



National Rural Support Programme



2026

Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Action Plan



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Document History				
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Version-1	June 28, 2004	36 th BOD meeting	Approved by the Board of Directors and advised to be operationalized with immediate effect	
Version-2	June 2007	GAD section	Participatory Gender Action Plan 2008 spear headed by GAD NRSP.	
Version-3	2017	Approved by BOD	Gender Mainstreaming Policy aligned with GCF Gender Policy even though Climate Change and Disaster Management	GCF Policy
	April 16, 2025	103 BOD meeting	- Comprehensive Gender Risk assessment along with Gender action plan was presented to the Board of Directors (BoD) in its 103rd meeting held on April 16, 2025. - Board approved the summary of Gender Policy and Gender Action Plan based on RMFC recommendations	Gender Risk assessment
Version-4	April, 13, 2026	Approved by the BOD	NRSP BOD approved updated version-4 of Gender Policy in 107 th Board meeting	



Approval Sheet Gender policy Version -4 (2026)			
Activities	Name	Reference Document/ Forum	Date
Proposed By:	Gender & Development section & Risk and Compliance Department has proposed amendments in NRSP Gender Mainstreaming Policy	Version-4	April 14, 2025
Reviewed/ Recommended By:	The updated Gender Policy was reviewed by the NRSP Risk Management & Finance Committee (RMFC) expressed its satisfaction and recommended to the Board for its approval.	Version-4	June 15, 2025
	NRSP Board has reviewed the summary of updated Gender Policy and Gender Action Plan based on RMFC recommendations	Version-4	April 16, 2025
Approved By:	NRSP Board Approved updated Gender mainstreaming Policy	Version-4	April 13, 2026
Wider Circulation and implementation	The updated Gender Policy was shared with the NRSP Gender, Ethics and Appeals (GEA) Committee members for inputs, dissemination and implementation	Version-4	June 15, 2026



Executive Summary

The National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) has embedded gender equality and women's empowerment into the core of its rural development mission. This Gender Mainstreaming Policy formalizes NRSP's institutional commitment to creating inclusive, equitable, and sustainable development outcomes for women and men. The policy aligns with national and international commitments of the Government of Pakistan especially for gender equality.

NRSP since its inception has taken concrete steps to ensure that gender perspectives are systematically integrated into its organizational structures, programs, and field operations.

NRSP has institutionalized gender through the establishment of a central GAD Unit, supported by decentralized mechanisms, and promotes grassroots leadership through Community institutes. The policy ensures the systematic integration of gender perspectives into programs, governance, climate resilience, and disaster risk reduction efforts. A centralized Gender and Development (GAD) Unit, supported by decentralized implementation through field teams, ensures the integration of gender considerations across all sectors. Special emphasis is placed on supporting women-focused Community institutions, strengthening women's voices, needs, and leadership in development processes

The Gender Mainstreaming Policy has been periodically reviewed and strengthened through review and formation of gender action plan to reflect NRSP's proactive alignment with the national and international commitments of the Government especially in relation to governance, climate resilience, disaster risk reduction, and environmental sustainability.

The overall NRSP gender policy ensure gender, social safeguarding and social inclusion which may affect women and other vulnerable groups across all demographic settings/districts during the implementation of different activities in the field. The potential areas and associated policies and practices concerning women, adolescent girls, the elderly, Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), minorities, transgender persons, and other disadvantaged community groups within the programme and project area across various microfinance and development activities NRSP existing policies, practices and implementation at field were directed to ensure national, international and regulatory compliances. Identification of the gender risks which may arise because of project activities and propose measures to prevent, manage and prevent such risks. NRSP adopt Gender Equity and social inclusion (GESI) approach during project designing and implementation of project activities to ensure inclusion of vulnerable segment as beneficiaries under different project and core activities/interventions.

In summary, NRSP's GAD Policy promotes inclusive, equitable, and sustainable development by embedding gender and social inclusion across all organizational and field operations.



