ESCAP
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

TRUST FUND FOR TSUNAMI, DISASTER AND CLIMATE PREPAREDNESS

ESCAP MULTI-DONOR TRUST FUND FOR TSUNAMI, DISASTER AND CLIMATE PREPAREDNESS

Gender, Disability, and Social Inclusion Guideline

Introduction: Rationale and Enabling Principles

Disasters and climate-related hazards affect people differently. Gender, disability, age, poverty, displacement, Indigenous identity and other intersecting factors can shape exposure, access to warnings and services, participation in decision making and the ability to prepare, evacuate, and recover[1]. Integrating Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) therefore makes disaster risk reduction and climate preparedness more relevant, accessible, effective, and sustainable.

This guideline operationalizes the ESCAP multi-donor Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness (hereafter referred to as 'Trust Fund') enabling principle on Gender and Social Inclusion: Prioritize gender-responsive and inclusive early warning system development in line with Objective 7 of the Sendai Gender Action Plan [2] through, inter alia, disaster risk sensitization and awareness for marginalized at-risk populations.

This approach is intended to support the Trust Fund's wider commitments to strategy implementation, sustained impact, meaningful participation of the Advisory Council, co-financing, results-based monitoring and evaluation, as well as risk-informed and needs-based investment (see Annex C: Operational Guidance).

This guideline also applies a rights-based approach by recognizing marginalized groups as rights-holders who deserve a voice and responsible institutions as duty-bearers. Trust Fund programming will uphold equality and non-discrimination, accessibility, meaningful participation, dignity, transparency and accountability throughout project design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and learning.

Objective

This guideline sets out good practice guidance to integrate GEDSI throughout Trust Fund operations and programming. The overall objective is to:

1. Operationalize the Trust Fund's commitment to inclusive and equitable disaster and climate preparedness;

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[1]UN Women, 2020, "Review of Gender-Responsiveness and Disability-Inclusion in Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia and the Pacific", United Nations. Available online at: https://wrd.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/A2REVI~1.PDF

[2] United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, United Nations Population Fund, and United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, 2024, "Gender Action Plan to Support Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030", United Nations. Available online at: https://www.preventionweb.net/sendai-framework/sendai-framework-for-disaster-riskreduction/SendaiGAP

2. Support Trust Fund Implementing Partners in designing and delivering inclusive programmes;
3. Strengthen accountability for GEDSI across governance, implementation, monitoring and learning in line with key United Nations strategic frameworks.

Relevant UN frameworks for alignment

Programming should align with:

1. Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) 2015-2030
2. Sendai Gender Action Plan
3. UN Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS 2.0)
4. ESCAP Gender Equality Policy (2025)
5. ESCAP Disability Inclusion Policy (2020)
6. Operational Guide on the Implementation of the Jakarta Declaration on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2023-2032)

Roles and Responsibilities

ESCAP Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction

- To provide a forum for presenting the Trust Fund's GEDSI achievements, challenges, and lessons, in accordance with the matters addressed under the Committee's Terms of Reference (TOR),

Advisory Council members

- Ensure GEDSI is reflected in strategic priorities and funding decisions,
- Provide strategic direction (and technical capacity if appropriate) to address inclusion gaps in Trust Fund programming as identified.

ESCAP Grants Committee

- Confirm the applicable GEDSI markers have been assigned and documented during the grant-review process,

Trust Fund Secretariat

- Integrate GEDSI requirements into calls for proposals, templates, assessment tools, and reporting processes,
- Screen proposals and monitor programming against the GEDSI requirements,
- Facilitate learning and knowledge exchange on inclusive disaster and climate preparedness, including with Implementing partners, as necessary.

Implementing Partners

- Conduct a context-specific GEDSI analysis to uncover existing inequalities and social dynamics within the project context, identify gaps, establish baseline, and inform evidence-based planning,

- Meaningfully engage diverse range of stakeholders identified, including women's organizations, organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), Indigenous Peoples, and other marginalized groups,
- Collect and use sex-, age-, and disability disaggregated data where feasible and appropriate,
- Allocate adequate resources for accessibility, reasonable accommodation, participation, safeguarding and other inclusion measures,
- Monitor, report, and adapt implementation based on evidence and community feedback,

GEDSI integration within programming on disaster and climate preparedness

This section translates the enabling policies and principles into operational requirements for Trust Fund programming.

