GSE STRATEGY 2021-2024

Transforming Inequality: A Summary

HELVETAS

For Your Information

- The Gender Equality and Social Equity (GSE) Strategy aligns with and complements the HELVETAS organizational strategy 2021-2024.

- This version of the GSE Strategy 2021-2024 is meant as a reference and for orientation.

- The target audience/readers may include directors of departments, heads of working areas, team leaders, country or program directors or deputies, administrative, financial, and human resources responsible, interns, and volunteers - among others, based in our head and field offices.

- This is a summary of the more comprehensive, and 'How to' version for practitioners/implementors and technical advisors.

- Both versions are (will be) available in English, French, and Spanish.

- This summary version can be shared with partners, donors, consultants and other development actors for their information and awareness building, or for other communication/public relation purposes.

- Underlined and in blue words or phrases are hyperlinks to external/public access sites, while underlined and in black words or phrases are hyperlinks to the internal/intranet site only accessible to internal HELVETAS users.

  For information on the practitioner/implementor version of the GSE strategy 2021-2024 or a referenced intranet related resource, please contact us: https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/what-we-do/our-topics/gender-social-equity/gender-expert

  Or for internal users, visit our Pamoja intranet GSE space HERE

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- The GSE strategy considers both organizational/institutional and operational/programmatic aspects as interdependent in ways which reinforce each other.

- The first section focuses on **framing and anchoring** the new GSE Strategy: contextual, institutional, and operational.

- The second section steers and aligns our GSE commitments both organizationally and operationally along a **GSE marker** which helps to identify the type of GSE organization and the type of programs we commit to.

- The third section outlines our **theory of change** and related processes toward achieving GSE systemic and ultimately transformative change.

- The fourth section focuses on expected **organizational GSE related milestones**, and what these translate into in our resources, communication, knowledge, and quality management practices.

- The fifth section focuses on expected **programmatic GSE related milestones**, and our working areas, intervention mechanisms, and working approaches including for whom and who we work with, our primary stakeholders and system actors.

- The sixth section concludes and wraps up the GSE strategy by ending with and making a link to the other **Transversal Theme of Learning and Innovation** (LNI)

- For detailed 'How to' guidance, drawing on good practices and lessons learnt, please refer to the more comprehensive version of this GSE strategy for practitioners/implementors and technical advisors.

**Our vision is a just world
in which
all people
determine
the course of their lives
in dignity and security,
using environmental resources
in a sustainable manner.**

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Section 1: Framing and Anchoring

Contextual Framing and Anchoring

- **Inequality is on the rise**

While poverty reduction has benefitted from important progress, inequalities in income, and therefore uneven access to services, resources and opportunities is increasing, widening rural/urban, rich/poor, gender/ethnic divides. https://wid.world/

- **Instability is on the rise**

Alongside rising inequality, the world is also experiencing a swell in political, economic and climate instability in the form of more conservative regimes, trade wars, and natural disasters. These in turn trigger and compound vulnerabilities to more globalized human (migration/ under employment) and potential health crises (water/food shortages and pandemics) with financial recessions ever looming, with disproportionate impacts on women and vulnerable groups. OECD States of fragility

- **Insecurity is on the rise**

Instability breeds insecurity in the form of more individualistic and nationalistic protectionism, resource conflicts, alongside social displacement, and tensions where civic, gender, indigenous and other rights are increasingly under pressure. Global Democracy Index and CIVICUS Monitor

- **Geo-politics and repressive governance**
  Geo-politics and Corporatocracy are influencing sovereignty and security of countries, giving rise to conservatism, militarization, autocracy, and resurgence of patriarchy, elitism, and radicalization, with particularly negative impacts on women, youth, minorities, and other marginalized groups. This evidenced by shrinking civic space and instances of violence against these groups, many of whom are spearheading movements against injustice, inequality, democratic and environmental degradation. Access to and use of information, data and technology by governments, private sector and citizens is changing reality for better and worse e.g., misinformation and social polarization.

➤ *These dynamics need to be included in, especially in our voice, inclusion, cohesion and women's political empowerment and leadership projects, if we are to effectively shift and balance power and redistribute services, resources, and benefits more equitably.*

- **Mobility and Displacement**
  Economic and conflict related migration is shifting rural-urban settlements, challenging access to services, resources, and opportunities, and confronting inter-cultural values and social cohesion. Underserved, uninformed and ill-equipped people on the move and/or displaced, can also lead to a surge in gender-based violence, criminalization and health hazards including infectious diseases (lack of potable water/ sanitation and waste management; pollution, risks of addiction and unsafe sexual practices or sexual violence e.g., some reports warn of HIV/Aids spike especially among 25–29-year old's etc.)

➤ *These dynamics need to be considered in, especially in our water, food, climate, projects, and our humanitarian response, if we are to effectively enhance resilience of currently affected populations and future generations.*

- **Demographics and Automation**
  In many regions/ countries, the median age is young, with alarming youth unemployment trends, and a workforce gender gap with more women unemployed than men and increasing work informality and therefore insecurity. Dynamic population increases and decreases, are resulting in skilled labor force shortages due to mobility, brain drain and fluctuating fertility rates. Employment automation trends and future of work forecasts provide insight into emerging skills which will be required in as soon as the next 10-20 years.

➤ *These dynamics need to be integrated in, especially in our skills, jobs, income, projects if we are to effectively improve opportunities for women, youth, minority, and migrant groups over the longer term.*

Institutional Framing and Anchoring (Organization)

Our Institutional GSE Values and Organizational Commitments

We are committed to **'Walking our Talk'** in the values we stand for and the gender equality and social equity we commit ourselves to, in the development and humanitarian work we do. This means, we practice what we preach, internally in how we manage our resources be they financial, physical and/or most importantly human.

In complement to our operational GSE policy, at the institutional level, across the organization, we commit to contributing to the continued progress toward meeting our GSE Diamond goals.
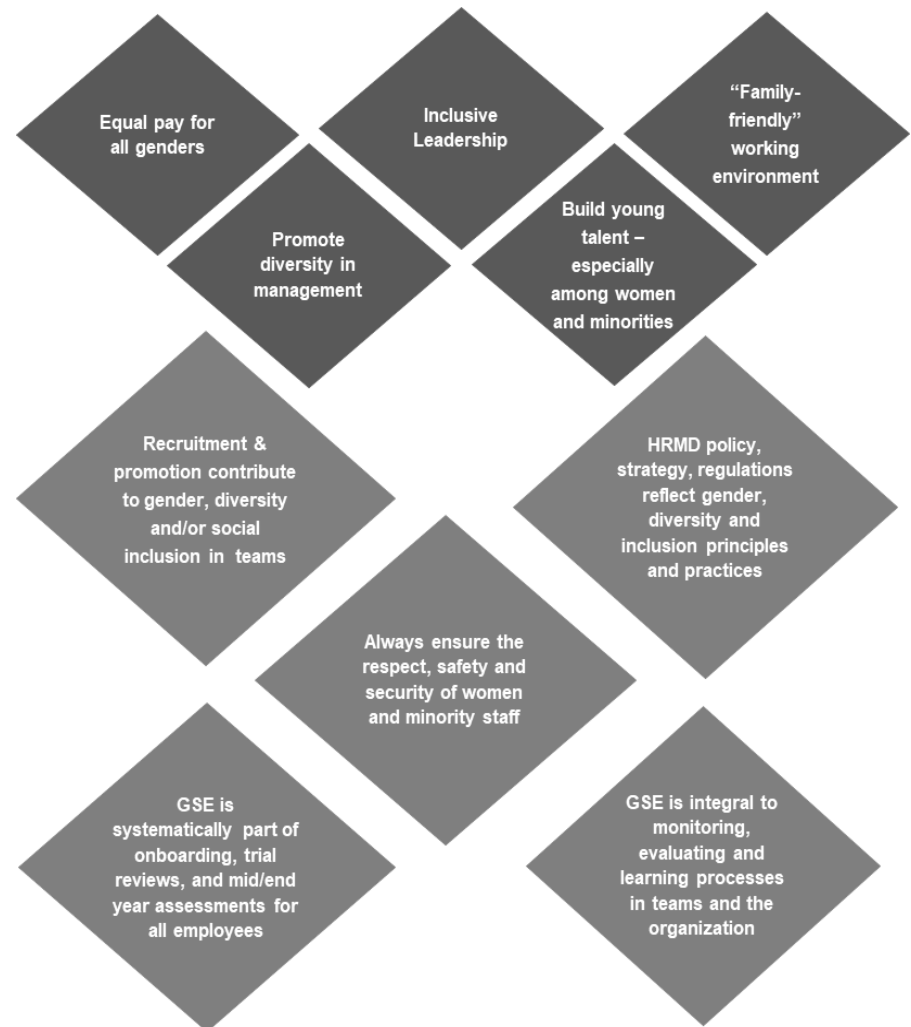
This relies on our leaders, our teams, and our recruitment, human resources management and development policies and practices to support, strengthen and safeguard a working environment which is inclusive, diverse, fair, respectful, motivating, and safe for all.

The GSE Diamonds provide benchmarks and actions for better managing our physical spaces and assets, our financial and most importantly our human resources. Identifying and improving means for achieving our GSE Diamonds is an ongoing process.

Ultimately our working conditions and environment serve to enhance the wellbeing, sense of belonging, opportunity for growth, and optimal productivity of all employees, interns, and volunteers'.

For more information, for internal users, visit our PAMOJA intranet GSE Space HERE .

