

GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION (GESI) STRATEGY FOR THE YOUTH READY PROGRAM

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BACKGROUND

World Vision, with funding support from the Barrett Family Foundation, has been working with vulnerable adolescents and youth facing multiple forms of marginalization in Latin America since 2017 to create positive change in their own lives, communities and countries. As a highly vulnerable population, female and male adolescents and youth are at risk of joining gangs and getting involved in illicit activities creating immense obstacles to transition safely to adult life. Phase 1 (FY 2017-2019) sought to provide economic opportunities to 2,400 female and male youth between 15 and 25 years old, in 10 municipalities in Honduras and El Salvador.

Despite the significant progress made in the economic and educational inclusion and rights of vulnerable female and male adolescents and youth in Phase I, pockets of fragility remained. Violence, poverty, migration, gender-based violence (GBV), proliferation of gangs, and discriminatory gender norms and practices continued to deprive adolescents and youth of their right to reach their full potential as educated, skilled, and productive members of their communities. Phase II of the Youth Ready Program (FY 2020-2023) was launched which specifically targeted youth who were most at risk of dropping out of school and becoming involved in gang activity as well as out-of-school youth who wanted to pursue life opportunities by reintegrating back into educational or economic opportunities. This Phase aimed to build on lessons learned from Phase I and scale up the program for female and male adolescents and youth in El Salvador and Honduras while also expanding into five new countries: Guatemala, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador and Bolivia.

The Youth Ready Program is now in its third phase of implementation (FY 2024-2026) covering the seven Latin American countries in Phases I and II, and adding Rwanda, Kenya and Tanzania in East Africa. While the program has made significant headways in uplifting the status of female and male in-school and out-of-school youth and adolescents, providing thousands of youths with new opportunities to unleash their full potential, much remains to be done, particularly in strengthening the program's GESI approaches and interventions. Communities are experiencing significant setbacks from gender inequalities and intergenerational violence, socio-economic impact of Covid-19 pandemic, climate change shocks, and war, undermining achievements made in the last decades. Key GESI challenges remain which restrict the youth, particularly women and adolescent girls, in all their diversities (e.g.,



young mothers, Persons with Disabilities or PWDs, Indigenous women, young migrants, LGBTQI+ members, etc.), from fully accessing, participating in and benefiting from education, employment and entrepreneurship opportunities. The GESI strategy also addresses complex and overlapping challenges faced by female and male youths and adolescents in YR project implementation areas as various forms of social stratification, such as gender, race, class and location, intersect to create unique experiences of discrimination and privilege.

A GESI Strategy is crucial for defining, measuring, and tracking the program's efforts for a more gender-responsive, inclusive, effective, and sustainable YR Program for phase 3 and beyond. By addressing the specific needs and challenges faced by the youth, especially diverse groups of women and girls, including PWDs, the program can foster greater equality, social cohesion, and economic development in the 10 implementing countries. The GESI needs and challenges, which are discussed in more detail in Section 1 below, are organized according to the following GESI domains, namely:

Access, Decision-making, Participation, Systems, and Well-being.



The Youth Ready GESI Strategy is designed for stakeholders involved in the development and support of vulnerable and diverse groups of adolescents and youths. These stakeholders include:

- World Vision Program/Project staff (program/project management, technical and M&E specialists, project facilitators, project coordinators);
- Key YR stakeholders in implementation areas such as regional government agencies, NGOs, youth organizations, community leaders and organizations, educators and schools (including technical, vocational, and trade institutions); and
- Private partners such as employment agencies, companies employing youths (volunteers, apprentices, employees), and business development agencies.

The YR GESI Strategy will serve as a tool for these stakeholders to better understand and address the specific GESI challenges faced by diverse groups female and male youths, guiding the development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of YR interventions.

THE STRATEGY INCLUDES SEVEN KEY COMPONENTS:

1. Overview of GESI Analysis
2. GESI Outcomes
3. Expected Outcomes, Approaches, and Interventions
4. Capacity Building
5. Monitoring and Reporting
6. Resources and Budget
7. Contribution to GAC's Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP) and Other Relevant Policies in the 10 YR Countries

1. OVERVIEW OF GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION ANALYSIS

Aligned with the GESI policies of the ten implementing countries, Global Affairs Canada's Gender Equality Policy, and the Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP), the Youth Ready (YR) Program shall explicitly and systematically integrate gender equality and social inclusion considerations at all stages of the program.

A literature review and GESI analysis from secondary data shared by the YR GESI Focal Points in the program's implementing countries revealed the following key GESI issues within the program areas which are highlighted from the perspective of World Vision International's five GESI domains of change, as follows:

ACCESS The ability to make decisions free of coercion at individual, family, community and societal levels. This can include control over assets and ability to make decisions in leadership.

DECISION-MAKING The ability to make decisions free of coercion at individual, family, community, and societal levels. This can include control over assets and ability to make decisions in leadership.

