

# Working Procedure for disabilities inclusion in SAKSHAM Project



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## 1. Background

LI-BIRD is a non-profit and non-governmental organization established in 1995 in Pokhara, Nepal. LI-BIRD is committed to capitalising on local initiatives for sustainable management of renewable natural resources to improve the livelihoods of rural poor and marginalised farmers, especially women. LI-BIRD continues to work along the research development commitment, and has contributed to several innovative methodologies and approaches for participatory research and development through partnerships in development-oriented research in agriculture, forestry, climate change, biodiversity, and natural resources management. It has generated impacts that have enhanced the livelihoods of rural poor and marginalised farmers through appropriate technological, social and policy changes. The impact group of LI-BIRD basically includes smallholder farmers, especially women and youths, who depend on agriculture, biodiversity and natural resources for their livelihoods. The organization targets communities in highly food deficit rural areas; women and youths, especially aspirant and returnee migrants; climate-vulnerable and disaster-prone communities; landless and land poor communities; and farmers living in rural-urban interface and road corridor areas.

LI-BIRD is implementing a project entitled 'Strengthening Capacity of Smallholder Farmers for Resilient Livelihoods (SAKSHAM)', funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland through FELM Nepal, in Kanchanpur and Doti districts of Nepal. The SAKSHAM Project aims to improve livelihoods and well-being of marginal and climate

vulnerable families in Kanchanpur and Doti districts of Sudurpaschim Province, Nepal through organizing and capacitating beneficiaries, providing skills, resources and collaborating with local governments and other key stakeholders to create an environment to access support and services. The project also expects to improve and diversify food and nutrition security and create income opportunities for the targeted communities and improve climate change adaptation and disaster risk management capacities of communities in these two districts. The Project works with resource poor, marginal and landless, Freed Kamaiya, People with Disabilities (PWD), returnee migrant, single women and smallholder farming households primarily living below the poverty line. Among them, people with disabilities are one of the important target beneficiaries of this project. Out of a total 3673 beneficiary HHs, the project has identified 297 HHs having PwDs.

Most of the PwDs identified in the project area have poor nutritional status, food insecurity, poverty, and less economic participation than people without disabilities. In addition, the person with disabilities are experiencing barriers in access to quality basic food and opportunities for livelihood related services. Agriculture operation is difficult for them, and there is a lack of other income generation opportunities in rural areas. So, inclusion of disabilities in food security, climate change and disaster risk reduction, and livelihood related programmes is very crucial to improve their intra-household status as well as economic empowerment. Undoubtedly, Food Security, CCA/DRR and Agricultural Livelihood Programmes provide an opportunity to meet the nutritional needs



of persons with disabilities and improve their access to agricultural produce and productivity by improving the skills, capacity, ability, assets and resources required to make a living surviving from agriculture activities. To meet their dietary diversity and food preferences for an active and healthy life, there is the need for availability of nutritious and safe food at all times.

## 2. Rationale

The Person with Disabilities (PwDs) are facing specific risks and barriers to accessibility and inclusion. Their inclusion makes inclusive economic sense. They are among the most marginalized and vulnerable groups of the communities. They are denied and deprived of the basic human rights of inclusive education, employment of their own choice, participation in social life, contribution in livelihood, and many more. They face double discrimination which hinders them to meet their full potential as human beings. The inputs and services they are receiving to acquire a quality and dignified life are quite insufficient yet. The situation of PwDs in the rural setting is even more challenging where individuals struggle for their identity and acceptance from families and society with limited physical, financial, and human resources. According to census 2022, a total of 2.5% and 2.7% of the total population in Doti and Kachanpur districts have some kind of disabilities. A total of 3% men and 2.2% women of the total population in Krishnapur Municipality and a total of 4.6% men and 3.8% women in Laljhadi Rural Municipality in Kanchanpur district have some kind of disabilities whereas a total of 3.6% men and 2.2% women of the total population in Joroyal Rural Municipality in Doti district have some kind of disabilities. For addressing the above-mentioned barriers and

challenges, the SAKSHAM Project feels the need of developing the working procedure on how to support and include the PwDs in the planned project interventions.

## 3. Project design

At the project design stage, the project focused on the project implementation area with a more detailed targeting and social inclusion strategy. Three main activities are planned for this stage:

### 1) Conduct a context analysis on disability responsive scenario

The project design team conducted a context analysis on a disability-responsive scenario involving thorough exploration of various factors with respect to disability inclusion within the geographical area where the project is being implemented. An assessment on data and information gathering needs to be carried out to understand the scenario.

