



SUSWA

SUSTAINABLE WASH FOR ALL

Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Audit Report

GEDSI Audit Time Frame: 16th – 23th April 2025

Document

GEDSI Auditing Report, 2025

Sustainable WASH for All, SUSWA

Date

April 2025

Citation details

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Abbreviations and Acronyms:

AWP - Annual Work Plan

BC- Behavior Change

CBM - Christian Blind Mission (Disability advocacy organization)

CC - Climate Change

CCA- Climate Change Adaptation

CEDAW - The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

CGD- Child, Gender and Disability (friendly)

COWASH- the Community-led Accelerated WASH Project

CRPD -(UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

DAG - Disadvantaged group

DI- Disability Inclusion

DMM- Dignified Menstruation Management

DRR -Disaster Risk Reduction

DWSSM- Department of Water Supply and Sewerage Management

ECOSOC (UN)- Economic and Social Council

EU -the European Union

FWSSM- Federal Water Supply and Sewerage Management

FWSSMP- Federal Water Supply and Sewerage Management Project

GAP (EU) -Gender Action Plan

GDP -Gross Domestic Product

GE- Gender Equality

GEDSI - Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion

GESI - Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

GRB - Gender Responsive Budgeting

HH – Household

HR- Human Rights

HRBA -Human Rights Based Approach

HRC- Human Rights Council

KADMM- Karnali Alliance for Dignified Menstruation Management

LGBTQI+- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex

LISA- Local Government Institutional Capacity Self-Assessment

LMBIS - Line Ministry Budget Information System

MC- Municipal Council

MEL - Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

MFA- Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MHH- Menstrual Health and Hygiene

MHM -Menstrual Hygiene Management

MIS- Monitoring Information System

MUS -Multiple Use (water) System

MWF- Municipal WASH Fund

NDRRMA- National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority

NFDN -National Federation of Disabled Nepal

NIRAS- Engineering Consulting Company

NWASH- Nepal WASH monitoring information system

OA- Outcome Area

OPD -Organization for Persons with Disabilities

PCO- Project Coordination Office

PSU -Project Support Unit

PwD -Person with Disability

RVWRMP- Rural Village Water Resources Management Project

SDG- Sustainable Development Goals

SDP -Sector Development Plan

SUSWA- Sustainable WASH for All

UN -the United Nations

UNDP- United Nations Development Programme

VMW -Village Maintenance Worker

WASH -Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

WS -Water Supply

WSP- Water Safety Plan

WUSC- Water Users and Sanitation Committee

1. Project Background:

Sustainable WASH for All (SUSWA) is a Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene project funded by the Governments of Nepal, Finland, and the European Union. It aims to improve sanitation and hygiene in 42 municipalities in western Nepal, covering all 10 districts of Karnali Province. The project will be implemented over five and a half years, starting in mid-November 2022. Its three outcome areas include a strengthened environment and governance for sustainable WASH services, climate-resilient, safe, and functional water supply, and sustainable sanitation and hygiene and dignified menstruation management.

2. Objective of the GEDSI Audit:

Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) is a cross-cutting theme of SUSWA which is guided by Human Rights and Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan. It is to be integrated in the project in all of the Outcome/Output areas.

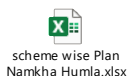
There are seven GEDSI focused indicators of GEDSI in SUSWA's result framework. In order to achieve the targets, set for with the indicators, SUSWA has been planning and implementing a variety of GEDSI activities in line with the HR/GEDSI Strategy and Action Plan. SUSWA pays attention to ensuring a meaningful integration of GEDSI. In this regard, WASH- MCs/WASH Units and SUSWA, PSU needs to check and monitor the integration of GEDSI at LG and community levels. Therefore the Project has conceptualized a GEDSI auditing with the standard check list presented below.: The auditing task will be accomplished based on the interviews, observations, and verification.

3. Methodology:

In line with the objectives and scope of GEDSI Audit, the GEDSI Auditing process was executed meticulously. Actively engaged for GEDSI Audit in **Namkha Rural Municipality**. The WASH Unit supported to conduct interactions with LG, WUSC, beneficiaries, SMC, Teachers, child club, Mother group, DMM committee, adolescent group, GRB focal person and witness the situation, GEDSI auditing and effectively manage the GEDSI Audit process.

3.1 The following steps and activities were considered in carrying out this GEDSI Audit:

- Developed the detail information sheet related to scheme level.



- GEDSI Auditing Checklist.



GEDSI Audit,
Check-list.docx

- GEDSI auditing at scheme area, Institutional Toilet/Institutional level and LG Level
- Interaction with procurement committee, WASH focal teacher, WUSC, water users, VMW, Mason
- Interaction with WASH Unit
- Field scenario and feedback sharing with WASH Unit.