Our 5 mandatory and 5 added-value GSE Diamonds

Equal pay for all genders

Inclusive Leadership

"Family-friendly" working environment

Promote diversity in management

Build young talent – especially among women and minorities

Recruitment & promotion contribute to gender, diversity and/or social inclusion in teams

HRMD policy, strategy, regulations reflect gender, diversity and inclusion principles and practices

Always ensure the respect, safety and security of women and minority staff

GSE is systematically part of onboarding, trial reviews, and mid/end year assessments for all employees

GSE is integral to monitoring, evaluating and learning processes in teams and the organization

Operational Framing and Anchoring (Programs)

Our Operational GSE Principles and Program Commitments

It is a fact that a person is more likely to be poor and vulnerable if the person is female and/or an indigenous member of an ethnic group, practices a minority religion, is from an isolated geographical area, was born into a low social status (caste, modern slavery), is young or elderly, identifies as LGBTQI+, or lives with a dis/ability or disease.

Poverty tends to be strongly correlated with being socially disadvantaged and marginalized– that is, experiencing discrimination, injustice, and powerlessness. Addressing GSE systematically and systemically, requires a multi-dimensional, intersectional, intergenerational, and intercultural rights-based approach:

Identity: right for all to self-determine and be recognized

Inclusion: right for all to be included and participate without bias, censorship, or fear

Representation: right to space, voice, informed choice for all

Rights: economic, social, and cultural rights, political and civic rights, environmental rights for all.

Access: right to access essential services for all

Equality: right to protection in the law and before the law for all

Dignity: right to dignity at home, in school, at work and in society for all

Equity: right to equity in investments and benefits for all

Peace: right to individual wellbeing, and social cohesion for all

Security: right to personal safety, and social protection for all

And when one or a combination of above rights are not afforded, or protected, then

Justice: right to responsibility, transparency, accountability by all, for all

The 2030 Development Agenda recognizes gender equality as integral to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For this reason, gender is mainstreamed across all goals and is a stand-alone goal, SDG 5. In tandem, SDG 10 prioritizes reducing Inequalities. Our operational GSE Policy principles, and program commitments contribute directly to these two goals.

Our 9 GSE Policy Principles

We intervene in an inclusive and systemic manner, practicing conflict sensitivity and Do No Harm

We involve the disadvantaged and marginalized and consider the needs and opinions of all genders

We address violence, harmful practices and promote human rights

We value unpaid care work, informal work whilst promoting decent employment

We promote inclusive leadership and socially diverse representation in our projects

We integrate GSE in social protection, considering social , economic and environmental safeguards and climate change

We consider and integrate GSE in our partnership processes, agreements, and codes of conduct

We highlight and advocate for GSE in development policies and strategies

We integrate GSE and participatory MEaL in our quality assurance

For more information, and to access our GSE Policy, visit HERE .

Section 2: What type of organization and programs do we commit to?
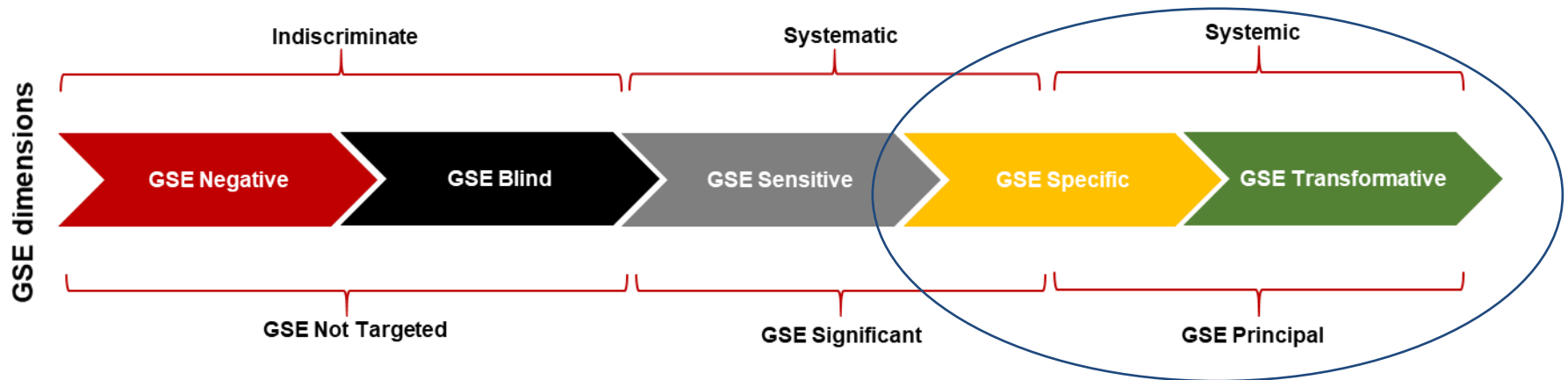
To meet our GSE commitments and considering the increasingly fragile and complex contexts we operate in, we need to be much more deliberate in *the what, why, who* and *how* in both our organizational and program planning, management and development.

Until now we have mostly hovered in the GSE sensitive range, occasionally blind and sometimes responsive to some specific 'practical needs', meaning overall we can mark ourselves as relatively systematic and GSE significant, in both our organization and programs.

Moving forward GSE blind or negative actions/interventions in our organization or programs will not be an option. Being GSE sensitive will be the minimum whilst we commit to enhancing in quality and quality being more GSE responsive and transformative, addressing more systematically the practical needs but also more systemically the strategic needs, of women, youth, minorities and other disadvantaged, segregated, or excluded groups.

The GSE self-assessment relies on inclusive and participatory reflection and inquiry among concerned team members (and key partners) for a more objective and realistic 'GSE marker'.

The below table provides guidance for determining what type of intervention/action we are implementing and/or what type of action/intervention we want to implement moving forward, considering both organizational and programmatic GSE commitments.

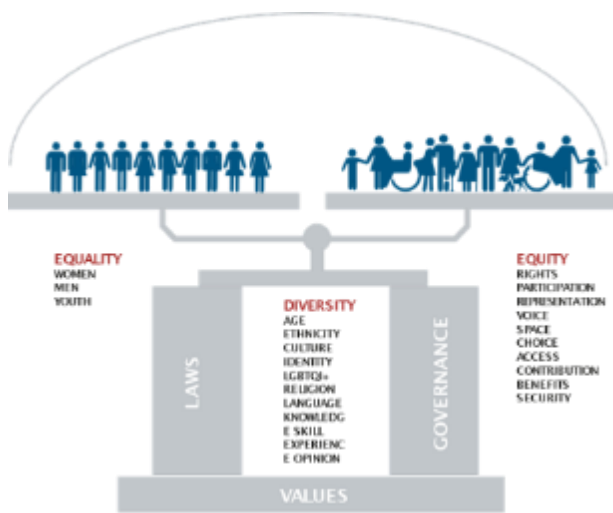| Institutional/ Organization		
GSE Negative/ Blind (Not targeted)	**GSE Sensitive/ Responsive (Significant)**	**GSE Responsive/ Transformative (Principal)**
Less than 30% of staff are women Management is primarily or entirely composed of men, middle age and up. There is an organizational culture of patriarchy, hierarchy, and stereotyping Recruitment practices favor men and maintaining status quo Clear policies and means for mitigating or responding to gender-based or other forms of discrimination, harassment, or violence do not exist, are outdated, and/or not adhered to.	All 5 mandatory GSE diamonds have been identified, are monitored, reviewed, and reported on annually. At least 30% of employees are women, including at management levels. The organizational culture facilitates concrete measures for inclusive and equitable working conditions and environment Policies, codes of conduct, regulations and disciplinary instruments exist addressing non-discrimination, respect, harassment, mobbing etc. Important organizational documents are available in different languages. GSE is invested in budgets, team building, human resources, and capacity development e.g., GSE focal persons GSE is considered in external communications/ public relations	All 10 GSE diamonds have been identified, are monitored, reviewed, and reported on annually At least 40% of employees are women, including at management level At least 20% diversity, in age, nationality/ ethnic and/or other type of diversity (LGBTQ+, dis/ability, etc.) GSE Policies and strategies exist and are regularly revisited to maintain high degree of staff inclusion, diversity, satisfaction, performance, and retention. GSE is mainstreamed in all key organizational strategies e.g., financial, human resources, communications etc. Important organizational documents are available in different languages, including more audio-visual options. GSE is part of inclusive leadership trainings and managerial recruitment requirements GSE is integrated into annual assessments and accountability instruments e.g., annual talks, program/project reporting including in budgets, staff surveys/ mood barometers

Operational/ Programs		
GSE Not targeted	**GSE Significant**	**GSE Principal**
Negative: Creates new or exacerbate existing risks, vulnerabilities, and inequalities, negatively impacting women's and/or other primary stakeholder's rights, dignity, safety, living conditions and/or life opportunities. Blind: Does not consider gender and social inclusion or exclusion dynamics in the program/ project design and management, and runs the risk of reinforcing inequalities, conflicts, or unchanged status quo E.g., Do No Harm, conflict sensitivity, leave no one behind not applied	Sensitive: Considers gender and/or social inequalities, and, includes women and/or socially marginalized groups by at least 30% of people reached overall Responsive: GSE is integrated into preparatory analyses and systematically responds to some prioritized 'practical needs' which are integrated into selected activities/ outputs with gender disaggregated indicators. Ultimately, the project meaningfully involves and benefits women and/or socially marginalized groups by at least 50% of people reached overall	Responsive +: A GSE analysis and its results are integrated into the program/project's theory of change, with at least one key objective and respective outcome/ results which respond to selected 'practical needs' and at least one 'strategic need' which are GSE specific, with quantifiable/qualifiable reporting based on disaggregated GSE indicators. Transformative: Anchors GSE at the center of a Political Economy and Power Analysis. A GSE specific policy change at institutional level is sought; and an inclusive systems development approach is applied, whereby GSE is integrated into procurement, sub-contracting, collaboration, and partnership agreements drawing on GSE principles, with clear red lines, and addressing GSE capacity development gaps and goals are included.