Key Population Groups

Projects should identify and meaningfully engage population groups who may experience disproportionate disaster and climate risks or barriers to preparedness measures[3]. Relevant target population groups should be identified through context-specific analysis and community engagement rather than assumed in advance. Depending on the context, these may include those outlined in Figure 1.

Gender and people with care responsibilities	Disability, health, and functional needs	Age-related vulnerabilities	Social, cultural, and displacement-related barriers
• Women and girls • Pregnant and lactating women • Female-headed households • Caregivers • Sexual and gender minorities	• Persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, or psychosocial disabilities • People with chronic illnesses	• Children, adolescents, and youth • Unaccompanied or separated children • Older persons, older persons living alone	• Indigenous Peoples • Refugees • Internally displaced persons (IDPs) • People facing multiple and intersecting forms of disadvantage

Figure 1. Key population groups to consider in GEDSI-responsive programming

Project Scope

The following table constitutes good practices that can inform project proposals in incorporating GEDSI components relevant to their scope, hazards, and context[4].

[3]UN Women, 2024, "Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion Mainstreaming in Disaster Risk Reduction: Enabling GEDSI Responsive DRR Planning & Budgeting Tips on Strategies and Approaches", United Nations. Available online at: https://wrd.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-10/np-c949-05-gender-equality-disability-and-social.pdf

[4]Table 1 presents a synthesis of the following publication:

Table 1. GEDSI integration in various disaster and climate preparedness efforts

	GEDSI components	Good practices
Risk knowledge and assessment	Analyze how gender, disability, age, care responsibilities, poverty, displacement, Indigenous identity, location, and other intersecting factors influence exposure, vulnerability, capacities and access to preparedness measures.	A context-specific GEDSI analysis is included in the proposal, sex, age, and disability disaggregated (SADD) data are used where feasible and ethically appropriate, relevant representative organizations and affected groups are consulted, identified barriers and capacities inform project activities.
Governance, leadership, and preparedness planning	Ensure women, persons with disabilities, caregivers, Indigenous Peoples, and other underrepresented groups participate meaningfully in preparedness governance and decision-making. Integrate GEDSI into contingency plan, SOPs, and institutional responsibilities	Relevant representative organizations participate in planning and decision-making, preparedness plans and SOPs include specific inclusion measures, participation is documented including how stakeholder contributions influenced decisions.
Inclusive end-to-end multi-hazard early warning system (refer to Table 2 for more detailed guidance across pillar)	Integrate GEDSI across the four Early Warnings for All (EW4All) pillars. Co-design warnings with diverse users and ensure that forecasts, triggers, messages, and anticipatory actions account for differentiated risks and barriers.	Each EW4All pillar includes GEDSI measures, warning messages are available through complementary channels and accessible formats, local languages and trusted community networks are used where relevant, warnings are consulted and tested with diverse users, early-action plans identify who may require additional support and how it will be provided
Community preparedness, education, training, and simulation	Provide accessible and culturally appropriate preparedness education, training, and drills. Incorporate local and Indigenous knowledge and strengthen the leadership of women, persons with disabilities and other underrepresented groups as trainers, facilitators, and preparedness actors.	Training venues, materials and communication are accessible, reasonable accommodation and participation support are available, drills test barriers affecting different population groups
Inclusive evacuation, shelter, and response readiness	Ensure evacuation routes, transport, assembly areas, shelters and response procedures are physically accessible, safe and appropriate for different users. Address mobility support, caregiving responsibilities, privacy, accessible water and sanitation.	An accessibility and protection assessment is conducted, evacuation plans identify assistance and transport arrangements, shelters provide accessible facilities, accessible complaints and referral mechanisms are established.