3.2 Area of the GEDSI AUDIT:

- GEDSI Audit in Water Supply Scheme/Community Level
- GEDSI Audit in Institutional Toilet/Institutional Level
- GEDSI Audit in LG Level
- WASH Unit Capacity on GEDSI

3.3 Name of the District: Sarkegad R.M

Details

Humla	No.
Namkha Rural Municipality	
No. of LGs visited:	1
No. of LGs GEDSI Audited:	1
No. of Water Supply Scheme/Community Level GEDSI Audited:	1
No. of Institutional Toilet/Institution Level GEDSI Audited: (2 School and 1 Public)	3
No. of WASH-Unit meetings attended:	1
Interaction with WASH unit staff	2

Name of the Water Supply Scheme/Community Level
1. GEDSI Audit in Chatesi DWSS, Yalwang ward no. 4
Name of the Institutional Toilet/Institutional Level
1. GEDSI Audit in Buddha Basic School, Hepka ward no.1
2. GEDSI Audit in Chala Gumba Institutional Toilet, Chala Ward no.4
3. GEDSI Audit in Maha Budhha Secondary School, Yalwang ward no.4

4. GEDSI COMPLIANCE/GEDSI AUDIT

4.1 Scheme's wise GEDSI Policies Compliance/GEDSI Audit

4.1.1 GEDSI Compliance/GEDSI Audit in Water Supply Scheme/Community Level:

Name of the Scheme: Chhatesi DWSS, Yalwang ward no. 4

Implementation FY: 2080/81

Mass Meeting Participation

- Only one meeting minute was found, from the first public hearing. Out of 51 participants, only 18 were women, indicating 35.3% female representation, less than the desired 50% representation. However, it was found that the LG-level GESI Policy was followed, ensuring at least 33% women's representation in the mass meeting. The final public hearing is still pending..
- The WUSC was inclusive, comprising 7 members, including 4 women.
- There was proportionate representation of Dalit and Janajati during the mass meetings, as per SBS process.
- Household representation was below 75% during the first public hearing.

Communication and Accessibility

- Inclusive communication strategies were ensured, such as household visits and door-to-door visit and used the Rokka as collect the mass and also the telephonic conversations.
- Meeting venues were accessible to all participants, ensuring no exclusion based on disability or mobility limitations.

Guiding Principles and Inclusive Participation

- The 10 guiding principles were applied.
- PWDs or their family members were present at meetings but were not involved in decision making processes.
- According to WUSC members, while key positions like Chairperson, Treasurer, and Secretary were actively involved, other members were passive, often perceiving their role as limited to "attendance only".
- Women actively participated in discussions and decision making. The committee structure showed an inclusive composition, with women holding key roles with key position.

WUSC and Procurement Involvement

- One woman was part of the WUSC procurement committee. She received training and participated in the bid document opening.
- While key WUSC members understood and performed their roles, other members lacked awareness of their responsibilities, indicating a need for capacity building

Workforce and Task force

- A Water Safety Plan (WSP) team was not formed, which is a gap in compliance with inclusive planning practices.
- Although both male and female Village Maintenance Workers (VMWs) were identified, only the male VMW was actively working.
- Woman mason was trained, but currently inactive. Male masons are engaged in ongoing work.

Accessibility Auditing

- No formal Accessibility Audit was conducted. However, accessibility considerations were included during design and implementation.

Infrastructure and Menstrual Health Management (MHM)

- All tap stands were found accessible, including for menstruating women and girls.
- According to the Chhatesi DWSS members, no harmful menstruation-related practices exist in the locality, which is predominantly a Janajati (Lama) community. However, there are still gaps in menstrual hygiene management, particularly in pad disposal and waste management. Pads are often burned, indicating the need for improved hygiene practices and awareness.

Community Mobilization and Behavior Change

- In the absence of LRPs, Social Mobilizers (SM) and the WASH Unit were effectively mobilized to promote dignified menstruation management and sanitation awareness.

Recommendations

- Conduct the final public hearing as soon as.
- All DWSS (Drinking Water and Sanitation Schemes) should be required to safely store and maintain all official documents and meeting minute registers for a minimum of five years. This ensures transparency, accountability, and future reference for monitoring and evaluation purposes.
- Increase participation of households in public meetings as per our GEDSI policy and ensure for 75% or above.
- Empower female WUSC members and ensure their involvement in decision making process.
- Promote active participation of trained female VMWs and masons.
- Conduct a formal Accessibility Audit.
- Orient all WUSC members to enhance understanding of their roles and improve their engagement.
- Strengthen awareness and management practices around menstrual hygiene (Pad disposal) and waste disposal.

