies by women farmers.	Provide targeted training programs on irrigation technologies specifically tailored for women farmers. Offer subsidies or financing options to increase women's access to irrigation equipment and infrastructure.
		Limited access to irrigation resources for women	Insufficient access to irrigation for women, impacting their crop yields.	Invest in gender-responsive irrigation infrastructure development projects to increase access for women farmers. Prioritize allocation of irrigation resources to areas with high concentrations of women farmers.
		Insufficient training on irrigation technology	Few women receiving training on new irrigation techniques.	Integrate gender-sensitive content into existing agricultural extension programs to include training on irrigation technologies for women farmers. Provide mentorship opportunities for women to learn from successful adopters of irrigation technologies.
5	Expansion of Digital Agricultural Service (KSC, e-Voucher)	Gender gap in access to digital agricultural services	Limited accessibility of digital services to women farmers.	Develop user-friendly digital platforms that cater to the needs and preferences of women farmers. Provide training and support for women to use digital agricultural services effectively.
		Limited participation of women in e-voucher programs	Few women beneficiaries in e-voucher programs.	Implement targeted outreach campaigns to increase women's awareness and participation in e-voucher programs. Offer incentives or subsidies specifically for women farmers to encourage their participation.
		Gender bias in digital service delivery	Digital services not designed considering the needs of women farmers.	Conduct gender analyses to identify barriers faced by women in accessing and using digital agricultural services. Adapt service delivery methods and interfaces to be more inclusive and user-friendly for women.
6	Accreditation of Seed Certification & Food Safety	Lack of gender-sensitive testing procedures	Testing procedures not addressing gender-specific concerns in food safety.	Develop gender-sensitive protocols for seed certification and food safety testing to address the unique needs and vulnerabilities of women farmers.

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DLI	DLI Title	Gender-Related Risks	Examples	Mitigation
				Train certification and inspection personnel on gender-responsive approaches to testing and inspection.
		Insufficient focus on women's food safety concerns	Food safety protocols neglecting women's specific health considerations.	Conduct research and outreach to understand women's perspectives on food safety and integrate these concerns into certification and inspection processes. Provide educational materials and training programs for women farmers on safe food handling practices.
		Gender disparities in seed certification	Limited certification opportunities for women-led seed producers.	Establish quotas or affirmative action policies to ensure equitable representation of women-led seed producers in certification processes. Provide capacity-building support and technical assistance to help women meet certification requirements.
7	Promotion of Agri-Food Entrepreneurship for Youth and Women	Limited opportunities for women and youth entrepreneurs	Few initiatives supporting women and youth in agri-food entrepreneurship.	Create targeted entrepreneurship programs and incubators specifically for women and youth in agriculture. Provide access to mentorship, training, and financing opportunities tailored to their needs.
		Gender bias in entrepreneurship partnerships	Unequal representation of women in on-the-job training partnerships.	Promote gender diversity in entrepreneurship partnerships by actively recruiting and supporting women-owned businesses. Provide incentives for companies to partner with women entrepreneurs and mentorship programs.
		Inadequate support for women and youth entrepreneurs	Limited financial support for women-led agri-food businesses.	Establish dedicated funding mechanisms or loan programs for women and youth entrepreneurs in agriculture. Offer technical assistance and business development services to help women and youth entrepreneurs succeed.
8	Increase of R&D Activities for New Technologies and Innovations	Gender disparity in R&D budget allocation	Inequitable allocation of funds for gender-responsive agricultural research.	Advocate for increased funding for gender-responsive agricultural research and innovation. Establish funding priorities and criteria that prioritize projects with strong gender components.
		Lack of women's involvement in research collaboration	Few women participating in collaborative research projects.	Promote gender diversity in research teams and partnerships by actively recruiting and supporting women researchers. Provide training and mentorship opportunities to build the capacity of women researchers.

DLI	DLI Title	Gender-Related Risks	Examples	Mitigation
		Insufficient focus on gender-specific innovations	Research projects neglecting innovations addressing women's needs.	Integrate gender analysis into the research design process to identify and address women's specific needs and preferences. Encourage researchers to develop innovative solutions that promote gender equality and women's empowerment in agriculture.
9	Establishment & Operationalization of VC Promotional Bodies for Selected Commodities	Gender bias in policy and regulatory framework	Policies lacking gender considerations in agri-food value chains.	Advocate for gender-responsive policies and regulations that promote women's participation and leadership in agri-food value chains. Establish gender quotas or targets for representation in value chain promotional bodies.
		Limited representation of women in promotional bodies	Women underrepresented in decision-making bodies for value chain promotion.	Implement measures to increase women's representation and participation in value chain promotional bodies, such as targeted recruitment efforts and leadership training programs. Provide support and resources to ensure that women's voices are heard and valued in decision-making processes.
		Inadequate support for women-led value chains	Limited resources and assistance for women-led value chain initiatives.	Create dedicated funding mechanisms and support programs specifically tailored to women-led value chain initiatives. Provide technical assistance, capacity-building training, and mentorship to help women entrepreneurs succeed in value chain development.
10	Quality Information System	Gender disparity in data collection capacity	Insufficient training on gender-sensitive data collection for staff.	Provide gender-sensitive training for data collection staff to ensure that gender-specific issues are captured and analyzed in agricultural data. Develop guidelines and protocols for gender-responsive data collection and analysis.
		Lack of gender analysis in agricultural policies	Agricultural policies lacking gender impact assessments.	Integrate gender analysis into policy development processes to ensure that agricultural policies address the specific needs and priorities of women farmers. Conduct gender impact assessments of existing and proposed policies to identify potential gender disparities.
		Insufficient focus on women's agricultural needs	Policies not addressing specific needs of women in agriculture.	Advocate for policies and programs that prioritize women's access to resources, services, and opportunities in agriculture. Engage women farmers and stakeholders in policy dialogue and decision-making processes to ensure that their voices are heard and their needs are addressed.