PARTICIPATION The ability to participate in or engage in societal affairs and systems of power that influence and determine development, life activities, and outcomes.

SYSTEMS The availability of equal and inclusive systems that promote equity, account for the different needs of vulnerable populations, and create enabling environments for their engagement.

WELL-BEING The sense of worth, capability status, confidence, dignity, safety, health, and overall physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual well-being. This includes living free from gender-based violence, HIV, and all forms of stigma and discrimination.

a. Unequal and Unpaid Care and Domestic Work and Inadequate Caregiving Support

ACCESS The burden of unpaid care and domestic work often falls disproportionately on young women, restricting their ability to access education and formal employment, to name a few. In Colombia, for example, women dedicate an estimated 4.5 hours more per day to unpaid care work creating a barrier to improving income expectations and working conditions. Similarly, in Guatemala, 49.7% of women primarily engage in household chores, compared to only 4.1% of men. This figure rises to 53.5% for Indigenous women and drops to 3.2% for Indigenous men. In Tanzania, unpaid household chores deny young women ample time to engage in economic activities resulting in their exclusion from decision-making, socio-economic dependence and lack of access to finance/credit and other productive resources. Women in urban and rural areas in Rwanda spend 3.7 and 3.3 hours on unpaid care work, respectively, whereas men in urban and rural areas devote a mere one hour and 1.1 hours, respectively, for these activities.

PARTICIPATION Women's unequal and unpaid care work hinders their participation in paid activities, education opportunities, mobility, income, access to market resources, personal growth, recreational opportunities, and public spaces. Young girls often spend a substantial amount of time on unpaid care work, such as cooking, cleaning, and caring for family members. This reduces the time they can dedicate to their studies, leading to late arrivals at school, incomplete homework, and in some cases, dropping out entirely. Studies show that girls aged 5-14 years globally dedicate 550 million hours daily to household chores, compared to 150 million hours by boys. The time spent on domestic duties restricts young women and girls' transition to the labour market, making it difficult for them to acquire skills needed for well-paying jobs. This perpetuates a cycle of poverty and limits their economic independence.

SYSTEMS Women are primarily the caregivers of children with physical, mental and medical complications. The lack of support for home nursing, paid caregiving, or flexible work arrangements makes performance of this role extremely challenging for women. Their caregiving role for children and other family members with special needs also makes it nearly impossible to balance their multiple productive, reproductive and community management roles.

WELL-BEING The cumulative effects of the limitations brought about by young women and girls' unequal and unpaid care and domestic work means that they are unable to achieve their full human potential. The unequal division of labor within households, reinforced by cultural norms, deprives them of opportunities for education, employment, and personal development. This not only affects their individual lives but also has broader implications for gender equality and societal progress.

b. Entrenched Socio-Cultural Norms and Gender Stereotypes and Prevalence of Patriarchal System

PARTICIPATION Entrenched socio-cultural norms, gender stereotypes in YR implementing countries perpetuate gender inequality, affecting participation of youth, particularly women and girls. Gender stereotypes limit the roles and opportunities available to young people, particularly girls, and are more pronounced in rural areas. Traditional beliefs and gender biases limit girls' access to and participation in education. For example, families are likely to prioritize boys' education over girls', leading to lower enrollment and completion rates for girls.

WELL-BEING Entrenched socio-cultural norms and gender stereotypes impact emotional, social, and physical well-being. Deeply ingrained gender stereotypes often dictate that girls focus on domestic responsibilities rather than pursuing education or careers. Young women and girls often face discrimination in educational settings, which can manifest as biased treatment from teachers and peers, limiting their participation and success in school. The prevalence of patriarchal system impacts overall well-being as it perpetuates women's subordination by men, which negatively impacts on women's dignity, self-worth, safety and overall physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual well-being.

SYSTEMS Deeply rooted patriarchal culture, male domination, and machismo; xenophobia linked to male chauvinism, are systemic issues that perpetuate gender inequality and limit women's participation in decision-making.

b. Social Exclusion and Discrimination Based on Identity and Sexual Orientation

ACCESS Adolescents and young people from indigenous communities, Afro-descendants, or those living in poverty in YR project implementation areas face significant social exclusion and have fewer opportunities to access education, health, and employment. LGBTQ+ adolescents and young people face additional discrimination, stigmatization, and violence, which further limit their access to opportunities and participation in various areas of their lives. They fear disclosing their identity due to potential negative reactions from peers, staff or community members, which can prevent them from fully engaging in programs and projects. These initiatives may lack the necessary resources or training to provide inclusive services that address the unique needs of LGBTQ+ youths, leading to unequal access to opportunities.

