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Himal Innovative Development & Research Pvt. Ltd.



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AN ANALYSIS

OF GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGET ALLOCATION AND SPENDING

TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND
ADVANCING WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN NEPAL

STUDY REPORT



Government
of Ireland
International
Development
Programme

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Government of Nepal

Ministry of Women, Children, Gender and Sexual Minorities and Social Security

Singhadurbar, Kathmandu



FOREWORD

The Government of Nepal has expressed higher level political commitment to advance gender equality through the Constitution of Nepal and other legislative measures. The Constitution guarantees gender equality and women's rights as fundamental rights and state obligations through Articles 18, 38, and 42, along with broader provisions on equality, inclusion, non-discrimination and social justice adopting the principle of affirmative measures and proportional participation in all level of State mechanism. In line with these commitments, the Ministry of Women, Children, Gender and Sexual Minorities and Social Security together with other government institutions, promotes Gender Equality and Social Inclusion through policies, planning, budgeting, and the implementation of national and international commitments on gender equality, women's rights, and social justice.

The Government of Nepal has been implementing Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) since 2007, further strengthening the approach through the adoption of the GRB Guidelines (2012) and the GRB Localization Guidelines (2016). These efforts are also aligned with Nepal's commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the national CEDAW Roadmap, which are being implemented through policy, institutional, programmatic, and financing reforms.

This study report entitled **"An Analysis of Gender Responsive Budget Allocation and Spending to Promote Gender Equality and Advancing Women's Rights in Nepal"** by ActionAid International Nepal in collaboration with Himal Innovative Development and Research Nepal (HIDR Nepal) and local partner organizations, provides critical evidence and policy insights on the need to strengthen the effectiveness of GRB implementation across the three tiers of the Government of Nepal. The findings of the study are expected to contribute significantly to improving public investment, strengthening gender-responsive financing, enhancing transparency and accountability in public expenditure, and supporting evidence-based advocacy and legislative & policy reform. I am hopeful that the study will directly contribute to the effective implementation of Nepal's commitments under the constitutional & national level legislative direction, CEDAW Roadmap and National Gender Equality Policy along with broader national mandates aimed at ensuring gender equality, women's rights, and the socio-economic empowerment of marginalized communities.

I extend my sincere thanks to everyone who has been involved in the preparation of this report and its publication.


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FOREWORD

It is with great pleasure that ActionAid International Nepal (AAIN) presents this report, “An Analysis of Gender Responsive Budget Allocation and Spending to Promote Gender Equality and Advancing Women’s Rights in Nepal.” The study reflects AAIN’s continued commitment to promoting gender and economic justice, and social inclusion, envisioning a society where women, girls, and marginalized communities can equally exercise their rights and access opportunities with dignity.



The study analyzes the trends, effectiveness, and implementation of Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB) in federal and local levels, highlighting both progress and persistent gaps in addressing inequalities faced by women and marginalized groups. Focusing on the Ministry of Women, Children, Gender and Sexual Minorities and Social Security at federal and Madi Municipality, Shankharapur Municipality and Manahari Rural Municipality at local level, the findings underscore the need for stronger and more effective implementation of GRB to advance women’s rights and Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) in Nepal.

The Constitution of Nepal guarantees gender equality and women’s rights as fundamental rights and state obligation, through Article 18, 38, and 42, ensuring provisions related to on equality, inclusion, and social justice. These ensure women’s protection, empowerment, and equal participation in all spheres of life. The Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB) framework supports these commitments by integrating GESI analysis throughout the budget cycle to address structural inequalities, promote gender-equitable investments, and improve outcomes for women and marginalized groups. Nepal’s GRB framework is firmly anchored in CEDAW, the SDGs, and the Local Government Operation Act (2017). However, implementation remains largely symbolic, requiring stronger institutional ownership, greater accountability, and full integration of gender analysis across all stages of the budgeting process.

AAIN believes that achieving substantive equality requires gender-responsive financing, accountable governance, and transformative systems that address structural inequalities and unequal power relations. This research aims to strengthen evidence-based policy dialogue and advocacy for a more inclusive and gender-just society. We hope this report will contribute to the ongoing efforts of the Government of Nepal to advance gender equality and social justice aligned with Nepal’s commitments to the SDGs and the national CEDAW Roadmap, which are being implemented through policy, institutional, programmatic, and financing reforms.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the Ministry of Women, Children, Gender and Sexual Minorities and Social Security, the Ministry of Finance, the local governments of Madi Municipality, Manahari Rural Municipality, and Shankharapur Municipality, local partner Chitwan Sakriya Women’s Foundation and Makwanpur Mahila Utthan Samaj, women’s groups, community members, and all stakeholders who generously shared their experiences and insights throughout the research and validation process. We also express our appreciation to the research team from Himal Innovative Development and Research (HIDR) Nepal for their technical leadership and dedicated efforts.

Nevertheless, AAIN sincerely thanks ActionAid Ireland for its insightful collaboration and continued support, as well as the Government of Ireland’s International Development Programme for its financial contribution, which made this study possible. I also like to express gratitude to the team of ActionAid International Nepal for their valuable contributions and coordination throughout the study process.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sujeeta Mathema'. The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a dotted line.

.....
Sujeeta Mathema
Executive Director, ActionAid International Nepal

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

HIDR would like to express its sincere appreciation to ActionAid International Nepal (AAIN) for their trust in assigning this study and for their continuous technical and institutional support throughout the process. HIDR also acknowledges the coordination support provided by Chitwan Sakriya Women's Foundation (CSWF) in facilitating field-level engagement.

This report, "Gender Responsive Budget Allocation and Spending to Promote Gender Equality and Advancing Women's Rights in Nepal," has been prepared by Himal Innovative Development and Research (HIDR), Nepal, with support from ActionAid International Nepal (AAIN) in coordination with Chitwan Sakriya Women's Foundation (CSWF). The study examines trends, effectiveness, and implementation of Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB) at the federal and local levels, undertaken under a jointly developed Terms of Reference.

The publication is based on comprehensive qualitative and quantitative research conducted in December 2025, complemented by insights generated through consultations and validation workshops held in two municipalities, namely Madi Municipality, Chitwan, and Manahari Rural Municipality, Makwanpur, in April 2026.

The report critically analyzes the status of Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB) in Nepal, including its implementation gaps and key recommendations. It further reviews budget trends from 2023 to 2025, identifies gaps across the budget cycle, and assesses implications for marginalized women and girls.

HIDR extends its gratitude to the Government of Nepal, particularly the Ministry of Women, Children, Gender and Sexual Minorities, and Social Securityⁱ and the Ministry of Finance, as well as Manahari Rural Municipality (Makwanpur), Madi Municipality (Chitwan), and Shankharapur Municipality (Kathmandu), for their cooperation and support during the study process.

Appreciation is also extended to AAIN's local partners, including Chitwan Sakriya Women's Foundation (CSWF), Makwanpur Mahila Utthan Samaj (MMUS), and Nepal Mahila Ekata Samaj (NMES), as well as to women's groups, community members, and other stakeholders who contributed through key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), case studies, consultations, and validation exercises, thereby enriching the findings of this report.

Special acknowledgment is extended to the HIDR study team for their technical leadership and rigorous engagement throughout the research process, and to the reviewers from AAIN for their constructive feedback, coordination, and technical support. HIDR further extends its appreciation to all individuals and institutions who directly and indirectly contributed to the successful completion of this study.

Indu Tuladhar
Chair, HIDR

ⁱ The ministries within the Government of Nepal have undergone restructuring. Accordingly, the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens (MoWCSC) has been renamed as the Ministry of Women, Children, Gender and Sexual Minorities, and Social Security, while the Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration (MoFAGA) is now the Ministry of Land Management, Cooperatives, Federal Affairs and General Administration. However, as the GRB study process, including data collection and analysis, was conducted prior to the restructuring, this report retains the former ministry names throughout.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAIN	ActionAid International Nepal
BMIS	Budget Management Information System
BPfA	Beijing Platform for Action
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CSWF	Chitwan Sakriya Women's Foundation
CSU	Civil Society Unit
FCHV	Female Community Health Volunteer
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FY	Fiscal Year
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GRB	Gender Responsive Budget
GRBC	Gender Responsive Budgeting Committee
HIDR	Himal Innovative Development and Research
IFMIS	Integrated Financial Management Information System
KII	Key Informant Interview
LGOA	Local Government Operation Act
LISA	Local Government Institutional Self-Assessment
LMBIS	Line Ministry Budget Information System
MDAC	Ministerial Development Action Committee
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoFAGA	Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration
MoFALD	Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development
MoWCSC	Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens
MMUS	Makwanpur Mahila Utthan Samaj
MTEF	Medium-Term Expenditure Framework
NDAC	National Development Action Committee
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIWF	National Indigenous Women's Forum
NMES	Nepal Mahila Ekata Samaj
NPC	National Planning Commission
OBC	Other Backward Classes
PLMBIS	Provincial Line Ministry Budget Information System
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIMS	Social Information Management System
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SuTRA	Sub-National Treasury Regulatory Application
ToR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of Trainers
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VDC	Village Development Committee

GLOSSARY

GRB: GRB is a framework that integrates equity into every phase of the government fiscal policy, program and budget process. It transforms underlying budget structures to fulfill gender equality commitments, rather than just allocating budget for women and targeted groups.

IFMIS: IFMIS is a centralized digital framework that unifies an organization's core financial operations such as budgeting, accounting, treasury, and debt management.

MTEF: A multi year budgeting and planning approach adopted by the Government of Nepal to align policies, priorities, and expenditures over a medium term period, generally covering three fiscal years.

BMIS: BMIS is a core component of the IFMS which manages the budget cycle of central agency such as MoF.

LMBIS: LMBIS is designed to support the line ministries and spending agencies in budget execution and tracking.

PLMBIS: PLMBIS is a budget management system established across all the seven provinces to support provincial line ministries in budget execution and tracking.

SuTRA: SuTRA is developed to facilitate and implement a structured financial management procedure of the sub-national level.

LISA: A web-based performance assessment and evaluation tool developed by MoFAGA to enable local governments to assess administrative performance, identify gaps, and strengthen public service delivery.

SIMS: A web-based data management system that streamlines social welfare, anti-trafficking efforts, and evidence-based planning. It creates integrated registries to reduce data duplication, coordinates benefit distribution (including allowances), improves crisis response (disaster and pandemic situations), and supports inclusive planning for vulnerable groups, including women, children, elderly persons, and persons with disabilities. It also enables data-driven decision-making for development projects.”

Seven Step Planning Process: is a decentralized, participatory framework mandated by the Local Government Operation Act (LGOA) for municipal and rural governments (Palikas) which ensures that annual budgets and development plans are driven by grassroots community needs.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The study, commissioned by ActionAid International Nepal and undertaken by Himal Innovative Development and Research (HIDR), assesses the effectiveness of Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) mechanisms at both federal and local levels in Nepal. At the federal level, the assessment focuses on the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens (MoWCSC), while at the local level it covers three municipalities: Shankharapur Municipality, Manahari Rural Municipality, and Madi Municipality. The study aims to track budget trends between 2023 and 2025, identify gaps in the budget cycle, and evaluate the real-world impact of GRB policies on marginalized women and girls.

In terms of methodology, a mixed-methods approach was employed to generate a comprehensive understanding of GRB implementation. The study included a secondary review of 44 documents, comprising national policies, federal Red Books, and local budget reports. Primary data collection involved 23 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), 6 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and 5 in-depth case studies with diverse stakeholders and community groups. An intersectional analytical lens was applied to examine differentiated impacts across caste, ethnicity, and disability, alongside a review of the “Local Level Seven-Step Planning Tool” to assess procedural and institutional integration of GRB.

The study identified, that Nepal’s GRB framework is anchored in international commitments, including CEDAW and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as domestic legislation such as the Local Government Operation Act, 2017. However, despite the existence of formal mechanisms, several gaps persist. Procedurally, financial management

systems like LMBIS and SuTRA incorporate gender coding, yet operational clarity among decision-makers remains limited. Institutional coordination between the federal Gender Responsive Budgeting Committee (GRBC) and local governments is weak, and many GRB strategies developed in 2016 have not been updated to align with the current federal governance structure. Conceptually, GRB is often narrowly perceived as a women-targeted program rather than a comprehensive framework addressing the needs of all marginalized groups.

At the federal level, the MoWCSC demonstrates limited institutional commitment. Mandated internal GRB committees are often non-functional, and GRB knowledge is concentrated among technical IT staff rather than policy or program leads. At the local level, municipal implementation tends to be procedural, with women’s participation frequently occurring after budgets are approved, restricting their influence on priority-setting. Across both levels, GRB continues to operate voluntarily guided by executive decisions rather than enforceable legal provisions, and is seldom incorporated into high-level monitoring or accountability mechanisms.

Although Nepal has established a strong procedural and institutional foundation for GRB, the practice remains largely symbolic rather than transformative. To implement GRB, efforts must focus on strengthening conceptual understanding among leadership, clarifying institutional roles, and embedding rigorous, activity-level gender analysis throughout all stages of planning, budgeting, and review. Only through such systemic integration can GRB become an effective instrument for promoting equitable and sustainable outcomes for women and marginalized groups.

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SECTION
01

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY



INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

1.1 Background of the Study

A Gender-Responsive Budget (GRB) addresses the diverse needs of all individuals' including women and men, girls and boys, people with different gender identities including disadvantaged communities by ensuring an equitable distribution of resources and fostering equal opportunities. Beyond simple allocation, GRB involves transforming budget structures to fulfill gender equality commitments. These frameworks guide stakeholders through every phase of the government budget process, helping them develop and implement strategies for lasting change.¹

GRB originated in Australia in 1984 through the Women's Budget Initiative, when its federal government introduced the world's first Women's Budget Statement, establishing Australia as a pioneer in gender-responsive budgeting and gender equality advancement.² Subsequently, the Beijing Platform for Action of 1995 underscored the significance

of integrating a gender perspective into budgetary policies, for advancing women's rights.³

Following the Beijing conference, South Africa launched the first initiative in 1995 through a collaboration between a parliamentary joint committee and women's rights.⁴ This prompted for parallel initiatives in countries like Uganda, Tanzania, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. To date, more than 90 countries in the world have initiated GRB, including 25 from the Asia-Pacific region.⁵

In South Asia, India (1998), Sri Lanka (2001), Nepal (2007), and Bangladesh (2009), have institutionalized GRB within their budget and planning process.⁶ Nepal, specifically, has practiced GRB for nearly two decades, following the induction in 2007/08⁷ to integrate GRB in annual budget. Nepal has aligned its national policies with international frameworks such as the 2030 Agenda and the Beijing Platform for Action (1995). To institutionalize these commitments, it introduced the

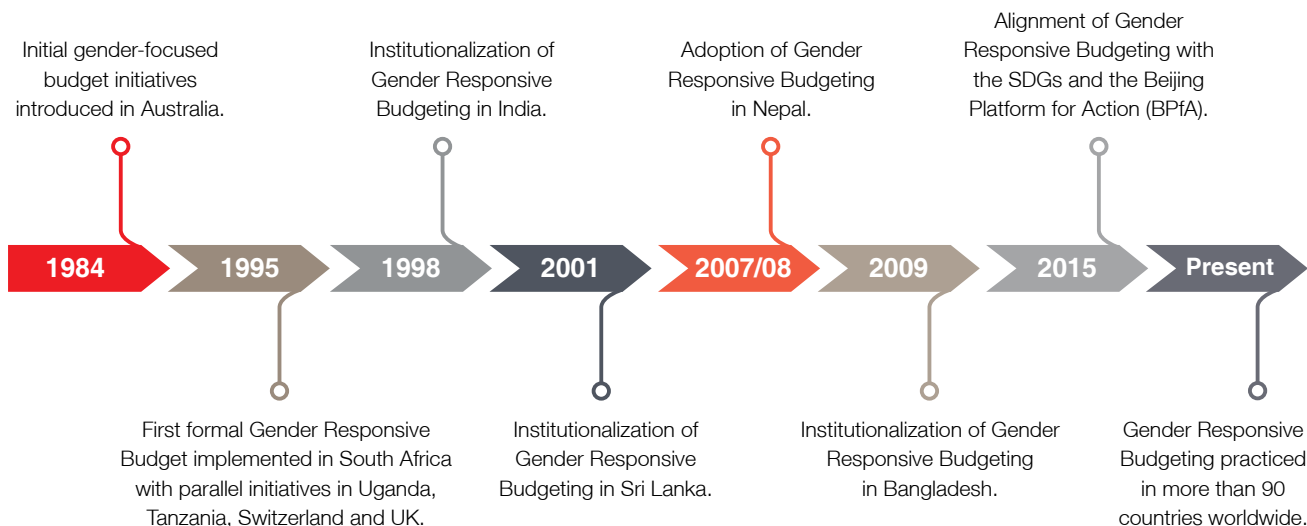


Figure 1: Major Milestones in the Evolution of Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB)

¹ Stephenson, Mary-Ann. 2018. *A Guide to Gender Responsive Budgeting*. Oxfam Women's Budget Group. DOI: 10.21201/2017.1848

² Madhusudhanan, S. 2018. *Gender Responsive Budgeting: A Lesson Learned and Way Forward*. *International Journal of Applied Economics, Finance and Accounting* ISSN 2577-767X Vol. 2. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330679489_Gender_Responsive_Budgeting_A_Lesson_Learned_and_Way_Forward/fulltext/5c4f1d49a6fdcc6b5cff514/Gender-Responsive-Budgeting-A-Lesson-Learned-and-Way-Forward.pdf

³ *Beijing Declaration*, 1995. <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA%20E.pdf>

⁴ *UN Women Asia and the Pacific*. ND. *Fact and Figures*. <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/countries/india/national-planning-and-budgeting/fact-and-figures>

⁵ *Ibid*

⁶ Panday, P.K., and Chowdhury, S. 2021. *Gender Responsive Budgeting in South Asia: Experience of Bangladeshi Local Government (1st ed.)*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003148661>

⁷ *UN Women*. 2016. *Gender Responsive Budgeting in the Asia Pacific Region: A status Report*. United Nations. https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20ESEAsia/Docs/Publications/2016/12/GRB_report-for-web.pdf

GRB Formulation Guidelines in 2012 and the GRB Localization Strategy in 2016.

While these guidelines and strategies have laid the foundation for gender mainstreaming in Nepal's budgeting process, effective implementation remains a challenge, with persistent gaps preventing budget allocations from translating into tangible outcomes despite institutional mechanisms such as the GRB Committee and formal guidelines.

In this context, Himal Innovative Development and Research Pvt. Ltd. (HIDR), in collaboration with AAIN and CSWF, conducted a study on women-related budget allocations and expenditures, examining the implementation of the GRB Guidelines (2012) at the federal level and the GRB Localization Strategy (2016) across Shankharapur Municipality (Kathmandu), Manahari Rural Municipality (Makwanpur), and Madi Municipality (Chitwan). The research is guided by the following research objectives:

1.2 Objectives of the study

The overall objective of the assignment is to analyze Nepal's national budget trends, focusing specifically on allocations and expenditures under the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens of last three fiscal years (2023-2025) AD/ FY 2079-2083 BS. Furthermore, the study examines three selected municipalities of local government through a gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) perspective, linking these findings to the GRB frameworks adopted by the Government of Nepal. These broader objectives will be achieved through the following specific objectives:

- Track the budget allocation and spending trends in advancing women's rights (from gender equality and social inclusion perspectives) at least of three years (2023-2025) at federal level (focusing Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens (MOWCSC) of last three fiscal years (2023-2025) and at three local Palika (Shankharapur Municipality in Kathmandu, Manahari Rural Municipality in Makwanpur and Madi municipality of Chitwan).
- Identify the gaps and challenges to integrate GRB within the budget cycle process that hinder gender equality and inclusivity in MOWCSC and the three target municipalities.