4.1.2 GEDSI Compliance/GEDSI Audit in Institutional Toilet/Institutional Level:

Name of the Scheme: Maha Buddha Secondary School, Yalwang ward no.4

Implementation FY: 2080/81

Meeting Participation and Representation

- Two meeting minutes were available: WUSC formation and first public hearing.
- 50% women participation was observed in the documented meetings.
- The final public hearing has not yet been conducted.

Inclusive Communication

- Communication efforts were inclusive, utilizing:
 - Student mobilization
 - Household visits
 - Formal invitation letters

Venue Accessibility

- Meeting venues were physically accessible for all participants.

Application of 10 Guiding Principles

- 10 GEDSI guiding principles/rules were applied during the mass meeting.

Procurement Committee Representation

- A woman was included in the procurement committee, in line with policy.
- She actively:
 - Participated in relevant training
 - Attended the bid opening
 - Contributed to procurement related decisions

Budget Transparency

- Partial budget awareness was noted:
 - Key stakeholders like SMC members and teachers had knowledge of the budget.
 - No hoarding board displaying budget information was installed.

Accessibility of WASH Infrastructure (Facilities)

- **Tap stands:**

- Not fully accessible for children and persons with disabilities (PWDs) due to slightly elevated height.
- **Handwashing stations:**
 - Not child-friendly, as their height is also elevated.

Disability and MHM Friendly Toilets

- The door size is small, and the presence of a small stair impacts wheelchair access (though no current wheelchair users were found).
- The commode installation is incorrect, placed too close to the wall instead of centrally positioned.
- There was no sealed bucket available for safe pad disposal.

Accessibility Audit

- No formal Accessibility Audit was conducted for this scheme.

Behavior Change & Hygiene Practices

- While there was no formal LRP, the Social Mobilizer and staff facilitated sessions as per the TOR.
- Sessions were scheduled at convenient times, lasted 1–2 hours, and were delivered respectfully and effectively.
- Positive behavior changes were observed, including:
 - Nail cutting habits
 - Regular handwashing practices

Child Club and Adolescent Engagement

- A Child Club was formed, but It was not mobilized for sanitation or MHM awareness activities.
- No adolescent group was formed at the school level.

Recommendations

1. Conduct the final public hearing and ensure active participation of marginalized groups.
2. All documents related to scheme should be required to safely store and maintain all official documents and meeting minute registers for a minimum of five years. This ensures transparency, accountability, and future reference for monitoring and evaluation purposes.
3. Install a budget hoarding board in a visible location for public awareness and transparency.

4. Ensure tap stands and handwashing stations to appropriate height standards, especially for children and PWDs.
5. Ensure or upgrade the disability-friendly toilet:
 - Wider doors
 - Ramp instead of stairs
 - Correct placement of the commode
6. Conduct a formal Accessibility Audit.
7. Mobilize the Child Club for hygiene promotion and MHM awareness and form an adolescent group, even in lower grades, for early sensitization on sanitation and hygiene topics.

4.1.3 GEDSI Compliance/GEDSI Audit in Institutional Toilet/Institutional Level:

Name of the Scheme: Chala Gumba Public Toilet, ward no. 4

Implementation FY: 2080/81

Mass Meeting Participation

- The women's representation in the mass meetings was above 50%,
- There was proportionate representation of Dalits, Janajatis, and Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), ensuring diverse and inclusive participation in the meetings.

Inclusive Communication

- Invitations were communicated through various channels including Rokka (messenger) mobilization and household visits.

Accessible Venue

- All meeting venues were accessible to everyone.

Application of 10 Guiding Principles

- The 10 guiding principles were applied effectively.

Procurement Committee Representation

- A woman was included in the procurement committee and had received relevant training; however, her presence was not reflected in the bid opening documents.

Budget Transparency

- Partial budget awareness was noted:
 - Key person had knowledge of the budget.
 - No hoarding board displaying budget information was installed

Accessibility of WASH Infrastructure (Facilities)

- **Tap stands:**

- Not fully accessible for children and persons with disabilities (PWDs) due to slightly elevated height and there is no water.
- **Handwashing stations:**
 - Not child-friendly, as their height is also elevated.

Disability and MHM Friendly Toilets

- The door size is small (though no current wheelchair users were found).
- There was no sealed bucket available for safe pad disposal.

Accessibility Audit

- The accessibility audit was not conducted, and the documentation related to the accessibility measures is not available.

