The Role of Local Actors in Gender Responsive and Inclusive Social Protection Systems:

ANNEX COMPENDIUM

Synthesis Report: Annex Compendium

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ANNEX A: CONCEPTUAL FRAMING

Overview

This section describes the conceptual framing for the study. It was designed to analyse the relationship between local actors and social protection (SP) systems in each of the six deep dive countries and specifically to unpack:

- **The social protection system processes** e.g., policy and programme framing, design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation;
- **The Social protection system building blocks** or component activities (see *Table A1)*.
- **The current and potential roles of diverse local actors** and their level of agency across the social protection processes and building blocks in different country contexts;
- **The role of local GESI actors, including GESI actors,** in delivering GESI SP outcomes; and
- **The role of local actors in SP** in different contexts, including crisis contexts.

Assessing Local Actor Roles

The Social Protection System framework defines a set of processes and building blocks for delivering SP. This was used to help integrate local actors into the key phases/processes (policy, design, delivery) of the COVID-19 response and was further refined in the paper "Social Protection as a Solar System". The building blocks identified in this framework provide the foundational elements for unpacking the actual and potential role of local actors in this paper (see *Box 1)*.

This study adapts the existing social protection systems framework and was designed to assess the current and potential roles that local actors could play across the system, specifically framing the role of local actors across the four social protection processes (**framing, design, delivery, and learning**) and the building blocks (see *Table A1)*:

Table A1: Social Policy Processes and Building Blocks

FRAMING	DESIGN	DELIVERY	LEARNING
Developing policy and programme objectives	Developing targeting criteria	Awareness raising and advocacy	Designing M & E tools and indicators
Establishing governance & coordination	Designing conditionality of assistance	Beneficiary registration & verification	M & E data collection and analysis
Mapping locations, risk & vulnerability	Deciding beneficiary entitlement	Service delivery e.g., assistance distribution	M & E reporting
Deciding SP priorities	Deciding on transfer processes	Managing and setting up digital transfers	Collecting beneficiary feedback

Box A1: The SP System Conceptual Framework



Source: Barca & Jaramillo Mejia (2023)

Note: the "Solar System" has been adapted for the purposes of this study, which identifies the SP programming processes as "framing, design, delivery, and learning"

Mapping Current and Potential Levels of Local Actor Agency

In addition to gathering data on the roles of diverse local actors, data were gathered on the level of agency of diverse local actors across the four social protection processes and component building blocks. Strengthening the role of local actors in social protection systems and enabling local actor agency across key processes and building blocks is a process of shifting agency dynamics in specific contexts. To help take stock of the actual and potential agency of diverse local actors (i.e., how local actors are being involved and how they could potentially be involved) and to enable a more granular and operational understanding, the deep dives drew upon a tailored "*Spectrum of Local Actor Agency Framework*" developed by the Share Trust in conjunction with OECD. The refined spectrum identifies four levels of agency across functions/SP building blocks (*see Table A2*).

Table A2: Local Actor Agency Spectrum

Agency Level (& score)	**Level of Agency**	**Explanation**
A (10-12)	**Primarily responsible**	Local actors (including women's organisations), lead, take decisions, and actions independently.
B (7-9)	**Co-responsible**	Local actors are part of a formal system and take decisions jointly or independently.
C (4-6)	**Consulted**	Local actors receive information on policies/ strategies/ programmes and engage in dialogue (often after consultation with their own constituents)
D (0-3)	**Omitted**	Local actors are unaware of opportunities for engagement and support (i.e., funding).

10-12	**Primarily responsible**	**7-9**	**Co-responsible**	**4-6**	**Consulted**	**0-3**	**Omitted**

ANNEX B: APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

Study Methodology

The Study was led by The Share Trust, with support from STAAR and FCDO.

Phase I: Inception Activities (April 2024 – August 2025)

The *Inception Phase* involved clarifying the working definitions (see *Box B1),* confirming the scope of the study, refining the research questions, and developing the conceptual framing for the study. A high-level desk-based review was carried out to understand the current state of play, including the role of local actors in social protection, as well as barriers and opportunities for strengthening their role in social protection programming. This involved a global desk review of the literature and global high-level key informant interviews.

Box B1: Working Definitions

LOCAL ACTORS: local actors were defined in the broadest sense - individuals, businesses, community based organisations and members, institutions, networks, national and subnational governments - based and operating within the local context of reference, subject to local laws, and whose activities are centred on local communities.

For this study, the focus was on three primary categories of local actors: i) government actors; ii) local NGOs (LNGOs); and iii) community- based organisations (CBOs):

- **Government actors:** this category includes: i) national or federal non-GESI focused government departments and or ministries e.g., ministries of social protection, health, etc; ii) GESI focused ministries or national government departments e.g., for women, children, people with disabilities; iii) subnational government departments; and iv) community government officers such as chiefs, traditional leaders or village leaders.
- **Local NGOs (LNGOs):** local NGOs as defined as either national or subnational non-governmental organisations, with (where possible) a legal registration status in the country of operation. LNGOs include gender and social inclusion (GESI) focused NGOs, for example women's organisations, organisations for people with disabilities (OPDs) as well as non-GESI focused NGOs. This category excludes international actors who have registered their organisations in the countries of study.
- **Community-based organisations (CBOs):** these are informal and mostly non-registered non-governmental grassroots entities that are established and operated by local community members e.g., Self Help Groups, youth groups etc. They typically have a smaller scope and operate at the neighbourhood or village level.

Within these three groups, local GESI Actors are either: i) *national government actors* e.g., ministries responsible for women, children, and social affairs; iii) *subnational government actors* e.g., sub-national level officers, women traditional leaders; iii) *national NGOs* focusing on, or representing women and other marginalised groups e.g., women's rights organisations, disabled people's organisations; and iv) *non-government community-based organisations* e.g., women's Self Help groups, youth groups, women's committee, grassroots OPDs. However, for the purposes of this study, **local GESI actors is used for non-governmental GESI actors** only with women's ministries grouped under "government actors."

SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS: are organised frameworks designed to provide support to individuals and households, helping them manage risks and shocks, reduce poverty, and improve their quality of life. These systems encompass a range of policies and programmes, including social assistance, social insurance, and labour market interventions, all aimed at

promoting social welfare and economic stability. Social protection systems encompass several components including:[1]

- **Management information systems (MIS):** digital platforms that collect, process, and manage data related to social protection programmes;
- **Social registries:** databases that consolidate information on potential beneficiaries, enabling effective targeting and coordination of social protection initiatives;
- **Payment systems:** mechanisms established to deliver monetary benefits to recipients, ensuring timely and secure transactions;
- **Grievance redress mechanisms:** structured processes that allow beneficiaries to lodge complaints or provide feedback about social protection programmes; and
- **Monitoring and evaluation (M & E) systems:** frameworks designed to assess the effectiveness and impact of social protection programmes.

Phase II: Country Deep Dive Activities *(September 2024 – February 2025)*

Following the *Inception Phase* and in close consultation with FCDO and STAAR, six deep dive countries were selected (see *Box B2)*. The selection was based on a structured scoping process that considered multiple criteria to ensure diverse and meaningful analysis of the role of local actors in social protection systems. The key selection criteria included a mix of political economy contexts, prioritisation of countries within FCDO priority listing, the presence of strong social protection and humanitarian cash transfer (HCT) programmes, the availability of highly rated local researchers, and existing partnerships with The Share Trust, STAAR or FCDO.

A balance between crisis and stable contexts was essential. Countries with strong Share Trust, STAAR, or FCDO partner relationships were given preference to leverage existing collaborations and ensure impactful research outcomes. The shortlisted countries represent a diverse regional and contextual spread across Africa, Asia, and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Each country met several of the selection criteria, ensuring that the research findings would be comprehensive and applicable across different social protection models, governance structures, and humanitarian contexts. The final selection also factored in recommendations from global key informants, further validating the choices based on practical experience and expertise in the field.

Box B2: Deep Dive Countries

1. **Afghanistan**
2. **Kenya**
3. **Lebanon**
4. **Myanmar**
5. **Nepal**
6. **Sudan**

The purpose of *Phase 2* was to carry out a deep dive in each of the selected countries to unpack the current and potential role of local actors in social protection systems in both crisis and stable contexts, and the potential to enhance GESI outcomes.

Each country deep dive drew from the conceptual framework developed in *Phase 1* (see *Annex A),* and included a desk review, a survey, and key informant interviews with relevant stakeholders. Local researchers were engaged to lead the country deep dive primary research with The Share Trust

[1] Source: Lindert *et al.,* (2020).

working closely to provide ongoing support, guide deep dive planning, and develop the research tools (see *Box B3)*.

Box B3: Local Researchers

The Country deep dive was carried out by local researchers, one in each of the selected countries:

- **Afghanistan:** Seema Massumi
- **Kenya:** Alice Mwindi
- **Lebanon:** Rima Al Mokdad
- **Myanmar:** Lal Fakmawii
- **Nepal:** Anita Ghimire
- **Sudan:** Hassan-Alattar Satti

Country Desk-Based Reviews

These comprised a review of the available literature and scoping interviews to identify: i) existing social protection programmes implemented by different actors (e.g., non-state actors, governments) (see *Annex C)*; ii) social protection policies and legal frameworks; and iii) identification/mapping of key social protection stakeholders (see *individual country reports)*. At the end of the desk review, two social protection programmes in each deep dive and associated stakeholders were identified for more intensive review (see *Annex D)*.