- Assess the Impact of gender and inclusion gaps on women and girls' rights by documenting cases studies and testimonies from marginalized women and girls that includes informal labor, survivors, economically disadvantaged).

1.3 Proposed Modality/ Approach

The study employed mixed research methods, including both quantitative and qualitative approaches, while drawing on primary and secondary sources of data. Secondary data were collected through an extensive desk review, whereas primary data were gathered through Key Informant Interviews (KIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and case studies. Both primary and secondary data sources were used for cross-verification, substantiation, and triangulation to derive the study's key findings. The research approaches employed are described below:

i. Secondary Data

Secondary data was collected through a comprehensive Desk Review, and the components are outlined below:

• Desk Review

The desk review examined international and national frameworks, policies, and guidelines related to gender-responsive budgeting, providing insights into the theoretical foundations of financing for women and GRB. A total of 44 documents were reviewed including 15 GRB-related national and international policies and legal instruments; 11 federal-level annual policy and program documents, Red Books and progress reports of FY (2022-2025); and 18 local-level annual budget books, progress reports, policy and program documents of FY (2023-2025) and from the latter quantitative data were gathered. A complete list of the reviewed documents is provided in Annex-I.

At the local level, the Seven-Step Planning Process was specifically used to analyze how gender considerations are incorporated across different stages of the planning cycle. This multi-layered methodology enabled a systematic assessment of coherence between GRB norms and their operationalization within Nepal's decentralized planning and budgeting processes.

ii. Primary Data

The primary data was gathered through KII, FGD's and Case Studies among various stakeholders.

KII and FGD: A total of 24 KIIs and 6 FGDs were conducted at federal and local levels to capture institutional and grassroots perspectives on GRB. While KIIs engaged diverse government stakeholders through semi-structured interviews to assess lived experiences, inequalities, and policy effectiveness, FGDs with marginalized and vulnerable community groups provided critical insights into women's rights, budgeting, and the practical effectiveness of GRB.

Case Studies: The case study method generated in-depth insights into GRB design, implementation, and outcomes across governance levels and sectors. Five case studies were selected based on gender integration in budgeting, participation, documentation, measurable gender budget coding, and innovative or notable gender equality outcomes.

The checklists for KII, FGD and Case Studies are mentioned in the Annex II. And an overview of the participants involved in the KIIs, FGDs and Case studies is presented in Annex III.

1.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted in two parts: quantitative (budget analysis) and qualitative analysis. Quantitative analysis was based on a desk review of secondary budget datasets from the federal government (Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare) and three municipalities, obtained through formal coordination with relevant agencies facilitated by CSWF/ActionAid.

Qualitative data collected through desk review, KIIs, FGDs, and case studies, then systematically analyzed through transcription, coding, thematic identification, and triangulation with desk review findings to ensure validity and inform key conclusions and recommendations.

1.5 Quality Assurance

Quality assurance was ensured through regular reporting, continuous coordination with ActionAid and CSWF, and incorporation of their feedback throughout data collection, analysis, and reporting. Data reliability and validity were strengthened through field visits, use of authentic government-approved sources, transparent stakeholder communication, and rigorous reporting standards. A draft report outlining key findings and recommendations was shared for stakeholder review, and feedback from validation workshops was incorporated into the final report to enhance accuracy, relevance, and usability.

1.6 Ethical Consideration

The study adhered to ethical and methodological standards by ensuring voluntary participation. All participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any stage or decline to answer questions without coercion. To foster a safe and respectful environment, the study's purpose was clearly communicated to everyone involved. Participants' rights, dignity, and privacy were upheld through principles of non-discrimination, equality, inclusivity, with a strict commitment to preventing sexual violence and harassment.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The limitations of the study are as follows:

- The sample size was limited to three municipalities at the local level and the MoWCSC at the federal level; therefore, the findings reflect specific local contexts and ministry, hence cannot be generalized.
- The analysis was constrained by the limited availability of local-level studies and literature on gender-responsive budgeting, particularly those linking GRB with the planning process.



Figure 2: Steps for Qualitative Data Analysis

SECTION
02

**INSTITUTIONAL AND POLICY
FRAMEWORK OF GRB IN NEPAL**



INSTITUTIONAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK OF GRB IN NEPAL

2.1 Nepal's Commitment to Gender Equality

i. Nepal's International Commitments to Advancing Gender Equality and Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB)

Nepal has demonstrated a strong international commitment to gender equality and ending discrimination against women by ratifying key global instruments. For instance, the CEDAW Committee's Concluding Observations to Nepal (2018) emphasize on integrating gender equality across all stages of the budget cycle from planning to monitoring, while strengthening legal, policy, and institutional frameworks, ensuring adequate resources and coordination, and promoting accountability through systematic budget tracking. The following commitments underscore the need to domesticate international standards by integrating treaty provisions into national legislative and administrative frameworks, transforming global commitments into enforceable legal measures and practical protections within the country.

SN	International Commitments	Key Provisions Relevant to GRB
1	CEDAW Committee Concluding Observations to Nepal (2023)	Strengthen the National Women Commission with sufficient resources, and coordination of policies for gender equality, including gender-responsive budgeting, in collaboration with local authorities and women's organizations
2	CEDAW Committee Concluding Observations to Nepal (2018)	Emphasizes the integration of gender equality considerations across all stages of budget planning, formulation, implementation, and monitoring processes.
3	Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2016-2030	Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Target 5.c: Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for gender equality at all levels. Indicator 5.c.1: Track and make public budget allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment.
4	Beijing Platform for Action (1995)	Calls for restructuring public budgets to promote women's empowerment and for developing tools and mechanisms to track gender-related budget allocations and expenditures.
5	CEDAW (1991)	Article 2: Obligates State Parties to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women through appropriate legal, policy, and institutional measures. Article 3: Requires State Parties to adopt measures ensuring women's full equality in political, social, economic, and cultural spheres. Article 13: Obligates States to eliminate discrimination in social life, ensuring women equal rights to family benefits, financial credit and cultural participation.

Table 1: Nepal's International Commitments and Key Provisions

ii. Domestic Legislative and Policy Framework of Gender Equality

Nepal's political commitment to Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) is firmly anchored in its constitutional, legal, and policy framework. The Constitution of Nepal authorizes the State to adopt special measures for the protection, empowerment, and advancement of women and socially and culturally marginalized groups. These constitutional mandates are operationalized through sectoral policies that institutionalize proportional inclusion and affirmative action across state institutions, programs, and policies.

Alongside its high-level constitutional commitment, the Government of Nepal has adopted a range of specialized legislation, policies, and periodic development plans. This framework includes key governance and fiscal laws such as the Local Government Operation Act (2017) and the Inter-Governmental Fiscal Arrangement Act (2017), as well as several thematic legislations aimed at advancing women's human rights. These include the Domestic Violence (Crime and Punishment) Act (2009), the Sexual Harassment at the Workplace (Prevention) Act (2015), the National Women's Commission Act (2017), and the Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Rights Act (2018), among others.

Furthermore, the Local Government Operation Act, 2017 promotes inclusive governance by mandating citizen participation through public consultations, participatory planning, social audits, and accountability mechanisms at local level. The Act formalizes GESI as a cross-cutting issue which must be prioritized within local government by embedding its principles into their core governance functions along with the formulation of periodic and annual policies and development plans *Section 24(2)*. Similarly, *Section 24(3)* further operationalizes gender responsiveness by requiring local authorities to prioritize programs and budgets that directly benefits women, children, and marginalized communities.⁸ Through these provisions, the Act mandates that local governments adopt inclusive approach during budget planning, ensuring equitable access to opportunities and services to all

the individuals. Nonetheless, the Act does not clearly spell out mandatory provisions for the practice of GRB in local-level planning processes.

Similarly, the Sixteenth Plan (2024/25 – 2028/29) positions GESI as a structural reform that integrates social justice with economic productivity. The crucial feature of this plan is the economic valuation and prioritization of unpaid care work. Moreover, it emphasizes the economic empowerment of women, particularly those from marginalized communities, and explicitly includes sexual and gender minorities (LGBTQI+) alongside endangered and highly marginalized groups such as the Raute and Musahar communities.

Besides that, the Sixteenth Plan emphasizes on GRB by institutionalizing gender equality across all three tiers of government through increasing women's representation and participation in governance, strengthening women's property ownership, and enhancing their access to and participation in public services.⁹

2.2 Nepal's Adoption of GRB to Realize Gender Equality

Nepal has established a comprehensive normative framework to institutionalize GRB as a public financial management tool for advancing gender equality, women's empowerment, and social inclusion. Over the past two decades, the government has endorsed various guidelines defining GRB, its preconditions, institutional mechanisms, indicators, sub-indicators, and coding processes for integrating gender perspectives throughout the budget cycle at the federal, provincial, and local levels. A significant milestone in this process was the formal adoption of the GRB system by the Ministry of Finance (MoF) in fiscal year 2007/08¹⁰, which required seven sectoral ministries to classify their program budgets as directly gender responsive, indirectly gender responsive, or gender neutral based on five indicators, each assigned a quantitative weight of 20 percent, totaling 100 percent.¹¹ The following are the key guidelines:

⁸ Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration (MoFAGA). 2017. *Local Government Operations Act 2017*. Government of Nepal. <https://mofaga.gov.np/detail/1697>

⁹ National Planning Commission. 2024. *The Sixteenth Plan (Fiscal Year 2024/25 – 2028/29)*. Government of Nepal. <https://npc.gov.np/content/6462/the-sixteenth-plan-fiscal-year-2024-25-2028-29/>

¹⁰ UN Women. 2016. *Gender Responsive Budgeting in the Asia Pacific Region: A status Report*. United Nations. https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20ESEA/Docs/Publications/2016/12/GRB_report-for-web.pdf¹¹ UN Women Asia and the Pacific. ND. *Fact and Figures*. <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/countries/india/national-planning-and-budgeting/fact-and-figures>

¹¹ Ministry of Finance. 2012. *Gender Responsive Budget Formulation Guidelines 2012*. Government of Nepal. <https://old.mof.gov.np/grbc/GRB%20Guideline.pdf>

i. GRB Formulation Guidelines : The guidelines provided the initial systematic framework for integrating gender considerations into the formulation of national and sectoral budgets. It includes pre-requisite for implementation, gender indicators and sub indicators, bases of rating score, budget classification as per score institutional mechanism, follow-up, reporting and feedback and execution of guidelines.

The guideline continued the provisions originally established in 2007/08 by MoF which requires the ministries and department i.e. *Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction, Ministry of Agriculture and Department of Livestock development and agriculture development, ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Health and Population, Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development, Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport and Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, Ministry of Education* to systematically identify and classify budget activities based on their gender responsiveness through a defined sequential process. The effectiveness of each program is assessed against five key indicators, which were first introduced in 2008 and retained in the subsequent 2012 guidelines. The indicators are illustrated in Figure 3.

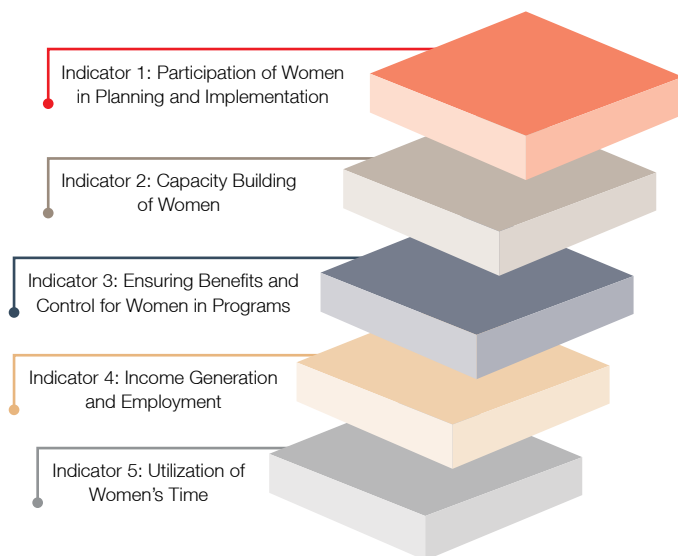


Figure 3: Indicators for GRB, 2007/08

These indicators are further categorized into sub-indicators and the descriptive table with indicators, sub-indicators and the weightage calculation of the programs are mentioned in Annex VI. Under this scoring methodology, programs scoring 50 points or more are categorized as directly gender-responsive; those scoring above 20 but less than 50 are considered indirectly gender-responsive; and those

with less than 20 points are classified as gender-neutral (*mentioned in table 2*). Through this classification, sectoral agencies and stakeholders are guided to analyze the gender-related impact of their programs and respond to identified gender needs and priorities. Nonetheless, these guidelines are limited to federal ministries and do not provide guidance for the implementation of GRB at the local level.

Classification	Basis for Classification
Directly Gender-Responsive	Total weight of assigned points exceeds 50
Indirectly Gender-Responsive	Total weight of assigned points below 50
Gender-Neutral	Total weight of assigned points below 20

Table 2: Basis for GRB Classification

ii. GRB Localization Strategy 2016

The GRB Localization Strategy 2016, formulated by the Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration (MoFAGA), serves as a comprehensive framework intended to simplify the application of indicators, sub-indicators, and assessment criteria outlined in the GRB Formulation Guidelines 2012, thereby promoting consistency in planning and budgeting processes across all levels, including the local level.

Furthermore, the strategy seeks to institutionalize GRB by ensuring meaningful women's participation, strengthening institutional capacity, and fostering effective coordination between government and development partners. It sets specific quantitative targets to increase "directly gender-responsive" budget allocations and enhance women's involvement in planning and implementation, while assigning varying weightage across indicators: women's participation in policy and program design and implementation, women's capacity building, and women's employment and self-employment each receive 20 percent; reduction of women's time and workload is allocated 10 percent; and women's control over and benefits from programs receive the highest weightage at 30 percent.¹² These measures are intended to achieve long-term outcomes, including improved access to resources, expanded economic opportunities, reduced gender disparities, and strengthened local accountability and good governance.¹³ Similarly,

the guidelines outline key considerations for GRB formulation, procedural frameworks, coding formulas, and distinct indicators and sub-indicators tailored to local levels, including district, municipal, and village governance.

iii. Model Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) Guideline for Provincial and Local Level, 2021

The model GRB guideline (2021), developed by MoF, institutionalizes GRB as a coherent framework for planning, allocating, executing, and monitoring public finance to advance gender equality, women's empowerment, and social inclusion. It clearly defines the roles of federal, provincial, and local governments to ensure equitable distribution of resources, gender-sensitive revenue policies, and targeted investments that address structural discrimination and harmful social practices.

The guideline further mandates the systematic use of gender analysis; classification, coding, and tracking of expenditures within financial management systems. In this guideline two-tier gender-responsive coding is utilized to categorize public plans and expenditures. In the first tier, activities are classified as targeted, supportive and neutral, based on their objectives for gender equality. Then, the second tier assigns a formal responsiveness code by assessing the share of the total budget allocated to these categories where over 60 percent is considered as targeted, 10-59 percent as supportive, and 9 percent or less as neutral. This approach ensures transparent budget tracking and alignment with commitments to women's empowerment and social inclusion.¹⁴

iv. National Gender Audit Procedure, 2025

The National Gender Audit Procedure, developed by the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens (MoWCSC), is a comprehensive document which ensures gender responsiveness across all public entities in Nepal. The procedure mandates the assessment of policy and programs; budgets; organizational structures; and decision-making

processes through a GESI lens to ensure inclusive and accountable governance. The procedure integrates GESI principles within the decision-making bodies by promoting gender-responsive policies, increasing women's representation and encouraging positive discrimination¹⁵ to enhance equitable access to services and opportunities. In addition to that, it operationalizes GRB by mainstreaming gender concerns across the budget planning cycle, ensuring targeted allocations, and using appropriate indicators to track outcomes. The procedure further introduces a structured gender audit mechanism, combining self-assessments, external reviews, corrective action plans, and public disclosure of findings to strengthen transparency and institutional accountability.¹⁶

2.3 Institutional Structure of GRB

Institutional arrangements for GRB in Nepal are primarily guided by the GRB Formulation Guidelines, 2012 and the GRB Localization Strategy, 2016. The GRB Formulation Guidelines, 2012 established the national Gender Responsive Budget Committee (GRBC) under the MoF as the central body responsible for reviewing budget allocations and public expenditure from a gender equality perspective, while the MoWCSC serves as the focal agency for formulating related plans and programs. In coordination with sectoral GRB Committees across federal ministries, the GRB Implementation Committee under MoFAGA, and Gender Focal Points within sectoral ministries, this institutional framework integrates gender equality considerations throughout the annual planning, budgeting, and implementation cycle.¹⁷

The GRBC's core functions include analyzing the gendered impacts of macroeconomic and development policies on women, men, and disadvantaged groups; developing guidelines and recommending reforms to strengthen the gender responsiveness of the national budget system; and enhancing institutional capacity and public awareness for effective expenditure monitoring. It also collaborates with development

¹² Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration. 2015. *Gender Responsive Budget Localization Strategy 2016*. Government of Nepal <http://lgcdp.gov.np/content/gender-responsive-budget-localization-guideline>

¹³ *Ibid*

¹⁴ Ministry of Finance. 2021. *Model Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) Guideline for Provincial and Local Level, 2021*. Nepal.

¹⁵ Positive discrimination refers to the intentional and preferential treatment or special provisions made for specific groups to ensure equity and equality.

¹⁶ Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens. 2025. *National Gender Audit Procedure 2025*. Government of Nepal. <https://mowcsc.gov.np/content/266/national-gender-audit-procedures--2082/>

¹⁷ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. ND. *Experiences of Implementing Gender Responsive Budget (GRB) in Nepal*. <https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/11.%20Nepal.pdf>

partners, civil society, and the private sector to support the design, implementation, and evaluation of gender-responsive programs.¹⁸ Furthermore, the Guidelines mandate the establishment of sectoral GRB Committees within federal line ministries to institutionalize and monitor GRB implementation across sectors, although they do not clearly define the composition of these committees.¹⁹ (*National GRB Committee in listed in Annex IV*)

As for the local level, under GRB Localization Strategy 2016 multiple committees were established at the ministry (MoFAGA), district, and municipal levels (urban and rural), each with clearly defined roles and responsibilities (listed in Annex IV). At the ministry level committee under MOFAGA provides strategic guidance by integrating gender perspectives into local plans and budgets, recommending systemic reforms, analyzing the gendered impacts of policies, strengthening institutional capacity, promoting interdepartmental coordination, and ensuring monitoring and accountability. It also supports the institutionalization of gender-responsive and socially inclusive budgeting and auditing at subnational levels.²⁰

At the district level, the District GRB Implementation Committee translates district plans and budgets into gender-responsive frameworks, coordinates sectoral offices, supports capacity development, monitors expenditures, and engages stakeholders to advance gender equality.²¹ Similarly, municipal and village-level committees mainstream gender into local planning and budgeting by addressing gender disparities, strengthening coordination, enhancing institutional capacity, promoting participatory planning, raising community awareness, and integrating grassroots feedback and gender-disaggregated data into planning, monitoring, and accountability systems.²²

However, the Guidelines do not provide for GRB Committees at the provincial level, despite Nepal's transition to federalism and the adoption of the GRB Localization Strategy in 2016. Developed prior to the full

implementation of federalism, these guidelines largely reflect a centralized and district-based governance framework, making several provisions and institutional arrangements misaligned with current federal structures. Consequently, revisions are necessary to address restructuring in local governance, fiscal federalism, and the evolving mandates of federal, provincial, and local governments to ensure the guidelines remain relevant and effective within Nepal's present governance system.

