



GENDER EQUALITY POLICY AND GENDER EQUALITY PLAN 2026–2030

Approved by the Board of Directors

SOUTH ASIA PARTNERSHIP PAKISTAN

Rationale of Gender Policy

South Asia Partnership Pakistan (SAP-PK) is committed to promoting gender equality, non-discrimination, women's empowerment and equal participation within the organisation and across all programmes, projects, partnerships and community interventions.

The purpose of this document is to present a policy framework for engendering institutional and programmatic spheres of SAP-Pakistan. The peculiar social and political conditions facing the people of the country demand a broad development approach ensuring justice, equality, prevention of exploitation & Abuse, and harmony in all sections of the society regardless of any discrimination based on caste, creed, religion, language, gender, or economic position. SAP-PK has initiated its struggle and aspires to empower marginalized and powerless through mobilizing their human potential.

SAP-PK's program is designed to work for these sections of the society especially women, children, minorities, rural and urban poor and other economically and socially excluded groups. The values we want to promote in the society are based on participation of all, society based on secular principles and social equality. These values can be achieved only through an organization run and inspired by these principles it aims to promote in society. SAP-PK promotes the same policies in its institutional, operational and governance areas.

SAP-PK recognises that gender inequality is influenced by social, economic, cultural, institutional and political structures. Gender equality therefore requires more than equal treatment. It requires the identification and removal of barriers that prevent women and other disadvantaged groups from accessing opportunities, resources, services, leadership and decision-making.

SAP-PK will apply gender mainstreaming alongside targeted measures for women and other groups experiencing gender-related disadvantage. Gender equality will be considered during organisational planning, recruitment, budgeting, programme design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, research, communication and decision-making.

This policy builds upon SAP-PK's existing Gender Policy and strengthens it through measurable commitments, institutional responsibilities, gender-disaggregated data, monitoring, dedicated resources, capacity building and an organisation-wide Gender Equality Plan.

We believe that bringing gender sensitivity to its operational and management policies will further augment our capacity to deal with social and economic inequalities in a more effective manner. This document provides guidelines and principles based on equality and some extra opportunities for deprived especially women and minorities to participate at all levels of SAP_PK work. These guidelines will ensure the principles of equity and equality for creating organizational culture, work environment, interactions, practices, procedures, behaviors and treatments with its staff, partners, main stakeholders, program structure/ bodies, members of the governing body, staff, volunteers. This is a challenge for us and we aspire to achieve with clarity, commitment and determination.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish an institutional framework through which SAP-PK will:

- promote equal rights, opportunities and treatment for women and men;
- prevent discrimination based on gender and other intersecting forms of disadvantage;
- increase women's participation in employment, leadership and decision-making;
- promote a safe, respectful and inclusive working environment;
- support work-life balance and care responsibilities;
- prevent and respond to gender-based violence, sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse;
- integrate gender equality into all programmes and projects;
- strengthen gender-responsive planning and budgeting;
- collect and use gender-disaggregated data;
- build staff and management capacity on gender equality;
- establish measurable targets and indicators; and
- ensure institutional accountability for gender equality.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- Board members and governing bodies;
- senior management;
- permanent and contract staff;
- project and programme staff;
- consultants and technical advisers;
- interns and volunteers;
- field workers;
- partner organisations where relevant through partnership agreements;
- community structures supported by SAP-PK; and
- persons participating in SAP-PK activities.

The policy applies to SAP-PK offices, field locations, official travel, meetings, training activities, project sites, digital communication and other activities conducted under SAP-PK's authority.

SAP-PK Vision on Gender Equality

SAP-PK envisions a society in which women and men enjoy equal rights, opportunities, resources, dignity, participation and decision-making power.

SAP-PK recognises that:

1. Gender equality is a fundamental principle of social justice and sustainable development.
2. Women and men should have equal opportunities to access employment, resources, education, services and leadership.

3. Gender equality requires transforming discriminatory social norms, attitudes and institutional practices.
4. Women's social, economic and political contributions must be recognised and strengthened.
5. Targeted and affirmative measures may be necessary to address historical and structural disadvantages.
6. Men and boys are important partners in achieving gender equality.
7. Gender equality must be addressed together with other forms of inequality and exclusion.
8. Gender equality requires institutional commitment, adequate resources, reliable data and measurable accountability.

Guiding Principles

SAP-PK will implement this policy according to the following principles:

Equality and Non-Discrimination

No person shall be discriminated against on the basis of sex, gender, gender-related characteristics, age, disability, religion, caste, ethnicity, socioeconomic status or other protected characteristics.

Equity and Affirmative Action

Where structural inequalities exist, SAP-PK may adopt targeted measures to increase participation and representation of disadvantaged groups.

Gender Mainstreaming

Gender considerations shall be integrated into organisational policies, programmes, budgets, planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and research.

Participation

Women and men shall have meaningful opportunities to participate in organisational and programme decision-making.