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Annex 03 PARTNER Gender SOWT analysis

Factors	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Gender-Inclusive Policies	Established policies promote equal opportunities for men and women.	Constraints in allocating sufficient resources for gender-focused programs.	Opportunities to enhance policy advocacy for more comprehensive gender-inclusive policies.	Potential resistance or opposition to changes in existing policies.
Capacity Building	Robust training programs enhance staff and participant capacity in gender mainstreaming.	Challenges in ensuring accuracy and reliability of gender-disaggregated data.	Opportunities for ongoing capacity-building initiatives to strengthen gender programs.	Risk of inadequate implementation due to insufficient training resources.
Stakeholder Engagement	Active engagement with local communities strengthens understanding of diverse gender dynamics.	Limited representation of women and marginalized groups in decision-making.	Opportunities for increased stakeholder engagement, promoting gender equality awareness.	Potential backlash from stakeholders resistant to gender-inclusive practices.
Gender-Disaggregated Data	Systematic collection and analysis of gender-disaggregated data for evidence-based decision-making.	Gender data quality issues may compromise the effectiveness of strategies.	Opportunities to improve data quality through technological advancements and training.	Ongoing challenges in maintaining accurate gender-disaggregated data.
Limited Resources for Gender	The project faces constraints in allocating sufficient resources for gender programs.		Opportunities to explore additional funding sources and partnerships for gender initiatives.	Persistent resource constraints may hinder the implementation of gender programs.
Gender Programs Quality			Opportunities to continually enhance the quality and impact of gender-specific programs.	Risk of program stagnation or ineffectiveness without ongoing improvements.
Inadequate Representation	Limited representation of women and marginalized groups in decision-making processes.		Opportunities to advocate for increased representation and diversity in decision-making bodies.	Continued challenges in achieving equitable representation within project structures.
Deep-seated Gender Stereotypes	Community empowerment opportunities for challenging traditional gender norms.	- Deep-seated gender stereotypes within local communities may resist change.	Opportunities for targeted awareness campaigns to challenge and change stereotypes.	Resistance from conservative sociocultural norms may hinder stereotype change.
Public-Private Partnerships	Collaboration with private sector partners can provide additional resources and expertise.		Opportunities for expanding partnerships to enhance gender-inclusive initiatives.	Potential conflicts of interest or misalignment with private sector partners.

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Factors	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Policy Advocacy	Opportunities to advocate for gender-inclusive policies at local and national levels.		Opportunities for influencing policy changes that favor gender equality.	Resistance or slow response from policymakers to adopt gender-inclusive policies.
Technology for Gender Inclusion	Utilizing digital tools and technology to enhance reach and provide support for women and marginalized groups.		Opportunities for leveraging technology to bridge gender gaps and enhance inclusion.	Digital divides or limited access to technology may widen gender disparities.
Sociocultural Resistance		Resistance from conservative sociocultural norms may impede the acceptance of gender-inclusive practices.	Opportunities for targeted community engagement and education to overcome resistance.	Sociocultural backlash may impede efforts to introduce gender-inclusive practices.
Economic Inequalities		Existing economic disparities may exacerbate gender inequalities.	Opportunities to address economic inequalities through gender-sensitive programs.	Economic challenges may perpetuate or worsen existing gender disparities.
Inadequate Legal Frameworks		Weak enforcement of gender-related laws and policies poses a threat to promoting gender equality.	Opportunities to advocate for stronger legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms.	Risk of continued gender inequalities due to inadequate legal support.
Insufficient Gender-Awareness		- Lack of awareness and understanding of gender-related issues among project stakeholders.	- Opportunities for comprehensive awareness campaigns to improve gender literacy.	- Ongoing challenges in achieving widespread gender awareness and understanding.

PARTNER GENDER Theory of Change (ToC)

GOAL

Promote Gender inclusivity (GI) , Enhance Income Generation (EIG) , Capacity Building(CB) in PARTNER

INPUTS

Comprehensive training programs designed to provide equal opportunities to women, youth, and men.
Monitoring activities aimed at achieving a minimum of 60 percent women participation, ensuring representation and inclusivity.
Initiatives focused on increasing income opportunities for women and youth through targeted interventions.
Advocacy for gender balance in training programs and certification efforts, with a target of at least 40 percent women participation.
Promotion of women's participation in digital training programs, aiming for a minimum of 30 percent women involvement.
Ensuring effective delivery of KSC services to women farmers, with a goal of reaching 40 percent women beneficiaries.
Prioritizing inclusion of women and youth in training programs and aiming for a minimum of 60 percent women participation.