2.4 Integration of Financial Management Systems

To further institutionalize GRB, Nepal embedded GRB coding into key financial management systems like the Budget Management Information System (BMIS), Line Ministry Budget Information System (LMBIS) and Sub-National Treasury Regulatory Application (SuTRA).

BMIS is a core component of the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) which manages the budget cycle of central agency such as MoF. It ensures centralized control and oversight of public spending, support in budget preparation, and facilitates on execution through automated procedures and internal controls. BMIS also incorporates accounting and audit functions to ensure precise records and compliance.²³

Similarly, LMBIS is specifically designed to support the line ministries and spending agencies in budget execution and tracking. It enables ministries to submit budget proposals within approved ceilings, following the appropriation bill, monitor expenditures in real-time, manage fund disbursements through treasury offices, and conduct monthly and quarterly monitoring of program implementation.²⁴ Additionally, GRB coding is integrated into the LMBIS system under three categories: direct, indirect, and neutral. This coding is mandatory and applied at the budget heading level.

Furthermore, the Province Line Ministry Budget Information System (PLMBIS) has established across

¹⁸ Ministry of Finance. 2012. *Gender Responsive Budget Formulation Guidelines 2012*. Government of Nepal. <https://old.mof.gov.np/grbc/GRB%20Guideline.pdf>

¹⁹ *Ibid*

²⁰ Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration. 2015. *Gender Responsive Budget Localization Strategy 2016*. Government of Nepal <http://lgcdp.gov.np/content/gender-responsive-budget-localization-guideline>

²¹ *Ibid*

²² *Ibid*

²³ *Budget Management Information System (BMIS)*. ND. Home. <https://bmis.online/>

²⁴ Ghimire, L and Bhattarai, M. 2015. *Review of the Implementation of the Ministry-level Budget Information System (LMBIS)*. Nepal. https://giwmscdnone.gov.np/media/app/public/56/posts/1684734182_51.pdf

all the seven provinces to support provincial line ministries in budget execution and tracking.²⁵

Likewise, SuTRA was developed to facilitate and implement a structured financial management procedure of the sub-national level. SuTRA has two main applications, each for province and the local level. Through this system, sub-national financial information is consolidated and shared with the National Natural Resource and Fiscal Commission, MoF and Financial Controller General Office.²⁶ SuTRA also has incorporated GRB coding categories similar to LMBIS, however, the system has a key limitation as GRB coding is not mandatory within the system.

2.5 Key gaps within the Policy and Institutional Frameworks

While Nepal has established comprehensive frameworks and institutional structures for GRB, their alignment and operationalization across federal and local levels remain inconsistent, and they are reflected in the following key gaps.

First, several frameworks remain rooted in the pre-federal context. The GRB Guidelines (2012) and the GRB Localization Strategy (2016), developed before the adoption of federalism, do not reflect the current three-tier governance structure, rendering key committees, processes, and institutional roles such as district, village, and municipal development committees largely outdated.

Second, GRB implementation is constrained by weak legal backing. It is primarily guided by executive decisions of the MoF and the MoFAGA, making its adoption non-mandatory and largely considered a “soft law” (i.e making its adaption non mandatory). Although the 2012 GRB Formulation Guidelines call for a legal framework and standardized tools, these have not been developed, resulting in limited compliance, weak enforcement, and predominantly procedural rather than substantive application of GRB.

Third, the framework places excessive emphasis on budget classification rather than on results. Although budgets are categorized as direct, indirect, or neutral and supported by indicators and sub-indicators, there is limited attention to monitoring and oversight mechanisms.

Fourth, the linkage between GRB coding and accountability remains weak. The guidelines do not establish a robust enforcement mechanism to ensure consistent application across budget lines, nor do they adequately integrate GRB with performance-based budgeting and results-based monitoring systems, thereby limiting assessment of efficiency and effectiveness.

Fifth, operational guidance for scoring and classification is insufficiently detailed, leading to subjectivity and inconsistency across agencies. For instance, similar programs such as rural road construction or capacity-building initiatives may receive different GRB scores depending on whether emphasis is placed on participation inputs or broader outcomes, resulting in non-standardized interpretation.

Sixth, the framework has a narrow focus on women as a homogenous group, with limited integration of broader GESI dimensions such as caste, ethnicity, disability, geography, and intersecting vulnerabilities. Consequently, disparities within groups of women are often overlooked, as illustrated by programs that do not differentiate outcomes for Dalit women, Indigenous women, or women with disabilities.

Seventh, institutionalization mechanisms remain weak. Although GRB committees exist, there is no strong oversight or monitoring system to track outcomes over time. Existing federal monitoring structures such as (Ministerial Development Action Committee) Pre-MDAC, MDAC, (National Development Action Committee) Pre-NDAC, and NDAC do not systematically include GRB implementation in their agendas or reporting formats, limiting accountability and follow-up.

Finally, A significant operational gap exists in integrating GRB within financial management systems such as LMBIS, and SuTRA. Although national guidelines mandate GRB tracking, their guidance for systematic integration into these platforms remains limited. In LMBIS, GRB coding is applied at the budget heading rather than activity level, undermining the intended operational review process. While GRB coding in SuTRA is non-mandatory, therefore compliance can be bypassed during data entry, resulting in inconsistent implementation across local governments.

²⁵ Province Budget Management Information System (PLMBIS). ND. Home. <http://bagamati.plmbis.gov.np/login>

²⁶ Sub National Treasury Regulatory Application (SuTRA) . ND. Home. <https://SuTRA.fcgo.gov.np/v1/index.asp>

SECTION

03

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS



FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

This section presents the analysis and key findings of the study based on field-level evidence. The findings and analysis are presented in two sections i.e. the federal level and the local level, reflecting insights from practice, implementation experiences, and stakeholder perspectives at each level.

3.1 Federal Level (MoWCSC) Findings at Glance

i. Status of Fulfillment of Pre-requisite for Implementation of GRB

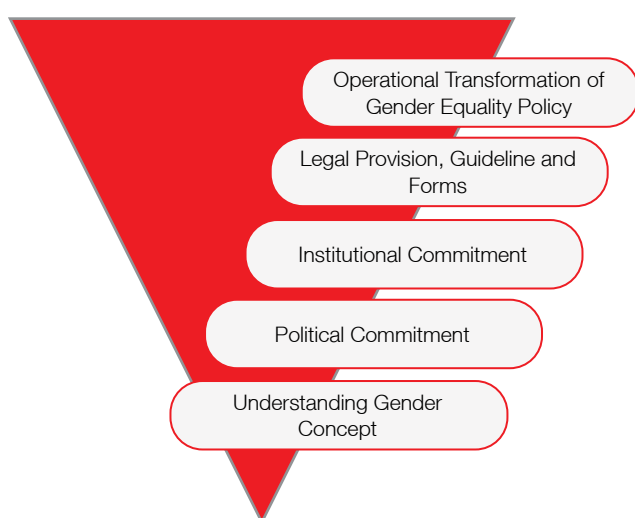


Figure 4: Pre-requisite to Bridging Policy and Practice

The effective implementation of GRB at federal level necessitates the fulfillment of certain preconditions. These facilitate its systematic and well-reasoned application of gender lenses to fiscal policy; program and budget aligned with the GRB Formulation Guidelines (2012) issued by the MoF.²⁷

During the study period, it was observed that these requirements have been only partially met at the federal level, indicating a persistent gap between policy provisions and their effective implementation on the ground.

ii. Conceptual Understanding and Linkages

While respondents demonstrated a basic understanding of gender as a concept, their comprehension of GRB

as a comprehensive framework remains limited. GRB was largely perceived as a women-targeted budgeting approach rather than a broader mechanism for addressing the needs of women, men, and marginalized communities. In addition, there was limited clarity regarding budget coding in LMBIS, with stakeholders in line-ministries often delegating GRB coding responsibilities to IT personnel and computer operators, who input data based on intuition rather than clear policy guidance.

“GRB is frequently perceived as being solely focused on women, and even existing directives tend to favor this interpretation. GRB, however, must incorporate the needs of marginalized groups, including men.” KII at NPC

“We have limited awareness of the overall GRB allocation process and lack clear understanding of what constitutes direct, indirect, and neutral categories. As the IT personnel reviews the budget and enters the information into LMBIS, they are more familiar with how GRB is allocated within the budget.” KII at MoF and MoWCSC

iii. Political and Institutional Commitment

With regard to political commitment to GRB, the Government of Nepal has demonstrated its dedication to gender and social inclusion through various national and international GESI and GRB frameworks. However, significant gaps remain in harmonizing these frameworks and effectively translating them into practice (see Chapter 2 for details). At the same time, overall policy commitment to GRB within the MoWCSC, as reflected in the Work Division Regulation 2018, remains limited.

Furthermore, while the GRB Formulation Guideline, 2012 emphasizes that effective GRB implementation requires strong institutional commitment supported by robust institutional mechanisms, qualified human resources, and appropriate legal arrangements,²⁸ but the study revealed that institutional commitment remains weak in practice.

²⁷ Ministry of Finance. 2012. Gender Responsive Budget Formulation Guidelines 2012. Section 1.6. Government of Nepal. <https://old.mof.gov.np/grbc/GRB%20Guideline.pdf>.

²⁸ Ministry of Finance. 2012. Gender Responsive Budget Formulation Guidelines 2012; Sec 1.6.3 and 1.6.4; Government of Nepal. <https://old.mof.gov.np/grbc/GRB%20Guideline.pdf>.

S. No	Key Measures defined by the Guidelines, 2012	Status
1	Provide gender training to institutional human resources.	Staff have some awareness of gender issues; however, there is no structured or regular training plan for new employees.
2	Improve planning and budgeting forms to incorporate mandatory gender responsiveness.	Required forms have not yet been developed to ensure gender-responsive planning and budgeting at the federal level.
3	Ensure GRB is applied not only at the budget planning stage but throughout the entire plan formulation process.	Federal ministries have developed the LMBIS software, but the planning formulation process is not integrated into it.
4	Develop and utilize a computer-based system to institutionalize the mandatory recording and management of sex-disaggregated data.	The Social Information Management System (SIMS) ²⁹ has been initiated by the Ministry of Women, Children, and Senior Citizens, but it needs integration with relevant ministries/entities to ensure comprehensive data entry and storage.
5	Establish a dedicated group within the Planning Division/Section to initiate gender analysis.	Training of Trainers (ToT) is urgently required, extending to the local level; efforts should address not only gender analysis, but also other requirements outlined in the GRB Guidelines, 2012.
6	Treat gender equality as an integral and cross-cutting component of the organization's operations.	This remains largely unrealized; effective implementation requires actionable gender equality policies and supporting legal provisions.

Table 3: Status of Institutional Commitment at Federal Level

"Although GRB committees are currently in place, but its efficiency is lacking due to undefined roles and responsibilities. Thus, there is a need to establish a designated GRB focal agency." KII at NPC

Despite a structured planning and budgeting framework, political commitment to GRB remains limited, resulting in weak prioritization during budget formulation. The planning process of the MoWCSC, governed by the Financial Procedure and Fiscal Responsibility Act, 2076 through the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and LMBIS, often marginalizes GRB considerations. This is further compounded by low prioritization during resource projection and budget ceiling setting, as well as the absence of binding legal provisions mandating GRB implementation, effectively rendering the 2012 Guidelines discretionary in practice.

iv. Current Practices of GRB

GRB operationalization involves several critical analytical steps as mentioned in *figure 8*. Following these steps, program activities are assessed using defined indicators and sub-indicators (as presented in the indicator table in Annex VI). Based on the scoring and weighting of these indicators, activities are subsequently classified as Direct, Indirect, or Neutral in terms of gender responsiveness.

In this context, effective implementation of GRB in Nepal requires federal level institutions and line ministries to adhere to the above outlined process. However, the evidence from KII at the federal level and desk review indicates that, in practice, some elements are applied while largely remain unimplemented.

²⁹ Social Information Management Systems (SIMS) by managed by MoWCSC streamlines data for better social welfare, anti-trafficking efforts, and evidence-based planning, by creating integrated registries to reduce data duplication, coordinate benefits (like allowances), improve crisis response (disaster/pandemic), and ensure inclusive planning for vulnerable groups (women, children, elderly, disabled), while also enabling data-driven decisions for development projects.

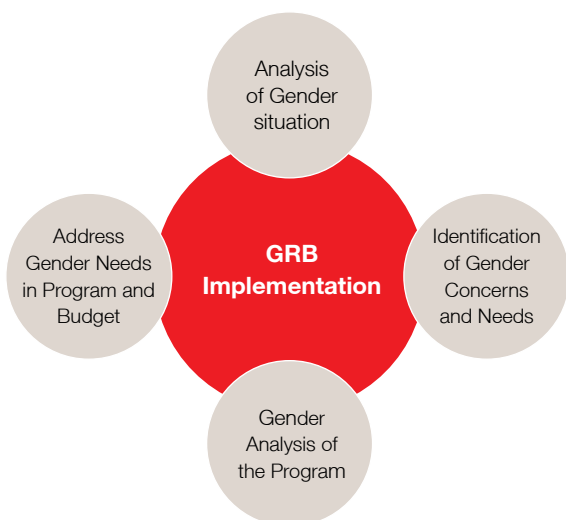


Figure 5: GRB operationalization steps

The KII reveals a limited level of awareness regarding the core steps of GRB operationalization among stakeholders at the federal level. Respondents, at the line ministries including MoF (GRB committee lead) reported that knowledge concerning GRB allocations and the classification of budgets (direct, indirect, or neutral) remain with IT personnel rather than policy leads.

The findings indicate that GRB is practiced at the federal level particularly MoWCSC; however, its implementation does not adequately adhere to the GRB Formulation Guidelines (2012). The respondents clarified that line ministries allocate budgets under various headings based on their approved budget ceilings, after which IT officers or computer operators enter the finalized data related to programs and associated budget amounts into the LMBIS.

Besides that, this budget allocation process bypasses several critical steps of GRB operationalization, including gender analysis, identification of gender-specific concerns and needs, gender analysis of program, and the integration of these needs into program budgets prior to classification. *“The annual budget is finalized based on the approved budget ceiling which does not encompass GRB steps and assessment of indicators or sub-indicators.” KII at Planning and Monitoring Section, MoWCSC*

The IT personnel further explained that the LMBIS includes a provision for GRB coding at the budget head level, followed by the entry of program activities without formal instructions or guidance for classification. This practice suggests that GRB is

implemented largely through technical processes managed by IT personnel, with minimal involvement of the GRB committees established at the national level. *“GRB coding is applied at the time of entering the budget head into the LMBIS. However, there is no formal guidance for this process; instead, while inserting the budget, we are required to select from the available options as direct, indirect, or neutral.” KII with IT officer at MoF*

Although the GRB Formulation Guidelines (2012) are not systematically followed, GRB coding is nonetheless applied, on a largely procedural basis, during budget entry into LMBIS by line ministry officials. As a result, annual budget documents, including the Red Book, reflect GRB allocations. Line ministries independently enter their budgets into the LMBIS, after which they are reviewed by the NPC and MoF, then finalized, and submitted to Parliament for approval. Once approved, the programs and budgets are consolidated into the Red Book (*GRB allocation is mentioned in figure 6*).

However, this process is characterized by a lack of consensus between line ministries and the MoF regarding roles and responsibilities in GRB implementation. While the respondents from line ministries stated MoF as the primary authority for GRB management and coding, the stakeholders from MoF contends that it exerts no influence over specific ministerial allocations. The latter further added that line ministries submit their budget structures along with the GRB coding through LMBIS, and MoF takes further required actions proposed originally by the line ministries.

“GRB implementation is handled by MoF.” KII at Policy Planning and Monitoring Section; MoWCSC

“We do not engage in GRB coding, we simply insert the budget allocation and submit them within LMBIS.” KII with computer operator at MoWCSC

v. Budget Allocation and Expenditure Trends: MoWCSC

The review of Red Books, budget speeches, and federal-level policy and program documents for FY 2079/80, FY 2080/81, FY 2081/82, and FY 2082/83, together with the corresponding annual progress reports of the MoWCSC, indicates the classification of GRB budget allocations. The GRB allocations are illustrated below:

• Budget Allocation (GRB) Trends of MoWCSC

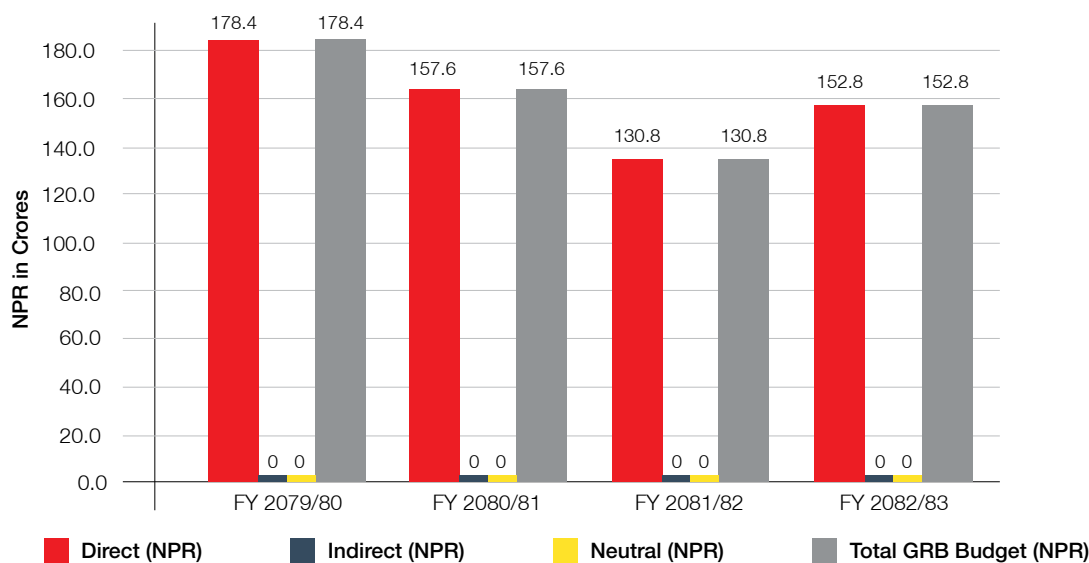


Figure 6: GRB Allocation of MoWCSC

Source: Red Book; MoF (FY 2079/80-82/83)

The figure illustrates that across FY 2079/80 to FY 2082/83, the entire GRB budget allocated to the MoWCSC is classified as direct GRB, with no allocations recorded under indirect or neutral categories. This uniform classification suggests that all MoWCSC programs are presumed to contribute directly to gender equality objectives, resulting in a consistent 100 percent share of direct GRB within these fiscal years. Thus, the lack of indirect and neutral classifications in the budget raises analytical concerns

regarding the accurate identification of GRB, resulting in the automatic labeling of a ministry's budget as Direct GRB rather than applying GRB criteria in a nuanced, activity-level manner.

To assess this uniform classification, it is important to examine the nature of MoWCSC's programs and whether they consistently meet GRB criteria at the activity level. Table 4 therefore presents the Ministry's key program categories and activities.

