



NATIONAL HIGHWAY AUTHORITY, PAKISTAN

Gender Action Planning
Framework (GAPF)

WIDENING & IMPROVEMENT OF PRIORITY SECTIONS OF N-5 (487 KM)



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NATIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES PAKISTAN (PVT.) LTD.
HEAD OFFICE: NESPAK HOUSE, 1-C, BLOCK-N, MODEL TOWN EXTENSION
LAHORE, PAKISTAN



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GENDER ACTION PLANNING FRAMEWORK (GAPF)

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1. GENDER ACTION PLANNING FRAMEWORK (GAPF)

1.1 GENERAL

Road and transport infrastructure play a crucial role in economic growth and social development, offering enhanced mobility, economic opportunities, and improved access to essential services. However, gender disparities in economic benefits, access and safety remain significant in Pakistan. While improved connectivity through projects like the AIIB-financed N-5 Widening & Improvement Project (hereafter the “Project”) enhances opportunities for job creation, trade, and travel safety for women, it also introduces risks such as gender-based violence (GBV)/Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)/Sexual Harassment (SH), displacement, wage gaps, and health concerns. As such, a gender-responsive approach is essential to ensure equitable benefits, inclusive participation, and mitigation of social risks, making transport systems in Pakistan safer and more accessible for all.

This Gender Action Planning Framework (GAPF) for the Project outlines possible actions and approaches for economic empowerment, safety, and access to essential services for women, ensuring that they benefit equitably from infrastructure development while minimizing risks, including those related to GBV/SEA/SH and labor influx. Based on the GAPF guidelines, site-specific Resettlement Action Plan(s) (RAP(s)) will include the necessary activities to enhance women’s participation, protect them from vulnerabilities and provide them with the opportunities to benefit from the Project.

Project Overview

National Highway N-5 having total length of 1,819 km is the lifeline for the Pakistan economy. The N-5’s importance lies in it linking the port of Karachi to Peshawar and the Afghan border, via all of the country’s main population and economic centres of Hyderabad, Multan, Lahore, Gujranwala, Rawalpindi / Islamabad and via the Karakorum Highway up to the international border of Peoples Republic of China (PRC). In the 2022 flood events, numerous segments of the N-5 highway experienced significant impacts, resulting in roadway erosion and collapse and—traffic interruptions.

The proposed Project is divided into eight Sections (Table below):

Section No.	Name	Length (km)
1	Hyderabad – Hala (Phase 2)	65
2	Ranipur – Rohri (Phase 1A)	70
3	Okara – Manga (Phase 2)	83
4	Lahore – Gujranwala (Phase 1B)	68
5	Kharian – Dina (Phase 2)	41
6	Dina – Rawat (Phase 2)	72
7	Rawalpindi – Burhan (Phase 1A)	44



Section No.	Name	Length (km)
8	Nowshera – Peshawar (Phase 1A)	31
TOTAL		474

The project is overall divided into two (02) phases. Phase 1 is further divided into Phase 1-A and Phase 1-B. Phase 1-A includes Section # 07, Section # 08 and Section # 02 while Phase 1-B includes Section # 04 alongside the Nai Baran Bridge located southwest of Hyderabad in Sindh province. The Phase 2 project includes all of the remaining Sections. This phasing is conducted to prioritize the most urgent projects based on the economic and financial plan of AIIB, road and traffic conditions and environment, social and resettlement impacts. The framework level E&S instruments will be prepared for all the Sections under the proposed Project (RFP, LMP, GAPF and SEP) while site-specific documents (ESIA/ESMP and RAP including LRP and GAP) will be prepared for Phase 1(A) on a priority basis.