PARTICIPATION Diverse groups of youth and adolescents facing multiple forms of marginalization and time poverty are underrepresented in various YR activities due to institutional and socio-cultural barriers. In Ecuador alone, only 2% of participants are adolescents and youths facing different forms of marginalization, such as gender

diverse individuals, PWDs, or ethnic minorities. Special measures are needed to enhance the participation of these groups of youth, particularly women and girls.

WELL-BEING Discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation can have profound effects on the emotional, social, and physical well-being of youth, including those with disabilities (PWDs). Youth with disabilities face double discrimination based on both their disability and their gender identity or sexual orientation, compounding the negative effects on their well-being.

d. Lack of Access to Health Services Including Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)

ACCESS YR adolescents and young people from indigenous communities, Afro-descendants, or those living in poverty face greater social exclusion. They have fewer opportunities to access health, particularly SRHR, information and services, due to financial, socio-cultural and logistical barriers. In Ecuador, many of these youth struggle to access quality sexual and reproductive health (SRH) information and services, such as safe sexuality practices, menstrual health, contraceptives, STI testing and counseling. In Guatemala, acquiring and discussing SRH information is taboo, particularly for adolescents and youths, impeding their access to essential SRHR information and services.

DECISION-MAKING Limited awareness and willingness by parents to provide sex education to their adolescent and young children, influenced by societal norms, restricts young people's ability to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health. Without proper sex education from their parents, young women and men and adolescent girls and boys may lack essential knowledge about and decision-making around their bodies, sexual health, and relationships. They are more likely to engage in risky sexual behaviours. They may not understand the importance of contraception, leading to higher rates of unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

e. Teenage Pregnancy

ACCESS Teenage pregnancy is a complex issue influenced by various factors in YR implementing countries. In Latin American countries, many adolescents do not receive adequate sex education, leading to misinformation and risky behaviours. In some East African communities, early marriage and childbearing are culturally accepted and even encouraged. Adolescents often engage in sexual activity at a young age, increasing the risk of teenage pregnancy. Sexual and Gender-Based Violence perpetrated against young women and adolescent girls also lead to unwanted pregnancy. Adolescent pregnancy limits education, employment and health access as young mothers often drop out of school and face health risks.

DECISION-MAKING Decision-making and autonomy are crucial factors in addressing teenage pregnancy among young women and adolescent girls. When young women have the ability to make informed decisions about their reproductive health, they are more likely to use contraception effectively and avoid unintended pregnancies. Autonomy also empowers them to negotiate safer sexual practices and resist coercive or risky behaviours. However, many young women in YR countries face barriers to autonomy, such as restrictive social norms, lack of access to comprehensive sexuality education, and limited access to reproductive health services. The prevalence of teenage pregnancy is linked to low contraceptive use, lack of autonomy, and gender violence. Adolescent girls often lack the power to make decisions about their reproductive health, leading to early pregnancies.

SYSTEMS Systemic issues around teenage pregnancy are complex and multifaceted, often rooted in social, economic, and cultural factors. Like generalized poverty, inequality, and normalization of violence contribute to the prevalence of teenage pregnancy. Some of these issues are lack of comprehensive sex education, limited access to contraceptives, early marriage and childbearing, cultural norms and gender roles, sexual violence and coercion, and limited access to quality and gender-responsive SRHR services and information.

WELL-BEING Adolescent pregnancy, which is often linked to gender-based violence, has severe impacts on the health and well-being of young mothers and their babies. Teenage mothers are at a higher risk of pregnancy complications such as pre-eclampsia, anemia, and gestational hypertension. These conditions can lead to premature birth, and low birth weight. Postpartum depression, anxiety, and stress are more likely to be experienced by teenage mothers. The added responsibilities of motherhood can be overwhelming, leading to emotional and psychological challenges. Many teenage mothers also struggle to continue their education due to the demands of caring for a baby. This can limit their future career opportunities and economic independence.

f. Institutional Barriers Within the Education Setting

ACCESS In Ecuador, the lack of dedicated educational materials on GESI tailored for adolescents and adapted to local and cultural context hinder young people's understanding of gender equality and social inclusion issues. Long distances to schools, absence of teachers, and general lack of infrastructure impede access to quality education in some of the YR countries. These barriers are particularly acute in rural areas, where girls are more likely to drop out of school.

PARTICIPATION Institutional barriers within the education setting significantly hinder the participation of young women and girls. Many schools lack gender-sensitive infrastructure such as separate toilets for girls, which is a major deterrent for girls, especially during menstruation, as this leads to absenteeism and eventually dropouts. Inadequate gender-sensitive and inclusive educational materials that do not address the specific needs and experiences of girls result in a lack of engagement and interest in school, contributing to higher dropout rates. Girls are also more likely to drop out of school due to factors such as early marriage, pregnancy, and the need to contribute to household income. These factors are often exacerbated by the lack of resources and support in schools.

