

## GENDER ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN

GENDER ASSESSMENT
<p><b>Gender mainstreaming category:</b> gender equity theme</p>
<p><b>1. Key issues.</b> Since Independence, the Republic of Tajikistan has included gender development in the political, social, and economic spheres. The Constitution of Tajikistan sets the principle of equality between women and men, and guarantees equal rights based on sex (Article 17), and principles of nondiscrimination are enshrined in basic legislation such as the Family Code, the Land Code, the Criminal Code, the Law on Education, and the Law on Public Health. Recent legislation includes the State Program for the education, selection and placement of talented women and girls to management position over periods 2007–2016, 2017–2022 and, 2023–2030, as well as the National Strategy for Enhancing the Role of Women in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2021–2030.</p> <p>While the Tajikistan poverty rate decreased from 83% to 26.3% between 2000 and 2019, certain non-monetary poverty indicators remain high, particularly in rural areas where only 36% of the population has access to safe drinking water. The challenge remains to ensure the youth have productive job opportunities, including equitable opportunities for women in particular, who often confront harmful traditional gender norms that limit their opportunities for productive employment.</p> <p>There is a low level of participation of women in legislative bodies of state authorities, and a small number of women in senior positions in the executive branch. In general, women are entrusted with authority in the socio-cultural aspects. The lack of representation in the authorities' structures and decision-making suggests that there are still problems related to women's empowerment. The proportion of women in managerial positions is 14.8%. Participation of women in the Parliament is 23.8%. Women represent 25% of the total number of civil servants and 20% of them are in manager positions. In accordance with the State Program for the education, selection, and placement of talented women and girls to management positions, it is planned to increase the number of women among civil servants to 30% and among managers to 25% by 2030. Gender gap in the labor market is significant. Women account for only 12.5% of total employers and the LFPR among females is 30.2% and among males is 50.5% in 2021. Tajikistan's 21.5% gender LFPR gap is higher than the average for low-income countries.</p> <p>Rapid population growth, in addition to many other problems, means classrooms are in short supply. Due to insufficiency of physical infrastructure the majority (84%) of city and rural comprehensive schools operate in two shifts, 1.7% in three shifts and only 15% in one shift (2021). In Khatlon region 90% of schools operate in two shifts. One shift education is mostly found only in primary schools, and most of them in rural areas. In addition, one shift education is also found in private schools, gymnasiums, and lyceums. In some schools, especially in primary schools, the number of pupils in classes is higher than the norm, ranging from 40 to 60. Other problems include the low level of sanitation and water supply mostly in rural educational institutions and lack of heating systems, except for the capital Dushanbe. These factors are barriers to access to education as well as to the provision of quality education services.</p> <p>At all levels of general education there is a gender imbalance in favor of boys, which reflects the population imbalance. However, the imbalance becomes exacerbated particularly after grade 4: in grades 1–4, there is generally no dropout of either boys or girls and dropouts begin from grade 4. The absolute gender gap, by grade, has shown an increasing trend in recent years, especially in grades 1 and 11. The gender gap in grades 6–8 has also widened year on year, and in grades 3 and 5, the gender gap has been decreasing year on year. In grades 2, 4 and 10, the gender gap initially widened but has diminished slightly from AY2020/21 to AY2021/22. Data on the age range of pupils show that the older the pupils are, the fewer of them are enrolled in school, implying that older students no longer see a place for themselves in formal education. Dropout of pupils from school is also noted during the school year, not only between grades. In-year dropout rates for all students are quite high (5.1% from grade 9 and 7.5% from grade 11), give cause for concern, and should be investigated further for the reasons behind them. Interestingly, while the dropout for girls from grade 9 is almost double that for boys, the reverse is seen in grade 11, where girls' dropout stands at 3.3% whereas for boys it is higher at 4.3%. Perhaps the higher threshold for girls to enter grade 10 and 11 mitigates the reasons for dropout, and girls are more likely to complete the grade. While the gender imbalance in enrollment in primary and secondary basic education (grades 1–9) is 4%, the gender imbalance in grades 10–11 is on average 8%. According to UNESCO, 26% of girls and 10% of boys at the ages of upper secondary school do not receive education or vocational training. Only 85% of boys and 66% of girls continue to grade 10. 74% of boys compared to 50% of girls complete secondary school.</p> <p>Nationwide, women make up 73% of the education sector. Female teachers make up 62.2% of the total number of teachers in the country, male teachers 37.7%. In the total number of comprehensive day schools (3,940), there are 128,456 teachers, 79,999 of whom are women (data 2022). The percentage of female teachers in secondary general education ranges from 56 % in Khatlon to 67% in Sughd. 31.6% (40,599 in 2022) of teachers work in grades 1–4 in primary school and 68% (87,857 in 2022) of teachers work in grades 5–11. The main STEM teachers are</p>

concentrated in grades 5–11. According to MOES statistics, the number of STEM teachers is 32,408 – 37% of all teachers in grades 5–11. There are more men than women STEM teachers (15,599 are women and 16,809 are men).