ACTIVITIES

Gender-sensitive training programs, Awareness campaigns, tailored support, collaboration with stakeholders

OUTPUTS

Higher participation of women and youth in training programs and monitoring efforts.
Improved agricultural skills and knowledge among women and youth, leading to increased productivity and income generation.
Increased confidence and empowerment of women in agricultural activities and decision-making processes.
Improved access to KSC services and digital tools for women farmers, leading to enhanced productivity and profitability.

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

Economic Empowerment: Increased income and economic independence among women and youth in agriculture.
Gender Equality: Improved gender balance and inclusivity in agricultural practices and decision-making processes.
Sustainable Agriculture: Adoption of sustainable farming practices and value chain development, leading to long-term resilience and growth.

LONG -TERM OUTCOMES

Transformed gender norms improved livelihoods; Nutrition contributed to broader goals

ASSUMPTIONS:

Availability of funding, cooperation from stakeholders, access to resources.
Successful implementation of activities, participation of target groups.
Continued support and engagement, effective use of skills.
Sustainable changes in attitudes and behaviors, lasting improvements in livelihoods.
Alignment with broader development objectives, positive contributions to societal well-being,

IMPACT

Improved Livelihoods: Enhanced livelihoods and well-being of women and youth in rural communities, contributing to poverty reduction and sustainable development.
Empowered Communities: Strengthened communities with empowered women and youth actively participating in and benefiting from agricultural activities.
Gender-Inclusive Agriculture Sector: Transformation of the agriculture sector into a more gender-inclusive and equitable environment, promoting social and economic justice.

OVERALL IMPACT

Enhanced gender inclusivity, poverty reduction, food security, and inclusive economic growth

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Annex 05 Gender Inclusion Plan for PARTNER

Our Vision

To create an agricultural landscape where everyone—regardless of gender—has equal opportunities to participate, lead, and benefit.

Key Focus Areas

A. Equal Participation

- Target: 40% women in all training and project activities.
- Action: Remove barriers like inconvenient timings and lack of childcare by offering flexible schedules and support services.

B. Empowerment Through Resources

- Target: Ensure women and men have the same access to tools, technology, credit, and land.
- Action: Provide easy-to-follow guides, tailored financial programs, and mentorship for women farmers.

C. Safer Communities

- Action:
    - Launch GBV awareness campaigns.
    - Set up safe spaces and anonymous reporting channels.
    - Train staff and communities to handle sensitive situations with care.

D. Leadership Opportunities

- Target: Women in at least 30% of leadership roles.
- Action: Run leadership boot camps and mentorship programs designed specifically for women.

How We Will Achieve This

Step 1: Understand the Landscape

- Collect data about who is involved, what barriers exist, and what's needed.
- Use tools like surveys and community discussions to get real insights.

Step 2: Build Skills

- Provide gender-sensitivity training for everyone involved.
- Focus on practical skills like resource management and communication for women and men.

Step 3: Measure Progress

- Regularly check: How many women are participating? Are resources fairly distributed? What feedback are we getting?
- Adjust plans based on what works and what doesn't.

Simple Tools for Accountability

- **Scorecards:** Track how inclusive each activity is.
- **Feedback Boxes:** Let everyone share concerns or ideas anonymously.
- **Check-ins:** Weekly meetings to address issues quickly.

Building a Supportive Environment

- **Collaborate:** Partner with local organizations and gender experts.
- **Celebrate Success:** Highlight stories of women and men benefiting equally.
- **Innovate:** Use digital tools like mobile training apps or gender-friendly platforms.

Why This Matters

- Communities thrive when everyone gets a chance to contribute.
- Inclusive agriculture means better ideas, stronger economies, and more sustainable solutions.

DLI-Based Gender Inclusion Plan for the PARTNER Project

DLI	Gender Inclusion Goals	Key Actions
DLI 1: GAP Standards in Fruit & Vegetable Production	- Ensure 40% of GAP training participants are women.	- Adapt standards to meet women's needs and roles. - Provide mobile training sessions for better access.
DLI 2: High-Yielding Rice Varieties	- Allocate 30% of high-yielding seeds to women farmers.	- Involve women in seed multiplication networks. - Simplify training materials for women farmers.
DLI 3: Crop Diversification	- Engage 35% women in crop diversification activities.	- Research women's preferences for stress-tolerant crops. - Train women on managing diverse crops and marketing.
DLI 4: Efficient Irrigation Technologies	- Reserve 40% of subsidies for women farmers. - Include 50% women in water user groups.	- Offer easy-to-follow training on irrigation tools. - Develop policies ensuring women's access to water.
DLI 5: Digital Agricultural Services	- Ensure 30% of e-voucher users are women.	- Run digital literacy sessions for women. - Build mobile apps and helpdesks tailored for women farmers.
DLI 6: Seed Certification & Food Safety	- Achieve 40% women representation in seed testing and certification roles.	- Remove barriers for women entrepreneurs in certification. - Organize food safety workshops for women.
DLI 7: Agri-Food Entrepreneurship	- Ensure 60% of entrepreneurship program participants are women.	- Provide mentorship, credit, and startup training for women entrepreneurs. - Offer leadership skill programs.
DLI 8: R&D for Technologies and Innovations	- Direct 35% of R&D funding to projects benefiting women. - Involve 30% women in R&D teams.	- Include women farmers in innovation testing. - Focus on developing tech addressing women's agricultural needs.
DLI 9: Value Chain (VC) Promotional Bodies	- Ensure 50% of leadership roles in VC bodies are held by women.	- Train women for leadership roles and decision-making. - Create inclusive policies for VC development.
DLI 10: Quality Information Systems	- Integrate gender-disaggregated data into all reporting.	- Train women to access and use quality agricultural data. - Use surveys to gather women's feedback on needs.