WELL-BEING Institutional barriers such as the lack of teacher knowledge on GESI, resulting in gender stereotypes and insensitivity, hinder the holistic development of YR students. Students with disabilities encounter physical barriers, such as a lack of ramps and elevators in multi-level school buildings, heavy doors, and inaccessible washrooms.

g. Gender Gap in Literacy Rates

ACCESS The gender gap in literacy rates illustrates disparities in access to education between women and men. For example, in Guatemala, 85.30% of every 100 men know how to read and write as opposed to 76.70% of every 100 women, showing a gender gap of 8.8%. The gap is even wider in rural areas, with Mayan women at a significant disadvantage. There are clear disparities between urban and rural populations, and between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. In Tanzania, studies indicate that parental preference for sons' education over girls tends to limit the literacy level of young women and may unintentionally cause school dropouts of girls.

PARTICIPATION Literacy rate can affect young women and girls' participation in economic and entrepreneurship opportunities, health and safety, social and

emotional wellbeing and education and skills development. Literacy is also important for participating in civic activities and understanding one's rights. Girls with low literacy rates may be less engaged in community and political activities.

DECISION-MAKING Literacy empowers young women and girls by providing them with the knowledge and skills needed to make informed decisions about their lives. It opens opportunities for higher education and better job prospects, leading to greater economic independence and self-sufficiency. It can also contribute to their empowerment and ability to advocate for themselves and their rights.

WELL-BEING Literacy rates have a significant impact on the overall well-being of youth, particularly women and girls including Indigenous women, youth migrants and PWDs. It can contribute to their empowerment, autonomy, and ability to defend their rights. Literacy skills help build social networks and support systems. On the other hand, low literacy rates can result in lower educational attainment, limiting opportunities for further education and personal development. Girls with low literacy rates may struggle with reading and writing, affecting their overall academic performance. It also hinders young women and girls' ability to understand health information, leading to poorer health outcomes and increased vulnerability to diseases. Young women and girls with low literacy rates may also have fewer opportunities to connect with peers and mentors, limiting their social networks.

h. Challenges Faced By People With Disabilities (PWDs)

ACCESS Lack of access to opportunities, lack of disaggregated statistical and demographic data, limited access to assistive devices, and medicines; non-identification of different types of disability; inaccessible specialized health services; lack of equitable educational and labour inclusion programs; and environmental barriers all contribute to the exclusion of people with disabilities from mainstream society. These issues impact PWDs in YR implementing countries such as Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras.

PARTICIPATION People with disabilities face major barriers to participating in the workforce and entrepreneurship. In Guatemala, for example, the meaningful participation of PWDs at the family and community level is almost nil (1.6%). These barriers start from exclusion of PWDs from formal education and training, which prevents them from acquiring the skills and knowledge needed or required by employers. The lack of programs that promote participation, empowerment and autonomy of PWDs and other vulnerable groups contribute to the problem. Moreover, gender norms and safety concerns restrict the participation of PWDs in economic activities and community leadership roles.

WELL-BEING People with disabilities face multiple attitudinal, structural and environmental obstacles to participation in education, labour market, leisure, and other socially valued spaces and opportunities impacting their overall well-being. Lack of access to healthcare, housing, and other essential services can negatively impact on the physical and mental health of people with disabilities. This can lead to increased stress, anxiety, and other health issues. Internalized stigma and low self-esteem can affect the mental health and overall well-being of people with disabilities. They may struggle with feelings of inadequacy and hopelessness due to societal attitudes and discrimination. Addressing these barriers requires a comprehensive approach that includes policy changes, community engagement, and targeted interventions to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for people with disabilities.

i. Gender Digital Divide

ACCESS The gender digital divide significantly limits access to education for young women and girls in both Latin America and East Africa. In Latin America, the gender digital divide is influenced by socio-cultural norms and economic factors. Many young women and girls in Latin America have limited access to digital devices and the internet, which hinders their ability to participate in online learning and access educational resources. Additionally, lower levels of digital literacy among women and girls can make it difficult for them to effectively use digital tools. Economic constraints also play a role, as families with limited resources may prioritize other needs over technology. Harmful social norms and gender stereotypes can further restrict girls' access to education and technology. In East Africa, the gender digital divide is exacerbated by connectivity gaps and economic disparities. Women and girls are less likely to own smartphones and use mobile internet compared to their male counterparts. High data costs and limited internet access in rural areas make it challenging for young women and girls to benefit from digital learning opportunities. Cultural and social norms also contribute to the divide, as girls may be discouraged from pursuing education or using digital devices. The lack of digital skills training and limited device ownership further hinder their educational progress.

j. Feminization of Poverty, Including Pay Gaps Between Women and Men

ACCESS Women in poverty face multiple barriers to accessing resources and opportunities. Limited financial resources make it difficult for women to afford basic necessities such as food, housing, and healthcare. They also have limited access to quality education, which can hinder their ability to secure better-paying jobs and improve their economic situation. Poor access to healthcare services can lead to untreated health issues, which can further exacerbate their economic and social challenges.

