

SAHAKARYA Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy

The **Goal** of the SAHAKARYA gender equity and social inclusion framework is to promote *greater equality between women and men as well as between social groups, and to support the empowerment of women and the socially disadvantaged.*

The desired result is *increased social and economic equality of women and disadvantaged groups.*

Objective # 1: Increase economic and social equality within and between households in participating communities.

The strategy will work at two levels:

- 1) Create conditions within the community to raise social inclusion by organizing many awareness activities for every segment of the community;
- 2) Support the empowerment of women and socially disadvantaged groups

Indicators of Objective 1

- Decrease in resistance to women's and socially disadvantaged people's participation in community initiatives.
- Men and women are able to communicate why there is a need for a gender approach to development and describe some of the specific issues.
- Women and socially disadvantaged people are well-integrated into community-level development activities and community-based groups.
- Men's contribution to reproductive forms of labor is increased.
- Women experience greater freedom of mobility.
- Conflicts and violence within the family decreased.
- Communication between every component of the community improved.
- Solidarity within the community is stronger.
- Women and disadvantaged groups perceive they have equal access to improved livelihood options.
- Decrease in economic and social disparity between households.
- Representative participation and increase in the livelihood assets of socially disadvantaged groups.
- Women have greater control over resources and income, and contribute to decision-making in the household.
- People of the "advantaged" groups in the community are more conscious about the social disparities and are willing to address social change

Objective # 2: Empower women and socially disadvantaged groups through effective participation in CBOs, i.e. in decision-making, having access to and control over CBO resources and services.

Through the CBOs, men and women, advantaged and disadvantaged people, will be made aware of human and legal rights in Nepal.

Women and disadvantaged people will be targeted for training to increase their communications, management and organizational skills, and improve their ability to be heard and to contribute to local governing bodies.

The project will promote proportional representation of women and disadvantaged groups in all CBOs supported and promoted by the project.

SAHAKARYA will provide technical assistance and training to CBO board members, especially to women and members of disadvantaged groups, in order to develop their skills to participate in the management and governance of CBOs, and have more influence on the services and resources provided.

Indicators for Objective 2:

- In all CBOs and second-tier organizations, 50% or more of the general members and 40% or more of the board members are women and a representative number of the socially disadvantaged are members and board members.
- Ratio of women to men executives will be 40/60.
- Women and members of socially disadvantaged groups perceive their needs and priorities are being addressed by the CBOs and their participation influence CBO decision-making.
- Operation plans of CBOs and second-tier organizations increasingly reflect the development needs of women and disadvantaged groups.
- Percentages increase of women and the socially disadvantaged campaigning and elected in elections for local bodies.
- Percentages increase in the number of women and disadvantaged people who exercise their right to vote within the project area.
- Percentage increase of people from socially disadvantaged group in the CBOs and other local political bodies.
- Increased perception in the community that women and the socially disadvantaged are well equipped and capable of holding leadership positions and positively affecting government initiatives and planning.

Objective # 3: Improve economic development options for women and socially disadvantaged groups and their access to resources such as credit, technology and markets.

Women and disadvantaged groups will be made aware of their membership right to borrow money from SCOs and training will be provided to identify productive activities for utilisation of loan proceeds. They will also be made aware of their right to access and possess land. Where necessary, technical training will be provided and information related to a specific activity will be transferred.

Women and disadvantaged groups will be actively encouraged to participate in all SAHAKARYA activities.

Indicators for Objective 3:

- Percentage increase in the utilization of loans from SCOs by women and disadvantaged groups and a higher ratio of loans being utilized for productive rather than social purposes.
- Increase in income of women and members of socially disadvantaged groups.
- Percentages increase in the number of women and socially disadvantaged holding land certificates.
- Improved well-being of women and members of socially disadvantaged groups.
- Percentage increase in the utilization of income by women from the products marketed through CBOs and second-tier organizations.

Objective # 4: Address women's and DAG's most urgent practical needs.

Infrastructure and health component activities of SAHAKARYA will address many of women's practical needs. Drinking water systems provide clean water to the community and have a direct benefit on women, saving women from the burden of long trips to other water sources. Smokeless stoves improve respiratory conditions in the household and save women time collecting firewood. Ghattas and mills reduce women's labor and time expenditure. The installation of latrines improves the community's hygiene and health risk factors.

Women and DAGs will also benefit from literacy classes providing them with functional literacy skills. Parents' awareness will be increased regarding the importance of their children's education and nutrition to ensure benefit from future opportunities for the community. Women will be educated on maternal health issues and provided with improved access to pre-and post-natal care. Women's and DAG's access to income-earning activities will be increased, improving livelihood options and opportunities.

Indicators for Objective 4:

- The majority of disadvantaged households in the communities participates in the community infrastructure program and benefit through access to drinking water systems, smokeless stoves, latrines and mills.
- Eighty percent of women members of CBOs achieve basic literacy.
- Women and socially disadvantaged people attending literacy classes feel the skills they have acquired are both functional and useful.
- Child malnutrition and maternity related illnesses and deaths decrease