How to Use This Plan:

1. **Set Clear Goals:** Focus on achieving the gender participation targets for each DLI.
2. **Act Strategically:** Use the "Key Actions" as practical steps to reach these goals.
3. **Monitor and Adjust:** Regularly track progress, review feedback, and adapt actions as needed.

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SOCIAL SAFEGUARD BOOKLET

Program on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for Nutrition, Entrepreneurship, and Resilience (PARTNER)

1	OBJECTIVES OF THE SOCIAL SAFEGUARD FRAMEWORK
2	KEY PRINCIPLES
3	SOCIAL RISK CONTEXT
4	MITIGATION STRATEGIES
5	STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT
6	GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM
7	MONITORING AND EVALUATION
8	CAPACITY BUILDING
9	COMPLIANCE FRAMEWORK

Prepared by: Dr. Nasiba Aktar, Gender Specialist
Date: April 2025

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❋ Introduction

The PARTNER program seeks to transform Bangladesh's agricultural landscape with a focus on nutrition, rural entrepreneurship, and resilience. This transformation must be inclusive, equitable, and protective of the rights of all individuals—especially the most vulnerable.

This booklet outlines the Social Safeguards Framework to ensure the program does no harm, mitigates social risks, and actively promotes social inclusion, gender equity, and community resilience.

🎯 Objectives of the Social Safeguard Framework

- Prevent and mitigate adverse social impacts.
- Promote gender equity and the inclusion of marginalized groups.
- Ensure meaningful stakeholder engagement and grievance redress.
- Align with national regulations and donor safeguard standards (World Bank, IFAD).

👥 Key Principles

- Do No Harm: All program activities will be designed and implemented to prevent any form of social, economic, or cultural harm to individuals and communities.
- Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC): The program will uphold the right of Indigenous and tribal communities to give or withhold consent to proposed interventions, ensuring their full understanding and voluntary agreement before any activity begins.
- Zero Tolerance for GBV, Sexual Harassment, and Exploitation (SH/ SEA): The program strictly prohibits all forms of gender-based violence, sexual harassment, and sexual exploitation or abuse, with robust prevention, response, and reporting mechanisms in place.
- Inclusive Participation: The program will actively promote the engagement of women, youth, elderly persons, individuals with disabilities, and ethnic minorities to ensure equitable access and benefits.
- Transparency and Accountability: Clear and accessible mechanisms for community feedback, grievance redress, and social safeguard monitoring will be maintained to uphold trust and responsiveness.

📊 Social Risk Context

Potential Risks

Risk Area	Examples
Land Use	Displacement due to irrigation, agro-processing zones
Gender -Based Violence (GBV)	Increased risk in value chains, transport, labor
Exclusion	From agricultural subsidies or training due to gender, caste, or class
Labor	Child labor or unsafe conditions in agribusiness
Cultural Practices	Conflict with traditional gender roles or Indigenous land use

🪓 Mitigation Strategies

Safeguard Area	Actions
Gender Equity	Gender Action Plan, sex-disaggregated data, leadership quotas

Land Acquisition	No involuntary resettlement without compensation and consent
GBV Prevention	GBV Action Plan, safe reporting channels, staff training
Inclusive Access	Mobile outreach for women, persons with disabilities, and youth
Child Labor	Community awareness, supplier code of conduct, enforcement

🤝 Stakeholder Engagement
- Consultation: Pre-implementation workshops with communities, especially women and marginalized groups.
- Information Dissemination: Use local languages, visual aids, radio, and community meetings.
- Participation: Formation of local "Inclusive Agriculture Committees."

📞 Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)

A multi-tiered GRM system will be established with the following features:
- Anonymous complaints allowed
- Gender-sensitive intake processes
- Escalation paths from local to national level
- Response within 15 business days

📊 Monitoring and Evaluation
- Social Safeguard Indicators will be tracked quarterly:
  - 40 % of women trained in agriculture and entrepreneurship
  - % of grievances received and resolved
  - GBV incidents reported and addressed
  - Inclusion of disadvantaged groups in program activities
  - % of women and youth involvement.
- Third-party social audits conducted annually.

📚 9. Capacity Building
- Training for program staff on:
  - Gender mainstreaming
  - Social safeguard compliance
  - Conflict sensitivity
  - Human rights-based approaches
- Community-led workshops and peer learning

📌 10. Compliance Framework

The PARTNER Program commits to complying with:
- Bangladesh's National Social Safeguard Guidelines
- World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (ESF)
- IFAD Social, Environmental, andClimate Assessment Procedures (SECAP)

Annex 07 Gender Based Violence (GBV) prevention Plan

Introduction

Gender-Based Violence in Bangladesh:

Violence against women (VAW) is one type of GBV which is very prevalent in Bangladesh and is often rooted in gender inequalities and harmful gender norms. VAW in Bangladesh is still very high. Report on Violence against Women (VAW) Survey 2015 jointly conducted by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) and UNFPA found that 73% of married women in Bangladesh have experienced forms of violence from their husband, 55% reported forms of violence in the past 12 months, and 50% reported physical violence in their lifetime. More than 10 million Bangladeshi women experience physical or sexual violence every year. The numbers may be higher but societal stressors often prevent victims of rape and domestic abuse to step forward. Cybercrimes have added a new element to VAW. The Counter Terrorism Unit of Bangladesh Police reported a rapid rise in cases filed with their Cyber Crime Unit, (845 in 2018 up from 566 in 2017) of which 70% of the victims were women and children. The worst manifestation or existing forms of GBV is child marriage, also known as early marriage. Child marriage and the dowry system puts girls at particular risk of sexual, physical and psychological violence throughout their lives. Bangladesh has one of the highest early marriage rates in the world at 59 percent in 2018 (UNFPA, 2019). Early marriage nearly always results in school drop-outs or from to pursuing higher education and early childbirth, and is often used as a way for trafficking young girls. This is hazardous from a health perspective and is a hindrance to academic and economic development.

Legal and Institutional Environment for Gender Equality and GBV Prevention in Bangladesh:

Existence of laws and regulations as well as mechanisms helps to address SEA/SH risks. Bangladesh has the following mechanisms for SEA/SH/GBV/VAC mitigation, prevention and response.

• The National Women's Development Policy (NWDP), 2011 seeks to reduce violence; eliminate discrimination; increase access to education, health and employment; and address the special needs of older women, women with disabilities and women from indigenous and marginalized communities.

• In early 2017, the Parliament of Bangladesh reviewed the Child Marriage Restraint Act 2016 to permit under-18 girls to be married under "special circumstances". This has raised serious concerns among women's groups and legal NGOs working in the country.

• The Multi-Sectoral Program on Violence against Women (MSPVAW) is being implemented jointly by the Government of Bangladesh and Government of Denmark under the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs. The project is being carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Ministry of Information, Ministry of Social Welfare, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Youth and Sports and Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperative. One of the significant components of the program is the OCC in the Medical College Hospitals (MCHs). The OCCs provides health care, police assistance, DNA test, social services, legal assistance, psychological counseling and shelter service etc. A training module for combating VAW was developed for OCC staffs, teacher, students, health assistant, family planning officers and other professions. Another intervention set up by the MSPVAW is the National Helpline Center for violence against women, a 24-hour helpline that can be accessed from land lines and mobile numbers.

• A High Court decision declared in 2009 that the sexual harassment of girls and women is illegal, and issued a set of guidelines defining sexual delinquency to prevent any kind of physical, mental or sexual harassment of women, girls and children at their workplaces, educational institutions and other public places including roads across the country.

• Bangladesh's laws do address the use of corporal punishment in school settings; and in 2010 the Ministry of Education released an Education Circular that forbids corporal punishment in classrooms and schools. This same ban does not, however, extend to alternative care institutions, penitentiary settings or as punishment for specific criminal offenses.

•Bangladesh legislated an 'ICT Act' in 2006 to combat cybercrime and online harassments. However, the provisions of this Act are quite insufficient to undertake legal measures appropriately as it does not address gender-based violence online in a clear and effective manner. The country has also formed a 'Cybercrime Tribunal' that addresses cyber violence.

• Other than NWDP, the government has enacted a number of stringent laws and policies to protect men and especially women from gender based violence (GBV) including sexual exploitation and abuse/sexual harassment (SEA/SH): The Criminal Procedure Code, 1889; The Penal Code 1860; The Evidence Act 1972; Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929; Citizenship Act 1951 (Amended 2009); Muslim Family Laws Ordinance 1961; Dowry Prohibition Act 1980; Immigration Ordinance 1982; Immigration Ordinance 1982; Family Court Ordinance 1985; Women and Children Repression Prevention Act 2000 (2003); Women and Children Repression Prevention Act 2000 (2003); Women and Children Repression Prevention Act 2000 (2003); Women and Children Repression Prevention Act 2000 (2003); Women and Children Repression Prevention Act 2000 (2003); Acid Crime Prevention Act,2002;Acid Control Act 2002;The Bangladesh Labor Act 2006;Domestic Violence (Prevention & Protection) Act 2010;Human Trafficking Deterrence and Suppression Act, 2012;The Pornography Control Act, 2012; The Hindu Marriage Registration Act 2012. Multi-Sectoral Program on Violence against Women is being implemented jointly by the Government of Bangladesh and Government of Denmark under the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs. One of the significant components of the program is the OCC (One Stop Crisis Centre) in the Medical College Hospitals (MCHs). The OCCs provide health care, police assistance, DNA test, social services, legal assistance, psychological counseling and shelter service etc

Potential SEA/SH Risks Assessment in the Project Areas:

In the pursuit of sustainable development and agricultural transformation, the Partner Project is committed to ensuring a safe and inclusive environment for all stakeholders, with a particular focus on preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and Sexual Harassment (SH). Acknowledging the unique vulnerabilities that can arise within project activities, a comprehensive risk assessment has been conducted to identify potential SEA/SH risks across the various Development and Learning Indicators (DLIs). This proactive approach aims to foster an environment where the principles of dignity, respect, and equality are upheld, ensuring that every individual involved in or affected by the Partner Project experiences safety, security, and empowerment. The subsequent prevention plan is tailored to address these risks systematically, promoting a culture of accountability and protection within the project's sphere of influence.