Intersectionality

SAP-PK recognises that gender inequality may interact with poverty, disability, age, location, religion, minority status, marital status, displacement and other factors. Programme and organisational measures shall consider these overlapping inequalities where relevant.

Accountability

Gender equality commitments shall be supported by clear responsibilities, indicators, reporting mechanisms and management oversight.

Do No Harm

Gender mainstreaming shall not expose women, girls or other vulnerable persons to additional risks, discrimination, stigma or violence.

The Process of Gender Policy Formation

The process of forming SAP-PK Gender policy was initiated in 2001 with the Gender assessment of SAP-PK organizational structure and programs which provided the basic areas in which gender policies

were needed to be formed. A round of consultations was conducted with SAP-PK national, provincial and field staff for gathering staff recommendations for gender policy. Afterwards these recommendations were articulated in terms of gender policy document by a committee formed in the national office of SAP-PK. The policy has been revised time to time according to the shifts in the programs after consultation with the staff. This is the updated version of gender policy revised in January 2026.

Implementation and Amendments

The policy will be an overarching document on all other existing policy documents and will serve as a guideline for all decisions, actions and plans to be made in all programs and SAP-PK national and provincial offices, support structures, village level groups and programmatic .

The policy document will be regularly revised according to the changing needs of the programs and organization. The policy document cannot be amended, or revised without the consent of the general body or with a vote not less than two third of the total membership of the governing bodies. Gender strategies of each program will be formed on the basis of these policies in order to work out operational mechanisms for the implementation of these policies.

Gender Policy of SAP-PK comprises two major following areas.

Areas

1. Gender Related Human Resource Policy

Gender Related Human Resource Policy is related to staff and systems being operated within the organization and work structure. SAP-PK's existing human resource policy has many components having a number of different rules and principles within each component. Gender policy has selected only those components of organizational policy where some gender sensitive rules were needed to incorporate. The organization's gender human resource policy is in the areas of recruitment, staff development, roles and responsibilities, salary, infrastructure, decision-making and information and coordination, work environment and administrative system.

2. Program Policy

Program policies are related to formulating policies at program levels with the objective of incorporating Gender sensitive initiatives in all programs and working out operational strategies to implement these policies. The main objectives are:

- ② To mainstream gender sensitive steps in all programs
- ② To identify roles and responsibilities of each of the concerned staff in the field of gender.

- ② To set a criteria of women participation and decision making/ leadership role in actions (group formation, capacity building, service delivery, advocacy and research) and in structures of all programs.

Gender Related Human Resource Policy

Administrative systems

- ② Triple role of female colleagues to be taken into consideration at every stages of planning and decision-making; work plans, visit plans and work distribution.
- ② Female staff members during pregnancy will not be given hard physical work. Women during pregnancy and having little babies should not be given excessive field assignments.
- ② Provision of flexible working hours for male and female staff with infants. Women having small children to be allowed to spend at least one hour with their children during working hours.
- ② Provision of food, lodging and transportation facilities for child minder (other than spouses) and child up to the age of three to female staff while traveling for official assignments within the country.
- ② Provision of food, lodging and transportation facilities for children up to the age of three of female staff while attending in-coun
- ② 2try training workshop or seminar.
- ② Three months maternity leave for each birth (The time of leave can be started before 45 days of delivery but it should be her choice whether she want to take leave before delivery), with pay will be given to female staff. If necessary medical and annual leave may be added to it (the rule will be applied to all permanent and contract staff but not for internees). An additional three-month unpaid leave can be provided in case of complications (pre and post natal), as per the recommendations of a qualified doctor and the decision of management team.
- ② Pregnant women will be given relaxation of working hours at the last stage (last month of her pregnancy) and provided drop at home at two hours early for the sake of her relief and rest.
- ② Provision of extra 15 days paternal leave with pay for fathers for each birth. In case of three consecutive medical leaves the submission of a medical certificate will be necessary for all staff members for the approval of leaves.
- ② 7 days paid leave can be provided to both male/ female staff working in any categories, on the death of close relatives (father, mother, sister, brother, child, spouse, mother-in-law and father-in law) provided other routine leaves exhausted
- ② Provisions of 5 days paid leave, for both male and female staff, in case of close relatives (father, mother, sister, brother, child, spouse, mother-in-law and father-in law) being hospitalized.
- ② Provisions of employment opportunity (as decided by management on the basis of nature of the job available and qualification) to the dependents in case of demise/accident, inability of the staff served SAP-PK for at least 5 years.

- Ⓢ All staff serving as permanent or contract should be eligible for all leaves (medical, casual and annual) as defined and when in the staff policies.
- Ⓢ Provisions of loans to staff (only to permanent employee) on installments after their completion of two years job. In accordance with HR policy of SAP-PK
- Ⓢ All female staff must be entitled to pick and drop facilities by the office transport especially in field and going outstation visits/assignments. The similar facilities should also be provided to female staff working in office on off-days, or late hours.
- Ⓢ All female staff (permanent and contract) will get priority in using office transport (on payment according to the vehicle policy) for medical check -up from the seventh month of pregnancy until birth of child.
- Ⓢ In order to reduce workload on the administration staff, facilities and logistics for daily tea and refreshments of staff should be provided in each section. They should prepare their own tea instead of asking administrative staff.