SYSTEMS Women generally earn less than men for the same work, which reduces their overall income. Women's lower wages compared to men's limit their economic independence and decision-making power at individual, household, community and societal levels. Lower earnings mean women have less money to spend, which can limit their ability to invest in education, healthcare, and other essential services. This reduced purchasing power can perpetuate cycles of poverty and limit opportunities for economic advancement.

DECISION-MAKING Young women, particularly those facing multiple forms of marginalization, are disproportionately affected by poverty. Women's lower wages compared to men's limit their economic independence and decision-making power at individual, household and community levels. Pay gaps between women and men impact decision-making autonomy in both rural and urban areas. Women in poverty, especially those with disabilities and other vulnerable conditions, face multiple barriers to accessing resources and opportunities, which restricts their ability to make independent decisions about key issues affecting their life.

k. Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Including Early Marriage

ACCESS Gender-based violence (GBV) has profound and far-reaching impacts on young women and girls, affecting their access to resources, opportunities, healthcare, and employment, among others. GBV can lead to school dropouts, limiting educational opportunities and future prospects. Young women and girls may also be forced into exploitative labour or trafficking, further limiting their access to resources. GBV survivors face barriers to employment due to gaps in their education, trauma, and lack of support systems. Survivors

of GBV often face stigma and social isolation, which can hinder their ability to access community resources and support networks. Inadequate healthcare services and lack of trained professionals can further limit access to appropriate care for GBV survivors.

DECISION-MAKING The fear of violence or actual experiences of coercion can force young women to comply with decisions made by others, often against their will. Parents often make decisions on early marriage without considering adolescents' opinions, limiting their autonomy and decision-making power.

WELL-BEING Gender-based violence such as violation of sexual and reproductive rights, femicide, and sexual assault, has severe impacts on the well-being of survivors. GBV can result in physical injuries, sexually transmitted infections, unintended pregnancies and mental health issues such as trauma and PTSD which have negative lasting impact on the overall well-being of survivors and victims. Inadequate support for GBV survivors impacts the well-being of young women, girls and PWDs.

I. Migration of Children and Adolescents

ACCESS Migrant youth and children may face barriers to accessing healthcare services, which can affect their physical and mental health. They may also face obstacles in accessing education and training resources, leading to gaps in their learning and difficulties in catching up with their peers.

WELL-BEING Migration of children and adolescents is a reality in Central American countries, impacting their development and life plans. It also affects family structures, and has gender implications, influencing the equality we strive for. The stress and instability of migration can affect youth's and children's academic performance and overall educational outcomes. Migration can result in separation from family members, which can be emotionally challenging for children and adolescents. Moreover, migration can alter family roles and dynamics, as children may take on new responsibilities or face changes in their support systems.

m. Homicide and Suicide Rates

WELL-BEING Homicide and suicide rates are prevalent among young men and adolescents in Latin America due to various socio-economic stressors. These rates reflect the broader social and economic challenges faced by diverse groups of young people including PWDs.

n. Alcohol and Drug Abuse

PARTICIPATION Substance abuse can disrupt education (e.g. school dropouts, poor academic performance) and employment opportunities, leading to economic instability and social marginalization.

WELL-BEING Substance abuse among adults, youth and adolescents has significant impacts on the well-being of individuals and communities. Excessive alcohol consumption and drug abuse can lead to serious health issues, including liver disease, mental health disorders, and increased risk of infectious diseases. Young women may face additional risks, such as sexual violence and exploitation, which can be exacerbated by substance abuse. Sociocultural isolation, poverty, and parental substance use contribute to the prevalence of alcohol and drug abuse among young women and adolescents.

o. Gaps in Existing Policies

SYSTEMS In YR implementing countries, there are policies promoting gender equality and social inclusion, but implementation is inconsistent and ineffective. In some areas, policies exist but are not sufficiently inclusive and often fail to address the intersectional needs of marginalized groups, particularly diverse groups of young women and adolescent girls including PWDs.

2. GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION OUTCOMES

Gender inequality and intersecting forms of discrimination negatively impact the agency, economic empowerment and psychological well-being of in-school and out-of-school female and male adolescents and youth, including people with disabilities (PWDs), living in vulnerable communities in Latin America and African countries. The Youth Ready Program aims to explicitly and systematically integrate and advance gender equality and social inclusion by addressing root causes of discriminatory and harmful practices, beliefs and systemic gaps that undermine the agency, decision-making power, social status, and access to education and economic resources of young women and adolescent girls, including PWDs.

The first intermediate outcome aims to increase use of opportunities for employment, entrepreneurship and educational services, by vulnerable adolescents and youth, especially women and girls and PWDs, in a localized, sustained, inclusive way.

