


**CAPABILITY STATEMENT**

# GENDER AND SOCIAL EQUITY (GSE)

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**.

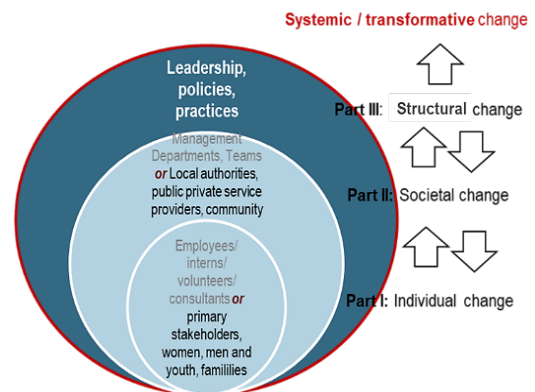
<https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/who-we-are/vision-mission>

Our commitment to our vision, 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.

This translates to fostering inclusive systemic development approaches and strategies, 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.

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

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


**EQUALITY**
**EQUITY**
**EMPOWERMENT**

## GSE IN OUR ORGANIZATION

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

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. This relies on **our leaders, our teams, 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 that 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’.**

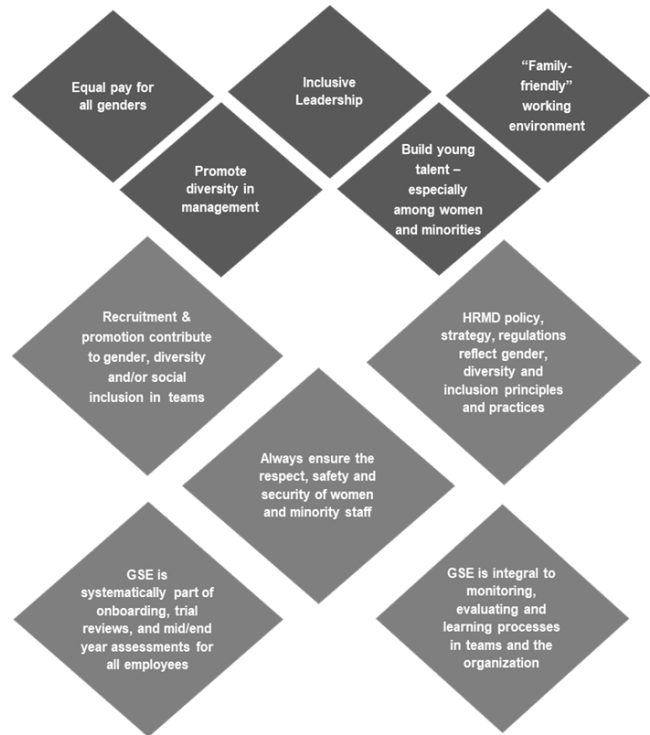
## GSE IN OUR PROGRAMS

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); and [Water, Food & Climate](#) (WFC). We also consider GSE as part of **Do No Harm** in our [humanitarian response](#), and 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 and stakeholder assessments. Our [GSE marker](#) supports our teams in the design of projects and the integration of GSE in our intervention strategies. The results of our analyses and GSE marker, inform whether GSE is addressed as significant or principal, in our theory of change and subsequent change management throughout the project cycle. **Participatory quality assurance**, monitoring, accountability, learning and evaluation instruments which are GSE disaggregated, provide evidence for [policy dialogue/advocacy](#), institutional and sectoral learning, and innovation related to Gender and Social Equity.

## OUR GSE DIAMONDS

Our GSE Diamonds serve as a benchmark across our organization, and teams, to strive toward and 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 and empowerment are integral and transversal. No matter the sector we are engaging in, we are guided by fundamental GSE principles and working approaches.



[https://www.helvetas.org/Publications-PDFs/HELVETAS\\_GSE\\_Policy\\_2022\\_EN.pdf](https://www.helvetas.org/Publications-PDFs/HELVETAS_GSE_Policy_2022_EN.pdf)

## OUR 9 PRINCIPLES

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

## OUR ADVISORY SERVICES

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

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

- Conduct GSE related organizational audits, support GSE related policy and/or strategy development
- Support integration of GSE in human resources management and development policies, practices, Develop related tools and capacities.

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

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

## INEQUALITY, INSTABILITY AND INSECURITY

Gender equality and social equity are people-centred and human rights-based. These are integral to inclusive and sustainable development. These include a wide range of **social inclusion, social cohesion, social protection, social empowerment, social security** and **social justice** initiatives.

Where there is disproportionate gender inequality and social inequity, there is interdependent socio-economic inequality, political instability and/or environmental insecurity. These interlinked disparities, if not addressed **exacerbate endemic and/or persistent cycles of poverty, exclusion, and injustice**. It is a fact that a person is more likely to be poor and vulnerable if the person is female and/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 and systemically, requires a multi-dimensional, intersectional, intergenerational, and 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 [5](#), [10](#) and [16](#).

### Forecast

Moving forward, we anticipate investing more in:

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

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

**Digitalization and mobility:** for services, for good governance, for resilience, considering **rights, gender divides and digital harms** for women and youth, as well those on the move as migrants, IDPs and/or refugees.

## 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>

<https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/what-we-do/how-we-work/our-projects/africa/ethiopia/ethiopia-youthful-labour-market>

**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>

<https://www.helvetas.org/en/tajikistan/what-we-do/how-we-work/our-projects/Asia/Tajikistan/tajikistan-justice>

**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)

<https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/what-we-do/how-we-work/our-projects/latin-america/bolivia/bolivia-cocoa-project>

**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/multimedia-stories-from-our-projects/ukraine-breather-on-the-run>

<https://www.helvetas.org/en/switzerland/what-we-do/how-we-work/our-projects/asia/nepal/nepal-earthquake-relief>

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

### OTHER EXPERIENCES

#### Unpaid Care Work



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

#### Gender Based Violence



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

#### Culture & Peace



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

## OUR GENDER AND SOCIAL EQUITY EXPERT/S



**Agnieszka Kroskowska**  
GSE Coordinator / Senior Advisor  
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We also have committed GSE focal persons around the world in our country programmes.

## OUR GSE PARTNERSHIPS, ALLIANCES AND NETWORKS



SHAREWEB  
**GENDER**

SDC Gendernet  
<https://www.shareweb.ch/site/Gender>  
All gender issues across sectors

**KOFF**

Die Schweizer Plattform für Friedensförderung  
La plateforme suisse de promotion de la paix  
La piattaforma svizzera per la promozione della pace  
The Swiss platform for peacebuilding

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



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

We also forge and are a part of many strategic partnerships, alliances and networks specific to and/or related to gender and social equity in the countries and 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>

- [https://www.helvetas.org/Publications-PDFs/HELVETAS\\_GSE\\_Policy\\_2022\\_EN.pdf](https://www.helvetas.org/Publications-PDFs/HELVETAS_GSE_Policy_2022_EN.pdf)
- [https://www.helvetas.org/Publications-PDFs/GSE\\_Strategy\\_21-24\\_Summary\\_Final\\_En.pdf](https://www.helvetas.org/Publications-PDFs/GSE_Strategy_21-24_Summary_Final_En.pdf)
- [https://www.helvetas.org/Publications-PDFs/GSE\\_FocalPerson\\_ToR\\_2018\\_EN.pdf](https://www.helvetas.org/Publications-PDFs/GSE_FocalPerson_ToR_2018_EN.pdf)

## CONTACT US

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

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What type of organization and programs do we commit to?

