



TECHNICAL FACTSHEET

Advancing Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

Our Approach

Global Communities recognizes that gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) are vital to realizing **human rights**, achieving sustainable development goals, and delivering effective humanitarian assistance. We are committed to advancing **dignity, equity, and inclusion** and these principles are firmly embedded in our mission. We envision a world of expanded opportunity, where **women and girls, youth, and marginalized populations** have the voice, choice, and resources they need to thrive and where they enjoy freedom from discrimination and violence. We employ both **cross-cutting** and **gender-specific** interventions to foster GESI and ensure that all community members can safely and equitably participate in and benefit from our programs. First, we strive to **integrate GESI** across all programs. Second, we implement **women- and youth-centered programs** to promote their leadership, economic empowerment, and civic engagement; advance their health and well-being; and address gender-based violence. And third, we **engage men and boys** in gender-transformative interventions that challenge unequal gender norms and power dynamics.

Integrating Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Across Programs

Global Communities designs **gender-responsive** and **inclusive** programs which center the diverse needs and priorities of women and girls, youth, and marginalized populations. To this end, we facilitate participatory processes, such as **GESI analyses and action planning**, to identify and **reduce normative, cognitive, and material barriers** they face in accessing essential **services** and commodities, such as nutritious foods, healthcare, productive assets, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH). We also facilitate their meaningful **participation and leadership** in governance and the private sector. Central to our approach is capitalizing on their unique insights and abilities and engaging them as confident decision-makers, professionals, and **agents of change**.

Promoting Women's Empowerment through Savings Groups

Global Communities' signature **Women Empowered (WE)** initiative is a global **savings group program** designed to promote financial inclusion and gender equality. In WE groups, 15–25 members come together to save money, access credit, and invest in income-generating activities. WE groups improve women's access to information and **resources**, strengthen their **skills**, and enhance their **agency**, including self-esteem and decision-making power. WE groups also promote women's **leadership and collective action**. Developed in 2008, WE builds on the proven Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) methodology with the spirit of continuous **adaptation** and **innovation**. In addition to the core curriculum, WE incorporates novel approaches to transform harmful gender norms, advance inclusion in oral communities, and champion digital transformation.

Since 2008, WE has supported more than 10,000 savings groups, reaching over 250,000 people, mostly women (89%), in 15 countries across the Americas and sub-Saharan Africa. Cumulatively, our WE groups have saved over \$7,400,000 and loaned over \$6,600,000.

Enhancing Women’s and Girls’ Economic Participation

Global Communities blends GESI with a **market-based approach** to promote women’s **entrepreneurship** and **workforce participation**. First, we improve access to in-demand life skills, financial literacy, and vocational training. For example, we implement **P.A.C.E. (Personal Advancement and Career Enhancement) curriculum** in partnership with Gap Inc. Second, we offer business support and training to women entrepreneurs and women-owned enterprises. And third, we advance women’s leadership and meaningful participation in value chains, including climate-resilient agriculture.

Investing in Women’s and Girls’ Health

Global Communities has worked to improve women’s and girls’ health for over seven decades. We specialize in strengthening primary health systems and promoting equitable access to healthcare, with a focus on advancing **maternal, newborn, and child health and nutrition (MNCHN)** and increasing uptake of **HIV prevention, care, and treatment services**. For example, our **DREAMS (Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored, and Safe)** interventions for adolescent girls and young women improve access to sexual and reproductive health services and incorporate violence prevention. We also employ **social and behavioral change** strategies to promote improved **health, nutrition, and hygiene practices**.

Strengthening the Prevention of and Protection from Violence, Conflict and Exploitation

Global Communities implements trauma-informed and conflict-sensitive approaches to prevent and mitigate the risks of **gender-based violence**, including **intimate partner violence, child marriage** and **human trafficking**. We engage women and men in peer learning and counseling to build empathy

and transform unequal gender norms. We work with communities to raise awareness and address root causes of violence. We also provide **protection services** to women, children, and vulnerable populations affected by conflicts and natural disasters. This includes legal and psychosocial support, case management, referrals, in-kind distributions, and cash transfers.

Engaging Men and Transforming Gender Norms

Across the globe, women face profound normative barriers to their well-being and socioeconomic participation. To address this challenge, Global Communities employs **gender-transformative interventions for couples** that **shift unequal gender norms** and power dynamics present in their relationships. These interventions engage men as agents of change, promote **positive masculinities**, and encourage **gender-equitable relationships**, especially in such areas as decision-making, division of labor, and control over household resources. For example, between 2018 and 2021, Global Communities implemented **Engaging Fathers for Effective Child Nutrition and Development in Tanzania (EFFECTS)**. A recent study resulting from EFFECTS generated novel evidence that—with the right approach and resources—community health workers can deliver gender-transformative nutrition and parenting interventions to couples in low-resource community settings with potentially synergistic positive effects on household gender relations and maternal and child well-being. In addition, Global Communities has partnered with Equimundo to implement **Journeys of Transformation (JOT)**—a gender-transformative intervention for WE members and their male partners. In **Guatemala**, the intervention improved communication between partners, led to more equitable division of labor at home, and significantly reduced acceptance of intimate partner violence.

Our Global Commitments

Global Communities is a proud **member** of the Coalition for Women’s Economic Empowerment and Equality, the Coalition for Adolescent Girls, Girls not Brides, Mobility International USA, and the Coalition for Racial & Ethnic Equity in Development. We are a **signatory** to the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-based Violence in Emergencies and the InterAction CEO Pledge on Preventing Sexual Abuse, Exploitation, and Harassment by and of NGO Staff.