The second intermediate outcome seeks to increase access to a safe, inclusive, gender-responsive and supportive environment that promotes education, entrepreneurial initiatives and/or employment by vulnerable adolescents and young people, particularly women and girls and PWDs.

Youth Ready will address the program's immediate outcomes related but not limited to: a) gaps in life skills of female and male adolescents and youth, including PWDs, in a safe and inclusive way that enhance their overall well-being; b) barriers to access safe, inclusive and gender-responsive educational, employment and entrepreneurial opportunities by vulnerable adolescents and youth, especially women and girls and PWDs; and c) the need to strengthen partnership between local government, communities, public and private stakeholders including organizations of PWDs, to address barriers to full participation of adolescents and youth facing multiple forms of vulnerabilities, especially women and girls and PWDs, in educational, enterprise, and education opportunities incorporating a GESI, tenderness/positive parenting and safeguarding approach.

3. EXPECTED OUTCOMES, APPROACHES AND INTERVENTIONS

YR will implement a combination of proven approaches such as positive parenting, positive youth development, male engagement approaches/positive masculinities, empowered worldview and other key interventions which will form part of the programs GESI Strategy to achieve the stated outcomes. They include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Special measures such as: provision of incentives for female youth and adolescent girls to encourage and support them to advance their education, employment and entrepreneurship aspirations; provision of incentives for employers to open employment opportunities to female youth, including PWDs; grant support from relevant government and other foundations for YR participants, particularly female youth and PWDs, in the form of seed capital and start-up machinery for cottage industry setups; achieving curricular adaptations in educational spaces to ensure inclusivity for various disabilities; adjusting training format and schedule to ensure youth who have been excluded from activities can participate; etc.

- b. Direct services/support such as: transportation support for YR participants, particularly for young mothers and PWDs to attend training sessions and project activities; provision of assistive technologies for PWDs in the program (e.g., Braille system, hearing aids, sign interpreters, speech-enabled computer systems, mobility support, etc.) to enable them to fully participate in program and other opportunities; provision of childcare support for young mothers; counselling services for youth in need of emotional/mental/psychological support; establishment of women's safe spaces to discuss issues that affect their life. In addition, considering that the program has limited resources, referrals will be provided to ensure youth requiring specialized assistance may be supported.
- c. Engaging and networking with key stakeholders: Engaging and partnering with faith leaders, faith-based organizations, youth organizations/networks, women-led organizations, organizations supporting PWDs, young migrants, LGBTQI+ communities, private sector, and government for the promotion of gender equality, social inclusion, and promotion and protection of human rights of diverse groups of female and male youth and adolescents; collaborating with the Ministry of Education to include gender equity and social inclusion topics in teacher training programs and coordinate cooperation efforts.
- d. Formation or strengthening of networks and partnerships which include formation of networks of local YR actors such as global youth alliance, churches, health units, labour ministries, schools, NGOs, universities, and the private sector, etc. where the following initiatives may be considered: d.1 forge agreements among members and work with YR program to undertake joint initiatives; d.2 socialize GESI topics and discussion issues faced by diverse groups of YR participants; d.3 refer key GESI issues to be addressed by relevant entities; d.4 create exclusive girls' social networks; and d.5 strengthen care networks to address unpaid care work.
- e. Research initiatives including time use analysis; gender-responsive and socially inclusive market assessments; robust GESI analysis for the advancement of diverse groups of female and male youth and adolescents in education, employment and entrepreneurship; impact analysis at the end of the projects/program from a GESI lens; and barriers and inequities analysis in each context to adapt the program to urban and rural needs.
- f. Policy and advocacy such as supporting the process for the amendment of marriage acts; creation of bylaws to penalize parents who fail to send their children to school; engaging parents, families, religious leaders, caregivers, etc., to create awareness on early child marriage, GBV and decision-making; sensitization of gatekeepers/community leaders on the effects of patriarchal systems and other harmful and discriminatory gender and social norms and practices; advocacy for more inclusive infrastructure with universal access; sensitization and advocacy on the need for child caregiving services/nurseries; establishing clear education policies and protocols to address and prevent discrimination against female and male youth facing multiple vulnerabilities including PWDs, Indigenous women, migrant women, young and poor women, etc.; disseminating existing policies and procedures; and implementing educational activities to challenge and dismantle gender stereotypes and promote gender equality and social inclusion.
- g. Communications and messaging. Develop messaging to communicate GESI Strategy internally and externally and ensuring program/project communication materials are accessible to visually and hearing-impaired people, are culturally relevant and sensitive, and translated in local languages.