#### Data on Persons with Disabilities

The project team collected data on the number and demographics of persons with disabilities in the project implementation area. This supports understanding the type of disabilities and their specific needs and challenges.

#### Poverty and Food Insecurity Data

The project team analysed poverty and food insecurity data, focusing on marginalised communities such as women, men, indigenous peoples, and children with disabilities based on the secondary information received by local government. The project team understood the unique challenges they face in accessing resources and opportunities.

## **Barriers to Participation**

The project team identified the needs, risks, and barriers faced by persons with disabilities in participating in project activities. This included assessing local attitudes and perceptions towards disability, as well as physical, institutional, and communication barriers that hinder their inclusion.

## **Livelihoods and Economic Opportunities**

The project team evaluated the livelihoods and economic opportunities available to persons with disabilities in the project area. Assessed past and ongoing government programs and initiatives, as well as interventions by other development partners, aimed at promoting disability inclusion and economic empowerment.

## **Existence of Disability Organizations**

The project team determined the existence and capacity of organizations of persons with disabilities in the project area. Assessed their roles, activities, and capacity needs in advocating for the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities.

## **Ad-Hoc Disability Responsive Assessment**

The project team considered conducting ad-hoc disability-responsive poverty and social assessments when more in-depth information is needed. These assessments can provide valuable insights into the specific challenges and opportunities faced by persons with disabilities in the project context.

To collect above mentioned information, the project used several data sources such as secondary data and interviews and focus group discussions in the project implementation area to complement secondary data. These activities can be conducted using semi-structured interviews and other participatory tools. Besides, the project carried out an ad-hoc disability responsive poverty and social assessment when the project was in need of more in-depth information. By synthesizing information from these various sources and analyses, the project can gain a comprehensive understanding of the context and develop targeted interventions and strategies to promote disability inclusion and empowerment within the project implementation area.

## **II) Develop inclusion strategy for persons with disabilities**

This activity includes the following issues which are: allocate a budget for inclusion as well as noting down data on persons with disabilities in planning, monitoring and evaluation, staff involved in the programme should be trained, Identified persons with disabilities in programme, work to remove the attitudinal, environmental and institutional barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from participating and work together as government, disability-specific service providers, organisations of persons with disabilities etc.

While developing the inclusion strategy for persons with disabilities, the following steps were taken:



Figure 1: Steps in developing the inclusion strategy for persons with disabilities

#### **a) Setting targets for inclusion of persons with disabilities**

The project included persons with disabilities as a target group (a total of 297 persons with disabilities including HHs of persons with disabilities) and prioritized them who have the potential to take advantage of improved access to assets and opportunities for agricultural production and rural income generating activities. They might either already be involved in agricultural production and rural income generating activities or might have the potential to do so. The project has set specific targets for the inclusion of persons with disabilities. When setting targets, intersectional dimensions, such as sex (M-69 and F- 228), age (<24- 15 and >24- 282), types of disabilities (deaf blind-7, haemophobia-1, hearing-35, vision-31, voice and speech-28, mental-22, multiple-9 and physical-164) and severity of disabilities ( A-6, B-24, C-30 and D-14 as per the types of card) which are being targeted in this project.

#### **b) Defining selection criteria and identifying persons with disabilities**

Project developed selection criteria to ensure the participation of them by adding a clause to the selection criteria that states that persons with disabilities and their support persons get priority to participate. The project allocated a minimum 10% of participation in the management committee of cooperatives, DRR structure and producer groups. Moreover, the project included at least 10% PWD in technical, vocational, and entrepreneurship skill training, increased access on credit at lower interest rates than other people and provided inputs (seeds, materials, tools, planting materials) to them free of cost in comparison to others who pay 25% amount of the total investment cost for seeds and materials. It can be difficult to identify persons with disabilities due to issues of stigma or shame. Identification can involve self-reporting of disability. The key informant interviews, use of social protection schemes run by the government, community-based targeting or using proxies can be other methods to identify the persons with disabilities.

### **c) Planning activities for ensuring inclusion**

In this step, the project followed some of the following measures and methods that are enabling measures, empowerment and capacity-building measures, self-targeting measures and direct targeting. Enabling measures include measures to create and sustain a policy and operational environment favourable to disability inclusion. Capacity building measures should be applied to empower and encourage active participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities in planning and decision-making. Considering the heterogeneity and diverse priorities of persons with disabilities, activities need to be designed around their priorities and livelihood constraints. Persons with disabilities can also be targeted directly, especially for skills development, self-employment and wage employment.