Program Category	Key Programs and Activities
President Women Empowerment Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socio-economic empowerment of rural and marginalized women through entrepreneurship, livelihood support
Gender Equality and Women Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women's economic and digital empowerment by operationalizing entrepreneurship facilitation centers Targeting low human development areas for livelihood improvement
Violence Prevention and Trafficking Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated rescue, rehabilitation, legal, and psychosocial support for survivors of gender-based violence and trafficking. Province-level awareness and cyber-crime prevention campaigns.
Child Rights and Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child protection through rescue and family reintegration of vulnerable children, management of juvenile reform homes, Operation of daycare centers and child helpline services.
Welfare for Senior Citizens and Disability Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social protection enhancement by supporting assistive devices and residential rehabilitation for persons with disabilities Managing care institutions and community centers for senior citizens.
Social Welfare Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring and Regulation of NGO's and Grants Management

Table 4: Nature of the Programs Formulated by MoWCSC

Source: MoWCSC Annual Progress Report 2079/80

The programs drawn from the Annual Progress Report 2079/80, is presented as sample as the review of the Annual Progress Reports for 2080/81 and 2081/82 reveal a similar pattern of program implementation.

As for the MoWCSC's programs, they are primarily designed to uplift marginalized groups particularly women, children, persons with disabilities, and senior citizens by supporting their transition from vulnerability to self-reliance. In this context, activities cannot be broadly or automatically classified as Directly Gender

Responsive without the systematic application of GRB coding based on the defined indicators and sub-indicators and its assigned scoring system.

Additionally, in context of budget expenditure, systematic documentation of expenditure trends for GRB-specific budgets is not available. In the absence of disaggregated GRB expenditure data, the analysis therefore reviews the total expenditure of MoWCSC. The budget allocations and expenditure of MoWCSC for the three consecutive fiscal years are presented in figure 7.

• Budget Expenditure Trends of MoWCSC

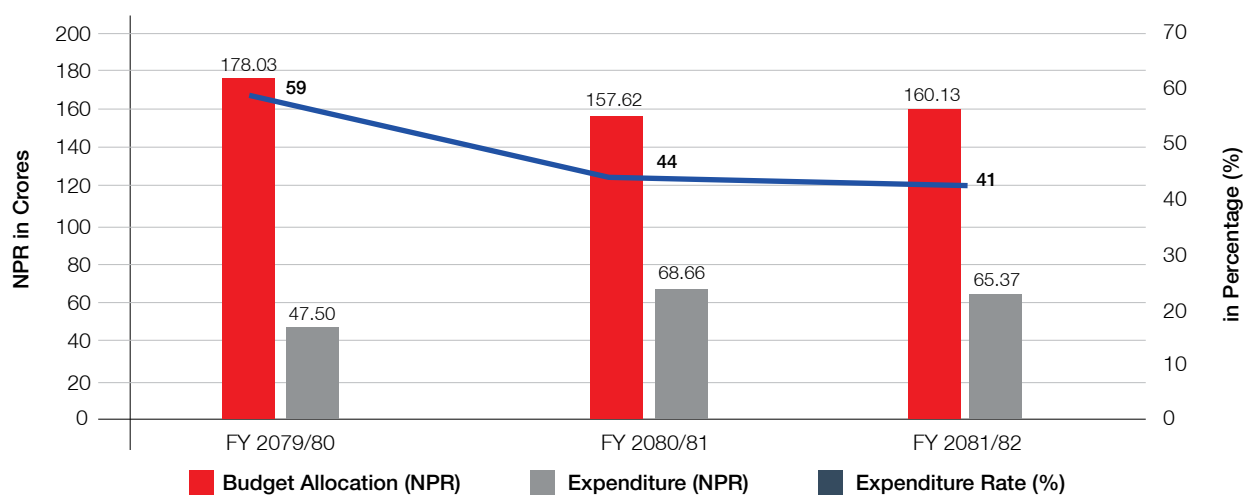


Figure 7: Budget Expenditure of MoWCSC

Under current GRB practices, the ministry's total GRB allocation is categorized as direct, indirect, or neutral as provided in figure 6. Thus, in the absence of specific GRB expenditure data, the ministry's overall expenditure is utilized as the baseline reference.

The data indicates that although the Ministry has not fully utilized its allocated budgets, resource consumption has been substantial enough to reflect active implementation rather than under-execution. Expenditure trends, including relatively higher utilization in FY 2079/80 and recovery in FY 2081/82, suggest improving absorption capacity and gradual progress in translating budget allocations into actual spending. Despite year-to-year fluctuations, the utilization of nearly half or more allocated resources in most years demonstrates that funds are being meaningfully deployed toward intended objectives.

At the same time, MoWCSC continues to receive a comparatively small share of the national budget. In FY 2081/82, for instance, the Ministry accounted

Source: Annual Progress Report MoWCSC (FY2079/80-81/82)

for only 0.086 percent (*Federal Level Allocation: 18,60,30,00,00,000 (NPR 18,603 Crore) and MoWCSC Allocation : 1,60,13,40,000 (NPR 160.13 Crore)*) of the total national budget³⁰, while expenditure rates across available fiscal years ranged from approximately 44 to 59 percent. This indicates that although implementation is active, both limited budgetary prioritization and incomplete utilization constrain the Ministry's overall impact.

Overall, the assessment suggests that prevailing GRB practices within MoWCSC have yet to effectively translate formal policy commitments into substantive practice. While institutional structures, information systems, and reporting mechanisms indicate procedural compliance, limited analytical depth, fragmented ownership among decision-makers, and weak integration between social analysis and resource allocation have reduced effectiveness. Furthermore, continued reliance on ceiling-based planning, combined with technical-level decision-making, has weakened accountability and diluted the strategic purpose of GRB. Without rigorous

³⁰ Ministry of Finance. 2024. Budget Estimation Details (Red Book). Government of Nepal. <https://mof.gov.np/content/83/expenditure-estimates--red-books--2081-82/>

activity-level assessment, clearly defined leadership, and enforceable policy alignment, the framework risks remain largely symbolic rather than transformative. Therefore, the findings indicate strengthening GRB effectiveness requires deeper conceptual understanding, clearer institutional responsibilities, and the systematic integration of analytical rigor across planning, budgeting, and review processes, rather than merely introducing new instruments.

3.2 Key Insights from Local Level

At the local level, the GRB context differs from that of the federal level. To support local level GRB implementation, the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development (MOFALD) currently MoFAGA has developed the GRB Localization Strategy (2016), which serves as a key guiding framework to ensure GRB at local level. In parallel, a seven-step planning process has been established to structure budgeting and planning at the local level in 2017 after the implementation of Local Government Operations Act in the same year. The key insights gathered during the study are detailed below.

i. Understanding of Conceptual Framework of GRB

The KII findings indicate that, while the term “GRB” is familiar to respondents across all three municipalities, the depth of understanding and conceptual clarity lacks among stakeholders. Across these municipalities, respondents generally associated GRB with budget allocations for women, marginalized communities, and persons with disabilities. However, beyond this basic understanding, respondents demonstrated limited clarity regarding the framework for GRB implementation.

Although, they reported to have reviewed the GRB Localization Strategy, their comprehension of the critical steps in the process was notably weak. The respondents were aware of women-focused programs and capacity trainings to women but largely unaware of their link to the GRB framework and its process, including committee formation, gender assessment, budget classification, coding during planning process, women’s participation, and monitoring and evaluation.

“GRB is the budget allocated for gender specific needs, poor, marginalized, Dalit, children and elderly people.” KII at Manahari Rural Municipality

“GRB is generally understood as a budget allocated for women; while the concept itself is familiar, the procedural aspects of GRB is unclear.” KII at Madi Municipality

While the GRB Localization Strategy, 2016 itself is not mandatory, the seven-step planning process is legally required³¹ under Section 24 of the Local Government Operation Act, 2017 and the Local Level Plan Formulation Guideline, 2021, which mandate local governments to follow this framework in preparing annual budgets, development plans, and programs. However, KII respondents revealed significant gaps in knowledge and understanding regarding its practical application.

Although local government officials and elected representatives generally demonstrated awareness of the planning process, their understanding of the specific roles and responsibilities of key institutional bodies such as the Resource Projection and Budget Ceiling Committee, the Budget and Program Preparation Committee, ward offices, and municipal assemblies throughout the annual planning cycle remained limited. In contrast, FGD respondents exhibited little to no awareness of GRB, the GRB framework, or the broader budget planning process. While they recognized the existence of women-focused programs and budget allocations for women and marginalized groups at ward and municipal levels, but they lacked understanding of how these programs are formulated, how budget allocations are determined, and the processes through which such decisions are made.

“We do not know about GRB.” FGD with Community members at Shankharapur Municipality, Ward 8

“We are aware of the budgets and programs developed by the ward that target women and marginalized groups but have no idea about GRB.” FGD with Community members at Manahari Rural Municipality; Ward 6

ii. GRB Institutional Mechanism at Local Level

According to the GRB Localization Strategy, 2016, each municipality is expected to have a designated GRB Committee (as referenced in Annex IV). However, KII with municipal stakeholders indicate that no GRB committee is currently operational. Instead,

³¹ Adhikari, G. 2024. Understanding the provisions for local government Planning in Nepal. *Intellectual Journal of Academic Research, (IJAR)*, 2(1), 11–22. <https://doi.org/10.3126/ijar.v2i1.72794>

municipalities have specific departments overseeing budget planning and formulation of women-targeted programs and budgets.

Across three municipalities, women targeted programs are managed through dedicated units and committees under municipal leadership. Shankharapur municipality has Women Development Unit, which is staffed with a Chief Women Development Officer, an Assistant, and an Inspector, oversees budget allocation, economic empowerment, legal aid, social protection, health awareness, and partner coordination.³² Similarly, Manahari³³ and Madi municipalities,³⁴ have Social Development Committees, which are supported by administrative staff and guided by the Municipal Executive, who lead initiatives on skill development, education, health, social protection, cultural promotion, poverty reduction, and community-driven development. These committees ensure accountability, participatory planning, and gender and inclusion sensitive implementation while coordinating with NGOs and CBOs.

Therefore, social development units are responsible for addressing women's issues across all the three municipalities but, the absence of a dedicated GRB institutional mechanism has resulted in weak ownership, fragmented coordination, and limited accountability for the implementation of gender-responsive budgeting under the GRB Localization Strategies. Thus the findings reflect that local level budget planning and process is functioning without robust human resources having a comprehensive understanding of the GRB concept and framework.

iii. Data Gaps and Implications for GRB Planning

KII and FGDs across three study municipalities reveal substantial gaps in data and a lack of evidence-

based decision-making. The absence of timely, disaggregated, and gender-sensitive data has undermined planners' capacity to accurately identify and prioritize gender-specific needs. As a result, GRB remains weakly integrated into mainstream planning processes. Moreover, plans and budgets have often failed to reflect gender priorities fully, which limited their effectiveness in addressing structural inequalities. The weak evidence base has further restricted the ability to justify allocations or interventions which are essential for promoting gender equality, reducing the overall strategic impact of GRB.

These data limitations carry several critical implications. First, decision-making becomes reactive rather than proactive, with interventions often determined by availability of resources and practical gender needs basically focused on infrastructures i.e. road, water and sanitation, rather than strategic gender needs. Second, the weak alignment between planning and GRB coding perpetuates existing gender disparities and undermines institutional accountability for institutionalizing GRB.

"We approached the ward office to request budget allocation for a road and a water tank, as these were more urgent than other needs. The road would ease our daily commute while carrying grass for our cattle, and the water tank would reduce the distance we travel to fetch water." FGD with women community groups at B.K. Tole; Shankharapura Municipality.

iv. Local level Policies on Gender and Women's empowerment

At the local level, only a limited number of municipality-specific policies related to gender and women have been developed. The existing policies for Shankharapur, Madi, and Manahari Rural Municipalities are presented in the table below.

Shankharapur Municipality	Madi Municipality	Manahari Rural Municipality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy 2021; Procedures for the Formation and Management of the Local Committee on Human Trafficking and Transportation (Control), 2020; Gender-Based Violence Management Procedures, 2021. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Trafficking and Transportation (Control) Committee, (Formation and Operation) Directive 2025. GBV Prevention fund (operational) procedure 2019 Safe house Operation Procedure (ND) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GESI Strategy 2022 Women's Coordination Committee, (Formation and Operation) Procedure 2018 Safe house Operation Procedure (ND) GBV Prevention fund (operational) procedure (ND)

Table 5: Local Level Policies on Women

³² Shankharapur Municipality. <https://www.shankharapurmun.gov.np/en>

³⁴ Madi Municipality. <https://www.maddimun.gov.np/en>

³³ Manahari Rural Municipality. <https://manaharimun.gov.np/>

Kills conducted across the three municipalities indicate that Shankharapur, Madi, and Manahari Rural Municipalities have adopted specific policies for women and gender concerns. Respondents noted that all three municipalities follow the National Gender Equality Policy (2020) and comply with relevant constitutional mandates. While Shankharapur and Manahari Rural Municipalities have developed their GESI strategies, Madi Municipality has planned the development of a GESI strategy, as outlined in its FY 2082/83 policy and program documents. The existing framework at these local levels provides a solid foundation for promoting women empowerment and justice at local level.

v. Normative Standards and Procedural Gaps in GRB Integration within the Seven-Step Planning Process

The Local Level Planning Formulation Guideline 2021, enacted under the Local Governance Operation Act 2017, establishes a structured seven-step planning process anchored in systematic, inclusive, and results-oriented subnational planning. Key institutional arrangements including the Revenue Advisory Committee, the Revenue Estimation and Budget Ceiling Determination Committee, and the Budget and Program Formulation Committee govern the process, supported by comprehensive situation analyses, participatory mechanisms, resource estimation aligned with the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, and cross-cutting considerations such as gender equality, social inclusion, and disaster risk reduction.

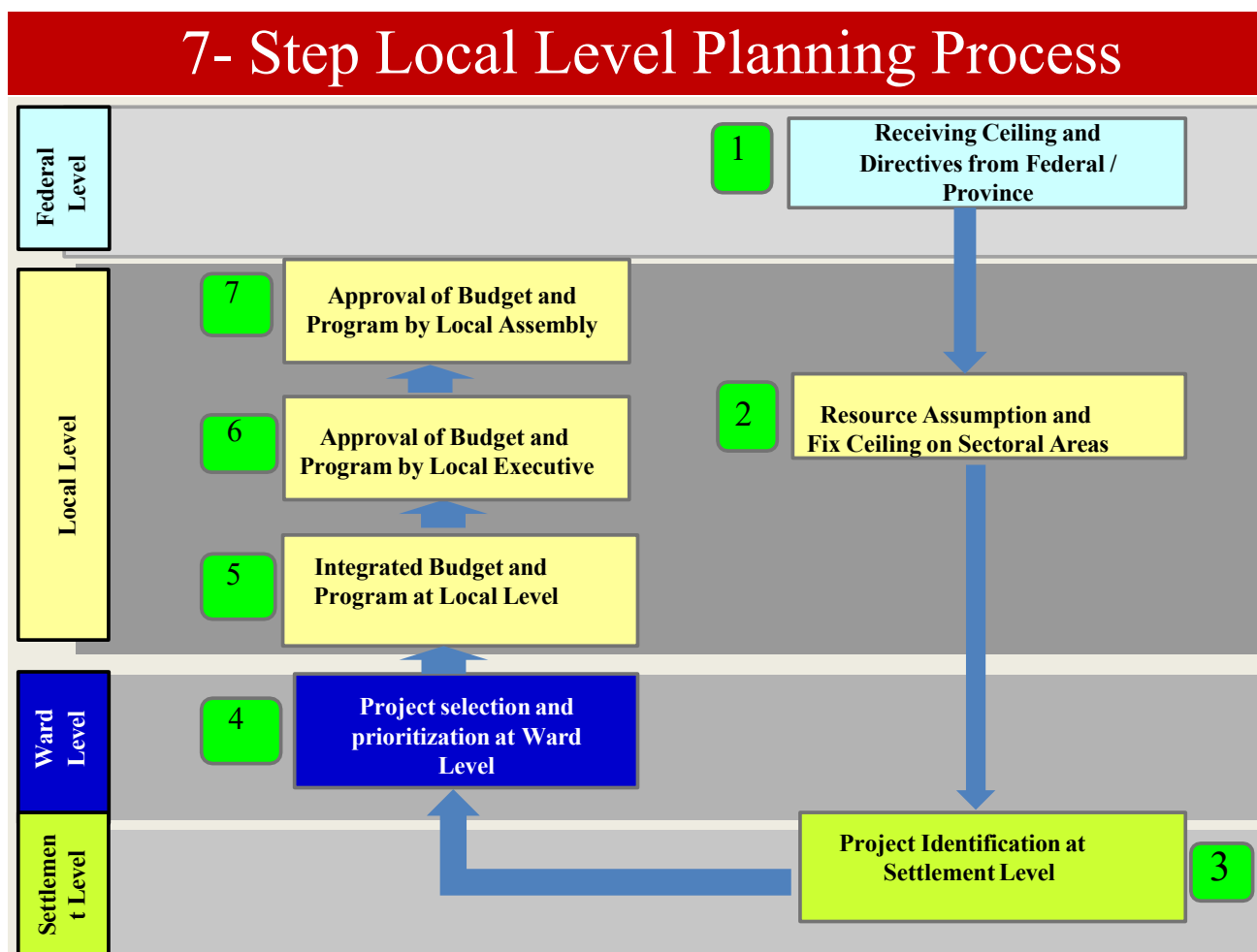


Figure 8: Seven Step Planning Process

The process begins with the receipt of federal or provincial budget ceilings and policy directives, proceeds through resource estimation, sectoral ceiling allocation, and Ward Committee-led project identification and prioritization, and culminates in formal approval by the local executive and assembly ensuring alignment between higher-level guidance and community-driven priorities before implementation.