DLI	Contextual Factors	Project Activities	Workforce Composition	Accommodation and Living Conditions
1	Pre-existing power dynamics and cultural norms may contribute to SEA risks during community engagement.	Lack of gender-sensitive approaches during training sessions may exacerbate SEA risks.	Gender imbalance in the workforce may lead to harassment or discrimination incidents.	Inadequate housing facilities for project staff may increase SEA risks.
2	Economic disparities resulting from the project may create power imbalances, leading to SEA risks.	Unaddressed SEA risks may strain relations between the project and the community.	-	-
3	Cultural norms that tolerate sexual harassment may create an environment conducive to SEA.	Inadequate screening of suppliers and contractors may expose the project to SEA risks.	-	-
4	-	-	Lack of awareness about reporting mechanisms for SEA/SH incidents may deter victims from coming forward.	Lack of accessible and gender-sensitive grievance mechanisms may hinder individuals from reporting SEA incidents.
5	Weak monitoring of project activities may allow SEA risks to go unnoticed.	Project-related activities may contribute to community displacement, increasing vulnerability to SEA.	-	-
6	Inadequate safeguards during community engagement activities may expose community members, particularly women and girls, to SEA risks.	Improper integration of project staff into the local community may exacerbate SEA risks.	-	-
7	Unequal representation of genders in the project workforce may lead to harassment or discrimination incidents.	SEA incidents may negatively impact the livelihoods of victims, affecting their ability to participate in project-related activities.	-	-

DLI	Contextual Factors	Project Activities	Workforce Composition	Accommodation and Living Conditions
8	Power imbalances within communities may lead to situations of SEA.	SEA risks may be present within the project's supply chain, especially if vendors lack robust accountability measures.	-	-
9	Conducting training sessions without gender-sensitive approaches may contribute to an unsafe environment.	Fear of retaliation may discourage individuals from reporting SEA incidents.	-	-
10	Cultural norms that tolerate sexual harassment may create an environment conducive to SEA.	Failure to incorporate SEA considerations into project evaluations may result in oversight.	-	-

These potential SEA/SH risks should be addressed through comprehensive mitigation strategies tailored to each DLI and its associated activities.

GBV Prevention Plan

The GBV Prevention Plan for the PARTNER project adopts a comprehensive strategy encompassing both prevention and mitigation measures, recognizing the limitations of existing policies in addressing GBV. Given that the project involves construction activities in project-implemented areas, potential GBV risks are identified in four areas: sexual exploitation and abuse, workplace sexual harassment, and non-sexual exploitation and abuse. The primary objective of this action plan is to pinpoint issues, stakeholders, potential service providers, and assess their capacity to facilitate grievance redressal. Mitigation measures will be implemented, emphasizing community sensitization and strengthening institutional capacities to address potential GBV risks among the project-affected population.

The plan follows a survivor-centric approach, prioritizing the care of victim/survivors and ensuring access to various referral mechanisms. The overarching goal is to foster a supportive environment where the rights of each survivor are respected, and individuals are treated with dignity and respect.

To operationalize these efforts, the project will implement a general Code of Conduct (CoC) and a Labor Code of Conduct (sample provided in Annex I). These codes will specifically address GBV/SEA/SH-related risks for contractors, sub-contractors, and laborers employed under the project.

Grievance Mechanism

For the PARTNER project, the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) or Environmental and Social Unit (ESU) will utilize the existing Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) system, emphasizing confidentiality in addressing Gender-Based Violence (GBV) issues.

Incidents related to GBV, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA), and Sexual Harassment (SH) can be reported through the standard project-level GRM channel, similar to any other project-related grievance (see Annex III for an illustration). The GRM focal person within the Project Management Unit (PMU) will connect the complainant with a designated service provider (see Annex II). This service provider will

Introduction:

PARTNER is devoted to creating a work environment that minimizes negative impacts on the local environment, communities, and its workers. We strongly commit to establishing an atmosphere where Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and Sexual Harassment (SH) are strictly prohibited for all employees, sub-contractors, suppliers, associates, or representatives of the company.

Purpose of the Code of Conduct:

Establish a common understanding of Sexual exploitation and abuse, and sexual harassment.

Foster a shared commitment to standard behaviors and guidelines for preventing, reporting, and responding to SEA and SH.

Make it clear that a breach of this code of conduct will lead to disciplinary action.

Definitions:

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA): Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, power, or trust, for sexual purposes.

Sexual Abuse: The actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal/physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Distinction between SEA and SH:

SEA occurs against beneficiaries or community members, while sexual harassment involves personnel/staff of an organization or company.

Consent:

Consent must be freely given, okay to withdraw, and specific to the situation. Consent cannot be given by anyone under 18, and a mistaken belief regarding the age of the child is not a defense.

No Consent is Obtained Through:

The use of threats, force, coercion, abduction, fraud, manipulation, deception, or misrepresentation.

The use of a threat to withhold a benefit to which the person is already entitled, or a promise is made to provide a benefit.

Examples of SEA and SH:

SEA Examples:
- Offering jobs in exchange for sex.
- Connecting services to households in exchange for sex.
- Rape or sexual assault.
- Denying passage unless sexual favors are performed.
- Hiring decisions based on sex.
- Inappropriate relationships with minors.