### **d) Defining disability inclusive friendly monitoring and evaluation**

The project formulated indicators (See Annex III) to measure whether persons with disabilities are able to access services or be part of the project or activities. For this, the project collected disability disaggregated data at the beginning stage of the project.

**e) Ensuring accessibility:** Accessibility consists of multiple interconnected dimensions that together contribute to building a fully accessible and inclusive environment. Those dimensions include the built environment, information and communication, including ICT and services. The project is working on these mentioned dimensions gradually by developing the ICT materials in braille etc.

### **f) Budgeting for disability inclusion**

The project allocated financial resources for disability inclusion in the budget of the project. Budget covered disability-targeted activities such as tailor-made training, capacity-development, and inputs and material support. The project has also allocated a budget for social mobilisation components including awareness-raising on disability-inclusion and budget for the recruitment of staff and resource persons capable of fulfilling specific terms of reference related to targeting persons with disabilities. In addition, the project has collaborated with local government and other line agencies to mainstream activities that focus on special needs of person with disability.

### **III) Linkage with persons with disabilities and their organisations**

The project consulted and included persons with disabilities and the organizations working with persons with disability at the project design stage to develop inclusive design, plan and programme to cater their needs. The project has identified and addressed the different barriers that constraint the capacity of the persons with disabilities by using the adequate disability sensitive methods like focus group discussion, key informant interview. The key identified barriers included: Negative attitude and social norms, lack of resources and capacity, lack of accessibility, lack of institutional commitments and political will and lack of data and evidence.

## **4. Project implementation and monitoring**

During the implementation phase, the project is monitoring the progress of disability-related project components and interventions at regular intervals.



This will allow us to verify whether the project continues to be responsive to the disability issues previously identified. In this regard, the following considerations have been made: Budget and time resources for disability-focused activities include in the annual work plan and budget, establish explicit and manageable objectives for actions addressing disability issues within the project context, specify the steps that must be taken to accomplish each objective, hold regular consultations with project staff to keep disability issues visible and to coordinate disability related project activities, provide training for project staff and service providers on disability issues if necessary, involve project participants, especially persons with disabilities in the process of providing feedback, monitoring and in developing indicators to assess implementation of disability-related objectives and assess progress in accomplishing objectives on a regular basis. Following example from SAKSHAM project is presented that should be majorly considered during the project implementation phase:

### **I) Project start-up**

The project organized a dedicated session of the project's start-up workshop on disability inclusion to ensure that the project staff and service providers are aware of the key concepts of disability inclusion and project's related commitments as stipulated at design.

### **II) Annual planning, budgeting and procurement**

The project has earmarked the costs for disabilities inclusion in the project's annual budget. Such as costs related to reducing or removing the barriers to inclusion for persons with disabilities, participation in and benefit from the projects and disability specific activities.

Furthermore, it is important to ensure PwDs friendly procurement processes that support to reduce the barriers to inclusion of persons with disabilities.

### **III) Build capacity of project staff and cooperative members on disability inclusion**

The capacity of project staff and cooperative members to address the priorities of persons with disabilities are strengthened continuously during the course of the project. This might include awareness raising campaigns as well as specific learning events, such as training and workshops. It is recommended that field staff and cooperative members should be familiar with the following topics: Right-based approaches to disability inclusion versus medical-model, disability-sensitive facilitation methods and disability-inclusive tools and approaches used by the project.

### **IV) Organising disability inclusive meetings**

The project is ensuring the participation of the persons with disabilities in the meetings and workshops organized by the project by analysing existing barriers and plan for adequate measures to address them.

### **V) Knowledge management and communication**

The project has allocated the budget for knowledge management and communication related activities such as ICE materials, flyers and booklets will be developed in appropriate design and language (Braille)

### **VI) Monitoring and evaluation**

The most widely tested tool to generate comparable data about persons with disabilities is the Washington Group Short Set of Disability Questions (WG-SS). These questions are important

because they identify persons with disabilities as per the human rights-based approach. The WG-SS in the project's baseline, outcome and end line surveys should be included.

### **VII) Supervision and mid-term review**

The project is monitoring progress in addressing disability issues identified during project planning which covered to monitor participation of persons with disabilities, to track disability-related project activities, to identify successful strategies or processes, to flag problems as they occur, and to make the necessary changes as the project developed.

### **VIII) Completion**

At the end of the project, a comprehensive disability inclusive report covering the good practices, key challenges, best approaches, lessons learned and recommendation should be developed for future disability-responsive projects.