Organization Culture

In order to ensure a supportive and enabling environment to all employees especially female the management of SAP-PK must ensure that:

- Ⓢ All must cherish gender sensitivity as core value of the organization as well as demonstrate gender sensitivity in behaviors in office and field with colleagues and partners and in personal life.

Following code of conduct must be followed in office and during field visits and meetings:

- Ⓢ Gender sensitive attitudes towards all
- Ⓢ Must not use any language, symbols or words contrary to the respect of any person, cast, section, religion or culture.
- Ⓢ Must not use derogatory language while addressing colleagues, community people or partners.
- Ⓢ All should respect privacy and personal space of each individual in office and field.
- Ⓢ Person not complying with these codes can be treated according to the administrative policies and strict measures can be taken against him/her.
- Ⓢ Behavior of all colleagues to new comers especially female staff must be encouraging and respectful.
- Ⓢ Continuous education/motivation by senior staff to all especially new comers to develop better inter-personal relationships and resolve their differences.
- Ⓢ Insensitive language and any derogatory comments, which may cause humiliation to anyone, will be considered as a punishable offence.
- Ⓢ Provision of separate male and female lavatories in the organization with all necessary facilities.
- Ⓢ Wherever possible adequate infrastructure, administrative facilities, timely support and comfortable working environment should be provided to staff members (in all categories) in the fulfillment of his/her job assignments.

Decision Making

Maintaining gender balance in all decision-making bodies from management committee, program committees, national council and general body, in all SAP-PK offices, support structure and structure of the programs at district and community level.

In case there is a lack of female representation at the management tier, special provision for members from staff on positions with experience be made to participate in management committees. In order to ensure greater participation, representation and learning for all program staff, a method of meeting observers can be adopted in management committee meetings.

- The criteria and strategies of women participation in decision making and leadership within the organization, program structure and major interventions must be made and followed
- Decisions and planning made in the management committee must be shared with rest of the staff through properly designed channels and forums. The criteria of women equal participation in all activities and structure of programs is compulsory. However strategies must be adopted for ensuring their equal participation in activities in areas where restrictions exist in the ways of women participation.
- In order to ensure women equal participation in program actions, structures decision making SAP_PK policy of women participation, mobility and decision making must be followed at all levels from national office to community level.

Communications and Consultation

- Effective mechanisms to be established for consultations, coordination and information sharing including gender learning at various levels of the organization both horizontally and vertically.
- Accessibility, easy sharing and proper dissemination of information in form of resource material about the tasks and job to each staff member. Each staff should be facilitated and provided with necessary information to support his/her job and assignments.
- Provision of complete record, history and information of his/her program to each newly appointed staff. Each staff should ensure proper sharing of field observations, findings and other necessary details with colleagues through regular meetings, forums and person to person consultations.
- Effective channels have to be designed and put in place to ensure regular sharing of staff performance, achievements with other colleagues. Similarly effective feedback and reflection systems to be maintained in terms of verbal and written reports. Management to ensure circulation of reports, material and literature to all concerned on regular basis.

Program Policy

1. Structure of the program

(Village, UC level committees/groups, district level groups, program staff at district level)

- Women equal participation in village/UC level groups Peasant workers groups, citizens groups etc. ensure representation of minorities in these structures.
- Women equal participation in district, province and national level support structure, district level groups, networks etc.
- Women from local level activists, LG members, media, journalist, lawyers and doctors must be part of support structures of the programs
- Women participation (at least 40%) in district level staff of the programs
- Preference to organizations sensitive to women issues, needs and problems and involve women in their organization functions for partnership with SAP-PK in different programs.
- Organizations having at least 30 per cent participation of female will be selected in all programs.
- Women organizations or community groups with overwhelming women membership should be preferred
- Organizations willing to create gender equity and work for women will be selected
- Partnership agreement with partner organizations (district level) must be gender sensitive
- Women equal participation in regular meetings on these structures from village, UC, district, province and national level.
- The areas where combine sittings of male and females is difficult like KP and Balochistan their separate sittings for meetings, trainings or some other activities should be arranged.
- Women mobility related problems will be considered and resolved (acting upon the SAP-PK's mobility policy) e.g. transport facility, allowing mothers of little babies to bring them along, allow them to bring some member of their family along if it is difficult for any to come alone.
- The anchor of the meetings, sessions should encourage women to speak and take active part in meetings, trainings etc.
- Women are given roles at village, UC level structure like reporting, convening meetings, mobilizing community etc.
- Women leadership and decision making should be encouraged
- The frequency, time and venue of the meetings will be selected after the consultation of women members of the groups which suits them
- The program staff team at district, province and national level going to field at village, UC or district level should comprise of male and female.
- Organizations, which will not increase female participation in organization, must be excluded from programs after giving proper time and focused input.