Gender Responsive Budget (GRB) in the Planning Process of Local Government: Indicator 1: Participation

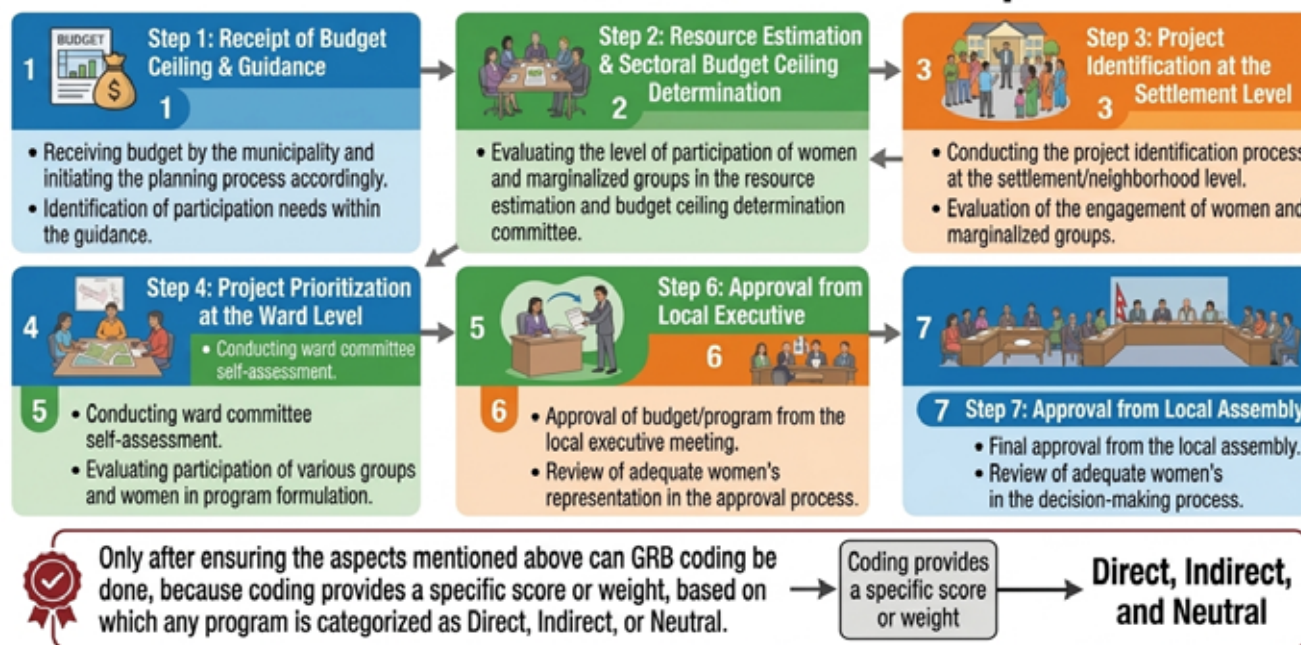


Figure 9: Indicator 1

Despite this structured framework, the study identified a critical procedural disconnect in GRB integration. While the GRB Localization Guidelines define five indicators with scoring criteria and categorization thresholds, they prescribe no clear standard operating procedures (SOPs) specifying when coding should be initiated, validated, or finalized. In principle, each indicator should be embedded within specific planning stages: Indicator 1 (Participation) across all seven steps; Indicator 2 (Capacity Building) in sector-specific project appraisal; Indicator 3 (Benefits and Control) in assessing resource access and agency; Indicator 4 (Income and Employment) in evaluating economic opportunities; and Indicator 5 (Time Use) in examining reductions in unpaid care burdens. Such stage-specific assessment is the prerequisite for coding and credible classification of programs as Directly Responsive, Indirectly Responsive, or Neutral.

In practice, however, the absence of SOPs reduced GRB to a post-facto compliance exercise. Since the

guidelines do not mandate scoring during the critical stages of settlement-level project identification (Step 3) and ward-level prioritization (Step 4), the gender lens was absent precisely where project design decisions are made. Coding was instead deferred to Budget Formulation (Step 5) and applied retroactively within the SuTRA system shifting the process from planning for impact to coding for compliance, and fundamentally undermining GRB's core intent of aligning resource allocation with the needs of women and marginalized groups.

This gap was most consequential at the Thematic Committee Review (Step 4), where the absence of a mandatory GRB scoring requirement allowed committees to bypass substantive gender assessment. Infrastructure-heavy projects such as large-scale road construction were routinely classified as Indirectly Responsive without integrating GESI components, such as safety provisions or women's labor participation, into the municipal reports. This

reflects administrative convenience rather than genuine gender responsiveness.

Addressing this requires harmonizing the GRB Localization Guidelines with the Seven-Step Planning Framework. Instituting a mandatory GRB Clearance at the conclusion of Step 4 ensuring no project

advances to assembly approval without documented scoring against the five indicators would strengthen accountability, embed gender considerations at the point of decision-making, and restore GRB as a substantive instrument for equitable resource allocation rather than a procedural formality.

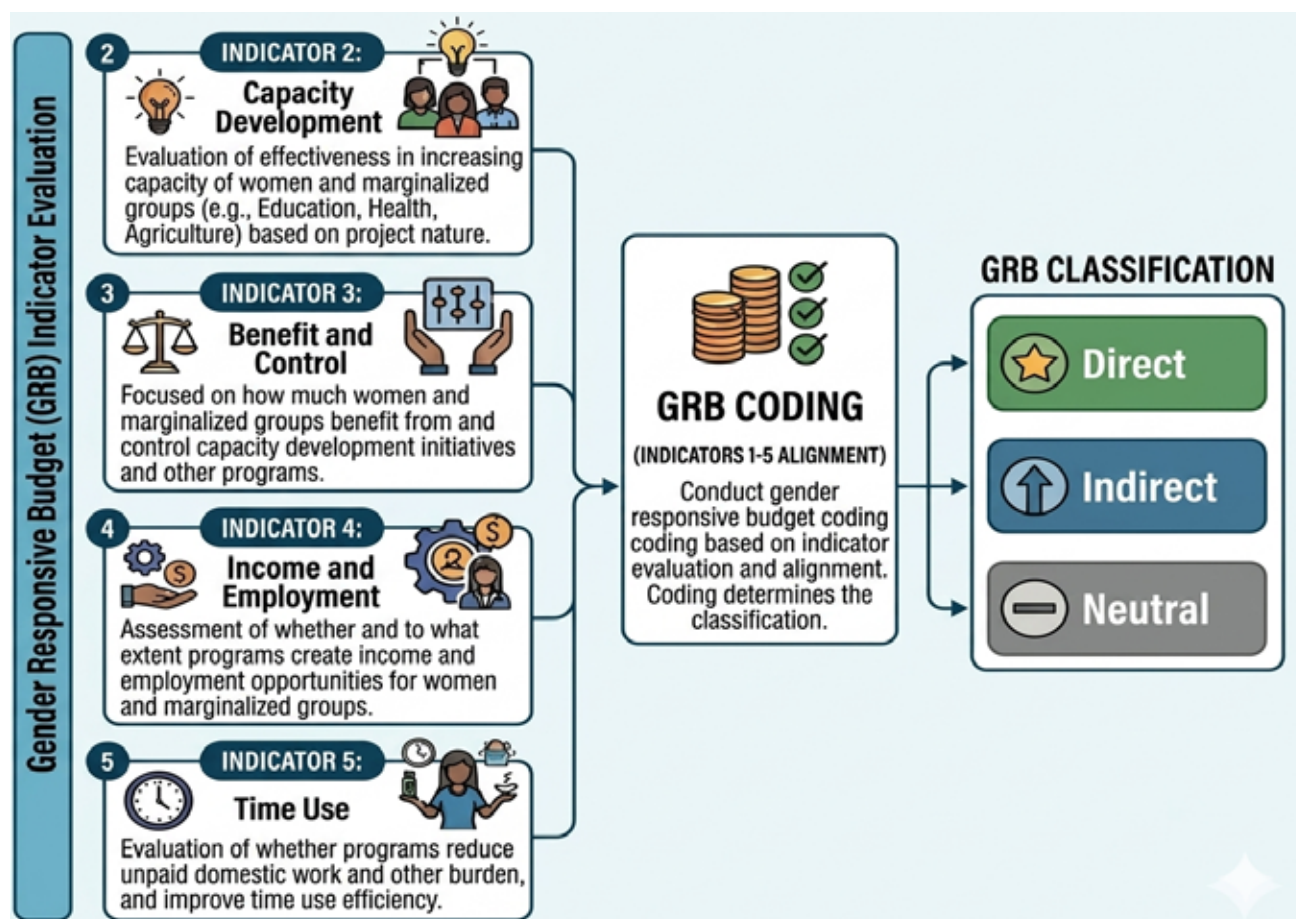


Figure 10: Indicator 2 - Indicator 5

vi. Participation of women and disadvantaged communities in planning process

In terms of the composition of key decision-making bodies across Shankharapur Municipality, Madi Municipality, and Manahari Rural Municipality reflects a moderate level of women's participation, with notable variations across committees and institutional levels (table is referenced in Annex V). While women's representation is relatively stronger in Local Assemblies and Municipal Executives ranging from around 40 to 47 percent³⁵ but it remains lower in core fiscal and planning bodies, particularly the Revenue Estimation and Budget Ceiling Determination Committees and

Budget and Program Formulation Committees, where male dominance persists. In several cases, women chair these committees, indicating formal leadership inclusion; however, this has not consistently translated into balanced and overall membership. Overall, the data suggest incremental progress toward gender inclusion yet highlight persistent gaps in women's substantive participation in critical budgetary and revenue-related decision-making processes.

Similarly, in regard to the participation of community members during the planning process, the KII respondents, across three municipalities reported

³⁵ (42 percent for Municipal Executive, 40.2 percent for Local Assembly; Shankharapur Municipality; 47.4 for Municipal Executive, 42.5 for Local Assembly; Madi Municipality, 42.8 for Municipal Executive, 40.4 for Local Assembly; Manahari Rural Municipality)

that community meetings were organized during the budget planning process to identify programmatic needs, with participation encouraged among women, men, and marginalized groups by respective ward committees. However, the women's participation was quite minimal. To facilitate broader engagement, information on these meetings were disseminated through recorded messages broadcast via vehicles such as bikes and auto-rickshaws at the ward level. In addition, respondents from Shankharapur Municipality highlighted that municipal staff have received GRB related training and gender audit support from federal level experts, and that gender audits have been conducted over the past two years.

Community gatherings are organized at each ward with an emphasis on encouraging women's participation; however, their participation remains limited." KII at Manahari Rural Municipality

"Women and marginalized communities are hesitant to come forward and put forth their needs and demands." KII at Madi Municipality

"We have received training on GRB and gender audits from experts and have prepared gender audit reports for the past two years, incorporating all ward officials." KII at Shankharapur Municipality

Women and disadvantage community's participation are key in GRB and seven steps planning process however, the FGD findings present a more limited picture of practice of meaningful participation at the community level. Women participants reported minimal involvement in ward-level community meetings related to budget planning due to the unpaid care responsibilities and lack of prior notice by the ward. In this context, men tend to participate more frequently and were better informed both before and after budget allocations are finalized. As a result, women's groups often approach ward offices only after budgets have been approved to request programs, which were then provided within the constraints of already allocated women-focused budgets. While FGD respondents acknowledged receiving various training programs similar to those described by KII respondents, they reported mixed outcomes.

"We are not invited to the meetings for budget planning. Also, we are unable to participate due to household responsibilities. The activity usually occurs in the morning, which is a challenging time for us as we need to send our children to school and take the buffaloes and cows to grazing areas." FGD with community groups at Manahari Rural Municipality

"We requested a budget for a water tank and road construction, which were essential for us, but the ward allocated only NPR 150,000. This amount was insufficient, and we managed to complete the works through other sources." FGD with the community groups at B.K. Tole; Shankharapur Municipality

"We requested funds for musical instruments, specifically Damai Baja, which we received. We have formed a group, perform at events, and generate income." FGD with the community groups at BK Tole; Shankharapur Municipality

"The majority of the budget is allocated to infrastructure development, while funding for women-focused programs remains limited." FGD with the community groups at Madi Municipality

vii. SuTRA and GRB Coding

Evidence from KIIs shows that all three municipalities have completed the Local Government Institutional Self-Assessment (LISA) for the FY 2080/81, which includes indicators related to GRB, such as women's participation, training, and GESI audits. However,

The screenshot displays a web-based interface for the SuTRA Coding Manual. At the top, there are navigation tabs for 'सेटअप', 'बजेट सीमा', 'बजेट तालुमा', 'बजेट छलफल', 'बजेट स्वीकृती', and 'कार्यक्रम संसोधन'. Below these are several status indicators for different stages: 'राजस्व अनुमान', 'वार्षिक खर्च अनुमान', 'रणनीतिक संकेत चित्रण', 'समाप्त अनुदान', 'अनुदान बाँडफाँट', and 'स्वीकृत'. The main section is titled 'रणनीतिक संकेत चित्रण' and shows a table with columns for 'कार्यक्रम/अयोजना/क्रियाकलापको नाम' and 'सैंगिक उलटवारी बजेट'. The table lists 13 activities, each with a dropdown menu for selecting a budget code. The dropdown for the first activity is open, showing options: '1 | प्रत्यक्ष योगदान', '2 | अप्रत्यक्ष योगदान', and '3 | तटस्थ बजेट'. The bottom of the interface shows the date '२०७५' and the logo of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development, and Infrastructure.

Figure 11: SuTRA Coding Manual

respondents were unable to clearly explain the criteria or evidence used to score these indicators, noting that the assessments were conducted internally by administrative staff and or computer related staff.

In addition, the local financial management System-Sub-National Treasury Regulatory Application (SuTRA) is used to record budget allocations approved by the municipal assembly. As a normative framework, SuTRA is a structured program-based budget and planning architecture which supports the application of GRB classification and coding in the planning and budget entry process allowing local governments to tag their budgets according to GRB categories (e.g., direct, indirect, and neutral). However, SuTRA does not seem to have any feature to tag budget planning process and activity wise budget as directly responsive, indirectly responsive and neutral from GRB coding perspective. Further to that, GRB coding is not mandatory to fill in the SuTRA software system (that means it can be escaped without GRB coding). The software confines GRB coding to budget subheads rather than integrating it throughout the budget planning process and at the program or activity level, as required by the GRB guidelines and strategy, which emphasize capturing women's participation across the entire budget cycle at both federal and local levels. As a result, even when local governments apply GRB coding, it fails to present a comprehensive picture of GRB budget allocations. This limitation significantly constrains the effective operationalization of GRB in practice at the local level.

Furthermore, as the GRB component is neither mandatory nor adequately considered during SuTRA data entry, a disconnect emerges between GRB frameworks and LISA scoring. Given that LISA assessments were often conducted intuitively rather than based on verifiable evidence, this underscores the need to strengthen alignment between the seven-step planning process and GRB. Additionally, the absence of a structured template to systematically integrate GRB indicators and sub-indicators at each stage of planning limits their accurate reflection in both LISA scoring and SuTRA.

Similarly, field visits across the three municipalities further reinforce the analysis, as none were able to demonstrate operational alignment of GRB within their planning and budgeting processes. This highlights the need for further refinement of the SuTRA system to capture comprehensive gender-responsive budget performance data in accordance with relevant guidelines and strategies.

The findings also underscore the importance of developing a structured template that ensures each stage of the planning process incorporates rigorous analysis of GRB indicators and sub-indicators. Such an approach would enable accurate calculation of weightages and facilitate the classification of programs as directly responsive, indirectly responsive, or neutral, prior to the entry of the consolidated budget into SuTRA.

"GRB coding isn't currently practiced." KII at Manahari Rural Municipality

"GRB coding is there in SuTRA and we omit it." KII with IT staff at Manahari Rural Municipality

"LISA is completed by administrative staff based on their own calculations." KII at Madi Municipality

"Our municipality has a 10th level GESI officer who supervises the women's department in developing programs relevant to women and marginalized groups." KII at Shankharapur Municipality

viii. Budget Allocation and Expenditure Trends of Women targeted budgets

A review of the budget books and annual progress reports of Shankharapur Municipality, Madi Municipality, and Manahari Rural Municipality for FY 2079/80-2081/82 was conducted to examine budget allocation and expenditure trends, with a focus on allocations related to GRB or as practiced by these municipalities, budgets targeting women and marginalized groups. A detailed summary of the budget allocations and expenditures is presented below:

in NPR

Fiscal Year	Municipality	Overall Budget (Crore)	Women-Targeted Allocation	Women-Targeted Expenditure (%)
FY 2079/80	Shankharapur Municipality	91.90 Cr	40.75 Lakh	28.23 Lakh (69.29%)
FY 2080/81		117.58 Cr	2.28 Cr	1.61 Cr (70.50%)
FY 2081/82		126.23 Cr	1.22 Cr	92.44 Lakh (76.07%)
FY 2079/80	Manahari Rural Municipality	52.10 Cr	48.50 Lakh	27.45 Lakh (56.59%)
FY 2080/81		48.15 Cr	29.40 Lakh	24.30 Lakh (82.68%)
FY 2081/82		54.56 Cr	30.18 Lakh	23.87 Lakh (79.08%)
FY 2079/80	Madi Municipality	128.84 Cr	86.85 Lakh	70.35 Lakh (81.00%)
FY 2080/81		98.39 Cr	72.52 Lakh	51.42 Lakh (70.91%)
FY 2081/82		96.92 Cr	66.90 Lakh	54.76 Lakh (81.85%)

Table 6: Women targeted budget allocation and expenditure of the three municipalities

Source: Annual Progress Reports and Budget books of the respective municipalities

Note: The women-targeted budget presented in the table above represents the allocation designated for women's development. This table may not include allocations made for women under sectors such as agriculture, education, health and others.

Across Shankharapur, Manahari, and Madi municipalities, budget allocations and expenditures on women and disadvantaged communities over the past three fiscal years reflect differing levels of prioritization, implementation capacity, and institutional commitment toward gender-responsive programming. This analysis focuses specifically on dedicated "Directly Responsive" budget headings, excluding broader sectoral allocations such as health, education, and agriculture, and therefore captures only the targeted core of gender-specific investments. Across all municipalities, (as reflected in table 6) women-focused activities span health, social protection, economic empowerment, and governance inclusion, including maternal and neonatal care, GBV support services, educational assistance, entrepreneurship development, and women's participation in local decision-making.

"Budgets are allocated for various training programs targeting women and marginalized communities. In addition to these programs, women can request specific initiatives, which are provided within the scope of the funds allocated for women-focused programs." KII at Shankharapur Municipality, Ward 1

In Shankharapur Municipality, budget allocations for women and marginalized groups remain modest relative to the overall municipal budget; however, the

municipality demonstrated consistent expenditure utilization. This reflects a gradual but steady institutional commitment to translating allocated resources into action. Shankharapur municipality has particularly prioritized skill-based economic empowerment initiatives such as tailoring, handicrafts, and entrepreneurship training for women and youth. While these initiatives indicate a growing focus on women's financial independence and capacity development, the scale of investment remains relatively limited, suggesting a cautious but sustained approach to institutionalizing gender-responsive programming.

In Manahari Rural Municipality, although the proportion of total budget allocated to targeted gender-responsive headings is comparatively smaller, there has been significant improvement in expenditure efficiency over the three-year period. This trend signals an increasing administrative focus on effective implementation rather than allocation alone. Manahari rural municipality has concentrated on micro-entrepreneurship training for women in underdeveloped wards, complemented by vocational and practical life-skills education for girls. These interventions demonstrate a strategic effort to strengthen women's economic inclusion, particularly among vulnerable groups, though the limited budget envelope suggests that gender-responsive priorities are still evolving within broader municipal planning.

Furthermore, Madi Municipality stands out for its relatively higher budget allocations and consistently strong expenditure performance in women-focused programming. This pattern reflects a more robust institutional framework and stronger political commitment to integrating gender considerations into planning and budgeting processes. Madi municipality has emphasized inclusive entrepreneurship training for women and disadvantaged groups, alongside broader efforts to connect them with local economic opportunities. The municipality's stronger allocation and utilization patterns indicate a more mature approach to gender-responsive governance, where dedicated investments are more effectively embedded into development priorities.

A critical finding of this analysis is that the current budget data represents only a narrow subset of municipal investment. The figures primarily capture

budgets explicitly labeled for women's empowerment and capacity building, essentially serving as a "targeted envelope." They do not reflect the significant resources allocated to women through broader sectoral headings such as health, education, and agriculture. Consequently, while the expenditure patterns indicate progress in implementing specific empowerment initiatives, they likely underrepresent the total municipal investment in women's development across all sectors. Overall, while targeted GRB constitutes a limited share of total municipal budgets, the upward trend in expenditure efficiency across these municipalities indicates a positive shift. Local governments are increasingly moving from "budgetary promise" to "tangible initiative," showing significant progress in translating allocated funds into lived realities for women and marginalized communities, even as the scope of reported GRB remains confined to direct empowerment programs.