Introduction

This Policy document serves as a strategic and operational guide for NRSP staff, partners, and donors, ensuring that gender remains at the heart of NRSP's development vision, structures, and practices. The National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) recognizes that sustainable rural development is not possible without gender equity and the meaningful participation of women. Aligned with national priorities and relevant international frameworks especially the SDGs to reduce poverty, ignorance and attain gender equality. NRSP has institutionalized gender mainstreaming as a core organizational value and strategic approach. Since its inception, NRSP has designed and implemented all programs through a gender lens.

To strengthen its institutional commitment, NRSP adopted a consultative process for regularly updating its Gender Mainstreaming Policy. Initially approved by the Board of Directors in 2004, the policy is continuously revised based on field experience and emerging best practices. Key milestones include the 2007 review—which introduced exposure visits and gender sensitization workshops—and the development of Participatory Gender Action Plan in 2008.

In 2016, the policy was further revised to reflect evolving global standards, including GCF guidelines, and to enhance the integration of gender perspectives in climate change and disaster risk reduction. The updated policy was approved by the Board in 2017.

This Gender Mainstreaming Policy provides a shared framework for NRSP staff, partners, and donors to collectively advance inclusive, equitable, and resilient development, reflecting NRSP's commitment to gender equality and inclusion.

NRSP's Vision of Gender Mainstreaming

The National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) recognizes **Gender as a cross-cutting theme** that must be systematically integrated across all stages of programme planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation—including in contexts such as disaster preparedness and response. NRSP adopts a holistic and inclusive approach to gender mainstreaming, beginning with an initial socioeconomic and gender-responsive assessment that guide the design of evidence based and equitable programme.

NRSP's gender mainstreaming policy is to support the achievement of humane governance in order to reduce poverty, achieve gender equality and ensure sustainable humane development. NRSP believes that its efforts to reduce poverty cannot achieve their full potential unless the organization addresses the constraints that limit the capabilities of the marginalized men and women to improve their standard of living and quality of life. Key aspects of this are:

- 1) Recognizing and harnessing the full potential of rural men, women, girls, boys, single/divorced women, elderly, handicapped, orphans, minorities and transgender etc.
- 2) Increasing their productive capacity
- 3) And reducing barriers limiting their participation in society.

NRSP acknowledges Gender Mainstreaming a means of consciously raising the visibility and support to women's (a majority in among the marginalized segments) contributions to poverty alleviation. This is different from assuming that women will benefit equally from gender-neutral development intervention. NRSP is committed to encourage gender justice.



NRSP also acknowledges that Discrimination at the work place can be passive i.e not providing conducive environment/facilities for women or their exclusion from professional discussions on "Social Grounds" which hinder their exposure and limit their capacity as professionals. Active Discrimination takes place if women are deliberately excluded from recruitment, job security or promotion based on their being women. As a policy matter NRSP will strive to increase women participation in the Board besides keeping and issuing gender disaggregated data of all interventions with actions to ensure this at all levels.

The Guiding Principles

NRSP's policy on gender mainstreaming is guided by the following principles;

a) Gender Integration

NRSP realizes that addressing gender inequality as a crosscutting theme requires that the marginalized segments & women's views, perceptions, needs and aspirations shape the development agenda as much as those of men.

b) Diversity and intersectionality

Gender equality requires recognition that every policy, program and project affects the marginalized segments, women and men differently. While diversity is often used in reference to race, ethnicity, and gender, we embrace a broader definition of diversity that also includes age, national origin, religion, disability, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. These factors combine to either enhance or limit a person's access to resources, opportunities, voice, and decision-making power. By applying an intersectional lens, NRSP ensures that the most marginalised groups are not only included in development processes but also able to influence them.

c) Partnership between women and men

Partnership between men and women is inevitable to enlarge choices. It involves working with men, women from different segments, minorities & other downtrodden communities e.g those assigned menial jobs to bring about changes in attitudes, behavior, roles and responsibilities at home, in the workplaces, communities and the society at large.

d) Empowerment and Agency

Empowerment enables the marginalized and the decision-making women, men & transgender to identify unequal power relations and unequal access to and control over resources and the implications of unequal power relations for a prosperous society. Empowerment begins with consciousness raising and leads to self-realization e.g capacity building and confidence building of women/ marginalized to become agents of change instead of victims. The link between Gender Policy & ESSF for a Baseline will ensure response to need assessment specifically related to Climate Change Issues. Drivers of Change can be identified in this manner.