Capacity Building

- Equal male/female participation in trainings
- Women facilitators and resource persons will be preferred
- Women equal participation in district level training pool
- Gender disaggregated information will be imparted in all conceptual and technical components of trainings.

- Community surveys should essentially include components, items of gender-disaggregated information
- A separate workshop on Gender and Development will be incorporated in training programs apart from incorporating gender related concepts, themes and topics in all other workshops. Similarly all development related approaches, models and descriptions should dominantly be based on gender philosophy.
- Gender perception of all themes of trainings will be highlighted
- Women participants will be encouraged to speak and take active part during the trainings
- Where combine trainings of male and females are difficult their separate trainings will be arranged even if it involve extra time and resources
- Gender sensitization trainings must be conducted for all staff from national to district level and program support structure at district level as well as for groups and committees of the program at community level
- Training need assessment of women members of the village and UC level groups and special focus on enhancing their capacity
- Technical or sectoral skill training will be conducted on the basis of training needs of male and female members of village and UC level groups
- Ensure equal participation of male/ female and representation of minorities during assessment and follow-up meetings at community level
- Women mobility related problems are resolved including provision of transport, Provision of food and lodging for child (up to the age of three) and child minder of a mother participant during the training period and permitting a person of the family to be along if a woman cannot come alone. (SAP_PK mobility policy) even if extra resources are incurred on these.
- Gender component will be imparted in all follow-up meetings and visits in all program areas.
- Ensure equal participation of female from organization and community in follow up meetings (the visiting team wherever possible should include at least one female)

Financial / Technical Support (livelihood support, schemes, projects)

- Partnership agreement of with partner organizations for schemes must be gender sensitive
- 50% financial and technical including livelihood support and schemes must be allocated for women empowerment or to women members of committees or groups.
- Women members of village, UC level committees should be the direct implementers at all the stages from need assessments, proposal development, implementation and monitoring; whereas district partners can only facilitate the process
- A gender analysis should be part of proposal, monitoring and evaluation of the scheme
- Head of the schemes dealing with women groups or schemes
- Women participation is necessary also at all levels of other schemes and their participation in decision making body is also necessary.
- Women focused projects should be preferred and those projects should be given preference which address gender strategic needs.
- Project committee, management committees and other structure should be gender balanced, women bank signatory should be a woman.

- Out of direct beneficiaries 50% should be women
- Gender assessment indicators to be part of monitoring and evaluation exercises in each project.
- Each project should directly or indirectly address gender practical and strategic needs
- Maximum participation of female both within organization and community in the process of need identification of project
- Gender component/sessions should be essential part of assessment visits, meetings.
- Greater participation and consultation of female members both from organization and community in all community and organizational meetings.
- Gender assessment should be part of monitoring and evaluation reports.

Advocacy and Networking

- Gender component will be integrated with the main theme of all activities of advocacy and networking
- Equal participation of male and females in all advocacy activities
- Preference should be given to issues affecting the most marginalized sections; issues of strategic importance should be selected on priority basis.
- Promote local action generated as a result of dialogue supporting the most important and strategic aspects of the issues.
- Include gender component in all follow up visits and meetings focusing on their views, ideas and aspirations.
- Attempt should be made to keep balance on male female resource persons
- Advocacy campaigns on women and gender issues like women peasants and workers issues, gender rights and justice must be part of workplan

Research and Documentation

- Research, studies, reports relating to progress and other publications must be conducted on the issues of most marginalized including women and minorities.
- Gender disaggregated data in all the consolidated reports including the annual report of SAP-PK, actions etc.
- Gender disaggregated information / data should be compiled and documented in the research reports
- Women and gender perspectives in all the themes of publications must be highlighted.
- Attempts should be made to keep balance between male female researchers and data collection teams
- Preference should be given to issues affecting most marginalized sections of the society; issues of strategic importance should be related and included in the research framework.
- Gender disaggregated information data should be compiled and be reflected in the final document or product.
- Portrayal of issues and problems of women and minorities should be given due weight-age
- Regular publications on issues supporting gender point of view, philosophy and approaches.

- Language and diction in all publications should be gender sensitive, simple and comprehensible.
- All publications should be disseminated to active women, women members of support structure at district level.

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND GOVERNANCE

Board of Directors

The Board shall:

- approve the Gender Equality Policy and Gender Equality Plan;
- provide strategic oversight;
- review progress at least annually;
- ensure that gender equality remains part of organisational governance; and
- ensure appropriate resources are available for implementation.

Executive Director

The Executive Director shall:

- ensure implementation of the policy;
- allocate appropriate organisational resources;
- ensure gender equality is incorporated into annual planning;
- review progress against targets;
- ensure appropriate action where policy commitments are not implemented; and
- report major gender equality risks and achievements to the Board.

Gender Equality Focal Person/Committee

SAP-PK shall designate a Gender Equality Focal Person or Gender Equality Committee.