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2024, "Gender Action Plan to Support Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030", United Nations. Available online at: https://www.preventionweb.net/media/94610/download?startDownload=20260919

For early warning system (EWS)-specific programming, projects are recommended to incorporate GEDSI components across all four pillars of the EW4All initiative. With reference to the UNDRR Inclusive Early Warning Checklist & Implementation Guide[5], good practices are the following:

Table 2. GEDSI integration in early warning system specific programming and minimum standards

EW4ALL Pillar	Identification Questions	Good practices
Pillar 1: Disaster Risk Knowledge and Assessment	- Who is most exposed to the hazard? - Who may be disproportionately affected due to gender, disability, age, and other social factors? - How do caregiving responsibilities, care needs, and access to care services shape the exposure, vulnerability, and preparedness capacities of different population groups? - Have women, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, older persons, and other underrepresented groups been consulted?	- Sex-disaggregated data - Age-disaggregated data - Disability-disaggregated data (where feasible) - Community consultation
Pillar 2: Observations, Monitoring, Analysis, Forecasting	- Can all population access, understand, and act on warnings? - Have diverse users been involved in designing or testing the warning system? - What barriers prevent certain groups from receiving or understanding warnings?	- Accessible warning formats - Inclusive warning formats tested with diverse users
Pillar 3: Warning Dissemination and Communication	- Who receives warning messages and preparedness information and who may be excluded from receiving them? - Are community networks engaged in warning dissemination?	- Multiple dissemination channels - Women's organizations, OPDs, community leaders, and local organizations engaged - Information available in locally appropriate and language formats
Pillar 4: Preparedness and Response Capabilities	- Who participates in preparedness planning and decision making? - Are evacuation routes, shelters, and drills accessible to all?	- Inclusive evacuation planning, accessible shelters, and drills - Representation of women, caregivers, persons with

[5] United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2023, "Inclusive Early Warning Early Action: Checklist and Implementation Guide", United Nations. Available online at: https://www.undrr.org/media/91953/download?startDownload=20260624

EW4ALL Pillar	Identification Questions	Good practices
	- Are underrepresented groups represented in preparedness committee?	disabilities, and other underrepresented groups

GEDSI mainstreaming across the project cycle

Disaster and climate preparedness projects are most effective, equitable, and sustainable when GEDSI considerations are integrated throughout the project cycle. Incorporating GEDSI into planning, design, implementation, and evaluation enables stakeholders to better understand and respond to the diverse needs, knowledge, capacities and priorities of affected populations, thereby supporting more inclusive and equitable community resilience outcomes.

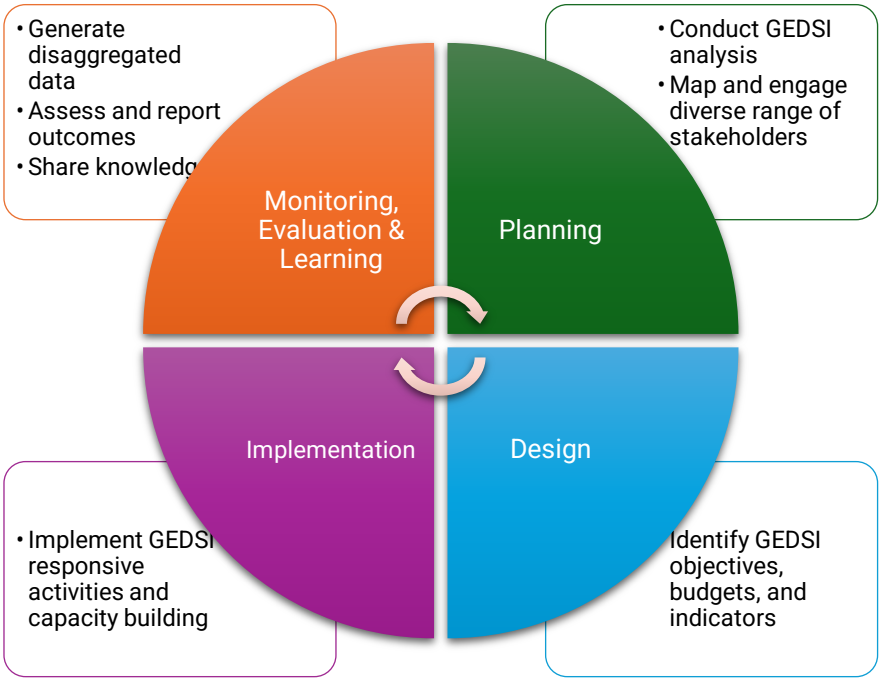


Figure 2. GEDSI integration across the project cycle

Project Planning

Ensure project design is informed by the needs, capacities, and barriers of affected population groups, with GEDSI established as a guiding principle from the outset. Key actions include:

- Embed GEDSI from the beginning in project plans, communications and decision-making process to ensure that it remains a priority throughout implementation,
- Conduct a context-specific GEDSI analysis through a review of relevant research, policies, existing secondary data or collection disaggregated data where needed, and stakeholder consultations such as interviews. The analysis should apply an intersectional approach to identify existing inequalities and social dynamics within the project context and inform project design. Main areas for analysis might include decision-making power, access to

and control over resources, division of labor and livelihoods, and other intersecting factors that may create opportunities or constraints to affected groups. Where necessary, involve GEDSI experts to provide technical guidance and strengthen GEDSI integration across project activities,

- Undertake stakeholder mapping and engagement to identify relevant stakeholders and determine how they should participate throughout the project. This should engage a diverse range of actors including women's organizations, OPDs, Indigenous Peoples organizations, and other underrepresented groups to ensure different perspectives, needs, capacities, and priorities inform project design and implementation,
- Where applicable, secure high-level commitment from influential stakeholders and align the project with relevant national and regional GEDSI policies, strategies, and institutional mandates in the locations where activities will be implemented.

Project Design

Ensure that findings from the GEDSI analysis inform the development of project priorities, activities, indicators, and implementation arrangements. Projects should include a GEDSI responsive action plan to promote equitable participation, access to benefits, and influence in decision making. Key actions include:

- Validate the analysis findings by synthesizing and sharing them with relevant stakeholders to confirm that they accurately reflect local realities and provide a credible basis for project decisions,
- Translate the findings into GEDSI action plans that sets out priorities, actions, responsibilities, timelines, required resources and expected results for addressing identified barriers and opportunities,
- Allocate adequate budget and resources for accessibility, meaningful participation, reasonable accommodation, and other GEDSI measures identified during the analysis and design process,
- Develop relevant GEDSI-sensitive indicators to track progress and assess whether the intended GEDSI objectives and outcomes are being achieved. Indicators should measure meaningful changes in participation, access to information and resources, benefit-sharing and decision-making influence which align with the expected impacts and outcomes set out in Annex B: Results Framework.

Project Implementation

Ensure all project activities meet both the preparedness and GEDSI objectives. Key actions include:

- Strengthen the capacity of project teams, partners and stakeholders to understand and apply GEDSI principles and recognize how inclusive approaches contribute to improving preparedness outcomes. Where relevant, project personnel are encouraged to complete

or consult ESCAP learning resources on disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction with gender mainstreaming[6].

- Partner with organizations with relevant GEDSI expertise including OPDs, women's organizations, and community-based organizations to support project implementation, community engagement, accessibility and monitoring. Partnerships should recognize these organizations as technical and implementation partners, with clearly defined roles and adequate resources.
- Ensure all population groups can equitably access project information, training, financing, technology, and other project benefits through continuous assessment of participation and benefits-sharing to avoid reinforcing existing disparities,
- Provide reasonable accommodation and accessibility support such as accessible venues, materials, and communication formats,
- Ensure balanced and diverse representation in panels, speaking engagements, consultations, training activities and other public-facing events. All-male panels should be avoided, and proactive efforts should be made to include women and representatives of other underrepresented groups as experts, speakers, facilitators, and decision makers,
- Apply continuous feedback mechanism to regularly collect, analyze, and act on feedback from affected groups, identify barriers and improve project inclusiveness and effectiveness.

Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, and Learning

Assess whether project benefits and outcomes are equitably distributed and use evidence to improve inclusion outcomes. Key actions include:

- Collect and report quantitative and qualitative GEDSI indicators and SADD data, aligned where applicable with Results Framework indicators[7] as available,
- Assess and report differences in access, participation, leadership, benefits, outcomes, and unintended impacts across population groups,
- Use findings to adapt project design and implementation, document good practices, and strengthen institutional GEDSI approaches.

Integration of GEDSI Components in Project Proposals and Progress Reports

As mandatory requirements, project proposals and progress reports integrate GEDSI components and Gender Equality and Disability Inclusion Markers.

GEDSI in Project Proposals (examples)

[6] Learning resources are available at: https://www.maketherightreal.net/learning

[7] Relevant indicators include: O3.1 on Number of local governments and/or communities with improved inclusive community preparedness and anticipatory action protocols, O3.3 on Evidence of Inclusive DRR approaches used in projects, resulting in the meaningful engagement of at-risk populations, and O.4.1 on Percentage of population covered by MHEWS including at-risk populations derived from disaggregated data.