e) Gender Equality/Equity: an effort to promote sustainable humane development

Achieving gender equality does not mean that women become the same as men or the vulnerable follow the same pattern and exploit the uninformed / marginalized after attaining awareness and empowerment. Rather, it is a conscious effort to ensure that one's rights or opportunities do not depend



on being man woman or rich or poor. NRSP is aware that its efforts and contributions to poverty reduction must be coupled with actions to address Climate Change issues and eliminate gender inequalities so that impacts can be measured in order to promote sustainable humane development.

f) Do No Harm

All NRSP interventions must apply a “do no harm” lens to avoid reinforcing gender stereotypes, exacerbating power imbalances, or placing women and marginalized individuals at greater risk. Safeguarding measures will be embedded in all programs to prevent abuse, exploitation, or unintended harm—especially in crisis and climate-affected contexts.

g) Zero tolerance

NRSP’s policies prohibit any behavior on the part of an NRSP employee which constitutes any form of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, and sexual violence towards any other staff member, client, beneficiary, or other individual participating in any NRSP activity. Retaliation for reports of sexual misconduct is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Sexual misconduct and/or retaliation of any kind will result in termination of employment. For the purposes of this policy, (NRSP) employees include regular/ project staff, volunteers, interns’ consultants, temporary employees, or temporary contractors.

h) Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (SEAH)

NRSP upholds a **zero-tolerance policy** towards all forms of sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment. Preventing SEAH is integral to promoting gender equality and protecting the dignity, safety, and rights of all individuals—especially women, children, and marginalized groups.

NRSP has also adopted **AASHA Code** (Alliance against Sexual Harassment) since 2010 and trained its staff and inquiry Committee Members besides arranging a “briefing” for the Board by Mehrgarh, to discourage Sexual Harassment at the Work Place.

NRSP ensure

- i. Implementing the AASHA Code of Conduct and SEAH protocols;
- ii. Training staff, partners, and community stakeholders on SEAH prevention;
- iii. Establishing safe, confidential, and accessible reporting and redressal mechanisms; and
- iv. Ensuring accountability through investigation and disciplinary action in all cases of SEAH

i) Commitments

By adopting a gender-sensitive approach, the NRSP commits to contributing to gender equality, as enshrined in national constitutions and international agreements, and other human rights agreements.

The NRSP thereby also commits to:

- Understand the sociocultural factors underlying climate change-exacerbated gender inequality, and the potential contribution of women and men to societal changes in order to build resilience to, and the ability to address, climate change;
- Adopt methods and tools to promote gender equality and reduce gender disparities in its climate funding; and



- Measure the outcomes and impacts of its activities on women and men's resilience to climate change
- NRSP integrates gender-responsive approaches across all programmes and projects. Ensuring equitable participation, access, and benefit-sharing is central to NRSP's mission for sustainable and inclusive development
- NRSP committed to providing a work environment that is free of discrimination and unlawful harassment. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's sex, race ethnicity, age, religion, or any other legally protected characteristics are not acceptable

The Goal and Objectives of NRSP's Gender Mainstreaming Policy

The Goal: The goal of NRSP's gender mainstreaming policy is to support the achievement of humane governance in order to reduce poverty, achieve gender equality and ensure sustainable humane development.

Objectives: From this goal, NRSP derives the following objectives;

- To integrate gender equality concerns into policies, planning, programming, implementation and evaluation of activities in all areas including environment, climate change, gender digital divide and peace building.
- To highlight and value similarities and differences instead of making them the same.
- To develop institutional mechanisms (organizational structures, culture to not just strive for equal numbers but equal recognition and status) and sector specific strategies to carry forward the gender integration process.
- To establish linkages with other RSP's, and governmental and non- governmental organizations striving to achieve gender equality, peace & disaster risk reduction through a gender perspective.
- To show practice non-discriminatory in terms of benefits and remuneration for both men and women beneficiaries and employees; during implementation of all programmes/ projects to be implemented by NRSP (applicable of all relevant programmes/manuals of NRSP including Social Mobilization, Microfinance and Enterprise Development, Social Sector Services, Physical Infrastructure and Technology Development, Environment and Natural Resource Management and Social and Human Protection).