The responsible mechanism shall:

- coordinate implementation of the GEP;
- advise management on gender equality;
- support gender analysis;
- coordinate gender training;
- monitor gender indicators;
- support collection and analysis of gender-disaggregated data;
- coordinate annual gender equality reporting;
- identify organisational gaps;
- document good practices; and
- facilitate consultation with staff.

The focal person/committee shall have sufficient authority, time and access to information to perform these responsibilities effectively.

DEDICATED RESOURCES

SAP-PK recognises that gender equality requires organisational resources.

Gender equality shall therefore be incorporated into:

- annual organisational budgets;
- programme budgets;
- staff development budgets;
- safeguarding and protection measures;
- monitoring and evaluation resources;
- research and documentation budgets; and
- communication and awareness activities.

Where feasible, SAP-PK shall identify and track expenditure contributing to gender equality.

Programme proposals shall identify gender-related activities and corresponding budget requirements.

GENDER EQUALITY IN RECRUITMENT

SAP-PK shall:

- promote gender-balanced recruitment;
- ensure gender-sensitive job descriptions and recruitment criteria;
- avoid discriminatory language in vacancy announcements;
- encourage applications from women and under-represented groups;
- ensure representation of women on interview panels wherever possible;
- apply transparent and merit-based selection processes;
- provide reasonable accommodation where required;
- monitor the gender composition of applicants, shortlisted candidates and recruited staff; and
- take appropriate affirmative measures where significant gender imbalance exists.

Recruitment decisions shall not discriminate against women because of pregnancy, maternity, family responsibilities or other lawful care responsibilities.

EQUAL PAY AND FAIR EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS

SAP-PK is committed to equal pay for work of equal value.

The organisation shall:

- apply transparent salary structures;
- ensure that remuneration is based on position, responsibilities, qualifications and experience rather than gender;
- periodically review salary structures for gender-related disparities;
- provide equal access to employment benefits;
- ensure transparent promotion and reward procedures; and
- address unjustified gender-related pay differences.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

SAP-PK shall ensure equal access to:

- professional development;
- training;
- mentoring;
- leadership opportunities;
- national and international exposure;
- promotion;
- career counselling; and
- professional networking.

Special measures may be introduced where women are under-represented in particular positions or professional areas.

Managers shall ensure that maternity, parental or care responsibilities do not unfairly disadvantage employees in performance assessment or career progression.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND CARE RESPONSIBILITIES

SAP-PK recognises unpaid care work and family responsibilities as important factors affecting women's participation in employment.

The organisation shall promote:

- flexible working arrangements where operationally feasible;
- maternity and paternity/parental leave in accordance with applicable law and organisational policy;
- reasonable accommodation for pregnancy;
- supportive arrangements for breastfeeding and childcare;
- appropriate consideration of family responsibilities in field assignments;
- safe transport arrangements where required;
- childcare support for eligible official travel and training where feasible; and
- fair distribution of work responsibilities.

Care responsibilities shall not be treated as a basis for discrimination.

SAFE AND INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

SAP-PK shall maintain a working environment that is:

- safe;
- respectful;
- inclusive;
- free from discrimination;
- free from intimidation;
- free from sexual harassment;

- free from gender-based violence; and
- supportive of dignity and privacy.

Separate and appropriate sanitation facilities shall be maintained where required.

Workplace safety assessments shall consider gender-specific risks, including risks faced by women during fieldwork, travel and late working hours.

GENDER BALANCE IN LEADERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING

SAP-PK shall promote meaningful participation of women in:

- the Board and governing structures;
- management committees;
- programme committees;
- recruitment panels;
- project steering committees;
- community structures;
- partner structures; and
- other decision-making bodies.

The organisation will seek to maintain gender balance and establish measurable targets where women are significantly under-represented.

SAP-PK's existing commitment to women's participation in organisational and programme decision-making shall remain applicable.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN PROGRAMMES

All SAP-PK programmes shall incorporate gender considerations throughout the programme cycle.

Gender analysis shall be undertaken during:

1. needs assessment;
2. problem analysis;
3. project design;
4. proposal development;
5. budgeting;
6. implementation;
7. monitoring;
8. evaluation; and
9. learning and reporting.

Programme teams shall identify:

- gender-specific needs;
- gender-related barriers;
- participation gaps;
- control over resources;
- decision-making patterns;

- risks of gender-based violence;
- opportunities for women's empowerment; and
- potential unintended gender impacts.

GENDER-RESPONSIVE PROGRAMME DESIGN

Project proposals shall, where relevant, specify:

- women and men's participation targets;
- gender-specific objectives;
- gender-responsive indicators;
- gender-related risks;
- mitigation measures;
- gender-responsive activities;
- gender-responsive budget allocations; and
- expected changes in gender relations or women's empowerment.

SAP-PK shall continue to ensure that projects address both practical and strategic gender needs.

GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING

SAP-PK shall progressively strengthen gender-responsive budgeting.