- h. Inclusive approaches that recognize and respect the diversity of identities and experiences of youth and adolescent participants, integration of adolescents and youth with different gender orientations without discrimination.
- i. Engaging the private sector. Engaging the private sector is a crucial approach to expand employment opportunities for female and male youth, including PWDs and other vulnerable youth after completion of vocational/skills training.
- j. Linking education with vocational training. Establishing linkages between formal education institutes and vocational training centers to develop/adapt curricula that enable school dropouts to re-enroll and develop skills is another significant intervention to be considered by the program. This will facilitate re-entry of female and male youth who have dropped out of school to vocational training opportunities by adapting vocational training curricula that will cater to the specific needs of out-of-school youth.
- k. Linking vocational training institutions with employers. Linkages will also be established between youth participants who have completed vocational training with potential employers to facilitate the transition from training to job placement.
- l. Supporting GBV survivors. GBV, such as intimate partner violence, sexual violence, physical and emotional abuse, is alarmingly prevalent in the YR program countries/implementation areas. The YR program will introduce initiatives that will address some of the challenges around this harmful and pervasive issue, such as: formation of cohorts of young women facing different categories of violence, in collaboration with women's homes providing legal, psychological, and medical care; establishment of referral pathways for vulnerable YR adolescents and youth in need of protection and GBV services/support; and engaging with psychosocial care units and enrollment of survivors in support programs in municipalities.
- m. Specific support for PWDS. The YR Program will explore ways to support YR female and male PWD participants to facilitate their participation in YR program. For example, the following will be explored: providing support to enable PWD participants to move within their housing and social interactions, use of transportation, and access the internet; supporting advanced educational attainment; inclusive quality education; labour market access; entrepreneurship support; integrated social protection systems; professional care services; addressing health care needs; promoting violence-free environments; ensuring access to assistive devices appropriate to PWDS' needs and characteristics; achieving curricular adaptations in educational spaces to ensure inclusivity for various disabilities.

4. CAPACITY BUILDING

The YR program includes a strategic focus on building the capacity of both staff and community members to ensure gender equality and social inclusion. It is critical that YR country project staff have strong competencies in gender equality and social inclusion principles, human rights, programming, and MEAL. Project staff are a trusted voice within the community and need to be able to be models for community members in the principles, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors the project is promoting.

A staff gender capacity building plan will be developed for the program/project. Training for program/project staff, coordinators, specialists, managers and facilitators. will be informed by a needs assessment and tailored to specific needs of different stakeholders to ensure content addresses priority knowledge gaps, attitudes and behaviors. The cultural context in which the

intervention will be carried out will also be considered. This is especially relevant in regions with rich cultural diversity, such as the Amazon, where traditions, worldviews, and social structures have a significant impact on gender dynamics. There will be periodic refresher training provided. YR team members will participate in a variety of workshops to increase knowledge and working understanding of gender and social inclusion concepts and approaches.

Lastly, the project will focus on capacity building of public service providers and enhancing the capacity of government institutions in several areas including gender and social inclusion, gender responsive and adolescent service delivery, among others. World Vision Canada has a Gender Technical Specialist, and Protection and Inclusion Specialist, to support YR teams in these capacity building plans. Team members will participate in workshops to increase knowledge and working understanding of gender concepts and FIAP, among others.

The following capacity building activities have been identified to build and strengthen staff capacity for the program:

- GESI training at the beginning of the year. This will include orientation on GESI checklist and training on accommodation of PWDs.
- Integrate training on positive masculinities for both sexes to challenge gender stereotyping in stage 1 of Youth Ready curriculum; train facilitators on positive masculinities/male engagement approaches (e.g. training on Program H and M for YR program/project facilitators).
- GESI orientation for parents/guardians/family of youth
- GESI training for YR Partners, youth employers, teachers and TVET instructors, other key stakeholders in the private/business and government sectors.
- Youth-centered psychosocial support training for service providers
- Create awareness to identify different forms of GBV among facilitators/coordinators. GBV case management training for facilitators/coordinators; includes training on tools and protocols.
- Capacity building on Channels of Hope, Empowered Worldview, etc.; and engaging with parents, families etc.
- Capacity building for M&E staff on GESI-specific indicators and GESI-responsive data collection and analysis
- Training on feminist solidarity economy approach to make business ideas more sustainable and consider adaptation to climate change
- Training on youth rights and responsibilities in the workplace for youth participants
- Training of staff on safeguarding and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) policy, Reporting and referral of SGBV cases
- Training on advocacy, communication, networking, M&E framework (including feminist/gender transformative MEAL), etc.
- Training in public speaking and leadership to increase girls' power within to take leadership positions in formal and informal forums

5. MONITORING AND REPORTING

YR's progress will be monitored and evaluated by trained team members using methods and tools that integrate gender and social inclusion considerations. YR's approach to monitoring and reporting will be based on measurement of actual results, the changes created and contributed to, and collecting sex, disability and other disaggregated information to assess progress on a regular basis and taking timely corrective actions through participatory processes with partners and stakeholders. The WVC MEAL Specialist will support in-country M&E officers to ensure timely and quality data gathering, processing and interpretation. Both primary and secondary data disaggregated by sex, civil status, vulnerability, disability will inform project progress, successes, and gaps. Although the focus of the analysis is mainly gender, where possible, data will also be disaggregated for other vulnerability markers such as migrants, indigenous, ethnicity, race, education level, LGBTQI+, etc.

