

## CAPABILITY STATEMENT



# GENDER & SOCIAL EQUITY (GSE)

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

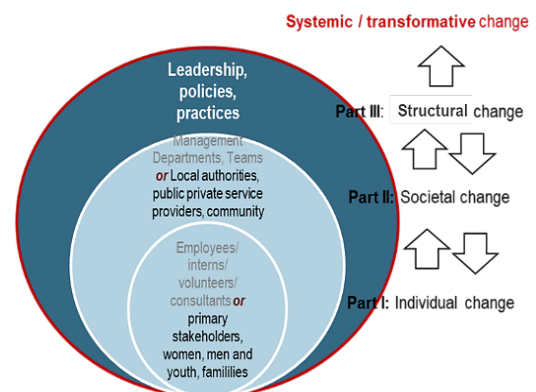
<https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/who-we-are/vision-mission>

Our commitment to our vision, means we do not regard the people & communities we work with as mere target groups or passive beneficiaries of development assistance or humanitarian aid. Rather **we respect, value, & strengthen the women, men, youth & all people & groups we work with as rights holders, active participants, & contributors to the development we seek to achieve together with them as primary stakeholders**, who ultimately should self-determine the transformations we achieve & impacts we incur which will shape & define the quality of their lives.

This translates to fostering inclusive systemic development approaches & strategies, for addressing gaps in inclusion, participation, access to services, equality in & before the law, transparency in information, & mutual accountability between people, duty bearers & rights holders, public & private service providers & clients, employers & employees.

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

These interdependent levels of change, are long term, inter-linked, & incremental processes we facilitate & invest in not only within our programs & project operations with our partners & stakeholders, but also within our institution & organizational culture, policies & practices with our leadership, teams & colleagues.



EQUALITY

EQUITY

EMPOWERMENT

## GSE IN OUR ORGANIZATION

We are committed to gender & social equity at the institutional level across the organization. We rely on over 1,500 committed team members, across [30+ countries](#) & 4 regions including Africa, Asia, Latin America & MENA. We are diverse in our genders, ages, origins, cultures, faiths, experiences, capacities, knowledge, opinions, & interests. This diversity is our strength.

We are committed to **‘Walking our Talk’** in the values we stand for & the gender equality & social equity we commit ourselves to, in the development & humanitarian work we do. This means, we practice what we preach, internally in how we manage our resources be they financial, physical &/or most importantly human. This relies on **our leaders, our teams, our recruitment, human resources management & development policies & practices to support, strengthen & safeguard a working environment which is inclusive, diverse, fair, respectful, motivating, & safe for all.**

The GSE Diamonds provide benchmarks & actions for better managing our physical spaces & assets, our financial & most importantly our human resources. Identifying & improving means for achieving our GSE Diamonds is an ongoing process. Ultimately our working conditions & environment serve to **enhance the wellbeing, sense of belonging, opportunity for growth, & optimal productivity of all employees, interns, & volunteers’.**