Fiscal Year	Sankharapur Municipality	Manahari Municipality	Maadi Municipality
79/80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop foundational strategy for women's representation in committees. - Menstrual hygiene management and free sanitary pads distribution in schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Free education up to Grade 12 for vulnerable children. - GESI-friendly design of administrative and ward buildings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mobile health camps for cancer screening and maternal checkups. - Simplified access to marriage and birth documentation for women and marginalized groups.
80/81	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skill-based training (tailoring, handicrafts) to promote micro-entrepreneurship among women. - Awareness campaigns to reduce domestic and gender-based violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Citizenship and vital registration services delivered to homes. - Strengthening diverse social group participation through GESI-sensitive governance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consolidated social safety benefits for women and marginalized groups. - Community programs to reduce domestic violence.
81/82	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity-building and leadership workshops for Mother's Groups. - Expansion of reproductive health and menstrual hygiene services in schools. - Programs for victims of trafficking and gender-based violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Free uterine cancer screening camps for women in remote areas. - 24-hour service in local health posts and birthing centers. - Vocational training and life-skills education for girl students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policies to increase women's involvement in youth and sports development training. - Upgrading health centers with functional birthing and neonatal care facilities.

Fiscal Year	Sankharapur Municipality	Manahari Municipality	Maadi Municipality
82/83	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthening maternal and neonatal health services and bolstering birthing centers. - Free services for timely identification and prevention of breast and cervical cancer in women. - Health insurance support and continued recognition of female community health volunteers. - Legal literacy programs for women leaders, adolescent girls, and marginalized ethnic groups. - Entrepreneurship-based capacity-building for women and youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programs for women, children, senior citizens, and marginalized groups to ensure social equity. - Continuation of maternal-neonatal health and nutrition programs. -Operationalization of a Safe House for GBV victims. - Micro-entrepreneurship training for women in underdeveloped wards. - Incentives, uniforms, and capacity-building for FCHVs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dedicated management for survivors of violence. - Institutionalized distribution of sanitary pads in schools. - Targeted entrepreneurship training for women and disadvantaged groups.

Table 7: Annual Policy and Program of the Three Municipalities

Source: Annual Policy and Program (2079-82) of the respective municipalities

ix. Impact of the Women targeted budgeted programs

The FGD findings reveal that, the impact of budgeted programs on women exhibits mixed yet significant outcomes, particularly in relation to capacity building, livelihoods, and social empowerment. The respondents noted that the leadership and skills-based training have improved their confidence, agency, and ability to articulate their needs at the ward level. Similarly, the livelihood-oriented interventions, including soap making training and support for musical instrument groups, have facilitated some women groups to generate income. They further added the instance of municipal support which extended beyond training such as the procurement of locally produced soap for offices/units under municipality, schools and health facilities, which supported in market facilitation. However, the benefits of these programs were uneven, particularly in case of livestock distribution, due to limited awareness among beneficiaries regarding the intended use of the support, as well as deficient follow-up and technical support from the municipality.

"The ward provided us a budget for Damai baja instruments. As a result, we now perform at various events and earn an income." FGD with women's groups at Shankharapur Municipality

"The municipality provided soap making training to approximately 15 Bankariya women. We are now operating a small cottage-based soap making enterprise. The municipality has also attempted to facilitate market access by purchasing the products and supplying them to schools and hospitals." FGD with women's groups at Manahari Rural Municipality

"The ward distributed ducks; however, the initiative did not generate the expected benefits, as some ducks died and others were consumed at the household level." FGD with women's groups at Maadi Municipality

Beyond economic outcomes, the FGDs highlight positive social impacts associated with women focused and family inclusive programs. Leadership trainings and joint participation of couples in awareness programs have contributed to increased confidence

among women, improved household dynamics, and shifts in gender norms. The participants reported greater involvement of men in domestic work, reduced alcohol consumption, and a decline in gender-based violence.

“The trainings have enhanced our confidence. We are now able to speak, engage in discussions, and clearly present our needs before the ward.” FGD with women’s groups at Manahari Rural Municipality

“We have observed noticeable changes in men’s behavior within our households. They have begun supporting domestic work and are more considerate towards their wives.” FGD with women’s groups at Manahari Rural Municipality

The findings indicate that budgeted programs have generated limited yet observable impacts across GRB indicators, including women’s capacity development, access to benefits, support for employment, and workload reduction. While women’s participation in planning remains weak, capacity-building initiatives such as leadership and skills training have enhanced confidence and agency, and livelihood programs have enabled some income-generating opportunities. Tangible benefits are also seen in improved household dynamics, reduced gender-based violence, and greater community engagement. However, these outcomes are uneven and largely ad hoc, highlighting gaps in program design, targeting, and follow-up.

The impacts of the budgeted programs are further illustrated through the case studies collected during the field visits, which are presented in the following section.

CASE STUDY 1: FROM EXCLUSION TO ENTERPRISE: DALIT WOMEN’S COLLECTIVE ACTION AND THE LIMITS OF MARKET-BASED LIVELIHOODS IN MADI

Dil Kumari BK

Gulmeli Tole, Ward No. 3, Madi Rural Municipality, Chitwan | Chairperson, Mili Juli Samuha

Dil Kumari BK is a resident of Gulmeli Tole, Madi Municipality. She belongs to the Dalit community and sustains her household primarily through subsistence agriculture and cutting and sewing work. Like many Dalit women in the area, she carries the primary responsibility of household management and childcare, as men from most Dalit households in her community are engaged in foreign employment abroad. For Dil Kumari, her livelihood is constrained by overlapping vulnerabilities of being a Dalit woman, where gender and marginalized caste intersect with poverty, limited access to education and public resources.

Dil Kumari’s engagement with collective group began when she joined Sunaulo Mahila Samuha. Through this experience, she learned the value of collective action and solidarity among women. Yet, over time, she realized that distance and social difference limited the space for Dalit women to fully articulate their needs. The group was located distant from her settlement and predominantly comprised Tharu and Madhesi women.

She realized that Dalit women needed their own platform, grounded in proximity, shared experience, and mutual trust. She mobilized women from her own community and formed Mili Juli Samuha, a Dalit women led group with 22 members, all from Dalit households in Gulmeli Tole. For many members, this was the first time experiencing organized leadership from within their community. As Chairperson, she envisioned the group not merely a discussion forum, but as means to uplift Dalit women economically and socially and to consolidate their voices in local decision-making process.

An opportunity for livelihood diversification emerged when municipality introduced a program targeted at Dalits, offering training on Panche Baaja, a traditional musical ensemble historically associated with specific

castes and ceremonial functions. She and fifteen other members of Mili Juli Samuha participated in the initial five-days training. However, as the sessions progressed, the women realized the duration was insufficient to gain confidence and technical proficiency. They discussed this issue within their Samuha and collectively approached the municipality, requesting an extension of the training. The municipality extended the training to ten days and provided the group with a full set of Panche Baaja instruments.

For the women, this was more than a skill-building exercise, it was a rare instance where their voices influenced local government action. Ensuing the training, the women practiced independently, and, to date, have performed at one wedding ceremony, earning NPR 15,000, which was shared among the group. While this income is modest, it represents possibility, an additional source of earnings in households where financial options are scarce.

Despite their skill, the group faces a “Market-Demographic Mismatch.” Madi Municipality is inhabited predominantly by Janajati, Tharu, and Madhesi communities, where Panche Baaja is not widely used in ceremonies. As a result, Panche Baaja cannot serve as a primary livelihood source. However, it functions as a supplementary mode of income.

Beyond market limitations, Dil Kumari candidly highlighted the broader challenges Dalit women face in accessing government support. Although budgets are reportedly allocated for Dalits and Dalit women, these funds are often the first to be deducted or reallocated. Community members rarely know how much funding is earmarked for them or which programs they are entitled to access. Awareness relies heavily on informal mechanisms such as town criers and announcements during neighborhood assemblies (tole bhehas) that leaves many women excluded. Nonetheless, this is how Mili Juli Samuha learned about the Panche Baaja training in the first place.

Social attitudes further complicate progress. The women face patronizing and stigmatizing remarks, such as being labeled “baaja bajayera khane haru” a phrase that reduces their skills to a caste-marked survival tactics, instead of recognizing it as dignified work. Such comments reinforce caste-based dominance and undermine confidence, particularly for women already navigating poverty, limited education and social exclusion.

Education remains another pressing concern. Many Dalit women in the community are uneducated, and retaining their children in school is a persistent struggle. Although municipalities offer targeted scholarships for Dalit children, access is limited to a selected few, leaving many families unsupported. Dil Kumari believes that stronger and more inclusive livelihood interventions for Dalit women would have multiplier effect, improving household stability, enabling educational continuity for children.

One immediate need she identifies is a community space where the group can safely store instruments and practice collectively, an enabling asset that could significantly improve their readiness and visibility for performances.

Dil Kumari BK’s story illustrates that a fully gender-responsive budgeting approach would have anticipated this market reality and complemented the training with additional livelihood options, market linkage support, or diversification strategies. GRB requires not only allocating budgets to women and marginalized groups but also ensuring that expenditures respond to their personal, social and economic context.

CASE STUDY 2: BUILDING ECONOMIC RESILIENCE WITHOUT LAND SECURITY: INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S SOAP ENTERPRISE IN MANAHARI

Santoshi Bankariya

Musedhap, Ward No. 4, Manahari Rural Municipality, Makwanpur | Community Leader & Soap Industry Entrepreneur

Santoshi Bankariya is a member of the Bankaria community residing in Manahari Rural Municipality-4, Musedhap, Makwanpur. The Banakariya community has been living on leased land for generations without land ownership certificates, placing them at a risk of eviction and significantly constrains their ability to register enterprises, and plan for long-term livelihood development.

Amidst this structural vulnerability, Santoshi Bankariya has become a prominent leader within her community committed to advancing economic self-reliance and social empowerment. Her work earned her recognition as one of the Online Khabar's top 50 Most Influential Persons in 2024. She is the second individual from her community to have completed education up to Grade 12, establishing her as an important asset for local leadership, educational mentorship and coordination.

Beyond her own livelihood activities, Santoshi plays a broader role in community development. She conducts evening tutoring classes for primary school children and facilitates adult literacy classes under an initiative locally known as Santoshi Pariyojana. These efforts have contributed to increased awareness around education and financial management and have encouraged several community members to begin saving through a cooperative mechanism.

Santoshi also manages a small-scale cottage industry named Bankariya and Chepang Women Soap Industry. This is a collective (samuhik) enterprise involving 25 Bankariya women, established as an income-generating initiative for indigenous women in the settlement. The enterprise established ensuing a soap-making training provided by the National Indigenous Women's Forum (NIWF), which equipped 25 women from the Bankariya community with technical skills and supplied essential soap making equipment.

Currently, around 13 Bankariya and Chepang women are regularly engaged in soap production. The group keeps a stock of around 200-300 soap bars at any given time. The soaps are produced using locally available natural ingredients such as mugwort, aloe vera and honey, allowing the enterprise to capitalize on surrounding natural resources while keeping production costs relatively low.

In the initial phase, the group mobilized internal resources by collecting NPR 50 each from 15-16 community members. This pooled fund was used to purchase soap base, and the products were sold at a local fair, generating NPR 25,000 in revenue. This early success demonstrated the viability of collective entrepreneurship and strengthened confidence among participating women.

Additional support was later received from Manahari Rural Municipality, which committed NPR 100,000 to the enterprise, of which NPR 90,000 has been received and invested in raw materials. Beyond funding, the municipality has played a critical role in market facilitation by purchasing soap products directly. All offices under the municipality have been instructed to buy soap only from Bankariya and Chepang Women Soap Industry. The group now produces 100-150 soap bars on order basis, earning a profit of approximately NPR 5 per bar. Profits are retained within the community fund, enabling women to have access on small loans, reinforcing their internal financial resilience.

In addition to enterprise support, the municipality provides NPR 4,000 per individual as a social security allowance from the municipality. While acknowledging the importance of this support, Santoshi emphasizes that employment and income-generating opportunities are more sustainable than cash allowances. She views enterprise development as a route to long-term dignity, self-reliance, and reduced dependency.

Despite these achievements, the enterprise faces significant challenges. A major constraint is the lack of land ownership, which made it difficult to formally register the soap-making industry. With the support of the local ward chairperson, Santoshi was able to register the business on a temporary basis; however, lack of permanent registration creates uncertainty and curbs access to credit, scaling opportunities, and long-term planning. This highlights a critical gap in GRB implementation, where women's economic initiative are supported through programs but inhibited by unresolved structural barriers.

Operational challenges also persist. Sustaining consistent production remains difficult. Income from soap-making is limited due to small-scale operations and constrained market reach, which affects motivation among community members. Santoshi also notes social dynamics within the community, including religious shifts, as an additional challenge. She states *"Many Bankariya and Chepang households are religiously engaged in Church activities, reducing their availability for regular participation in livelihood activities."* Balancing cultural, social, and economic priorities has therefore become increasingly intricate.

The experience of Santoshi Bankariya and the Bankariya and Chepang Women Soap Industry elucidates how programs can translate into tangible outcomes when investments are targeted, participatory, and linked to market access. However, the case also demonstrates that GRB effectiveness is also constrained when structural issues particularly land ownership are not addressed, alongside other limiting factors.

CASE STUDY 3: GRASSROOTS LEADERSHIP AND SOCIAL NORM TRANSFORMATION: WOMEN'S COLLECTIVE EMPOWERMENT IN MALAHI TOLE

Santarasha Mahato

Malahi Tole, Ward No. 3, Madi Rural Municipality, Chitwan | Chairperson, Sunaulo Mahila Samuha

Santarasha Mahato is a 40 years old Tharu woman residing in Malahi Tole, Madi Municipality-3. Her livelihood is primarily based on agricultural wage labor on other's land and informal piece-rate work. Additionally, she owns a bus that operates once a week on the Madi-Kathmandu route, providing supplementary household income. Despite having formal education only up to grade 2, Santarasha has emerged as a respected community leader and currently is the Chairperson of Sunaulo Mahila Samuha. She also contested as a candidate for Deputy Mayor in the most recent local-level election.

Women in Malahi Tole have historically highly restricted lives, with limited mobility, minimal participation in public spaces, and strong adherence to practices such as face-covering with veils. These socio-cultural constraints have significantly limited women's voice, visibility, and access to economic opportunities.

Santarasha's leadership has been instrumental in gradually transforming these norms. With technical and facilitative support from the Chitwan Sakriya Women's Foundation, she has persistently encouraged women to organize, participate in group meetings, and engage in discussions on household challenges, financial needs, independence, and collective wellbeing. Through regular interactions within the group, women who previously hesitated to speak publicly have begun to introduce themselves, express opinions, and participate in community discussions. As a result, Santarasha has become an informal representative

and spokesperson for women in her community. This form of grassroots leadership demonstrates that women's empowerment does not solely depend on formal education, but on confidence, availability of collective platforms, and sustained engagement in community level social activities.

Within Sunaulo Mahila Samuha, around 5 women engage in traditional basket weaving, producing dhakiyas using moonj grass, reeds, and elephant grass sourced from nearby community forests. These baskets are sold in local fairs and occasional fairs in Bharatpur, providing a modest but culturally rooted income source. However, the women face significant constraints in scaling this livelihood option, because raw materials are collected from forest areas, transporting the baskets through jungle roads often results in conflict with army personnel. Limited market access and inadequate formal promotion further constrict income potential. Santarasha emphasized that municipal support in product promotion and direct market linkage could significantly enhance earnings for these women.

Although Sunaulo Mahila Samuha functions as an active informal collective, it is not officially registered. Santarasha explained that limited literacy and unfamiliarity with formal procedures make it difficult for women to understand how a registered collective operates. As a result, the group cannot formally seek municipal funding or services, limiting its ability to leverage public resources.

Santarasha also highlighted a partially implemented community infrastructure initiative. With NPR 500,000 from a Madhesi organization working for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and NPR 300,000 from the ward office, construction of a cemented community house was initiated in Malahi Tole. The structure was intended to serve as a disaster management shelter, as the area is highly prone to flooding, and as a potential space for displaying and selling local products. However, construction was halted midway, and the municipality has not taken steps to complete the building. This has resulted in both lost disaster preparedness capacity and missed economic opportunities for women's groups.

Santarasha expressed a strong sense of exclusion from municipal decision-making processes, stating that the needs and demands of her community are rarely prioritized and that Malahi Tole remains among the most marginalized settlements in Madi Municipality. Despite repeated requests for support, she feels their concerns are largely ignored.

At the same time, she acknowledged certain positive municipal interventions. The construction of a bridge in the vicinity of Malahi tole has significantly improved mobility and safety, particularly enabling girls to attend school more regularly. Road gravelling has eased transportation of goods and access to services. Additionally, the municipality engaged women from the community in river embankment work. However, women received lower wages than men for the same work, reinforcing gender-based economic inequality.

The experience of Santarasha Mahato illustrates how women's leadership and collective action can empower highly marginalized women. At the same time, it reveals significant gaps between the intent and practice of gender-responsive budgeting at the local level. Addressing the gaps highlighted by Santarasha would not only strengthen women's economic empowerment but also enhance the accountability and inclusivity in local governance.

CASE STUDY 4: FROM SOCIAL MOBILIZER TO TOURISM ENTREPRENEUR: ADVANCING THARU WOMEN'S ECONOMIC LEADERSHIP THROUGH COMMUNITY HOMESTAY DEVELOPMENT

Rajpatiya Kumari Chaudhary

Ward No. 3, Madi Municipality, Chitwan | Homestay Entrepreneur & Federation Leader

Rajpatiya Kumari Chaudhary is a resident of Madi Municipality-3 and belongs to the Tharu community. Her professional journey began as a UNDP's community social mobilizer, where she was actively engaged in community-level activities and local development processes. This engagement made her visible and earned community's trust, through which she paved her way for her transition into entrepreneurship.

Madi Municipality has a significant Tharu population, with approximately 400 Tharu households. Recognizing both the cultural richness of the Tharu community and the untapped potential for local tourism, the municipality envisioned the development of a "Tharu Village" model. This initiative aimed to preserve and promote Tharu culture while simultaneously generating local employment and income through community-based tourism.

As a part of this vision, the municipality initiated the Bagauda Community Homestay program. Given Rajpatiya's prior experience as a social mobilizer and her leadership potential, she was identified by the municipality as a suitable entrepreneur to operate homestay and to lead the municipal committee of the homestay federation.

The municipality provided financial support of NPR 1.5 million each to three individuals, including Rajpatiya Kumari Chaudhary, to establish three homestays in the community. The homestay was established during the COVID-19 period, a time of increased financial instability and risk. Subsequently, the municipality provided an additional NPR 1 million to upgrade amenities and infrastructure, including the installation of air-conditioning facilities, to improve service quality and competitiveness.

Initially, Rajpatiya expressed hesitation about assuming such a significant financial and operational responsibility. However, with the support of her husband and her own determination, she successfully operationalized the homestay. Over time, home stay has become economically viable and stable. Rajpatiya notes that the homestay is mostly fully booked, with a steady flow of guests. This has substantially improved her household's economic security. Where she previously experienced financial hardship and uncertainty, she now enjoys a stable income and reduced economic stress.

Beyond individual benefits, the homestay has generated positive spillover effects within the local economy. Guests frequently request traditional Tharu cuisine, particularly duck and fish. To meet this demand, Rajpatiya purchases these products from local farmers, thereby creating a localized market chain. This has contributed to income generation for other households and strengthened linkages between tourism and agriculture within the municipality.

Moreover, Rajpatiya's leadership role in the homestay federation at the municipal level, enables her to coordinate with other homestay operators, represent their interests, and contribute to the broader development of community-based tourism in Madi. This role further enhances women's visibility in local economic leadership and decision-making spaces.