Behavior Change & Hygiene Practices

- While there was no formal LRP, the Social Mobilizer and staff facilitated sessions as per the TOR.

Recommendations:

- Install a budget hoarding board in a visible location for public awareness and transparency.
- Ensure the disability-friendly toilet like: Wider doors, Ramp and ventilation.
- Correct placement of the commode
- Conduct a formal Accessibility Audit to identify and address design gaps.
- Mobilize the Task force for hygiene promotion

4.1.4 GEDSI Compliance/GEDSI Audit in Institutional Toilet/Institutional Level:

Name of the Scheme: Buddha Basic School, Hepka ward no. 1

Implementation FY: 2080/81

Mass Meeting Participation

- The women's representation in the mass meetings was 50%.
- There was proportionate representation of Dalits, Janajatis, ensuring diverse and inclusive participation in the meetings.

Inclusive Communication

- Invitations were communicated through various channels including student mobilization, Rokka mobilization, WUCS mobilization, telephone.

Accessible Venue

- All meeting venues were accessible to everyone, including persons with disabilities, ensuring that the spaces were inclusive and conducive to participation from all groups.

Application of 10 Guiding Principles

- The 10 guiding principles were applied effectively.

Procurement Committee Representation

- The school followed the joint procurement committee at the Palika level, which included one woman in the decision making process, ensuring gender representation.

Budget Transparency

- Women, Dalits, Janajatis, and persons with disabilities (PWDs) were informed about the toilet scheme's budget. Additionally, a wall painting displaying budget information was observed, contributing to transparency and public awareness.

Accessibility of Water and Sanitation Facilities

- All institutional tap stands were accessible for all.
- Handwashing stations were also fully accessible to children and PWDs, ensuring inclusive hygiene practices.

Accessibility Audit

- The accessibility audit was not conducted, and the documentation related to the accessibility measures is not available.

Disability and MHM Friendly Toilets

- The girls' toilet and the disability-friendly toilet are currently locked and have not been used yet. Due to low water pressure, they have not been in use. The water drum has not been delivered yet. Once it is connected, all the toilets can then be opened and it will be easier to clean them.
- There is no extra sealed bucket available for pad disposal in girls toilet.
- A functional lock was available on the disability-friendly toilet. It was understood that this toilet was designated exclusively for persons with disabilities (PWDs), ensuring their privacy and appropriate use of the facility.

Menstruation Management Awareness

- No LRP but SM facilitated sessions as per the Terms of Reference (TOR), and although MHM sessions were not held. Positive changes in hygiene behaviors, such as improved handwashing and nail-cutting habits, were also observed.

Child Club and Adolescent group Mobilization

- A child club has been formed in the school; however, it has not been mobilized for sanitation-related activities. Additionally, no adolescent group has been established.

Recommendations:

- Actively engage the child club in activities such as hygiene education, maintenance of sanitation facilities, and promoting handwashing practices. This will instill a sense of responsibility and cleanliness in students.
- Ensure regular and unhindered access to the disability-friendly toilet for PWDs. The facility should remain accessible at all times and not be repurposed or locked without need.
- Ensure the provision of a separate, sealed bucket inside the girls' toilet for the safe and hygienic disposal of sanitary pads, promoting proper menstrual hygiene management (MHM).

4.3. GEDSI Compliance/GEDSI Audit in LG Level:

Policy Formulation and Publication

- The Inclusive WASH Act, GEDSI Policy, and DMM Policy have been formulated, approved, and are set to be officially published in the local gazette by Jestha 15.
- This commitment reflects institutional readiness to formalize GEDSI integration in the WASH sector.

Involvement of Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs)

- OPDs are present at the LG level and have been actively involved in WASH planning, policy formulation, and monitoring activities.
- Their participation was ensured.

Implementation of GEDSI Policy in Activities

- The GEDSI policy has been followed, both directly and indirectly, in events like trainings, workshops, and public meetings:
 - 33% women's representation and proportionate representation of marginalized groups have been generally maintained.
- However, proper documentation of these practices is lacking, and LG has agreed to ensure complete documentation going forward.

Monitoring and Accessibility Audits

- LG has its own monitoring guideline.
- During accessibility audits and monitoring events, representation of women and persons with disabilities (PWDs) was ensured.
- Monitoring data is collected and managed using SMART ME software and Google Drive, ensuring both qualitative and quantitative data is captured in a disaggregated manner and progress reports were available in the accounts section, during bill settlement these progress report are mandatory.

Gender-Responsive and Disability-Inclusive Planning

- A workshop was conducted and relevant plans were collected, but the final documentation is still in progress.
- LG has committed to implementing the plans aligned with the Seven-Step Planning Process, ensuring structured inclusivity.

Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) in SUTTRA

- GRB coding has been completed in the SUTTRA system, and activities are categorized following the Ministry of Finance (MoF) guidelines.
- However, the Section for Women, Children, and Senior Citizens is currently inactive, leading to limited visibility of their roles in GRB. Despite this, the account section is managing GRB-related tasks and ensuring financial balance aligned with inclusivity objectives.

WASH Management Committee (WASH MC) Involvement

- The WASH Management Committee plays an active role in decision-making regarding GRB.

Recommendations

- Ensure timely publication of all approved policies in the local gazette to reinforce institutional commitment.
- Strengthen documentation practices to capture GEDSI integration in events and decision making.
- Revitalize the Section for Women, Children, and Senior Citizens to play an active role in GRB related planning and execution.
- Finalize and implement the gender-responsive and disability-inclusive plans developed through workshops.
- Continue to ensure OPD and PWD representation in all stages of planning, monitoring, and audits.

4.4 WASH Unit Capacity on GEDSI:

Gaps and Areas for Improvement:

- WASH Unit is only partially familiar with HR/GEDSI strategy and action plan.
- Limited familiarity with GESI policies of LG.
- Limited, Familiar with Accessibility Audit Checklist.
- Partial awareness of 10 guiding principles/rules for community-level events.
- Partial understanding of GEDSI compliance in PIM and other field guidelines.

- Partial awareness of Gender Responsive and Disability Inclusive Plan.

Recommendations:

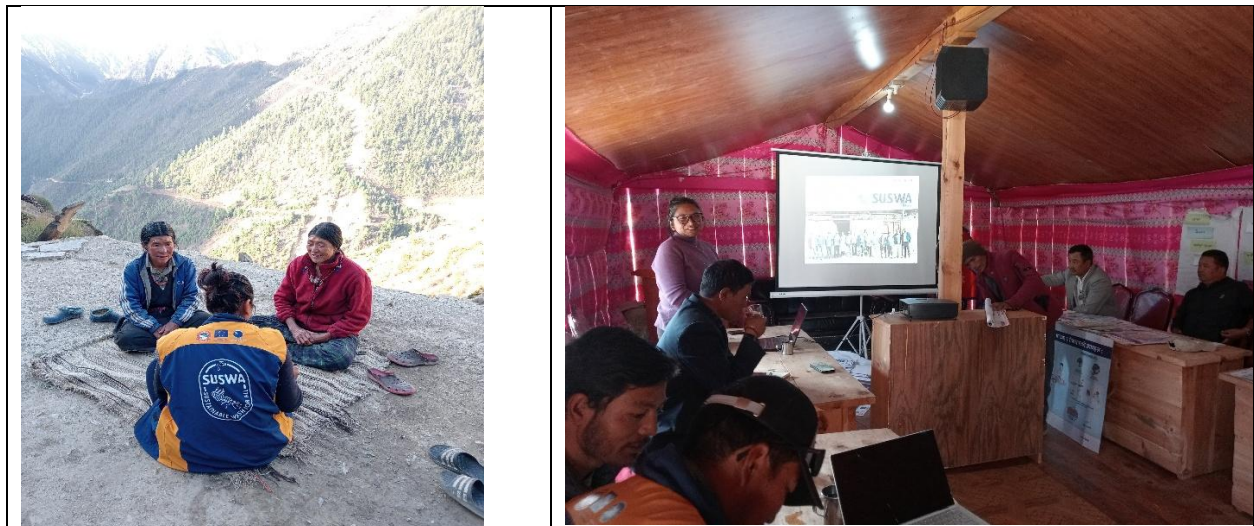
- Conduct sessions to enhance WASH Unit's knowledge on HR/GEDSI strategy and action plans.
- Conduct sessions on GESI policies of LG level.
- Conduct sessions to enhance WASH Unit on the Accessibility Audit Checklist.
- Conduct sessions to enhance understanding of the 10 guiding principles/rules for community events.
- Conduct sessions to enhance GEDSI compliance in PIM and field guidelines.
- Conduct sessions to improve knowledge of Gender Responsive and Disability Inclusive Plan.

5 Conclusion:

This audit highlights areas of strength and improvement in GEDSI compliance across water supply schemes, institutional sanitation facilities, and local governance. While positive steps have been taken in inclusivity and accessibility, further efforts are needed to ensure equitable representation, systematic planning, and implementation of GEDSI principles in WASH programs or activities.

6. Annex:

Photos:





WASH Unit Meeting Minute: Namkha Rural Municipality Humla, G