Scope of Gender policy

The policy serves as a living document, adaptable to evolving gender challenges, national laws, international commitments, and organizational learning. It reinforces NRSP's vision of inclusive, equitable, and sustainable rural development. The NRSP applies its gender policy to all its climate mitigation and adaptation activities, whether implemented by partners, communities and executing entities This Gender Policy document serves as a strategic and operational guide to support the Board of Directors (BoD), senior management, and all programme units of the National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) in institutionalizing gender equality across its organizational culture, systems, and development interventions. It aims to formalize NRSP's commitment to gender mainstreaming by embedding inclusive principles into policy-making, planning, implementation, and monitoring processes.



Purpose of Gender Policy

- a) **Establish a comprehensive gender mainstreaming framework** approved by the Board of Directors. This framework outlines strategic directions for integrating gender across all levels of NRSP operations, including the development of gender-sensitive policies, assignment of roles and responsibilities, measurement of impact, and continuous learning and improvement through policy reviews and adaptations.
- b) Ensure gender perspectives are embedded within NRSP's broader risk management architecture, including operational, social, and reputational risks. The policy ensures that gender risks are identified, assessed, and mitigated proactively. It also defines risk tolerance thresholds in relation to gender outcomes and allows for adaptability as programs evolve.
- c) Guide the development of context-specific gender-responsive tools and operational approaches that reflect the diverse needs of NRSP's clientele, lending methodologies, programme areas, and social performance goals.

Responsibility and Implementation

The Board holds the ultimate responsibility for approval of gender related policies. The Gender, Ethics and Appeals (GEA) Committee will oversee development and implementation of gender related policies and standard operating procedures and manuals.

The senior management both at head office and regional level is accountable for dissemination, implementation, and compliance of approved policies and procedures.

The gender section will coordinate with head office and regional teams for implementation, monitoring and reporting to donor, regulators and partner organizations. Whereas Compliance and Risk departments will conduct assessments and formation of gender action plans in consultation with gender section for risk mitigation and presentation to BOD RMFC for approval.

Confidentiality

The contents of this Policy document are proprietary to NRSP and are intended for internal distribution only. No portion of this document may be reproduced in any form without the written permission of the authority.

Accountability

The NRSP accounts to its Board for gender and climate change results and outcomes, and reports annually in a transparent manner. Qualitative and quantitative gender monitoring, impact, and outcome indicators are included in the Gender Action Plan.

NRSP's entities and implementing partners will be required to meet the NRSP's gender policy. They will also be required to have policies, procedures and competencies in place with which to implement the NRSP's gender policy.

Gender-related complaints and grievances that may occur in projects and programmes are processed through the NRSP's Grievance redress mechanism.



Management and staff are responsible for delivering gender results, with accountability integrated into HR, procurement, and other administrative policies.

Competencies

The NRSP strives to reach gender balance in key advisory and decision-making bodies, including in the appointments of its Board members and staff.

The NRSP commits to knowledge generation as experience is gained on gender and climate change. It also commits to capitalize on knowledge and expertise gained from other organizations. Such knowledge is to be used to strengthen the competencies of all stakeholders.

Resource Allocation

NRSP allocates resources across all sectors to promote gender equality, women's empowerment, and the prevention of Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (SEAH). Projects and programmes are designed to address gender inequalities, ensure gender-sensitive solutions, and enable equitable participation and benefits for women, men, and marginalized groups.

NRSP also prioritizes gender-responsive approaches in climate change mitigation, adaptation, and readiness. Where specific gender gaps exist, funds are targeted to support women-focused initiatives

Knowledge generation and communications

As a learning institution, NRSP will document the experience and knowledge that it will acquire from the implementation of its gender policy and action plan. In particular, it will seek to identify good practices from countries and entities/partners. At the same time, it must tap into the considerable knowledge already available on gender and climate mitigation and adaptation programmes and projects implemented by other partners. The NRSP will support knowledge exchange activities on gender and climate change finance.