According to the World Bank, an average of 339 pupils use one toilet. While most schools reported having separate sanitation facilities for boys and girls, only 1% of schools had closed tanks for menstrual hygiene waste disposal and only 2% of schools had water in girls' menstrual hygiene stalls. This probably affects girls' school attendance, especially in higher grades, resulting in lower performance and increased dropout rates for girls. Only 3% of schools have separate toilets for PWD.

**2. Key actions.** Gender promotional and gender-responsive outputs are focused but not limited to output 5. Every aspect of the project has taken into the account gender-related issues, including careers guidance and education that is focused on girls and their families, identification of students at-risk of dropout, special IT training courses for girls, etc., as outlined below.

The project will: (i) support improving learning environment through upgrading infrastructure and adding learning spaces for selected schools, with sex-segregated WASH facilities, and energy-saving and disaster-resilient buildings and facilities; construct laboratory facilities by adding a STEM block comprising biology, chemistry and physics laboratories, informatics rooms and STEM project and multipurpose activity workspaces (to encourage integration of mathematics, sciences, geography and engineering activities) with adequate water supply, drainage, ventilation system. New facilities and equipment (including technical handicrafts) will be accessed by all students, irrespective of gender; (ii) upgrade selected dormitories for female students at TSPU and DPC with internet connection and ICT rooms. (iii) provide scholarships to 600 female students, stipends to 600 girls to remain in school at the transition from grade 9 to grade 11 and 50 research assistantships for in-service secondary school female STEM teachers; (iv) develop and provide English training for 1,000 secondary school STEM teacher trainers, teachers and teacher candidates while prioritizing females; (v) provide elective ICT courses for 1,000 STEM teacher candidates on data analysis, programming, and e-learning material development, by prioritizing females; (vi) encourage and provide career re-entry orientation and mentoring for 300 women teachers who wish to resume teaching again after raising a family; (vii) provide 200 hours per year of selective STEM classes, including extra-curricular activities and courses for girls on reproductive health, at the project-targeted secondary schools; and (viii) provide career guidance service and soft skills training for students to encourage and motivate especially girl students to follow STEM subjects.

The project will train 450 STEM teachers and teacher trainers (45% female) as well as 3,500 pre-service STEM teacher trainees (55% female) on the skills-based education approach, subject(s) knowledge, formative assessment, and the practical application of science and ICT laboratories and technology. It also includes activities for strengthening peer-learning mechanisms for teachers by developing 40 lead teachers (50% female) on STEM subjects and subject blocks, and implementing classroom-based mentoring and monitoring.

**3. Key implementation arrangements.** The project will recruit an organization for Gender Empowerment, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI), and Design and Implementation of Gender and Career Awareness-raising, and identification of students at-risk of drop-out together with an International Specialist for GEDSI. A National Specialist for Gender Empowerment (GE) will also be recruited to guide and work with the PAG, the selected institutions, and the project consultants to ensure all gender-related activities are implemented as planned. The PAG will include a gender officer with responsibility to monitor and report all gender-related activities and outputs. A gender focal person will be identified in each selected institution and will report quarterly to the PAG and GEDSI/GE specialists on gender and social issues. The GEDSI/GE specialists will liaise with the procurement team to ensure that all contracts for civil works contain clauses on training and labor protection (including SEAH) for women employed onsite, as well as provision of sex-segregated facilities for male and female workers. A total of \$8 million (20% of the total project funding) will be applied to support the specific activities in this GAAP.

**4. Negative impact and risks.** No adverse gender-related impacts or risks are envisaged as a result of the project activities. There is a risk that the gender gap between male and female teachers may widen somewhat as teaching is already a sector with many more females than males, and the project is anticipated to increase the numbers of female STEM teachers.