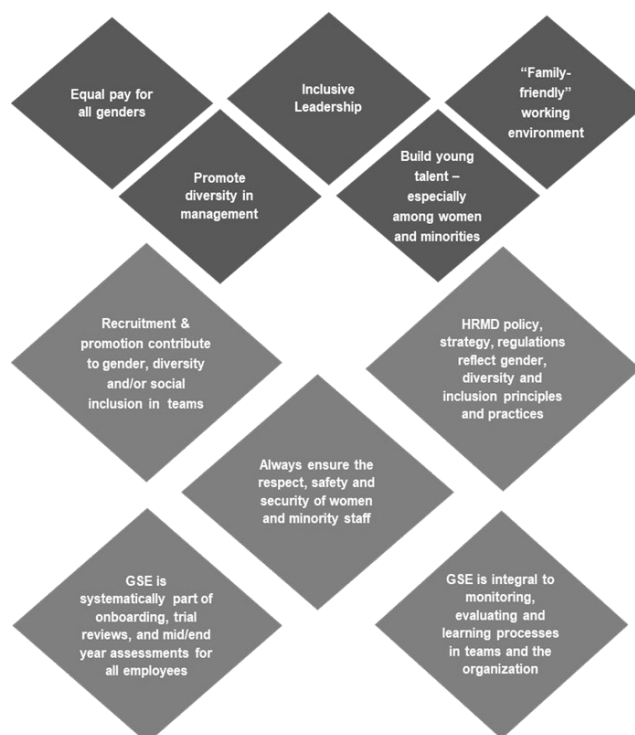
## GSE IN OUR PROGRAMS

GSE is a transversal priority, which is either mainstreamed or focused on across our three working areas, of [Skills, Jobs & Income](#) (SJI), [Voice, Inclusion & Cohesion](#) (VIC); & [Water, Food & Climate](#) (WFC). We also consider GSE as part of **Do No Harm** in our [humanitarian response](#), & in our [urban engagement](#).

As part of our commitment to inclusive systems development, we **integrate GSE in our context analyses**, including [political economy](#), power, [conflict](#), risk & stakeholder assessments. Our [GSE marker](#) supports our teams in the design of projects & the integration of GSE in our intervention strategies. The results of our analyses & GSE marker, inform whether GSE is addressed as significant or principal, in our theory of change & subsequent change management throughout the project cycle. **Participatory quality assurance**, monitoring, accountability, learning & evaluation instruments which are GSE disaggregated, provide evidence for [policy dialogue/advocacy](#), institutional & sectoral learning, & innovation related to Gender & Social Equity.

## OUR GSE DIAMONDS

Our GSE Diamonds serve as a benchmark across our organization, & teams, to strive toward & continually improve on.



[https://www.helvetas.org/Publications-PDFs/GSE\\_Diamonds\\_EN.pdf](https://www.helvetas.org/Publications-PDFs/GSE_Diamonds_EN.pdf)

[https://www.helvetas.org/Publications-PDFs/Switzerland/Regulations%20Code%20of%20Conduct\\_EN.PDF](https://www.helvetas.org/Publications-PDFs/Switzerland/Regulations%20Code%20of%20Conduct_EN.PDF)

## OUR GSE PRINCIPLES

Equality, equity & empowerment are integral & transversal. No matter the sector we are engaging in, we are guided by fundamental GSE principles & working approaches.



[https://www.helvetas.org/Publications-PDFs/HEL-VETAS\\_GSE\\_Policy\\_2022\\_EN.pdf](https://www.helvetas.org/Publications-PDFs/HEL-VETAS_GSE_Policy_2022_EN.pdf)

## OUR 9 PRINCIPLES

1. We intervene in an inclusive & systemic manner & practice do no harm.
2. We involve the disadvantaged & marginalized & consider the needs & opinions of all genders.
3. We address violence, harmful practices & promote human rights.
4. We value unpaid care work & informal work whilst enhancing decent employment opportunities.
5. We promote inclusive leadership & socially diverse representation in our projects.
6. We integrate GSE in social protection, considering social, economic, & environmental safeguards & climate change.
7. We highlight gender equality & social equity in development policy & strategies.
8. We consider & integrate GSE in our partnership processes, agreements, & codes of conduct.
9. We integrate GSE & participatory monitoring, evaluation, accountability & learning (MEAL) in our quality assurance.

## OUR ADVISORY SERVICES

We provide advisory services internally to our teams & partners in the frame of our programs & projects, as well externally to interested organizations, institutions, donors & other actors.

For **organizational development purposes**, we can:

- Conduct GSE related organizational audits, support GSE related policy &/or strategy development
- Support integration of GSE in human resources management & development policies, practices, & regulations.
- Develop related tools & needs based coaching & capacity building solutions.

For **program/project management purposes**, we can:

- Develop, backstop or conduct GSE related context/program or project analyses & strategy development.
- Develop, backstop or conduct assessments, & evaluations.
- Develop, backstop or conduct tailored GSE training, coaching & other online/in person learning related processes or events across different sectors & GSE specific issues be they practical &/or strategic.
- We can work with civil society, government, public/private sector, parliament &/or other system actors e.g. media, academia, legal sectors.