Table B1: Desk Based Review Focus

Area of Focus	Details
SP context	• **High level review of SP context** e.g., SP laws, SP programmes and role of diverse local actors in policy and programme framing, design, delivery, and learning
SP programmes & stakeholders	• **Map existing key SP programmes** (all major country programmes) - highlighting good practices in relation to local actor involvement • **High-level mapping of all key SP stakeholders**
Identification & review of focus SP programmes	• **Identification of two priority SP programmes** to focus primary research on • **Identification of key informants associated with the programme** (and local actors that could play a role) • **Review of project literature & reports**

Country Key Informant Interviews (KII)

In total 120 KIIs were completed across the six countries with a range of key actors linked to the selected social protection programmes including: 26 KIIs with international actors, 32 with government actors, 35 with local NGOs, and 6 with CBOs. In addition, 21 KIIs were conducted with local non-governmental GESI actors specifically.

Table B2: Number of Key informant interviews

Actor type	Kenya	Nepal	Afghanistan	Sudan	Myanmar	Lebanon	TOTAL
International actors	3	3	6	6	3	5	26
Government actors	6	19	5	2	0	0	32
Local NGOs	5	5	10	4	10	1	35
CBOs	0	2	0	0	3	1	6

Local GESI actors (LNGOs & CBOs)	3	3	4	3	6	2	21
TOTAL	17	32	25	15	22	9	120

Table B3: Research Questions for Social Protection Focus Programmes

Issue	Examples of Learning Questions
Local actor roles & agency (actual/potential)	**To what extent do different local actors currently have agency** in SP policy/programme framing/design, delivery, monitoring, evaluation, accountability & learning? **How does this map against local actor preferences** in terms of their roles/agency?
Challenges	**What are the challenges to strengthening local actor agency/roles in social protection programming** (i.e., framing, design, delivery, learning)? • *e.g., resource constraints, capacity and skills gaps, power dynamics, marginalisation, policy and institutional barriers, behavioural barriers, underlying norms*
Contextual influence	**How do local contextual parameters** - including crisis contexts - constrain local actor agency/roles in SP systems including humanitarian cash transfers? • *e.g., political economy, gender norms and dynamics, legal and policy frameworks, governance* **Can local actors support more effective SP systems in crisis contexts?** (e.g., more responsive, timely, cost-effectiveness, culturally sensitive, inclusive with increased reach, gender-responsive/transformative, accountable to local communities, sustainable, more impactful)
GESI outcomes	**How have local actors - including GESI actors -** supported gender-responsive and socially inclusive social protection PROCESSES? • *i) framing & design (e.g., advocacy & awareness, inclusion & engagement; ii) delivery (e.g., data collection & analysis, inclusion & engagement); iii) monitoring, evaluation & learning* **How have local actors - including women's organisations** - supported gender-responsive and socially inclusive social protection OUTCOMES?
Enablers	**What are the opportunities, enablers, and priorities** for strengthening the role of local actors in social protection? • *e.g., capacity sharing, shifting power, shifting funding, shifting processes, addressing underlying norms, policies & legal frameworks, enhancing coordination & collaboration* **What are the opportunities, enablers, and priorities** for strengthening local actor agency/engagement for more INCLUSIVE social protection systems moving forward? **What are the opportunities, enablers, and priorities** for strengthening local actor agency/engagement in SP systems in DIFFERENT CONTEXTS?

Country Survey

In total, 118 surveys were administered across five countries (no surveys were conducted in Lebanon due to the security situation at the time of this study) with 10 with international actors and 108 with local actors. The survey used the Local Actor Agency Spectrum presented above to rate the level of agency of different local actors across different social protection building blocks. International actors who responded to the survey were asked to rate the agency levels of different local actors while local actors rated their own levels of agency in relation to the selected social protection programmes. The survey responses were analysed through taking the average of different local actor scores per country.

Study Outputs

» ***Six Country Reports.*** The Share Trust worked closely with the six local researchers to prepare country reports for each of the six deep dive countries.[2]

[2] These are unpublished but have been shared with FCDO Country Offices.

» ***Synthesis Report on the Role and Opportunities for Local Actors in Gender Responsive and Inclusive Social Protection*** *(accompanying this Standalone Annex Compendium).* This focuses on the current and potential roles, barriers and opportunities for engaging local actors – including GESI actors - in gender-responsive and inclusive social protection in diverse contexts.

» ***Synthesis Report on the Role and Opportunities for Local Actors in Social Protection in Crisis Contexts.*** This report synthesises findings from the country studies on the role of local actors in support social protection in fragile and crisis contexts.

» ***Policy Briefs.*** Two thematic briefs (one focusing on conflict context and the other on gender-responsive and social protection) offer short, practical and actionable guidance.

Study Limitations

» **Challenges administering the surveys in some contexts**. For example, in Lebanon, due to the security situation and sensitivity of exchanging online information at the time of data collection, surveys were not conducted.

» **Challenges conducting face to face interviews**. In Lebanon, Myanmar, Sudan and Afghanistan, the security challenges hindered face to face interviews due to access challenges especially with local/sub-national government actors and community-based organisations. This prompted utilisation of virtual interviews with some key stakeholders.

» **Risks with direct interviews**. In crisis contexts for instance in Myanmar and Afghanistan, there were significant risks with direct interviews with local actors and especially GESI actors, prompting the use of virtual interviews to allow primary data collection but without putting the local actors at risk.

» **Government actors.** It was challenging to integrate government actor respondents into the research in Myanmar and Afghanistan. In Myanmar, government actors were not interviewed, and the researcher relied on international actor respondents who provided context and information about government related activities in social protection programming. In Afghanistan, DfA staff generally have limited experience of the SP sector and in some cases were not allowed to speak to outsiders without senior leadership permission.

» **Lebanon crisis.** The unfolding crisis in Lebanon during the time of data collection led to significant delays in starting the study in the country. In addition, as a result of these delays and the extremely difficult situation, the local researcher was not able to comprehensively reach the target number of key informant interviews and most of the intended respondents were hesitant to participate in the interviews or complete the survey citing security concerns. These issues affected the depth of information that could be collected in Lebanon and instead a desk-based review approach was prioritised with a limited number of key informant interviews.

ANNEX C: COUNTRY SOCIAL PROTECTION CONTEXTS

This section summarises the social protection context for the six selected deep-dive countries.

Table C1: Social Protection Highlights Per Country

AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan has experienced conflict and periods of fragility since 1978. Due to the constant change of regimes and policies, the country has an underdeveloped social support system given insufficient revenue and the high cost of wars undermining consistent funding. As a result, assistance has always been provided by the government and by the international funding community in the form of projects which are largely geographically targeted and crisis-focused.

Since August 2021, gaps in social safety nets have widened due to international sanctions imposed on the De-facto Authority (DfA) of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and the large-scale departure of highly educated individuals from the country. The financial sanctions imposed on Afghanistan by the international community have resulted in barriers to banking systems, restricted access to assets, and the cessation of funding for development projects that had created numerous jobs over the past 20 years.

The return of the Taliban to power in 2021 has severely impacted women's rights and social protections. Women and girls face significant restrictions, including bans from secondary education and many forms of employment. This regression has led to Afghanistan being rated as "very poor" in gender equality, with women subjected to forced pregnancies, childhood marriages, and other abuses.

KENYA

The Constitution of 2010 has played a crucial role in expanding opportunities for social protection in Kenya, while national social health reforms have been more challenging due to conflicting interests and institutional legacies. The implementation of national cash transfers has resulted in positive change including index-based livestock insurance for pastoralists, e.g., *the Kenya National Safety Net Programme (NSNP)* established in 2013 with benefits for household welfare including the elderly.

Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) supported programmes play a key role in the development of social protection. For example, *the Cash Transfer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (CT-OCV), the Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP)* and *the Home-Grown School Meals Programme (HGSM).* INGOs and LNGOs provide complementary support, including cash transfers for crisis-affected households notably in arid and semi-arid counties.

Kenya has made strides in promoting gender equality through legislative reforms and policies aimed at enhancing women's rights. The 2010 Constitution guarantees equal rights for men and women, leading to increased representation of women in political spheres. However, challenges persist, particularly concerning gender-based violence (Musambi, 2024).

LEBANON

Lebanon's social protection landscape is profoundly shaped by prolonged economic instability, political fragility, and a growing humanitarian crisis. Since late 2019, Lebanon has been grappling with a severe and multifaceted economic and financial crisis, which the World Bank (2021) ranked among the most severe globally since the mid-19th century. This crisis emerged due to a halt in capital inflows, a banking sector collapse, and a drastic currency devaluation. The economic collapse has had widespread implications, affecting access to basic services, employment opportunities, and overall quality of life, alongside a sharp and widespread increase in poverty.

Before these crises, Lebanon's social protection system was characterised by fragmentation, lack of coordination, and limited coverage. Most of the existing social protection system was contributory and covered mostly public and formal sector workers. *The National Social Security Fund* (NSSF) was among the country's main operating social protection structures, providing social insurance to a limited segment of public sector and formal private sector employees through health insurance, family allowances, and end-of-service indemnities. *The Ministry of Social Affairs* (MoSA) and the *Presidency of the Council of Ministers* (PCM) introduced the *National Poverty Targeted Programme* (NPTP) in 2011, which targets the poorest and most at risk Lebanese households through a proxy-means testing approach.

Before 2019, the NPTP provided limited social assistance, including food e-cards, healthcare exemptions, and school registration support. In the face of multiple crises and the unprecedented number of Lebanese needing social and humanitarian assistance, the NPTP scaled from 15,000 cash-recipient households in 2020, to 36,000 in 2021, to around 75,000 in August 2023. The NPTP was effectively terminated in June 2024 due to the cessation of donor funding.