## **5. Approaches for disabilities inclusion in SAKSHAM Project**

The project is promoting the process of disability inclusion focusing on targeting persons with disabilities by following approaches.

### **A. Targeting households of persons with disabilities**

The project is supporting to increase the income and improve family food security and nutrition of households of persons with disabilities is an important approach to ensure that the benefits of projects also accrue indirectly to persons with disabilities. Through this approach, the project is trying to engage the whole household while keeping the persons with disabilities, at the centre of the intervention, are likely to be more empowering than those that are focused on household-based targeting. A total

of 205 households of persons with disabilities have been identified in this project.

### **B. Targeting persons with disabilities**

The project has set a specific target in its logical framework to reach out to persons with disabilities. The project has made the necessary adjustments to include persons with disabilities as a priority target group, along with the identification of specific activities to target them. For this, the project identified PwD-friendly IGA and enterprises like goat farming, poultry farming, mushroom farming, vegetable farming, home gardening, nursery establishment and PwD-friendly technologies and tools like plastic house farming, shed improvement, drip irrigation, urine collection, bio-fertilizer, rakes, gloves, fruit harvester, agro-met advisory etc. The project is working with the types of persons with disabilities such as physical, limited vision, hearing, vision and hearing, and speech impairment directly. A total of 92 persons with disabilities have been identified in this project.

### **C. Identification and selection**

The project is adopting and operationalizing national definitions of disability to identify and engage with persons with disabilities in project's activities. Besides, the project has also used a combination of strategies for target selection of persons with disabilities. This includes using government records; consulting key informants in communities, such as health workers, social and community leaders; consulting already identified persons with disabilities and their organisations and using participatory community-based assessments. The government issued cards to disabled people in four colors. The project has decided to work with disabled persons

and their families as long as they had a card issued by the government (red, blue white or yellow) along with the family that was certified by the government as eligible for government support. The project directly works with persons with disabilities who have the white and yellow card and HHs of persons with disabilities who have the red and blue card. In order to be flexible, 75% of the beneficiary identification was done using cards, and another 25% beneficiaries were allowed based on community perception and selection.

The project used Washington Group Short Set of Questions (WGSS) which asks questions about six domains: vision, hearing, mobility, remembering and concentrating, self-care, and communication. The WGSS avoids asking restrictive “yes/no” questions by utilizing four response categories that are designed to capture the degree or severity of difficulty experienced including no difficulty, some difficulty, a lot of difficulty, and cannot do at all. The project front-line staff were oriented about this method and then, they followed this method to identify the person with disabilities.

#### D. Diverse needs and priorities

Persons with disabilities are a diverse group. The needs of persons with disabilities vary based on the type and severity of disabilities along with class, gender, age and ethnicity. The project tends to focus mostly on physical, limited vision, hearing, vision and hearing, and speech impairments which are the types of disabilities that are more easily identifiable, as well as more common in rural areas. Similarly, the project tends to direct focus on types of severity of the persons with disabilities who are under the group of GA and GHA. Moreover, the project tends to focus on households of persons with disabilities who are under the group of KA and KHA as per the categorization of the government of Nepal.

### 6. Framework for disability inclusion

The project follows the following framework while promoting the disabilities inclusion during the project planning, designing, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.