SH Examples:
- Inappropriate comments on appearances.
- Victim-blaming.
- Unwanted physical contact.
- Solicitation for sexual favors.

Individual Signed Commitment:

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I, _____, acknowledge that SEA and SH are prohibited. As an (employee/contractor) of (contracted agency / sub-contracted agency) in (country), I understand that engaging in SEA and SH activities on the work site, surroundings, or community constitutes a violation of this Code of Conduct. I commit to treating all persons with respect, preventing SEA and SH, and reporting any observed or suspected incidents. I will adhere to this code both on and off the project site, actively partake in training, and report incidents to the Grievance Reporting Mechanism (GRM) or my manager. I understand the consequences of breaching this code.

Sanctions:

I understand that breaching this code may result in disciplinary action, including warnings, training, loss of salary, suspension, termination, or reporting to authorities.
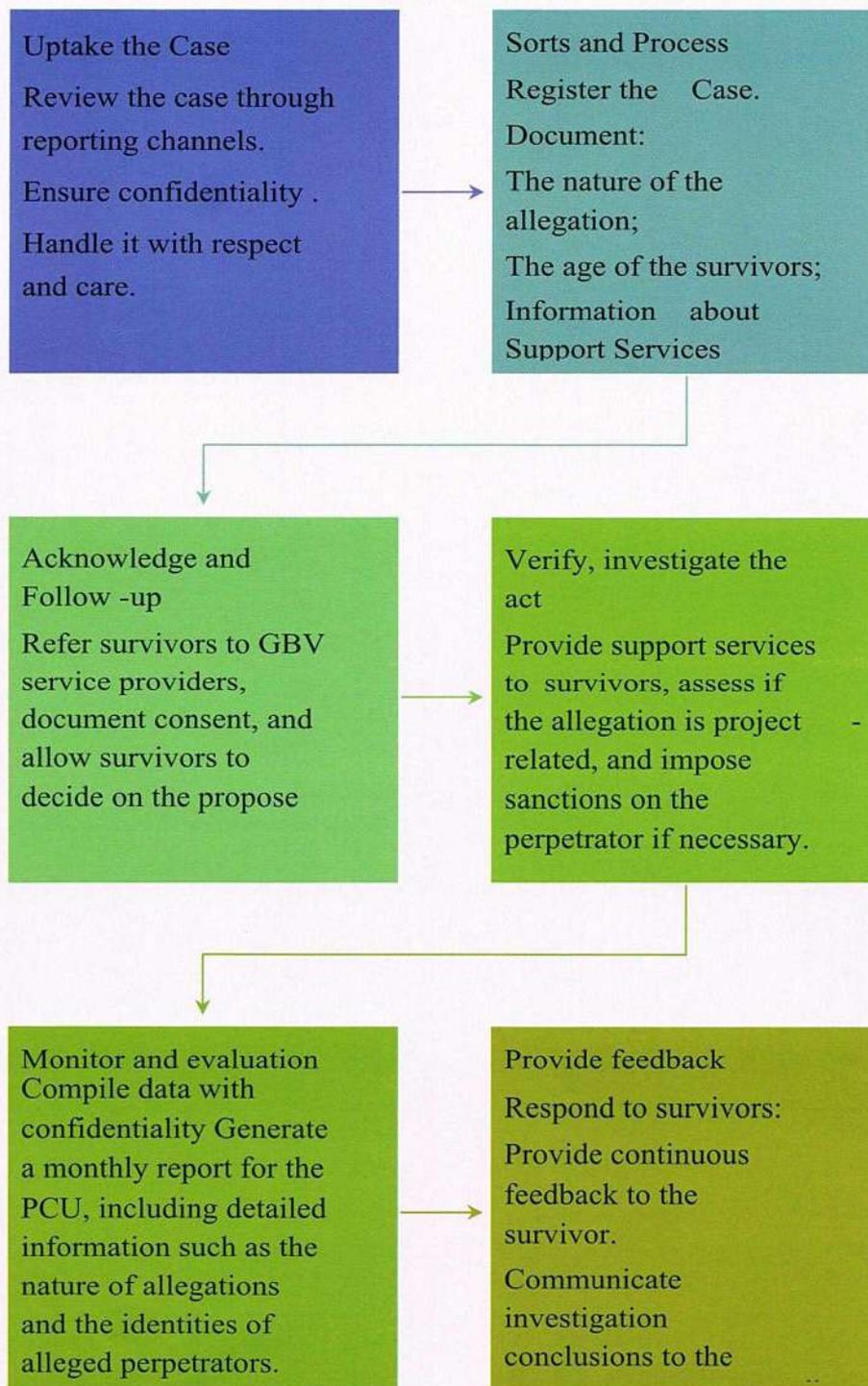
Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Step	Responsibility	Task
1	Tier 1 – Project coordinator Head of Implementing Agency (7) Strategic Partner (8) Gender Specialist Environment & Social Safeguard specialist M&N Specialist	Start & Overview: Receive an initial overview of the grievance.
		Decision on Reporting: Decide if the reported grievance involves SEA/SH allegations.
		Overall Coordination: Oversee the initial assessment and ensure appropriate resource allocation.
		Policy and Decision Making: Make decisions related to the seriousness of the allegations and potential consequences.
		Communication: Communicate decisions and actions to stakeholders.
2	Tier 2 - Regional/District Level	Initial Assessment & Referral: Conduct an initial assessment and immediately refer to support services.
		Investigation Team Formation: Form an investigation team and ensure readiness.
		Investigation Oversight: Oversee the investigation process, ensuring alignment with organizational guidelines.
		Decision and Action Implementation: Implement decisions and actions based on investigation findings.
		Communication at Regional/District Level: Communicate within the region/district regarding progress and outcomes.
3	Tier 3 - Field Level GM Focal	Allegation entry & Local Investigation: Conduct on-the-ground investigation based on guidelines.
		Support Services and Immediate Actions: Take immediate actions and connect victims with support services at the local level.
		Continuous Follow-Up and Support: Provide ongoing support and follow-up at the field level.
		Monitoring and Evaluation at Field Level: Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the grievance mechanism locally.
		Communication at Field Level: Communicate within the field regarding actions, updates, and support.
		Capacity Building and Prevention at Field Level: Conduct continuous training and implement preventive measures at the field level.
4	M&E Specialist	Monitoring and Evaluation: Implement an overarching monitoring and evaluation process at all levels for continuous improvement.
5	Overall	Transparency and Accountability: Ensure transparency and accountability throughout the entire process.
6	Overall	Capacity Building and Prevention: Conduct continuous training and implement preventive measures at all levels.
20.	End	Resolution and Learning Outcomes: Conclude with a clear resolution and identify learning outcomes for future improvements.

