



## Gender equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) plan of Action

Developed by: MJF Team

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### GESI Integration strategy in MJF at programme, organization and partner level

#### **Introduction**

This gender mainstreaming strategy paper has been prepared based on the enablers and challenges identified during the 'Gender Audit of MJF and Partner'. The paper is the compilation of checklists of key issues and questions that should be addressed to ensure gender mainstreaming. The strategy papers also explaining the understanding of MJF about 'Gender Equality with regards to the 7 thematic project areas. Gender mainstreaming is a process to integrate gender needs in the project cycle management and organizational culture. The gender mainstreaming steps are demonstrated in the papers along with the process of assessing outcome and impact on gender equality. The papers also included a set of checklists to assess the gender mainstreaming at the level of project designing and outcome level which could be used by the field to managerial level staff to enhance gender thematic and operational knowledge.

This paper would be considered as a 'living document' and can be added different issues to and improved over time by the MJF and their partners. Therefore, rolling out the strategy papers, getting regular feedback from the field, reporting and analysis are important.

#### **Why the Gender Mainstreaming is important for MJF and Partners:**

Through the gender audit, the following critical questions have been arising and need to find out the answer at the operational and strategic level. The critical questions are,

- Does the project (s) are promoting the full participation and empowerment of women and the project benefits are distributing equally between women and men?
- Does the project (s) is challenging the existing social and ideological barriers which restricting women and girls from participating in public spaces without any questions?
- Does the project (s) is enabling the social, cultural, and economic environment for women and promoting smooth and independent access to the resources and available services?
- Does the project (s) building the collective social and family level opinion to exercise their rights over their bodies and protection from violence?
- Does the project (s) is promoting women's access to basic needs, knowledge, education, new skills, and actively encouraging their participation in decision-making?
- Does the project developing the knowledge, skill, and support system to establish the women and girl's leadership at the family, social, political, and cultural spheres?

**Understanding of MJF and Partner's about Gender Equality:**

- a. Women and men will enjoy the same rights and entitlements with same level dignity, respect and access and control over resources.
- b. Recognize women's transformative changes to enhance the power to exercise choice and decisions from personal to public arena.

**Understand Gender Mainstreaming within MJF and Partner's:**

- a. Ensuring that all of the MJF and partner's level projects, institutions, policies, and organizational culture are ensuring gender equality by transforming the balance of power between women and men through ensuring access, participation, controlling the power hubs, and exercise the power without any major gender-related challenges.
- b. Recognizing that gender inequality is one of the major dimensions of poverty and the implication of poverty and humanitarian crisis having different implications for women and men while assessing the basic and strategic needs.
- c. Acknowledging that, experiences and capacities of women and men fundamentally shape as per the gendered socialization process, norms and values therefore coping and overcoming ability should not be considered only from the economic aspect.

**Gender Mainstreaming at Program/Project level:**

Gender is not an isolated issue to address apart from the socio-economic, political and cultural analysis. Critically way for gender integration should start from the program cycle management.

**Gender integration at level of Situation Analysis:** *Identify the different perspectives of women and men on poverty issues. Examine gender roles and relations in terms of the distribution of power and resources, and how these are affected by social factors such as age, disability, caste, class and ethnic differences. Ensure data collected is disaggregated and analysed by sex. Identify partners and allies who share Oxfam's gender concerns.*

**Gender integration at Planning and Design level:** *Ensure objectives and strategies address the gender issues identified in the situation analysis. Ensure the representation and active participation of women and men from diverse & marginalized groups in the planning process, and check that their gendered interests are reflected in decisions made.*

**Gender Integration at Project Appraisal:** *Identify whether the implementing organization has gender sensitive policies and practices e.g. staff training, resources and leadership on gender. Explore whether project activities are gender-sensitively planned e.g. does the project aim to reduce discrimination against women and will this be monitored?*

**Gender integration at the level of execution:** *Ensure appropriate participation of both sexes in project implementation. Ensure that participation of women does not merely increase their workload, but means their active involvement in decision-making. Ensure that men understand the reason for this and support it.*