This case illustrates a municipality's investment and program translating into tangible outcomes for women's economic empowerment. This has addressed women's strategic gender needs by enabling access to capital, entrepreneurship opportunities, and leadership roles in a traditionally male-dominated economic sphere. The broader economic multiplier effects such as creation of value chain for local farmers further contribute to the GRB impact.

CASE STUDY 5: WOMEN-LED DAIRY COOPERATIVES AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH: STRENGTHENING LIVELIHOOD SECURITY IN MANAHARI RURAL MUNICIPALITY

Phulmaya Tamang

Sunachuri, Ward No. 6, Manahari Rural Municipality, Makwanpur | Chairperson, Dairy Cooperative

Phulmaya Tamang is 50-year-old indigenous women, resident of Manahari Rural Municipality-6, Sunachuri, Makwanpur. Like many women in rural and indigenous communities, she has turned towards viable livelihood options that can potentially generate regular income while engaging other women in collective economic activities. She identified dairy farming as a practical source of income, capitalizing on the local market's need for milk and the existing animal husbandry skills within her community.

Phulmaya Tamang currently serves as the Chairperson of the *Sanyukta Janajati Duddh Utpadhak Sahakari Sanstha*, a collective established with objective of promoting cow rearing and milk production as a community-based livelihood. Together with 15 other women, she initiated the group by securing loan from a private bank through the cooperative. The loan enabled the purchase of approximately 30 to 40 cows; the group established the foundation for a women-driven dairy collective in the community.

In its early stages, the collective was able to collect about 600 litres of milk per day. Over time, membership expanded significantly. The group now comprises 84 members, including 80 women and 4 men. However, not all members currently own livestock; approximately 50 individuals actively rear cows and contribute to the collective.

The collective operates a milk collection system supported by a chiller with a storage capacity of 300 liters per day. Farmers deposit their milk the cooperative collection point, where the quantity is recorded digitally. Each farmer receives a token indicating the volume of milk supplied, and payments are made based on the amount and type of milk deposited, with buffalo milk fetching a higher rate.

Although the cooperative was initiated independently by its members, the municipality has played a facilitative role in market access. The municipality collects the milk from the cooperative and transports it to a dairy facility in Hetuada-19. Through this formal market ties, the cooperative earnings reach up to NPR 900,000 per annum, successfully securing a reliable livelihood for all participating members.

Phulmaya Tamang views the collective not only as a livelihood initiative but also an avenue for employment generation. She noted that many individuals in her ward remain unemployed and often engage in gambling and alcoholism. She believes that expanding cow farming and dairy production could provide productive alternatives, reduce social issues, and strengthen household economies.

Despite its progress, the cooperative faces several operational challenges. One key constraint is the absence of a dedicated administrative or managerial staff, when affects record keeping, coordination, and long-term planning. Scaling up production is also constrained by infrastructural limitations. The cooperative lacks a generator to operate the milk chiller during power outages, resulting in risks to milk storage and quality. Additionally, overhead costs such as rent increase operation expenses and strain financial sustainability, particularly in the absence of regular external support. As a result, Phulmaya Tamang has been unable to scale up its operations and has been seeking strong support from local government.

Manahari Rural Municipality has committed to providing NPR 100,0000 in financial support to the collective. Phulmaya Tamang plans to invest this amount in purchasing additional cows and increasing the number

of active dairy farmers within the group. She envisions that with adequate support and scaling; the dairy collective could create employment opportunities for a larger segment of the community and further enhance income security for indigenous households.

Phulmaya's case demonstrates how targeted budgeting could effectively translate public resources into sustainable economic empowerment for indigenous women when investments are aligned with women's productive roles and leadership capacity. Strengthening GRB frameworks at the local level could enable women-led dairy collectives like this one to scale sustainably, generate broader employment, and contribute to inclusive local economic development.

To conclude, from a *transformative gender approach*, these initiatives mark an important shift beyond welfare-oriented interventions toward strengthening women's economic agency; however, their transformative potential remains uneven across the three municipalities. While skill development, entrepreneurship training, and income-generation support contribute to improving women's practical needs and short-term economic participation, they largely operate within existing gender norms and economic structures. Most interventions emphasize individual capacity-building without

sufficiently addressing structural constraints such as unequal access to assets and credit, unpaid care burdens, mobility restrictions, market linkages, and discriminatory social norms that limit women's control over income and decision-making power. Moreover, the limited integration of men and community power-holders, weak linkage with local value chains, and absence of measures to influence institutional and policy-level economic systems constrain the extent to which these initiatives can challenge and transform entrenched gender inequalities.

SECTION
04

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS



CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusion

In conclusion, Nepal has established a comprehensive legal, institutional, and procedural framework to advance GRB across all tiers of government followed by international commitment for gender equality. Constitutional guarantees, policy commitments, dedicated committees, and integrated financial management systems demonstrate a clear intent to embed gender equality within public finance. However, despite these foundations and nearly two decades of institutionalization, GRB has yet to fully transition from a procedural or compliance exercise into a strategic and transformative instrument for gender equality.

At the policy level, GRB implementation remains constrained by weak legal enforceability, outdated pre-federal provisions, and insufficient alignment across federal and local frameworks. The policy framework also places greater emphasis on budget classification than results, with limited provisions for monitoring and oversight. Further gaps include weak integration of accountability mechanisms, inconsistent operational guidance, and limited incorporation of broader GESI dimensions. Additionally, inadequate integration of GRB into financial management systems such as LMBIS and SuTRA undermines effective policy execution and tracking.

At the federal level, implementation is constrained by limited conceptual understanding, fragmented institutional ownership, and a predominance of technical processing over policy leadership. Budget formulation often adheres strictly to expenditure ceilings, with gender considerations introduced retrospectively through system-based classification rather than integrated into initial program design. Further, the limited use of activity-level assessment, indicators, and disaggregated data undermines analytical rigor, restricts accountability, and hampers evidence-based decision-making.

At the local level, the gap between policy intent and practice is even more pronounced. While municipalities carry out activities focused on women- and marginalized groups, these are often isolated initiatives rather than part of a coherent GRB framework. Weak institutional arrangements limited technical understanding among officials and elected representatives, minimal

participation of women during early planning stages remain significant barriers. Additionally, the inadequate integration of GRB coding within financial systems reduce transparency and accountability.

Nevertheless, certain leadership and skills-based interventions have strengthened women's confidence, agency, and participation, while selected livelihood initiatives have created income-generating opportunities when supported by market facilitation. Positive social changes, including improved household dynamics and reduced gender-based violence, were also observed. However, these outcomes remain uneven and largely ad hoc due to persistent gaps in program design, targeting, structural inclusion, and follow-up support.

Overall, while Nepal has laid a strong foundation for GRB, persistent gaps in conceptual clarity, legal backing, institutional coordination, procedural alignment and inadequate monitoring continue to limit its transformative potential. Achieving sustained gender equality outcomes will require strengthening the conceptual and technical capacity of decision-makers, clarifying institutional responsibilities, embedding rigorous activity-based gender analysis throughout planning and budgeting, and ensuring the meaningful participation of women and marginalized groups at all stages. The current landscape reflects a system in transition, characterized by high-level commitment and incremental progress, yet still struggling to translate formal structures into equitable, lasting results.

4.2 Recommendation

The recommendations are as follows:

i. Legal and Policy Reform to Institutionalize GRB in the Fiscal Planning Process

Establish a Strong Legal Basis for GRB: Amend the Financial Procedure and Fiscal Responsibility Act, 2019, the Local Government Operation Act, 2017, and other relevant legal frameworks to institutionalize Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) as a mandatory statutory requirement. This reform should provide enforceable legal backing to ensure gender-responsive resource allocation is integrated across all stages of

the budget cycle planning, execution, and auditing at federal, provincial, and local levels.

Strengthen Gender-Differentiated Fiscal Analysis:

Formalize the roles of Revenue Advisory Committees, Budget Formulation Committees, and other planning bodies to systematically assess how taxation, resource mobilization, and public expenditure differentially impact women and marginalized groups through amendments to the Local Government Operation Act, 2017.

Integrate GRB into the Seven-Step Local Planning Process:

Ensure GRB principles, indicators, and coding are embedded from the earliest stages of local planning particularly resource estimation, budget ceiling setting, and project prioritization rather than being applied post-budget. This requires amendments to the Local Level Plan Formulation Guideline (2021) and the GRB Localization Strategy (2016).

Revise and Harmonize National GRB Frameworks:

Update the GRB Guidelines (2012) and GRB Localization Strategy (2016) to reflect Nepal's post-2017 federal governance structure. Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of federal, provincial, and local governments and ensure alignment with the Local Level Plan Formulation Guideline (2021).

Integrate GRB into Digital Financial Systems:

Institutionalize the linkage between gender-responsive policy and fiscal execution by transforming LMBIS and SuTRA from data-entry platforms into enforcement mechanisms. This requires system modifications to ensure that budget submission or finalization is not possible unless GRB coding fields are completed.

Mainstream GRB into National Oversight and Accountability Mechanisms:

Institutionalize GRB as a standing agenda item within federal monitoring forums such as Pre-MDAC, MDAC, Pre-NDAC, and NDAC. Strengthen reporting systems to systematically capture progress, expenditure patterns, implementation challenges, and gender equality outcomes.

Strengthen Federal Institutional Leadership:

Position the Ministry of Finance as the central custodian of GRB until revised frameworks are fully operationalized, supported by a functional central GRB committee. Simultaneously, enhance the MoWCSC as a key advocacy and coordination institution for advancing GRB across government systems.

Develop Standardized Intersectional GRB Indicators:

Expand GRB beyond a women-centric approach by developing standardized indicators that integrate Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) dimensions, including caste, ethnicity, disability, geography, age, and intersecting vulnerabilities.

Make GRB Capacity Building Mandatory:

Introduce a joint directive from the Ministry of Finance and MoFAGA mandating compulsory GRB training for all officials engaged in planning, budgeting, and financial management across all levels of government.

ii. Ministry of Women, Children, Gender and Sexual Minorities and Social Security

Activate Internal GRB Mechanisms:

Revitalize non-functional internal GRB committees and transfer operational responsibility for gender-budget tracking from technical IT personnel to programmatic and policy-level leadership.

Enforce Gender Auditing:

Institutionalize the National Gender Audit Procedure (2025) by mandating all federal public entities to systematically assess budget allocations through a GESI-responsive lens.

Integrate Data Systems (SIMS):

Fully operationalize and integrate the Social Information Management System (SIMS) with sectoral ministries to establish a unified database containing sex-disaggregated and intersectional data.

Strengthen GRB Capacity and Awareness:

Address the limited institutional understanding of GRB through the development of a standardized capacity-building training package. The MoWCSC should implement this training across ministries to shift the emphasis from isolated “women-focused programs” toward gender-transformative budgeting across major sectoral portfolios.

iii. Local Level

Strengthen Functional GRB Committees and Focal Persons: Establish and operationalize GRB committees and designate trained focal persons at municipal and ward levels with clearly defined roles, coordination responsibilities, and accountability mechanisms.

Institutionalize GRB Focal Person Systems: Ensure each local government appoints a certified GRB focal person supported by standardized, certification-based training systems.

Prioritize Practical, Budget-Cycle-Based Learning: Replace theoretical orientations with short, practical GRB clinics focused on gender analysis, budget coding, reporting, and use of digital systems during active budget preparation cycles.

Link Capacity Development to Performance Systems: Integrate GRB training completion, coding

accuracy, implementation quality, and reporting performance into staff evaluations, institutional performance reviews, and LGPAS assessments.

Ensure Dedicated Financing for GRB Capacity Building: Allocate a fixed minimum share of capacity development budgets at local levels specifically for GRB training, mentoring, refresher courses, and technical assistance.

Strengthen Political and Elected Leadership Orientation: Provide structured GRB orientation for elected representatives focusing on oversight, budget review, accountability, and interpretation of GRB outcomes to enhance political ownership.

Track Capacity Outcomes Annually: Establish annual monitoring systems to track trained personnel, active focal persons, coding compliance, and institutional application to ensure sustained capacity development and accountability.

Annex I: List of Documents Reviewed

i. National and International Legal Frameworks

International Frameworks	National Frameworks	Local Level Policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEDAW (1991) • CEDAW Committee Concluding Observations to Nepal (2018) • Beijing Platform for Action (1995) • SDG 2030 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution of Nepal (2015) • National Gender Equality Policy, 2020 • Gender Responsive Budget (GRB) Formulation Guidelines, 2012 • GRB Localization Strategy, 2016 • Local Level Gender Budget Audit Guideline, 2007 • Local Government Operation Act, 2017 • Human Trafficking and Transportation (Control) Act, 2007 • Gender-Based Violence (Crime and Punishment) Act, 2009 • National Gender Equality Policy 2020 • Local Government Operations Act 2017 • The Fifteenth Plan (2019/20-2023/24) • The Sixteenth Plan (2024/25-2028/29) • National Gender Audit Procedure 2025 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy 2021 • Procedures for the Formation and Management of the Local Committee on Human Trafficking and Transportation (Control), 2020 • Gender-Based Violence Management Procedures, 2021 • Human Trafficking and Transportation (Control) Committee, (Formation and Operation) Directive 2025. • GBV Prevention fund (operational) procedure 2019 • Safe house Operation Procedure • GESI Strategy 2022 • Women's Coordination Committee, (Formation and Operation) Procedure 2018

ii. Review of Annual Budget-Related Documents

Fiscal Years	Federal Level	Bagmati Province	Selected Local Governments
FY 2079/80 – FY 2082/83	Policy and Program, Budget Speech, Annual Budget, Economic Survey (except FY 2082/83)	Policy and Program, Budget Speech, Annual Budget, Economic Survey (except FY 2082/83)	Policy and Program, Annual Budget, Economic Survey (except FY 2082/83) (Shankharapur Municipality, Manahari Rural Municipality, Madi Municipality)

Annex II: Checklists for KII, FGD and Case Studies

1. CHECKLIST FOR KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW (FEDERAL LEVEL)

A. Background Information of Key Informant

- Name:
- Age:
- Gender Identity:
- Position:
- Institution:
- Date of Interview:
- Start Time:
- End Time:
- Facilitator(s) Name:
- Note-taker Name:
- Location:

B. Understanding of Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB) and Integration Processes

1. Could you tell your understanding of Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB)? Please explain briefly.
2. Are you aware of gender-responsive budget planning? If yes, please describe.
3. What are the key areas or levels of GRB integration within your ministry?

C. Law and Policy Framework

4. Are you aware of existing laws and policies that ensure the implementation of GRB? If yes, please explain
5. Could you tell us the major characteristics of these laws and policies?
6. What areas require improvement to strengthen GRB within the legal and policy framework in your opinion?

D. GRB Practices

D1. GRB Process and Implementation

7. Could you explain the current practice of GRB at the MoWCSC/MOFAGA/ NPC/MOF? How does the Ministry influence gender-responsive allocations at the federal level?
8. What challenges does the Ministry face in advocating for an increased share of the GRB budget or practice of GRB?
9. How effective is the Ministry's collaboration with line ministries in mainstreaming GRB?
10. How effective is the Ministry's collaboration with the Ministry of Finance in advancing GRB? Or Ministry of finance to other line ministries?
11. How effective is the role of political and bureaucratic leadership in promoting GRB?
12. Are programs designed in alignment with the Key Indicators and Sub-Indicators for Measuring Gender-Responsive Budgeting developed by the Ministry of Finance? (*Probe: examples of Indicator-Based Questions*)
13. Could you explain How does your ministry ensure women/disadvantage people's meaningful participation in planning, budgeting, implementation, and monitoring processes?

14. Please tell us the measures that are in place to enhance women's capacity for leadership and participation in training or institutional development programs.
15. Kindly tell us how do you ensure that women equitably benefit from programs, and how are gender gaps identified and addressed during implementation?
16. What steps are taken to promote women's access to employment, income-generation opportunities, and equal wages?
17. Please tell us if there are any initiatives introduced to reduce women's workload, promote time-saving solutions, and support shifts in traditional gender roles?

D2. Budget Allocation and Expenditure Trends

18. Please tell us how have budget allocations for gender equality and women's rights evolved over the past three fiscal years (2079-2083)? Probe, what is the current status of gender-responsive budget allocations for FY 2082/83?
19. Could you tell us which gender-specific programs receive the highest and lowest proportions of budget allocations?
20. How do you assess gender-specific budget expenditure patterns to evaluate effectiveness and determine continuation in next fiscal years?
21. How are funds for gender-related programs allocated during the annual budget preparation process?
22. What is the overall status of MoWCSC/ NPC/MOF, MOFAGA's GRB in the past three fiscal years?
23. Kindly let us know what support systems, capacities, or institutional arrangements are lacking to strengthen GRB implementation?

E. Impact of Budgeted Programs

24. Please explain regarding the visible changes or outcomes have resulted from GRB investments for women and girls?
25. Have you notice any such budget headings or programs target intersectional vulnerabilities (e.g., caste, ethnicity, disability, geography etc.) among women?

F. Successes and Failures

26. Over the years, why do you think the implementation of GRB indicators during planning and execution has been successful or unsuccessful? What factors contributed to these outcomes?

G. Challenges and Opportunities in Budget Cycle

27. Please explain what challenges or bottlenecks have you faced during different stages of the budget cycle (planning, execution, monitoring, reporting, evaluation)? (Probe: gaps in the GRB classification and coding system) (Probe: coordination challenges across ministries and government levels, if any) (Probe: adequacy of reporting mechanisms across government levels)
28. What opportunities exist to strengthen GRB planning and execution?

H. Way Forward

29. What measures should be taken to ensure the effective implementation of GRB guidelines and to apply GRB budget codes during planning and execution?
30. Are you aware of any ongoing or planned reforms to strengthen GRB mechanisms?
31. Do you have specific recommendations for the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens, Provincial Governments, and Local Governments?

2. CHECKLIST FOR KII AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

A. Background Information of Key Informant

- Name:
- Age:
- Gender Identity:
- Position:
- Institution:
- Date of Interview:
- Start Time:
- End Time:
- Facilitator(s) Name:
- Note-taker Name:

B. Understanding of Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB)

1. Could you tell your understanding of Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB)? Please explain briefly.
2. Are you aware of gender-responsive budget planning? If yes, please explain how it is designed.
3. What are the key areas or levels of GRB?
4. In your opinion, how is GRB integrated into the planning and budgeting process? (e.g., gender analysis, policy and plan integration, budget and program planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, gender audit and feedback)

C. Laws and Policies

5. Are you aware of the laws or policies that ensure GRB? If yes, please explain.
6. Could you tell the major characteristics of these laws and policies?
7. What areas require improvement to strengthen GRB within the legal and policy framework in your opinion?

D. Current Practice of GRB

8. Could you tell us the current practice of Gender-Responsive Budgeting in municipalities in Nepal?
9. How do you think the funds for gender-related programs are allocated during the annual budget preparation process?
10. Could you please tell us the overall GRB budget status of the municipality for the last three fiscal years and the ongoing fiscal year? (Please share the budget sheet, if possible.)
11. Are programs designed based on the Key Indicators and Sub-Indicators for Measuring Gender-Responsive Budgeting as per the GRB Localization Guidelines?
12. In terms of, Women's Participation and Planning; how does your municipality ensure meaningful participation of women, particularly in decision-making roles, during planning, budgeting, implementation, and monitoring processes?
13. In terms of, Capacity Development of Women; what measures are in place to enhance women's leadership, decision-making, and participation through institutional training and development programs?