Gender/ safeguarding related policies of NRSP

- NRSP-Gender mainstreaming Policy
- NRSP-Grievance Redressal Mechanism (GRM)
- NRSP-Whistle Blow Policy
- NRSP-SEAH policy
- NRSP-Child Protection Policy
- NRSP Anti-Money Laundering Policy
- NRSP-Anti Fraud Policy
- NRSP-Conflict of Interest Policy
- NRSP-Employee Code of Conduct
- NRSP-ESSF (Environment, Social and Statutory Framework)

Reporting channel and Procedures for Gender related issues

NRSP has clear and confidential procedures for individuals to report incidents related to Gender. This can include



- NRSP complaint management system¹
- Designated safeguarding focal point²
- Designated Gender focal point (Regional & Head office level)³
- Gender committees (Head office & Regional level)⁴
- Third-party platforms includes:
 - a) Security Exchange and Commission of Pakistan (SECP) Complaint Cell – Contact details mentioned on the main page of NRSP-Website
 - b) Prime Minister's Portal
 - c) In case of Harassment, Office of Federal and provincial Ombudsperson for Protection against Sexual Harassment (FoSPAH).

Operational guidelines

The policy will be implemented throughout the NRSP's administrative and operational processes. Guidelines will be issued for the benefit of external partners. The guidelines will apply to all activities and for which core elements will include the following:

- Determine how the project/programme can respond to the needs of women and men in view of the specific needs/ climate change issue to be addressed;
- Identify the drivers of change and the gender dynamics in order to achieve the project/programme adaptation or mitigation goals;
- Identify and design the specific gender elements to be included in the project/programme activities;
- Estimate the implementation budgets;
- Select output, outcome and impact indicators; and
- Design project/programme implementation and monitoring institutional arrangements;
- Gender equitable stakeholders' consultations with the gender parameters provided in the policy;
- Inclusion of gender perspective in the application of the mandatory project/programme social and environmental safeguards in line with ESSF
- Project screening for gender sensitivity at the various stages of the project preparation, appraisal, approval, and monitoring process

Capacity-building

NRSP recognizes that effective gender mainstreaming requires continuous capacity enhancement across all organizational levels. The HR Manual has mandatory gender training for all staff with refreshers. For strengthen its institutional ability to integrate gender equality throughout programmes and operations, NRSP will enhance its existing staff capacity by engaging relevant experts and

¹ NRSP's complaint management system is outlined in the NRSP GRM Policy. Gender-related complaints received through the designated reporting channels are processed in accordance with the established reporting procedures and protocols defined in the GRM

² Designated safeguarding focal pointed: nominated at head office, with responsibility to ensure the safety, dignity, and well-being of all employees, partners, and community members, as well as leading the implementation of NRSP's safeguarding policies and procedures, including the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), Child Protection, and Code of Conduct.

³ Designated Gender focal point at head office and regional level, responsible for promoting gender equality and ensuring that gender perspectives are systematically integrated into all policies, programmes, and operations.

⁴ Gender committees (Head office & Regional level) are formed as per the guidance of law - Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace 2010, responsible for promoting gender equality and ensuring that gender related compliance.



deploying additional gender-competent staff or focal points, as needed, in line with programme expansion and staffing growth.

Regular capacity-building initiatives—including specialized trainings, refresher sessions and exposure opportunities—will be undertaken to deepen staff understanding of gender concepts, inclusive programming, SEAH prevention, and gender-responsive planning, implementation, and reporting.

Gender Policy Framework

NRSP has established a comprehensive framework to ensure its operations fully comply with national and international commitments of the Government of Pakistan related to gender. The NRSP adopts gender action plans in order to implement its gender policy. The plan includes priority areas in general and NRSP's programme sectors specific. These gender action plans will be reviewed time to time based on field activities, to ensuring regulatory compliance on different notifications and based on changes in NRSP policies and procedures. The revised gender action plans will accordingly be disseminated to all concern for implementation to ensure compliances at different level

This Gender Policy reinforces NRSP's commitment to upholding integrity, transparency, and accountability and ensure compliances at all levels of its work by aligning with the key National legal and regulatory instruments:

- **Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010 and amendment 2022**– Aims to create a safe and dignified working environment. NRSP fully complies with the Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2010 and follow the compliance of law:
 - Formation of Gender committees
 - Display of code of conduct / AASH code
 - Display of committee members name in offices

International commitments of the Government of Pakistan especially the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – Particularly Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, **UN Secretary-General's Bulletin (ST/SGB/2003/13)** – On protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA).

