

Management Response & Recommendations Action Plan

Evaluation Report: Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Mainstreaming Research British Embassy Kathmandu - Final Report

The key conclusions from the evaluation:

Overall summary

The Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Mainstreaming research project is a one-year qualitative study which was commissioned by the United Kingdom (UK) Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)/ the British Embassy Kathmandu (BEK). The research has been undertaken by Adam Smith International (ASI) with the purpose of generating learning on how to include a meaningful focus on GESI within 'mainstream' development programmes. The research was commissioned to answer the following three overarching research questions (RQs), with the overall intention for the research to practically inform future work and promote higher standards in GESI mainstreaming:

- RQ1: What evidence is there of what works well in GESI mainstreaming (and what doesn't), from the international experience and literature?
- RQ2: How do BEK-funded programmes mainstream GESI into their work?
- RQ3: How does GESI mainstreaming in documents such as business cases and annual reviews translate into real delivery and observable outcomes?

The research methodology was divided into three interlinked stages:

Stage 1: Global literature synthesis. The research began with a synthesis of global literature on GESI mainstreaming. The focus here was on answering RQ1 through the review of a sample of 36 documents.

Stage 2: BEK portfolio review. Following the Stage 1 Global Literature Synthesis, the research moved on to a review of the BEK portfolio of programmes. The focus here was on seeking to answer RQ2 through interviews and a review of a selection of documents for a sample of 15 programmes in the BEK portfolio.

Stage 3: Deep-dive case studies. Following the Stage 2 BEK Portfolio Review, the research team took a closer look at a sub-set of four BEK programmes using semi-structured interviews to answer RQ3.

The research team developed a conceptual framework which could allow space for different mainstreaming approaches to be explored, whilst also enabling a degree of consistency in the way that data was collected, analysed, and presented. It was evident from the global literature that an intersectional lens needed to be placed at the centre of the conceptual framework. A relatively consistent focus on three 'Essential Elements' which enable effective and meaningful GESI mainstreaming also emerged from the literature:

- Essential Element 1: A systematic approach through strong leadership and accountability to motivate and enable a focus on GESI within programmes.
- Essential Element 2: GESI being integral to programme teams through the development of GESI capacity and an inclusive team culture.
- Essential Element 3: An outcomes focus, with an emphasis on GESI results and ongoing learning and adaptation within programmes.

Through the literature review, the research team also identified a set of 12 Common Approaches to GESI mainstreaming, which were mapped to the three Essential Elements.

The final report presents an analysis of findings and lessons from the three stages of the GESI Mainstreaming Research Project and are of broader relevance to the donor

Management Response & Recommendations Action Plan

community in Nepal and beyond. They are structured around the 12 Common Approaches in the GESI Mainstreaming Framework. These include:

1. Programmes can helpfully demonstrate and elevate commitments to GESI mainstreaming through the use of programme GESI strategies, especially where they were linked to practical action plans.
2. GESI mainstreaming requires a dedicated investment of resources, with budget allocations for GESI needing to be explicit and visible.
3. It is important for programme leadership to intentionally motivate their teams to address GESI through their work.
4. Recruiting diverse programme teams and encouraging diversity to be valued so that alternative perspectives are shared, listened to and acted upon is an important aspect of GESI mainstreaming.
5. GESI mainstreaming requires GESI expertise. This is most effective when GESI experts are embedded in full time roles which give them status within programme teams.
6. Partnerships with GESI-focused organisations can enhance GESI capacity within programmes and add value to the design and delivery of interventions.
7. As well as a commitment to GESI, programme teams need to be equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to play a role in GESI mainstreaming.
8. Intersectional and operationally focused GESI analyses can strengthen GESI mainstreaming within programmes by enabling barriers to be identified and understood.
9. Programmes need to address the challenges and barriers marginalised groups face in accessing and benefiting from programme interventions and resources.
10. Mainstream development programmes should identify opportunities to include GESI-focused activities or interventions, drawing on GESI expertise, analysis and GESI-focused partnerships to help them do so.
11. It is important that programme seek to understand and address potential risks associated with GESI mainstreaming, especially where efforts seek to challenge current power dynamics and resource distribution.
12. Addressing GESI through programme M&E is a vital aspect of mainstreaming, including the use of both disaggregated and GESI-specific indicators.