This GSE strategy considers the interdependence between institutional/organization and operational/program intervention strategies, and their respective incremental milestones for achieving sensitive, responsive, and transformative results. See the theory of change and the GSE organization and program milestones sections below.

Otherwise, to learn more about the Gender Policy Marker from which the above GSE marker was adapted, visit the OECD here: https://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/dac-gender-equality-marker.htm

Section 3: Theory of Change

GSE Systemic Change: Laws, Values and Governance

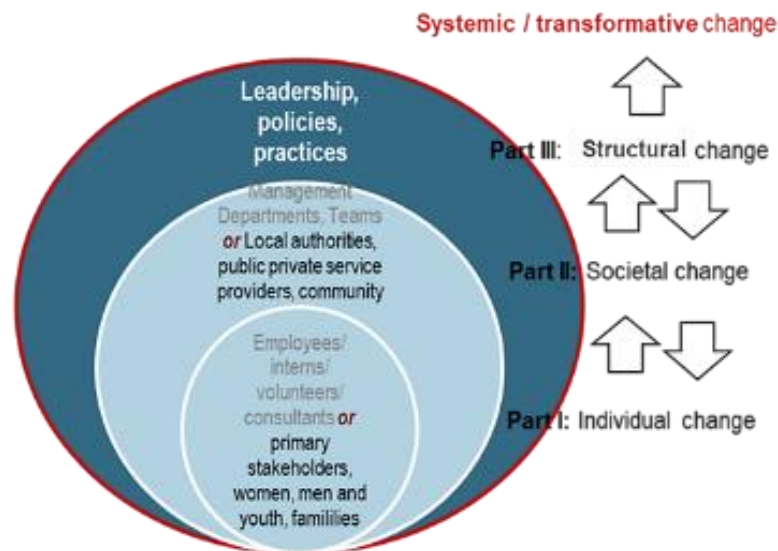## GSE Transformative change: individual, societal, and structural

Systemic change relies on analyzing and integrating three key areas, be they in an organization or program context. These are the organization or country's policies/ laws, the organization or country's governance system, and finally the organization or country's culture and values.

Gender equality needs to be included, protected, and accounted for, **in and before the law**, for all women, men, youth and different gender identities e.g., LGBTQI+. (SDG 5)

Social Equity relies on good governance principles and practices, which invite participation and inclusion, safeguard rights, create spaces where all people have access, voice, choice, and enhance opportunities for all, to contribute and benefit, safely and securely, leaving no one behind. (SDG 10 and SDG 11).

How laws and governance are shaped and influenced by both duty bearers and rights holders, relies on **individual, societal and institutional values**, which either include or exclude diversity, dignity, and basic human rights. (SDG 16)

Transformative change relies on shifting mindsets, behaviors, norms, practices, and rules (formal and informal) at three interdependent levels: individual, societal, and structural.

This is applicable to both our organizational and operational change management processes, which are interlinked.

The changes we seek are incremental, and build on each other, first achieving different types of significant changes to then achieve more principal, systemic and ultimately transformative changes.

The theory of change considers two interdependent levels which reinforce each other, **i.** the institutional/ organization level which frames, steers, and supports (Left); and **ii.** the operational/program level, which implements, adapts, and informs (Right).

The interface between the two levels, serves continuous learning, innovation, quality assurance, and scaling across the levels, through feedback loops and cooperation channels between head offices and country program offices, and/or teams in country, between regions and across programs.

Institutional

If, we enhance and systematize the integration of our values and GSE principles in our human resources management and development, **then** our teams will be more inclusive and diverse.

If, our teams are inclusive and diverse, **then** we will be more representative of the societies we work in and work to improve.

If, we want our teams to be more capable to address GSE, **then** we need to strengthen current and future team and project leaders in inclusive leadership.

If, we want to enhance inclusion and diversity in our teams and leadership, **then** we need to systematize policies, regulations, and practices to be GSE mainstreamed, and/or improved as necessary.

Operational

If, we know how to better identify and therefore commit to a type of GSE project, **then** we can better elaborate GSE anchored theories of change.

If, we enhance and systematize the integration of GSE in the analysis and smart design of our projects, then we can better address equality and equity in our project cycle management (PCM).

If, GSE is better integrated in our PCM, **then** we can better monitor, document, learn and share our experiences and expertise.

If, we can better document and share our GSE experiences and expertise, **then** we can better scale, adapt and innovate internally while contributing to dialogue, informing policies and strategies of other development actors, including the public and private sectors for more inclusive systemic and sustainable development.

- Sensitive
- Significant
- Responsive
- Principal
- Transformative

Section 4: Institutional / organizational milestones and practices

THE PROFILE OF A GOOD LEADER

Has good communication skills in particular good listening

Motivates people through positive energy

Believes in me and gives space to explore and act

Is supportive and encouraging

Who coaches and mentors - someone to learn from

Is generous (with their time, with their knowledge)

Understands when to reach out to help
(support, steer, mentor/coach)
and when to leave alone (self-manage)

Creates an enabling environment

Supports staff, and backs up/ defends when necessary

Has an attitude of sharing a vision and strategy

Is neutral (does not take sides in conflicts)

Honest and acknowledges success of others/ gives credit

Has good delegation skills

Is results-focused and decisive

Understands needs and has skills to accommodate
and drive/steer commo objectives

Leads by example

Who creates leaders (ie. supports others to become leaders
themselves)

*Elaborated by HELVETAS employees participating in the
HELVETAS Regional Inclusive Leadership workshop, Sri Lanka 2016*

Inclusive Leader Self-Assessment

We are committed to achieving the following key interlinked GSE milestones, which are GSE significant, principal and/or transformative, at the **institutional** organization **level**.

At the institutional/organizational level

1) GSE sensitive/ significant: Systematize the integration of the GSE Diamonds in human resources management and development processes at Head office (HO) and country program offices.

   Milestone: By 2024, the **GSE Diamonds are adopted**, tracked, learned from, and reported on systematically every year organization wide, in our head and country program offices.

2) GSE responsive/ principal: Enhance awareness and capacities for inclusive leadership training and development among current and future leaders in our departments and teams at Head office and country program offices.

   Milestone: By 2024, **all current or new** department heads, team leaders, program directors and their deputies, program/project **managers** have been **trained and/or coached in inclusive and gender sensitive leadership and team management** approaches.

3) GSE transformative/ systemic: Continue to monitor and improve our policies, regulations and practices which enhance how we walk our talk, and ensure gender, diversity and inclusion are lived and translated into more retention, more wellbeing, and more satisfaction among all HELVETAS employees, interns, and volunteers.

   Milestone: By 2024, **at least 85% of staff report positive perceptions regarding gender, diversity inclusion, and equity** in their treatment, sense of wellbeing and identity/ belonging in the organization (at both horizontal and vertical hierarchal levels)

   Milestone: By 2024, **GSE has been effectively integrated** (new) or upgraded (existing) **in key financial and human resource management policies and processes**, including related capacity and competency building required.

GSE in Resources management

Human Resources - Finance and Services - Pamoja (helvetas.org)

GSE in our Human Resources Management (scroll down page)

CIVICUS 2020: Diversity and Inclusion Practices and Trends in Civil Society Organisations

GSE and human resources

In addition to the organizational GSE coordinator and senior advisor, there are GSE focal persons in our partner country programs. As part of the new strategy, these will be further supported and more interlinked via:

➤ *Systematic onboarding of all GSE focal persons and all directors*
➤ *Integration of GSE diamonds monitoring and support via HR Regional Working Groups*
➤ *Online and in person GSE training and coaching*
➤ *GSE thematic/ technical know-how exchanges online for & between GSE focal persons via the GSE Working group and topical webinars accessible to all*
➤ *The GSE Hubs will serve to inform, exchange and more systematically 'demand/ supply' GSE knowledge and expertise in and outside the organization*

Additionally, new employees participate in joint GSE orientation sessions, while bilateral sessions are organized with new employees filling in leadership or managerial functions. Advisory services and resources are made available to managers for strengthening GSE in their team management.

Otherwise, GSE remains integral to our institutional human resources management and development policies, practices, codes of conduct , safeguarding, and accountability instruments.

➤ *Annually, GSE is analysed and reported on across the organization and teams, in composition, recruitment, function, promotion, fluctuation and more, by triangulating available data for more objective and insightful analysis and therefore follow up action plans if/where necessary.*
➤ *Mentoring, coaching and leadership programs remain a key tool, in addition to the regional human resources working groups where progress and challenges faced related to the implementation of the GSE Diamonds are shared and troubleshooted jointly among peers, with support from head office level human resources responsible and the GSE Coordinator.*
➤ *Additionally, the GSE Coordinator works closely with the Human Resources team in the revision and development of regulations, and in case of misconduct incidents.*
➤ *The GSE coordinator acts as a person of trust to contact in the organization for management and employees alike and can be a member of/ or act as an advisor to the personnel commissions, PEKO.*
➤ *The GSE Coordinator also interacts with the management board, and with the Board of Directors.*

GSE and financial resources

At the organizational level, the GSE Coordinator/ senior advisor is covered under both Directorate (reserved budget) and Advisory Services (mandate/project budgets).