ANNEX 7.4 Operating Procedures and Response Protocol for SEA/SH Allegations

Uptake the Case
Review the case through reporting channels.
Ensure confidentiality .
Handle it with respect and care.

Sorts and Process
Register the   Case.
Document:
The nature of the allegation;
The age of the survivors;
Information   about Support Services

Acknowledge and Follow -up
Refer survivors to GBV service providers, document consent, and allow survivors to decide on the propose

Verify, investigate the act
Provide support services to survivors, assess if the allegation is project   - related, and impose sanctions on the perpetrator if necessary.

Monitor and evaluation
Compile data with confidentiality Generate a monthly report for the PCU, including detailed information such as the nature of allegations and the identities of alleged perpetrators.

Provide feedback
Respond to survivors:
Provide continuous feedback to the survivor.
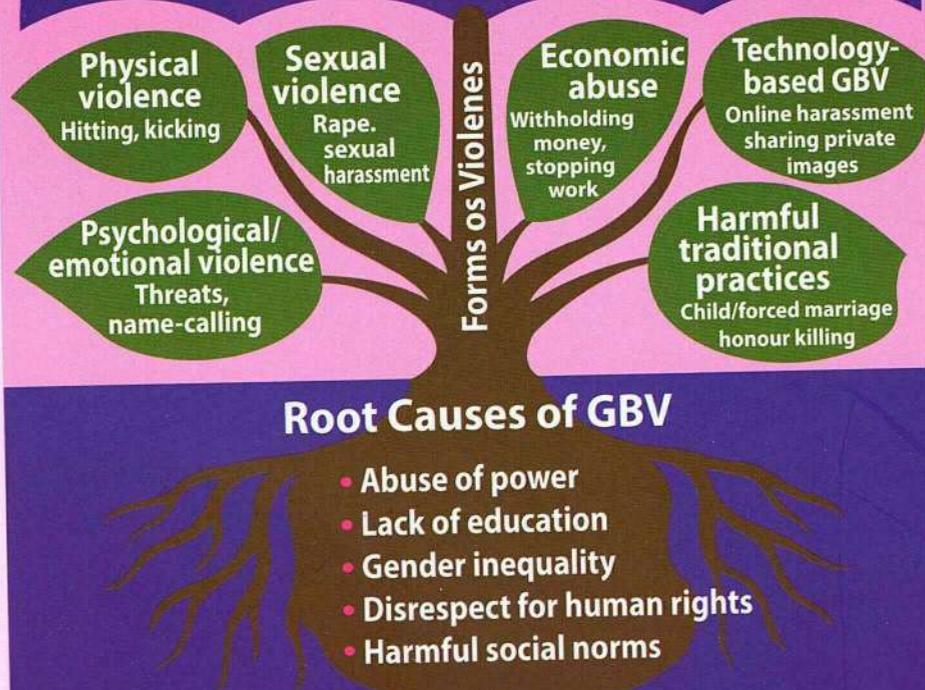Communicate investigation conclusions to the

PARTNER for Safety:
Cultivating a Future Free from GBV

S.A.F.E. Pillars
S-Services: Health, legal, psychosocial, and shelte
A- Accountability: Laws & policies protecting rights
F-Financial empowerment: Fconomic independence
E- Environment: Promoting respectful relationships & challenging harmful norms

Forms os Violenes

Physical violence
Hitting, kicking

Sexual violence
Rape. sexual harassment

Economic abuse
Withholding money, stopping work

Technology-based GBV
Online harassment sharing private images

Psychological/ emotional violence
Threats, name-calling

Harmful traditional practices
Child/forced marriage honour killing

Root Causes of GBV
- Abuse of power
- Lack of education
- Gender inequality
- Disrespect for human rights
- Harmful social norms

Program on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for nutrition, Entrepreneurship and Resilience in Bangladesh (PARTNER)

THE WORLD BANK

IFAD
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