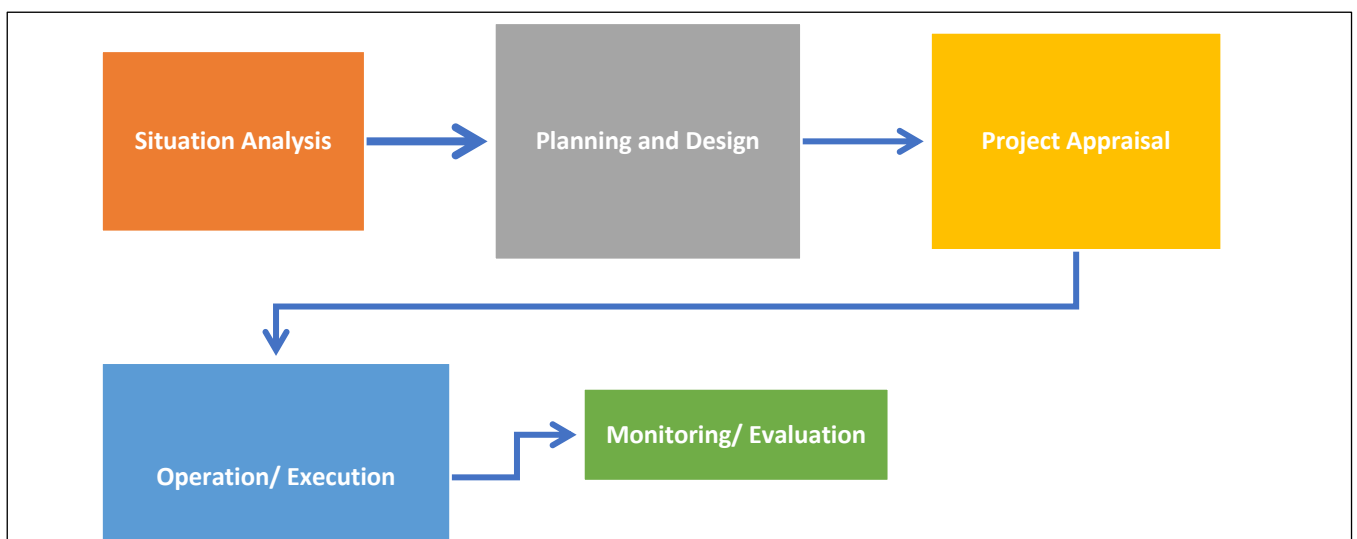
**Gender integration at the level of monitoring and evaluation:** *Identify gender-sensitive indicators e.g. changes in the balance of women and men’s access to resources and decision-making, incidence of gender-based violence, discriminatory attitudes against women, women’s empowerment, and sensitization of men to the need to strengthen gender equality. Evaluate the different impact the project may have had on women and men.*

**Project assessment criteria on gender mainstreaming:**

**Gender Blind project:** Gender not mentioned at all, or categorically mentioned “response will be gender-sensitive”, but no analysis or content, which differentiated according to gender. Policies and programs that ignore gender considerations altogether. Designed without prior analysis of the culturally-defined set of economic, social, and political roles; responsibilities; rights; entitlements; obligations; and power relations associated with being female and male; and the dynamics between and among men and women, boys and girls.

**Gender Aware:** Minimum level of basic gender analysis which focuses on women's roles and responsibilities in isolation. Policies and programs that examine and address the culturally-defined set of economic, social, and political roles; responsibilities; rights; entitlements; obligations; and power relations associated with being female and male; and the dynamics between and among men and women, boys and girls. Here beneficiaries are described by sex, and some sex-disaggregated contextual data is provided Objectives do not significantly address gender inequality. Within the Gender Aware program there are 3 types of approaches we followed;

- a. **Gender Exploitative:** Policies and programs that intentionally or unintentionally reinforce or take advantage of gender inequalities and stereotypes in pursuit of project outcomes, or whose approach exacerbates inequalities. These inequalities and stereotypes are harmful and can undermine program objectives in the long run.
  
- b. **Gender Accommodating:** Policies and programs that acknowledge but work around gender differences and inequalities to achieve project objectives. Although this approach may result in short-term benefits and realization of outcomes, it does not attempt to reduce gender inequality or address gender systems that contribute to differences and inequalities.
  
- c. **Gender Transformative:** Policies and programs that seek to transform gender relations to



promote equality and achieve program objectives by:

- i. Fostering critical examination of inequalities and gender roles, norms, and dynamics.

- ii. Recognizing and strengthening positive norms that support equality and an enabling environment.
- iii. Promoting the relative position of women, girls, and marginalized groups, and transforming the underlying social structures, policies, and broadly held social norms that perpetuate gender inequalities.

MJF as an organisation decided to undertake a systematic gender audit to map to what extent it is being integrated at the level of programme, organisation, partner. The purpose of the audit was also to learn that what is making it work and what needs to be changed. The key problem areas that the audit aimed at taking deeper dive were-

**Knowledge, competencies, and personal commitment of staff towards gender analysis and gender integration are limited:** Besides this staff are having a misunderstanding about gender integration among those who are working with it. Staff working at MJF and partner's level commitment on gender integration is a concern because MJF has agreed that gulf of difference 'What we preach and what we practice at our workplaces and homes. MJF and partner's staff are not having clear understanding on 'Gender Transformational Change'.

**Gender Analysis in projects/programs in the different strategic documents are not being done systematically and equally:** MJF and partner's staff sometimes are not serious about analysing gender within the project/ program cycle management level rather only considering gender-disaggregated data. The MJF team has also been agreed that due to negative attitudes and behaviours towards gender equality in our personal life influencing our professional roles and responsibilities. Inadequate gender analysis was done during the project design which ultimately contributing in the project action plan.

**The social norms, values, and dynamics always partial especially in our society in favour of men and boys are also affecting the development interventions to achieve gender equality:** The project (s) is not always challenging the societal norms and dynamics through the project activities rather reinforcing, the local partners are considering it as the role and responsibilities of donors but thinking somehow it is being imposed to them. The NGOs of MJF do not play a proactive role in integrating gender in their respective organizations. From MJF there is no intensive and adequate role being played to change the mindset of partners.

**Lack of adequate financial and skilled human resources at MJF and organizational level:** Most of the time the partner's and project (s) are not dedicated financial resources to implement essential activities for gender integration such as skill and competency development of staff on gender and gender analysis, recruiting the competent and skilled staff, organized training for targeted communities, special allocation to meet up the gender emergency needs, etc. Also, not enough resources to develop the necessary tools and framework to integrate gender in different projects and M&E processes, etc.

**Partners and MJF project team are concerned on achieving the numeric target of the projects rather consider how gender analysis impacting program cycle management specially the result:** Sometime the thematic project operational team and partners are ignoring to lookback on the gender inclusion issues effectively which are mentioned in the project proposal. It is because the M&E system and tools are not up to the mark which could identify the gender analytical information from the project output and outcome.

The process of staff recruitment and staff development are not fully gender sensitive: It is because the recruitment process is not equitable, gender issues are considered as ad hoc basis in the mission statement of partner NGOs and nothing mentioned how to integrate gender to achieve that mission. Between PNGO and MJF also across the PNGOs there are limited scope of sharing the lesson learning specially from the Gender equity and equality aspects. Also acknowledging the incompetent trainers' pools and training materials within the capacity building interventions. There large numbers of staff



05.	Organize discussion meeting with senior management and governing board of MJF share the findings and recommendation of 'Gender Audit' and present the Gender Integration Action plan for approval and allocation of dedicated resources.													
06.	Orient MJF Staff about the amendments brought in the available due diligence policies and project strategic documents also the action plan													

**Action: Knowledge, Attitude and Capacity development of MJF and partners staff on gender equality**

<b>B.</b>	<b>Capacity - Input: Knowledge, Attitude and Capacity development of MJF and partners staff on gender equality</b>													
01	Review and update the existing training modules developed for the different thematic program and incorporate the in-depth gender analysis achieving transformative changes - may engage external consultant													
02	Based on the revised training modules provide refresher training and orientation to the MJF and partner staff with the objectives to improve gender sensitivity, skills and knowledge to address and monitor the gender transformative changes.													
03	Develop necessary strategies, materials and tools to orient the community level targeted stakeholders about importance of gender analysis, gender sensitivity, skill and knowledge for transformative change and sustainability.													
04	Organize quarterly study circle gender issues (design) and policies linked with different thematic program and gender related concept. MJF may invited external expert to get in-depth views.													
05	At partner's level select at least 3-4 project and organisational senior staff, provide in-depth gender analytical training on the revised training module and set up action plan what they could do in order to gender integration and achieve gender equality.													
06	Based on the knowledge and understanding of the MJF and partner's staff at MJF level dynamic (live) ToC could be developed on gender integration and followed by the team													

**Action: Develop gender integration plan for GESI Integration at partner's and programmatic level by engaging the different support function like HR, Finance, Knowledge Management and Monitoring and Evaluation**

<b>C.</b>	<b>Operational: Input- Develop gender integration plan for Gender Integration at partner's and programmatic level by engaging the different support function like HR, Finance, Knowledge Management and Monitoring and Evaluation.</b>													
SI No	Area of Input	Year 01				Year 02				Year 03				
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	



02	Organize consensus building workshop based on the identified challenges and meeting with MJF program and finance team for allocating budget, objectives, setting indicators from a gender perspective.														
03	While designing any project proposal for the program team ensure essential gender analysis at the context analysis level specially 'Gender dimension of the poverty and access to resources' and set fundamentals and negotiable principles on gender perspective for Donors.														
04	The Gender Integration core team under the leadership of Gender Focal person could develop a strong note and share with the MJF board to ensure a core budget pot with a dedicated gender equality team for ensuring gender integration at programs level and M&E.														

**Way forward:**

Recommendation to MJF is to immediately begin the implementation of the action plan and review it periodically to make mid-course correction and also assess the impact through internal systems of monitoring.