SECP Regulatory Compliance

The gender policy document further satisfies the requirements of Securities Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) Circular 5 dated January 31, 2025 and other notifications being issued time to time.” Through a combination of measures and a dedicated focus on regulatory compliance, NRSP strives to ensure the sustainability and resilience of its operations while upholding the highest standards of professionalism and ethical conduct.

Additionally, NRSP's gender policies and gender action plans are specifically designed to align with the rules and regulations set by SECP for Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs).⁵

⁵ a) Associations with Charitable and Not for Profit Objects Regulations, 2018, SRO S.R.O. 733 (1)/2018
b) NBFC-Regulations-Regulations-2008-Updated-25 October 2021and amendments introduced through SRO1605(1)-2021dated December14, 2021
c) The Non-Banking Finance Companies, Establishment and Regulation Rules 2003 Updated Sept 27, 2022
d) NBFC regulations 2008 update on March 1, 2023, and amendments being made on May 17, 2023.



Regulatory Framework and NRSP Practices

1) Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/Sexual harassment at Work

To ensure compliance to provide legal protection to women under the Protection of Women against Harassment at Workplace Act 2010

2) Patriarchal (system ruled and control by men) Social Norms

NRSP programme area is diversified and working with societies exposes risk of gender and social safeguarding risks against women who do ask for their legal rights and seek social protection.

3) Inclusion of vulnerable segments

NRSP ensure social safeguarding and inclusion of vulnerable segments i.e. women, minorities, disable, poor and ethnic minorities in its all programme activities and interventions

4) Social and economic empowerment

NRSP take focused efforts for women social inclusion, economic empowerment, gender and social safeguarding initiatives

5) Gender responsive budgeting

NRSP will strengthen accountability and ensure that both programme and operational expenditures contribute effectively to gender mainstreaming and inclusive development.



Annex 1: Definitions⁶ of key Gender Concepts

Gender and Sex:

Gender refers to the characteristics and roles that society defines for men and women. It determines how we are perceived and expected to think and act as men and women because of the way society is organized. Gender is a set of roles, which communicates to people that we are feminine or masculine. **Sex** describes the biological differences between men and women, which are universal and determined at birth.

Gender includes

- Roles: What we think men and women should do
- Stereotype: What we think men and women should be like
- Values: What we think is good for men and women.

The roles, stereo types and values are context, time -specific and Changeable as Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man, a girl or a boy in a given context. Other important criteria for socio -cultural analysis include class, race, disability, poverty level, religious or ethnic group.

Gender Analysis

Gender analysis is the collection and analysis of gender desegregated information. Men, boys, girls & women both perform different roles. This leads to different experiences, knowledge, talents and needs. Gender analysis explores these differences so policies, programmes and projects can identify and meet the different needs of women, boys, girls and men. Gender analysis also facilitates the strategic use of distinct knowledge and skills possessed by women and men. Sex-disaggregated data is based on whether people are men or women. It is not gender-based because it is limited to raw data. It is useful to carry out gender analysis and it leads to gender equality. Gender statistics, presents an image of the conditions, contributions, specific needs and problems of men and women. gender statistics have to reflect gender issues, that is, questions, problems and concerns related to all aspects of women's and men's lives, including their specific needs, opportunities and contributions to society. In every society, there are differences between what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman and what is expected, allowed and valued in a man. These differences have a specific impact on women's and men's lives throughout all life stages and determine, for example, differences in health, education, work, family life or general well-being.

Gender Equality: Gender equality means that there is no discrimination on the grounds of person's sex in the allocation of resources or benefits. This is therefore is the equal valuing of society for women and men and the roles they play.