14. In terms of, Ensuring Benefits and Control for Women; how does the municipality ensure that women equitably benefit from programs, and how are gender gaps or barriers identified and addressed during implementation?
15. In terms of Women's Employment and Income Generation; what steps are taken to promote women's access to employment, income-generation opportunities, and equal wages within municipality-supported programs?
16. In terms of, Improving Women's Time Use and Reducing Workload; what initiatives have been introduced to reduce women's workload, promote time-saving solutions, and shift traditional gender roles?
17. Is the municipality applying the *"Local Level Institutional Capacity Self-Assessment Guideline, 2077"* while developing the budget? If yes, how?
18. Could you explain how you link Local Level Institutional Capacity Self-Assessment (LISA) with GRB coding system? Please explain

E. Linkages with Sub-National Treasury Regulatory Application (SuTRA)

19. Is SuTRA helpful in ensuring gender-responsive budgeting and planning? Please explain.
20. Does the SuTRA software support gender-responsive budget planning effectively? Please provide the reasons for whether it supports or does not support.
21. Does SuTRA have provisions for tracking the status of budget implementation?

F. Successes and Failures

22. Over the years, do you think the implementation of GRB indicators during municipal planning and budgeting has been successful or not? Please explain the contributing factors.

G. Challenges and Opportunities

23. What are the key bottlenecks to implementing GRB planning at the municipal level? Please list them and explain the underlying causes.
24. Are you aware of the key opportunities for strengthening GRB planning at the local level in your opinion?

H. Way Forward

25. What measures would you suggest ensuring effective implementation of the GRB Guidelines and proper application of the GRB budget code during the budgeting and execution process? Please share any specific recommendations.

3. LIST OF KEY QUESTIONS FOR CASE STUDIES

1. Could you please share a brief overview of your background, including your educational history and current means of livelihood?
2. Could you describe the public services or government programs you have attempted to access in recent years, and whether they were accessible and adequate for your needs?
3. What types of challenges or forms of exclusion have you encountered while seeking these services or opportunities?
4. In what ways have gender norms, social expectations, or cultural practices influenced your ability to benefit from public programs or resources?
5. To what extent do financial, social, or mobility-related barriers affect your access to essential services, employment, or support systems?
6. Based on your experience, what specific difficulties do women and girls particularly informal workers, survivors, or those who are economically disadvantaged face in your community?
7. How have these gaps or barriers impacted on your wellbeing, livelihood, safety, or ability to exercise your rights?
8. Have you approached your local government or any community-based groups for support? If so, how would you describe their response?
9. Are you aware of any government programs targeted at women or marginalized groups, and how accessible or beneficial have these programs been for you?
10. What types of support, improvements, or changes do you believe would better address the needs of women and girls in circumstances similar to yours?

Annex III: Overview of Participants (KII, FGD and Case Studies)

No. of KII, and FGD planned in Federal and Local Level				
SN	Level	KII	FGD	Case Studies
1	Federal level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens (4) Ministry of Finance (3) Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration (2) National Planning Commission (1) 		
Total		10		
Local Level				
1	Shankarapur Municipality, Kathmandu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deputy Mayor (1) Ward Chairs (2) Chief Administrative Officer (1) 	Community women groups- 2 (each in two wards)	Community women group respondent-1 (Dalit woman leader, cooperative/group-based livelihood)
Total		4	2	
2	Madi Municipality, Chitwan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor (1) Ward Chairs (2) IT Officer (1) 	Community women groups- 2 (each in two wards)	Community women group respondents-2 (Tharu woman leader, homestay entrepreneur; group-based collective enterprise leader)
Total		4	2	
3	Manahari Rural Municipality, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair (1) Deputy Chair (1) Administrative Officer (1) Planning Department Officer (1) Social Development Committee, Officer (1) Ward Chair (1) 	Community women groups- 2 (each in two wards)	Community women group respondents-2 (Indigenous woman cooperative leader; dairy enterprise group leader)
Total		6	2	
Grand total		24	6	5

Names of Participants Engaged During the Study		
24 KIIs		
Data Collection Method	Participants Name	Designation/Department
Federal Level	1. Ms. Aabha Shrestha	Joint Secretary, MoWCSC
	2. Ms. Indira Acharya	Under Secretary; Women Empowerment Division, MoWCSC
	3. Ms. Puspa Thapaliya	Section Officer; Policy, Planning and Monitoring Section, MoWCSC
	4. Ms. Sangita Thapa	Computer Operator; Policy, Planning and Monitoring Section, MoWCSC
	5. Mr. Khomraj Koirala,	Joint Secretary; Financial Management Division, National Planning Commission
	6. Mr. Suman Dahal	Joint Secretary; Budget and Program Division, MoF
	7. Ms. Kamala Kharel	Under Secretary; Budget and Program Division, MoF
	8. Ms. Sujita Joshi	Computer Operator; Budget and Program Division, MoF
	9. Mr. Prakash Dahal	Joint Secretary; Federal Affairs Division, MoFAGA
	10. Ms. Bishnu Kumari Bhusal	Under Secretary; Social Inclusion Division; MoFAGA
Local Level		
Shankharapur Municipality	1. Ms. Samita Shrestha	Deputy Mayor
	2. Mr. Chudamani Panthi	Chief Administrative Officer
	3. Mr. Bed Narayan Dangal	Chairperson, Ward 1
	4. Mr. Pote Thing Tamang	Chairperson, Ward 8
Madi Municipality	1. Ms. Tara Kumari Kaji Mahato	Mayor
	2. Mr. Prabin Bhandari	Information Technology Officer
	3. Mr. Dipendra Raj Poudel	Chairperson, Ward 6
	4. Ms. Chandra Kumari Baniya	Chairperson, Ward 7
Manahari Rural Municipality	1. Mr. Ranjan Kalakheti	Chairperson
	2. Ms. Sita Pulami Magar	Deputy-Chairperson
	3. Mr. Ramesh Subedi	Administrative Officer
	4. Mr. Rajendra Prasad Chaulagain	Officer, Planning Department
	5. Mr. Gyanendra Dhakal	Officer, Social Development Committee
	6. Mr. Bikash Thapa	Chairperson, Ward 6

6 FGDs		
Municipalities	Name of the Respondents	
B.K. Tole, Ward No. 3, Shankharapur Municipality, Kathmandu	1. Sharmila Sunuwar 2. Purna Maya B.K. 3. Sabitri B.K.	4. Mithu B.K. 5. Bipana B.K. 6. Kalpana Sunuwar
Kafle Danda, Ward No. 8, Shankharapur Municipality, Kathmandu	1. Sumana Tamang 2. Anjali Tamang 3. Phulmaya Tamang 4. Srijana Tamang 5. Bishnu Maya Ghalan	6. Sharmila Tamang 7. Sanji Ghalan 8. Sarita Tamang 9. Sabina Ghalan 10. Jethi Thing
Ward No. 3, Ward No. 7, and Ward No. 4, Manahari Rural Municipality,	1. Hiralal Syangtang 2. Govinda Pande 3. Balram Khadka 4. Basudev Dhakal 5. Mithu Karki 6. Sano Kanchi Bal	7. Pampha Praja 8. Gyanu Gautam 9. Swostika Timalisina 10. Phulmaya Tamang 11. Rasmi Dhakal 12. Aiti Maya Syantang
Malahi Tole, Ward No. 3, Madi Municipality, Chitwan	1. Santarasha Mahato 2. Gayatri Mahato 3. Shakti Mahato 4. Malati Mahato 5. Malati Sahani 6. Phulwadan Sahani 7. Lilawati Sahani 8. Jayakali Sahani 9. Dil Shova Sahani 10. Sita Kami 11. Punam Shah 12. Kulawati Sahani 13. Dharmasila Sahani 14. Laxmi Shah 15. Manju Sahani 16. Dikshya Limbu 17. Sushila Sahani	18. Anju Sahani 19. Niruta Sahani 20. Srijana Majhi 21. Kamala Thakur 22. Asha Mardaniya 23. Sindu Sahani 24. Tara Sahani 25. Anisha Majhi 26. Arati Majhi 27. Anju Majhi 28. Pramila Sahani 29. Kajal Sahani 30. Durga Sahani 31. Hira Sahani 32. Jyoti Sahani 33. Bindu Sahani
Chitai Tole, Ward No. 1, Madi Municipality, Chitwan	1. Menuka Mahato 2. Ranju Mahato 3. Prem Kumari Mahato 4. Chandra Kumari Mahato 5. Birphi Mahato 6. Janaki Mahato	7. Malati Mahato 8. Sanphulia Mahato 9. Sashi Sunar 10. Pramila Mahato 11. Jyoti Mahato 12. Nanda Thakuri 13. Siyursiya M

Annex IV: National GRB Committee and GRB Committees at Various Levels

1. National GRB Committee

S.N.	Name / Representation	Role
1	Joint Secretary, Budget and Program Division, Ministry of Finance	Coordinator
2	Representative, Secretariat of the National Planning Commission	Member
3	Representative, Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development	Member
4	Representative, Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare	Member
5	Representative, Office of the Financial Comptroller General	Member
6	Representative, International Economic Cooperation Coordination Division, Ministry of Finance	Member
7	Representative, UN Women	Member
8	Under-Secretary, Budget and Program Division (Responsible for Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare), Ministry of Finance	Member Secretary

2. GRB Committees at Various Levels

Level	Committee Composition	Role
Ministry Level	Head of Budget and Programme Division, Ministry of Finance	Coordinator
	Representative, National Planning Commission Secretariat	Member
	Representative, Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development	Member
	Representative, Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare	Member
	Representative, Office of the Financial Comptroller General	Member
	Representative, Foreign Aid Coordination Division, Ministry of Finance	Member
	Representative, UN agencies	Member
	Joint Secretary, Budget and Programme Division (responsible for Women, Children and Social Welfare sector), Ministry of Finance	Member Secretary
District Level	Chairperson of the District Development Committee or designated official	Coordinator
	Local Development Officer	Member
	Heads of District Offices (Agriculture, Education, Health, Livestock, Forest, Technical, Cottage and Small Industries, Treasury and Accounts Controller)	Members
	Representative, District Administration Office	Member
	Representative, Women and Children Office	Member
	Chairperson, District Women Coordination Committee	Member
	Representatives, NGO Federation, Chamber of Commerce, Journalists' Federation	Members
	District GESI Focal Person	Member
Planning/Monitoring/Administrative Officer	Member Secretary	

Municipal Level	Mayor or designated official	Coordinator
	Executive Officer	Member
	Representatives from sectoral offices (Education, Agriculture, Livestock, Health, Forest, Administration, Technical, Treasury and Accounts, Women and Children, Cottage and Small Industries)	Members
	Vice-Chairperson, Municipal Women Coordination Committee	Member
	Representative, NGO Federation	Member
	Woman representative, Municipal Chamber of Commerce and Industry	Member
	Social Development Officer	Member Secretary
Village Development Committee (VDC) Level	VDC Chairperson or designated official	Coordinator
	VDC Secretary	Member
	Representatives from local health institutions and School Management Committees	Members
	Representatives from Agriculture Service Center	Members
	Representatives from NGOs working on gender equality and women's empowerment	Members
	Woman teacher nominated by the VDC	Member
	Female Community Health Volunteer	Member
	Women representatives from community-based organizations, women's groups, Ward Citizen Forums, and Citizen Awareness Center	Members
Private sector representative	Member	
Social Mobilizer or designated official	Member Secretary	

Annex V: Committee Division for Planning Process at Local Level

Municipality	Respective Committees	Chair		Members		Total Percentage women Participation	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Shankharapur Municipality	Revenue Advisory Committee, Committee,	0	1	3	3	42.85	57.14
	Revenue Estimation and Budget Ceiling Determination	1	0	4	2	71.42	28.57
	Budget and Program Formulation Committee,	0	1	8	0	88.89	11.11
	Municipal Executive	1	0	3	3	58	42
	Local Assembly	1	0	27	19	57.44	40.42
Madi Municipality	Revenue Advisory Committee, Committee,	0	1	4	2	58.1	42.9
	Revenue Estimation and Budget Ceiling Determination	0	1	5	1	71.40	28.6
	Budget and Program Formulation Committee,	0	1	6	2	66.7	33.3
	Municipal Executive	0	1	10	8	52.6	47.4
	Local Assembly	0	1	28	19	58.2	42.5
Manahari Rural Municipality	Revenue Advisory Committee, Committee,	0	1	4	2	58.1	42.8
	Revenue Estimation and Budget Ceiling Determination	1	0	5	1	85.7	14.3
	Budget and Program Formulation Committee,	0	1	6	2	66.7	33.3
	Municipal Executive	1	0	11	9	58.2	42.8
	Local Assembly	1	0	28	19	60.2	40.4

Annex VI: Indicators and Sub-Indicators for GRB

(GRB formulation guideline 2012)

No.	Main Indicator / Sub-Indicator	Description / Checklist	Score / Weight	Remarks and Status in each level/area
1.0	Women's Participation in Planning and Implementation		20	
1.1	Participation in Planning Programs and Budgeting	<p>At central and district levels, during planning, programming, and budgeting, the following arrangements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent: Participation of women employees at decision-making level and gender focal persons at central level; ≥33% women employees or stakeholders involved at district level; consultations held with women representatives of other groups. • Moderate: Participation of decision-making women employees or gender focal persons at central level; 20–32% women employees or stakeholders involved at district level; consultations held with women representatives of other groups. • Basic: Participation of women employees other than decision-making level at central level; 5–19% women employees or stakeholders involved at district level; consultations held with women representatives of other groups. 	4 / 3 / 2	
1.2	Ensuring Women's Participation in Implementation		12	
1.2.1	Women's Participation in Program Implementation	<p>Women's participation in staff or management/ coordination committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent: ≥33% of decision-making positions • Moderate: 20–32% • Basic: 5–19% 	5 / 4 / 3	
1.2.2	Women's Representation at Decision-making Levels	<p>Participation of women in thematic implementation decision-making bodies and stakeholder/consumer committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent: ≥33% in decision-making bodies and committees • Moderate: <33% in decision-making bodies but ≥33% in committees • Basic: 10–32% 	4 / 3 / 2	
1.2.3	Mandatory Presence of Women	Ensuring mandatory presence of women officials in planning and implementation meetings	3	
1.3	Women's Participation in Monitoring	Ensuring participation of women or gender experts in monitoring plans	4	

No.	Main Indicator / Sub-Indicator	Description / Checklist	Score / Weight	Remarks and Status in each level/area
2.0	Capacity Building of Women		20	
2.1	Capacity Building for Policy Decision-making and Implementation	<p>Arrangements for capacity building of women office bearers in groups and committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one program to enhance decision-making skills • Refresher programs • Targeted programs for specific groups of women 	6 (2 / 2 / 2)	
2.2	Women's Participation in Capacity Building Programs	<p>Participation in workshops, training, awareness, and skill development programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent: ≥33% women participants • Moderate: 20–32% • Basic: 5–19% 	7 / 5 / 3	
2.3	Gender-sensitive Content / Environment	<p>Workshops, training, awareness, and skill development programs with gender-sensitive content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of gender concerns • Provision for gender-sensitive presentations or environment 	7 (4 / 3)	
3.0	Ensuring Benefits and Control for Women (including other target groups)		30	
3.1	Ensuring Benefits to Women	<p>Proportion of women benefiting from plans and programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent: ≥50% • Moderate: 30–49% • Basic: 5–29% 	8 / 6 / 4	
3.2	Identification of Gender Gaps, Special Needs, and Barriers	<p>Identification and addressing of gender gaps and barriers (economic, educational, mobility) in local-level performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent: All three barriers addressed • Moderate: Two barriers addressed • Basic: One barrier addressed 	6 / 4 / 2	
3.3	Gender-friendly Implementation Mechanisms and Environment	<p>Arrangements to make policies, structures, and work environment gender-friendly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal/regulatory frameworks promoting equality and removing discriminatory provisions; workplace free of violence (code of conduct, grievance mechanisms) • Provision for women's specific needs (separate toilets, breastfeeding areas, gender-friendly office layout) • Staff-oriented gender-responsive service activities (awareness programs, citizen outreach, orientation training) 	7 (3 / 2 / 2)	
3.4	Ensuring Budget Allocation	Adequate budget allocation and utilization for programs promoting gender equality	2 (1 / 1)	

No.	Main Indicator / Sub-Indicator	Description / Checklist	Score / Weight	Remarks and Status in each level/area
3.5	Gender-sensitive Monitoring, Evaluation, and Impact Assessment	Recording gender-disaggregated data and impact assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separate records for men and women • Inclusion of gender progress in annual review reports • Incorporation of learnings in next year's plans/budget • Gender auditing and impact evaluation 	7 (2 / 1 / 1 / 2)	
4.0	Women's Employment and Income Generation		20	
4.1	Availability of Employment Opportunities for Women	Ensuring women's participation in newly created employment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent: ≥33% • Moderate: 20–32% • Basic: 5–19% 	8 / 6 / 4	
4.2	Generation of Alternative Income or Vocational Opportunities	Creation of alternative income or vocational opportunities through technical/skill development programs or market-linked initiatives	7	
4.3	Equal Wage Rate	Ensuring equal wages for men and women in available employment	5	
5.0	Improving Women's Time Use and Reducing Workload		10	
5.1	Efficiency and Time Saving in Work	Use of new technologies or methods providing immediate benefits and saving women's time (e.g., mobile banking, water supply, roads, irrigation, informal education, women-friendly workplace technology)	4	
5.2	Long-term Efforts to Change Traditional Roles	Efforts for transforming traditional gender roles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in non-traditional tasks with value and skill enhancement • Training and awareness on unpaid domestic work and workload • Encouraging men's participation in household tasks and promoting collaboration 	6 (2 / 2 / 2)	

Note: When calculating percentages for the various sub-indicators based on the checklist, if the decimal value is less than 0.5, it should be rounded down to the lower full mark; if it is 0.5 or higher, it should be rounded up to the next full mark. In cases where the minimum criteria specified for a standard are not met, the program will not be awarded any score.

For example, if a percentage calculation results in 15.4, it should be rounded to 15 full marks; if the value is 15.5 or higher, it should be rounded to 16 full marks.

It should be noted that the main indicators, sub-indicators, and their associated checklist in Table 2 are designed for use only in the context of programs formulated for the fulfillment of the primary responsibilities and roles of regional bodies, and not for routine annual administrative management expenditures. Users should be clearly aware of this specific context.






Annex VII: Local Level Institutional Capacity Self-Assessment Guideline, 2077 (LISA)

S.N.	Indicator No.	Indicator Area	Score	Evidence	Remarks
50	C.R.2.1	Implementation of programs targeted toward Dalit, marginalized, single women, persons with disabilities, senior citizens, and pregnant women	1		
51	C.R.2.2	Annual Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Audit	1		
52	C.R.2.3	Conducting social audits of women-targeted programs (Minimum A.M. 2 requirement)	1		
53	C.R.3.1	Conducting orientation/training programs for Dalit, marginalized, single women, persons with disabilities, senior citizens, and pregnant women based on needs assessments (Priority to women, Dalits, and vulnerable groups)	1		
54	C.R.3.2	Number of women/girls/adolescent girls participating in economic/social/leadership programs, or involved in income-generation activities (Based on needs assessment)	1		
55	C.R.3.3	Number of women, children, persons with disabilities, senior citizens, Dalits, individuals from vulnerable groups, adolescent girls, single women, and survivors of violence who have received legal, psychosocial, or economic support services (Based on annual records)	1		



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