Programme and annual budgets should identify:

- activities specifically supporting women and girls;
- resources required to remove women's participation barriers;
- safeguarding and protection costs;
- childcare and accessibility costs where relevant;
- gender training;
- gender analysis and data collection; and
- other expenditure contributing to gender equality.

Gender equality shall not be treated as an unfunded organisational commitment.

GENDER-DISAGGREGATED DATA AND MONITORING

SAP-PK shall collect and analyse sex/gender-disaggregated data where relevant and ethically appropriate.

Organisational data should include, where applicable:

- staff composition;
- recruitment;
- shortlisting;
- appointments;
- promotions;
- salaries;
- training participation;

- professional development;
- leadership positions;
- staff retention;
- turnover;
- leave;
- complaints and safeguarding cases; and
- participation in decision-making.

Programme data should include relevant information on:

- beneficiaries;
- participants;
- training;
- services;
- leadership;
- decision-making;
- economic outcomes;
- access to resources; and
- project results.

Data shall be collected, stored and used in accordance with applicable privacy and data protection requirements.

Gender Equality Indicators

SAP-PK shall maintain a gender equality indicator framework.

Indicative indicators include:

Area	Indicator
Recruitment	% women among applicants, shortlisted candidates and recruits
Workforce	% women among total staff
Leadership	% women in management and governance
Pay	Gender pay differences identified and addressed
Career progression	% women receiving promotion/professional development
Training	% staff completing gender equality training
Programmes	% projects incorporating documented gender analysis
Beneficiaries	% women among direct beneficiaries
Decision-making	% women in programme/community decision-making structures
Budget	%/amount of programme expenditure contributing to gender equality

Area	Indicator
Data	% projects reporting sex-disaggregated indicators
Safeguarding	Number and status of gender-related complaints
Work-life balance	Uptake of family-friendly measures by women and men
Culture	Staff perception of gender equality and workplace safety

Targets shall be established annually based on baseline data and organisational priorities.

GENDER EQUALITY TRAINING

SAP-PK shall establish regular gender equality training for:

- Board members;
- senior management;
- programme staff;
- HR and administrative staff;
- field staff;
- support staff;
- interns and volunteers where appropriate.

Training shall cover, as relevant:

- gender equality and gender mainstreaming;
- unconscious gender bias;
- gender stereotypes;
- gender analysis;
- gender-responsive budgeting;
- prevention of sexual harassment;
- safeguarding;
- gender-based violence;
- inclusive communication;
- intersectionality; and
- gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation.

New staff shall receive gender equality orientation as part of induction.

PARTNERS AND SUPPLIERS

SAP-PK shall encourage partners and service providers to uphold gender equality and non-discrimination.

Where appropriate, partnership agreements shall include requirements relating to:

- non-discrimination;

- women's participation;
- safeguarding;
- prevention of sexual harassment and exploitation;
- gender-sensitive programme implementation;
- gender-disaggregated reporting; and
- compliance with SAP-PK's relevant standards.

GENDER-SENSITIVE COMMUNICATION

All SAP-PK communication shall:

- use respectful and non-discriminatory language;
- avoid gender stereotypes;
- portray women and men with dignity;
- avoid victimising or objectifying women;
- recognise women's agency and leadership;
- use gender-sensitive language in reports and publications; and
- consider gender equality in digital and social media content.

Communication materials should, where appropriate, demonstrate diverse representation of women and men.

RESEARCH, KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING

SAP-PK shall integrate gender perspectives into relevant:

- research;
- assessments;
- baseline studies;
- evaluations;
- publications;
- case studies;
- learning documents; and
- organisational reports.

Research and evaluation shall, where relevant, examine changes in gender relations, participation, access to resources, decision-making and empowerment.

Women shall be encouraged to participate as researchers, facilitators, knowledge producers and community representatives.

ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE AND GENDER

SAP-PK recognises that climate change and environmental degradation can affect women and men differently.

Where relevant, environmental and climate programmes shall:

- conduct gender-sensitive vulnerability analysis;

- recognise women's roles in natural resource management;
- consider women's access to climate finance and livelihood opportunities;
- promote women's participation in climate decision-making;
- collect gender-disaggregated climate-related data; and
- ensure that climate interventions do not unintentionally increase women's unpaid work or exposure to risk.

INTERSECTIONAL GENDER EQUALITY

SAP-PK shall consider how gender inequality intersects with:

- poverty;
- disability;
- age;
- geographic location;
- minority status;
- religion;
- social exclusion;
- displacement;
- marital or family circumstances; and
- other relevant forms of disadvantage.

Particular attention shall be given to women and girls who experience multiple and overlapping barriers.

ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION

SAP-PK shall progressively ensure that gender equality initiatives are accessible to persons with disabilities.

This includes, where feasible:

- accessible training venues;
- accessible communication materials;
- reasonable accommodation;
- inclusive consultation mechanisms; and
- participation of women with disabilities in programme design and decision-making.

GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN

SAP-PK shall maintain a Gender Equality Action Plan covering a defined implementation period.