Looking ahead, Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB), Financial Inclusion (FI) and Financial Flow (FFA) and Cost Benefit/ Effectiveness Analyses (CBA/CEA), can be more systematically integrated into both organizational and programs' financial management.

Building on existing annual budgeting, planning, and reporting instruments, while leveraging related past and current project experiences, opportunities for integrating GRB, FI, FFA and CBA more systematically in our organization and/or programs which are user friendly, will be further explored and integrated.

GSE and physical resources

Sound procurement procedures and management of offices and assets are in place. However untapped opportunities exist to manage these more inclusively and equitably.

Moving forward, adapted solutions will be explored to pilot gender sensitive procurement, greener asset management and consider options for making our offices more accessible to employees and visitors with different mobility needs: Promoting diversity and inclusion through workplace adjustments: A practical guide

GENDER IN MUNICIPAL PLANS AND BUDGETS

Social and democratic, vertical and horizontal accountability, improves efficiency, effectiveness, transparency of resource investments and their management.

The Power of Words

Beneficiary **vs** Stakeholder

Men and women **vs** Women and men

Disabled **vs** Differently Abled

Participation **vs** Meaningful or active Participation

Opportunities **vs** Equal Opportunities

Benefits **vs** Equitable Benefits

Accountability **vs** Mutual Accountability

Ownership **vs** Shared Ownership

Empower **vs** Empowerment

Leadership **vs** Inclusive Leadership

Migration **vs** Safe Migration

Employment **vs** Decent Employment

Value Chain Development **vs** Fair Value Chain Development

Market Systems Development **vs** Inclusive Market Systems Development

Private Sector Development **vs** Responsible Private Sector Development

Governance **vs** Good governance

Policy Dialogue **vs** Participatory Policy Dialogue

Gender-sensitive Communication

Test your knowledge

At the time of the elaboration of this strategy, HELVETAS was and continues to explore how to better integrate more inclusive communication, internally and externally, hence language which remains 'binary' does not intend to be non-binary bias/discriminatory, rather it is an indication of an ongoing exploratory organizational process, and interim, until the transition to the next official strategy period 2025-2028

Manifesto for responsible communication on international cooperation
Strategic Communications - Communications CoP (Community of Practice)
LNI Methods, Guides, Tools, Resources - Advisory Services
ICT4D Home - ICT4D - Pamoja (helvetas.org)
GSE in Communications Resources and Glossaries (scroll to bottom of pages)

GSE in our Communication practices

We are aware of the power of words and images, verbal, and non-verbal communication.

Both in our internal and external communications, be they in person, or online, direct, or indirect, whether we are communicating for development or in an emergency, we commit ourselves to socially inclusive, empowering, gender and conflict sensitive communication.

This means we talk about, and talk with all people respectfully, no matter their gender identity, age, origin, religion, sexual orientation, social, cultural, educational, economic, or political background.

We are considerate of and continually strengthen our interpersonal, intergenerational & intercultural sensitive and non-violent communication approaches.

We adhere to our guidelines and safeguards in respectful, responsible, and safe communication, especially when engaging with more vulnerable groups, and minors.

We support and strengthen our communication experts and focal persons (who in some cases are also GSE focal persons) in their work and commitment to GSE sensitive and responsible communication.

GSE in Quality Management (QM) Practices

2020 Annual GSE Highlights Report

GSE in Adaptive Management Approaches

In our organization as part of our commitment to gender balanced teams, equal opportunities in developing interests, competencies and career paths, and an inclusive dynamic, innovative and productive organizational culture which safeguards life/work balance.

This means,

➢ *Punctual and timely integration of the GSE topic in organizational departmental and team meetings, learning events, and discussion fora.*
➢ *Punctual and timely 'check-ins' between managers and their team members focusing more on wellbeing, satisfaction etc; treating Terms of Reference (ToRs) as a tool for framing, steering and adaptation; enabling opportunities for all collaborators to challenge their comfort zones, explore their interests, and pilot new areas of experience and potential expertise which are mutually beneficial for the employee and the organization, hence contribute to employee satisfaction, motivation, and therefore productivity and retention.*
➢ *Enhancing life/work balance, family friendly spaces and practices in our offices, whilst promoting self-management and results-based management, in the frame of flexible and hybrid working modalities.*

GSE capacities in M&E, accountability, and learning (MEAL)

To ensure GSE indicators, progress, and changes (positive and negative) are systematically monitored, analysed, documented, responsibly and objectively for timely learning and adaption.

This means,

➢ *Annually the GSE coordinator together with Human Resources and management review, analyse and decide on priority course corrections to ensure that GSE at the organizational level is continually progressing*
➢ *Supporting capacity development opportunities to better consolidate, analyse and translate data into corrective actions*
➢ *Enhance capacity and tools to systematize data entry, consolidation, and triangulation for more insightful GSE information and trends*
➢ *Document and share key results and recommendations transparently, and support follow up for effective and efficient integration into ongoing policies, regulations, processes, and practices.*

Section 5: Operational / program milestones and approaches

At the global level

SCSB in Bhutan whereby a sub-granting program supported initiatives which reduced vulnerabilities among minority and marginalized groups including people living with disability or disease (HIV/Aids), and members of the LGBTQ+ community. An unlikely partnership with Bhutan's Olympic Committee resulted in Changlingmethang National Stadium's toilet facilities being upgraded to be disability friendly and more socially inclusive.
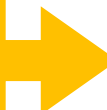
Kemenik in Guatemala, which strengthens women's participation in Local Governance, especially indigenous

MEDII and ACT in Serbia, local authorities and citizen groups jointly plan social development initiatives resulting in thousands of children, elderly, women, LGBTQ+, Roma and other disadvantaged community groups benefitting in a transparent, participatory and inclusive manner.

GSE in our Programs milestones

1) **GSE sensitive/ significant:** integration of GSE analysis from the outset to inform project design and improve mainstreaming GSE in the theory of change and throughout the project management cycle based on what type of GSE project we want to implement.

   Milestone: By 2024, at least 10 country programs implement at least one **social equity significant project** which addresses the political, social and/or economic rights and related inequalities of "left behind" groups (minorities including ethnic, religious, LGBTQ, social caste, differently abled.)

2) **GSE responsive/ principal:** enhance capacities to account for unpaid care work, address sexual and gender-based violence, leverage 'new masculinities' and promote women's leadership and social inclusion as integral to intervention strategies for more equality and equity in project results.

   Milestone: By 2024, at least 10 country programs implement at least one **gender equality principal project**, which explicitly addresses the needs of women, particularly financially excluded or inactive young women, single women (mothers/ widows, w/dis/ability), indigenous/ethnic women, women in fragile contexts, and/or women migrants, IDPs, refugees.

3) **GSE transformative/ systemic:** foster more systematic documentation, sharing and promotion of GSE experiences and expertise internally between teams and countries, and externally with peers, partners, donors, and other development/humanitarian actors, including public and private sectors.

   Milestone: By 2024, at least 5 country programs evidence **systemic transformative changes** in social, economic and/or political inclusion and meaningful participation of women, youth and/or other disadvantaged people and groups.

   Milestone: By 2024, all country programs have implemented **at least one of the above transformative, principal, or significant GSE projects**.

At the global level
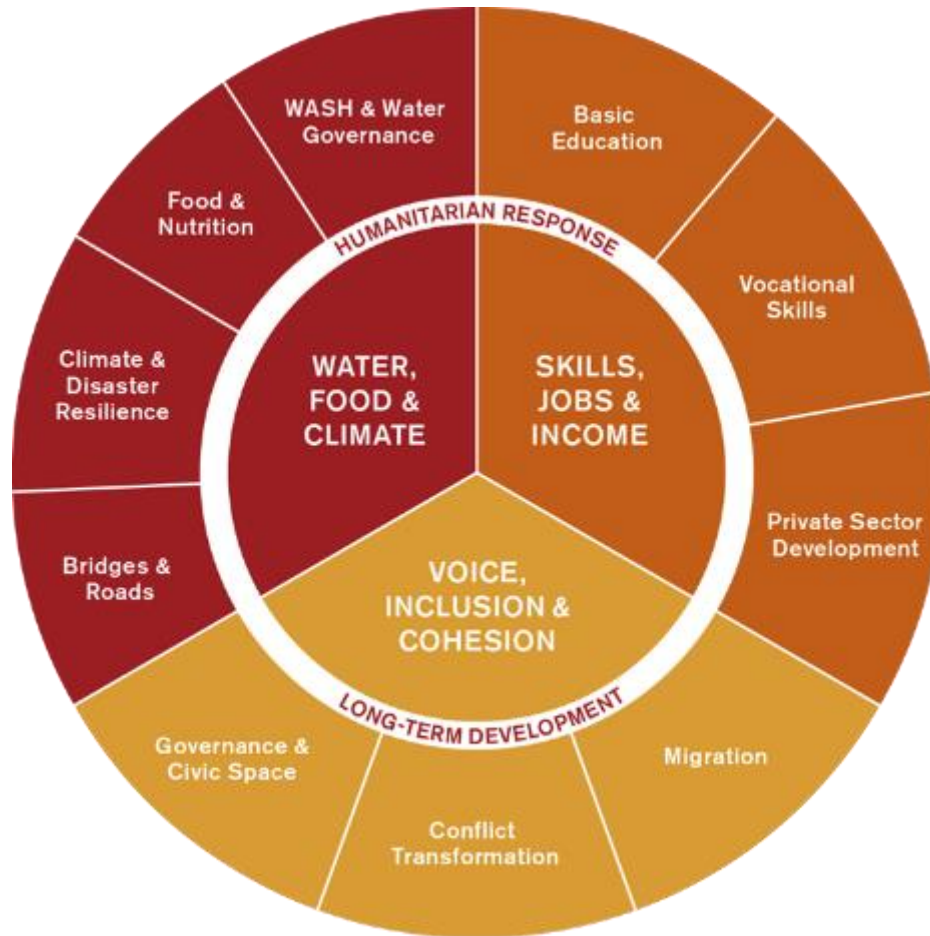
The HELVETAS organizational strategy 2021-2024, includes GSE relevant milestones to be achieved within each of the three Working Areas (WA) and their respective Working Fields (WF).

