

Gender Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan

1. Gender Dimensions in Natural Resources Management

1. Ensuring that both men and women have the opportunity to equally participate in, and benefit from, this project is fundamental to project success, and can be realized through careful planning and mainstreaming gender dimensions throughout. Gender is relevant within all three project components - the SEPLS demonstration sites, as well as the project's capacity development and knowledge exchange activities. Given both the regional and cultural variation across the future project demonstration sites and among target audiences, it is clearly difficult to analyze specific gender issues in detail for the purposes of the plan. However, at this time, it is useful to highlight some key gender dimensions that are common in the natural resources management context, and which are indicative of many of the constraints and opportunities in ensuring gender equality within this project's three components. It should be noted that even within these two gendered social groups, there can be much variety (based on age, economic level, religion, education level, etc.) that influences the following dimensions.

2. **Roles, Responsibilities, Practices and Knowledge** - Men's and women's different roles, responsibilities and daily practices directly influence their uses of, and needs for, natural resources. For example, in coastal southwest Madagascar, men focus on ocean fishing while women harvest from reef flats and mangroves. As a result of these differences, men's and women's unique knowledge of and contribution to biodiversity conservation can be significant and quite varied. It is critical to understand the practices that men and women engage in, their roles, responsibilities and ecological knowledge, and integrate that into conservation management, ensuring that women's roles, knowledge, and needs for conservation are not overlooked or underestimated.

3. **Rights to, and access and control of, Resources and Assets** - In many societies, discriminatory customary and social practices curtail women's access to land and other resources and assets. For example, across much of Africa customary inheritance practices generally pass land from father to son, and despite legal protections, dictate that women who lose their husbands (widowed or left by the husband) also lose their land, which returns to the husband's family. Women often have *de facto* or use rights compared to men's *de jure* or ownership rights; this means that while women rely on the use of land they have little or no say in when it is sold. The depletion of common property resources affects both men and women, but with access often mediated by spouses, fathers or clan leaders, women, and especially household heads, are particularly disadvantaged. The ability to access ancestral lands and engage in traditional land use and agricultural practices can be important conditions for communities to maintain biodiversity and associated traditional knowledge.

4. **Capacity building and Information** – Evidence from different regions shows that men tend to dominate access to new technology, information and training related to natural resource management. Furthermore, male relatives often mediate women's access to information, markets and credit. In Vietnam, for example, women made up only 25 percent and 10 percent of participants in training programs on animal husbandry and on crop cultivation, respectively. In Cambodia, women were only 10 percent of extension beneficiaries (FAO, 2010). For these and other regions, common reasons include that research and extension services tend to focus on the tasks that males specialize in; problems with mobility and time to travel to district centers in order to access services; and difficulties for women in communicating face-to-face with mostly male staff. The choice of methods and materials that address these gender inequalities become important elements in mainstreaming plans.

5. **Decision-making Processes** – In contexts of highly unequal gender and class relations, achieving gender equality in participation in community-based decision-making can remain complex and difficult. Community-level participation can often fail to fully acknowledge the voices and concerns of women and marginal groups. Even when attending meetings, such groups may not feel free to voice their opinions, or feel that they are not taken seriously. Community participation can often be dominated by local elites, usually men, but sometimes elite women’s concerns directly conflict and override poor women’s access to resources. Decision-making at national and international levels on natural resources management and related issues generally continues to be dominated by men, despite efforts to mainstream gender at these levels of debate and policy-making. From community to national and international scales, it is clear that mainstreaming plans need to ensure more meaningful participation and decision-making by less powerful and under-represented groups, especially women.

2. Objectives and Outline

1. The objective of this gender mainstreaming plan is to outline specific actions that will be taken within the project to ensure that both men and women have the opportunity to equally participate in, and benefit from, the project. Along with the stakeholder engagement plan, this plan is part of the project’s commitment to equitable stakeholder participation. The plan takes into account that project activities cover a range of operational scales from communities to global agendas with components that fund field based implementation and broader knowledge management and capacity building. To best address project design and mainstreaming requirements the plan is divided into three parts: a) the first part covers the approach and measures for mainstreaming gender considerations into investments that support priority SEPLS as demonstration projects; b) the second part focuses on mainstreaming gender considerations into knowledge management, capacity building, dissemination and execution arrangements; and c) the third part provides information on developing monitoring and evaluation to include gender. Given the broad scope of the project in scale and target geographical areas, the plan seeks to be practical and meaningful in terms of both proposed measures and results.

3. Part 1. Gender Integration in Enhanced Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in Priority SEPLS through Investing in Demonstration Projects

1. Demonstration projects in priority SEPLS under Component 1 will be expected to mainstream gender in their proposed activities and operations. Each successful grant recipient will be required to prepare a gender-mainstreaming plan for approval by the CI-Project Agency with specific actions outlined that follows the guidelines in the ESMF and current good practice. Grant recipients will also need to ensure that there will be adequate technical and financial resources allocated to support the realizations of those actions. Social development expert/s within the executing partners will provide technical oversight and assistance for overall gender mainstreaming in the component. Key areas and actions for mainstreaming are given below.

2. Grant Application Requirements EOIs will require evidence of experience in gender mainstreaming or social inclusion issues, ideally in natural resource management and livelihood management contexts. In their full proposals, selected organizations will need to present a gender mainstreaming plan that follows the ESMP guidelines, and allocates adequate financial resources for mainstreaming activities in their budgets (budget will depend on activities). Prior experience with gender mainstreaming should help ensure that budget allocations for addressing these issues can be kept at reasonable levels given

the maximum value of grants. Key elements of a plan are likely to include the following:

- **An assessment of gender roles, responsibilities, constraints and opportunities** relating to the environment in which the subproject will be based (e.g., use patterns, participation in governance, etc.), with specific focus on barriers to equal participation and benefit sharing within the project. Information gathering should include participatory appraisals (focus groups and/or surveys or interviews) and Indicators of Resilience assessments;
- **Identification of specific actions** that will be taken, based on the localized information collected, to reduce barriers to equitable participation in project activities;
- **A gender-sensitive M&E framework** that collects sex-disaggregated data in a gender-sensitive collection method, incorporates these data into adaptive management, and extracts and shares lessons learned and analyses in gender mainstreaming;
- **Adequate resources allocated in the project budget** to support gender mainstreaming, e.g., for recruitment of expertise, additional meetings, travel (e.g., travel of pairs of women to meetings), training for staff and key participants, translation, etc.; and
- **Description of tasks for person/s assigned to supervise** and/or support gender mainstreaming, and identification of person/s assigned along with qualifications and experience

3. Requests for Proposals, Selection Criteria and Review Process. Requests for full proposals will include guidance and reference materials, e.g., Project Document, ESMF guidelines, Project Operational Manual, templates, and reference sources, for preparing gender mainstreaming plans. Criteria for evaluation of EOIs will reflect the requirement that organizations present evidence of experience in gender mainstreaming or social inclusion issues, ideally in natural resource management and sustainable livelihoods. Evaluation committees for the EOIs and full proposals will include social development expertise to assess gender integration and social inclusion aspects. For evaluating full proposals, guidance (e.g., checklists, scoring guides) will be provided for reviewers to assess gender mainstreaming plans and related activities and inputs.

4. Technical Support. The Project Operational Manual will provide more detailed guidance for sub-project grantees on how gender issues can be addressed and integrated into their activities and operations. The project will also provide technical support, through its in-house social development expertise, to grantees to strengthen gender integration activities in the project sites (see section 4.3. Gender Mainstreaming Support and Oversight below)

4. Part 2. Other Strategic Elements for Gender Mainstreaming

4.1. Improved Knowledge Generation and Management

1. Gender Dimensions in Analytical Frameworks. The project aims to contribute to improved management of SEPLS by strengthening knowledge-sharing at the international level, particularly through generating and synthesizing relevant knowledge, compiling good practices and disseminating research findings and guidance for mainstreaming conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity at the landscape and seascape levels. Social issues including gender dimensions will be integrated into the analytical frameworks for operational definitions of SEPLS, criteria for high-value SEPLS, and analyses of key environmental problems facing SEPLS. Under the criteria “Ensuring good governance and equity” gender is included as part of the preliminary framework for operational definitions. During the course of the project, this aspect of governance and any other gender dimensions will be elaborated as needed and included. Knowledge products such as operational guidelines and policy briefs based on the

analyses will highlight gender issues where relevant and their relationships to conservation outcomes, lessons learned and examples of good practice that contribute to improving gender equality. Through active dissemination of these products and the participation of implementing partners in wider resource use debates, the project will help to ensure that gender issues are incorporated in land use or development plans that mainstream the role of SEPLS.

2. Toolkit for Indicators of Resilience in SEPLS. The Indicators of Resilience will be used in each of the demonstration sub-projects for planning and monitoring. Project activities include training sub-project grantees and other stakeholders on the application of the indicators, analyses of findings from their use in project sites, and general promotion and dissemination of the toolkit to a global audience.

3. The toolkit provides practical guidance for making use of the Indicators of Resilience. The indicators have been developed as an innovative tool for engaging local communities in adaptive management of the landscapes and seascapes in which they live, and strengthening resilience of local communities. Gender dimensions have been integrated throughout the toolkit. The importance of gender in SEPLS management is discussed, and gender related indicators are included in the groups covering Biodiversity and Governance and Social Equity. Practical advice is provided on ensuring gender balance and equitable participation in community level assessments, and follow-up steps such as planning and monitoring. Lessons learned about gender integration from field applications of the toolkit further strengthen the guidance provided.

4.2. Capacity Building, Knowledge Exchange and Dissemination

4. Awareness raising and capacity building of target stakeholder groups are key activities in bringing about improved management practices in SEPLS and mainstreaming their roles in biodiversity conservation. Through a series of thematic local, regional and global workshops/training events, stakeholders will share experiences and lessons learned, while exchanging and building knowledge on key management issues and mainstreaming themes. A key activity will be the training of grant recipients from Component 1 in the application of the Indicators of Resilience.

5. The project will design and deliver gender sensitive training, knowledge sharing and dissemination activities, ensuring that there is equitable participation by both men and women. Attention will be paid to understanding existing gender relations and the obstacles to women's active participation in training and workshops. Training and workshop design will address these obstacles by proposing content that takes into account both women's and men's interests and needs, and by adopting training and facilitation methods that enhance women's participation. More precisely, gender sensitive design, delivery and evaluation activities will take into account the needs, priorities, and expectations of both women and men in order to ensure that women and men receive equitable benefits from the learning and participation processes. Gender expertise will be contracted to assist in the design and delivery of gender sensitive training, and for the facilitation of workshops and meetings.

6. The following list, which is not exhaustive, serves to indicate some key aspects of gender sensitive training and facilitation that will guide the project capacity building and knowledge exchange activities.

- Consulting both women and men to understand their needs and capacities, and barriers to equitable participation
- Defining objectives that reflect women's and men's needs, interests, and capabilities
- Providing equal opportunity to participate for both women and men through affirmative action (or

positive discrimination)

- Using gender-sensitive participatory training and facilitation methods, including choice of language and facilitator
- Making schedules and arrangements flexible enough to suit women participants
- Using gender disaggregated data and experiences from both women and men.
- Using gender sensitive language during the training/workshops
- Using pictures, audio-visual materials, diagrams, or illustrations that show both women and men as key players
- Defining gender sensitive outputs and indicators for training/workshop follow up and monitoring purposes.

7. Knowledge Products. The development and dissemination of knowledge products will also take into account gender sensitivity so that as wide an audience as possible is able to access and understand information about SEPLS. Assessments will be conducted to identify the most appropriate methods of sharing information with men and women. For example, given that literacy levels are often lower among women and marginal groups, the project will explore and encourage the production of low cost videos documenting good practice and digital dissemination, as alternatives to the more standard written reports. Reports, guidelines, etc., will be translated into key national/local languages to reach larger audiences.

4.3. Project Execution Arrangements

8. Gender Mainstreaming Support and Oversight. To ensure a coordinated and informed approach to gender integration throughout the project, social development expertise from existing staff of the executing partners or as contracted consultant/s will provide assistance and oversight in implementing, monitoring and evaluating the mainstreaming plan. Key responsibilities will include:

- Supervising and monitoring the incorporation of the gender approach in a cross-cutting manner in all project activities;
- Developing and delivering a training program on gender and conservation for the Project Management team;
- Supporting coordination of the different project components and sub-components to design and implement mechanisms which facilitate equitable participation of men and women beneficiaries;
- Providing technical assistance to grantee organizations in the project sites to strengthen their gender mainstreaming activities;
- Supporting M&E functions in the identification of gender-sensitive indicators and the implementation of annual assessments; and
- Planning and follow-up of gender mainstreaming activities;

9. Gender Balance. Gender balance and roles will be reviewed with the project management team. To the extent possible, adjustments will be made within the existing team to address inequities. Guidelines will also be developed to help ensure that future recruitment of services for the project encourages applications from under-represented groups, including women.

10. Gender Dimensions Training. Based on a training needs assessment, tailored training will be provided for the Executing Partners on gender dimensions. Topics to be covered may include gender analysis, participatory methodologies, and M&E in gender mainstreaming.

5. Part 3. Monitoring and Evaluation

1. The project will assess its performance in gender mainstreaming in the following ways:
 - a) **Component 1.** Gender Mainstreaming Plans for each of the subgrant projects will specify gender-related outcomes, outputs, indicators and targets that are relevant for their objectives and activities. Additionally, it should be noted that all subgrant projects will use the Toolkit for Indicators of Resilience which include some that are specifically related to gender:
 - a. Women's knowledge, experiences and skills are recognized and respected in the community (Toolkit #11)
 - b. Rights and access to resources and opportunities for education, information and decision-making are fair and equitable for all community members, including women, at household, community and landscape levels (Toolkit #15).
 - b) **Component 3.** Output 3.2. : All workshops are conducted in gender-sensitive manner and ensure that 30-40% of the participants are women. This output relates to training and other workshops organized by the project.

2. Analyses and Reporting. In order to ensure adaptive management in the project, annual reviews of gender mainstreaming successes and challenges will be carried out with adaptation of mainstreaming plan as needed. Subgrantees implementing projects under Component 1, will identify analyses and reports for in their M&E plans, which will include reporting on periodic assessments using the Indicators of Resilience. The findings from these reports will be integrated into the annual reviews of gender mainstreaming. The final project report will highlight gender and conservation lessons learned.