1.2 GENDER CONSIDERATIONS AND POLICY FRAMEWORK: COUNTRY CONTEXT

Women make up 49% of Pakistan's population and their empowerment is critical for economic growth and national development¹. Despite commitments to international gender equality frameworks, Pakistan ranks low on gender equality, with persistent barriers in education, employment, mobility, and decision-making. Low employment opportunities, weak industry-academia linkage, limited access to information, and mobility constraints are among the foremost challenges for women's economic empowerment. Women's access to the labor market and decent employment opportunities have remained low over the past decades. Regardless of their education level, women and girls in Pakistan bear a disproportionate burden of domestic and care work, spending 10 times more time on household chores and child/elderly care than men. This means they face time constraints in gaining skills and getting jobs. For instance, among adult females who had completed Grade 12 or above, only 31% were part of the labor force as compared to 83% of their male counterparts².

Addressing some of these issues, the Pakistan Government has recently developed the National Gender Policy Framework (2022-2025) which aims to provide a structured, gender-transformative roadmap for promoting gender equality. The framework mainstreams gender by integrating gender perspectives into national and provincial policy-making, planning, and programming. It mandates gender-responsive budgeting, institutional capacity-building, and the development of sex-disaggregated data systems. It further encourages gender impact assessments, inclusive policy dialogue, and participatory governance mechanisms especially in areas such as health, education, economic empowerment, and safety. Gender focal points and gender action labs are institutional mechanisms embedded within the framework to operationalize and monitor gender inclusion across sectors.

¹ World Bank. (2024). *Women's Economic Empowerment in Pakistan*.

² UN (2023). *National Report of Status of Women in Pakistan*.



1.3 GENDER CONSULTATIONS

In order to enhance women's participation and to understand women's issues in the project area, and to inform project design and the finalization of the ES instruments, a total of twenty-four (24) consultations were carried out at various locations as a part of the stakeholder engagement process. The NESPAK E&S team conducted gender-specific consultations to document suggestions and concerns regarding the proposed Project. Details of these consultations are presented in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Gender Consultations Conducted in Project Area

Package	Gender Consultations
Package # 01: Hyderabad to Hala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Consultation at Bhit Shah • Gender Consultation at Matiari • Gender Consultation at PPHI Sindh Government Dispensary Soomar Chand, Matiari
Package # 02: Ranipur to Rohri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Consultations at Sukkur City • Gender Consultations at Ubri • Gender Consultations along the road • Gender Consultations at Tando Mir Hassan
Package # 03: Okara to Manga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Consultation at Kasur • Gender Consultation at Moon Razai Center • Gender Consultation at Phool Nagar
Package # 04: Lahore to Gujranwala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Consultation at Mohallah Bilal Nagar, Shahdara Lahore • Gender Consultation at Punjab College (Girls campus), Muridke • Gender Consultation at Allied School, Muridke
Package # 05: Kharian to Dina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Consultation at Govt. Degree college for Women Kharian, District Gujrat • Gender Consultation at Govt. Girls Higher Secondary School Dina
Package # 06: Dina to Rawat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Consultation at Barki Bazar GT Road, Tehsil Gujjar Khan, District Rawalpindi • Gender Consultation at THQ Hospital, Sohwa, District Rawalpindi • Gender Consultation at Allied School, Tehsil Gujjar Khan, District Rawalpindi • Gender Consultation at Zara Hospital, Main GT Road, Banth Stop, Tehsil Gujjar Khan, District Rawalpindi • Gender Consultation at Howard Cambridge School, Tehsil Gujjar Khan
Package # 07: Rawalpindi to Hassanabdal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Consultation at Horizon school of Nursing and Health Sciences, Hasanabdal GT road, Hasanabdal, District Attock • Gender Consultation at Wah cantt. Rawalpindi
Package # 08: Nowshera to Peshawar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Consultation at Govt. Degree College for Women Nowshera Cantt, Nowshera City. • Gender Consultation at Aman Garh Tehsil, District Nowshera



In general, women in the Project area perceived that the proposed Project is beneficial, indicating direct benefits like reduced traffic congestion, improved transportation and road safety, and indirect economic benefits such as local employment and industrial growth. Additionally, the project is expected to increase income and reduce travel-related stress. However, women also expressed some concerns and suggestions during gender consultations which are outlined below:

Concern	Suggestion
Women face safety issues, risks of accidents and harassment due to high-speed traffic, lack of crossings and inadequate traffic controls, restricting their mobility.	Provision of safe/segregated crossings shall be considered based on-site needs and design.
Women face mobility restrictions due to cultural norms, unsafe infrastructure, and lack of inclusive facilities.	While designing road and infrastructure sensitivity to female safety and cultural norms shall be considered.
The influx of labor may increase harassment risks for women in nearby communities' especially female students/staff.	Control worker movement in residential areas and assign a responsible person to ensure women's safety. Barriers shall be installed around schools, and GBV prevention training will be given to all workers.
Health issues due to dust, air quality, and noise for women and children.	Dust will be controlled by regular water sprinkling, and construction during peak hours will be limited to reduce noise disruptions.
Construction activities may limit women's movement and access to essential services.	Provide safe alternative routes and security measures so women can move freely without disturbance.
Issues highlighted by women: inadequate access to safe drinking water, insufficient healthcare, limited educational and employment opportunities, and lack of transport for women.	These concerns will be included in the Gender Action Planning Framework (GAPF) and addressed within the scope of the project.
High number of accidents leading to injuries on the road.	Road widening, signage, protected U-turns, and a traffic management plan will be implemented. Highway Police will enforce rules to reduce accidents.
How can females lodge complaints related to the project?	A functional Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) with a GBV committee will be established for females and community members to lodge complaints.
Job and labor opportunities for local females.	Ensure that special job provisions for women are included through effective GAP implementation and reflected in bidding and tender documents.

1.4 GENDER ASSESSMENT SURVEY

Gender surveys were conducted using structured interviews and questionnaires (attached as Annex I) to identify women's roles, challenges, and specific issues and assess their participation in education, employment, healthcare, and decision-making. The initial survey included a total of 172 respondents from Phase 1 locations: 97 respondents from Section 8, 43 respondents from



Section 7, and 32 respondents from Section 2. The survey identified barriers to women's mobility, including limited access to education, employment, and resources due to cultural norms, safety concerns, and inadequate transport infrastructure. Fear of harassment at bus stops restricts travel, while hiring biases and workplace limitations hinder participation in road and engineering sectors. The survey also explored solutions to promote gender equality through safer transport, policy reforms, and inclusive infrastructure.

Cultural norms in Khyber Pukhtunkhwa (KP) limited women's survey participation and led to underreporting of sensitive issues. To address this, the social team was trained for culturally sensitive engagement. A total of 97 randomly selected women were interviewed separately by the Gender Specialist. Despite these challenges, the survey provided valuable insights into gender issues and potential interventions for women's empowerment.

The participants of the survey identified key social issues affecting their community and discussed possible solutions. Key gender issues identified in the Project area include:

- Women have less control over household finances, education, and healthcare, with male elders making most decisions.
- Women, especially in rural areas, have fewer job opportunities, mainly limited to agriculture, teaching, and informal labor.
- Risks of GBV/SEA/SH exist in various forms.
- Despite laws against GBV, conviction rates remain low due to weak enforcement mechanism.
- Women lack adequate healthcare services, proper mobility infrastructure, and privacy protections, particularly near construction zones, bus stops, and markets.
- The arrival of external workers increases risks of harassment, human trafficking, and health concerns (HIV/AIDS) in the Project area.

Gender Action Planning Framework (GAPF) – Key Interventions:

- Support income generation activities, vocational training, and employment in construction and other sectors.
- Conduct awareness programs on GBV, available legal aid, and support services through NGO coordination.
- Strengthen contractor obligations to prevent SEA/SH, establish GRM protocols for confidential reporting, and ensure third-party monitoring.
- Collaborate with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)/Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and law enforcement agencies to improve women's safety and access to justice.
- Implement anti-trafficking measures, HIV/AIDS awareness programs, and worker code of conduct enforcement.
- Enhance contractor and government agency accountability for gender-sensitive project implementation.