Gender Equity: The term refers to fair measure/ conditions to improve the disadvantaged situation of women and men. Girls and women need to be provided with a comprehensive range of activities/ programs choices that fulfill their interests, needs and experiences. In 1982 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, has affirmed the principles of equity while making provisions for affirmative action programs to eliminate disadvantages. NRSP has also taken affirmative action by focusing on women

⁶ The definitions are aligned with the UN PSEA Guide Toolkit and the Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010



only social mobilization in this regard. Positive initiatives that target specific groups are important because they take into account years of socialization and historical traditions that have created imbalances, subsequently marginalizing sectors of the population because these conditions are accepted as the norm. e.g promoting more women and girls as affirmative action

Equality focuses on creating the same starting line for everyone.

Equity has the goal of providing everyone with the full range of opportunities and benefits – the same finish line.

Empowerment: Empowerment is about people-both women and men taking control over their lives; setting their own agendas, gaining skills, building self- confidence. No one can empower the other person. It the conscious decision of the individual herself /himself. The institutions like NRSP can initiate processes that can nurture self- empowerment of individuals.

Gender Division of Labour: This concept refers to the societal division of tasks and responsibilities among women and men. More precisely, it is the determination of what is suitable for women and what is suitable for men.

Women in Development (WID): The WID approach aims to initiate women specific interventions by targeting women only. Another aspect is that the practitioners tend to forget the role of men in women empowerment.

Gender and Development (GAD): GAD approach seeks to have both women and men participate, make decisions and share benefits equally.

Practical Gender Needs: Practical needs refer to what women (men) perceive as immediate necessities such as water, shelter and food.

Strategic Gender Interests: It refers to interests that often relate to structural changes in society regarding women's subordinating status. The measures include legislation for equal rights, reproductive choice and increased participation in decision – making.

Humane Governance:

Humane Governance is transparent, democratic and gender-sensitive. It is rights-based, pro-poor, promotes gender equality and is inclusive in concept and practice.

Sustainable humane development increases choice and leads to poverty reduction. It is the means, the process and the ultimate end of expanding human capabilities. Sustainable human development is based on empowerment and inclusion in social processes. Its benefits derive from equal access to rights and services. Sustainable human development protects future generations through sustainable resource management and responsible financial management.

Gender mainstreaming

Attention to gender equality is central to all rural development interventions. Mainstreaming gender in NRSP's core programme and Projects means including gender in planning, implementation, analysis, policy-making, advocacy, legislation, research, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Gender mainstreaming will strengthen NRSP's ability to alleviate rural poverty.

**Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (SEAH)**

The SEAH term addressing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (SEAH). This important in safeguarding from inappropriate and harmful behavior, particularly in workplaces, and organizations that interact with vulnerable populations.

NRSP encompasses to prevent, address, and respond to incidents of sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment within NRSP or with external stakeholders (such as community beneficiaries, clients, or the vendors). It sets clear standards of conduct and outlines procedures for reporting, investigating, and resolving SEAH-related incidents.

Sexual exploitation:

Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from the sexual exploitation of another

Examples:

- An employee gives special benefits to a beneficiary because they had sex
- An employee has sex with a temporary contractor with the promise that it will lead to her being given a permanent job.

Sexual abuse:

Actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions

Examples:

- A female employee is sexually assaulted by a senior government official who visits the project
- A senior manager rapes an employee, who does not resist as she fears being fired

Sexual harassment:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours & other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that interferes with work, or is made a condition of employment, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment in connection with a Fund-related activity

Examples:

- A community member makes sexual gestures at a female employee while she is interviewing him as part of a community consultation exercise
- A project worker emails unwanted sexual pictures to a colleague
- An employee repeatedly asks a colleague on a date, despite her saying no each time

Victim-Centered Approach:

NRSP gender policy prioritizes the safety and well-being of victims/survivors, ensuring that they have access to appropriate support and resources.



NRSP -Gender Action Plan

To operationalize its Gender Mainstreaming Policy, NRSP will adopt a **Gender Action Plan** that defines clear priorities and interventions, both organization-wide and within sector-specific programmes. This plan will serve as a roadmap to institutionalize gender equality across all layers of NRSP's development agenda.