Below is an extract of the GSE specific and relevant milestones according to each Working Area.

Based on our own and global good practices and lessons learnt, concrete **'how to' guidance for achieving these milestones is included in the practitioner/implementer version of this GSE strategy 2021-2024**.

Not included are GSE in Humanitarian Response milestones as at the time of this new strategy, the Humanitarian Response strategy was still in development.

For more information:

https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/what-we-do/our-topics/humanitarian-response

Humanitarian Response and Preparedness - Humanitarian Response and Preparedness - Pamoja (helvetas.org)

GSE in Water, Food and Climate (WFC)

As part of our commitment to ensure basic **rights and leave no one behind**, especially among the underserved and vulnerable.
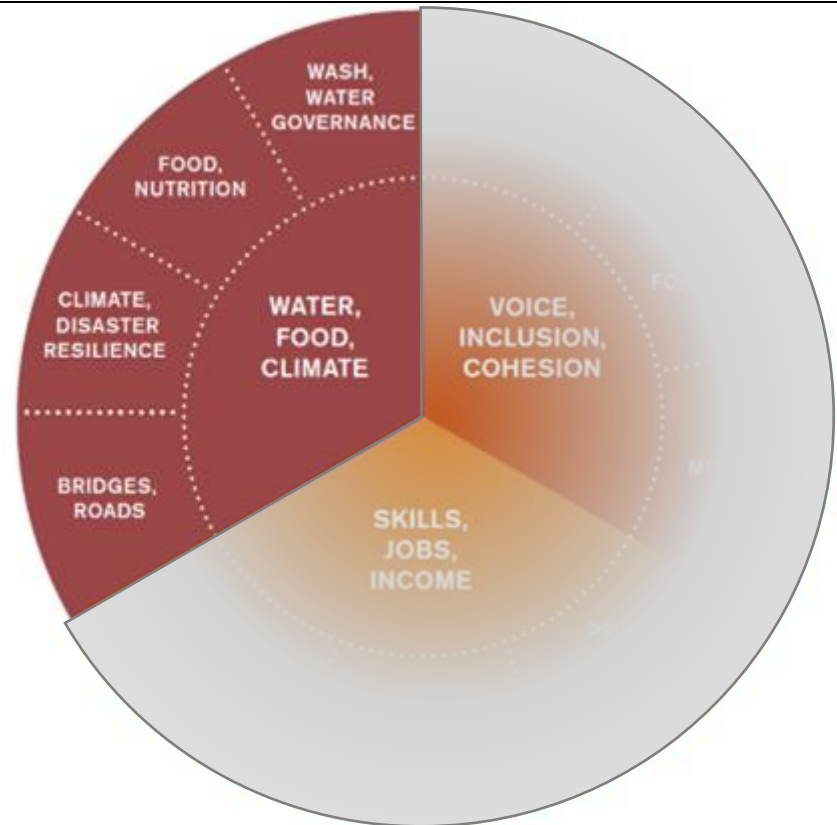
WASH, WATER GOVERNANCE

FOOD, NUTRITION

CLIMATE, DISASTER RESILIENCE

WATER, FOOD, CLIMATE

VOICE, INCLUSION, COHESION

BRIDGES, ROADS

SKILLS, JOBS, INCOME

Milestones (partial extract per HELVETAS 2021-2024 Strategy)	GSE in Water, Food and Climate (WFC)
o By 2024, 1 million people, **of which 550,000 women**, have gained direct access to safe drinking water services, at home, at school and in health centres. o By 2024, 950,000 people, **of which 500,000 women**, have gained direct access to safe sanitation services, at home, at school and in health centres. o By 2024, 500,000 farmers, **of which 250,000 women**, apply more water use efficient farming practices and technologies, that increase productivity and generate other benefits.	
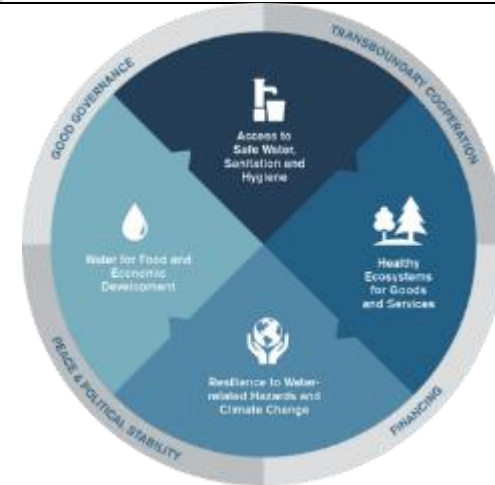
Milestones (partial extract per HELVETAS 2021-2024 Strategy)	GSE in Water, Food and Climate (WFC)
o By 2024, 2.5 million smallholders, **of which 1.25 million women**, have increased agricultural productivity or income based on sustainable agricultural practices. o By 2024, 300,000 people, **of which 170,000 women**, have improved their consumption of nutritious food.	

Milestones (partial extract per HELVETAS 2021-2024 Strategy)	GSE in Water, Food and Climate (WFC)
- By 2024, 1 million people, **of which 500,000 women, the most vulnerable in rural and urban areas**, have increased their capacities to adapt to climate change and/or respond to disaster risks through risk-informed decision-making, planning and improved access to climate finance. - By 2024, 500,000 people, **of which 250,000 women**, have gained secure access, use and management rights over natural resources.	
By 2024, 4 million people, **of which 2 million women** have gained access to markets, schools, and health centers due to the construction or rehabilitation of trail bridges and additional tracks, and access roads.	
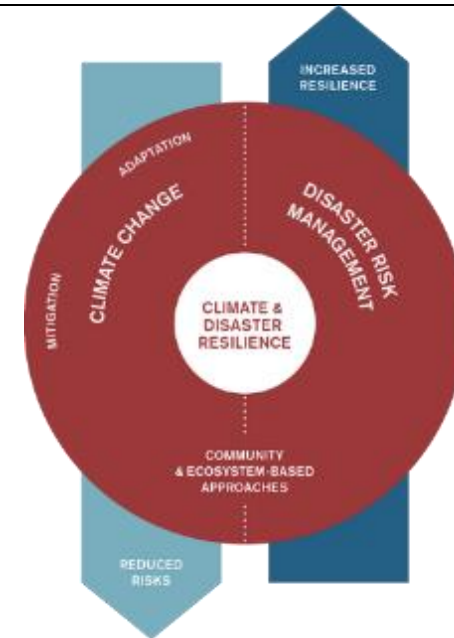
GSE in Voice, Inclusion and Cohesion (VIC)