Use of gender responsive tools in data collection and disability-related apps like COMCARE and Washington Group questionnaire in data collection will be implemented. YR is using online data collection accessible by participant youths in 4 languages: English, Swahili, Kinyarwanda and Spanish. YR will use the three main RBM working tools, the Logic Model (LM), Performance Measurement Framework (PMF) and Risk Register for managing results throughout the entire lifecycle of the project. Progress towards expected results will be measured at regular intervals, using participatory processes that involve key stakeholders, including communities. Lessons learned from all measurements process will be applied on the project to improve implementation fidelity and coverage. Baseline, midline, and final surveys will measure intermediate and ultimate outcome indicators while immediate outcomes, outputs and activities will be monitored periodic progress reports and annual outcome monitoring using LQAS methodology.

YR will prioritize women and girls' voices and emphasize their ownership through the co-design and co-management of the MEAL processes throughout the project cycle ensuring the meaningful inclusion of women, girls and PWDs in design, data collection, analysis, interpretation of results and dissemination. Gender-transformative, participatory approaches will be used to meaningfully include women and girls in the design, data collection, and analysis and interpretation of the results, as well the generation of recommendations and actions going forward, and processes will be put in place to ensure the dissemination of results back to the community for downward accountability. The project will undertake an impact analysis at the end of the project.

6. RESOURCES AND BUDGET

The above strategies and approaches have been/will be integrated into the project's budget ensuring adequate resources for gender and social inclusion staffing, training and technical expertise. As all outcomes have components of gender equality and social inclusion, the majority of the budget is targeted towards interventions and activities specifically focused on GESI-related capacity building, service provision, advocacy and outreach. The in-country grant manager/s will be ultimately responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy together with the in-country GESI Technical Specialists supporting YR Program and M&E specialists and the regional GESI focal points. WVC-based Grant Manager, in coordination with the Gender Technical Specialist, and the Protection and Inclusion specialist, will provide oversight and accountability for GESI implementation, monitoring and updating.

Resources will be adequately budgeted for the implementation of GESI-focused activities including the provision of accessible materials in Braille, audio and sign language for YR PWD participants.

7. CONTRIBUTION TO GAC'S FEMINIST INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE POLICY (FIAP) AND OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES IN THE 10 YR COUNTRIES

- The Youth Ready Program is enhancing the protection and promotion of the human rights of women and girls enshrined in laws and policies in YR Countries. This includes laws related to Gender equality and equal opportunities, Violence against women, Laws on persons with disabilities and laws addressing discrimination on various grounds with its focus on increased agency, economic empowerment, and psychosocial well-being of in-school and out-of-school adolescents and youth living in vulnerable communities.
- Colombia presented its international feminist policy, within the framework of the development plan, on March 15 of this year, in NY, within the framework of the 68th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, aimed at promoting and guaranteeing gender equality in the country's foreign policy at the bilateral and multilateral levels. Likewise, Colombia will be part of the Project "Strengthening Feminist Foreign Policy and International Feminist Cooperation, approved by the Fund for Triangular Cooperation in Latin America. There are also a number of laws promoting the equality of women and punishing any forms of violence.
- El Salvador: Currently, at the national level, there are laws guaranteeing rights for persons with disability, prohibiting violence against women and protecting women's rights and gender equality.
- The Tanzanian government has repealed the order enacted in 2017 that prevent pregnant and married girls from continuing their secondary school education. This magnificent socio-political change occurred following a landmark case in 2022 was ruled that girls who are pregnant, married and mothers should be allowed to return and/or continue their education at and to any level they desire.

The project recognizes and addresses the various ways women, girls and youths with disabilities experience inequality and discrimination in accessing, participating and benefiting from education, economic, and employment opportunities. Its strategy is specifically aligned with three of the six action areas of the FIAP: Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls (action area 1), Human Dignity (action area 2), Growth that Works for Everyone (action area 3) through its strong emphasis and investment in women and girls' leadership, economic empowerment and meaningful participation in decision-making processes at household, community, district and provincial levels.

Youth Ready will achieve the following under these action areas:

- a. Improved access to equal and safer environments for girls, women and PWDs access to education, economic, and employment opportunities
- b. Improved education, economic and employment levels for women and girls; provides opportunities for diverse groups of adolescents and young people facing multiple forms of vulnerabilities in employment, entrepreneurship, and education.
- c. Creating inclusive environments that prioritize gender equality and social inclusion and offer access to health services, education, business initiatives, and employment opportunities for female and male adolescents and young people experiencing multiple forms of vulnerabilities.