**5. Monitoring and reporting.** The GEDSI/GE specialists will guide the gender focal persons at the selected institutions on the format and procedures for monitoring and reporting (quarterly, semiannual and annual) gender-specific issues, including progress, results achieved, resource allocations, setbacks/obstacles to achievement, mitigating measures applied and any issues arising.

#### GENDER ACTION PLAN

Performance Indicators (activities and targets)	Contract Package Number	Responsibility	Timelines
<b>Outcome Learning outcome of secondary education students on STEM subjects and their preparedness for tackling climate change impacts developed</b>			

a. 42% of grade 9 completers (43% F) reached at least basic level of competency in applying sciences and mathematics knowledge to real world situations		PAG, Survey team, PISF	Q1.2024- Q2.2029
b. At least 50% of grade 9 female completers assessed at school with IT competency and are aware of basic climate change resilience practices		PAG, Survey team, PISF	Q1.2024- Q2.2029
c. At least 1 percentage point higher of grade 11 students (at least 0.5 percentage point higher for girls) chose to apply for Cluster 1 in the national entrance exams for higher education		PAG, PISF, NTC	Q2.2029
<b>Output 1: Quality of STEM education improved.</b>			
1a.1. 22 (i.e., 20+2) digital libraries on STEM subjects (containing minimum 32 gender-responsive items per grade and subject) items per grade and subject).		PAG, PISF, TSPU, DPC	Q2.2024 – Q2.2029
1a.2. All STEM teachers in the project schools can carry out formative assessment in class tests and can guide the practical application of science and ICT in the school laboratories.			
1a.3. Updated STEM teaching and learning materials for grades 5-11, based on the skills-based education approach and gender sensitivity.		PAG, PISF, TSPU, DPC, GE consultants	Q2.2024- Q2.2026 Q2.2025
1a.4. All STEM teachers and students have access to the updated gender-sensitive teaching and learning materials			
1b.1. 450 teachers and teacher trainers of STEM subjects (45% F) trained in gender-sensitive skills-based education approach.		PAG, PISF, TSPU, DPC	Q2.2024 – Q2.2029
<b>Output 2: Learning environment improved</b>			
2a.1 Infrastructure of 15 selected schools upgraded, renovated and equipped in a safe and climate-resilient manner, in compliance with gender-sensitive requirements, including gender-segregated WASH facilities to improve STEM learning environment for female students and teachers, including those living with disabilities.		PAG, DSF, MOES CD	Q3.2024- Q3.2025
<b>Output 3: School-level management strengthened</b>			
3a.1. SIS enabled with functions to report on individual students' attendance, dropout and learning results		PAG, GE & SIS consultants	Q4.2024
3a.2. Gender capacity of involved institutions strengthened.		GE consultants, PAG	Q2.2024-
3a.3. 10 MOES staff and 26 local education department staff (50% F), 20 school heads and 100 STEM teachers (40% F) trained on reporting and analyzing SIS data based on new functions		PAG, GE consultants, SIS consultants	Q1.2025
<b>Output 4. Climate change education and disaster resilience capacity enhanced</b>			
4a.1. Developed 5 gender-responsive climate change modules curriculum materials for climate change education. All materials disseminated.		PAG, PISF, CCES, TSPU, DPC	Q3.2024- 2025
4a.2. Conducted survey students and teachers (60%F) on understanding of climate change			Q3.2024
4b.1. 450 STEM teachers and teacher trainers (45% F) trained on climate change knowledge and practices and delivery of climate change education.		PAG, PISF, DSF, TSPU, DPC, CCMS	Q4.2025
4b.2. All staff of schools and students (50%F) trained on disaster resilience and basic ideas of climate change adaptation action.			
4b.3. Students and teachers arrange and implement community events on climate change issues (50% of participants and presenters female)		All selected schools, teachers and students, PAG	Q2.2025, then bi-annually
4d.1. 5 representative schools reconstructed and/or added of STEM blocks and sex-segregated WASH facilities compliant with climate change risk and disaster-risk resilience including seismic proofing requirements.		PAG, DSF, MOES CD	Q3.2024- Q3.2025