As part of our commitment to strengthen good governance and access to services vertically and horizontally between **duty bearers and rights holders**.
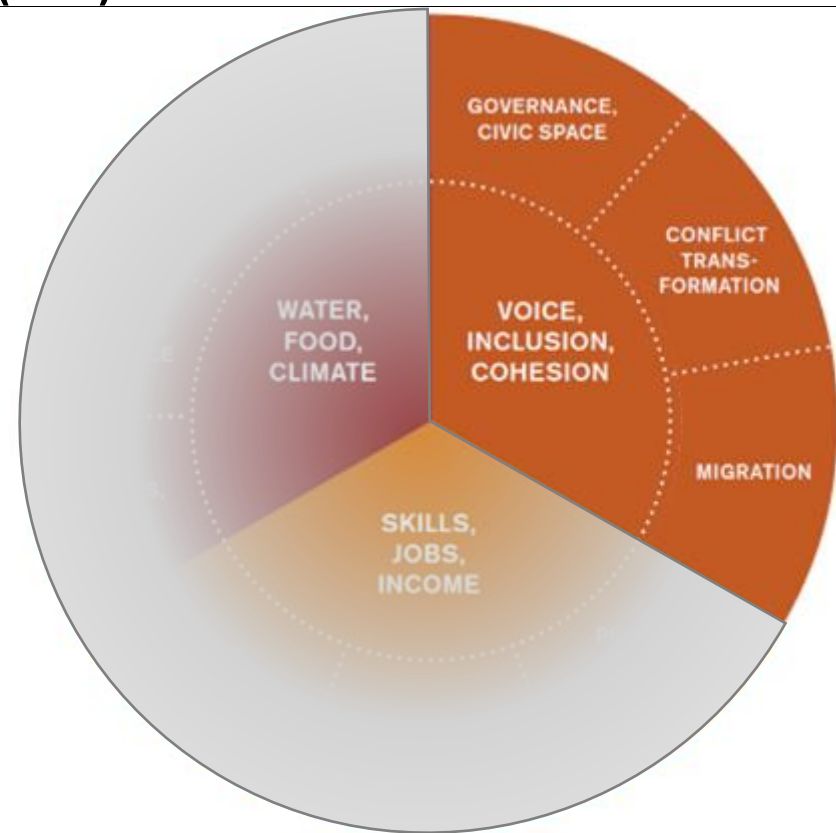
https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/what-we-do/our-topics/voice-inclusion-cohesion
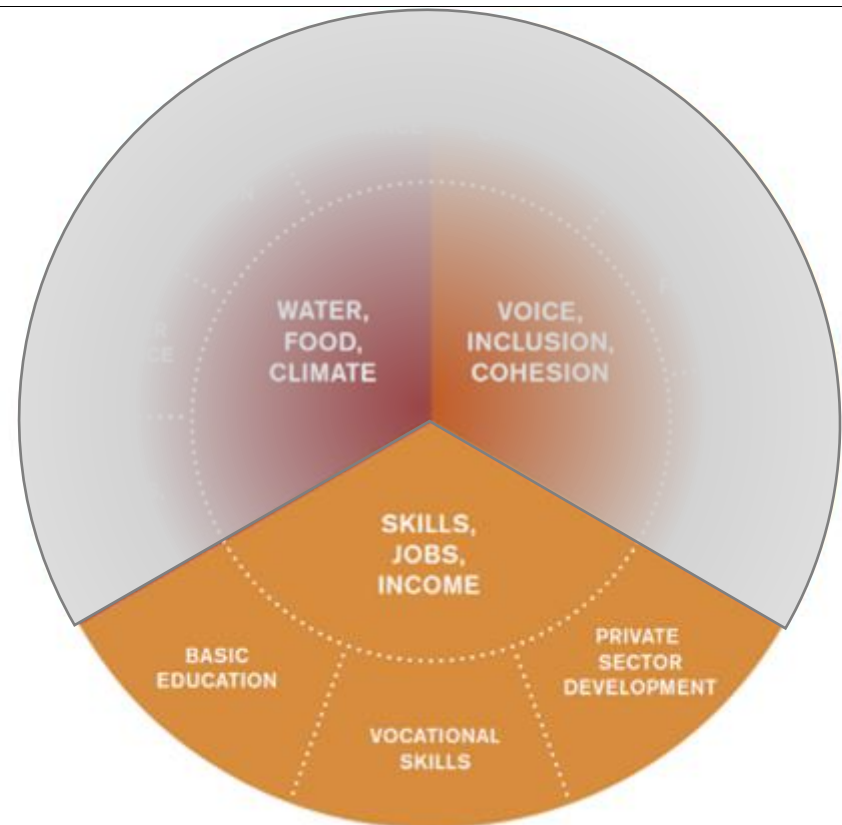https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/what-we-do/our-topics/urban-engagement
VIC | Voice, Inclusion and Cohesion - Advisory Services - Pamoja (helvetas.org)
Click on this link to know more on GSE in Voice, Inclusion and Cohesion

Milestones (partial extract per HELVETAS 2021-2024 Strategy)	**GSE in Voice**, Inclusion and Cohesion (**V**IC)
○ By 2024, 500,000 community members, **of which 250,000 women** have been empowered to raise their voice and claim their rights to accessible, affordable, and quality service provision that especially benefits the most disadvantaged and socially excluded	
Milestones (partial extract per HELVETAS 2021-2024 Strategy)	**GSE in** Voice, **Inclusion** and Cohesion (V**I**C)
○ By 2024, 1.8 million migrants and/or their family members, **of which 900,000 women** have been supported, contributing to responsible and productive migration and mobility of people.	
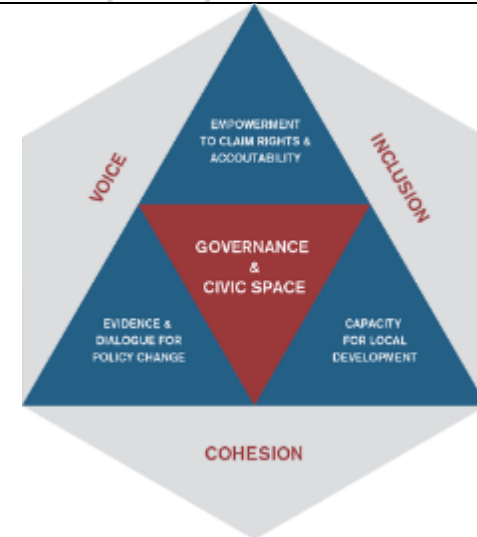
Milestones (partial extract per HELVETAS 2021-2024 Strategy)	**GSE in** Voice, Inclusion and Cohesion (VIC)
o By 2024, 130,000 community members, **of which 65,000 women** have been empowered to analyse and pro-actively address and transform root causes of local conflicts and violence that typically affect women and socially excluded groups.	
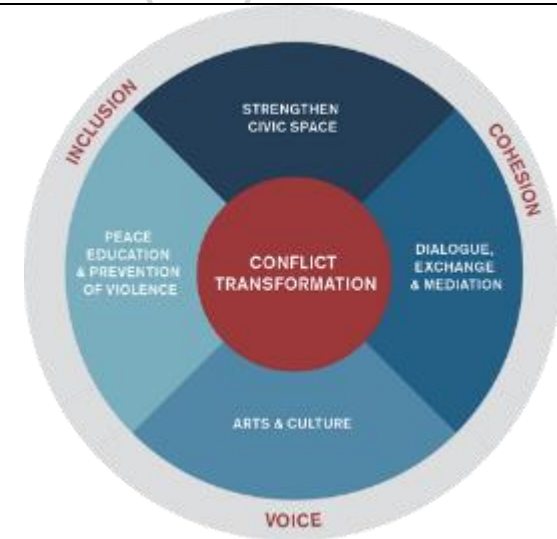
https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/what-we-do/our-topics/voice-inclusion-cohesion

https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/what-we-do/our-topics/urban-engagement

VIC | Voice, Inclusion and Cohesion - Advisory Services - Pamoja (helvetas.org)

Click on this link to know more on GSE in Voice, Inclusion and Cohesion

GSE in Skills, Jobs, and Income (SJI)

As part of our commitment to create new perspectives for **women, youth, minority, and underserved groups**.

Milestones (partial extract per HELVETAS 2021-2024 Strategy)	**GSE in Skills**, Jobs, and Income (**S**JI)
o By 2024, at least 200,000 pupils, **of which 100,000 girls**, have participated in, and at least 80,000 pupils, **of which 40,000 girls**, have successfully completed quality primary and lower secondary education in a school or institution supported by HELVETAS and its partners. o By 2024, 50,000 people, **of which 30,000 women** have successfully completed foundation (literacy/numeracy) and soft skills courses leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.	
Milestones (partial extract per HELVETAS 2021-2024 Strategy)	**GSE in** Skills, **Jobs**, and Income (**S**J**I**)
o By 2024, at least 320,000 people, **of which 170,000 women have participated**, and at least 250,000 people, **of which 130,000 women** have successfully completed a vocational skills development education or training (including further training). o By 2024, at least 125,000 people, **of which 66,000 women** have found gainful self- and wage-employment due to vocational skills development, education, or training.	

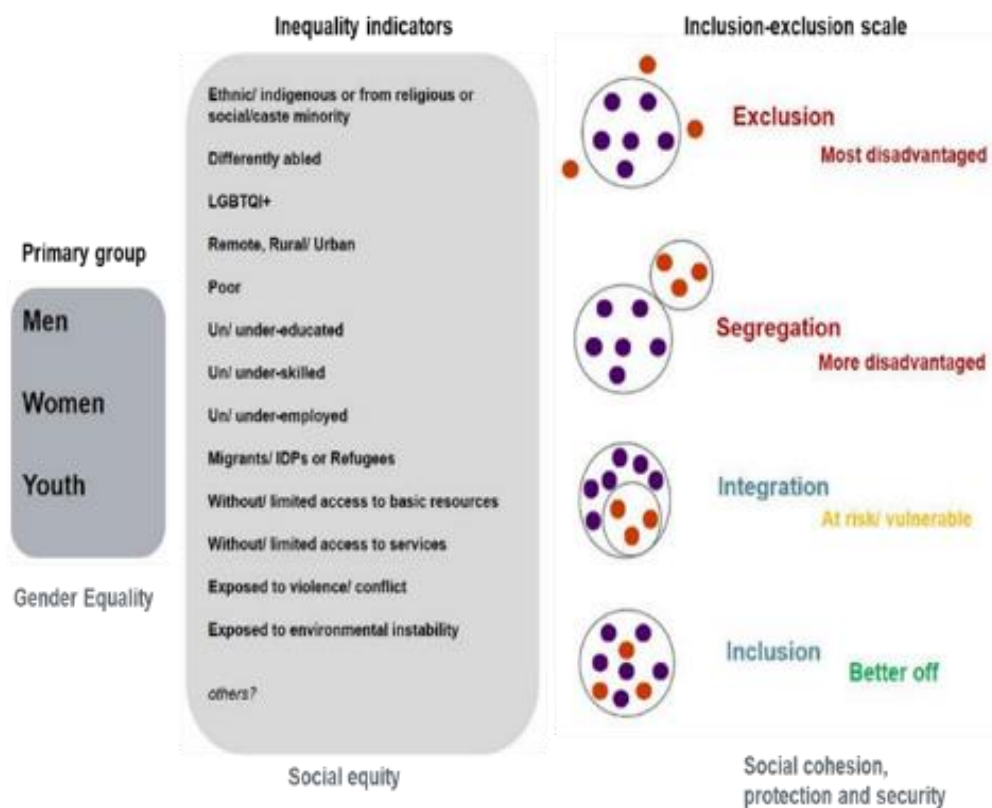| **Milestones** (partial extract per HELVETAS 2021-2024 Strategy)	**GSE in** Skills, Jobs, and **Income (SJI)**
o By 2024, 1.2 million people, **of which 600,000 women**, have been reached by PSD activities. o By 2024, 700,000 people, **of which 350,000 women**, have increased their income through interventions on Private Sector Development.	
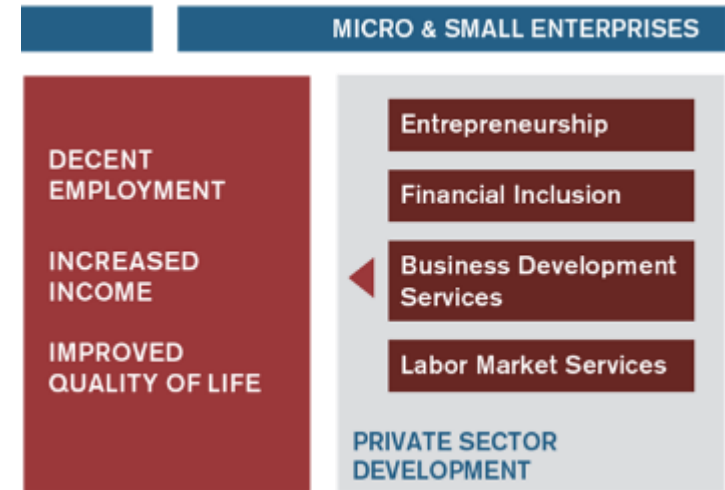
For concrete 'How to' guidance based on good practices, please refer to the practitioner/implementer new GSE strategy version HERE