The Action Plan shall specify:

Objective	Action	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Responsible Person	Timeline	Resources
Increase women in	Leadership development	% women in	To be established	Annual target	ED/HR	Annual	Allocated resources

Objective	Action	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Responsible Person	Timeline	Resources
leadership	ent and recruitment measures	leadership					
Strengthen gender capacity	Gender and unconscious-bias training	% staff trained	To be established	100% relevant staff	Gender Focal Person	Annual	Training budget
Improve gender data	Introduce sex-disaggregated HR/project indicators	% reporting systems	To be established	100% relevant projects	M&E	Annual	M&E budget
Strengthen gender-responsiveness programming	Mandatory gender analysis in proposals	% proposals with analysis	To be established	100%	Programme Department	Ongoing	Programme budgets
Strengthen gender budgeting	Identify gender-related expenditure	% projects applying gender budgeting	To be established	Annual increase	Finance/Programme	Annual	Existing budgets
Prevent harassment	Awareness and reporting mechanisms	% staff oriented	To be established	100%	HR/Gender Focal Person	Annual	Safeguarding budget
Improve work-life balance	Review family-friendly measures	Staff satisfaction/uptake	To be established	Annual improvement	HR	Annual	HR budget

Baseline values shall be established during the first implementation year.

MONITORING, REPORTING AND REVIEW

The Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan shall be monitored through:

- annual organisational review;
- programme monitoring;

- HR data analysis;
- staff consultations;
- safeguarding reports;
- project evaluations;
- gender audits or assessments where feasible; and
- management and Board review.

SAP-PK shall prepare an annual internal Gender Equality Progress Report summarising:

- progress against targets;
- gender-disaggregated data;
- achievements;
- challenges;
- complaints and safeguarding trends, without compromising confidentiality;
- resource allocation;
- corrective measures; and
- priorities for the following year.

The policy and action plan shall be formally reviewed at least every two years.

STAFF CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATION

SAP-PK shall consult staff, including women and other under-represented groups, when reviewing the Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan.

Staff shall have opportunities to provide confidential feedback concerning:

- workplace culture;
- discrimination;
- harassment;
- career progression;
- work-life balance;
- leadership;
- safety;
- training; and
- implementation of gender equality measures.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

Gender-related personnel, safeguarding and complaint information shall be handled confidentially.

Personal information shall only be collected and processed where necessary and shall be protected against unauthorised access, disclosure or misuse.

Gender-disaggregated reporting shall avoid identifying individuals unless there is a legitimate and authorised reason to do so.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND NON-COMPLIANCE

All personnel are responsible for complying with this policy within their respective roles.

Managers shall be accountable for implementing relevant gender equality measures within their departments and programmes.

Failure to comply with the policy may result in:

- corrective action;
- management intervention;
- additional training;
- changes in procedures;
- disciplinary measures where appropriate; or
- other action in accordance with SAP-PK policies and applicable law.

IMPLEMENTATION AND AMENDMENTS

This policy shall serve as an overarching framework for gender equality across SAP-PK's organisational and programme activities.

Programme-specific gender strategies may be developed where necessary.

The policy shall be reviewed periodically to reflect:

- organisational learning;
- changes in programmes;
- changes in applicable law;
- emerging gender equality issues;
- safeguarding lessons;
- staff feedback; and
- relevant international standards and donor requirements.

Any amendment shall be approved through the organisation's established governance procedures.

COMMITMENT

South Asia Partnership Pakistan is committed to moving beyond statements of equality towards measurable institutional change.

Gender equality shall therefore be treated as an organisational responsibility rather than solely a programme theme. SAP-PK will work to ensure that women and men have equitable access to opportunities, resources, leadership and decision-making, while addressing structural and intersecting inequalities that prevent equal participation.

The organisation will maintain a continuous process of assessment, action, monitoring, learning and improvement to strengthen gender equality across its institutional and programme work.

PREVENTION OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, ABUSE, AND HARASSMENT

- Adherence to SAP-PK Gender Equity policy is incumbent on all team members.
- Sexual harassment is unacceptable conduct in the workplace and field, and will not be tolerated. This applies to all Team members at all levels. Those who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, which can include dismissal from SAP-PK services.

- Sexual harassment is not only against SAP-PK policy but also against the law. It constitutes a prohibited Team practice, which serves to undermine the integrity of team member relations, debilitates and damages morale, and interferes with productivity of the organization.

DEFINITION

Sexual harassment is the attempt to make advances, requests and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature aimed at securing sexual favors against the will of the opposite or similar sex at the work place. The following facts, conditions and circumstances constitute, but are not limited to sexual harassment.

- Conduct made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of any individual's service, and/or any other favor to existing team member associated with SAP-PK official activities.
- Conduct made implicitly or explicitly as a basis of services decisions affecting such individual.
- A SAP-PK team member found guilty of sexual harassment of a community member where he/she is engaged for the execution of official duties of SAP-PK.