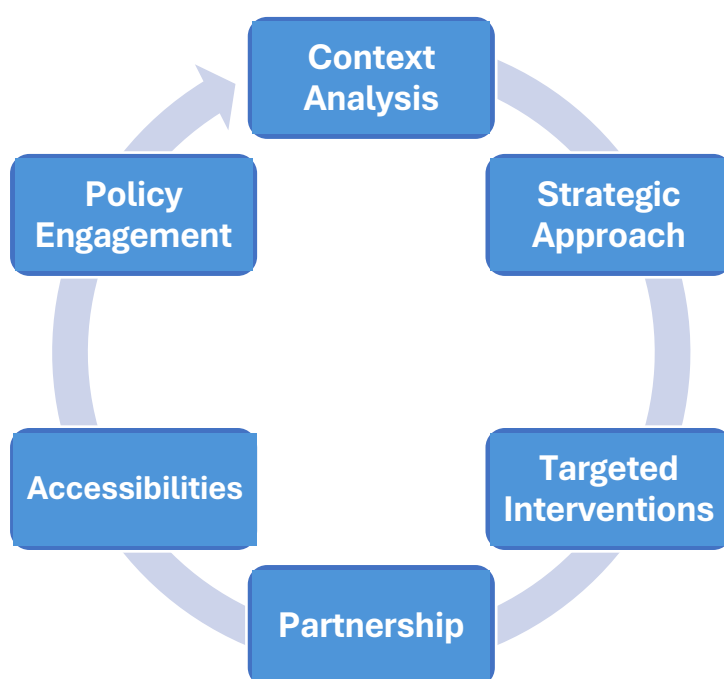


Figure 2: Framework of disabilities inclusion adopted by the project

## **I) Context analysis focusing on livelihood and poverty**

During this, the project consults with persons with disabilities and their organisations. It is very important to identify appropriate enabling institutional mechanisms and targeting measures that would enable them to overcome the obstacles they face. Besides, the specific risks and opportunities for disability inclusion in social, environmental and climate change and assessment processes would be assessed.

## **II) Strategic approach**

The project adopted a “Twin-Track Approach” which is a core element of strategy that seeks to mainstream disability inclusion successfully. The approach combines mainstream programmes that are inclusive of persons with disabilities and targeted interventions for persons with disabilities. Besides, promoting an enabling environment for disabilities inclusion by providing them with services and enhancing their capacities, increasing awareness among families, communities, and local governments on disabled person’s rights, promoting equal and meaningful participation of PwDs in household activities, group, cooperative, DRR management committee and community development level, ensuring meaningful participation of PwD in decision making at household, CBOs and community level, advocating with the local government to provide the identity card for ensuring the rights and entitlements of PwDs, coordinate with local government, other stakeholders, and local entities for collaborative work with PwDs are key strategic approach.

## **III) Targeted interventions**

The project applies the different types of interventions to target persons

with disabilities. These are mainly focused on supporting their economic empowerment and strengthening their food and nutrition security.

### **a) Entrepreneurship skill development**

The project has supported skills and enterprise development, both on- and off-farm, of persons with disabilities, awareness-raising and sensitization, training and capacity-development. The use of role models and peer learning has proven to be successful. Moreover, the project provided grant support to establish small scale enterprises at local level.

### **b) Access to rural finance**

The project has supported livestock promotion fund and seed fund to the local cooperatives through which persons with disabilities have also received financial support to set up their own businesses. In addition, the project has also provided grant support to targeted persons with disabilities and households of persons with disabilities to establish small scale enterprises in their localities. Moreover, the project has also facilitated the linkage meeting with financial institutions and private sectors that helps to increase access to rural finance. They are engaging in group-based saving and credit systems as well.

### **c) Food security and nutrition support**

The project is promoting home gardening activities in its working municipalities. The persons with disabilities and households of persons with disabilities have been targeted for home gardening through which the food and nutrition security of persons with disabilities and households of persons with disabilities are key. Activities to enhance food security and nutrition of persons with disabilities can include improved access to climate resilience cereal crops,

modified tools, and wider pathways to achieve both accessibility and functionality of persons with various disabilities in their vegetable and cereal crop cultivation. Through this support, the project aims to improve their food and nutrition security, as well as to gain some income from sales in the market.

#### **d) Livelihood planning approaches**

The project delivers dedicated family-based support to persons with disabilities and households of persons with disabilities. The approach has proven to successfully address the diverse and complex vision, speech and physical barriers that many persons with disabilities faced. The project also targeted about 10 percent of the households of persons with disabilities and persons with disabilities in working municipalities.

#### **e) Business skill, food systems and pro-poor value-chains**

The opportunities do exist to strengthen the participation of persons with disabilities in local food systems and pro-poor value chains. Persons with disabilities might play a role in specific, disability-friendly activities within the food system, such as processing, and/or sale of produce within their communities. Pro-poor poultry and goat value-chains have proven to be disability inclusive. These are home-based, easy to do and do not require physical mobility.

#### **f) Climate change adaptation**

For this, the project is strengthening the capacity of them in terms of climate change adaptation technologies and practices along with making the DRM structure more inclusive by ensuring their involvement in this structure so they can participate in decision making on local-level climate change adaptation activities.

#### **g) Awareness raising**

The project organizes the awareness raising event at group and cooperative level by mobilizing the trained project staff which is necessary. Through disability awareness, the misconceptions and stereotypes surrounding those with disabilities can be brought to the forefront. However, clear strategies and dedicated actions to raise awareness and address entrenched stigma in rural areas should be promoted by the project.

#### **IV) Partnerships**

The project is also working to establish partnerships with NGOs working on disability inclusion, organizations of persons with disabilities and government organizations in order to widen and deepen the disability inclusion efforts in working municipalities.

#### **V) Accessibility**

The project is working on disabilities friendly dimensions which include the built environment, information and communication, including ICT materials and services to ensure the accessibility of persons with disabilities.

#### **VI) Policy engagement**

The project is advocating to mainstream the needs and rights of persons with disabilities in the local government planning process. The project put the agenda for disability inclusion in the meetings with local municipalities. Persons with disabilities also participated in planning and budgeting meetings. The project facilitates them in making the disabilities inclusion friendly human resource policy, staff recruitment policy, communication policy, working environment in office premises, increase the access to government services easily etc.



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## 8. Annexes

### Annex I. Action Plan

S.N.	Key Action	Responsible person	Timeline
1.	Organize orientation on disability inclusion development to the project staff	TL	February
2.	Disaggregated data collection (Sex, Age, type and severity of PwDs)	TA/SM	March
3.	Orient the cooperative members on disability inclusion development	PO	March
4.	Identify the needs and priorities of targeted PwDs	PO/TA/SM	March
5.	Identify the potential interventions for inclusion of persons with disabilities	PO/TA/SM	March
6.	Identify the persons with disabilities friendly tools and technologies	PO/TA/SM	April
7.	Develop persons with disabilities friendly ICT materials	PO/TA/SM	April
8.	Organize monitoring visit targeting the persons with disabilities	TL	June
9.	Disaggregated data collection in terms of income generated by them	PO/TA/SM	November
10.	Organize interaction meeting with organizations working in the project area	TL	June
11.	Identify the key issues as agenda for advocacy	PO	June
12.	Sensitize the farmer groups on right of persons with disabilities	TA/SM	May
13.	Organize focus group discussion with persons with disabilities	PO/TA/SM	May
14.	Develop the working procedure for disabilities inclusion	TL	February
15.	Develop success stories on disabilities inclusion	PO/TA/SM	November

## **Annex II: Census Questions on Disability Endorsed by the Washington Group**

The next questions ask about difficulties you may have doing certain activities because of a health problem.

### **1. Do you have difficulty seeing, even if wearing glasses?**

- a. No - no difficulty
- b. Yes – some difficulty
- c. Yes – a lot of difficulty
- d. Cannot do at all

### **2. Do you have difficulty hearing, even if using a hearing aid?**

- a. No- no difficulty
- b. Yes – some difficulty
- c. Yes – a lot of difficulty
- d. Cannot do at all

### **3. Do you have difficulty walking or climbing steps?**

- a. No- no difficulty
- b. Yes – some difficulty
- c. Yes – a lot of difficulty
- d. Cannot do at all

### **4. Do you have difficulty remembering or concentrating?**

- a. No – no difficulty
- b. Yes – some difficulty
- c. Yes – a lot of difficulty
- d. Cannot do at all

### **5. Do you have difficulty (with self-care such as) washing all over or dressing?**

- a. No – no difficulty
- b. Yes – some difficulty
- c. Yes – a lot of difficulty
- d. Cannot do at all

### **6. Using your usual (customary) language, do you have difficulty communicating, for example understanding or being understood?**

- a. No – no difficulty
- b. Yes – some difficulty
- c. Yes – a lot of difficulty
- d. Cannot do at all

### Annex III: Key Indicators and Milestone

Milestones	Year			
	2022	2023	2024	2025
No. of PwD involved in baseline survey	300	0	0	0
No. of PwD involved in policies review and assessment process	10	0	0	0
No. of PwD involved in LDCRP preparation process	10	0	0	0
No. of PwD involved in capacity building event	10	75	75	50
No. of PwD involved in income generating activities	10	75	75	50
No. of PwD engaged in decision making positions of local entities (Cooperative, Farmer group, DRM structure etc.)	5	10	15	10
No. of PwDs who received services from local government	10	35	35	15
No. of PwD involved in entrepreneurship skill development		5	5	5
No. of PwD received technical training	1	5	5	5
No. of PwD participated in LPAC meeting and field visit made by LPAC committee	10	10	10	10
No. of PwD received seeds/tools/materials/services	55	110	110	25
No. of PwD improved their nutritional status	297	297	297	297
No. of PwD developed as an entrepreneur	0	5	5	5
No. of PwD received loan from cooperative	5	25	25	25
No. of PwD participated in workshop/meeting/training organized by the project	10	100	100	25
No. of PwD involved in reporting, monitoring and evaluation process	10	15	15	15

For more information



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