2.2. Gender Equality and Disability Inclusion Analysis

[Explain how men and women are affected differently by the above issues. What are the different needs of women and men identified? How will the project address them? Please also add any gender considerations to other parts of the project document, where appropriate, including the project strategy.

Moreover, taking into consideration the Disability Inclusion and the key problems outlined above, elaborate the ways in which persons with disabilities will be included and/or benefit from this project. Clearly define whether this is a 'disability-mainstreamed' or 'disability-specific' project. Where applicable, ensure that an analysis of discrimination and barriers facing persons with disabilities has been duly considered and appropriately addressed. Please also add any disability inclusion considerations to other parts of the project document, where appropriate, including the project strategy.]

5. Cross-cutting elements

5.1. Gender and Social Inclusion considerations

[Provide 100 words briefly outlining how the project will address gender and social inclusion related issues.

Please also indicate the Gender Marker, referring to the ESCAP Gender Marker Guidance Note (Annex II) to ensure it is assigned correctly. Select one of the following:

- *GEM1: Project contributes to gender equality/women's empowerment in a limited way;*
- *GEM2a: Gender equality/women's empowerment is a significant objective;*
- *GEM2b: Gender equality/women's empowerment (GEWE) is the principal objective.*

Please also indicate the Disability Inclusion marker score for this project, referring to the Disability Inclusion Guidance Note. Select one of the following:

- *Score 0: The project does not substantially contribute to the rights of persons with disabilities and disability inclusion, but persons with disabilities may benefit from the outputs of the project.*
- *Score 1: The project contributes to the rights of persons with disabilities and disability inclusion in a significant way.*
- *Score 2: The rights of persons with disabilities and disability inclusion is the primary objective of the project.]*

GEDSI in Progress Reports (examples)

5. Reporting on cross-cutting issues

5.1. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Please mention how your project is contributing to progress towards the SDGs (max 200 words).

5.2 Gender

Please mention how your project mainstreamed or promoted gender equality and women empowerment across your interventions, citing specific examples and indicating any deviation from the project document in terms of Gender Marker (max 200 words).

5.3 Vulnerable and Marginalized Groups

Please describe how vulnerable and marginalized groups, including persons with disabilities, have participated in and benefited from the project (max 200 words).

5.4 South-South cooperation

Please mention how the project contributed to South-South cooperation (max 200 words).

Gender Equality Marker[8]

This marker is used to track the integration of gender equality and associated resource allocations. Projects are reviewed with ESCAP's Gender Focal Points to apply the appropriate marker as follows:

Rating	***Meaning***
GEM 0	The project is not expected to contribute to gender equality or the empowerment of women
GEM 1	The project contributes to gender equality or the empowerment of women in a limited way
GEM 2a	Gender equality or the empowerment of women is a significant objective of the project
GEM 2b	Gender equality or the empowerment of women is the principal objective of the project

[8] United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, 2019, "ESCAP Gender Marker Guidance Note", United Nations. Available online at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Av8JcQIgcUQaxJZRZ2gWBS6-kq0Obl7d/view

Disability Inclusion Marker[9]

This marker serves as an accountability mechanism for systematically integrating disability inclusion across project planning and implementation. Projects are reviewed against the marker as follows:

Rating	*Meaning*
Score 0	The project does not substantially contribute to the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities, although persons with disabilities may benefit from its outputs
Score 1	The project contributes significantly to the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities
Score 2	The rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities are the principal or primary objective of the project.

This guideline is intended to ensure that GEDSI is systematically integrated across the Trust Fund's governance, project cycle, and disaster and climate preparedness investments. By applying these principles, good practices and project proposals and progress reports that integrate GEDSI components, the Trust Fund seeks to support programming that is more inclusive, accessible, equitable, and responsive to the diverse needs, capacities and priorities of at-risk populations.

[9] United Nations, 2022, "The Disability Inclusion Marker and Its Use in Umoja Integrated Planning, Management, and Reporting (IPMR)", United Nations. Available online at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/17k9dyJUUpeCrHp0VPl7Y4nKT20jST4NR/view