Key features of the Implementation:

- Identification of priority thematic areas relevant to NRSP's mandate, including rural livelihoods, health, education, disaster risk reduction, and climate resilience;
- Specific gender targets and indicators aligned with national and international development frameworks;
- Capacity-building of staff and community institutions to implement and monitor gender-integrated strategies;
- Engagement of internal and external stakeholders to ensure accountability, transparency, and shared ownership of the gender agenda.

The Gender Action Plan are linked with its annual planning and will be accordingly reviewed and updated, enabling NRSP to launch targeted activities, evaluate progress, and refine strategies based on field learning and feedback. This phased approach allows for adaptive management and continuous improvement of gender mainstreaming effort

The purpose of the gender action plan is to provide a time-bound framework within which to operationalize the gender policy. Implementation of the gender action plan will provide NRSP and all implementation partners, with the tools and processes in order to achieve gender sensitivity in all areas within the NRSP's mandate.



Gender Action Plan in General for all NRSP's Programme

The following are the key elements of the Gender Action Plan. Programme-specific sectors include additional elements and indicators, as applicable. Gender Action Plans

Area of Focus	Gender Action Plan
General	
Gender Mainstreaming	Mainstream gender at policy, field, external, and community institutes levels
Project Design	Address specific needs of men and women in design; include climate resilience and low emissions
Resource Allocation	Ensure equitable distribution and avoid gender-based exclusion
Staff Development	Increase women staff exposure to Gender Mainstreaming and regulatory compliance trainings
Gender Policy Alignment	Align project design with gender policy, ESSF, regulatory compliance and climate policies
Office Practice	Display AASHA Code in field offices
Monitoring	Include gender analysis in internal audits; monitor through Regional Programme Planning Meetings
Review	Require review from Gender & Development Unit before project approval
Implementation Support	Place gender trainers and professionals at regional levels reporting to Gender Department
Gender Training	Mandatory gender training for staff of F/A, MEDP, PITD, MER, IT, ENRM, SSS
Capacity Building	Allocate resources for gender capacity building at all tiers
Budget	Ensure gender budgeting is included in financial audits
Accountability	Ensure accountability for gender and climate outcomes
Climate Initiatives	Fund gender-focused climate change adaptation and mitigation projects
Governance	Present gender related work in board meetings
Workplace Environment	Create a women-friendly work environment



Sector Wise Elements of Gender Action Plan	
Microfinance & Enterprise Development	
Product Design	Assess MF products from a gender lens to improve responsiveness
Lending Policy	Include non-discrimination clause in credit manuals and ensure regulatory gender compliances
Social Mobilization Strategy	
Women's Role	Recognize and encourage women activists, and focus on formation of women community institutions
Gender Analysis	Use programme introductions to conduct gender-sensitive situational analysis
Information Collection	Collection and analysis of data in terms of women participation at all levels
Human Resource Development (HRD)	
Induction	Conduct mandatory gender sensitization for new staff
Community Trainers	Train women office bearers as Community Resource Persons (CRPs) for community level trainings
Staff Training	Focus on training of staff on gender mainstreaming and gender specific regulatory compliance
Staff Exit	Mandatory exit interviews for departing female staff
Office Facilities	Arrange support for women in all office's facilities
Skills Development	Train young women professionals in tech, admin, logistics
Policy Review	HR policies review for gender-sensitive
Follow-up	Monitor gender mainstreaming across all levels
Training Agendas	Include gender sessions in all trainings
Gender in PMM	Track and sharing of gender-related metrics in PMM: staff %, training % and other metrics
Environment and Natural Resource Management (ENRM)	
Participation	Ensure set % of women in NRM workshops and other interventions
Inclusive Design	Target interventions for poor women, minorities, transgender, disabled, youth



Social Sector Services	
Awareness	Promote gender-based awareness on water, sanitation, immunization, education
Literacy Programs	Design gender-sensitive adult, financial, and climate literacy programs
Monitoring, Evaluation, Research (MER)	
Project Review	Apply a gender checklist to revise methodologies, logistics, and targets
Impact Assessment	Budget for gender-sensitive impact assessments
Bottlenecks & Planning	Analyze existing interventions to address gender-related gaps during planning
System Review	Review administrative, financial, HR systems from a gender lens