Management Response & Recommendations Action Plan

Evaluation Report Title: Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Mainstreaming Research – Final Report

Recommendations: FCDO	Accepted or Rejected	If “Accepted”, Action plan for Implementation or if “Rejected”, Reason for Rejection
<p>Recommendation 1: Establish a clear description of what GESI mainstreaming means for BEK programmes and a vision of what it is intended to achieve, framed around the three Essential Elements.</p>	Accepted	<p>BEK is in the process of creating a cross embassy GESI Strategy and Action Plan. As part of this process, we will define and establish a clear definition of what GESI mainstreaming means across our BEK portfolio based on the three essential elements. This description will be shared and sensitised across BEK teams and with our implementing partners to ensure that BEK understands what constitutes GESI mainstreaming, why it is important and what it aims to achieve when done correctly.</p>
<p>Recommendation 2: Establish consistent use of the 12 Common Approaches Framework to GESI mainstreaming efforts within programmes.</p>	Accepted	<p>The final report and ex summary has been shared across BEK and with our implementing partners. A series of dissemination activities were carried out internally and externally, which aimed to create awareness and understanding around the three essential elements, 12 common approaches and key recommendations and lessons stemming from the research.</p> <p>Moving forward the BEK Social Development Advisor will work closely with programme teams to ensure a consistent use of the 12 common approaches framework to GESI mainstreaming efforts across all our programmes. This will include encouraging teams to review the GESI Checklist that has been created and to reflect on where programmes could do more to scale up their approach to mainstreaming. SROs, PROs and advisors should structure initial and ongoing discussions with implementing partners about GESI mainstreaming and conduct a light-touch annual stocktake to track progress on GESI mainstreaming across the BEK portfolio based on an annual self-assessment by BEK-funded programmes as part of the annual review process.</p>
<p>Recommendation 3: Incentivise SROs and PROs to mainstream GESI in the programmes they are working on, establishing it as an expected aspect of their role on which they are appraised.</p>	Accepted	<p>BEK will aim to incentive SRO and PRO to mainstream GESI in their programmes and look for ways to incorporate this into their objectives which they are appraised on. As part of this process there will be additional skills development and awareness raising activities for SROs, PROs and advisors in relation to GESI mainstreaming and the 12 Common Approaches. The main aim of the workshops would be to ensure conceptual clarity about the ambitions of GESI mainstreaming and how this relates to other terms such as LNOB, vulnerability and disadvantage as well as supporting programme teams to develop a more tangible understanding of what good (and bad) GESI mainstreaming looks like, specific to the sector(s) they are working in.</p>

Management Response & Recommendations Action Plan

<p>Recommendation 4: Require all new programmes/phases of programmes to develop a GESI strategy during their inception phase, which they update during the life of the programme.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>We will encourage all new BEK programmes/phases of programmes to develop GESI strategies during their inception period and updated during the life cycle of the programme – helping to ensure the strategy remains fit for purpose as interventions are implemented and adapted.</p> <p>Where appropriate, implementing partners will be encouraged to structure their GESI strategies around the 12 Common Approaches framework – which will help to ensure they are comprehensive and to ease review by BEK. Where appropriate, we will encourage the GESI strategies have a clear results focus, linked to programme outcomes as set out in the programme logframe.</p> <p>BEK SROs and advisers will be encouraged to require regular reporting by implementing partners against programme GESI strategies as part of their annual review in order to ensure programmes are held to account for their use and delivery. Lastly, it will be emphasised to implementing partners that their programme GESI strategies need to be living documents, with review and discussion between BEK and programme teams leading to ongoing revisions and adaptations, to keep pace with any changes to the programme and the wider context.</p>
<p>Recommendation 5: Require programmes to calculate how much they will spend on GESI mainstreaming and to track this spend as part of existing financial reporting.</p>	<p>Partially Accepted</p>	<p>Whilst we appreciate the importance of calculating GESI mainstreaming spend as part of existing financial reporting mechanism, we are mindful that spend does not always equate into tangible results. Therefore, we will place greater emphasis on tracking GESI mainstreaming outcomes.</p> <p>Where deemed feasible, we will encourage existing BEK programmes to calculate how much they spend on GESI mainstreaming and track this as part of their financial reporting. For new programmes coming online we will recommend that SROS and PROs work closely with partners to action this. Within ToR and ITT packs we will highlight the need for there to be sufficient skills, competencies and expertise to deliver GESI mainstreaming in the form of a GESI expert.</p>
<p>Recommendation 6: Recognise and reward programmes or individuals within implementing teams for their efforts and achievements in relation to GESI.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>BEK will promote recognition and reward programmes or individuals within implementing teams, for their efforts and achievements in relation to GESI. We will also consider extending this to BEK colleagues. Where possible this should be made visible to others within programmes and beyond in order to incentivise a focus on GESI. Examples based on the findings include: commending GESI achievements at cross-programme events and regularly showcasing GESI mainstreaming efforts in reports, newsletters and through BEK social media posts. We will also look to use existing Embassy awards or create a specific award for exceptional individual or programme level efforts in relation to GESI mainstreaming.</p>
<p>Recommendation 7: Expect and support programmes to recruit</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>BEK will increase our commitment and take proactive steps to support programmes to recruit diverse teams, which goes beyond the recruitment of women as a homogenous group. For example, we will</p>