4e.1. 80 community awareness-raising events on climate change held (50% audience are F)		All selected schools, teachers and students, PAG	Q2.2025, then bi-annually
<b>Output 5. Female-friendly STEM education system promoted.</b>			
The output will produce a pipeline of school female teachers on STEM and orient schoolgirls' focus on STEM studies and future career paths for STEM-related professions			
5a.1. Career orientation strategy and institutional plan for female STEM teacher candidates and students developed (CEG strategy for delivery to students starting in grade 5). 5a.2. Training modules on CEG developed and delivered to STEM teacher candidates and students (50% F) 5a.3. Developed an awareness-raising campaign aimed at parents of grades 5–11 students with an emphasis on broader life opportunities for girls to study and enter the world of work. 5a.4. Campaign program developed. 5a.5. Initiatives groups (IG) <sup>1</sup> established with 3-5 potential female leaders in all project facilities. 5a.6. Campaigns conducted in TSPU, DPC, all selected schools: (i) community meetings, (ii) distribution of brochures and leaflets, (iii) development and airing of at least 3 kinds of multimedia public service advertisement and their publication in newspapers and other print media. 5a.7 At least 50% of female participated and received distribution materials		PAG, GFP in TSPU and DPC, GE consultants, TSPU, DPC, NGO	Q2.2024- Q2.2025  Q3.2025-  Q3.2025 Repeat Annually
5b.1 16 new labs and learning spaces reconstructed or built, 2 WASH facilities built, and 2 female dormitory buildings renovated at TSPU and DPC 5b.2. Provide support for establishing gender-sensitive and - responsive STEM programs in TSPU and DPC.		PAG, DSF, MOES CD, GE consultants	Q3.2024- Q2.2025
5c.1. Provided scholarships for 600 newly enrolled female students to increase the enrollment of female students specialized in STEM linking to learning results and to their teaching practice at secondary schools. 5c.2. Provide 50 research assistantships for in-service secondary school female teachers to strengthen their continuous professional development in experiments and ICT.		PAG, GE consultants , TSPU and DPC,	Q4.2024- 2029
5d.1 Developed and conducted ICT-based women's leadership course with mentorship from a network of female education leaders. 5d.2. 1,000 female teachers and teacher candidates trained, and the network established. 5d.3. 2,000 secondary school female students from grade 9 to 11 trained by female school teachers on reproductive health, rights, and SEAH. 5d.4. Training modules developed, 450 STEM teachers and teacher trainers (45% F) trained. 5d.5. Management of selected schools trained on leadership and gender inclusiveness		PAG, GE consultants , TSPU and DPC,	Q4.2024- 2029  Q1.2025
5e.1. Develop ICT short courses for STEM teacher trainees, including soft skills related to the domains promoting female IT jobs. 5e.2. Strengthened capacity in ICT and English language for STEM subjects of 1,000 teachers of the selected schools and teacher candidates (52% F). 5e.3. Developed measures and a campaign to retain women teachers. 5e.4. Initiated childcare services		PAG, GE, consultants	Q1.2025 Q1.2026
Monitoring matrix established Monitoring and reporting conducted		GE consultants, PAG, M&E	Q3.2024 Quarterly

CCES = climate change education specialist, CCMS = climate change mitigation specialist, CD = construction department, CEG = careers education and guidelines, DPC = Dushanbe Pedagogical College, DSF = design and supervision firm, GAP = gender action plan, GFP = gender focal point, GE= gender empowerment specialists, GEDSI = gender empowerment, disability, and social inclusion, ICT= information and communication technology, LFPR = labor force participation rate, M&E = monitoring and evaluation, MOES = Ministry of Education and Science, NGO = non-governmental organization, PAG = project administration group, PISF = project implementation support firm, PWD = people with disabilities, Q = quarter, SEAH = sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment, STEM = science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, SIS = school information system, TSPU = Tajik State Pedagogical University, WASH = water, sanitation, and hygiene.

<sup>1</sup> Establish initiative group with members of the schools (including parents) and institutions, this activity needs for establish coordination and communication mechanisms to strengthening GAP.

<sup>2</sup> GEDSI specialists will provide the necessary support for GAP implementation, as key mechanism including develop gender policy, career plan, orientation, and trainings, coordinate the NGO activities. These specialists will be involved in the whole period of implementation the GAP.

<sup>3</sup> Engage an NGO with strong gender capacity- experienced NGO will help achieve project goals to improve the STEM activities, strengthening capacity of pilot schools and TSPU/ and DPC through conduct series trainings and awareness campaign. NGO will involve for the period of implementation GAP on trainings and campaign. Preferably, engaged local NGO should be a residence of cities of the project activities.

Source: Asian Development Bank.