Lebanon has made some progress in gender equality, particularly in education, with a Gender Parity Index (GPI) of 0.91 as of 1985. However, women's participation in the workforce and political representation remains low. Social protection measures specific to women are limited, and cultural norms continue to influence gender roles, hindering substantial progress in gender equality (UN Women, 2024).

A key milestone was reached with the launch of a disability allowance under the National Disability Allowance (NDA) programme, offering a targeted monthly cash transfer to nearly 4,000 individuals with disabilities, including both Lebanese and refugee populations. This disability allowance served as a shock-responsive tool during the crisis and reflects the broader implementation of the country's National Social Protection Strategy, which is supported by international donors and agencies. Importantly, the government extended the NDA in September 2025, reinforcing the institutionalisation of long-term social assistance mechanisms amid Lebanon's ongoing socio-economic challenges.

MYANMAR

Prior to the current crisis, Myanmar had a solid social protection system that combined contributory and non-contributory schemes. However, as a result of the 2021 crisis, many initiatives have been discontinued or scaled back. The conflict resulting from the overthrow of the democratically elected government by the Myanmar Armed Forces (MAF) has led to a growing humanitarian crisis, with 33% of the population in need of humanitarian assistance. The coup led to the suspension or cessation of most national level social protection programmes, with current SP programmes heavily geared towards meeting immediate humanitarian needs, as well as a halting of some social protection initiatives due to their presence in contested areas, budget cuts, or high staff turnover caused by civil disobedience.

This shift in the aid sector has forced many CSOs to redirect their activities, impacting their ability to pursue long-term social transformation goals. Local actors' sustainability is precarious due to financial challenges, the de Facto government's crackdown, and limited internal capacity.

Myanmar's political instability has adversely affected women's rights and access to social protection. The ongoing conflicts have led to increased reports of sexual violence, and women's participation in peace processes remains minimal. The country's gender equality rating has stagnated, with women facing challenges in accessing education and employment opportunities (Lederer, 2024).

NEPAL

The overarching framework for social protection in Nepal is the 2015 Constitution, which recognises social protection as a fundamental right, focused on reducing poverty, vulnerability and risk. Universal SP is regulated by the federal government and implemented by local governments. Nepal's SP expenditure in the fiscal year 2018/19 was approximately 134.4 billion Nepalese rupee accounting for 3.9 % of the country's GDP.

SP is primarily implemented through labour market interventions, social insurance, and social assistance. For over a decade, the largest SP programmes have included cash transfers for senior citizens, single women, indigenous and endangered ethnic groups, and children under five years of age. Nearly 50% of the SP budget is allocated to old-age pensions, while only about 6% is directed toward child grants.

Nepal has implemented several initiatives to promote gender equality and social protection for women. Organisations including *Women for Human Rights* (WHR) have been instrumental in advocating for women's rights, leading to legislative changes that improve property rights and social security allowances. Despite these advancements, challenges remain, particularly in rural areas where traditional practices continue to impede full gender equality.

SUDAN

Since April 2023, Sudan has been embroiled in a civil war between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), leading to a profound humanitarian crisis. The conflict has resulted in approximately 150,000 deaths and displaced over 14 million people, marking one of the worst displacement crises globally. The violence has severely disrupted essential services, with nearly 70% of medical facilities in conflict zones rendered inoperative, exacerbating the plight of civilians caught in the crossfire

The ongoing conflict has had a catastrophic impact on Sudan's social protection systems. Government institutions responsible for social support, such as the Ministry of Social Development and the Zakat Office, have become largely non-functional due to the war. As a result of the crisis, humanitarian organisations are major players in the social protection sector in Sudan. According to the Cash Working Group, 760,000 people benefited from the distribution of multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA) in 2024 with a total budget of $36.8 million.

The conflict has also witnessed the emergence of many mutual aid groups that mobilise resources from within and outside the community to deliver relief services to conflict affected communities across Sudan. Grassroots initiatives, such as the establishment of over 600 Emergency Response Rooms (ERRs), have been pivotal in providing food, shelter, medical aid, and education to those affected by the conflict. Informal social protection is an integral part of the daily lives of communities, and it is practised by grassroot organisations irrespective of any social protection provided by the government or humanitarian actors.

Sudan's recent conflicts have exacerbated challenges to gender equality. Women have been disproportionately affected by violence, with reports indicating a 50% increase in conflict-related sexual violence in 2023. Social protection mechanisms are weak, and women's participation in peace negotiations is minimal, hindering progress toward gender equality.

ANNEX D: COUNTRY SOCIAL PROTECTION FOCUS PROGRAMMES

For each country, key government and internationally supported programmes were reviewed as part of the desk-based review, and two SP programmes were selected to help identify stakeholders for consultation. These focus programmes are summarised below. More limited information is provided for Myanmar because local actors requested anonymity as the information was considered sensitive at the time of the study.

Table D1: Focus Social Protection Programmes for the Study

Country	Initiative	Funding Partner	Project Lead	Other Key stakeholders	SP Focus	Target Group	Geographical Focus	Initiative length
Afghanistan	Social Protection for Returnees by Citizens Organisation for Advocacy & Resilience (COAR)	Global Forum for Food And Agriculture (GFFA)	Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)	Directorate of Economy, money service providers, Directorate of refugees & returnees	Cash Transfer	4500 returnees from Pakistan and Iran	Kabul, Kunduz, Kandahar, Herat, Nangarhar	2025 to 2026
	Resilience Building Afghanistan Project	World Food Programme (WFP)	World Food Programme (WFP)	Local NGOs, local communities e.g., community shuras/councils	Resilience, food & livelihood activities	Ultra-poor	Balkh, Badghis, Kandahar	2024 (Ongoing)
Kenya	Girls Improving Resilience through Livelihoods and Health (Girl-H Programme)	Not specified	Mercy Corps	Arid And Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) Humanitarian network (AHN)	Social development (skills, business, education)	Girls	Rural (arid and semi-arid lands) - ASAL	4 years (2020-2024)
	Unconditional Cash Transfer (UCT) for Flood Response Programme	European Commission Humanitarian Aid (ECHO)	Agency For Technical Co-operation and Development (ACTED)	Kenya Cash Consortium (CWW/Oxfam)	Cash	Vulnerable households	ASAL Counties and refugee camps	May 2024 - October 2024
Lebanon	National Disability Allowance (NDA)	European Union (EU)	Government	UNICEF, ILO	Cash	People with disabilities (Persons With Disabilities (PWD) (Refugees)	Nationwide	2023 - ongoing

Country	Initiative	Funding Partner	Project Lead	Other Key stakeholders	SP Focus	Target Group	Geographical Focus	Initiative length
	Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) Programme	World Bank	Government	WFP	Cash	Vulnerable households	Nationwide	2011-2024 (July)
Myanmar	Women and Girls Social Protection Programme	*Information not included as per respondent request*			Psychosocial support, capacity strengthening	Women and girls	Nationwide	*Information not shared*
	Disability Inclusive SP Programme	*Information not included as per respondent request*			Disability allowances (Cash)	Women and Children PWDs	Nationwide	*Information not shared*
Nepal	Social Security Allowance Programme (SSA)	Government	Government (federal, local & private banks)	Civil society, multilaterals & donors	Social security (employment benefits)	PWD, widows, single women, elderly, ethnic minorities	Nationwide	Started in 1994/95 (ongoing)
	Prime Minister Employment Programme (PMEP)	Government	Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises	Local & provincial government, private sector companies	Social security	Unemployed persons of working age	Nationwide	Started in 2018 (ongoing)
Sudan	Mother and Child Cash Transfer Plus (MCCT+)	German government through KfW Development Bank	UNICEF	State Government	Cash & skills building	Pregnant women & mothers of young children, adolescent girls, vulnerable families	Kassal and Red Sea States	Started in 2021 (ongoing)
	Cash Consortium of Sudan	Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA), USAID, ECHO and FCDO	Mercy Corps	Cash consortium member agencies (international actors)	Cash	Vulnerable households	14 states in Sudan (Blue Nile, Central Darfur, Gedaref, Gezira, Kassala, Khartoum, North Darfur, North Kordofan, Sennar, South Darfur, South Kordofan, West Darfur, West Kordofan & White Nile)	Started in 2023 (ongoing)

ANNEX E: ROLE OF LOCAL GESI ACTORS IN SP

This section focuses on the *current* and *potential* roles of local GESI actors across the different social protection (SP) building blocks for the four main SP processes: framing, design, delivery, and learning. The agency spectrum is used throughout to define how local GESI actors see their role in different SP building blocks and how international actors see GESI actor roles. For this research study, GESI actors is the term used for non-governmental local GESI actors, with other governmental GESI actors (e.g., women's ministries grouped under government actors).

The figures shared in the tables represent an average of all the scores from all six countries. In some instances, some building blocks scored higher points especially in stable contexts such as Kenya whereas they scored very low in Afghanistan. The figures presented should therefore be considered indicative and significant variations across countries are highlighted. *Annex F* unpacks agency scoring for GESI actors by country.

Role of GESI Actors in Framing

Table E1: Perceptions on the Role of GESI Actors in FRAMING SP Programmes

FRAMING: Building Blocks	International Actor Perceptions		Local GESI Actor Perceptions	
	Current	Potential	Current	Potential
Developing programme objectives	4	8	6	9
Establishing governance & coordination	5	9	5	8
Mapping locations, risk & vulnerability	6	9	6	9
Deciding SP priorities	5	9	5	9

Key: 0-3 = Omitted 4-6 = Consulted 7-9 = Co-responsible 10-12 = Primarily responsible

Developing Programme Objectives

Current Roles. GESI actors see themselves as consulted in developing programme objectives, with stronger roles in Kenya and Nepal (where they see themselves as being co-responsible). Their participation is largely confined to providing occasional input, for example GESI actor input to INGO/LNGO consortium-wide discussions for the *Girls Improving Resilience through Livelihoods and Health (Girl-H) Programme* and the *Unconditional Cash Transfer (UCT)* project in Kenya. Findings from key informant interviews show that women's organisations are primarily only consulted on GESI-focused programmes in all the case study countries except in Afghanistan, where only male members of NGOs and communities. were consulted for the *Resilience Building Afghanistan Project* and *Social Protection for Returnee Project* given restrictions on women.

Potential Roles. The survey findings show that both international actors and local GESI actors perceive GESI actors as having the potential to be co-responsible for developing programme objectives. Notably, in Kenya and Myanmar, international actors perceive GESI actors as potentially playing a primary role in shaping SP programmes demonstrating high trust in these organisations. Women's organisations, for example in Sudan, identified that they can play a role in galvanising community actors, including women volunteers, to help develop programme objectives for framing social protection programmes to ensure community centred programming. These primary findings corroborate the literature review findings, which identified that local GESI actors, such as women's organisations, are

well positioned to inform gender-responsive and socially inclusive social protection policy framing (Holmes *et al.,* 2019).

In Sudan, a key informant from a grassroots women's organisation indicated that there is a considerable number of women volunteers enthusiastic about voluntarism, with the knowledge and understanding for participating in developing SP programme objectives to ensure gender-responsive social protection. She added that some international organisations that thematically focus on gender are willing to collaborate with grassroots women organisations.

In Myanmar, following the Cyclone Mocha disaster, women organisations, with support from international organisations, played a crucial role in identifying the specific needs of affected communities, particularly women and girls. They conducted rapid needs assessments and participatory consultations, which informed the development of programme objectives focused on shelter, food security, and psychosocial support tailored to the unique challenges faced by women in the post-disaster context.

Establishing Programme Governance and Coordination

Current Roles. In four of the deep dive countries – Kenya and Nepal being the exceptions - key informants reported that current programme governance and coordination of SP programmes was centralised and dominated by international actors. While the survey findings show that international actors view local GESI actors as playing a **consultative role**, GESI actors themselves feel that they are already taking **co-responsibility** for establishing SP programme governance and coordination.

Potential Roles. The survey shows that local GESI actors in relatively stable contexts such as Kenya have the potential to take on primary responsibility in governance and coordination. This indicates the existing capacity of GESI actors to lead the development and implementation of effective oversight mechanisms, while those in crisis contexts (Myanmar, Sudan and Afghanistan) have the potential to be co-responsible in this role.

In the context of ongoing conflict in Myanmar, women-led CSOs have demonstrated their ability to effectively coordinate humanitarian assistance and protection services for displaced populations. They have established local networks and coordination mechanisms that facilitate information sharing, resource mobilisation, and service delivery, often in challenging and insecure environments.

Mapping Programme Locations, Risk, and Vulnerability

Current Roles. Key informant respondents stated that local GESI actors, especially women-led organisations, provide context specific information on the activities that would be most beneficial to the community – especially in Kenya, Nepal and Sudan. They mainly do this through identifying hotspot locations and conducting community-based targeting. In crisis contexts such as in Myanmar, key informants reported that GESI actors are generally **consulted** in mapping programme locations, but their expertise in identifying vulnerabilities for marginalised groups is currently underutilised.

International actors see local GESI actors as being co-responsible in mapping social protection programme locations, risks, and vulnerability. This is corroborated by GESI actors themselves, who see themselves as potentially being co-responsible for this building block. GESI actors in Kenya, however, see themselves as being **primarily responsible** for mapping programme locations, a perception shared by international actor counterparts.

Potential Roles. Key informant respondents from women's organisations generally felt that they have the potential to play a leading role in mapping risks, vulnerability, and priority areas for

gender-focused social protection programmes. Survey findings show that local GESI actors see themselves as potentially playing a **co-responsible** role, which is corroborated by the perceptions of international actors.

Deciding Social Protection Priorities and Needs

Current Roles. In crisis contexts such as Afghanistan and Sudan, GESI actors including women's grassroot organisations reported that they were omitted from deciding priorities for gender-focused SP programmes and their contextual knowledge was not being leveraged. Whilst overall survey findings show that both local GESI actors and international actors see GESI actors as being **consulted**, actors in Afghanistan perceive them to be **omitted** in deciding social protection priorities and needs, most likely linked to the restrictive context.

Key informant interviews highlighted that, whilst local GESI actors are not always involved in deciding social protection priorities and needs, they advocate and lobby for changes in SP framing in order to ensure proper targeting. This was highlighted by several LNGO respondents in Nepal, who cited the widow pension protests in Nepal, where priorities for the programme was changed following the protests. This is attributed to the responsiveness of women's organisations and grassroots entities to community priorities and the development of their own programmes based on the issues encountered by their communities on the ground. For example, in conflict contexts such as Sudan, self-funded women's organisations were reportedly deciding on SP priorities and needs for their own social protection programmes based on their own analysis of the challenges.

> *"Yes, they made a rule that the widows will get NPR 50,000 to remarry and there is no SSA for widows. In Nepal, widows usually do not re-marry, and this was an insult to us. We also believed that remarriage should be a choice and not enforced. The framing meant that if one does not choose to remarry, they are excluded from government support. This was injustice. So, the single women groups throughout the country went for a protest and later the government pulled down the decision."*
>
> **GESI actor Key Informant, Sindulpalanchwok, Nepal**

> *"We highlight the issues that women IDPs face and frame their visions for interventions accordingly."*
>
> **CBO, Key Informant, Madhesh Province, Nepal**

Potential Roles. Despite local GESI actors playing a less significant role in deciding social protection priorities, survey data show that both international actors and GESI actors themselves perceive that they have potential to be co-responsible. Key informant respondents emphasised that this would enable greater ownership and buy-in from local stakeholders and secure GESI outcomes. From the survey findings, both international and local actors perceive GESI actors as potentially playing a **co-responsible** role in making decisions on social protection priorities rather than primary leaders. This is a missed opportunity because local actors' contextual understanding allows for the identification of nuanced opportunities and limitations across diverse project types. GESI actors in Nepal and Kenya, however, see themselves as having the potential to be **primarily responsible** for deciding social protection priorities.

> **In Kenya**, women legislators worked together across parties, in alliance with the Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA), and in collaboration with the emerging formal government gender entities, to secure substantive gains for women and girls in the 2010 Constitution. This feminist political activism has contributed to revisions of laws on entitlements to women in the Kenya social protection policy of 2011.

Role of Local GESI Actors in Design

Table E2: Perceptions on the Role of GESI Actors in DESIGNING SP Programmes

DESIGN: Building Blocks	International Actor Perceptions		Local GESI Actor Perceptions	
	Current	Potential	Current	Potential
Developing targeting criteria	6	9	5	9
Designing conditionality of assistance	5	8	5	9
Deciding beneficiary entitlement	4	6	4	7
Deciding on transfer processes	5	7	5	7

Key: 0-3 = Omitted 4-6 = Consulted 7-9 = Co-responsible 10-12 = Primarily responsible

Developing Targeting Criteria

Current Roles. Survey data show that GESI actors are usually consulted on developing targeting criteria for social protection benefits as rated by both international actors and GESI actors themselves. Local GESI actor key informants in Myanmar and Nepal reported that INGO-driven project design often translates into the latter presenting pre-designed projects or "Request for Proposals" with limited flexibility for local input. Most of these pre-designed projects have target and selection criteria included in project documents. This sits in contrast with the literature, which highlights that the participation and engagement of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), including child rights and women's rights advocates, is critical in making visible gendered and age-specific risks and vulnerabilities (UNICEF 2022).

On average, survey findings from international actors and local GESI actors themselves place GESI actors at the "consulted" level on the spectrum in relation to developing target criteria for social protection programmes. However, the ratings varied among different countries with GESI actors in Afghanistan indicating total **omission** of local GESI actors, while those in Myanmar and Kenya rating themselves as **co-responsible** and **primarily responsible** respectively.

Local GESI actors in Nepal reported that even though project design for the SSA programme was designed by the national government, their representatives at the national level were consulted during the design of the programme, which resulted in policy-related modifications to the design of single women allowances, notably changing the targeting criteria. Previously, the allowance was intended for women who were expected to marry; but following GESI actor input, it was changed to include all single women and widows.

Potential Roles. Local GESI actors possess untapped potential in developing targeting criteria for social protection programmes. Across the study countries, local GESI actors generally feel they have the potential to be **co-responsible** with international actors for developing targeting criteria. This suggests an opportunity for capacity strengthening and empowerment of GESI actors to fully utilise their expertise and take on more leadership in defining localised targeting strategies. However, there were variations across countries with survey findings from Kenya, Myanmar, and Nepal highlighting the potential for local GESI actors to be **primarily responsible** in developing targeting criteria, while in Afghanistan and Sudan a more **consultative** role, most likely due to more restrictive social norms. Specifically, in Afghanistan whilst women are not officially able to work for NGOs, some women staff, originating from women's organisations (which have been shut down), work more remotely for NGOs.

Designing Conditionality of Assistance

Current Roles. In designing assistance, key informants reported that local GESI actors are usually consulted by international actors, especially when they are funded by them or implementing programmes as part of a consortium. While overall, international actors as well as GESI actors themselves view their role as being **consulted** in deciding how assistance is delivered, GESI actors in Kenya see themselves as being **co-responsible**.

Potential Roles. Local GESI actors, and especially women's organisations, are reported to possess significant potential in co-designing the conditionality of social protection assistance, especially in GESI programming. This is collaborated by survey findings which score GESI actors at potentially being **co-responsible**. Interestingly, international actors in both Myanmar and Kenya perceive local GESI actors as having the potential to be **primarily responsible** for designing how assistance will be delivered while those from Afghanistan again score their potential as **consulted**, no doubt linked to the restriction of women working in NGOs.

Deciding Beneficiary Entitlement

Current Roles. Survey findings show that local GESI actors are only consulted when decisions on beneficiary entitlement are made for social protection programmes. This signifies a missed opportunity in leveraging their local expertise and insights in making these decisions. The significant omission of local GESI actors in deciding beneficiary entitlements may be due to efforts to harmonise the value of entitlements especially cash transfers (CALP, 2023) by donors and international actors and/or driven by national policies in alignment with government efforts.

There were, however, differences across the deep dive countries. Key informants in Kenya and Afghanistan stating that local GESI actors are **omitted** in this role while their counterparts in Myanmar and Sudan rated them as being **co-responsible** potentially because the assessed programmes are internationally led, with international actors creating space for these critical actors.

> **A local women-led organisation in Kenya** implementing various social protection programmes for women and girls reported that they provide beneficiary entitlements as prescribed by their donors - mostly international actors - and do not have any say in changing or altering the prescribed value of entitlements.

Potential Roles. Survey findings show that local GESI actors see themselves as being potentially co-responsible in deciding beneficiary entitlement. However, international actors see GESI actors as only being potentially **consulted** in this role. This may signify a lack of trust in local GESI actors by international actors in this important role. Both international and local GESI actors in Afghanistan indicated they are completely **omitted** from this role.

> **GESI actors' respondents involved in a disability and single women allowance in Nepal** reported that they would potentially change targeting design of the programme, if allowed, to suit the economic needs of the households. They stated that they would adjust entitlements based on the economic conditions of the beneficiaries given their in-depth knowledge of the local context and the needs and priorities of marginalised groups.

Deciding on Transfer Processes

Current Roles. International actor key informants, especially from Afghanistan, Myanmar and Sudan reported that most social protection programmes have a pre-determined duration established during scoping and proposal writing, and dependent on budgets. However, local GESI actors implementing the delivery of assistance, currently play a significant role in making decisions for the transfer processes such as the approach and frequency of entitlements. Whilst GESI actors rated

themselves as being **consulted** in this role, GESI key informant respondents reported that they are mainly **co-responsible** in making decisions for the processes of entitlement provision with a focus on reducing barriers for marginalised groups. In some contexts, such as Sudan, local GESI actors are taking **primary responsibility** in making decisions for the assistance processes in close collaboration with grassroots/community organisations and groups.

In Sudan, respondents from women's organisations indicated that they have the full mandate of setting up processes for distribution of assistance in collaboration with women's groups. They added that sometimes they receive calls from groups to intervene in response to some issues such as food and cash needs.

Potential Roles. Key informant respondents from local NGOs reported that GESI actors, especially grassroots women's organisations possess significant untapped potential in making decisions on transfer processes such as frequency and approach (e.g., in Myanmar and Afghanistan). Their field-level implementation experience makes them ideally suited to take **primary responsibility** for defining locally appropriate gender responsive approaches, frequency, and duration of transfers. For example, in remote areas of Myanmar with limited access to banking infrastructure, grassroots women's organisations could play a vital role in determining the most effective transfer methods, whether through mobile money, cash transfers via trusted community leaders, or in-kind distributions. They can also provide valuable insights into appropriate transfer frequencies and durations based on local economic cycles and seasonal vulnerabilities.

Role of Local GESI Actors in Delivery

Table E3: Perceptions on the Role of GESI Actors in DELIVERING SP Programmes

DELIVERY: Building Blocks	International Actor Perceptions		Local GESI Actor Perceptions	
	Current	Potential	Current	Potential
Awareness raising and advocacy	6	10	7	10
Beneficiary registration and verification	7	8	7	8
Service delivery e.g., assistance distribution	6	7	7	8
Managing and setting up digital transfers	5	6	5	7
Implementing case management	4	7	6	7

Key: 0-3 = Omitted 4-6 = Consulted 7-9 = Co-responsible 10-12 = Primarily responsible

Awareness Raising and Advocacy

Current Roles. Local GESI actors play a significant role in awareness raising and advocacy for social protection programmes as they rated themselves as being co-responsible in this role. The study found that local GESI actors conduct outreach and awareness through organising local forums to educate the community about the availability of social protection programmes, their benefits, and how to apply for them. This includes ensuring that vulnerable groups, especially women and children, are aware of their rights. Findings from the survey show that local GESI actors in Kenya, Myanmar, and Nepal see themselves as being **primarily responsible** in awareness raising and advocacy while international actors rate these actors as being **co-responsible**.

For example, a local CSO in the *Ayeyarwady region* of Myanmar conducted awareness-raising sessions on women's protection, reaching 1100 men and women in 2018, following a one-year sub-grant from an INGO. They also facilitated workshops with INGOs, local CSOs, administrators, and the Department of Social Welfare, demonstrating collaboration and knowledge sharing among diverse stakeholders

Potential Roles. According to the survey findings, international actors see local GESI actors as potentially taking primary responsibility in awareness raising and advocacy for social protection programmes. This aligns with the literature findings, which highlight that social movements that support women's and children's rights can play a leading role in supporting change for gender equality by providing resources to women and girls in their communities, promoting women's rights at all levels, and by monitoring and advocating laws, policies, programmes, and delivery services for greater accountability (UN Women, 2020).

Key informants from women-led organisations reported that they can utilise existing women's collective groups in the communities or form new ones to promote gender equality (e.g., Myanmar). These women's groups serve as platforms for empowerment, advocacy, and action at the grassroots level. In Myanmar for example, LNGO respondents reported that they can work with such groups to integrate discussions on women's rights, leadership, and economic empowerment into their regular activities. Local NGO respondents in Lebanon implementing the National Disability Allowance (NDA) programme further highlighted that community-based OPDs could formally lead awareness and communication to ensure outreach reaches all eligible individuals, especially those without disability cards.

Beneficiary Registration and Verification

Current Roles. Survey findings show that the registration and verification of beneficiaries of social protection programmes is a role where local GESI actors are co-responsible. They do this in close collaboration and with the guidance of international actors that fund their activities. In situations where local GESI actors receive direct funding from donors, key informants identified that they are **fully responsible** for registration and verification. In some contexts, such as Kenya and Nepal, local GESI actors work closely with local government to verify beneficiary lists in order to mitigate against double registrations or omissions. The survey findings show that local GESI actors themselves view themselves as being **co-responsible** in beneficiary registration and verification while international actors view them as being **primarily responsible** for this role.

In Myanmar, local actor ownership of beneficiary registration and verification processes is evident including in women's village savings groups in Rakhine State. This leverage established trust to provide financial support and flexible loans to community members, effectively acting as a localised social safety net. Furthermore, the reliance of INGO disability-focused programmes on OPDs for beneficiary identification and verification shows the significant role of local actors in these processes.

Potential Roles. As noted, across the deep dive countries, local GESI actors are already playing a significant role in beneficiary registration and verification and are identified as either fully primarily responsible or co-responsible and therefore they did not highlight additional potential roles in this building block.

Delivering Social Protection Benefits

Current Roles. Whilst international actors see GESI actors as being consulted in delivering social protection benefits, GESI actors themselves rated their agency at the co-responsible level signifying a disconnect between international actor perception and those of local GESI actors**.** In Nepal, Kenya and Myanmar however, local GESI actor key informants reported that they are **primarily responsible** for delivering SP benefits due to their proximity to beneficiaries and understanding of the

local context. For example, in Kenya, GESI actors reported that they lead in this role either as implementing partners in a consortium with other local actors and international actors, or as directly contracted implementers by international actors. This is supported by the survey data from Kenya, which highlights that international actor perceive local GESI actors as being **primarily responsible** for this role as confirmed by GESI actors themselves. This likely suggests that local GESI actors are not merely supporting players but are considered strong partners in delivering social protection assistance.

Potential Roles. As noted, across many of the deep dive countries, local GESI actors are already playing a significant role in delivering social protection benefits and are identified as **primarily responsible** or **co-responsible** and therefore they did not highlight additional potential roles in this building block.

Role of GESI Local Actors in Learning

Table E4: Perceptions on the Role of GESI Actors in SP Programme Learning

LEARNING: Building Blocks	International Actor Perceptions		Local GESI Actor Perceptions	
	Current	Potential	Current	Potential
Designing M&E tools and indicators	7	10	4	8
M&E data collection and analysis	6	9	6	9
M&E reporting	5	7	6	7
Collecting beneficiary feedback	6	10	7	9

Key: 0-3 = Omitted 4-6 = Consulted 7-9 = Co-responsible 10-12 = Primarily responsible

Designing M&E Tools and Indicators

Current Roles. In Myanmar, Nepal and Afghanistan, international key informants see themselves as primarily responsible for designing the M&E tools, indicators, and guidance documents while leaving the role of data collection to local actors including GESI actors. This is confirmed by the survey findings, which show that local GESI actors see themselves as having a **consultative** role, while international actors see GESI actors as being **co-responsible**.

Kenya is however different, and international actor key informants reported that local GESI actors take a lead in this role. This suggests that there are contextual differences in the handling of this role, with GESI actors in crisis and conflict contexts being excluded or playing a minimal role while in more stable contexts, where there is increased confidence in the local actors, they are being given **primary responsibility** for this role.

Potential Roles. Whilst the survey findings demonstrate that local GESI actors play a minimal role in designing M&E tools and indicators, especially in crisis affected contexts, they are seen as having potential for being **co-responsible** in this role in Myanmar and Nepal given recognition of their understanding of local dynamics, cultural nuances, and proximity to the communities. In Afghanistan however, they are perceived as having the potential to only play a **consultative** role, linked to the restrictions of women and women's organisations under the Taliban.

M&E Data Collection and Analysis

Current Roles. Key informant respondents from Kenya, Myanmar and Nepal reported that local GESI actors play a primary leading role in M&E data collection and analysis especially for projects that are GESI focused and for which they lead delivery. In programmes where they are part of a larger consortium (e.g., in Kenya), they are usually co-responsible for data collection and analysis but more generally perceive themselves to be primarily responsible or leading this social protection activity. This was confirmed by international actors who also perceive local GESI actors to be co-responsible.

Potential Roles. International actors perceive local GESI actors as having co-responsibility potential in data collection and analysis, while local actors rate their own potential much higher in taking **primary responsibility** in stable contexts. This reflects local actors' confidence in their ability to take on more responsibility in this role and collect experiences from beneficiaries and track social spending.

M&E Reporting

Current Roles. International actors view local GESI actors as having a consultative role in M&E reporting, while retaining primary control themselves. In contrast, local actors perceive themselves as **co-responsible**, highlighting a discrepancy in perceived roles and a potential underestimation of local capacity.

Potential Roles. Both international and local GESI actors see GESI actors as having the potential to take co-responsibility for M&E reporting. However, while international actors do see potential for increased involvement of local GESI actors in M&E reporting, local GESI actors in Kenya and Myanmar themselves highlight stronger capability to be **primarily responsible**. This suggests an opportunity to further empower local actors and leverage their contextual expertise to enhance M&E reporting processes, leading to more accurate, timely, and locally relevant insights. This finding aligns with the literature, which highlights that local actor involvement in monitoring can strengthening accountability of government and implementing agencies.

Collecting Beneficiary Feedback and Response

Current Roles. Key informant respondents reported that local GESI actors take primary responsibility in collecting beneficiary feedback. While international actors view them as playing a **co-responsible** role in collecting beneficiary feedback and response, with themselves retaining primary responsibility, local GESI actors perceive their role as much more central.

Potential Roles. While international actors see GESI actors as having the potential to be primarily responsible notably in reporting and feedback collection, GESI actors see themselves as being co-responsible in this role. This difference highlights the pervasive perception that GESI actors should only be engaged in specific GESI-focused programmes rather than engaging more broadly to ensure the integration of GESI across all social protection activities.

ANNEX F: SUMMARY OF COUNTRY-SPECIFIC FINDINGS

This *Annex* provides country-specific findings including: *Table F1* - the actual *and* potential roles of GESI actors across the four main social protection processes (framing, design, delivery, learning); and *Table F2* summarising the barriers facing local actors implementing gender-responsive and socially inclusive social protection across the six deep dive countries.

Table F1: Current and Potential GESI Actor ROLES in Social Protection Programming by COUNTRY

Role	FRAMING	DESIGN	DELIVERY	LEARNING
AFGHANISTAN				
Current	**Omitted: mostly excluded in framing**	**Omitted: e.g., from targeting** and entitlement decisions; restricted by social norms & security risks	**Omitted: operational restrictions** so unable to carry out delivery roles	**Consultative roles in data collection;** but **omitted** from tool design & reporting
Potential	**Co-responsible: including in mapping priority areas**	**Consulted e.g., in designing conditionality of assistance** & transfer processes via remote or informal mechanisms	**Co-responsible in awareness raising** (i.e., women's networks) & advocating for inclusion in SP policy framing	**Consultative role in data collection** if facilitated by international actor collaboration
KENYA				
Current	**Consulted on GESI-focused programmes**; play advocacy roles but excluded from decision-making	**Consulted** on **targeting**; **omitted** from entitlement decisions	**Primarily responsible on awareness,** registration, and delivery, especially in consortium settings	**Primarily responsible for data collection; co-responsible in tool design**; seen as central in feedback mechanisms.
Potential	**Primarily responsible for setting SP priorities** and mapping risks	**Primarily responsible for targeting criteria and co-design** of conditionalities and transfer modalities	**Primarily responsible already;** capacity strengthening & direct funding could further enhance reach	**Primarily responsible** for **M&E, reporting and indicator design**
LEBANON				
Current	**Co-responsible** for **raising awareness** but **omitted** from governance structures and policy framing	**Omitted from design** processes for disability allowances	**Co-responsible** for **raising awareness and supporting** programme outreach informally	**Consulted in feedback collection** but **omitted** from tool design & reporting
Potential	**Co-responsible for mapping of vulnerabilities** and disability-inclusive SP frameworks	**Co-responsible in targeting**, conditionalities, and entitlements if formally engaged	**Primarily responsible in awareness campaigns** and verification for the	**Primarily responsible for tracking systems** for the NDA and play stronger roles in data analysis

Role	FRAMING	DESIGN	DELIVERY	LEARNING
			National Disability Allowance (NDA) programme	
		MYANMAR		
Current	**Primarily responsible for conducting needs assessments** post-Cyclone Mocha but excluded from decision-making	**Consulted on targeting; omitted** from entitlements; **co-responsible** for designing transfer processes	**Co-responsible for registration and delivery** via village savings groups and informal networks	**Consulted in design**; play **co-responsible** role in data collection; **omitted** in reporting
Potential	**Co-responsible for governance & location mapping** due to coordination experience in crisis contexts	**Primarily responsible for targeting** & conditionalities in gender-focused programmes	**Primarily responsible for delivery leadership roles** using grassroots networks	**Primarily responsible in tool design and reporting** if restrictions eased and capacity strengthened
		NEPAL		
Current	**Consulted on programme priorities** (e.g., widow pension protest), but limited formal decision-making power	**Consulted on targeting** (e.g., SSA modifications); excluded from entitlement decisions	**Co-responsible for verification & delivery**; collaborate with local government	**Primarily responsible for data collection; co-responsible** for **analysis**; limited in tool design and reporting
Potential	**Primarily responsible for setting GESI priorities** due to proven political activism	**Primarily responsible for targeting, entitlement design**, and tool development based on community-based insights	**Primarily responsible** for delivery if formal partnerships are strengthened	**Co-responsible** or **primarily responsible** for **M&E** reporting &framework development
		SUDAN		
Current	**Omitted** from formal governance but **primarily responsible** for defining **self-funded informal SP priorities**	**Consulted** & sometimes **co-responsible** for **determining conditionality** and transfer decisions; **omitted** from entitlement setting	**Primarily responsible for awareness raising** and delivery of benefits through mutual aid groups	**Co-responsible in data collection and feedback**; excluded from reporting and tool design
Potential	**Co-responsible in framing** if supported with capacity & recognition	**Primarily responsible for transfer modalities** and co-lead in targeting & entitlements	**Primarily responsible:** already playing a leading role	**Primarily responsible for beneficiary feedback systems** & could participate more fully in reporting

Table F2: Key Local Actor BARRIERS for Gender Responsive and Socially Inclusive Social Protection by COUNTRY

Political	Institutional	Coordination	Financial	Socio-Cultural
AFGHANISTAN				
Government restrictions and exclusion of women: women staff are banned from NGO work under Taliban rule, critically affecting GESI-inclusive programming	**Lack of formal recognition**: GESI actors are excluded from official social protection frameworks and policy discussions	**Fragmented engagement**: local NGOs are not fully integrated into governance structures and rely on INGOs, with limited coordination mechanisms in place	**Funding bypasses grassroots organisations**: donor funding usually goes through INGOs, leaving local actors under-resourced and unable to strengthen capacity	**Patriarchal norms**: women face significant restrictions on public participation, which limits their roles in social protection leadership, decision-making, and delivery
KENYA				
Resistance to gender inclusion: local governance often views social protection as purely economic, sidelining gender and disability issues	**Implementation-only roles**: women's organisations are largely confined to delivering services rather than engaging in policy framing or design	**Competition and fragmentation**: GESI actors often compete for limited funding, weakening collective advocacy	**Short-term funding**: project cycles last 6–12 months, preventing sustainable GESI-focused programming	**Discriminatory practices**: deep-rooted patriarchal structures hinder women's leadership and participation in programme implementation and decision-making
LEBANON				
Tokenistic inclusion: OPDs and WLOs are consulted only after key policy decisions have been made, limiting meaningful influence	**Lack of formal roles**: GESI actors are not officially part of social protection governance or oversight structures	**Siloed operations**: WLOs and OPDs operate in silos without unified representation, undermining collective negotiation power	**Reliance on intermediary funding**: INGOs dominate funding pathways, limiting the autonomy of local GESI actors	**Limited influence of rights-based narratives**: despite progressive SP initiatives, stigma and lack of rights awareness persist among communities
MYANMAR				
Military control and NGO law: the Organisation Registration Law mandates NGOs to seek approval for all funding and partnerships, severely limiting local autonomy	**Informal operations**: many GESI actors lack registration, formal structures, and organisational systems, affecting their legitimacy and access to funding	**INGO dominance**: INGOs drive programme design with minimal inclusion of local GESI actors beyond implementation	**Inflation and budget constraints**: escalating operational costs amidst civil conflict and currency devaluation limit local NGOs' effectiveness	**Gender resistance**: societal resistance to women's leadership in civil society and SP programming persists despite strong grassroots activism
NEPAL				
Delayed decentralisation: despite a federal structure, subnational	**Limited GESI technical capacity**: many women-led and	**Weak integration of local actors**: while peer-to-peer networks exist,	**Underfunded outreach**: many remote areas remain unreached due	**Patriarchal norms**: traditional gender roles hinder women's

actors often lack influence over social protection priorities	disability-focused groups lack the skills for engaging in programme design or M&E	GESI actors are not systematically integrated into formal coordination platforms	to a lack of resources among GESI actors, especially those working with marginalised women	leadership and the targeting of social protection to female-headed households
SUDAN				
Unclear civil society regulations: the Humanitarian Aid Commission imposes bureaucratic obstacles to registration, particularly post-conflict	**Informal and under-resourced grassroots actors**: many women's organisations operate without formal registration or consistent funding	**Exclusion from programme governance**: WLOs and OPDs are not formally included in programme oversight, despite playing active grassroots roles	**Donor bypass and poor funding quality**: funding often favours INGOs and fails to support local sustainability or capacity development	**Cultural norms restrict women's visibility**: in traditional areas, women's grassroots organisations are treated with suspicion and sometimes face security threats

ANNEX G: COUNTRY-SPECIFIC PRIORITIES FOR SUPPORT

This Annex summarises country-specific opportunities for supporting the agency of different local actors in gender-responsive and inclusive social protection as identified by diverse key informants.

Table G1: Summary of Country Specific Technical Assistance Requests by Diverse Local Actors

Local Actor Type	Key Opportunities
	AFGHANISTAN
Youth organisations	• **Support capacity strengthening on social project (SP) programmes**. Young men and women could be trained online (women have difficulty attending in person training) and youth can be involved in consultation phases of the projects, community delivery, and monitoring programmes
Local NGOs	• **Support SP related awareness and capacity strengthening** for senior staff on project management, community work, and monitoring mechanisms • **Involve LNGOs in SP policy framing** dialogues in order to leverage their local-level knowledge
	KENYA
Local NGOs	• **Support capacity strengthening on SP systems** and technical approaches • **Provide long-term funding for** social protection programmes • **Facilitate strengthened coordination** and partnership with the government
Subnational government	• **Support provision of technological tools,** such as beneficiary tracking systems, digitised payment platforms, and mobile-based data collection tools, to more efficient delivery of social protection services.
National government	• **Support the establishment of digital systems** for SP programming • **Capacity strengthening** on advocacy, and monitoring & evaluation of SP programmes
	LEBANON
National Government (MoSA)	• **Provide capacity strengthening for government technical units** e.g., the gender unit, disability unit, and subnational social Development Centres (SDCs) into the policy and programme development cycle for social protection programmes. • **Support the establishment of regular consultation platforms** with CSOs, OPDs, and WLOs at every stage (from policy framing to design, delivery, and evaluation) • **Strengthen coordination of national government with SDCs** in order to improve their role in outreach, beneficiary engagement, and local delivery of SP programmes • **Support to develop a national M&E and data system** that directly captures and reflects input from local actors, allowing for real-time tracking of programme performance and more adaptive management

Subnational government actors (SDC)	• **Provide capacity strengthening to improve technical understanding** of SP programming, particularly around outreach, local coordination, and their role in the delivery of the NDA and ESSN • **Provide operational tools and resources** to fulfil their role in facilitating beneficiary engagement, community awareness, and grievance redress mechanisms linked to SP programmes • **Support capacity strengthening on how to apply gender-responsive and disability-inclusive approaches** in outreach, targeting, and grievance handling to ensure services meet the needs of women and people with disabilities
Local NGOs	• **Support technical capacity strengthening on SP policy analysis**, participatory programme design, and monitoring, with a focus on ensuring that both disability and gender inclusion are fully embedded • **Facilitate access to government data** to allow civil society to conduct independent research and evidence-based advocacy on SP programmes
MYANMAR	
CBOs including Self Help Groups (SHGs) & Village Savings Groups (VSLAs)	• **Support nationwide coordination to bridge township-level organisations** with oversees development assistance (ODA) and other resources. • **Provide technical assistance for vocational income opportunities** and caregiver/family education • **Support development of user-friendly disability registration systems** for cash transfers and social protection programmes • **Provide capital injections to enable internal group loans and support group enterprises**, such as: poultry farming and egg sales, collective trading of rice and other commodities for village consumption and market sales, and cooperative farming of cash crops • **Offer training programmes to develop skills in financial management**, leadership, conflict resolution, and project management empowering SHG members to manage their groups more effectively and navigate the complexities of operating in crisis environments • **Helping CBOs attain legal status** to facilitate access to funding opportunities and resources, thereby enhancing their operational capacity • **Support investment in communication tools and technologies** to help groups maintain internal cohesion and coordinate activities, even amidst infrastructural challenges • **Help implement community-led mental health and psychosocial support services** to address the psychological impacts of conflict and instability on SHG and VSLA members for their resilience and well-being • **Provide guidance on personal safety, conflict de-escalation, and emergency preparedness** to help members protect themselves in volatile environments. • **Facilitate connections between SHGs and VSLA with larger networks or coalitions** to amplify their voices, enhance advocacy efforts, and provide platforms for sharing resources and best practices • **Provide flexible funding to support both immediate humanitarian needs and long-term organisational strengthening.** • **Provide remote or decentralised training in governance and financial management** to help groups adapt to displacement challenges. • **Implementing crisis-responsive savings mechanisms**, such as mobile banking or pooled emergency funds, to ensure financial stability for displaced members. • **Provide guidance on psychosocial support and conflict-sensitive approaches** to help rebuild trust and enable groups to continue operations despite ongoing instability

NEPAL	
CBOs	• **Provide legal status** for CBOs in order to strengthen their agency in SP programming • **Provide financial resources** for their engagement in SP activities • **Support technical capacity strengthening** in SP programming at the community level
Subnational government	• **Support capacity strengthening** on SP approaches and community mobilisation • **Facilitate coordination** with the national government and local NGOs • **Allocate operational budget** to deliver the *Prime Minister Employment Programme (PMEP)* and *Social Security Allowance* (SSA) programmes and for monitoring and regular evaluation of these programmes
SUDAN	
Local NGOs	• **Prepare a targeted and predetermined capacity strengthening plan for the national NGOs working in SP** in areas such as fundraising, reporting, financial management, context analysis, presentation skills, M&E, outreach, and public relations • **Support national NGOs in developing policies** to be eligible for more funding • **Help institutionalise the roles of local NGOs** in SP in national social protection policies
Subnational government	• **Support increased involvement in decision making** forums of internationally funded SP programmes
CBOs (including women networks)	• **Facilitate the formalisation of grassroots women organisations** and help them attain legal status, in order to operate freely especially in hard-to-reach areas

ANNEX H: AGENCY TABLES AND DIAGRAMS

This section shares tables and diagrams summarising the *current* and *potential* agency ratings of different actors across the SP processes (framing, design, delivery and learning) and component building blocks. The Agency Spectrum was used to score local and international actor ratings of agency.

Key: 0-3 = Omitted | 4-6 = Consulted | 7-9 = Co-responsible | 10-12 = Primarily responsible

FRAMING

Table H1: FRAMING SP Programmes: International Actor Perceptions

SP FRAMING Building Blocks	Local NGOs		GESI Actors		Government Actors		CBOs		International actors	
	Current	Potential	Current	Potential	Current	Potential	Current	Potential	Current	Potential
Developing Programme objectives	3	8	4	8	3	4	0	0	12	11
Establishing governance & coordination	4	9	5	9	4	5	0	3	12	11
Mapping locations, risk & vulnerability	6	10	6	9	6	6	2	7	11	10
Deciding SP priorities	3	9	5	9	4	5	0	5	12	10

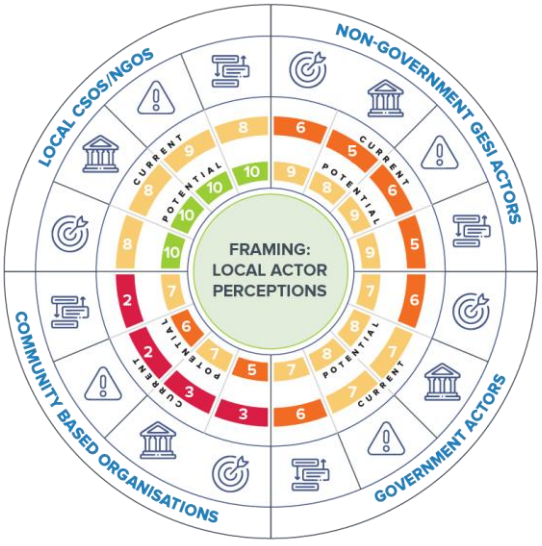
Table H2: FRAMING SP Programmes: Local Actor Perceptions

Social Protection Building Blocks	Local NGOs		GESI Actors		Government Actors		CBOs	
	Current	Potential	Current	Potential	Current	Potential	Current	Potential
Developing programme objectives	8	10	6	9	6	7	3	5
Establishing governance & coordination	8	10	5	8	7	8	3	7
Mapping locations, risk & vulnerability	9	10	6	9	7	8	2	6
Deciding SP priorities	8	10	5	9	6	7	2	7

Figure H1. FRAMING: International Actor Perceptions



Figure H2. FRAMING: Local Actor Perceptions



DESIGN

Table H3: DESIGNING SP Programmes: International Actor Perceptions

Social Protection Building Blocks	Local NGOs		GESI Actors		Government Actors		CBOs		International actors	
	Current	Potential	Current	Potential	Current	Potential	Current	Potential	Current	Potential
Developing targeting criteria	7	10	6	9	3	4	0	5	10	10
Designing conditionality of assistance	6	9	5	8	3	4	0	5	10	10
Deciding beneficiary entitlement	6	9	4	6	4	5	0	0	9	10
Deciding on transfer processes	6	9	5	7	2	4	0	3	9	10

Table H4: DESIGNING SP Programmes: Local Actor Perceptions

Social Protection Building Blocks	Local NGOs		GESI Actors		Government Actors		CBOs	
	Current	Potential	Current	Potential	Current	Potential	Current	Potential
Developing targeting criteria	8	10	5	9	6	7	2	7
Designing conditionality of assistance	8	10	5	9	6	7	3	6
Deciding beneficiary entitlement	6	9	4	7	6	7	3	5
Deciding on transfer processes	8	10	5	7	6	7	3	6

Figure H3. DESIGNING: International Actor Perceptions

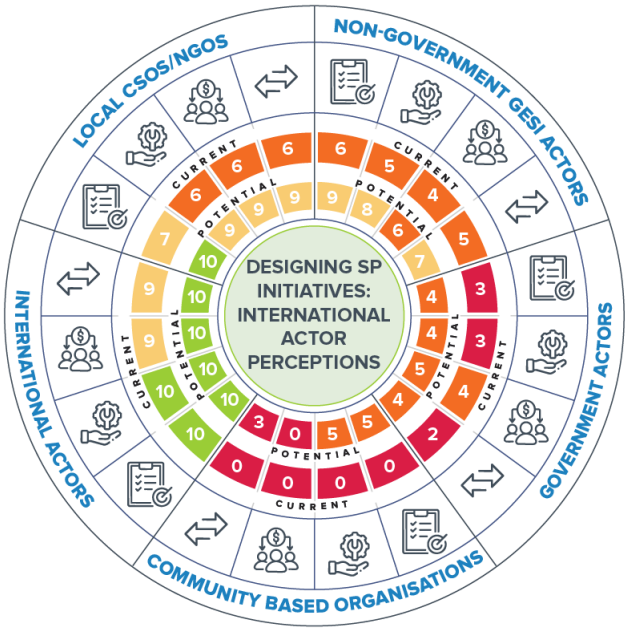
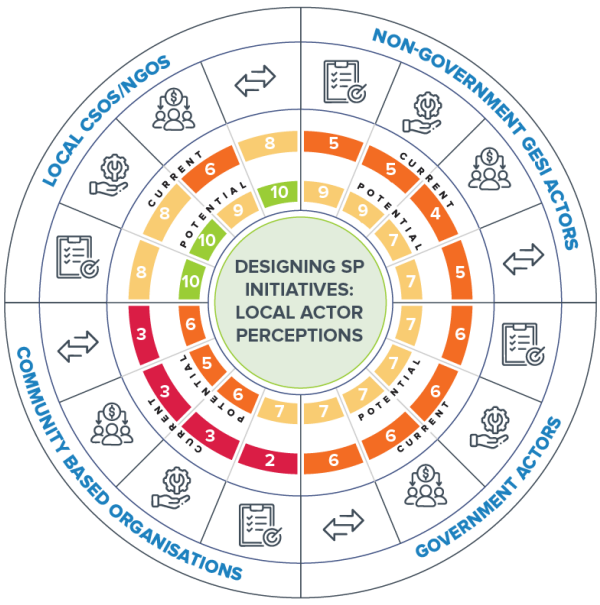


Figure H4. DESIGNING: Local Actor Perceptions



DELIVERY

Table H5: DELIVERY OF SP Programmes: International Actor Perceptions

Social Protection Building Blocks	Local NGOs		GESI Actors		Government Actors		CBOs		International actors	
	Current	Potential	Current	Potential	Current	Potential	Current	Potential	Current	Potential
Awareness raising and advocacy	9	11	6	10	2	3	2	10	6	7
Beneficiary registration and verification	10	12	7	8	2	4	0	3	6	6
Service delivery e.g. assistance distribution	9	11	6	7	4	5	4	6	6	7
Managing and setting up digital transfers	5	10	5	6	0	2	0	0	11	10
Implementing case management	8	10	4	7	2	4	2	5	8	9

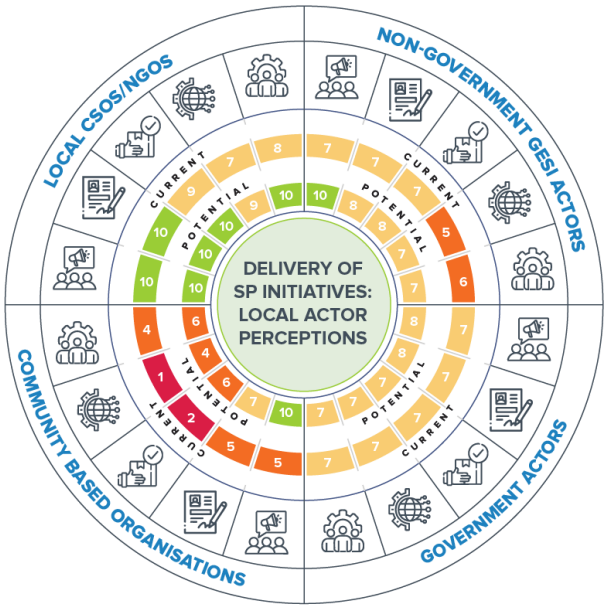
Table H6: DELIVERY OF SP Programmes: Local Actor Perceptions

Social Protection Building Blocks	Local NGOs		GESI Actors		Government Actors		CBOs	
	Current	Potential	Current	Potential	Current	Potential	Current	Potential
Awareness raising and advocacy	10	10	7	10	7	8	5	10
Beneficiary registration and verification	10	10	7	8	7	8	5	7
Service delivery e.g. assistance distribution	9	10	7	8	7	7	2	6
Managing and setting up digital transfers	7	9	5	7	7	7	1	4
Implementing case management	8	10	6	7	7	7	4	6

Figure H5. DELIVERY: International Actor Perceptions



Figure H6. DELIVERY: Local Actor Perceptions



LEARNING

Table H7: SP Programmes LEARNING: International Actor Perceptions

Social Protection Building Blocks	Local NGOs		GESI Actors		Government Actors		CBOs		International actors	
	Current	Potential	Current	Potential	Current	Potential	Current	Potential	Current	Potential
Designing M&E tools and indicators	7	9	7	10	2	3	0	6	10	11
M&E data collection and analysis	8	10	6	9	2	4	0	6	10	11
M&E reporting	8	10	5	7	2	4	0	0	8	8
Collecting beneficiary feedback	9	11	6	10	2	6	3	8	6	7

Table H8: SP Programmes LEARNING: Local Actor Perceptions

Social Protection Building Blocks	Local NGOs		GESI Actors		Government Actors		CBOs	
	Current	Potential	Current	Potential	Current	Potential	Current	Potential
Designing M&E tools and indicators	9	10	4	8	6	7	1	6
M&E data collection and analysis	9	10	6	9	6	7	1	6
M&E reporting	9	10	6	7	7	7	2	5
Collecting beneficiary feedback	10	10	7	9	7	7	6	9

Figure H8. LEARNING: Local Actor Perceptions

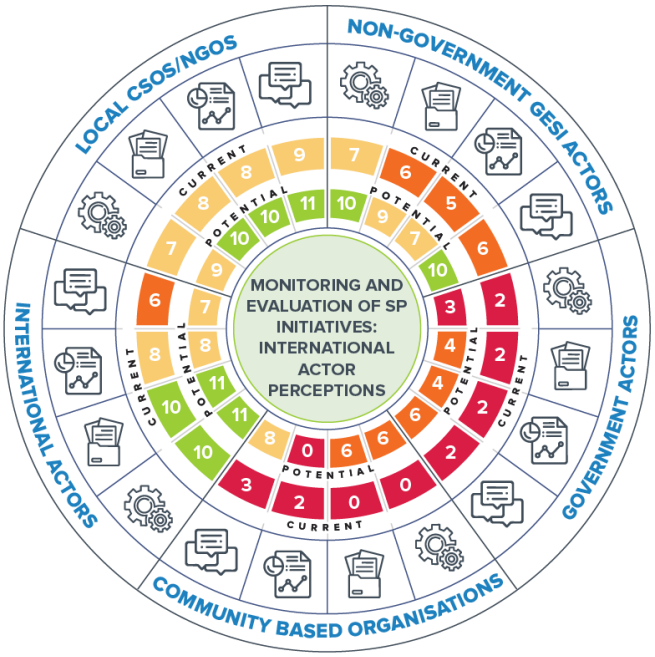
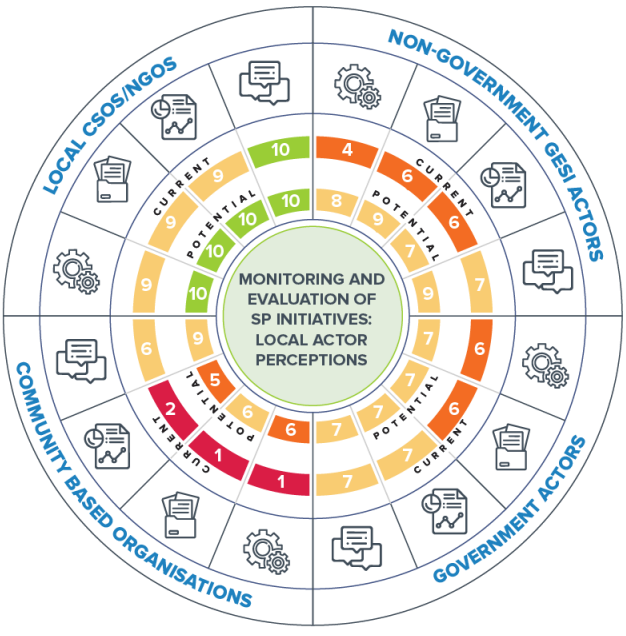


Figure H8. LEARNING: Local Actor Perceptions



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