Following are the circumstances, which may be considered as sexual harassment how; the list given below is not exhaustive:

- Unwarranted touching;
- Suggestive remarks or other verbal abuse in sexual context;
- Leering;
- Demands for sexual favors;
- Sexual assault;
- Unwanted attention of a sexually oriented nature, made by a person who know or ought reasonably to know that such attention is unwanted;
- An implied or expressed promise of reward for complying with or submitting to a sexually oriented request or demand;
- Use of power or physical or status; or
- An implied or expressed threat of reprisal for not complying with or submitting to a sexually oriented request in advance.

We expect:

- High moral standards;
- Trust; and
- Truth.

REPORTING OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The ED will appoint a focal person (at National and Provincial Levels) each year, preferably a female Team member, for reporting of sexual harassment. The focal person after receiving a complaint must inform the ED immediately. Strict confidentiality should be ensured in dealing with and handling of matters pertaining to sexual harassment.

PROCEDURES

The following procedures will be adopted when conducting an enquiry into the sexual harassment cases.

1. **Informal Way of Dealing with Sexual Harassment at the Workplace**
 - 1.1 An informal approach to resolve a complaint of sexual harassment can be through mediation between the parties involved and by providing advice and counseling on a strictly confidential basis.
 - 1.2 A Team member can report an incident of sexual harassment informally to the focal person, in which case the focal person can address the issue at his/her discretion in the spirit of this Code. The request may be made orally or in writing.
 - 1.3 If the incident or the case reported does constitute sexual harassment of a higher degree and the SAP-PK team member reviewing the case feels that it needs to be pursued formally for a disciplinary action, with the agreement of the complainant, the case can be taken up formally.
2. **Formal Approach**
 - 2.1 A complainant does not necessarily have to take as complaint of sexual harassment through the informal channel. S/he can launch a formal complaint at any time.
3. **Launching the Complaint**
 - 3.1 The Complainant can launch a formal complaint to the ED. ED will constitute a three member enquiry committee, where one member must be a female.
4. **Procedure of Investigation**
 - 4.1 In case a complaint is launched against a member of the senior management, no member of the Enquiry Committee should be in a position where they are directly or indirectly reporting to the accused. Assistance in the inquiry procedure could also be sought from the NC.
5. **Conducive Environment for Inquiry**
 - 5.1 The management should do its best to make temporary adjustments so that the accused and the complainant do not have to interact intensely for official purposes during the investigation period. This would include temporarily changing the office, in case both sit in one office, or taking away any extra charge (over and above his/her contract), which may give one party excessive powers over the other's job conditions. The management can also decide to send the accused on leave, or suspend the accused in accordance with the applicable laws/procedures for dealing with the cases of misconduct, if required.
 - 5.2 Retaliation from either party should be strictly monitored. During the process of the investigation work, evaluations, daily duties, reporting structure and any parallel inquiries initiated should be strictly monitored to avoid any retaliation from either side. In case the senior management has been accused of being a party, it is essential that outside monitoring and control be exercised.
6. **Evidence**

- 6.1 It is acknowledged that sexual harassment usually occurs between colleagues when they are alone; therefore usually it is difficult to produce evidence. It is strongly recommended that Team should report an offensive behavior immediately to someone they trust, even if they do not wish to launch a formal complaint at the time. Although not reporting immediately should not affect the merits of the case.
- 6.2 Detailed account of the complainant and the accused form a part of the evidence.
- 6.3 Witness statements
- 6.4 Statements of persons with whom the complainant might have discussed the incident, statements of persons from whom advice may have informally been sought, should be considered as evidence.
- 6.5 Any other document, audio or video records can be submitted. Expert technical advice can be sought for such submissions.
7. **Inquiry**
- 7.1 Upon receiving a formal complaint, the Committee shall ask the complainant to prepare a detailed statement of incidents in case the written complaint is not detailed. A statement of allegations will be drawn by the Committee and sent to the accused
- 7.2 The accused will be asked to prepare a response to the statement of allegations and submit to the Committee within a specified time.
- 7.3 The statements and other evidence acquired in the inquiry process will be considered confidential materials.
- 7.4 An officer in the organization could be designated to provide advice and assistance to each party.
- 7.5 Parties, the complainant and the accused will have the right to be represented or accompanied by a friend or a colleague.
- 7.6 The Committee will organize verbal hearings with the complainant and the accused.
- 7.7 Upon conclusion of the inquiry the report would be submitted to the ED with recommendations for further action.

GOVERNANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY MATRIX

Function	Primary Responsibility	Oversight
Policy approval	Board	General Body/Board
Strategic implementation	Executive Director	Board
HR gender equality	HR/Management	Executive Director
Gender mainstreaming	Programme Department	Executive Director
Gender data	M&E/HR	Management
Gender training	HR/Gender Focal Person	Management
Safeguarding/harassment	Designated focal mechanism	Executive Director/Board
Gender budgeting	Finance + Programme	Management
Annual reporting	Gender Focal Person/M&E	Executive Director
Policy review	Management + Gender Committee	Board