## INEQUALITY, INSTABILITY & INSECURITY

Gender equality & social equity are people-centred & human rights-based. These are integral to inclusive & sustainable development. These include a wide range of **social inclusion, social cohesion, social protection, social empowerment, social security & social justice** initiatives. Where there is disproportionate gender inequality & social inequity, there is interdependent socio-economic inequality, political instability &/or environmental insecurity. These interlinked disparities, if not addressed **exacerbate endemic &/or persistent cycles of poverty, exclusion, & injustice**. It is a fact that a person is more likely to be underserved, vulnerable &/or marginalized, if the person is female &/or a 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 a migrant, IDP or refugee, is young or elderly, identifies as LGBTQI+, or lives with a dis/ability or disease. **Addressing GSE systematically & systemically, requires a multi-dimensional, intersectional, intergenerational, & intercultural rights-based & conflict sensitive approach**. HELVETAS seeks to address the root causes of inequality, exclusion, inequity, which are challenging progress toward achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs), in particular goals [1](#), [5](#), [10](#) & [16](#).

## FORECAST

Moving forward, we anticipate investing more in:

### **Development & Humanitarian nexus:**

HELVETAS sees **social protection** as a bridge between our development & humanitarian work, in increasingly fragile contexts. We will continue to expand on & learn from our experiences to date, as part of do no harm, leave no one behind, & resilience strategies especially for the more vulnerable.

**Advocacy for human-rights:** we will continue to support & collaborate with government, relevant institutions, & civil society to use & contribute to [EU](#) & [United Nations' Human Rights](#) (UNHR) mechanisms, including accountability processes related to the [Universal Periodic Review](#) (UPR) & the Convention Against All Forms of Discrimination Against Women ([CEDAW](#)), **reinforcing different stakeholders' mandates, based on universal human rights principles**.

**Digitalization & mobility:** for services, for good governance, for resilience, considering **rights, gender divides & digital harms** for women & youth, as well those on the move such as migrants, IDPs &/or refugees, in & between rural & urban areas, & across borders.



## A SNAPSHOT OF OUR GSE PORTFOLIO

### GSE in Skills, Jobs & Income



<https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/what-we-do/how-we-work/our-projects/europe/bosnia/bosnia-markets>

Ensuring equal, safe, dignified & decent training & employment services & opportunities for all. Enhancing labour rights, & promoting responsible financial inclusion.

**More here:** <https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/what-we-do/our-topics/Skills-jobs-income>

### GSE in Voice, Inclusion & Cohesion



<https://www.helvetas.org/en/bangladesh/what-we-do/how-we-work/our-projects/Asia/Bangladesh/bangladesh-women-empowerment>

Supporting civic & political rights for all, for more inclusive & equitable policies, strategies, budgets & plans from local to national levels. Working with the public & private sector for more accessible, pluralistic & responsive services for all.

**More here:** <https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/what-we-do/our-topics/voice-inclusion-cohesion>

### GSE in Water, Food & Climate



[https://www.helvetas.org/en/kyrgyzstan/what-we-do/how-we-work/our-projects/Asia/Kyrgyzstan/kyrgyzstan\\_iwip](https://www.helvetas.org/en/kyrgyzstan/what-we-do/how-we-work/our-projects/Asia/Kyrgyzstan/kyrgyzstan_iwip)

Supporting safe, secure, clean, affordable & accessible food & water for all. Promoting women's & LNOB groups right to inheritance, land & other productive assets ownership. Safeguarding the rights & indigenous knowledge of natural resources dependent groups. Strengthening the adaptation & resilience of all confronted by climate change & environmental insecurity. Enhancing the availability of safer rural/urban mobility, green infrastructures, markets, & circular value chains for all.