Operational/ Program Approaches

GSE and our primary stakeholders

Inequality indicators

Primary group

Men	
Women	
Youth	

Gender Equality

Ethnic/ indigenous or from religious or social/caste minority

Differently abled

LGBTQI+

Remote, Rural/ Urban

Poor

Un/ under-educated

Un/ under-skilled

Un/ under-employed

Migrants/ IDPs or Refugees

Without/ limited access to basic resources

Without/ limited access to services

Exposed to violence/ conflict

Exposed to environmental instability

others?

Social equity

Inclusion-exclusion scale

Exclusion — Most disadvantaged

Segregation — More disadvantaged

Integration — At risk/ vulnerable

Inclusion — Better off

Social cohesion, protection and security

GSE_Rapid_Survey_Disadvantaged_Matrix_Tool_EN.pdf

HELVETAS' vision of a just world in which all people determine the course of their lives in dignity and security, using environmental resources in a sustainable manner, means we do not regard the people and communities we work with as mere target groups or passive beneficiaries of development assistance or humanitarian aid.

Rather we respect, value, and strengthen the women, men, youth and all people and groups we work with as **rights holders**, active participants, and contributors to the development we seek to achieve together with them as **primary stakeholders** who ultimately should **self-determine** the transformations we achieve and impacts we incur which will shape and define the quality of their lives.

Hence it is crucial to involve representatives from these groups in identifying the disadvantaged and designing inclusive and participatory intervention strategies which ultimately seek to benefit them.

As a basic right, we promote gender equality among our primary group. Recognizing that these primary groups are not homogenous, we also recognize the differences between and within these groups. Based on analysis, and in our commitment to social equity, we examine human, social, physical, educational, economic, environmental, political, and geographic differences e.g., inequality indicators. These differences help determine the degree of inequality an individual or group may face, based on the number of corresponding indicators identified as applicable.

At minimum 3 and a maximum of 5 indicators for a reliable but not overcomplicated analysis. The cumulative average result positions an individual or group as being, more or less included, to excluded in society. The scale of inclusion versus exclusion provides insight for addressing social cohesion, protection, and security as essential safety-nets, shock absorbers and resilience boosters.

Operational/ Program Approaches
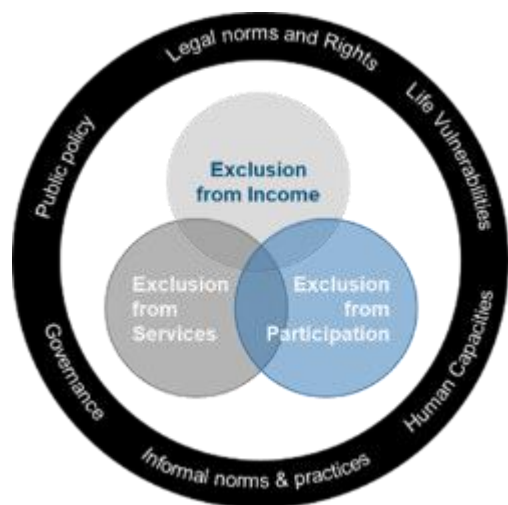
GSE in Project Cycle Management - Directorate - Pamoja (helvetas.org)
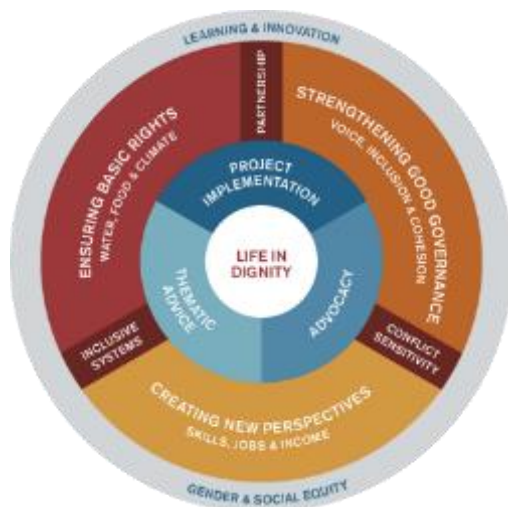
Advisory Services - Advisory Services - Pamoja (helvetas.org)

Advocacy - Directorate - Pamoja (helvetas.org)

GSE in our intervention mechanisms

GSE as a priority transversal topic is integrated in our **key intervention mechanisms**, to effectively mainstream GSE to achieve HELVETAS' more inclusive and equitable development goals.

- **GSE in Project Implementation**

We are committed to learning from and improving our GSE significant projects and aim to upgrade our capacities and resources to implement more GSE principal and transformative projects. (see section on GSE Goals and Milestones)

➢ *This means we will more systematically apply the GSE marker and conduct the corresponding level of GSE analysis, either integrated into other preparatory analytical exercises (GSE significant) or a stand-alone GSE analytical exercise (GSE principal)*

- **GSE in Thematic Advice**

We are committed to strengthening internal competencies to provide added value, strategic and innovative applicable GSE thematic advice both internally and externally across a variety of stakeholders and sectors. For more information on advisory services, and capacity development approaches, please click on the respective links.

➢ *This means that in tandem with operationalizing the GSE Hubs mentioned above, our pool of GSE focal persons will be supported to upgrade and share their capacities, experiences and expertise, while practical resources will continue to be made available via the GSE Pamoja space.*

- **GSE in Advocacy**

We are committed to own and joint initiatives which evidence the benefits of GSE across sectors and in society, contributing to bridging gender and social equity related data, good practice, and socio-economic and policy gaps. This is especially relevant for our GSE principal/ transformative projects or initiatives.

➢ *This means that we are aware of and can leverage national laws/strategies, or regional and international commitments/instruments toward gender and social rights, empowerment, and justice as both a safeguard and incentive when working with duty bearers and rights holders. E.g., OHCHR. For more information click on the respective links for advocacy, and GSE in Advocacy (Scroll to bottom of the page).*

Operational/ Program Approaches

HELVETAS Partnership Space

GSE in Partnership Assessment Tool
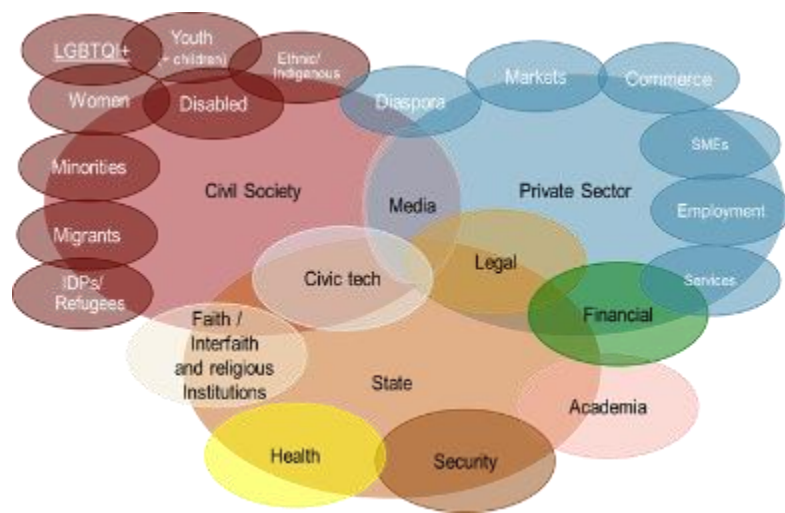
GSE and our Working Approaches

The SDGs in particular SDG 17, call on all development actors to cooperate and coordinate better for more efficient and effective sustainable development. Thus, working in partnership is an essential approach in fostering inclusive systems whereby stakeholders are brought together to tackle gender and inequality issues of common concern, by leveraging respective mandates, resources and complementarities between duty bearers, public and private service providers, and rights holders. However, such multi-stakeholder approaches with an aim to address root problems, risk exacerbating or creating new conflicts, hence practicing conflict sensitivity to do no harm is essential.