Management Response & Recommendations Action Plan

<p>diverse teams, which goes beyond the recruitment of women as a homogenous group.</p>		<p>promote the use of recognition of the value of having people with a lived experience of marginalisation and inequality within teams, including at leadership level.</p> <p>BEK will create and disseminate guidance to programmes based on an analysis of the barriers to diverse recruitment in Nepal. This should look at barriers for specific groups but with a clear intersectional lens. The analysis and guidance will help to identify effective HR practices which have enabled diverse recruitment and retainment within programme and field teams in Nepal.</p> <p>Within our new programmes we will also emphasise the value of diverse recruitment from procurement onwards, ensuring it is an essential element of effective programme delivery and that programmes have sufficient time for diverse recruitment. For example, further targeted outreach may be required to broaden the pool of applicants where sufficient diversity is not achieved in initial recruitment rounds.</p>
<p>Recommendation 8: Require new programmes/phases of programmes to have a GESI Lead who is a GESI expert in a senior role.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>BEK will encourage all new programmes/phases of programmes to have a GESI Lead who is a GESI expert in a senior role and can play a strategic role with crosscutting influence. We will also review our existing programmes to determine whether additional GESI specialists may be needed within the programme team and at field level depending on the scale and scope of programme and the number of locations it is working across. We will take a proportionate approach to ensure the GESI capacity is fit for purpose within the overall programme.</p>
<p>Recommendation 9: Establish a Community of Practice to support and strengthen GESI experts working within BEK programmes.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>BEK will establish a BEK GESI Community of Practice, facilitated by the SDAs, to support and strengthen GESI experts working within BEK programmes. BEK will play a cross portfolio role by convening a working group which would be resourced in order to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide a safe space for GESI experts working on BEK programmes to regularly network and share experiences, challenges and ideas. This will aim to promote greater coordination in areas where programmes overlap (i.e. TA to provincial or municipal government). 2. Provide mentoring opportunities for GESI experts working on BEK programmes, where needed. For example, this could be peer mentoring within the community of practice, or through the pairing of programme GESI leads with national and international sectoral GESI experts.
<p>Recommendation 10: Encourage and enable programmes to work with government institutions mandated to support GESI as part of the constitution.</p>	<p>Partially Accepted</p>	<p>BEK will look for opportunities to encourage programmes to work with government institutions mandated to support GESI – with a particular focus at the Provincial and Local level. At the federal level, BEK will look to further develop and strength it's relationship with the MOWCSC, through our existing programmes which work with the Ministry and through our on-going engagement in GESI IDPG. When appropriate we will look to engage more strategically with constitutionally mandated commissions to monitor the progress on the status of women and historically marginalised groups. For example, National Women Commission, National Dalit Commission, National Inclusion Commission,</p>

Management Response & Recommendations Action Plan

		Indigenous Nationalities Commission, Madhesi Commission, Tharu Commission, Muslim Commission, and the National Human Rights Commission.
Recommendation 11: Encourage implementing partners to establish partnerships with GESI focused organisations in order to strengthen programmes' capacity to work on GESI.	Accepted	<p>BEK will encourage our existing and future implementing partners to establish partnerships with GESI focused organisations in order to strengthen programmes' capacity to work on GESI. For example, this could include organisations focused on women's rights, people with disabilities and indigenous and historically marginalised groups – operating at both the national and grassroots. These partnerships will help to expand BEK programming into areas such as empowerment, social norm change and collective voice/influence.</p> <p>In our new programmes BEK emphasise the importance of such partnerships in ITTs and other procurement documents, and the need for partnerships to be based on mutual respect and on a meaningful two-way interaction and exchange of knowledge. BEK will also invite GESI-focused organisation to early market engagement events in order to encourage networking with those bidding as lead implementing partners. In our existing programmes BEK SROs and PROs will be encouraged to remind implementing partners to include additional GESI focused organisations as partners, as needed, during design and implementation.</p>
Recommendation 12: Support implementing partners to provide programme-specific GESI training to their teams so they are equipped with the competencies to mainstream GESI.	Accepted	<p>BEK will support implementing partners to provide programme-specific GESI training to their teams so they are equipped with the competencies to mainstream GESI. To ensure sufficient resource is allocated to this, SROs, PROs and SDAs, will clearly communicate that this can be covered using programme budgets.</p> <p>GESI training for programmes should go beyond basic messaging about the need for a general commitment to GESI and instead focus on equipping teams with the knowledge and skills they will need to play a role in GESI mainstreaming within the programme. For example, this should include building understand on how to use an intersectional approach to disaggregated data.</p>
Recommendation 13: Expect programmes to conduct ongoing intersectional GESI analysis to inform more detailed design and delivery of interventions as programmes adapt and evolve.	Accepted	SROs and PROs will be encouraged to promote the importance of programmes conducting ongoing intersectional GESI analysis to inform the design and delivery of interventions as programmes adapt and evolve. For example, GESI analysis conducted during the inception phase to develop a programme GESI strategy would be viewed as a necessary first step but insufficient to last the length of the programme. BEK will emphasise the importance that GESI analysis should be built into programme milestones and deliverables and communicate to implementing partners that intersectional analysis is not the same as simply reporting data or stating issues for various social groups.
Recommendation 14: Clarify which groups are	Accepted	BEK programme teams and implementing partners will be encouraged to clarify which groups are intended to be reached and how they are expected to benefit, as a result of GESI mainstreaming. This

Management Response & Recommendations Action Plan

<p>intended to be reached by BEK programmes – and how they are expected to benefit – as a result of GESI mainstreaming.</p>		<p>should be linked to the overall GESI Mainstreaming definition that will be created and will support a more consistent focus on certain groups and an intersectional approach to GESI mainstreaming within programmes. This will also help to avoid misinterpretations through the interchangeable use of a range of terms.</p>
<p>Recommendation 15: Require programmes to demonstrate a clear link between GESI-focused interventions and the design of the main programme.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>BEK will encourage programmes to demonstrate a link between GESI-focused interventions and the design of the main programme. For example, there should be a clear logic between them and other programme interventions.</p>
<p>Recommendation 16: Commission an evaluation of TA for municipal, provincial, and federal government GESI policies and GESI trainings provided to government officials in order to inform future support by BEK.</p>	<p>Partially Accepted</p>	<p>Whilst we support this recommendation in principle, BEK will first look to see what opportunities there are for us to leverage our support through our existing evidence programme and / or governance programme. For example, our governance programme has clear GESI objective and aims to improve the delivery of TA and capacity at the provincial and local level through the provincial academies. We will first need to ensure that there is already existing data we can draw that demonstrates where TA has effectively supported implementation of standalone GESI policies at municipal, provincial and federal level, including whether GESI policy commitment have gone on to be reflected in other sectoral policies and in budget allocations and services.</p> <p>There could still be the need for greater focus on the effectiveness of GESI trainings provided to government officials helping to evaluate how best to further invest and draw out learnings. For example, the extent to which GESI training sessions provided to government officials through BEK programmes has had any lasting effect in terms of knowledge, mindsets and ways of working.</p>
<p>Recommendation 17: Expect programmes to identify risks related to work on GESI, including as a result of backlash.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>BEK PROs and SROs with support of the BEK Safeguarding Champions will work with partners to identify risks related to work on GESI, including as a result of backlash or unintended consequences and harm. This is will be particularly important where GESI mainstreaming may encourage programmes to focus resources on certain groups, to prioritise the participation of marginalised groups and to challenge existing power dynamics. In order to identify risks and mitigation measures attention to risks should be included in ongoing programme GESI analyses where possible. BEK will also create a succinct 2-pager which explains the types of additional risks which can be triggered or exacerbated by GESI mainstreaming – helping to raise awareness among BEK colleagues and implementation partners.</p>

Management Response & Recommendations Action Plan

<p>Recommendation 18: Ensure GESI ambitions are set at outcome level within programme logframes.</p>	<p>Partially Accepted</p>	<p>Where deemed realistic and feasible, BEK will encourage new programmes to set out GESI mainstreaming ambitions at the outcome level in programme logframes... Programmes teams will be encouraged to have GESI outcome indicators that well defined and specific, with a clearly articulated approach to tracking progress. For example, targets should be based on GESI analysis of what a programme can realistically achieve.</p>
<p>Recommendation 19: Expect programmes to not only collect but also analyse disaggregated data with an intersectional lens and with a clear purpose to inform and improve programming for groups intended to benefit from GESI mainstreaming.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>BEK will encourage programmes to not only collect but also analyse disaggregated data with an intersectional lens to inform and improve programming for groups intended to benefit from GESI mainstreaming. For example, this should avoid disaggregated data (both quantitative and qualitative) being collected without a clear purpose. BEK will promote programme GESI advisers / focal points to work closely with M&E colleagues and programme teams should be encouraged to disaggregate targets for programme outputs and outcomes based on an analysis of what it is realistic for the programme.</p> <p>Programmes be encouraged to explain whether they will or will not collect data in relation to a list of aspects of people's identities – with an explanation of how and why. This list will be based on the definition of GESI which BEK develops (see Recommendation 1), and could include (but not be limited to): Sex, Caste/ethnicity, Age, Disability, LGBT+ (where deemed safe). BEK will also ensure programmes are clear on current thinking about the best approaches to the collection of disability-related data according to the Washington Group. This will help to encourage a standardised approach across BEK programmes.</p>