**More here:** <https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/what-we-do/our-topics/water-food-climate>

### GSE in Humanitarian Response



<https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/how-you-can-help/follow-us/multi-media-stories-from-our-projects/ukraine-breather-on-the-run>

**More here:** <https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/what-we-do/our-topics/humanitarian-response>

## OTHER EXPERIENCES

### Unpaid Care Work



Recognizing, redistributing, & reducing for more self determination & more equitable gender norms

<https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/what-we-do/our-topics/gender-social-equity/gender-expert/unpaid-carework>

### Gender Based Violence



Prevention, protection, response, redress, & access to justice, for women/girls, & men/boys.

<https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/Search-results?q=gender+based+violence>

### Culture & Peace



Leveraging culture for social cohesion; strengthening women's & youth's role in mediation, mitigating & resolving conflict. Supporting intergenerational & participatory psychosocial, & prevention of violence approaches.

<https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/Search-results?q=Psychosocial+culture+for+peace>

## OUR GENDER & SOCIAL EQUITY EXPERT/S



**Agnieszka Kroskowska**  
GSE Coordinator / Senior Advisor  
agnieszka.kroskowska@helvetas.org



We also have committed  
**GSE focal persons** around  
the world in our country  
programmes.

## OUR GSE PARTNERSHIPS, ALLIANCES AND NETWORKS



SDC Gender & Social  
Inclusion Network  
All gender issues across sectors



KOFF Swisspeace  
<http://koff.swisspeace.ch/>  
Women, Peace & Security



Interaction  
<https://www.interaction.org/the-dei-compact-ingo-commitments-toward-greater-diversity-equity-&-inclusion/>

We also forge & are a part of many strategic partnerships, alliances & networks specific to &/or related to gender & social equity in the countries & across the regions we work in.

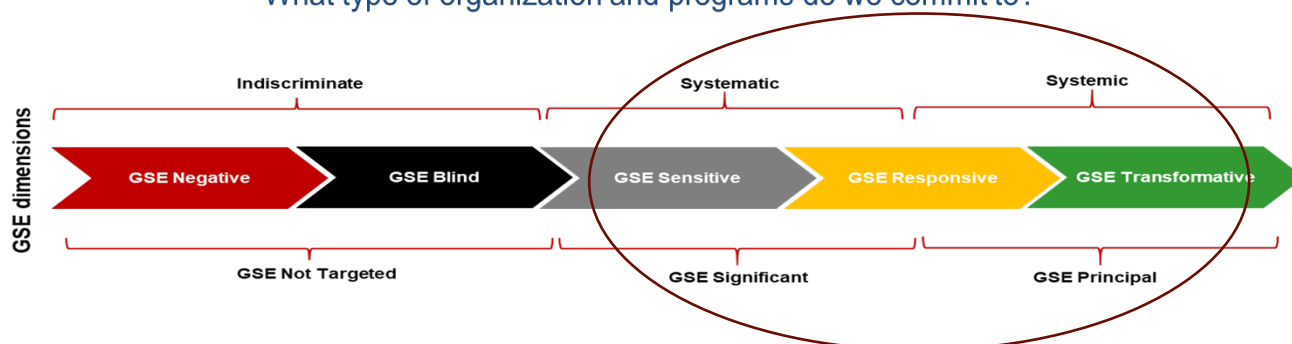
## MORE INFORMATION

- <https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/what-we-do/our-topics/gender-social-equity>
- <https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/what-we-do/our-topics/youth>
- <https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/what-we-do/our-topics/urban-engagement>
- <https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland>
- [https://www.helvetas.org/Publications-PDFs/HELVETAS\\_GSE\\_Policy\\_2022\\_EN.pdf](https://www.helvetas.org/Publications-PDFs/HELVETAS_GSE_Policy_2022_EN.pdf)

## CONTACT US

<https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/what-we-do/our-topics/gender-social-equity/gender-expert>  
[info@helvetas.org](mailto:info@helvetas.org)

What type of organization and programs do we commit to?



**HELVETAS**