Table 1.2 outlines the GAPF for the Project, detailing impacts/risks, mitigation measures, frequency/timeframe, and responsibility:



Table 1.2: Gender Action Planning framework

	Activity	Impacts/Risks	Mitigation Measures	Frequency/Timeframe	Responsibility
	Information & Resource Management				
1.	Data Management & Monitoring	Lack of gender-specific data hinders effective planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a gender-specific database to track project impacts. Regularly update and review gender-specific indicators. 	Throughout project lifecycle	PIU & RIUs, Social & Gender Team
2.	Communication & Information Dissemination	Women have limited awareness about project impacts, entitlements, and grievance mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Gender Committee to ensure women's concerns are addressed. Conduct awareness sessions and distribute informational materials. Ensure community consultations include women to promote inclusivity. 	Continuous during project implementation	PIU & RIUs, Social & Gender Team
3.	Gender-inclusive Compensation & Livelihood Support	Delayed or non-payment of compensation to vulnerable/affected women and lack of livelihood restoration opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain gender-specific data for compensation tracking. Ensure timely payments to affected women. Provide livelihood restoration support, including vocational training and job placement. 	Continuous during resettlement & compensation process	PIU & RIUs, Social & Livelihood Team
	Women's Safety, Mobility, and Well-Being				
4.	Women's Mobility & Safety	Women face harassment and accessibility challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct gender-segregated crossings, pedestrian bridges. Provision of separate facilities like lavatories during construction Install CCTV, emergency helplines, and visible signage on construction sites. Train construction staff on gender sensitivity and GBV prevention. 	Design & construction phases	PIU & RIUs, Contractor Gender & Safety Team
5.	Privacy & Safety	Construction may disrupt women's mobility, privacy, and access to essential services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule construction work to minimize disruptions to women's daily routines. Engage local women in planning to ensure privacy concerns are addressed. 	Continuous construction	PIU & RIUs, Contractors



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement safety measures such as well-lit areas and designated pathways. 		
6.	Human Trafficking & Health Risks	Increased risks of human trafficking, HIV transmission, and health vulnerabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct awareness campaigns on trafficking and HIV prevention. Strengthen coordination with health agencies and anti-trafficking groups. 	Periodic awareness programs	PIU & RIUs, Social Specialist and Safety Specialist
Women's Economic Empowerment					
7.	Women's Skills Development & Capacity Building	Limited access to vocational training and employment for women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design gender-inclusive training programs. Use female trainers and ensure a safe learning environment. Promote women's participation in project-related jobs. 	Throughout project	PIU & RIUs in coordination with public Training Institutions
8.	Income Generation & Employment for Women	Women face barriers to economic participation due to cultural norms and lack of opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate vocational training and job placements for women. Support women entrepreneurs by providing business opportunities along transport corridors. Address mobility challenges through transport assistance or safe travel options. 	Ongoing livelihood development	PIU & RIUs, in coordination with public Social & Economic Development groups
Gender-Inclusive Governance & Awareness					
9.	Gender-Sensitive Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)	Women may face barriers in reporting concerns related to project impacts including GBV.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the GRM is accessible, confidential, and gender responsive. Conduct outreach programs to inform women about reporting mechanisms. Establish multiple complaint channels (e.g., helplines, in-person, and online reporting). 	Continuous	PIU & RIUs, GRM Committee
10.	Media & Awareness Campaigns on GBV & Women's Rights	Lack of public awareness on GBV, women's rights, and safe mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run multi-media awareness campaigns (social media, radio, public spaces). Display anti-harassment messages at various locations and construction sites. 	Throughout project lifecycle	PIU & RIUs, Gender Specialist & Communication Specialist
11.	Women's Representation in	Low participation of women in security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire and train women security personnel for public spaces. 	Before and during operations	PIU & RIUs, Security Specialist and



	Security & Decision-Making	roles and project governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure women's representation in project decision-making committees. 		Gender Specialist
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PIU (Project Implementation Unit) **HIV** (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) **GBV** (Gender Based Violence) **SEA** (Sexual Exploitation and Abuse) **GRM** (Grievance redressal mechanism)



1.5 Integrated Gender Action Plans (GAP)

Gender action planning will be carried out as a part of the RAP preparation and mainstreamed throughout the ES Instruments. The draft RAP prepared for Phase 1A, road sections 2, 7 and 8 already includes gender consultations outcome of each road sections and suggestions and feedback from women. As the project is implemented, additional revisions may be required for the site-specific GAPs, which will be integrated into the site-specific RAPs. During the RAP finalization process, gender action points for each road/subproject section will be included. The template to prepare site-specific GAP is as follows:

- **Introduction:** This section sets out the rationale for gender mainstreaming. It sets out the background to the process and the methodology employed to develop GAP.
- **Gender Assessment:** This section will present the results of the gender assessment and consultations which identifies gender gaps and issues which need to be addressed within the subproject/project, as well as other forms of vulnerability that may intersect with gender, such as disability and economic poverty.
- **Objectives of the GAP:** This section states objectives and outcomes for the project/subproject level relate to the addressing the gender gaps and issues identified
- **Proposed Activities:** This section details the actions necessary for reaching the objectives and outcomes identified. It specifies responsibilities for delivering these actions.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** This section describes the monitoring and evaluation methods including responsibilities, the form and the frequency of monitoring and evaluation reporting etc.

1.6 Institutional Framework for Gender Action Plan Implementation

The detailed framework for the Institutional Arrangement for the Implementation of E&S Instruments is discussed in Section 6 of ESMPF. The Gender Representative will be part of all the E&S teams including:

- PIU-HQ
- RIUs (Construction/Implementation Phase)
- Construction Supervision Consultant (CSC)
- Contractor's Team

The Gender specialist will be the part of each team (as mentioned in the institutional arrangements provided in ESMPF and ESIA) at respective offices of PIU-HQ (Islamabad), RIUs (Regional Offices), and site offices for contractor team, and CSC.



ANNEX 1



GENDER SURVEY

1. Location:

Settlement: _____

UC: _____ Tehsil: _____ District: _____

2. Identification

2.1: Name: _____ **2.2: Father's / Husband Name:** _____

2.3: Permanent Address:

2.4: Contact No. _____

2.5: What is your age?

Age (year) 18 – 25 _____ 26 – 35 _____
 36 – 45 _____ 46 and above _____

2.6: Marital status? I. Married _____ II. Unmarried _____

2.7: What is your family size? I. Male _____ II. Female _____

2.8: What is your caste /ethnic group? _____

2.9: What is your language? _____

2.10: What is your qualification?

I. Illiterate _____ II. Primary _____ III. Middle _____
 IV. Metric _____ V. Intermediate _____ VI. Above Inter _____

3. What are the main roles and responsibilities of women?

Roles	Involvement(%age)
Household Activities	
Income Generation Activities	
Others	

Decision Making:

Who decides the following household matters?

Men = 1, Women = 2, Both = 3.	
	Decision maker
Education where to send, whom to send	
Health facilities (from where to avail)	
Number of children to have	
Children Marriages	
What HH assets to buy and sell	
Women to work outside home	



4. Access to Social/Financial Services and Mobility

4.1 Access to Education and Skills

Are there any constraints for girls accessing education? What are the main constraints?

4.2 Gender preferences for sending children to school?

4.3 Are there any vocational centers/schools for girls/women? What kinds of training courses are available with these vocational centers?

5. Access to Health

5.1 What kinds of health facilities are available in the area? Do women seek pre and post-natal health consultations and care? If not, what are the main constraints?

5.2 Distance from the nearest health facility in KMs?

5.3 What are the main health issues for men and women? Any common water borne diseases in the area?

6. Access to Drinking Water

6.1 What are the main sources of drinking water?

6.2 What are the key drinking water specific issues in the area?

6.3 Do women fetch water in the area from outside? Distance travelled by women _____?

6.4 Time used in fetching water? _____

7. Access to Finance



7.1 What kind of financial services (such as banking, micro-finance, and savings) are available to women?

7.2 What kind of challenges/constraints women face in accessing financial services?

8. Access and Control over Resources

8.1 What are the common trends of women ownership of land and assets?

8.2 What kind of issues, women face in access and control over resources/assets/property?

9 Access to Income Earning Opportunities

9.1 Are you involved in Income generating activities?

i) Yes _____ ii) No _____

If yes, what are common activities?

i) Stitching/Embroidery _____ ii) Livestock _____ iii) Job _____ iv) Other _____

9.2 What is opinion of male about the job of female, whether they like and encourage the female in jobs?

9.3 Are women allowed to work outside home? What are the main constraints for women in accessing economic opportunities?

9.4 Are you satisfied with the private wage/salary?

Yes _____ No _____ if No, how much it should be per day or per month (Rs.) _____



9.5 Do You save your salary/income independently in a separate bank account?

Yes _____ No _____, If No, why explain the reason. _____

9.6 In which area, the female employees spend their salaries or earnings on?

House construction: _____ Marriage of her children: _____ Education: _____

Kitchen: _____ Livestock: _____ Other: _____

9.7 What are the key potentials in the area for increasing women's participation in economic activities?

10 What is the attitude of the husband/ in laws family in case of more girl baby births against the willing of boy baby?

11 Women's Participation in Local Forums/Training Programs

11.1 What kind of local forums (formal, informal) exist in the area where women can participate?

11.2 Are there any cultural norms and social constraints refraining women to participate in the local forums?

11.3 What are the key potentials for engaging women in the local area development?

11.4 Do women participate in training programs offered by development partners (NGOs/CSOs)? What kind of training programs has been imparted?

12 LIVELIHOOD RESTORATION

12.1 Would you be interested in participating in livelihood restoration training programs?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe



12.2 What types of skills or training would be most beneficial to you in finding new employment or improving your livelihood? (Tick relevant)

- Vocational training (e.g., carpentry, plumbing, tailoring) -----
- Business management (e.g., financial literacy, marketing) -----
- IT and computer skills -----
- Language and communication skills-----
- Any other (Please Specify) -----

13 Vulnerabilities (Poor, Elderly, Disabled and Widows)

13.1 What are the key vulnerabilities for women in the area?

13.2 What kind of social protection mechanisms/programs for the vulnerable women?

14 Have you ever faced violence from male members of the household?

Yes _____ No _____ If Yes, Type

Physical _____ Mental _____ On what type of Issues?

i) Domestic _____ ii) Economic _____ iii) Others _____

15 Any complaint or voice rose against violence to NGO or Police?

Yes _____ No _____, if yes where _____

15.1 Was compensated to the affected woman?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what result and consequences of that complaint? _____

If Not. Why. _____

16 Project Benefits for Women

16.1 What protective measures do you suggest regarding the project implementation?



16.2 How women's participation could be ensured in the project implementation? How project interventions will benefit women?

16.3 What are the key recommendations for maximizing project benefits for women?

16.4 What kind of negative impacts do this project has on women?

15.5 What are the pressing needs of women of the Project Area?

17 Existence of other development partners:

17.1 Are there any other development partners (funding agencies, CSOs/NGOs) working in this area for the socio-economic development of the communities? List down the names of the development partners.

17.2 What kind of development support is provided by other development partners for the socio-economic uplift of the communities in this area?

18 Any other concerns/comments



Interviewer's Signature _____