- **Working in Partnership**

We are committed to working with and learning from GSE sensitive and capable partners, whilst incrementally enhancing GSE responsiveness among partners with bias attitudes and practices, helping to shift organizational culture and norms to be more GSE inclusive over time. The GSE Strategy leverages our multi-stakeholder engagement to achieve more inclusive and equitable development goals, by engaging with and strengthening **duty bearers** in their capacities and accountability toward GSE.

- **Institutions**

We are committed to strengthening local and national institutions, departments, committees, parliaments, legislative/judicial bodies, security agencies across sectors to act according to their mandate in respect of basic rights and promotion of socio, economic and political participation of all people according to national legal framework and international conventions signed. We work with and strengthen these institutions to address gender, inclusion and rights gaps in their policies, strategies, and investments.

- **Associations**

We are committed to strengthening local and national associations from civil society, public and private sector, local authorities, academia, health, finance, chambers of commerce, interfaith, legal and media, science, and tech sectors to enhance access to reliable information and related responsive services across sectors and levels for all people.

- **Champions**

We are committed to identify, strengthen and network GSE champions across institutions, associations, and sectors at local, national and when feasible regional level, all the while managing socio-political risks associated with their activism and role-modelling.

Operational/ Program Approaches

HELVETAS Inclusive Systems Space

Conflict Sensitivity Home - Conflict Sensitivity - Pamoja (helvetas.org)

· **Fostering Inclusive Systems**

We are committed to addressing endemic drivers of discrimination and exclusion by applying human rights based approaches (HRBA) and a Political Economy and Power Analysis (PEPA) framework analyses which helps devise a more systemic strategy for addressing gaps in inclusion, participation, access to services, equality in and before the law, transparency in information, and mutual accountability between people, duty bearers and rights holders, public and private service providers and clients, employers and employees.

This means,

➢ *We apply a GSE lens to the PEPA to ensure we Leave No One Behind in our identified primary stakeholder group, recognizing their heterogeneity and doing no harm.*
➢ *We foster responsible public /private partnerships and mobilizing gender lens and social impact investing schemes are important strategies for inclusive systems and transformative development.*
➢ *We promote territorial, green and circular economy approaches to optimize integrated and coordinated social, economic, and environmental development across sectors and actors, with decision makers, which is planet and people friendly.*

· **Practicing Conflict Sensitivity**

We are committed to Do No Harm, and conflict sensitivity in the promotion of GSE. We pay special attention to the risk of creating or exacerbating power imbalances, inequalities, gender-based violence, inter-religious, intercultural, or intergenerational tensions, resource conflicts and pressure on civic, labour, and political rights, among others.

This means,

➢ *We are aware of and consider underlying associated traumas, especially in fragile and/or post conflict contexts.*
➢ *In tandem with conflict transformation, we integrate psycho-social approaches.*
➢ *We also recognize the positive impact women's and youth's meaningful participation, and representation can have on peace and social security.*
➢ *We therefore work to enhance women, youth and minority participation and representation in informal and formal dialogue, mediation, and decision-making platforms, and to take up leadership positions in committees at different levels in social, cultural, economic and political spheres.*

Operational/ Program Approaches

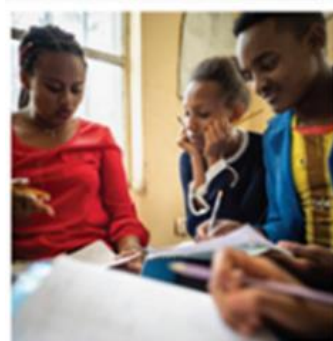In Lao PDR, enhancing self-determination through participation of primary stakeholders

GSE in HELVETAS
GSE in PCM
HELVETAS M&E Space
Digital M&E Space
Performance Indicators Space

GSE in Quality Management (QM) Practices

In doing so, we aim to meaningfully involve primary stakeholders, partners and system actors, in more participatory, transparent, and mutually accountable quality management throughout the project and phase cycles.

This means,

➢ *Systematically applying the GSE marker in designing and setting outcomes, results, and indicators for a project.*
➢ *Having clear and minimum disaggregated indicators for GSE in our logframes and aim higher in actual implementation*
➢ *Treating logframes as a frame for steering, and adaptation when course correction is required due to changes in the working context which may impede or facilitate achieving expected results.*
➢ *Partnering with GSE relevant organizations and/or institutions, joining at least one GSE relevant network or working group.*
➢ *Keeping abreast of changes in the national legal framework and progress toward meeting GSE international commitments.*
➢ *Facilitating capacity development on GSE in PCM for staff, partners, and system actors*
➢ *Proactively involving primary stakeholders, partners, and system actors in establishing milestones for success, and identifying their roles and responsibilities in contributing to these, monitoring, and reporting progress or deviations.*
➢ *Including GSE in ToRs and project related activity, budget and other planning and reporting templates.*
➢ *Conducting updated Political Economy, Power, and related risk analyses, applying a GSE and do no harm lens, annually in more stable contexts, more frequently in more fragile or volatile contexts*
➢ *Ensuring participatory mid-year and mid-term or end of project reviews and presenting a summary of results to the concerned primary stakeholders, partners and/or system actors.*
➢ *Including GSE in all project evaluations, impact assessments and reports, ensuring qualitative and quantitative disaggregated data, good practices and lessons learnt.*
➢ *Mainstreaming or featuring GSE in project case studies or capitalization of experiences (CAPEXs)*
➢ *Identifying and involving primary stakeholders, partners and system actors in tracking and documenting 'most significant change stories' using multi-media, ICT4D and other communication tools/ channels.*

Section 6: GSE in Learning and Innovation

We are committed to continually learn and innovate to ensure our theory of change and therefore strategy remain effective and relevant. To achieve this, we both integrate GSE into Learning and Innovation (LNI), and vice versa integrate Learning and Innovation into GSE, as the two **transversal themes** of HELVETAS at the organization and program levels.

The GSE Strategy aims to catalyse and capitalize on added value GSE knowledge, skills, and practices. It achieves this with sound Knowledge Management, in complement with the other organizational transversal theme of Learning and Innovation by:
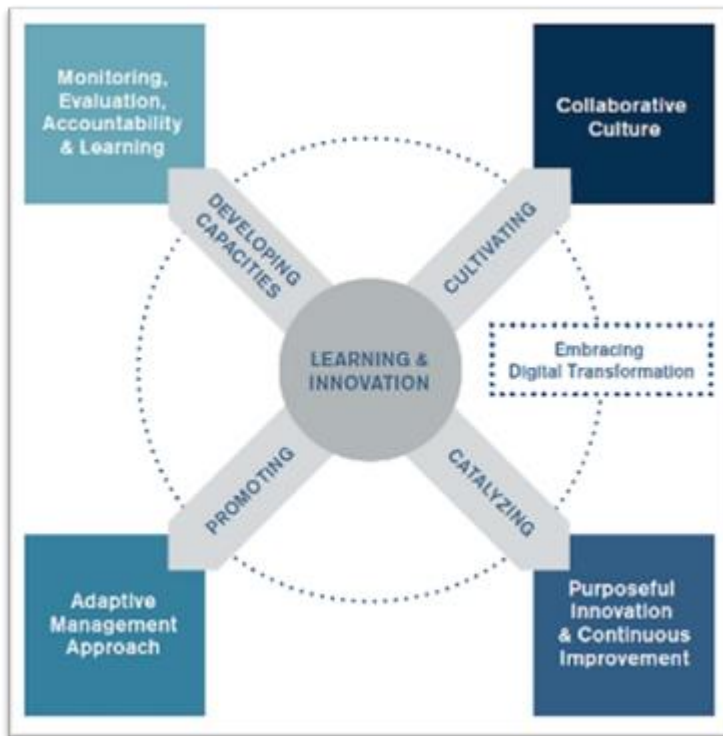
HELVETAS Learning and Innovation Space

In both cases, operationalizing the GSE Hubs will serve as a platform for collaboration, learning, innovation, and continuous improvement.

- **Cultivating a collaborative GSE inclusive culture**

  Without bias, or hierarchy, where diversity of all types, including gender, age, culture, and opinion is valued, invited, and leveraged for mutual knowledge exchange and learning development.

  ➢ *At both organizational and programmatic level, this means we encourage safe, inclusive, and mutually respectful spaces to learn, exchange and build our understanding of and capacities for GSE, among teams, with partners, primary stakeholders, and system actors*
  .

- **Catalysing purposeful GSE innovation and continuous improvement**

  Transformative GSE interventions are part of an ongoing often incremental and prolonged change process, which relies on imagination, innovation, and determination, even at times defiance and resilience against all odds.

  ➢ *At organizational level, this means we continually seek to improve our working and team environments, our policies, and practices, in open, transparent, and participatory ways, meaningfully involving management and collaborators to learn from each other and trigger new and better solutions, while valuing and upgrading what already works.*

  ➢ *At program level, this means, anchoring GSE at the centre of Political Economy and Power Analysis (PEPA), paying attention to conflict sensitivity and Do No Harm throughout the PCM, documenting and sharing good practices, lessons learnt and impacts as part of our inclusive systems development working approach.*

For more information, visit:

https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/what-we-do/our-topics/gender-social-equity

For internal users

Gender and Social Equity - Pamoja (helvetas.org)

https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland