



BEST PRACTICES IN GENDER AND BIODIVERSITY

Pathways for multiple benefits

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1 CBD Notification 2020-040 - Transformational Change: Best Practices for Gender-responsive Biodiversity Policy and Action - Call for contributions

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FOREWORD



The international community is increasingly recognizing the range of ways in which gender differences and inequalities shape how we take decisions and our impact on the natural world. Deeply entrenched social norms advantage more powerful and dominant groups over others, and most often men and boys over women and girls. Tackling these long-standing inequalities and structural barriers is a complex process that requires dedicated attention and resourcing. This collection of best practices shows us how such targeted action is also critical to achieve sustainable and transformative results for biodiversity.

The detailed case studies provide an in-depth look at steps taken at different stages of project development and implementation that contribute to achieving outcomes for gender equality and biodiversity. They illustrate the importance of gender analysis, including baseline studies and targeted household surveys, in determining the context and specific gender differences and gaps to be addressed. The case studies and ‘snapshot’ best practices are also inspiring in demonstrating the potential for action to be taken at many different scales and through different types of partnerships – from establishing a public-private-producer partnership to develop a fair-trade certification, to initiating national fora for women working in the fisheries’ sector to come together to share experience and build capacity, to developing and tracking the implementation of a gender-responsive national biodiversity strategy and action plan, and more. The examples showcase innovative approaches, such as how engaging women in natural resource mapping and ensuring their equal participation in determining financing priorities can lead to improved food security and nutrition as well as increased leadership roles for women.

These examples demonstrate how a structured approach to identifying and addressing gender issues can add up to a multitude of benefits. This publication highlights diverse outcomes such as improvements in forest management and access to water, increased capacity to carry out climate change vulnerability assessments and adaptation planning, reduction in illegally caught fish, increased leadership roles for women in peace processes and environmental governance, as well as improved perceptions of women’s capacities, and improvements in their status, earnings and social benefits.

I invite you to take some time to look through these pages and learn about different initiatives that are helping to set a new course for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use that can truly benefit all, women and girls as well as boys and men. As we move through a new decade, with a focus on transformative change towards meeting the Sustainable Development Goals and ensuring effective implementation of a new global biodiversity framework, let us make use of the guidance these examples provide. Building on best practice will help us to achieve our shared objectives for gender equality and biodiversity conservation, and to reach the 2050 vision of Living in Harmony with Nature. It will take all of us to realize a future where women and men and boys and girls can equally benefit from and contribute to a world in harmony with nature.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Elizabeth Maruma Mrema'. The signature is stylized and fluid.

Elizabeth Maruma Mrema
CBD Executive Secretary

ACRONYMS

ABS	Access and benefit sharing
BCP	Biocultural community protocol
EbA	Ecosystem-based adaptation
ASAP	Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (IFAD)
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
BIOFIN	UNDP's Biodiversity Finance Initiative
CEAP	Community Environmental Action Planning (Sudan case study)
CAFI	Central African Forest Initiative
CEPF	Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
CFUG	Community Forestry User Group (Nepal case study)
CONANP	National Commission for Protected Areas (Mexico case study)
CONAFOR	National Forestry Commission (Mexico case study)
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FECO	Foreign Economic Cooperation Office (China snapshot)
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GFC	Global Forest Coalition
IPLC	Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
LBSAP	Local Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

ILRG	Integrated Land and Resource Governance Programme (Zambia snapshot)
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions
MFF	Mangroves for the Future
MRV	Measuring, Reporting and Verifying (MRV)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRM	Natural resources management
PDR	(Lao) People’s Democratic Republic
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
SFMP	Sustainable Fisheries Management Project (Ghana case study)
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN-REDD	United Nations Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VGGT	Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WIFF	Women in Fisheries Forum
(WIFN-Fiji)	Women in Fisheries Network (Belize, Barbados and Fiji case study)

KEY MESSAGES

1. Tackle the ‘tough stuff’

Across the world, efforts are underway to tackle the underlying drivers of both biodiversity loss and gender inequality. This often involves efforts to change gender stereotypes that hamper gender and biodiversity outcomes. For example, a growing recognition that ‘community based’ and ‘participatory’ approaches are not necessarily ‘gender responsive’ is stimulating active efforts to truly engage all members of the community and leave no-one behind. **Working with traditional authorities** is proving a successful strategy, as is taking a **nuanced approach to targeting beneficiaries** which recognizes gender as one of various socio-economic factors alongside age, wealth, education, race and ethnicity and others that determine peoples’ access to, decisions about and benefits from land and biological resources. Another innovative strategy is to **tackle gender issues not just at community level, but also in the home**. Making visible women’s unpaid household contributions with regard to natural resources management (NRM) can help to tackle entrenched gender stereotypes at their root. Efforts to **address gender-based violence** in the context of biodiversity, as well as to **engage men and boys**, are also key to ensure lasting change.

2. Equitable access to land and natural resources remains important for multiple gains

Closing gender gaps in access to land and natural resources is a fundamental building block of transformative change for both biodiversity and gender equality. Equitable land tenure security is so important that it is reflected in three Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets² to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development³, and there is specific support on integrating gender in the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT)⁴ Land tenure security is about more than formal title deeds to individually owned land – it encompasses group access rights to land as well as the natural resources on it – such as forests, pastures, wetlands, rivers, soil, flora and fauna. Although improving secure access to land and its natural resources is often perceived as being difficult to tackle, there are encouraging efforts to improve women’s access through **joint land titling, equal participation in user groups** and **formalizing informal women’s collectives**. These actions also contribute to more equitable sharing of the benefits, including economic returns flowing from these natural resources and from gender responsive implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on **Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits (ABS)**⁵ Arising from their Utilization (2010). For Parties, progress

2 Target 1.4: By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources...’. Target 2.3: ‘By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment...’. Target 5A: ‘Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

3 United Nations. 2015. Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Informally called Agenda 2030 or the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

4 FAO. 2013. Governing land for women and men. A technical guide to support the achievement of responsible gender-equitable governance of land tenure.

5 Access and benefit sharing (ABS) refers to the way in which genetic resources may be accessed, and how the benefits that result from their use are shared between the people or countries using the resources (users) and the people or countries that provide them (providers). Genetic resources encompass all living organisms; plants, animals and microbes, which carry genetic material that could be potentially useful to humans. Source: CBD. 2011. Introduction to access and benefit-sharing.

in equitable access to land and natural resources translates into progress towards SDG targets 1.4, 2.3, 5a and SDG 15 among others.⁶

3. Promote women's collective action, organizations and networks

Many best practices support women's organizations and networks, creating spaces for women to build knowledge of their rights with regard to biodiversity, as well as how they can contribute to conserving biodiversity. Such organizations and networks can provide a forum for women to develop technical skills, increase opportunities for sustainable livelihoods, and **allow women to connect with each other and with other stakeholders**. The opportunity to network and build confidence in a 'safe' space may be especially important in sectors where women are particularly underrepresented in official statistics and in leadership roles. Women's organizations and networks may also **foster and encourage women to aim for leadership roles**.

4. Continue to foster women's leadership

A large number of best practices focus on supporting women's leadership and expanding women's access to decision making at various levels from the home, through to the community and in policy processes. Strategies include **engaging with women as well as men in biodiversity-related policy and programming processes** including, but not limited to, the development, revision and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) and project formulation, as well as reporting on gender dimensions of national progress reports. Measures to increase women's effective **participation and leadership roles in biodiversity related governance bodies** are also being taken by different actors.

5. Create and tap into gender responsive financing opportunities

Funding is needed to undertake gender responsive biodiversity actions, and biodiversity financing also needs to reach women and men on the ground. **Climate and environmental financing mechanisms with gender related commitments** appear to be stimulating greater uptake of gender considerations in the biodiversity actions they finance; tapping into these opportunities can provide an important entry point for stakeholders and offer linkages to regional and global programmes with South-South learning opportunities. Parties and stakeholders should also continue to find ways to get biodiversity financing to work for women as well as men on the ground, for example through funding gender responsive national programmes, and grants specifically targeting women's sustainable livelihoods. Innovative approaches include supporting **crowdfunding** by women environmental actors and applying **women's participation as a criterion for receiving and deciding on use of community funds**. Other strategies include **allocation of funds to deliver on gender actions in national biodiversity strategies and action plans**. The private sector can be an important partner, not only for direct funding, but also by providing markets and related capacity development for gender responsive biodiversity actions.

⁶ SDG 14: 'Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development' known informally as 'life below water'. SDG 15: 'Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss' known informally as 'life on land'. See footnote 1 for details of targets.

6. Use and produce good data

The importance of good data cannot be overstated. Best practices in the report include **making visible women's often unpaid roles as users and guardians of ecosystem services in official statistics**, especially at the subnational levels. Policies and programmes need to be based on and also produce **data disaggregated by sex**, as well as **qualitative insights** about attitudes toward biodiversity, what is working, and challenges. **Informational surveys that target women** as well as men and include **gender related questions** are also key to shaping gender responsive interventions that are relevant to the context. **Recent research and knowledge products** may provide important insights into key issues. New initiatives should draw on these resources to support gender analysis, and also make provisions to compile gender data and analysis as a project output, to add to the knowledge base on these issues. **Building partnerships** between those designing new projects and initiatives and organizations with gender expertise, women's networks and the private and public sectors, are also identified as best practices to identify and provide for gender and biodiversity data in biodiversity actions.

7. Scale up the small scale

Smaller scale initiatives and pilots potentially offer **rich ideas and models** that could be scaled up. Many small-scale biodiversity projects supported by a number of international financing mechanisms are gender responsive and potentially innovative in their approaches. New and larger biodiversity initiatives should consider building on these wherever possible in order to make the most of existing investments, learning and capacities. Indeed, this kind of integrated approach in general is very much in the spirit of Agenda 2030. A key step to begin scaling up is to **find out about relevant actions through stakeholder consultations and gender analysis** and identify what ideas, models and successes can be applied elsewhere, and at different scales. A critical 'ingredient' is **the will and commitment of those designing new initiatives to advance gender outcomes as well as integrate what is working and to learn from past experiences**.

INTRODUCTION

Parties, indigenous peoples and local communities, and stakeholders can consider how to integrate best practices identified in the key messages in the previous section, as relevant to their contexts. The introduction elaborates on best practices in action areas and implementation mechanisms, and signposts some examples of each. The introduction also summarizes how the best practices meet the criteria established for the review, and provides a short reflection on which kinds of best practices have not been identified in this exercise. Finally, the case studies and snapshots that follow illustrate concrete best practice examples that Parties, indigenous peoples and local communities, and stakeholders can adapt and implement in their own contexts.

Purpose of review

This publication is intended to strengthen and update the evidence base on gender responsive⁷ biodiversity policy and action, and support Parties, indigenous peoples and local communities, and stakeholders to integrate gender considerations in the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. Parties, indigenous peoples and local communities, and stakeholders may use it together with other relevant guidance and resources by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD Secretariat) and other organizations.

Approach

In order to strengthen the evidence base for stronger action on gender equality by Parties, indigenous peoples and local communities, and stakeholders under the new global biodiversity framework, the CBD Secretariat launched a call for contributions from Parties, indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs), international and civil society organizations and other groups on recent or ongoing gender-biodiversity initiatives.⁸ The focus was on innovative, transformative actions that demonstrate action at scale and were based on positive examples from 2015 onwards. Criteria established for best practices include those that demonstrated one or more of the following:

- Impacts for biodiversity as well as for gender equality and women's empowerment;
- Initiatives intended to transform gender relations, through addressing biodiversity concerns;
- Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals;
- Synergies with gender actions under the Rio Conventions;
- Innovative technologies and approaches, including application of traditional and new approaches;
- Financing from new/non-standard partners (private sector, public-private partnerships, Green Climate Fund, etc.); and
- Initiatives undertaken at larger scales.⁹

7 'Gender responsive' refers to outcomes that reflect an understanding of gender roles and inequalities and which make an effort to encourage equal participation and equal and fair distribution of benefits. Source: UNDP. 2015. Gender Responsive National Communications Toolkit.

8 CBD Notification 2020-040 - Transformational Change: Best Practices for Gender-responsive Biodiversity Policy and Action - Call for contributions.

9 Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The call for contributions yielded 30 submissions from a wide range of Parties, indigenous peoples and local communities, and stakeholders around the world, some containing multiple case studies. In parallel, additional research was undertaken to identify potential case studies meeting these criteria, covering different geographies and types of best practice.

Key messages are presented as central takeaways from this review. The next section on key findings summarizes overall findings of areas where progress is being made and implications for Parties, indigenous peoples and local communities, and stakeholders. A total of ten case studies from regions around the world are presented, covering both gender responsive biodiversity policy and practices in different sectors and contexts. These detailed case studies are complemented by 27 best practice ‘snapshots’ or short case examples, drawing on the many submissions received from the CBD Secretariat Call for contributions. While it was not possible to include inputs from all of the submissions received, these will inform further research and may be highlighted where appropriate in future communications efforts.

KEY FINDINGS

This section presents the main findings from the best practices in the publication. They have been broadly grouped into **action areas** and **implementation mechanisms** as set out below. The section ends with findings pertaining to the selection criteria set out for the identification of best practices.

The best practices can be grouped into the following **action areas**:

- Equal access to land and biological resources;
- Equitable benefits from land and biological resources; and
- Equal access to decision making at all levels.

The following kinds of **implementation mechanisms** also emerged during the review:

- Capacity development;
- Strengthening the evidence base;
- Gender responsive biodiversity finance;
- Good data development and use; and
- Gender action plans and resources.

These are discussed further below, illustrated by selected best practice examples.

Action areas

Equal access to land and biological resources

Equal access to natural resources and ecosystem services is a fundamental right of women and girls, men and boys. Two main strategies were identified in the review:

- (i) Tackling legal, policy and social barriers; and
- (ii) Promoting women's equal and effective participation in user groups, such as for forests and water.

Many case studies and snapshots support women's equal access to land and biological resources. For example, in the Bolivia case study, access to land was a key first step before combining traditional and innovative approaches to give women as well as men access to other natural resources. Case studies from Ghana and Tunisia demonstrate possible actions to improve women's use rights in fisheries, and the Nepal case study demonstrates how men can be engaged to help tackle gender-based violence against women conservationists. The Bangladesh snapshot shows how equitable access to land and water might be achieved.

Equitable benefits

Many best practices highlighted actions in this area in the following primary ways:

- (i) Creating sustainable income generation and employment opportunities; and
- (ii) Women's collective action to improve their benefits from biological resources and their sustainable use.

With regard to sustainable income generation, the Bolivia, Nepal and Sudan case studies all showcase income generation actions related to ecosystem services. The Zambia snapshot highlights how supporting women to brave gender stereotypes can be an important step in helping them to enter paid employment in non-traditional areas. In terms of supporting women's collective action to improve their benefits from biological resources, the Tunisia and Mexico case studies show how formalizing women's informal groups can help increase their benefits for biodiversity, the latter through a public-private-producer partnership in the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing. The Kenya snapshot shows how women's groups can contribute to a joint effort with men in securing community assets.

Equal voice in decision making at all levels

Many best practices are trying to improve women's equal access to decision making on some level, whether at the international, national, subnational or project levels – and even in the home. This involves not only increasing numbers but also improving the quality of women's participation. Gender stereotypes often need to be challenged to enable women to have a voice in decision making processes. When women as well as men take part equally in decision making, it often leads to a fundamental shift in traditional gender norms, which could be considered transformative. In terms of biodiversity benefits, equal access to decision making has the additional benefit of incentivizing women and men to contribute their unique knowledge and capacities to promote biodiversity outcomes.

At the **international level** this includes bringing together women from different countries to make their voices heard and to make a call for action – as illustrated in the Australia snapshot. At the **national level** this includes:

- (i) Meaningfully engaging women in national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs), and sector policy processes including revisions, reporting and enforcement, as well as with ministries and civil society with a mandate to address gender equality; and
- (ii) Making concrete provisions to address gender inequalities and build on women's potential in policies, legal provisions and programmes.

The Mexico case study and Lao PDR snapshot show how women have been engaged in developing and reporting on their NBSAPs, and the Uganda case study highlights one approach to explicitly deliver on the Rio Conventions' gender provisions in an integrated way. The Costa Rica case study is an example of how developing a specific policy on gender and biodiversity may be a strategy for Parties, indigenous peoples and local communities, to consider. In addition, the Belize/ Barbados/ Fiji case study shows how a specialized women's forum can help develop gender action plans in biodiversity related sectors.

With regard to concrete programme provisions, the Armenia case study highlights provisions for a project to ensure the participation of women in project management, and the China snapshot puts forward national guidelines on gender to support its integration in GEF supported environmental projects. A snapshot from Indonesia also showcases a possible approach to mainstreaming gender in environmental law enforcement, an interesting dimension of promoting gender responsive legal provisions.

With regard to biodiversity legal frameworks, Parties could consider including the following questions in assessments of their gender responsiveness, and these questions could also be adapted to assess policy:

- Does your legal framework recognize the special roles of women in biodiversity management?
- Does your legal framework provide mechanisms to disaggregate and differentiate how women impact or are impacted by biodiversity conservation and management?
- Does your legal framework make provision for affirmative action on the roles of, and participation of women in decision making concerning environmental and biodiversity management?¹⁰

At the **subnational level** this includes:

- (i) Women organizing to engage in community decision making;
- (ii) Supporting women, often traditionally marginalized in communities, to ensure their priorities are taken into account in local plans; and
- (iii) Changing gender stereotypes to support the above.

The Bolivia, Nepal and Sudan case studies are examples of projects that adopt various strategies to support women to make decisions on natural resources, as are the Eswatini, Kenya and Tanzania snapshots. In Eswatini, working with traditional chiefs to change gender stereotypes was key to increasing women's participation in decision making. The Tanzania and the African regional snapshots are in an urban setting, illustrating the role of women in promoting and benefitting from urban biodiversity.

Interestingly and encouragingly, the review also identified some best practices in supporting equitable decision making at the **household level**. This involves facilitating discussions between men, women and other household members. This is innovative and transformative in that it goes beyond the scope of most initiatives in order to address pervasive gender dynamics at the household level that can undermine efforts to engage women in decision making at community and higher levels. The Mozambique snapshot gives an example of this approach.

¹⁰ Adapted from presentation on 'Legal Assessment Tool on Human Rights and Biodiversity Mainstreaming,' IDLO. 2018.

Implementation mechanisms

Capacity development

Capacity development of individuals, groups, and institutions is a major crosscutting mechanism underpinning all of the above areas, and the main strategies identified in this review include:

- (i) Sensitization of women and men at all levels on gender related issues;
- (ii) Building technical knowledge of women as well as men to preserve biodiversity and improve women's status; and
- (iii) Producing tools and toolkits to support broader capacity development efforts.

Many case studies and snapshots have a capacity development dimension. The Nepal case study shows how a learning needs assessment can be useful to identify gender related capacity development opportunities, while in Armenia, the project plans to take a long-term approach by encouraging more women to study in biodiversity related sectors. The Mozambique snapshot shows how building capacity on addressing established gender norms can start in the home with family members, while the Kyrgyzstan snapshot shows how biodiversity-related employment opportunities can open up spaces to sensitize hard-to-reach young women on social issues. In the Eswatini snapshot, women are not only accessing sustainable land and water management training, but also emerging as lead farmers to share their knowledge with others, and gaining in societal status as a result.

Annex 1 presents some examples of recent tools and toolkits, which can be considered best practices because they tackle specific strategic issues rather than offer general guidance. They are not a substitute for engaging gender experts, but can enrich their contributions to meaningfully mainstream gender issues and be used as materials during capacity development on gender.

Strengthening the evidence base

Research and knowledge products about experiences in integrating gender into biodiversity and related actions can also be used as capacity development materials. They also potentially provide valuable information and insights for gender analyses and to develop and design gender responsive actions. They can strengthen the evidence base on what works, as well as flag innovation and opportunities to scale up successful practices. While not a substitute for participatory engagement with women and men, or for engaging gender experts, these products can yield important insights that can help to frame discussions and surveys. Recognition of the importance of research and knowledge products on gender and biodiversity appears to be increasing, and will hopefully continue.

In turn, biodiversity policies and programmes need to allocate resources to capture experiences in mainstreaming gender, to continually refresh the knowledge base. A balanced approach, which shares challenges and lessons learned in addition to success stories, can be especially useful to inform biodiversity action. Good practices that set out key steps as well as final impacts are also particularly helpful, and the increasing numbers of large scale and longer-term projects and programmes offer significant learning opportunities. **Annex 2** sets out some recent research and knowledge products that Parties and stakeholders may find useful as they address specific issues in gender and biodiversity.

Development and use of good data

Good quality data is the foundation of gender analysis and effective interventions on gender responsive biodiversity action and programming. Best practices were identified in:

- (i) Comprehensive analysis of data to inform national biodiversity policy and programming;
- (ii) Making visible women's roles in official statistics;
- (iii) Integrating gender dimensions in surveys; and
- (iv) Engaging with women to develop gender research.

The Costa Rica case study is a good example of how Parties can analyze available data in order to understand key issues (gender inequalities and good practices) in order to inform policy and programming. For example, the Tunisia case study shows how creating a database of previously unrecognized women in the fisheries sector enabled them to access social benefits, which are critical as their employment opportunities are seasonal. The Armenia case study is an example of targeting women and women heads of household in a project survey to reflect the demographic profile where many rural households are headed by women, as well as including questions to unpack dynamics on decision making and social issues. The Nepal case study also showcases a similarly rigorous gender responsive approach. Sex disaggregated data is key, and in Germany this is part of a national survey to track attitudes of women and men in consumption patterns relating to biodiversity. Research and knowledge products highlighted above are also linked to this best practice area. In Malawi, the National Forest Landscape Restoration Strategy (2017) was developed based on spatial mapping of sex disaggregated data, to determine priority restoration areas to benefit both women and men.¹¹ Finally, the Belize, Barbados, and Fiji case studies show how specialized fora and women's collectives can help to develop good quality data on gender roles.

Gender action plans and resources

Gender action plans and strategies are important to promote the implementation of gender-related commitments and reflect comprehensive resourcing implications. Best practices include:

- (i) Developing a gender theory of change; and
- (ii) Accessing gender expertise through partnerships.

The Nepal case study showcases an innovative approach to developing a gender theory of change. This helps to strengthen overall coherence between the different parts of the gender action. Various case studies and snapshots involve working in partnership with women's organizations and organizations with expertise in gender and biodiversity. See, for example, the Lao PDR and Brazil snapshots as well the case studies from Bolivia and Mexico. The Uganda case study is an example of how the expertise of various agencies can inform a cross sectoral gender action plan that integrates the gender commitments of the Rio Conventions.

¹¹ Mphatso Kalemba (CBD Secondary National Focal Point, SBSTTA National Focal Point for Malawi), interviewed by Katherine Despot-Belmonte (Programme Officer, UNEP-WCMC) on 3 February 2020.

Gender responsive biodiversity finance

Getting biodiversity finance to work for women as well as men is key to delivering on ambitions in gender responsive biodiversity action. Best practices were identified at two levels:

- (i) National and institutional level; and
- (ii) Project level, to make biodiversity finance flow to men and women on the ground.

The Mexico case study contains an example of a multi-sectoral national gender programme financed by the government, where national biodiversity agencies are required to integrate gender requirements in their programming. The China snapshot also shows how government environmental programme guidelines can mainstream gender dimensions. At the project level, the Bolivia and Nepal case studies show how minimum requirements to decide on and benefit from community grants can ensure equitable access to natural resources and sustainable livelihoods. The Philippines snapshot shows how innovative financing sources such as crowdfunding can help women carry out conservation activities. The Uganda snapshot illustrates how women with no assets use carbon purchase agreements as loan collateral. Although direct financing of gender responsive biodiversity actions by the private sector was not identified in the best practice review, the private sector are important partners in sustainable livelihoods for women as well as men, for example in ABS (Mexico case study) and providing markets (Tunisia case study).

Various global and regional financing mechanisms represent opportunities for stakeholders in biodiversity to focus on or integrate biodiversity actions as well as gender dimensions. Many mechanisms and their funders have commitments, standards and/ or priorities related to gender equality and women's empowerment and a number of these have stepped up gender commitments in recent years. The contribution of these mechanisms to gender responsive biodiversity action on the ground is especially powerful when investments include tracking, assessing and sharing compliance and impacts. Parties, indigenous peoples and local communities, and stakeholders accessing these and other financing mechanisms can also benefit from their guidance on integrating gender in proposals. Box 1 below presents some examples of best practices.

Box 1. Examples of gender responsive financing mechanisms

UNDP’s Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN): Includes gender dimensions in their guidelines. See the Philippines snapshot for an example of how BIOFIN is channelling finance through women on the ground to save a species.

Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI): A partnership between countries in Central Africa and various donors¹² as well as Brazil as a South-South partner, which supports the reduction of carbon emissions arising from deforestation and forest degradation while alleviating poverty. The results of the initiative have exceeded a previous 15 per cent target on gender, and the initiative has recently doubled its gender target to ensure that at least 30 per cent of CAFI-funded programmes become gender responsive, and that 20 per cent of programmes meet at least three out of four criteria on gender.¹³

Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF): Enables civil society to protect biodiversity hotspots and also tracks a qualitative gender dimension at the corporate level (i.e. the number of grantees who report gaining an improved understanding of and commitment to gender issues during their CEPF grants). Their various reports contain examples of gender responsive actions.

Global Environment Facility (GEF): Biodiversity is one of several focal areas of the GEF, which operates as the financial mechanism of the Convention on Biological Diversity. In 2017, the GEF refreshed its Policy on Gender Equality, moving from a ‘do no harm’ approach to a gender responsive, ‘do good’ approach and specific measures to better address gender gaps critical to the achievement of global environmental benefits.¹⁴ Project proposals now need to include a gender analysis and a gender action plan, and the GEF has also produced practical guidelines for the whole project cycle that could also be useful for other projects.¹⁵ Many of the examples identified in this report are supported by the GEF, which is increasingly collecting and sharing best practices.

Green Climate Fund (GCF): Projects contribute to biodiversity as well as climate change outcomes, such as through Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA).¹⁶ In 2019, the GCF approved an updated Gender Policy and Gender Action Plan (2020 – 2023), which requires a gender assessment and gender action plan at the project level, and requires that ‘women and men be provided with equal opportunity to take an active part in stakeholder consultations and decision making during project preparation, implementation and evaluation’.¹⁷ The GCF has also produced a manual that contains guidance that could be useful in other projects.¹⁸

UN Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (UN-REDD): Acknowledging the critical role of gender in REDD+¹⁹, the UN-REDD Programme has been striving to promote gender equality systematically in its work since 2008. The UN-REDD Gender Marker Rating System was created in 2017 to track and monitor the gender responsiveness of UN-REDD’s technical assistance. The UN-REDD Programme intends to have gender fully mainstreamed in 50 per cent of programme outputs by 2020. It has produced a useful technical resource that is relevant for forest based interventions more widely.^{20, 21}

12 Including European Union, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, South Korea, United Kingdom.

13 Source: web article ‘Gender Mainstreaming: New Commitments’. CAFI. 2020. <https://www.cafi.org/news-centre/gender-mainstreaming-new-commitments>

14 Source: web article ‘A new policy on gender equality for the GEF’. GEF 2017. <https://www.thegef.org/news/new-policy-gender-equality-gef>

15 GEF. 2018. Guidance to Advance Gender Equality in GEF Projects and Programs.

16 For example, see ‘Gender action plan for FP135: Ecosystem-based Adaptation in the Indian Ocean’ at <https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/gender-action-plan-fp135-ecosystem-based-adaptation-indian-ocean-eba-io>

17 See ‘Updated Gender Policy and Gender Action Plan 2020–2023’ (GCF, 2019)

18 GCF. 2017. Mainstreaming Gender in Green Climate Fund Projects.

19 REDD+ is an international framework whose name stands for ‘Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, conservation of existing forest carbon stocks, sustainable forest management and enhancement of forest carbon stocks’. The framework incentivises developing countries either to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or to increase the removal of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere by forest land.

20 UNDP. 2017. UN-REDD Methodological Brief on Gender.

21 For examples of case studies from Asia, see: <https://sway.office.com/k3hRDum8dBadkE6G?ref=Link>

Best practices – meeting the criteria

This section summarizes findings, taking into account the selection criteria that were used to identify best practices. All best practices featured in this publication demonstrate two or more of the criteria.

Impacts for biodiversity as well as for gender equality and women's empowerment

All best practices meet this criterion. Most practices are from biodiversity, climate change and/or environmental initiatives, and present a range of different strategies to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment outcomes depending on context. Rather than actions to advance gender equality and women's empowerment without necessarily contributing to biodiversity outcomes (e.g. supporting employment opportunities unconnected with biodiversity), the main distinguishing feature of the best practices in this publication is that they all seek 'win win' outcomes. These practices focus on addressing gender equality in ways that also deliver biodiversity benefits, and *vice versa*. The type of gains in gender equality and women's empowerment can be characterized in terms of the action areas of equal access to land and biological resources, equitable benefits from these resources, and equal access to decision-making at all levels.

Initiatives intended to transform gender relations, through addressing biodiversity concerns

This publication defines efforts to 'transform gender relations' as those seeking to address the root causes of gender inequality rather than only the symptoms, by tackling underlying gender stereotypes and norms to reduce inequality between men and women, and promote women's empowerment and 'power with' men.²² A number of best practices seek to change gender stereotypes and norms through:

- Encouraging women to take up non-traditional employment e.g. as forest fire fighters (Costa Rica) and wildlife patrollers (Kenya, Zambia) and in forest management/ renewable energy (Armenia);
- Increasing the visibility of women's biodiversity related contributions in the home, community, and in specific sectors as well as in biodiversity in general, using strategies such as improved data on women's roles (e.g. Tunisia), and sensitization of traditional authorities and national advocacy campaigns (Eswatini);
- Promoting women's leadership across biodiversity-related sectors e.g. fisheries, forest and water governance (e.g. Ghana, Nepal) as well as in peace processes (Sudan); and
- Ending sexual harassment and gender-based violence (e.g. Costa Rica, Nepal).

²² 'Power with' refers to finding common ground and building collective strength promote equitable relations. Adapted from 'A New Weave of Power, People & Politics. VeneKlasen,L and Miller,V. 2007.

Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

All of the best practices provide examples of implementing SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 14 on ‘life below water’ or SDG 15 on ‘life on land’, and most best practices also contribute to other SDGs.

Importantly, most of the best practices contribute to increasing women’s access to land and biological resources as well as to benefits from these resources. These practices as such contribute to SDG Target 5A and also SDG Targets 1.4 and 2.3.²³ **Table 1** summarizes and gives some examples of how best practices are supporting the implementation of SDG 5. **Table 2** gives examples of best practices supporting the implementation of other SDGs.









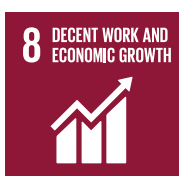
Table 1. Examples of best practices supporting the implementation of SDG 5







SDG 5 target summary	Best practice examples
<p>Target 5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere</p>	<p>Best practices that seek to change gender stereotypes in biodiversity-related areas through sensitization and capacity development at the household, community and national levels (e.g. the Eswatini snapshot shows how discussions with traditional authorities can make a difference). Also best practices that ensure application of gender responsive laws (e.g. the Bangladesh snapshot promotes joint land titling).</p>
<p>Target 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres</p>	<p>Best practices recognize and take steps to end gender-based violence (GBV) (e.g. the Nepal case study demonstrates how a cadre of men can serve as champions to fight discrimination and GBV).</p>
<p>Target 5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation</p>	<p>Best practices that seek to change gender stereotypes in biodiversity-related areas through sensitization and capacity development at the household, community and national levels (e.g. the Kyrgyzstan snapshot shows how biodiversity actions can offer entry points to address issues such as forced marriage and other gender-based injustices faced by women and girls, and enable discussion on ending gender based violence with boys and young men).</p>

²³ Target 1.4: By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources...'. Target 2.3: 'By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment...'. Target 5A: 'Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

SDG 5 target summary	Best practice examples
<p>Target 5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family</p>	<p>Best practices that aim to make visible women's unpaid contributions to the household and in specific sectors, and promote shared responsibility within the household (e.g. the Tunisia case study illustrates how improving sectoral data on women's roles can be leveraged to help them access social services, and the Mozambique snapshot is an example of the promotion of shared responsibilities in the home).</p>
<p>Target 5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life</p>	<p>A good number of best practices contribute to this target at the national and local levels, and even in the home (e.g. Mozambique snapshot), by not only increasing numbers but also improving the quality of women's participation and tackling gender stereotypes (e.g. Eswatini snapshot). See also the section 'Equal voice in decision making at all levels' above.</p>
<p>Target 5.a Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources</p>	<p>A majority of best practices contribute to this target, at both field and policy levels e.g. increasing access to land (Bangladesh snapshot), forest resources (e.g. Nepal case study), water (e.g. Bolivia case study) and improving women's benefits deriving from these resources (e.g. Mexico, Ghana and Tunisia case studies, Brazil and Indonesia PES snapshots). The Costa Rica and Uganda case studies are examples of policy initiatives that support this target.</p>
<p>Target 5.b Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology</p>	<p>Fewer best practices contributing to this SDG target were identified during this review, although this does not necessarily reflect on practices more widely. The African regional snapshot shows how computer games can be effective in engaging women and youth in city planning. Other examples include the Armenia and Bolivia case studies, which have examples of financing technologies to reduce women's work burden, and the Ghana case study which showcases investing in improved processing technology for women.</p>
<p>Target 5.c Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels</p>	<p>National and subnational biodiversity-related policies and legislation that integrate gender dimensions (e.g. the Costa Rica, Mexico and Uganda case studies as well as snapshots from Lao PDR, Indonesia and Malawi all show different strategies from integrating gender into NBSAPs and sectoral policies, to developing specific policies for gender and biodiversity and strengthening enforcement of gender responsive legal provisions).</p>

Table 2. Examples of best practices supporting the implementation of selected SDGs

SDG	Best practice examples	
	<p>End poverty in all its forms everywhere</p>	<p>Many best practices promote gender responsive financing, improved access to benefits from biological resources and sustainable livelihoods for women as well as men.</p>
	<p>End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture</p>	<p>Many best practices in rural context are about promoting women's and men's participation in more sustainable agriculture with food security and nutrition co-benefits.</p>
	<p>Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages</p>	<p>The projects in two case studies promote clean energy and labour-saving technologies with health benefits, and another identifies support to Community Learning and Action Centers for women to develop solutions for their most pressing needs. One snapshot (Ethiopia) highlights sensitization for women and men about health risks arising from zoonotic disease. One case study (Tunisia) and one snapshot (Costa Rica) show how women are supported to access social and health services by including them in official statistics.</p>
	<p>Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all</p>	<p>Most best practices include examples of capacity development and fostering learning opportunities (e.g. gender sensitization for men and public officials, technical, business and soft skills training as well as scientific education for women).</p>
	<p>Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all</p>	<p>A number of case studies and snapshots focus on women's equal access to water resources and their governance.</p>
	<p>Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all</p>	<p>Very few examples were identified meeting these objectives, although two case studies (Armenia and Bolivia) do have a focus on clean stoves.</p>
	<p>Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all</p>	<p>Many best practices are about promoting sustainable livelihoods opportunities and/ or improved working conditions for women.</p>

SDG	Best practice examples	
	<p>Reduce inequality within and among countries</p>	<p>All best practices can be said to contribute to this SDG given the focus on reducing inequalities between women and men, as women often comprise around half of a country's population.</p>
	<p>Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</p>	<p>A few best practices contribute to this SDG (e.g. Ethiopia and Tanzania snapshots), although they are largely in rural contexts.</p>
	<p>Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns</p>	<p>Many best practices focus on gender responsive sustainable and consumption patterns in sectors from fisheries (e.g. Ghana and Tunisia case studies) to agriculture (e.g. Bolivia case study). One best practice (Germany snapshot) also gives an example of tracking gender differences in attitudes to sustainable consumption.</p>
	<p>Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts</p>	<p>Many best practices contribute to this SDG – see also the criterion for contributing to the gender commitments of the Rio Conventions below.</p>
	<p>Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development</p>	
	<p>Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss</p>	<p>All best practices contribute to at least one of these goals.</p>

SDG	Best practice examples	
 <p data-bbox="397 283 657 556">Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</p>	<p data-bbox="690 283 1404 409">One best practice (Sudan) contributes to peace processes directly, but all best practices that support better and more gender inclusive biodiversity related institutions and governance of natural resources also contribute to this SDG.</p>	
 <p data-bbox="397 598 657 787">Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development</p>	<p data-bbox="690 598 1404 808">A number of best practices have examples of partnerships to deliver on gender equality in biodiversity actions, including with organizations specialized in gender equality/ women’s empowerment (e.g. Armenia case study) and the private sector (e.g. Mexico and Tunisia case studies). The Uganda case study is an example of establishing multi-sectoral partnerships to deliver on the gender priorities in the Rio Conventions.</p>	

It is therefore evident that paying attention to gender equality and women’s empowerment in biodiversity actions can potentially also deliver on multiple SDGs; indeed, the analysis of gender responsive biodiversity actions in the Mexico case study identified co-benefits for nine SDGs.

Synergies with gender actions under the Rio Conventions

While all the case studies and snapshots do not explicitly refer to synergies with gender priorities in the Rio Conventions, many are examples of these synergies in practice. For example, one case study (Uganda) specifically addresses coherent delivery on the gender commitments of the Rio Conventions. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification’s (UNCCD) Gender Action Plan (2019) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change’s (UNFCCC) Enhanced Lima work programme on gender and its gender action plan (2019) refer to gender actions in land degradation and climate, which have many synergies with biodiversity. The best practices in this publication contribute to several types of gender action prioritized by the UNCCD and UNFCCC, particularly:

- Promoting equitable access to land and natural/biological resources;
- Equal voice in decision making at all levels and in key processes;
- Economic empowerment through sustainable livelihoods;
- Enhancing women’s capacities and access to knowledge and technologies;
- Gender balance, participation and women’s leadership;
- Monitoring and reporting, including improving availability of sex disaggregated data; and
- Improved knowledge base on gender and climate change/ land degradation.²⁴

These types of action correspond with the action areas and some of the implementation mechanisms outlined above.

²⁴ This typology is based on the priorities for action in the UNCCD GAP (2018) and the priority areas in the UNFCCC Enhanced Lima work programme on gender and its gender action (2019).

Innovative approaches, including application of traditional and new approaches and technologies

Best practices include examples of innovative approaches, such as different techniques to work on intra-household power dynamics (e.g. Mozambique, Nepal), scaling up the application of traditional approaches in watershed management and agrobiodiversity that have been integrated with scientific data (Bolivia), and using computer applications to engage women and youth in environmentally-friendly city planning (Ethiopia). A number of innovations were identified to support women's economic empowerment and to help women carry out wildlife protection. For example, crowdsourcing for funds has helped women environmentalists save an endangered species (Indonesia). Women have also been empowered through being linked with banking services via tablets (Kenya) and through payment for ecosystem services (PES) schemes (e.g. Kenya, Uganda). Two best practices (e.g. Nepal, Asian regional case study) show how small grants can be mobilized specifically to promote innovative tools and approaches as well as gender equality and social inclusion.

Financing from new/non-standard partners (private sector, public private producer partnerships, Green Climate Fund, etc.)

One best practice (India Navdanya snapshot) shows how the private sector can support both biodiversity outcomes and women's empowerment. Two case studies (e.g. Mexico, Tunisia) include examples of public private producer partnerships, one in the context of an access and benefit sharing (ABS) agreement and another that gives women clam collectors access to international markets and fair prices. In both cases, informal women's collectives were first supported to become formal entities, often an important first step to access benefits. One of the case study projects (Armenia) is financed by the Green Climate Fund, many are supported by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and a number by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) among others. Various bilateral donors and multilateral funds are also supporting gender responsive actions.

Initiatives undertaken at larger scales

'Larger scales' in this publication means operating at a scale beyond a small number of communities, with many best practices operating at even larger scales within countries. Some initiatives span more than one country. Some best practices at smaller scales are included where they contain an innovative approach that could be scaled up, and indeed one of the key messages of this publication is to scale up innovative and effective approaches in gender responsive biodiversity where they exist.

CONCLUSIONS

Some overarching conclusions may be drawn from the above findings to support Parties, indigenous peoples and local communities, and stakeholders in implementing post-2020 biodiversity actions in a gender responsive manner.

While fewer best practices than may have been expected were identified in gender responsive budgeting at the national and project levels (possibly due to limits of the review exercise), this remains an essential 'building block' to turn objectives and commitments into practice. In addition, while much has been written on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women, the review revealed only one best practice (Ethiopia snapshot) that explicitly tackles the issue. This may be due to the fact that related assessments have not yet been undertaken or published in time to be available for this review. As the Ethiopia best practice shows, an understanding of gender roles is central to understanding the different risks faced by women and men. The uncertainties faced by women and men due to pandemics and natural disasters among others call for biodiversity actions that work for women as well as men, boys and girls, in the 'new normal', such as ensuring that the household retains a place in a programme, in case of migration or death of the head of the household.

The review confirms that gender responsive policy and programming can support not only gender and biodiversity outcomes, but also contribute to the implementation of many SDGs. Such approaches can also contribute to gender priorities of all the Rio Conventions, for example in increasing access to, benefits from, and governance of natural resources. Innovative approaches and technologies, including reviving and applying traditional knowledge, are being used to engage women as well as men, change gender stereotypes and transform gender relations in the context of biodiversity, and could be scaled up by Parties, indigenous peoples and local communities, and stakeholders. Parties, indigenous peoples and local communities, and stakeholders can also access gender responsive biodiversity financing, including through the private sector, which is emerging as a partner in terms of providing markets for gender responsive and sustainable products. Financing mechanisms have significant influence on the degree to which biodiversity actions integrate gender dimensions, by including related requirements and guidance, and should therefore continue to keep progress on gender under review.

CASE STUDIES



ARMENIA

Fostering forest resilience and women's equal energy access

Participatory gender analysis and gender action plan inform project design

The 'Forest resilience of Armenia, enhancing adaptation and rural green growth via mitigation' (2020–2028) project has just been approved at the time of this review, and the case study is therefore focused on project design, and how a participatory gender analysis and gender action plan can lay the foundation for improving forest resilience, as well as empowering women in a large-scale initiative. A longer implementation period, significant resources and the gender requirements of the funding body (Green Climate Fund (GCF)) are some potential operational success factors, as is the emphasis on basing actions and targets on data and demographics.²⁵

Best practices

HOUSEHOLD SURVEY AND DESK RESEARCH FOR CONTEXT-SPECIFIC GENDER ANALYSIS

FAO commissioned the NGO Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment to carry out a household survey in order to provide a baseline for the project gender action plan and inform the broader project design. This differs from typical project design approaches, which often integrate gender aspects into household surveys – if at all – rather than have a specific focus on gender.

REFLECTION

A specific focus on gender dimensions, in terms of the sample of respondents and questions, can be considered best practice:

- (i) Where the demographic reality is that women comprise the majority or a significant share of the target beneficiaries, for example due to out-migration of men or abandonment; and/or
- (ii) Where there is a lack of relevant sex disaggregated data at the subnational level.

REFLECTION

Choosing an organization and/or experts with gender expertise to conduct/carry out household surveys can help ensure these issues are taken into account from the outset. In this case, the NGO chosen to carry out the survey has experience of promoting women's empowerment and gender equality in Armenia's environmental sector.

²⁵ Adapted from funding proposal: GCF/B.26/02/Add.13: Consideration of funding proposals - Addendum XIII Funding proposal package for SAP014.

The survey was conducted on a one-to-one basis and around 65 per cent of all respondents were women. This emphasis on women reflected findings of the desk review that long term out-migration of males from rural areas has resulted in many *de facto* female-headed households left to carry on farming activities. Although on paper women may not be the landowners, in practice they often comprise the majority of farmers in rural areas. The decision was therefore made to reflect the high proportion of women in target areas in the sample.

The household survey findings included differences in forest use between men and women, and found that a key challenge for women's participation in forest and pasture management is their lack of awareness of opportunities. Interestingly, women seem to be more active in decision making when:

- (a) They have to assume responsibility as head of the household; and/ or
- (b) They are employed or are engaged in public activities, and as a result are more independent; and/ or
- (c) There is a culture of joint decision making within a family.

These findings indicate both gender-based *differences* as well as gender *gaps* that the project needs to address. For example women and men appeared to have different opinions on the importance of participatory community decision making, which has implications for the proposed community forest management model promoted in the project. Understanding these differences between men and women helps to identify likely supporters of a community approach during implementation. In addition, women's roles involve food preparation and they are therefore directly impacted by changes in energy fuelwood, which the project takes into account.

GENDER ACTION PLAN (GAP)

The project GAP builds on findings from both the household survey and a desk review of policies and available statistical data. The GAP has a clear and simple structure and sets out gender related actions, indicators, targets, budget and responsible actors as well as a timeline for selected project outcomes/ outputs. Some of these are presented below.

Box 2. Selected GAP provisions in Armenia's forest and energy nexus

Selected best practice provisions are presented below together with brief comments on their significance.

Project Component 1: Climate change mitigation and adaptation through forest investments and technology transfer

Project Outcome 1: By Year 8, at least 2.5% of degraded forestland is restored and sustainably managed following a climate adaptive methodology

Gender responsive actions related to project outputs:

→ **Ensure sex disaggregated statistical data on the targeted communities in order to equally involve male and female population in project activities and enjoyment of the results.**

Related target: 100% of all project documentation contains data disaggregated by sex, and where possible by age.

REFLECTION

The emphasis on sex-disaggregated data is critical in order to make visible women's and men's participation and in order to take timely action if targets are not met. Further, disaggregating the data by age adds a more nuanced approach and paves the way to identifying gender issues by life stage and then adjusting the intervention if needed.

→ *Identify women activists/groups to support project activities e.g. planting, rehabilitation, afforestation.*

Related target: At least 30 per cent of beneficiaries are women, or women's groups.

REFLECTION

The GAP specifies that the 30 per cent is a minimum target and that the goal should be 50 per cent or even more, depending on the demographic situation in the project area.

→ *Include gender awareness raising sessions in community training, as well as sectoral training.*

Related targets:

- (i) At least 80 per cent of the community / sectoral training sessions include a gender session;
- (ii) At least 30 per cent of participants in the community trainings are women.

REFLECTION

The targets relate both to the content of training sessions and participant numbers. Other targets and issues related to training and capacity development to be considered when designing projects include:

- (i) The proportion of female/ male trainers, especially where the cultural context means female trainers are likely to be needed to enable women's participation;
- (ii) Accessible timing that takes into account women's and men's different workloads and safety;
- (iii) Accessible venues that take into account women's and men's different mobility restrictions; and
- (iv) Practical support to help women in particular to overcome typical barriers in joining training opportunities e.g. access to childcare and transport.

Project Component 2: Promoting forest sustainability reducing forest degradation drivers.

Project Outcome 2: By Year 6, fuelwood dependency of targeted rural communities is optimized and decreased by at least 30 per cent.

Gender responsive actions related to project outputs:

→ *Review of the main national policies on energy efficiency and practices to assess if gender concerns are adequately mainstreamed, and provide recommendations, based on stakeholders' consultations that solicit the views and opinions of women and men on the ground.*

Related target: Gender perspective is mainstreamed in at least two national policies on energy efficiency.

Box 2. (Continued)

REFLECTION

This action lays the foundation for sustainable gender equitable outcomes by embedding gender issues into national policy. The participatory approach inclusive of both women and men is also good practice as it gives voice equitably in decision making at the national level. The GAP has provisions to advocate for women's participation (at least 30 per cent) in forest and natural resource management councils and groups.

→ *Ensure participation of women in the project management committee, planning and activity meetings.*

Related target: At least 30 per cent of the participants of the project management committee are women.

REFLECTION

This is an important concrete measure to begin giving women (from different age groups, ethnicities, income status etc.) visibility in the male dominated fields of energy and forest management, as well as a say in the project itself. It is also important to offer training to enable women to participate actively and effectively in meetings.

→ *Conduct awareness raising to attract more female students to study forest management/energy efficiency / renewable energy in vocational education institutions.*

Related target: At least 30 per cent increase in numbers of female students enrolled in relevant studies in vocational educational institutions.

REFLECTION

This best practice is helping to develop a 'pipeline' of qualified women to join an otherwise male dominated sector by addressing gender stereotypes. The eight-year project period is helpful as it allows some time for sensitization actions to take effect.

→ *Include female-headed households in the list of beneficiaries.*

Related target: At least 30 per cent of female headed households in the project area benefit from the project.

REFLECTION

This focus on female heads of household is very much in line with the demographic in the project area. Other initiatives should consider ensuring that their gender related actions and targets also align with the demographic profile in target areas, where women often make up at least half of the potential beneficiaries.

A key operational measure specified by the GAP is that the overall responsibility for implementation lies with the Project Manager, with technical support from a gender specialist. This may be a helpful approach to ensure that gender issues are not sidelined. Violence against women (VAW) is also identified in the gender analysis and while the risks of escalating the level of VAW due to the project implementation are assessed as low, the project proposes to dedicate specific attention to profound awareness raising work with communities and families, especially men. This is an important measure or safeguard against unintended risks associated with women's empowerment measures.

Source: Adapted from funding proposal package for 'Forest resilience of Armenia, enhancing adaptation and rural green growth via mitigation'.²⁶

Expected impacts and results

INCREASED WOMEN'S CAPACITIES

In addition to the gender-related benefits expected in the GAP, the overall project results framework has a target that at least 30 per cent of women from the community, local authorities, the private sector and civil society are trained in sustainable and climate adaptive silviculture.

IMPROVED ACCESS TO ENERGY

Another target is that at least 25 per cent of 9,000 households using energy efficient stoves will be headed by women.

INCREASED ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The project is expecting to bring over 130,000 hectares under sustainable and climate adaptive management and increase forest cover by about 2.5 per cent in target regions. This will contribute to increased carbon sinking potential, avoided emissions of over 20 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalents, and people will be less exposed to climate hazards.

²⁶ Available at <https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/gcf-b26-02-add13>

BELIZE, BARBADOS AND FIJI

Networking, building capacity and awareness

Women's networks as multipurpose fora

This case study shows how a forum to bring together women and stakeholders in a biodiversity related sector can result in multiple benefits for biodiversity and gender equality, including giving visibility to gender issues in male dominated sectors.

Best practices

LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR A GENDER RESPONSIVE FISHERIES PROJECT

In Belize, the Marine Conservation and Climate Adaptation Project (MCCAP) focuses on ecosystem-based marine conservation and climate adaptation measures to strengthen the climate resilience of the Belize Barrier Reef System and its productive marine resources. The project document commits to the project placing specific emphasis on gender equity through the design and implementation of alternative livelihood activities. During project preparation, women were found to play an integral role in harvesting marine resources both through their involvement in fishing and in the marketing of fish products. Women are also involved in a supporting role where they prepare materials and supplies for fishing expeditions and manage household income from fishing.

Consequently, the project undertook to ensure that women have an opportunity to participate in and express their aspirations during the identification of subprojects for funding. Furthermore, the project encourages spouses and youth from fishing families to develop subprojects for financing. The project explicitly committed to examining gender related issues that affect the well-being of fishing families and inhibit the participation of women. Women are also given the opportunity to participate in all training activities carried out under the project. Importantly, the project undertook to ensure that women have a role in decision making in order to benefit directly from project resources and to strengthen their position.²⁷ One of the initial project activities was to carry out a gender perceptions study, focusing on the perception of women in fishing communities with regard to gender equality in general and specifically within the fisheries sector.

THE NEED FOR A DEDICATED PLATFORM

Given that women's roles in the fishing industry are not fully understood, valued and therefore not systematically integrated into fishing policy and practice, the project decided to organize a dedicated forum to begin addressing this situation. The first Women in Fisheries Forum (WIFF) was organized in Belize 2017, and had multiple objectives, including the promotion of gender equality and equity in the allocation of resources, rights, status and responsibilities between women and men in the fishing sector.

²⁷ Source: Project document available at <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/55BelizeMCCAPProjectProposalJune52014-2.pdf>

In addition, one of the objectives of the WIFF was to review the outcomes of the gender perceptions study and identify issues and challenges. A third and related objective of the WIFF was for participants to jointly draft an Action Plan to mainstream gender in the activities of Government Departments and other stakeholders on the basis of the study and WIFF consultations.

REFLECTION

Bringing together women in sectors in which they are underrepresented or have inequitable benefits can be an important opportunity to strengthen networking between women as well as other actors who can help improve women's benefits. It may also be a valuable opportunity to give visibility and momentum to fragmented initiatives for a greater collective impact.

Women in Fisheries Forum, 2019. © Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies, Barbados



FORUM RAISES AWARENESS OF GLOBAL VOLUNTARY GUIDELINES FOR SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES

A key outcome of the first WIFF in Belize was to raise awareness of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (also known as the SSF Guidelines, prepared by FAO). The SSF Guidelines are the first international instrument dedicated entirely to the small-scale fisheries sector, and they call for equal participation of women and men in organizations and in decision making processes. The SSF Guidelines also encourage countries to challenge gender discrimination in laws, policies, customs and practices – not only in fisheries, but in society as a whole. Gender equity and equality are core objectives and guiding principles of the SSF Guidelines, and gender considerations are frequently addressed throughout. Chapter 8 in the SSF Guidelines is about gender equality and equity. The SSF Guidelines also call for responsible management of fisheries, aquatic ecosystems and biodiversity, and stress that the right to use a resource and the responsibility to manage it responsibly go together. The first WIFF included a presentation on these Guidelines, and, interestingly, only two out of over 50 participants had heard of them. As a result, one of the actions in the draft Action Plan on gender mainstreaming for the sector is to raise awareness of the Guidelines including both biodiversity and gender dimensions.

REFLECTION

The SSF Guidelines represent an important global policy instrument with biodiversity and gender equality benefits, yet men and women may not be aware of them. Increasing awareness of the guidelines could be a way to support fishers and fishery workers to effectively engage in policy development processes.

A PRACTICAL PLATFORM FOR WOMEN

In Belize, the WIFF has developed into a platform that supports women to meet their practical needs and advance their strategic priorities. For example, it has allowed women leaders to participate in decision making exercises where strategies are developed to help women at the community level access technical resources in terms of training and other capacity development opportunities. It also provides a safe environment for women to discuss issues affecting them, particularly issues surrounding safe working conditions for women aboard vessels when they go fishing with men, and how to address personal health and hygiene concerns in these contexts. Support is also provided in the provision of data for women to access formal credit, scholarship opportunities, and capacity development in forming cooperatives and women's groups with the capacity to collectively lobby for scarce resources through a strengthened and supportive network.²⁸

28 Adapted from 6th National Report: <https://chm.cbd.int/database/record?documentID=246170>

WIFF GOES WORLDWIDE

Inspired by the WIFF in Belize, other countries have been adopting this approach. In Fiji, a National Forum was organized in 2017 by the Women in Fisheries Network (WIFN-Fiji) together with the Wildlife Conservation Society and the Fiji Locally Managed Marine Protected Areas Network, which brought together stakeholders, including from fishing communities, to communicate the needs and priorities of women fishers. A 'National Stocktake of the Institutional and Enabling Mechanisms that Support Gender in Fisheries in Fiji' was launched at its second Forum in 2019 and in collaboration with the Fiji Women's Fund.²⁹ The need for this analysis was identified in a previous report on women in fisheries in Fiji, and it includes recommendations for WIFN-Fiji to play a central 'one-stop-shop' role in data management on women in fisheries given the many agencies involved and the importance of good data for national policymaking. Fiji has also organized subnational fora, for example in 2018 in its Northern Division, thereby improving the outreach of the forum to women who live far from the Capital.³⁰

REFLECTION

The national stocktaking report in Fiji highlights a number of relevant provisions in the National Gender Policy (2014) and the importance of partnership between the Network and the ministry responsible for gender. This recommendation could be applied to other sectors, in other words, linking gender responsive actions in specific sectors to any national gender policy provisions and building partnerships with the national ministry responsible for gender.

A WIFF was also held in Barbados in 2019, and had a focus on the Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF) Guidelines and linked to a case study on gender in local fisheries value chains. In Barbados, this was the first time a cross section of women gathered to discuss gender equity and equality in the Barbados fisheries sector. The Forum was organized to address the lack of sex disaggregated data and information on fisheries, to assess the different roles and socio-economic contributions of women and men, and support gender mainstreaming in the sector.³¹

Impacts and results

WIFF CATALYZES NEW KNOWLEDGE

The fora in each country provided platforms to discuss and validate research on women and fisheries, as well as to gather new information. For example, the subnational platform in Fiji proved successful in identifying good practices and new ideas to improve gender equality in the fisheries sector. Good practices identified included women's leadership in local institutions, which encouraged other women to actively participate in these institutions. New ideas included establishing women fisher's associations to strengthen their collective voice on natural resource management and for negotiating with middlemen for fair pricing.³² In Barbados and Belize, the WIFF provided a platform for women fishers and stakeholders to share and validate research on gender and fisheries.³³

29 Source: web article. 'Women in Fisheries Network-Fiji launches National Stock take of the Institutional and Enabling Mechanisms that support Gender in Fisheries in Fiji report'. Women's Fund Fiji. 2019. <https://fijiwomensfund.org/women-in-fisheries-network-fiji/>

30 Source: 'Fiji's Northern Division hosts its first Women in Fisheries Forum'. Maunghubahi.S., et al. Women in Fisheries Information Bulletin #28.

31 Women in Fisheries 2019 Forum: Summary Report. Pena,M. et al. Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES) Faculty of Science and Technology, The University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, Barbados.

32 Source: 'Fiji's Northern Division hosts its first Women in Fisheries Forum'. Maunghubahi.S., et al. Women in Fisheries Information Bulletin #28.

33 Gender perceptions study (Belize) and case study on women in fisheries value chains (Barbados), both of which are referred to above.

WIFF SUPPORTS SECTORAL GENDER MAINSTREAMING

An important outcome of the first Forum in Belize was a draft Gender Action Plan (GAP) for the fisheries sector in Belize. The draft GAP included measures to help improve practical issues, such as to do with improving women's access to social protection to offset the seasonality of their work, as well as to support women to take an active role in achieving gender equality through measures such as capacity development and networking. The draft GAP also included operational measures, such as to continue disaggregating data by sex and further research to deepen understanding of the roles of women and men.

REFLECTION

A sectoral forum for women, such as the WIFF, can provide a mechanism for governments and other stakeholders to engage in policy processes to share and obtain women's perspectives on possible gender related actions, and on proposed sectoral policies and programmes more generally.

REFLECTION

Due to the fact that women are often responsible for caring for children, the sick and elderly, social protection measures such as improving childcare and benefits for the sick and elderly can have a positive impact, and free up women's time, energy and financial resources to engage in sustainable livelihoods.

REFLECTION

The replication of the WIFF model in the region and beyond indicates a potential demand for the model in this and other parts of the world. The exact aim and mechanisms could vary according to the context. A similar type of forum may also hold potential to improve gender outcomes in other sectors, not only sectors in which women are less engaged but also in those where women are especially active (e.g. agrobiodiversity).

BOLIVIA

*Concursos and cadernetas ecologicas*³⁴ transform landscapes and gender relations

Comprehensive biodiversity and gender actions based on traditional and scientific knowledge

The ‘Economic Inclusion Programme for Families and Rural Communities in the Territory of Plurinational State of Bolivia’ (2013–2019) has supported the empowerment of women through innovative financing and natural resources management that brings together traditional and scientific knowledge. The *cadernetas ecologicas* have also contributed to discussions in the home about women’s contribution to biodiversity. The project was supported by the Government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia and beneficiaries, the Spanish Trust Fund and the International Fund for Agriculture and Development (IFAD) through both a loan and grant from its Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP).³⁵

Best practices

INCREASING ACCESS TO LAND

An important first step was to enable legal recognition of indigenous communities – a prerequisite for obtaining collective titles to ancestral land and territories and therefore to incentivize longer term investments in natural resource management by women and men.

REFLECTION

When collective titles are recognized, there could be opportunities to ensure that this collective access to land is equitable in practice for both women and men, such as through land use arrangements among community members.

INCLUDING WOMEN IN MAPPING NATURAL RESOURCES

Secondly, geo-referenced ‘talking maps’ (*mapas parlantes*), a visual and inclusive form of natural resource mapping, brought together science and traditional community knowledge to identify key issues as well as techniques and priorities. The resulting maps (three dimensional models) depicted the past and how natural resources were managed, the present with current challenges being faced by communities, and the future, with the envisaged desired status of the community. Women and youth were specifically targeted, and the maps depicted ecological issues, threats to natural resources and local resource management practices broken down by gender, age and ethnicity (i.e. women’s and men’s different access to, control and use of natural resources and how the benefits of these resources are distributed).

³⁴ *Concursos*: competitions, refers to competitive selection process to finance community development proposals. *Cadernetas ecologicas*: ecological logbooks.

³⁵ A multi-year and multi-donor financing window designed to make climate and environmental finance work for smallholder farmers. See <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/publication/asset/39186467>

REFLECTION

It is useful to employ methodologies that are easily understood by women and men in a given context, such as the visual approach used here. Including women and men in this kind of mapping exercise allows their different perspectives in natural resource management to emerge and be taken into account in designing initiatives.

SCALING UP THE APPLICATION OF WOMEN'S AND MEN'S TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

Improved agronomic practices, irrigation and land rehabilitation were three key project strategies for increasing resilience to climate change impacts, as well as for social and nutritional co-benefits. The project recognized the relationship between sustainable management of natural resources, food security and revitalizing traditional knowledge. It therefore set out to recover and replicate this knowledge – especially that of women – and blend it with science and technology for a holistic response to complex environmental challenges.

For example, the project built on concepts of traditional agro-ecosystems, such as the *aynokas* (vertical sections of the watershed in which, each year, a different crop is communally grown) and the *sayanas* (family lands usually close to houses used by families, especially women, to complement the production in the *aynokas*). The project promoted home gardens, with local horticultural and medicinal plant species important to women. Communal seed banks also supported women's roles as custodians of these genetic resources, as well as supporting income generation, food security and nutrition.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO WATER

An example of highly relevant traditional knowledge proposed and adopted in the project is that of the *quthañas*, a water harvesting system used by the Aymara people, which collects water through small dams. The project integrated the system water management scheme to mitigate the lack of water availability due to climate change. This focus on water was also important for women as they often bear responsibility for collecting water.

REFLECTION

Indigenous women and men are the custodians of different kinds of traditional knowledge, which can be mobilized to benefit all members of the community, and obtain biodiversity benefits. An understanding of women's and men's different roles can help to ensure that actions benefit both.

WOMEN HAVE A SAY IN GENDER RESPONSIVE FINANCING FOR NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

The 'talking maps' led to an inventory of options for financing; funding was released through a system of local competitions, or *concursos*. These proved to be successful in engaging communities in sustainable management of ecosystems and the natural resource base. The project emphasized equal participation of community members, including women, in decision-making. Communities were encouraged to decide on their own priorities for funding, according to various criteria that were agreed with them. These criteria included social elements, specifically 'contribution to improvements in community health, nutrition and education'. Selection criteria for initiatives to access finance included better community nutrition, youth inclusion and women's participation, with a minimum participation target of 80 per cent for both women and youth. There was also a special focus on women heads of household, given their greater barriers in accessing natural resources.

REDUCING WOMEN'S WORKLOADS

Women's greater workloads, difficulties in accessing natural resources and challenges/limited access to effective participation in decision-making were among the issues identified. The initial project analysis also highlighted the different roles and capacities of women and men. Understanding these different roles was a key step in designing gender responsive actions. Women's heavy workloads were addressed through various initiatives. These included childcare provision and a *concurso*s theme on technologies to reduce women's domestic workloads, such as the adoption of clean stoves that do not rely on firewood.

REFLECTION

Engaging both women and men in developing criteria for and deciding on community funding can be very empowering, and helps ensure that women and men benefit equitably from the financial resources.

MAKING VISIBLE WOMEN'S HOUSEHOLD CONTRIBUTIONS TO PROMOTE JOINT DECISION MAKING

Cadernetas ecologicas or ecological logbooks were used as a simple yet innovative tool to make visible women's contributions to the household economy, including in natural resources management, as part of a sensitization campaign to promote joint household decision-making.

REFLECTION

Women's contributions to natural resource management and in the home are often invisible. Simple tools to record the work and roles of women and men can be an effective starting point to facilitate greater recognition of women by other family members, and to pave the way for joint decision making.

INCLUSIVE STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS INFORM GENDER ANALYSIS

At the start of the project, a participatory and gender-sensitive methodology developed by CARE International, 'Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis', was used to understand the vulnerabilities, capacities and needs of target communities. This informed a gender analysis conducted by gender specialists, and the findings were integrated throughout the project document.

GENDER AND SOCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY

In line with national policies and those of financing partners, a Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy was prepared, which prioritized the equal access of men, women, youth and indigenous peoples to financial services, markets, productive assets (such as land, water and other natural resources) and decision making. Capacity development for women and support for their full participation in community decision making was also identified as a priority in the Strategy.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS TO SUPPORT GENDER ACTIONS

Alliances with UN Women and various non-governmental organizations enabled the project to access their gender expertise rapidly and to the extent needed.

REFLECTION

Such partnerships can be especially useful if timelines are short, while also promoting sustainable gender-biodiversity gains. Building strategic alliances was part of the project gender strategy for promoting the sustainability of gains in gender equality after the project end.

DEDICATED FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES, INCLUDING ‘GENDER PROMOTERS’

Dedicated staff were recruited to deliver on commitments, including ‘gender promoters’ and a national expert to support project local units. All capacity development initiatives involved women trainers, in order to overcome social barriers for women participants, which prohibited them from mixing with unknown men. In addition to targeting women as well as men, and youth as well as indigenous peoples, the project also allocated a dedicated budget line for women’s and youth-led initiatives in natural resources management. Regular missions by IFAD included gender experts and systematically addressed gender dimensions, rating performance and setting out actions for improvement.

Impacts and results

WOMEN’S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Over 1,200 groups accessed funding through *concursos*, of which 43 per cent were women and 19 per cent youth.

PROJECT REACH

The project reached 27,296 women and 14,345 young people (46 and 24 per cent of total, respectively). Indigenous peoples comprised 74 per cent of the target groups.

INDIGENOUS WOMEN PARTICIPATE IN LOCAL DECISION-MAKING

Indigenous women managed funding directly, many for the first time – this could be considered a ‘transformative’ strategy because this kind of decision making is not the social norm. The project built on this mechanism to embed community priorities, which include those of women and youth, into local development plans.

IMPROVED FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

Diversified food production allowed for diversified diets for households.

WOMEN TAKE ON LEADERSHIP ROLES

Over 500 ecosystems and biodiversity management groups were established with women leaders, and more than 1,000 marketing groups with women leaders were established, focussing on sustainable and traditional products.

IMPROVED ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION BENEFITS

About 1.3 million hectares were delimited and titled, benefitting 157 indigenous communities and more than 15,500 men and women. Over 6,000 hectares of degraded land was restored and/ or rehabilitated. Furthermore, over 15,000 people improved their resilience to climate change, almost 40 per cent of whom are women.

COSTA RICA

Data analysis, policy and institutional innovation to close gender gaps

Government actions to strengthen gender mainstreaming in biodiversity

This case study shows how a focused examination of sex disaggregated data can provide a picture of gender inequalities and also women's potential agency in biodiversity, as well as inform policy actions.

Best practices

NATIONAL LEVEL GENDER AND BIODIVERSITY DATA ANALYSIS

Costa Rica has been making use of data and statistics to understand and overcome gender gaps, or inequalities, in biodiversity-related sectors. For example, the country has combined sex disaggregated data on forests, biodiversity and gender collected as part of the REDD+ programme to establish a baseline on roles and uses of forest resources, as well as beneficiaries of their sustainable use. The data analysis also integrated national census data on land ownership (e.g. the proportion of women and men holding land titles). The data collected included information specifically on indigenous peoples and local communities.³⁶ In addition, Costa Rica has analysed gender gaps within the National System of Protected Areas.

Analysis of the data highlighted that mostly men were involved in decision making within most key institutions – see Figure 1.³⁷

In addition, evidence from the analysis pointed to land ownership gaps between women and men, where women are disadvantaged. Further challenges were identified as follows:

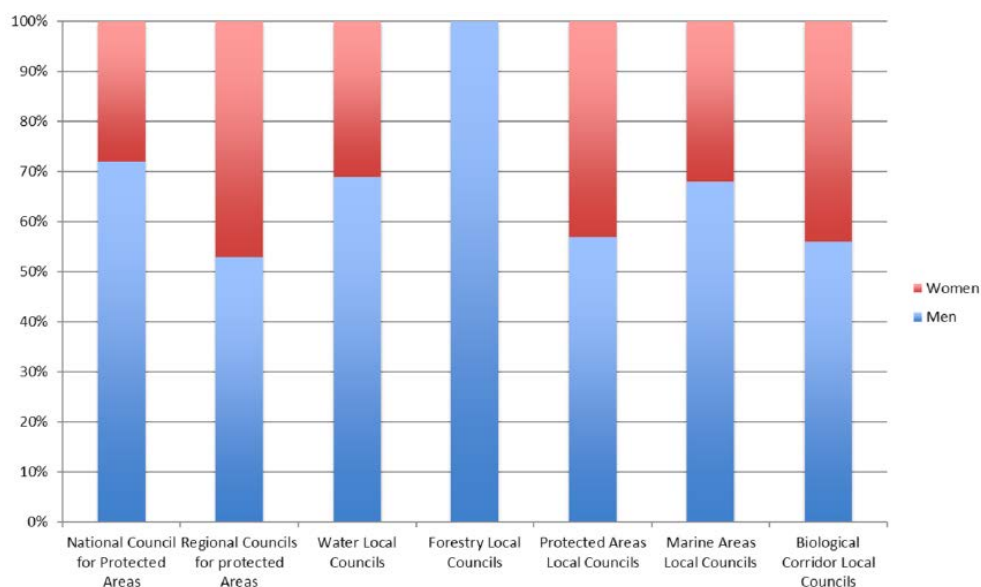
- Low level of knowledge about gender and biodiversity linkages;
- Lack of recognition of women's role in biodiversity management;
- Lack of employment opportunities for women and wage differences between men and women, especially in rural contexts;
- Obstacles to professional development and leadership within environmental institutions and related productive sectors (e.g. forestry, agriculture);
- Infrastructure and working conditions for staff performing fieldwork are not conducive to women's needs; and
- Continuing barriers in accessing finance (e.g. Payments for ecosystem services (PES) schemes, loans and grants).³⁸

³⁶ Pamela Castillo. 2020. Interviewed by Katherine Despot-Belmonte (UNEP-WCMC) on 4th February 2020.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

Figure 1. Representation of women and men in biodiversity related governance structures at the national, regional and local levels³⁹



Furthermore, women and men were found to play different roles in the conservation of forests and its biodiversity, and to benefit differently from the use of forest resources. Gender roles are also evolving and the analysis found evidence of women’s diversified roles and increased opportunities in biodiversity-related fields. For example, women now comprise over 40 per cent of researchers working on permits for access and benefit sharing, and are taking on non-traditional roles such as forest fire-fighters. Women were also found to be conserving genetic diversity such as seeds and other agricultural uses.

REFLECTION

Many of the gender gaps and issues identified in Costa Rica may also be relevant in other contexts. Interestingly, as well as identifying inequalities, this analysis of gender and biodiversity issues has also identified women’s emerging capacities, which could inform policy and legal actions to promote this potential.

POLICY CHANGE

Costa Rica’s data collection efforts on gender and biodiversity have been useful for developing gender responsive biodiversity policy. For example, Costa Rica’s Ministry of Environment and Energy enacted a Directive to close gender gaps and promote women’s leadership in biodiversity, related to water, forests and protected areas.⁴⁰ This new legal instrument requires the Executive Directors of key biodiversity-related institutions to report on actions towards reducing gender gaps within these organisations. The promotion of inclusive infrastructure in biodiversity management, such as women friendly local offices, and the implementation of a policy on sexual harassment are two further provisions.

³⁹ Presentation by Costa Rica at Side Event ‘Opportunities to Address the Drivers of Biodiversity Loss from a Gender Perspective’. SBSTTA 23. 2019.

⁴⁰ Directive No 005-2019 on the Reduction of gender gaps in the biodiversity-water sector, protected areas and forests to ensure equality and the contribution of women to the sector. Ministry of Environment and Energy 2019.

The Directive also requires the Institutional Strategic Plans of key government agencies to include concrete actions for gender equality such as/including to carry out gender analysis for all new strategies, projects and plans, and develop guides on how to include gender dimensions in technical instruments such as the Protected Areas Management Plans. The Directive also promotes inter-institutional and public-private strategic alliances that foster gender and biodiversity linkages. Other policy initiatives include plans to develop a national Gender and Biodiversity Policy, a framework for gender and biodiversity indicators, and provide further support to the Gender and Biodiversity Network, which is already in place.

FINANCING OF GENDER COMMITMENTS

Costa Rica has developed a five-year action plan to generate funds for the implementation of the Directive, and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with UNDP to mobilize funds. Seed funding has been made available to begin implementing some actions.⁴¹ However, further funding is likely to be needed and the Government is exploring potential sources.⁴² A related initiative of the Government is to mobilize financial resources for women leaders and entrepreneurs in sustainable biodiversity products and services.⁴³

REFLECTION

The attention to financing is innovative in that it aims to promote predictable finance flows for longer term actions rather than intermittent activities.

ADVOCACY TO CLOSE GENDER GAPS IN BIODIVERSITY

Costa Rica is also leading efforts to raise awareness on the importance of addressing gender and biodiversity gaps. For example, on International Women's Day in March 2019, the Government organised a high-level national meeting on women and biodiversity. Participants included the Vice President of the Republic of Costa Rica and representatives from the Ministry of Environment and Energy and the Ministry of Women. At the meeting it was declared that closing gender gaps in the biodiversity sector is a priority for the country.⁴⁴

Expected impacts and results

INCREASED REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN AND MORE GENDER RESPONSIVE NATIONAL PLANS

Expected impacts include a more balanced representation of women at different levels in all biodiversity related government institutions, and more gender responsive national plans and programmes, with adequate financing to promote their implementation. Organizations working on biodiversity are expected to have an improved understanding of gender mainstreaming in order to deliver on national and international commitments, and advocacy efforts will support a wider appreciation of the importance of addressing gender and biodiversity gaps.

41 At the time of writing.

42 Pamela Castillo. 2020. Interviewed by Katherine Despot-Belmonte (UNEP-WCMC) on 4th February 2020.

43 Presentation by Costa Rica at Side Event 'Opportunities to Address the Drivers of Biodiversity Loss from a Gender Perspective'. SBSTTA 23. 2019.

44 Ibid.

GHANA

A gender mainstreaming theory of change for fisheries governance

Multipronged gender mainstreaming from policy to practice

This case study is based on the ‘Ghana Sustainable Fisheries Management Project’ (SFMP, 2014 –2019)⁴⁵ supported by USAID. It is an example of a multi-pronged and comprehensive gender mainstreaming strategy, including a gender mainstreaming theory of change.

Best practices

GENDER AS PART OF PROJECT THEORY OF CHANGE

The project aimed to end overfishing and stop the collapse of key fish stocks important to local food security. The project intended to reach this aim by achieving intermediate results, including for gender, with the view that sustainable fisheries management in Ghana can best be attained when all user groups and stakeholders, both women and men, are included in management and decision making at the national and local levels. In the past, women have not been included in fisheries management decision making in a meaningful way.

A GENDER MAINSTREAMING THEORY OF CHANGE

A gender mainstreaming theory of change was developed to set out how the SFMP intended to enable women to be effective leaders, advocating for fisheries management reform and contributing to the overall logical framework and programme strategy. This theory can be broken down into the following statements:

- **If** men and women understand the importance of each other’s roles in the fisheries sector and men agree and support women’s involvement in decision-making;
- **And** women are knowledgeable, capable, and equipped with the policy support, leadership skills, and resources to engage in fisheries management;
- **And** women harvesters and post-harvest processors have the capital and technologies necessary to make a living from available fish;
- **Then** women will support fisheries management reform and reject illegally caught fish, which;
- **Will then** result in the implementation of stronger fisheries management;
- **And in turn** will reduce fishing effort and illegal fishing, which will provide ecosystem services that benefit human well-being and improve resilience.

⁴⁵ This case study is adapted from a report on the results of the SFMP gender impact assessment. E. Torell et al. 2019. *Assessing the Impacts of Gender Integration in Ghana’s Fisheries Sector in Coastal Management*. 2019, Volume 47, No. 6, 507–526., as well as D. Bilecki et al. 2018. *A Formative Assessment of the USAID/Ghana SFMP Gender Mainstreaming Strategy*. The USAID/Ghana Sustainable Fisheries Management Project (SFMP).

GENDER ANALYSIS

In the first year, the project conducted a gender analysis and needs assessment, which led to the development of a gender mainstreaming strategy. An understanding of the different economic impacts of a closed season (when no fish are caught) supported the project's theory of change premise. This premise was that engaging women in the fisheries sector is an important aspect of building powerful constituencies that in turn stimulate a well-managed fisheries sector. Respondents explained that processors with capital and access to storage can stockpile processed fish to sell at a higher price when supply is reduced during a closed season. Furthermore, fish caught during the proposed closed season period are not of good quality for processing because they are laden with eggs and have higher oil content at that time. They have to be sold fresh and are high in volume, so women do not make much money. Indeed, women processor associations supported a closed season in 2018, while fishermen's associations were not ready to accept it.

CONCRETE ACTIONS SUPPORT GENDER MAINSTREAMING THEORY OF CHANGE

To realize its theory of change, SFMP supported the equitable participation of women and men in project activities and promoted gender integration and empowerment in the fisheries sector. Actions included capacity development for women and men, increasing women's access to decision making in fisheries governance and to financial and natural resources, as well as support to gender responsive policy development. Implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy involved approximately 5,000 individuals and activities were organized around three entry points:

- 1. Strengthen fish processor associations**, in which many women are employed, to become more effective stakeholders in fisheries management. Capacity development activities include:
 - (i) Training of trainers, leadership, conflict management, team-building, peer-to-peer study tour to Senegal;
 - (ii) Organizational development for post-harvest processing associations to become more robust, transparent, and representational;
 - (iii) Business development and microfinance targeting women-owned micro and small-scale enterprises; and
 - (iv) Improved processing technology including certification, labeling, and marketing of processed fish.

- 2. Build women's participation in fisheries governance**
Support community-based management and use rights for women oyster harvesters in the Densu Estuary. Activities include:
 - (i) Participatory rapid appraisal and collection of participatory scientific and local ecological knowledge;
 - (ii) Linking university, Fisheries Commission, and other government extension actors into a participatory governance process;
 - (iii) Outreach and training for stakeholder engagement and the formal establishment and capacity development of a co-management association; and
 - (iv) Supporting official approval of a co-management plan.

3. Enable Gender Responsive Co-Management Policy

Work with the Government of Ghana to develop a strategy for mainstreaming gender into the fisheries sector to include provisions in the co-management policy requiring women's participation to develop a strategy on anti-child labour and trafficking in the fisheries sector which includes provisions on promoting gender equity and poverty reduction.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

An impact assessment was carried out at the end of the fourth year to identify to what extent the project had made progress towards changing perceptions, increasing capacity, providing capital and tools, and increasing support for fisheries management (i.e. by rejecting illegally caught fish or leading a local management plan) among women. This impact assessment has enabled the project experiences to be shared more widely to inform programming in the sector.

Impacts and results

GENDER EQUALITY AND BIODIVERSITY IMPACTS

The impact assessment identified successes in the following interconnected areas:

- (i) Women's knowledge, confidence, leadership skills, and advocacy;
- (ii) Strengthening women's associations;
- (iii) Women's access to capital and business development;
- (iv) Impacts on the policy environment; and
- (v) Adoption and implementation of improved fisheries management for women gleaners.⁴⁶

CHANGED GENDER NORMS AND INCREASED WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN FISHERIES GOVERNANCE

The impact assessment noted that as a result of SFMP's work with processors and oyster gleaners, women active within these groups are more confident, knowledgeable, and empowered to speak up. Indeed, increased confidence is one of the largest impacts SFMP has had on its female beneficiaries. They have changed their behaviour and this change is widely perceived to be sustainable as women's meaningful participation in the sector has become the norm. The assessment found that men recognize it is necessary to acknowledge the role that women play in the fisheries sector. Capacity development related to innovation, conflict management, advocacy, and leadership has contributed to women's perception that they have a voice in fisheries management. Women have been exposed to sustainable fisheries management and are better equipped with the knowledge and leadership skills to advocate for good fisheries practices, which they are actively demonstrating – see Box 3 for an example. They are able to discuss fisheries management, including the importance of closed seasons and other fisheries management measures. Training in post-harvest processing has helped women handle fish more hygienically, and support for business management and financial literacy has enabled women to grow their processing enterprises.

⁴⁶ Gleaners: those workers who fish on foot, also known as shore or beach fishers, often gathering shellfish. Source: Social protection for small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean region – A review. FAO. 2019.

IDENTIFIED HOW MEN CAN CONTRIBUTE TO ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY

The impact assessment noted that in order to achieve equitable change, fisheries development projects, such as SFMP, need to take a holistic approach that considers not only how women can become more engaged in fisheries management, but also how men can contribute more to running their households in order to help reduce the general workload of women concurrent to strengthening their role in fisheries management.

GENDER RESPONSIVE POLICY

In the area of policy, the SFMP supported the development of a National Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for the Fisheries Sector that was formally adopted in December 2016. The ‘Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for the Fisheries Sector’,⁴⁷ a best practice in itself, strives to empower fisherfolk, especially women, by enabling their active participation in fisheries management. The strategy highlights women’s roles in the fisheries sector and provides legitimacy to the Fisheries Commission’s extension support to the post-harvest processing sector, which boosted SFMP’s efforts to strengthen their business management skills among post-harvest processors. A first step toward implementation was to train fisheries zonal officers and partners. These frontline agents of change developed a gender mainstreaming action plan, which defined how they planned to address gender issues in the fisheries sector.

INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE SUPPORTING WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION

A small, but important, organizational change within the Fisheries Commission is that it now requires attendance sheets that record the number of men and women attending meetings – collecting information about gender is an important awareness-raising factor. Another implementation step is that a proposed co-management policy requires co-management committees to include women – it also specifies that Chief Fishermen are not mandated to be the Chair of co-management committees, as was previously the case, because that *de facto* excludes women from this leadership position.

REDUCTION IN ILLEGALLY CAUGHT FISH

Women fishers were found to be rejecting illegally caught fish and advocating for more sustainable practices despite the fact that doing so is daunting, in that it goes directly against the interests of their fisher husbands. Rejecting illegally caught fish also means that (mainly male) fishers won’t allow (mainly women) processors to buy *any* fish in a bid to force them to cooperate. Women’s action is making a difference: according to an official at the Fisheries Commission, “the National Fish Processors and Traders Association is positioning to be part of the solution to illegal juvenile and chemical fishing by refusing to buy. This has big implications. It will send a bigger message than an arrest.”

47 Available at <https://ghanalinks.org/documents/20181/0/National+Gender+Mainstreaming+Strategy+For+The+Fisheries+Sector.+Acc>

REVIVAL OF PREVIOUSLY THREATENED OYSTER POPULATIONS

See Box 3 for details.

Box 3. Densu Estuary's rebounding oyster populations

A microcosm of the degradation of Ghana's marine environment, the Densu Estuary is located southwest of Accra. Growing human populations have contributed to environmental degradation and dwindling fish and shellfish populations. Like many artisanal shellfisheries in the Global South, oyster harvesting in the Densu Delta is a vocation traditionally held by women, although some men also engage in this activity – but the labour of women oyster pickers has been invisible, underestimated, or not enumerated at all.

The project supported the Densu Oyster Pickers Association members to develop knowledge, confidence, leadership, and advocacy skills. Strong leadership by women in fisheries management emerged as a result of project support for a proposed shellfish co-management plan granting use rights to a local women-led co-management association that also has male members who harvest oysters. This case demonstrated to stakeholders that, rather than waiting for government action, they could lead their own participatory process, propose, and implement effective local fisheries governance strategies, while including and requesting support from government actors. After only one year, the Association decided to close the oyster grounds for five months in order to allow for a rebound in oyster populations.

MEXICO

Gender responsive NBSAPs and programming

A participatory approach

This best practice shows how gender responsive biodiversity policy development has been undertaken in a participatory way. In addition, Mexico's Government has supported gender responsive reporting of their NBSAP, including findings from on-the-ground action. One notable example is of women producers benefitting from the Nagoya Protocol, an example of a pioneering public-private-producer initiative.

Best practices

NBSAP DEVELOPMENT PROCESS ACTIVELY SEEKS WOMEN'S VIEWS

During the process of updating Mexico's NBSAP (2016-2030), the Government initiated a process of consultation with experts on gender equality and biodiversity in Mexico. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) coordinated an inter-institutional platform, which brought together the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources, the National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity, and the National Women's Institute, with mostly female experts and key actors from official institutions and civil society. This consultation process was carried out within the framework of the initiative 'Strengthening capacities to integrate the gender perspective in National Strategies and Action Plans on Biodiversity', with the financial support of the Japan Biodiversity Fund and IUCN.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN NBSAP

Mexico's NBSAP 2016 – 2030 is made up of six strategic axes, 24 action areas and 160 actions related to biodiversity priorities in the country, including deadlines and the actors involved in its implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Of these, 19 action areas, 50 actions and 44 detailed actions make direct reference to the need to adopt measures to promote and strengthen the inclusion of women in the management and use of biodiversity.

The strategic axis with the most references to a gender perspective is that of 'attention to pressure factors', which highlights the need to promote the participation of women to stop, reverse and mitigate trends in biodiversity decline. The axis of 'integration and governance' has the greatest number of actions and specifications to strengthen women's involvement in leading relations between the government and society in decision making about biodiversity conservation and use.



Capacity development for a gender perspective in biodiversity policy.

© Comisión Nacional para el Conocimiento y Uso de la Biodiversidad (National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity), Mexico

In addition to incorporating a gender perspective in the NBSAP, the government also carried out capacity development to promote implementation – the photograph above is from a capacity development workshop to promote gender responsive NBSAP implementation (November 2018).

The Sixth National Report to the Convention identifies to what extent data on progress against the Aichi Biodiversity Targets is disaggregated by sex – an important measure to allow an assessment of how gender equitable this progress is.

Impacts and results

TRACKING GENDER RESPONSIVE SUBNATIONAL ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT NBSAPs AND SDGs

During the preparation of the Sixth National Report to the CBD, the government launched a call to civil society organizations (CSOs), government institutions, academia, and local communities to identify initiatives and experiences in managing biodiversity with a gender perspective. The aim was to identify their contributions to the fulfillment of the Aichi Targets and SDGs, as well as to define priorities for capacity development for NBSAP implementation at the subnational level. This call yielded around 45 initiatives under the leadership of multiple actors including civil society, environmental funds, international, youth and community-based organizations, botanical gardens, regional arms of the Ministry of Environment and government institutions from the environmental and financial sectors.

REFLECTION

Inviting submissions from a broad range of gender related stakeholders in biodiversity could be a useful approach for Parties in tracking the progress of implementing gender-related commitments in their NBSAPs. The approach may be useful in contexts where it is not possible to organize physical consultations (e.g. in a pandemic scenario and if countries are very large).

The thematic areas identified encompassed leadership programmes for youth, the recovery of ancestral knowledge of plants and seeds to enrich forest nurseries, new development models based on sustainable businesses, watershed restoration and conservation, payment for environmental services, forest management and sustainable fisheries, among others. Initiatives to manage climate-related risk in protected areas and REDD+ implementation were also identified. The gender actions in these initiatives can be summarized as follows:

- Inclusion of women in biodiversity management in different ecosystems and in different social contexts (rural, rural-urban, urban and indigenous communities);
- Recognise and support differentiated and complementary roles of women and men in productive systems with an emphasis on agroecology and agroforestry;
- Identify opportunities through which environmental crises can catalyse women's leadership; and
- Promote women's roles in wildlife protection.

MULTIPLE BENEFITS FOR GENDER EQUALITY, THE ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE, AND SDGS

An analysis of these actions showed that they contribute to all six strategic axes in the NBSAP, 13 Aichi Biodiversity Targets and nine SDGs. The analysis also highlights that these experiences enrich the biodiversity agenda and also contribute to broader development gains, through fostering negotiation processes, equitable decision-making, rural development, business expansion and certification processes.

REFLECTION

The analysis above confirms that gender responsive biodiversity management not only delivers positive gender and biodiversity outcomes but also on achieving the SDGs. Many of the actions identified through the consultations also support the gender commitments of the Rio Conventions. For example, increasing women's access to land, water and natural resources aligns with one of the priority areas in the UNCCD Gender Action Plan (2018).⁴⁸ Similarly, women's participation in the recovery of ancestral knowledge of plants and seeds to enrich forest nurseries aligns with an activity related to gender responsive approaches to conserving traditional knowledge for climate resilience in the 'Enhanced Lima work programme on gender and its gender action plan' (UNFCCC, 2019).⁴⁹

⁴⁸ i.e. 'Strengthening women's land rights and access to resources'. Gender Action Plan. UNCCD. 2018.

⁴⁹ Activity D.3 'Promote the deployment of gender-responsive technological solutions to address climate change, including strengthening, protecting and preserving local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices in different sectors and for improving climate resilience ... ?

Persistent challenges in gender responsive biodiversity management. The analysis also highlights that, despite some positive examples, gender mainstreaming in biodiversity was not without challenges, such as:

- Continuing inequalities in women's access to and control of natural resources such as land, women's voices within the family, and access to educational, financial and employment opportunities;
- Women's lesser access to financing, for example, from private foundations and rural finance organizations; and
- Including women, and those from indigenous communities, in marine and coastal ecosystems management.

FROM POLICY TO PRACTICE: GENDER INTEGRATION IN NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY PROGRAMMING

Moving from policy to practice, Mexico's National Programme for Equal Opportunities and Non-Discrimination Against Women (PROIGUALDAD) promotes a gender dimension in sectoral programming, including in environmental matters. Both the National Commission for Protected Areas (CONANP) and the National Forestry Commission (CONAFOR) include a gender perspective in the operating rules of their programmes. For example, the Conservation Programme for Sustainable Development of CONANP and the Programme for Sustainable Forest Development of CONAFOR guarantee the participation of women, men and indigenous peoples.

REFLECTION

This biodiscovery case study and the subsequent work led by the UNDP-GEF project to support the development of biocultural community protocols are good examples of the strategic role that ABS processes can play to support the implementation of Agenda 2030. Thanks to a relatively small initial investment, the alliance between the Women and Environment group and Provital is generating policy, economic, and social impacts across several SDGs. The governments approach could be adapted by businesses and women's groups, supported by government, and development actors in other contexts. Supporting informal women's groups to formalize is a key step in ensuring they can have equitable access to biodiversity-related benefits.

WOMEN BENEFIT FROM ACCESS AND BENEFIT SHARING (ABS) LEGAL PROVISIONS

Box 4 below presents a best practice in the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on ABS.

Box 4. Women and ABS in Mexico

A powerful partnership between the community, the Autonomous University of Querétaro (UAQ in Spanish), and Provital, a Spanish cosmetics company, supported by the GEF and UNDP, is blazing a trail in gender responsive implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing.

In 2010, Eulalia Moreno, age 79, and her daughters from the community ‘La Carbonera’, in an area characterized by degraded soils and low rainfall, formed a community-based initiative known as *Mujeres y Ambiente* (Women and Environment) with the support of the UAQ. The aim of the group was to support the livelihoods of community members through a micro-enterprise focused on the sustainable use of vegetables and medicinal and aromatic plants. The women producers from the group have also been supported by UAQ students to develop new methods for securing sustainable income through better management of their natural resources.

In early 2016, the group was legally constituted as a company and since 2016 have been exporting *Toronjil* (*Agastache mexicana*) or ‘lemon balm’ for an environmentally minded Spanish company, Provital, with whom they have also secured agreements for the production and commercialisation of additional aromatic and medicinal plants.

In 2016, the partners approached the national focal point for the Nagoya Protocol in Mexico (NFPNP) to learn about the requirements of certification to gain access to a plant and its associated traditional knowledge. The Nagoya Protocol, which supports fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from using genetic resources derived from traditional knowledge, came into force in Mexico in 2014. Under the Protocol, producers in Querétaro’s rural regions signed a first-of-its-kind permit between Mexico and Spain, giving Provital access to the genetic resources of plants cultivated in Mexico for traditional medicine, and compensating rural producers fairly for their labour and knowledge.

Bringing together private enterprise, academic institutions, government ministries, researchers and scientists, this UNDP-GEF supported project is helping to establish the legal framework for ensuring rights to protect biodiversity. The connections with scientists and researchers help communities to identify the chemical constituents of the biodiversity to be preserved, celebrated and sold. The NFPNP advised Provital on legal requirements, including Mutually Agreed Terms (MAT) between the women and Provital.

Working in multiple locations, the project is supporting communities to preserve their ecosystems’ genetic resources and the traditional knowledge based upon them. Benefits are beginning to manifest in the form of business opportunities, employment, research, technology transfer, and capacity development.

Sources: ‘Rural and urban women forge new partnerships to protect biodiversity in Mexico’ web article.⁵⁰ GEF. 2017. ‘A Revolutionary Approach. Rural and urban women forging new partnerships to protect biodiversity in Mexico’ web article.⁵¹ UNDP. 2018.; ‘ABS is Genetic Resources for Sustainable Development’. UNDP. 2018.

50 Available at <https://www.thegef.org/news/rural-and-urban-women-forge-new-partnerships-protect-biodiversity-mexico>

51 Available at <https://undp-biodiversity.exposure.co/a-revolutionary-approach>

NEPAL

Women's participation in biodiversity governance

Comprehensive gender mainstreaming in a large scale programme

The USAID funded Hariyo Ban Programme⁵² aims to increase ecological and community resilience in the biodiverse landscapes of a Chitwan Annapurna Landscape and the Terai Arc Landscape. Phase 1 was from 2011 to 2016 and a second phase is from 2016 to 2021. Governance, gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) are important crosscutting themes. Forest dependent and climate vulnerable people belonging to poor and marginalized groups are the primary beneficiaries, with a special focus on women and youth. This case study is an example of best practice in extensive mainstreaming of gender in a large scale biodiversity and climate change project, working in partnership with organizations and involving extensive gender analysis.⁵³

Best practices

COMPREHENSIVE AND HOLISTIC MAINSTREAMING OF GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION (GESI) IN A COMMUNITY-BASED CONSERVATION PROGRAMME

Both phases of the programme are excellent examples of extensive and holistic mainstreaming of gender and a broader social inclusion agenda into biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation/mitigation. GESI and governance were established as two prominent crosscutting themes which went beyond addressing gender dimensions in specific project actions and emphasised positive outcomes in both gender equality and environmental/ climate areas. This approach was based on a recognition that “(c)onservation of biodiversity, sustainable management of natural resources, and building of resilience to climate change with community stewardship and effective mobilization hinges upon ensuring gender equality and social inclusion”.⁵⁴ The programme identified that women in local communities are responsible for managing many forest resources, and that along with poor and marginalized people, are often the most dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods and well-being.

⁵² Phase I (2012 – 2016) and II (2016–2021).

⁵³ This case study is adapted from (i) Hariyo Ban program – PHASE II fact sheet. USAID. (ii) IUCN submission to CBD Call (iii) various documents referenced in footnotes.

⁵⁴ Final Evaluation. Phase I. 2017.

GESI STRATEGY AIMS FOR EQUITABLE ACCESS TO BENEFITS AND DECISION MAKING

A GESI strategy was developed with the aim of building a GESI sensitive organizational culture, capacity to address GESI issues and implementing programme interventions to

- (i) Increase the access of women, Dalits⁵⁵, indigenous peoples, poor and marginalized groups to participate in decision-making processes and take on leadership roles in natural resources management (NRM); and
- (ii) Ensure equitable benefit sharing. The Hariyo Ban Programme made GESI an integral part of all interventions, prioritizing participation from poor, vulnerable women, and socially excluded groups, and supporting the mainstreaming of GESI into policies, plans and practices of NRM groups, NGOs and government agencies from local to national levels.

GENDER RESPONSIVE BASELINE STUDY

The 2012 baseline study for Phase I included gender expertise on the team, and households were sampled using a stratified random sampling method (dividing the population into smaller sub-groups) based on ethnic composition, sex and economic status. The study team conducted a household survey to capture information on biodiversity, landscape management, climate change, governance, gender and other socio-economic issues. The household questionnaire's sampling strategy meant that broadly equal numbers of women and men were surveyed.

REFLECTION

Sampling approaches that allow for some stratification enable project designers to target specific groups, whereas project designers could consider additional focus group discussions or other consultations in fully randomized methodologies so as to ensure equal numbers of women are included.

Primary data was also gathered through focus group discussions to identify the current status, trends and issues related to biodiversity conservation, landscape management, climate change adaptation, governance, gender and social inclusion, and socio-economic profile of the selected sites.

WOMEN'S LACK OF VOICE IN HOUSEHOLD DECISIONS IDENTIFIED

A key finding on household decision making was that women generally have less say compared to their male counterparts. For example, women were the primary decision makers in just less than 10 per cent of households surveyed, compared to around 37–38 per cent of men – the remainder reported that decisions are taken jointly by both men and women on marriage, land, livestock and family expenditures.

55 The term Dalit means 'oppressed' to the extent of losing original identity. The name has been adopted by the people otherwise referred to as 'Untouchables', and has come to symbolize for them a movement for the eradication of the oppression under the caste system. Adapted from: <https://minorityrights.org/minorities/dalits/>

REFLECTION

This unpacking of intrahousehold decision-making is very useful to understand the full range of potential impacts and risks experienced by women and other household members. On the one hand, efforts to increase women's public roles may be less effective if their meaningful participation is held back by deference to men in the home – in other words, there may be a risk that women take part physically in user groups but do not exercise their voice. On the other hand, there is a risk that efforts to engage women in income generating activities, for example, result in extra workload but do not enable women to take part in decisions on how earnings are used.

LEARNING NEEDS ASSESSMENT IDENTIFIES GENDER RELATED OPPORTUNITIES

An assessment in 2013 identified the extent to which beneficiaries were familiar with a topic, had had access to relevant training, and also the gender balance of participants. For example, it was found that although the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation had developed a Gender and Social Equity Strategy in 2008 and articulated a vision for gender, many stakeholders lacked the capacity to integrate GESI issues into programme implementation, monitoring and evaluation, including identifying and addressing issues of gender-based violence. In addition, it was found that monitoring activities often failed to consider the meaningful participation of women and excluded groups, and their access to finance and markets. In particular, the assessment noted that gender and social inclusion issues were yet to become part of mainstream biodiversity conservation initiatives. Other gaps included a lack of leadership training for women and excluded groups, as well as a lack of gender training for men.

Respondents expressed a need to develop analytical skills for GESI initiatives. Given the clear and pressing need to ensure the integration of gender and social inclusion issues into all aspects of activity in the biodiversity conservation sector, the assessment made recommendations regarding training content, mechanisms and target audiences.⁵⁶

REFLECTION

A gender responsive learning needs assessment can be important to women's and men's different capacity development needs, as well as to identify the extent of awareness of gender equality concepts and provisions.

WOMEN'S IMPROVED ACCESS TO NATURAL RESOURCES AND FOREST GOVERNANCE

Hariyo Ban worked in Phase I with community and public institutions to address structural barriers to community participation by enforcing affirmative policies and reviewing discriminatory ones. For example, the programme guidelines for affirmative actions in Community Forestry User Groups (CFUGs) included guaranteed membership in community forests for all resident community members, 50 per cent female representation on the Executive Committee of the CFUG, representation of marginalized groups, public hearings to promote transparency, and an annual financial audit. More than 400 Community Learning and Action Centers were created for women to come together, identify their most pressing needs, and develop solutions to improve their communities, as well as their own livelihoods.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Hariyo Ban Program Training Needs Assessment and Training Strategy. WWF. 2013.

⁵⁷ Factsheet: Gender Equality, Female Empowerment, and Social Inclusion. USAID. Undated.

These approaches were in line with the baseline study for Phase I, which found that while the poor, women and other disadvantaged groups do generally have an opportunity to speak up in the community, when there are important issues at stake elite male community members influence the decision. The approach was also aligned with studies that have found that CFUGs in Nepal and India with higher numbers of women in decision making roles support significant increases in forest quality and better conservation results for the area.^{58, 59}

The second phase of the programme is scaling up these approaches. It aims for a 30 per cent increase of women, ethnic and marginalized members in leadership positions of local groups, as well as to achieve three results: improved internal GESI policies, standards, and governance practiced by user groups, more women, youth, and marginalized people to be engaged in effective leadership, decision making and advocacy, and more equitable access to and benefit sharing from natural resources for women and marginalized groups.

REFLECTION

As well as supporting women's collectives, it is also important to support women's equal decision making with men in mixed-sex biodiversity-related groups. And in addition to minimum participation targets, capacity development may be needed to support women to speak up and be heard. The Community Learning and Action Centers are an example of measures to enable women to convene and gain confidence.

MALE CHAMPIONS HELP TACKLE GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

In the Hariyo Ban 2 programme area, as in many contexts, gender-based violence (GBV) was recognized as a prevalent problem. Women were identified as particularly vulnerable when carrying out conservation work, patrolling forests, participating in meetings, speaking out about local leaders, and holding positions that were assumed to be outside of their 'qualifications'. Project managers realized that addressing GBV was necessary to enable women to participate in and benefit from the project and to avoid putting them at increased risk. They also understood that working with men would be essential to bringing about transformation. The project developed a cadre of men as champions to fight discrimination and GBV, and also worked to raise awareness on GBV, gender equality and social inclusion issues to promote their mainstreaming into national policies.⁶⁰

SMALL GRANTS AND GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING

These help to channel biodiversity and climate finance to women and marginalized communities/groups. The 'Windows of Opportunity' small grant funds provided an opportunity for a wide range of stakeholders to undertake innovative projects that added value to the Hariyo Ban Programme in biodiversity conservation, sustainable landscapes, climate change adaptation, livelihoods, governance and GESI, through applied research, piloting of promising approaches, policy development, or scaling up activities. The programme provided grants to government agencies and NGOs, community-based organizations, academia and research institutions and by December 2016, 53 projects had been conducted by NGOs and 58 by government institutions with student research grants supporting 64 students in higher education degrees.

58 Gender and Forest Conservation: The Impact of Women's Participation in Community Forest Governance. B. Agarwal. 2009.

59 Adapted from 'Reducing corruption's impact on natural resources – How does a gender lens help in Targeting Natural Resource Corruption? Introductory Overview.' WWF. 2020.

60 Adapted from Reducing corruption's impact on natural resources – How does a gender lens help? in Targeting Natural Resource Corruption. Introductory Overview. WWF. 2020.

A Small Grants Programme in Phase 2 of the programme will promote innovation, capacity building, research testing and/or innovative science and technology. It will pilot new approaches, concepts or tools, rapid response to disasters and unanticipated issues, and maximize new opportunities in the fields of biodiversity conservation, climate change adaptation, livelihoods, governance and GESI, focusing on ecological and community resilience-building. The programme also promotes gender responsive budgeting in local government units.

PARTNERSHIPS

The programme works with communities, civil society, private sector, academia and media, to empower local people in safeguarding the country's living heritage and adapting to climate change through sound conservation and livelihood approaches. The first phase of the programme was implemented by a consortium of four partners: World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE), National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC), and the Federation of Community Forest Users Nepal (FECOFUN). CARE Nepal was the lead on climate change adaptation, governance and GESI and also made significant contributions in watershed management, biodiversity conservation, REDD+ and PES initiatives amongst other areas. In the area of GESI, CARE Nepal worked with the Women Skill Creation Center, an NGO working on women's empowerment issues such as women in politics, domestic violence, trafficking of girls and child labour, as well as in natural resource management and climate change adaptation.

REFLECTION

This approach of working with partners to promote GESI allows projects to access their in-country expertise and may be especially appropriate for larger scale initiatives, when a single project gender expert is not enough. It promotes sustainability, as working through local NGOs and organizations further strengthens their capacities to implement GESI on the ground. Furthermore, it allows projects to access gender responsive tools and approaches that have been developed by partner organizations. In this case, the project's first phase was able to draw on gender responsive community tested tools developed by CARE Nepal under a previous USAID-funded initiative, including a Participatory Governance Assessment, Participatory Well-being Ranking, Public Hearing and Public Auditing, and equitable benefit sharing mechanisms.

Impacts and results

PROJECT REACH

In Phase 1, over one million people directly and indirectly benefitted from project activities, of which 52 per cent were women.

MULTIPLE BENEFITS FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Key results from Phase 1 include:

- Promoting improved gender responsive internal governance of forest groups
- Increasing men's and decision makers' engagement in promoting leadership of women and marginalized groups; and
- Reducing GBV in natural resources management and the identification and mobilization of change agents for social transformation.

GESI is mainstreamed in the climate adaptation component through addressing differential impacts of climate change on women, the poor, marginalized, and other vulnerable groups.⁶¹ A learning point was that GESI and governance tools such as gender responsive budgeting and community scoreboards to evaluate the quality of services do empower communities but need to be scaled up.⁶²

IMPROVED FOREST MANAGEMENT AND ACCESS TO WATER

Improved forest management in Phase 1 contributed to positive perceptions of forest conditions. A project assessment found that more than two thirds of respondents perceived their forest condition as improving, and the Nepal National Forest Inventory confirmed a four per cent increase in forest area. Many respondents reported increased wildlife and almost one third of participants reported increase or improvement in water.⁶³ Over 900 NRM groups were formed, and 70 per cent of these had women in leadership positions.⁶⁴

IMPROVED CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY AND RESILIENCE

In the first phase, over 300 community adaptation plans and 90 local adaptation plans were prepared. Over 18,800 people, including women leaders and NRM group members, were trained on climate change and its impacts, carrying out vulnerability assessments and adaptation planning.⁶⁵

61 Hariyo Ban Program Phase I: Achievements and Learning. WWF. 2016.

62 Ibid.

63 Democracy, Human Rights and Governance and Biodiversity Conservation Linkages. USAID. 2019.

64 Final Evaluation. Phase I. 2017.

65 WWF Nepal. 2017. Biodiversity, People and Climate Change: Final Technical Report of the Hariyo Ban Program, First Phase.

SUDAN

Gender responsive natural resource management for peace

Meeting women's practical gender needs and strategic priorities

This case study is based on the project 'Promoting Gender-Responsive Approaches to Natural Resource Management for Peace' (2016 – 2018), supported by the Government of Finland and jointly managed and implemented by the Sudan country offices of UNDP, UN Environment and UN Women. It shows how meeting women's practical gender needs in accessing natural resources, as well as advancing their strategic interests in having more say in natural resource governance, can make concrete contributions to biodiversity outcomes as well as peacebuilding.^{66,67}

Best practices

MEETING WOMEN'S PRACTICAL GENDER NEEDS

In the locality of Al Rahad, in Sudan's North Kordofan state, the impacts of climate change on traditional livelihoods and peaceful coexistence are keenly felt by sedentary and pastoralist communities alike. Irregular rainfall, drought and increasingly poor soil quality are reducing the productivity of traditional crops – such as gum arabic – and restricting the availability of fertile grazing land. Moreover, the expansion of mechanized agriculture and the closure of cattle routes in the neighbouring region of South Kordofan due to ongoing conflict have limited the historical movements of pastoralists and increased the length of time they spend in Al Rahad, leading to greater competition between resource users over the locality's increasingly degraded environment.

As in other parts of the country and the broader Sahel region, these pressures are resulting in more frequent outbreaks of violence, with worsening outcomes. In addition to violent conflict, the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation are contributing to important shifts in the social composition of Al Rahad. Men have increasingly been migrating to other parts of the country in search of better economic opportunities, with more women left behind to head households. The feminization of the population is further compounded by the gradual sedentarization of some of the pastoralist groups, which not only stay in the area for longer periods of time, but also often split, leaving women and children behind while men continue along the migration route.

In this context, UN Environment, UN Women, and UNDP worked together to ensure that women from all groups had a chance to exercise agency in the governance and management of natural resources, and

66 Practical gender needs are the needs of women or men that relate to responsibilities and tasks associated with their traditional gender roles or to immediate perceived necessity. ... Strategic gender interests concern the position of women and men in relation to each other in a given society. Adapted from: 'Gender planning in the third world: Meeting practical and strategic gender needs.' Moser, C. 1989.

67 Sources: (i) adapted from UN Environment response to CBD Call (ii) Promoting Gender-Responsive Approaches to Natural Resource Management for Peace. Final Report. UNEP, UN Women and UNDP. 2019.

demonstrate leadership in the prevention and resolution of natural resource conflicts. The Joint Project was the first pilot project initiated by the global Joint Programme on Women, Natural Resources and Peace, which aims to promote natural resource-based interventions as a tool for women's political and economic empowerment in peacebuilding contexts.

While ultimately targeting gains in women's engagement in governance and conflict resolution over natural resources, the project adopted a sequenced approach that aimed to meet immediate needs first. The first priority was to secure alternative economic opportunities for local women and bolster their confidence, undermined by years of economic and political marginalization.

Through practical training, women learned adaptive and sustainable vegetable production techniques, how to harvest gum arabic, one of the major exports of the region, and how to plant Acacia trees. They also learned about sustainable harvesting methods and on-farm cultivation techniques and practices, including rain-fed crop production, organic manure and composting, forest management and other methods. The women then established backyard gardens and communal farms that now serve as demonstration sites for knowledge sharing. Furthermore, the project created women farmers' associations to enhance production volumes and ensure sustainability and scale up of the initiative beyond the initial scope of the project's funding. The associations were also supported to access local markets to sell their products, increasing their revenue and boosting their sense of empowerment and self-esteem.

ADVANCING WOMEN'S STRATEGIC GENDER INTERESTS

To develop women's skills for the sound governance of natural resources and to demonstrate their leadership and conflict resolution potential, the project also supported the community to carry out a collective Community Environmental Action Planning (CEAP) process. For the first time, women

Women planting a future, Sudan. © UN Environment



and men from both sedentary and pastoral groups came together in equal proportion to analyze their own environmental challenges and opportunities. Having demonstrated deep understanding of the environmental situation in their region, women representatives took on a particularly strong leadership role in the implementation of the prioritized actions.

In addition, the project specifically sought to strengthen women's capacities for conflict mediation and resolution, and to expand their spaces of influence within the community and its conflict resolution mechanisms. This aimed at changing community perceptions of women's roles and capacities, and at increasing opportunities for women to exercise leadership in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, particularly in relation to natural resource conflicts.

Supporting women's strategic gender interests also requires working with men and those who act as gatekeepers to their interests. The project therefore carried out an extensive sensitization campaign; over 180 community members, including youth groups and traditional leaders, were briefed on key gender considerations related to women's roles, knowledge and agency, and the importance of women's leadership in natural resource governance, management and conflict resolution.

Impacts and results

IMPROVED STATUS OF WOMEN

The socio-economic status of the women in Al Rahad significantly improved during the lifespan of the project, with 87 per cent of women supported through the project reporting increased income. The women successfully demonstrated their ability to exercise leadership in both business and marketing of vegetable and Acacia tree products and in preventing and resolving conflicts in the area, and will continue to do so beyond the project. For example, one of the women's associations supported by the project – the Alsadia Association – has increased its membership from 15 to 40 women since the end of the intervention. Sesame was successfully harvested in October 2018, with a percentage of the proceeds reinvested into the farm to plant the next crop and maintain the cooperative as a self-sustaining enterprise.

INCREASED INCOME

Women also indicated that the income from their home gardens was sufficient to cover daily basic needs, whereas the crops that they cultivated at the farms, such as sesame and sorghum, were considered cash crops that greatly boosted their income. This not only had an immediate positive impact on women's ability to meet their daily needs and that of their families, but also boosted women's sense of empowerment and self-esteem.

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN PEACE PROCESSES

Thanks to the training received and the skills developed on natural resources conflict resolution, the number of women affiliated with the local Conflict Mitigation and Peacebuilding Center, the main conflict resolution mechanism in the area, doubled during the project lifespan. Additional women joined the Center as mediators, bringing the total proportion of women to 40 per cent of members. Moreover, the local center for Conflict Mitigation and Peacebuilding and community committees now include at least two women in all mediation processes, and women's skills are particularly being used in the resolution of conflicts over natural resources. Among other roles, these women now lead Dialogue Forums bringing

pastoralist, farming and Internally Displaced Peoples' communities together in each of the target villages to discuss various factors of tension, including access to land and water.

IMPROVED PERCEPTIONS OF WOMEN'S CAPACITIES

Importantly, the perception of women's capacities, roles and contributions underwent a radical shift and there was a measurable change in community perceptions of the importance of women's roles and contributions, which increased from 54.5 per cent to 100 per cent.

“Now that women have the tools to analyze and develop strategies to address environmental challenges and the impacts of climate change, they are taking actions to protect the environment and forests.”

— Saria Eisa Abdullah, Halima Alsadia Women's Association, Al Sawani Village.

“I realized during the discussions that the men were accepting the opinions of women more. The Community Environmental Action Planning (CEAP) contributed to that because of its implementation from the beginning ensuring that the women were part of all the committees and that their ideas mattered equally.”

—El Amin Sulaiman, CEAP Committee member, Nawa village.

Improved environmental governance

In addition to capacity building for more sustainable agricultural practices, the project led to more inclusive and participatory environmental governance, opening spaces for local women – from both the nomadic and sedentary communities – to use their knowledge to seek solutions for the environmental challenges facing their villages. The women demonstrated strong leadership not only in action planning, but also in mobilizing their communities to implement priority actions, such as rehabilitating water pumps and protecting water sources. Furthermore, women from Nawa leveraged their environmental leadership skills to mobilize their communities to contribute human and financial resources for 6,000 trees to be planted in the area in order to decrease soil degradation.

SCALING UP THE PILOT IN GENDER RESPONSIVE NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN PEACEBUILDING CONTEXTS

The joint project and its approaches to gender and natural resources to sustain peace have influenced various projects in other regions of Sudan. For example, the Community Stabilization and Security Programme of UNDP in South Sudan and Blue Nile States increased the number of women benefitting from livelihood interventions and ensured women's participation in both the Community Management Committees and the peacebuilding sub-committees that were established in each project location. This gave women within these sub-committees the opportunity to work with members of state-level peacebuilding mechanisms in mediation processes. Importantly, good practices and lessons learned from the project are also starting to influence broader peacebuilding investments in the Sahel region, for example in the Mali-Niger border region, where a UN Peacebuilding Fund project building on and adapting the Sudan experience is under development.

TUNISIA

Boosting shell clam populations and women's empowerment

Public-private-producer partnerships

This case study illustrates how the 'Enabling women to benefit more equally from agrifood value chains' project in Tunisia recognized that making visible women's work in the fisheries sector can pave the way for their advocacy for more sustainable practices, more equitable benefits for women and economic empowerment.^{68,69}

Best practices

FAIR TRADE DEAL BENEFITING WOMEN AND BIODIVERSITY

The *Tapes decussatus autochthonous* clam is native to waters surrounding the coasts of Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Morocco and, thanks to its superior quality and taste, is highly popular with chefs. In Tunisia, the clam production sector employs more than 4,000 women at 17 production sites, primarily concentrated in two major coastal areas – Gabès and Sfax – with an average annual production of 700 tons mostly directed for export. Women work long days under the hot sun, with their direct involvement often ending after the harvest. Their earnings, channelled through a multitude of middlemen, are kept very low. A FAO implemented project has been focussing on empowering women collectors and developing a strategic partnership with the private sector to improve the women's income by creating more direct access to valuable markets.

A fair-trade agreement between the *Association of Continuity of Generations* representing the Tunisian Association of Women Clam collectors and Development, the Prince Export Centre for Clams and the Italian importer *Pesca Pronta*, marks an important step in empowering women clam collectors. A specific fair-trade label, designed by the community, has been developed for these Tunisian clams to inform consumers of production practices relating to sustainability, gender inclusion and the quality of the products.

This new approach to clam commercialization in Tunisia provides a win-win scenario for all stakeholders: Firstly, a fixed price set in advance guarantees the predictability of payments and receivables for both the importer and the women collectors throughout the harvest season, while mandatory cash payments are paid by onsite purchasers to the women collectors. An important biodiversity friendly measure is a special payment to women collectors, which rewards them for only taking larger sized clams,

68 Sources: (i) web article 'How an appetite for clams is helping boost women's empowerment in Tunisia'. FAO. 6 March 2020. <http://www.fao.org/gender/projects/detail/en/c/1265738/> (ii) web article 'FAO project supports women clam collectors in Tunisia'. FAO. 13 December 2019. <http://www.fao.org/in-action/women-in-agrifood-value-chains/fao-project-supports-women-clam-collectors-in-tunisia/es/> (iii) Good Practices for Integrating Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Climate-Smart Agriculture Programmes. FAO and CARE. 2019. https://www.care.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/good_practices_integrating_3.26.19.pdf

69 Supported by FAO Multi-partner Programme Support Mechanism.



FAO's project ensures that women collecting the clams in Tunisia are paid more fairly for their work.

© FAO/Amine Landoulsi; Source: www.fao.org/fao-stories/article/en/c/1264855/

leading to a more sustainable production system. This not only allows the clams to repopulate, but it also ensures the continuity of the women's livelihoods for years to come.

PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERS HELP WOMEN ACCESS HIGH VALUE MARKETS

FAO and the Tunisian government worked together with private stakeholders to facilitate privileged access for the women clam collectors to the high value European market, through an equity partnership with the Italian importer *Pesca Pronta*. Its president, Franco Amoruso, explains the benefits for the company: "...As a leading company in the seafood industry, and using our multiyear expertise, Pesca Pronta will market the Tunisian clams, telling everyone the story of this product from its first step in the value chain to the final consumer." He highlighted Pesca Pronta's pride in partnering with FAO and to add more "human value to the products that we distribute ...". The Prince Export Centre for Clams is the depuration centre for the clams, ensuring that the products comply with international food safety standards.

The agreement represents a new step towards a fairer and more sustainable production-export model, reached through a long process of facilitation, advocacy, and capacity development. Marcio Castro de Souza, FAO Senior Fishery Officer, described how a stable and quality supply for the private sector is "associated with fair compensation for the women clam collectors, and operated within a sustainable and environmentally-friendly context."

Policy advocacy for more transparent traceability

FAO has also been promoting a dialogue with the central and local governments to ensure transparency and social justice in the clam fisheries sub-sector. Advocacy at the policy level contributed to a more transparent environment for marketing transactions, especially with regard to the traceability of the process from the capture, weighing and purchase of clams to the delivery to clam exporters. Formalized in a ministerial circular (official communication), this kind of transparency provision was an innovation in the sector. Political will from the government as well as active brokering for a fairer system were two critical success factors in bringing about this change.

IMPROVED EARNINGS FOR WOMEN THROUGH PRACTICAL ACTIONS

A practical action to improve benefits to women was to help them weigh the clams themselves – in many cases, the women were able to triple their earnings because in the past, the middlemen had established a practice of charging for the weighing of the clams that they bought at the landing site using their own scales.

WOMEN'S GROUPS AN IMPORTANT EMPOWERMENT MECHANISM

This initiative builds on the results of a previous FAO Technical Cooperation Programme, 'Strengthening the role of women in the beach clam fisheries subsector'. Previously, women in the clam fishing sector in Tunisia had minimal organizational development, and therefore weak bargaining and advocacy power. In 2011, the project restructured the local fishery management entity that had been set up during a decentralisation process to local governments. Initially made up only of men, women were supported to participate on the Board. The Tunisian Association of Women Clam Collectors and Development was also created to strengthen women's bargaining power and advocate for their interests and rights.

PARTNERSHIPS TO PROMOTE WOMEN'S EQUITABLE BENEFITS

The project also linked women directly to markets, which increased the amount of profit earned and bargaining power of women in the clam fishing sector. Furthermore, the project established a partnership with the Association of Continuity of Generations (ACG), a non-governmental organization, to sensitize clam fishers on their rights and to get them involved in decision making processes, develop their entrepreneurship skills, as well as to engage them in protecting biodiversity and sustainable fishing practices. Opportunities to diversify their income sources were also promoted to reduce pressure on natural resources.

MAKING WOMEN CLAM COLLECTORS VISIBLE TO ACCESS SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

FAO supported the creation of a databank of female clam collectors in specific regions of Tunisia in order to give the government a clearer idea of their background, education and incomes, thereby making them visible and bringing them into the public sphere. A very concrete result is that this database is facilitating the government's ability to provide much needed social security coverage to these women, as the clam-collecting season only lasts for six months, leaving many women without work for the remaining six months of the year.

YEAR-ROUND EMPLOYMENT

Many women across the world in the fisheries sector are engaged in informal work that only lasts a few months a year. Women clam collectors in Tunisia face the same problem, so FAO is working with local associations, including associations of women clam collectors, in the coastal areas of Tunisia to boost sustainable eco-tourism and bring in year-round income. This is being done through the Blue Hope Project, which is helping to scale up gender aspects of the project in Tunisia, Turkey and Algeria.⁷⁰ Encouraging tourists to take an interest in the unique way the local communities gather clams and cook with them is expected to boost income for local communities all year round. Ensuring year-round employment from sustainable sources is a useful strategy to boost women's economic empowerment, as it responds to the challenge of seasonal employment faced by many women.

⁷⁰ See <http://www.fao.org/3/ca6854en/CA6854EN.pdf>

WOMEN-SPECIFIC INTERVENTION MAY BE A GOOD INVESTMENT TO CLOSE PERSISTENT GENDER GAPS

The project in Tunisia is part of a wider initiative ‘Enabling women to benefit more equally from agrifood value chains’, which has also been operating in Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco and Rwanda. The programme focuses on capacity development, institutional strengthening and improving the knowledge base in each country. This initiative may be considered a best practice in that it specifically targets women in order to effectively address entrenched obstacles. This approach can be considered by governments and other actors when multiple gender mainstreaming efforts are not enough to shift major barriers, as it allows a clear focus on gender issues. This specific focus has allowed the initiative to have significant impacts with a relatively modest budget of USD 385,000.

REFLECTION

When it comes to most projects and initiatives, which are not women-specific, a key question is how best to mainstream gender – by integrating gender dimensions throughout outcomes, activities and M&E or by including women- (or men-) specific interventions. The decision depends on many contextual factors including the extent of gender-related barriers or potential and political will to engage. A combination of approaches may represent a ‘no regrets’ strategy, where integrating gender dimensions throughout an initiative helps avoid a silo and tokenistic approach, and can be complemented by gender specific components where there is a particular potential for biodiversity-gender benefits and when it is useful to earmark specific funds.

Supporting women’s collectives, including by helping them to formalize and therefore more easily access social and market benefits, may be a good strategy to catalyze transformational change for both biodiversity and women’s empowerment in some contexts.

Impacts and results

IMPROVED STATUS, EARNINGS AND SOCIAL BENEFITS FOR WOMEN

Economic empowerment may be seen as the most tangible benefit for women, but greater self-confidence to engage in fisheries governance is another important outcome. Houda Mansour, a woman clam collector in the region of Zabooussa (Sfax), explained that before the fair-trade agreement, she and her peers were dependent on the low purchase price imposed by intermediaries who bought their entire production, and they struggled to negotiate. A clear and fair pricing system made them less dependent on prices imposed by middlemen. “Of course, we were exploited, but nobody dared to stand up to these middlemen who were also close relatives and local powerful people,” she said. The price of one kilo of clams rose from 8 Tunisian Dinar (approximately USD 3.30) to 18 Tunisian Dinar (around USD 7.60) for the entire collection season. As Houda described, “this new pricing increases our income, and encourages us to make additional efforts to improve our families’ standard of living.”

MORE SUSTAINABLE SHELL CLAM COLLECTION

The shell clam population has been repopulating, and capacity development in sustainable fishing practices is expected to have broader benefits for the coastal ecosystems. These sustainable fishing practices are being scaled up in the Blue Hope project.

UGANDA

Integrating gender actions under Rio Conventions

Multi-sector gender mainstreaming

This case study highlights how the Government of Uganda aims to coordinate the gender actions of different agencies, such as ministries and local governments, to deliver on gender commitments not only under the CBD but for all of the Rio Conventions and the SDGs.⁷¹

Best practices

GENDER ACTION PLAN TO IMPLEMENT RIO CONVENTIONS' GENDER COMMITMENTS

The 'Strengthening institutional capacity for effective implementation of Rio Conventions in Uganda' project, supported by the GEF, developed a gender action plan (GAP) for the period 2020–2025 that addresses gender commitments under the three Rio Conventions to combat climate change and land degradation, and protect biodiversity. The specific objectives for this action plan include the following:

1. To build and strengthen capacity for gender mainstreaming by all sectors and other institutions implementing the Rio Conventions in national and local governments, with a particular emphasis on common and complementary priorities;
2. To promote equitable and meaningful engagement of women and men in decision making at the national and subnational levels, in policy, planning and natural resources governance in the implementation of the three Rio Conventions, including in the respective processes and reporting; and
3. To establish a mechanism for monitoring the implementation of the Rio Conventions' respective commitments to gender equality and plans of action.

REFLECTION

The development of a single GAP is a useful way to address multiple gender related commitments under the Rio Conventions in a way that maximizes possible synergies in terms of outcomes and resource allocation between the closely interconnected areas of biodiversity, climate change and land degradation. Indeed, this could also integrate actions for relevant SDGs. For example, Target 5A indicators 'proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex' and 'share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure'. Alternatively, a component on the Rio Conventions could be included in national gender programmes.

⁷¹ Adapted from interview with Monique Akullo and Simon Peter Achuu, National Environment Management Authority by Soma Chakrabarti and Tanya McGregor, July 2020., and draft gender action plan.

CONSULTATIVE PROCESS TO DEVELOP THE GAP

The National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) led a consultative process to develop and obtain reviews of a draft gender action plan. Consultations at both the national and subnational levels included the ministries responsible for agriculture, livestock and fisheries, water, environment, and wildlife among others. Importantly, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development was not only consulted but is clearly identified as one of the agencies responsible for implementation in the draft workplan of the GAP. The Ministry is also presented as a key stakeholder in the project stakeholder analysis, underscoring the importance of gender issues. Civil society organizations including universities and think tanks were also consulted. In total, women made up around a third of all those consulted.

REFLECTION

Engaging with the ministry responsible for gender issues is important in order to strengthen their capacities to advise and report on gender and biodiversity/ climate change/ land degradation commitments.

GENDER RESPONSIVE INTER-MINISTERIAL COOPERATION MECHANISM

The project aims to set up a mechanism for collaborative decision making among policymakers on the implementation of the Rio Conventions. The cooperative mechanism is also intended to provide a platform to exchange experiences. The GAP includes activities to make this mechanism gender responsive through ensuring equitable participation of women and men, as well as the representation of the interests of marginalized groups. There is also a focus on content, with one indicator relating to the number of gender consultations carried out under this cooperative mechanism.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The GAP includes indicators for all the activities in the GAP workplan. For example, an activity to develop and implement a capacity development plan on the Rio Conventions (including modules on their gender dimensions) has an indicator on the percentage of male/ female participants at the national and subnational levels.

The GAP also goes further and has provisions to improve gender responsive reporting on the Rio Conventions at the national level. It aims for environmental targets and milestones relevant to the Rio Conventions to be monitored using gender sensitive indicators, and for the development of indicators for key thematic areas (e.g. agriculture, water, forests). All of these are to be in line with their respective National Action Plans (e.g. on climate change and land degradation) and the gender commitments of the relevant Rio Convention (i.e. CBD, UNCCD, UNFCCC).

GENDER RESPONSIVE DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR THE RIO CONVENTIONS

In order to measure progress against the proposed indicators, the GAP also provides for the development of gender sensitive data collection tools and systems that meet the needs of the Rio Conventions – good quality information is a major focus of the whole project. Activities include:

- (i) Identification and development of databases and datasets disaggregated by sex;
- (ii) Development of gender responsive data collection and sharing protocols between stakeholders as well as quality control/validation procedures; and
- (iii) Establishment of a central sex disaggregated environmental and climate information management system.

REFLECTION

This focus on sex disaggregated data is important not only to measure progress, but also to make visible the different contributions and benefits of women and men in biodiversity and in tackling climate change and land degradation.

DEDICATED RESOURCES FOR INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN GENDER

The GAP includes a costed workplan, which is widely recognized as being necessary to support implementation and can be useful to solicit resources.

ENABLING ENVIRONMENT SUPPORTIVE OF GENDER EQUALITY

The project GAP will not be implemented in isolation, but builds on a national track record in supporting gender equality including in sectors related to biodiversity. For example, the GAP is aligned with the Gender Strategy of the National Environment Management Authority, which is in turn aligned with an Environment and Natural Resources Sub-Sector Gender Mainstreaming Strategy (2016-2021). Participating ministries in the project GAP also have gender strategies – the Ministry of Water and Environment, for example, has a Water and Sanitation Gender Strategy (2018–2022) with a vision of: ‘An environment where men, women and vulnerable groups are empowered to access and manage water resources in an integrated, equitable and sustainable manner’.

The Uganda Gender Policy (2007) also includes measures to track progress on national gender mainstreaming requirements. It requires that annual ministerial policy statements are monitored for compliance with a gender lens by the Equal Opportunities Commission, an oversight body. The 2018/2019 report by this Commission indicates that rate of gender integration in key ministries engaged in this project, including the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, Ministry of Tourism Wildlife and Antiquities and the Ministry of Water and Environment, have been improving significantly in recent years, which in turn implies a strong foundation for the gender responsive implementation of the Rio Conventions.

Furthermore, Uganda's national action plans for the Rio Conventions already integrate gender considerations to varying degrees. For biodiversity, the second NBSAP (2015 – 2025) went through a gender mainstreaming process led by a Gender Task Force, including wide consultations with gender stakeholders. The NBSAP has a range of activities designed to make it more gender responsive, including the development of gender responsive guidelines for implementing NBSAPII. With regard to climate change, Uganda has set up a gender and climate change technical team to strengthen gender mainstreaming into the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) to reduce national emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change.⁷² In addition, there is a dedicated gender technical team for climate change Conference of the Parties negotiations and a gender focal point for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).⁷³ Uganda has also commissioned gender analysis to inform Uganda's NDC.

72 Agreed as part of the Paris Agreement in 2015.

73 UNDP. 2019. Gender and NDCs: Country Progress and Key Findings.

BEST PRACTICE SNAPSHOTS



COUNTRY EXAMPLES

AUSTRALIA

Advocating for women's access to benefits and voice in water governance

Freshwater resources around the world are under threat. While women often play critical roles in providing, managing and safeguarding water resources, women's participation in decision making over water resources remains limited. The Government of Australia therefore supported the first Women and Rivers Congress in 2019, organized by the Women and Rivers Network. The Network's coordinators are International Rivers, Oxfam and the Women's Earth Alliance, and sponsors include a range of government and civil society organizations and private foundations.⁷⁴ The event brought together around 100 women from more than 30 countries around the world to celebrate the fundamental role women play in defending and stewarding freshwater resources, and to spur collective action to challenge deep-rooted gender inequities that women face in safeguarding rivers and river ecosystems.

Congress themes included:

- (i) Conservation and biodiversity;
- (ii) Law, tenure and community management; and
- (iii) Rivers and gendered livelihoods. This last theme focused on women's leadership in fisher / farmer communities, and in CSOs working with communities to support women's rights.

The Congress resulted in a strong statement of solidarity between women to protect rivers and their rights to river-related benefits, as well as to engage in governance of these precious resources.⁷⁵ Another key result was the 'State of Knowledge: Women and Rivers in the Mekong Region' report, developed by International Rivers with input from partners and supported by Oxfam.⁷⁶ The report highlights women's contributions to better governance, social, and environmental outcomes for rivers in the region. It spotlights women's achievements in water decision making and river governance, but also the major barriers to their leadership and 'visible' participation. It also references good practice examples of where women have assumed important roles in governing the rivers and water resources on which they and their communities depend. The report includes a useful reflection on possible success factors for women's leadership in the sector; the value of formal and informal networks to support women in leadership roles, and enhanced access to knowledge and capacity development were two of the success factors identified. Parties and other stakeholders could consider supporting both of these approaches in their biodiversity actions.

74 American Jewish World Service, Arcadia, Australian Aid, Global Alliance for Green and Gender Action, Global Greengrants Fund, Government of Sweden, MacArthur Foundation, Oxfam, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Synchronicity Earth

75 Available at: <https://www.womenandrivers.com/women-and-rivers-congress/nagarkot-statement>

76 Available at: <https://www.womenandrivers.com/resources/state-of-knowledge-women-and-rivers-in-the-mekong-region>

BANGLADESH

Land tenure security

In the highly fragile southern delta of Bangladesh, a project was initiated to support viable livelihoods for *char* dwellers⁷⁷, through a comprehensive set of measures to stabilize the land with dykes and trees to protect it from climate change impacts, to undertake agricultural and non-farm activities, and to build roads, markets and cyclone shelters serving also as schools. Tenure security interventions included establishing equitable institutions to govern access to natural resources and clean water, with equal participation of women and men in management. A key strategy has been to formalize settlers' land title deeds, including the introduction of land certificates issued in the name of both spouses, with the woman's name first. In the event of a divorce, the land remains with the woman. This is an interesting approach in contexts where women have little land tenure security and few assets.⁷⁸

BRAZIL

Women and men agrobiodiversity guardians

An IFAD supported initiative (Rural Sustainable Development in the Semi-arid Region of Bahia, 2014 – 2022) seeks to enhance local agrobiodiversity and empower women and youth to actively participate in agricultural decision making. With a total financing of USD 95,000 million the project is currently reaching 62,000 families. Biological and cultural diversity in agroecosystems is crucial to the resilience of smallholder farmers as plant species and varieties cultivated and selected over generations have adapted to local conditions and can withstand pressures posed by pests and extreme weather events.

Women play an important role in the preservation of biodiversity and the nutrition of their families – of the total biodiversity identified at an Agrobiodiversity Fair in 2019, 638 and 445 species and varieties were exhibited by female and male 'biodiversity guardians' respectively. However, women are often excluded from decision making in the use of natural and economic resources, so the project seeks to strengthen female agency by supporting networks to collectively confront social, gender and ethnic-racial inequalities and violence, as well as to expand women's access to production and commercialization opportunities. The project reinforces women's leadership capacities and prioritizes their access to technical assistance, training and capacity building. One project target is that 50 per cent of beneficiaries are women or young people. Participatory meetings with both men and women are held to address issues such as domestic violence, women's rights and gender roles. Furthermore, the project encourages women to participate in agricultural activities traditionally undertaken by men, such as goat and sheep farming. Women occupy 70 per cent of management positions of the project's community associations and organizations – a major achievement as these are traditionally led by men.

⁷⁷ *Chars* are river deposits that can be islands or attached to the mainland.

⁷⁸ Adapted from: The Land Tenure Security Advantage. A catalytic asset for sustainable and inclusive rural transformation. IFAD. 2020.

COLOMBIA

Buen Vivir (living well) and biodiversity to empower women

Providing political, legal, and other forms of support for collective action in local communities can improve biodiversity conservation and livelihoods. This includes gender responsive community conservation and community governed forest restoration initiatives. Women, using their traditional knowledge, have developed best practices for biodiversity conservation in their communities, such as recovery and valuation of local seeds and creating ‘community reserves’ for conservation and agroecology, such as in Santander, Colombia. The Peasant and Community Reserves Collective of Santander has emerged as a local initiative in response to different phenomena: the burning and felling of native forests, the advancement of monocultures with the indiscriminate use of agrochemicals, industrial livestock farming, and the loss of ancestral knowledge and practices of forest care and biodiversity. It also seeks to halt the alarming displacement of rural people caused by clashes with armed groups.

The women of the Peasant and Community Reserves Collective are actively engaging in community conservation and food sovereignty initiatives, including preserving traditional seed varieties nurseries, agroforestry, and organizing fairs and bazaars for selling their products. They are creating livelihood alternatives based on their connection with the land and reviving their culture. They are also making concrete suggestions for greater gender equity, including strengthening women’s rights in access to land and the creation of women focused economic activities. These initiatives have also contributed to the increased inclusion of young women, who previously lacked livelihood and educational opportunities. Men are also joining activities usually considered only for women, for example, food processing and embroidery. The Peasant and Community Reserve Collective is having a multiplier effect, as more community reserves are being declared.⁷⁹

79 Adapted from Global Forest Coalition (GFC) response to CBD Call. For a more detailed case study, see pages 39-40 of the report ‘Toward Buen Vivir with Gender Equality and Environmental Justice’ (GFC, 2020) available at: <https://globalforestcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/LAC-gender-assessments-EN.pdf>



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ECUADOR

Gender capacity development for effective ABS implementation

The Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing (2010) is an important instrument to protect the unique traditional knowledge of women and men, so that they enjoy the benefits associated with this knowledge. Since 2018, Ecuador's National Service for Intellectual Rights (Spanish acronym SENADI) has been building the capacities of communities, including indigenous communities, in mechanisms to protect traditional knowledge. Equal participation of women and men in training sessions has meant that all members of a community can benefit from shared knowledge. Key topics have included free, prior and informed consent (FPIC), why and how to make voluntary deposits of traditional knowledge associated with biodiversity and beyond, to prevent their misappropriation, as well as familiarization with the relevant provisions of the national Organic Code on Social Economy and Knowledge, Creativity and Innovation (2016).⁸⁰ Over 200 voluntary deposits have been made, mostly by women, related to ancestral medicine associated with spirituality.⁸¹

In 2020, the Ministry of the Environment also launched a training module on gender and biodiversity management, as part of a project supported by the GEF.⁸² As well as key concepts and examples, the module includes facilitation tips that take account of different cultures.

⁸⁰ Adapted from Government of Ecuador response to CBD Call for submissions.

⁸¹ Adapted from: <https://www.ec.undp.org/content/ecuador/es/home/presscenter/articles/2019/con-204-depositos-voluntarios--ecuador-consolida-la-proteccion-d.html>

⁸² Available at: <https://community.abs-sustainabledevelopment.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/MODULO-GENERO-Y-GESTION-DE-LA-BIODIVERSIDAD-WEB-1.pdf>

CHINA

Gender mainstreaming standards making a difference

The Chinese Foreign Economic Cooperation Office (FECO) has developed comprehensive gender mainstreaming standards relevant to GEF financed projects. They call for gender analysis, sex-disaggregated data including qualitative data, gender budgeting, gender actions that address practical gender needs and strategic interests, and for surveys to address gender-based differences. FECO tracks various indicators including: whether the proportions of men and women project/plan developers are balanced; whether gender experts are hired in programme development; whether the proportions of men and women beneficiaries are balanced; and whether there are differences between benefits expected for men and women. A key principle is that projects will not exacerbate gender inequalities. FECO has also developed a methodology for monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming and an indicator system.⁸³

COSTA RICA

Supporting formalization of women's informal collectives for decent work

On the Pacific coast of Costa Rica, many communities depend on traditional methods of fishing for food and income. Yet, they represent one of the most vulnerable communities, lacking the resources and opportunities they would need to lift themselves out of poverty. Many of these mollusc gatherers are women who work in the informal sector and do not have access to social protection, despite the risks posed by their work, such as exposure to toxic algae, allergies from contact with mud, dehydration, arthritis and stroke resulting from sudden temperature changes. Women fishers are particularly marginalized as they receive little recognition of their roles and knowledge, lack clear rights to these natural resources and often they are not part of any local cooperatives that can support their development and strengthen their negotiation power.

In order to address this issue, FAO has been working together with the Costa Rican Institute of Fishing and Aquaculture, the Costa Rica National System of Conservation Areas and CoopeSoliDar R.L., a national group committed to human rights-based approaches to conservation of marine resources and improving local livelihoods. As part of these efforts, FAO and its partners have helped women fishers engage with the Government to obtain legal recognition of their work and achieve better working conditions to improve their livelihoods. Women mollusc gatherers have worked towards a participatory mollusc sustainable use plan, which will guarantee them permits that ensure their labour rights and clarify their rights to legally capture molluscs. The permits will also grant them access to healthcare, retirement pensions and social security.⁸⁴

⁸³ Adapted from FECO response to CBD Call for submissions.

⁸⁴ Adapted from web article: 'Costa Rica: Improving working conditions of women fishers'. FAO. 2016.

ESWATINI

Changing customary practices for inclusive natural resource management

Changing how women are regarded in the context of traditional societies represents a significant challenge in certain societies. In Eswatini, the project team of the IFAD-implemented and GEF financed Resilient Food Systems programme succeeded in working with local groups to relax the customary practice where women were not allowed to speak in meetings in which men were present. This was achieved through an open engagement with the chiefs on the socio-economic status of women and the chiefs' realisation that the failure to empower women was undermining the welfare of their villages. Following this engagement, the chiefs' advisory committees and the Chiefdom Development Committees opted for more gender balance and inclusiveness in these village fora, including in the Natural Resource Management Committees. Currently, women are demonstrating their leadership as the majority of 'lead farmers' with demonstration plots to share sustainable agricultural practices in communities. They are working with the private sector in apiculture value chains and have been supported by capacity development in sustainable land and water management in a Land Degradation and Ecosystem Health Surveillance Framework.

ETHIOPIA

Women making a difference on the front lines of dangerous zoonotic disease spread

In Ethiopia, women and men in rural communities know little about zoonotic diseases — those that jump between animals and humans. Yet infectious diseases remain a major threat for both animals and humans. Studies show that women and men are at risk of catching zoonotic diseases for different reasons. Making communities aware of how and why zoonotic diseases spread is critical. 'Community conversations' is an approach that has shown great potential to begin to change deep-rooted cultural behaviours around hygiene and gender issues to stem the spread of zoonotic disease. The aim of the conversations was to protect women and men from the transmission of zoonotic diseases, particularly those whose livelihoods bring them into direct contact with wild animals via markets. Tackling deeply ingrained cultural perceptions about what constitutes a man's or woman's work was a cornerstone of these community conversations. Participants said that women often had less information, because when agricultural service providers visit the home and share information about animal health and human consequences, it is men who are contacted. Yet targeting women is important, as it is often women who spend more time on activities like milking cows or cleaning out the barn of manure – activities that directly expose people to zoonotic disease.

After listing activities that men and women did in the household, women began to realize that men did not realize how heavy women's work burden was, which prompted them to ask for help. Involving trusted traditional leaders, religious leaders, farmers, elders, animal health experts and researchers in the community conversations has been critical for encouraging commitment among participants. Surveys conducted after a series of community conversations, showed that those believing raw milk is not a health risk dropped from about 64 per cent to about five per cent among women and from 50 per cent to almost five per cent among men. Awareness raising of health and gender issues along with other measures could help Ethiopia tackle zoonotic diseases among women and men on the front lines of zoonotic disease transmission, prevention and treatment.⁸⁵

GERMANY

Identifying men's and women's different perceptions of nature

Germany has been monitoring citizens' awareness of nature and willingness to act to protect it since 2009. Its 'Nature Awareness Study' promotes biodiversity awareness and takes place every two years, receiving feedback from approximately 2,000 respondents. Responses and analyses are disaggregated by sex, which allows for tailored communications on biodiversity by the Government.⁸⁶

In general, and across different topics and survey dates, women show a higher awareness of nature, more positive attitudes and more willingness to act for the conservation of nature and biodiversity than men. For example, women were heavily over-represented, and men heavily under-represented amongst those strongly agreeing that they:

- (i) Would like to be assured that there is no trade in fish products from endangered species; and that
- (ii) When they eat fish from the sea, they make sure that these are not endangered species.

Encouragingly, similar proportions of women and men were 'very willing' to participate actively in a nature conservation association in order to help conserve biodiversity. This kind of sex-disaggregated survey can be very useful to consider in order to understand and track attitudes towards biodiversity in order to target communications and efforts to build coalitions to undertake actions in support of biodiversity.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Adapted from: <https://www.ilri.org/news/annual-report/protecting-women-ethiopia-front-line-dangerous-zoonotic-disease-spread>

⁸⁶ See <https://www.bfn.de/en/activities/social-affairs/nature-awareness.html>

⁸⁷ Adapted from Government of Germany response to CBD Call. See link for 2017 Survey: <https://www.bmu.de/en/publication/2017-nature-awareness-study/>

INDIA

Global campaign of women on biodiversity, cultural diversity and food security

'Diverse Women for Diversity' is the gender programme of Navdanya, an organization which works at the local, national and global levels on issues of biodiversity, food and water as well as women's empowerment. It works to bring women's voices from the local and grassroots level to global fora and international negotiations. It seeks to strengthen women's grassroots movements and provide women with a common international platform. Navdanya works to promote agrobiodiversity, for example through establishing community seed banks in over 20 Indian states, many of which are now running independently of Navdanya's support. Over the past two decades, Navdanya has trained and created awareness among approximately 750,000 farmers in seed sovereignty, food sovereignty and sustainable agriculture, and established a conservation and training centre. More than 4,000 rice varieties have been collected, saved and conserved by Navdanya in the last 30 years. Forgotten food crops such as millets and pulses have been conserved and promoted by Navdanya.

Groups of farmers (mostly women) are organized to collect, propagate and exchange traditional seeds and related indigenous knowledge. Members of the community seed bank are responsible for conservation of indigenous varieties. The members collect the seeds available in their village. The seed bank is provided with the initial supply of seeds by Navdanya, either from farmers who are already cultivating them in surrounding villages or from the existing seed banks, or from farmers of similar agroclimatic regions. Farmers interested in growing indigenous varieties are also given technical support on how to do so organically. At the end of the season, after they have had a chance to create their own seed stock, farmers return the seed together with what they borrowed from the seed bank. These seeds are then given to other farmers in the next season. Navdanya's role is to help communities to run the seed bank, with the community taking over the management over time.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ Adapted from: <http://www.navdanya.org/site/living-seed/navdanya-seed-banks>

INDIA

Women ‘barefoot ecologists’ support environmental monitoring

The Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve in India is home to indigenous communities, and Keystone Foundation’s Community Based Ecological Monitoring model fosters a ‘Barefoot Ecologists’ Programme with women as well as men in these communities. Barefoot Ecologists in this programme are men and women with traditional ecological knowledge, who are trained in agrobiodiversity monitoring including observing, recording and analysing biodiversity data, data collection and interpretation, and sharing of data produced. Women as well as men are involved in Programme development, from setting goals and defining methods, Women Barefoot Ecologists currently include natural historians, seed savers, kitchen gardeners, fuel efficient stove makers and traditional healers. They collect data on monthly agricultural activities, wild food consumed in their village and wildlife sightings. The Programme provides an opportunity to include the traditional knowledge of both women and men in the management of natural resources, and rebuilds their sense of stewardship of the natural resources on which they depend.⁸⁹



Barefoot Ecologists from two Protected Areas

⁸⁹ Adapted from Keystone Foundation response to CBD Call.

INDONESIA

Gender responsive environmental law enforcement

The Indonesian government, supported by the Government of Australia and the UNDP, is developing an integrated approach to environmental law enforcement, in order to better investigate and prosecute environmental crimes. UNDP is working with the Directorate General of Law Enforcement under Indonesia's Ministry of Environment and Forestry on a five-year gender mainstreaming roadmap (2019–2024) and an annual plan for its implementation. The Roadmap provides guidance on mainstreaming gender equality into policy and regulations, capacity building, and gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation.⁹⁰

INDONESIA

Including women in Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) benefits and decision making

The Bujang Raba Community Payment for Ecosystems Services (PES) project, supported by the Rainforest Foundation-Norway, conserves endangered primary rainforest in Sumatra's Bukit Barisan forest through a REDD+ intervention, with mitigation activities that aim to reduce emissions from avoided deforestation between 2014-2023. The project involves indigenous communities in protecting tropical mountainous forests. It recognizes women's active role and extensive knowledge on the use and management of natural resources, as well as their high vulnerability to the degradation of forests and water resources and their traditional exclusion from decision making within these villages. As a result, it has given indigenous women a central role in planning and implementation of activities, especially in promoting existing women's cooperatives. A key point is that local people had been granted tenure over their village forests.

The project so far has not only empowered women, it has also provided climate change mitigation benefits, improved sustainable management of community forests and their conservation areas by local communities, improved agroforestry systems and generated multiple income alternatives that yield important social benefits, and contributed to the conservation of 5,336 hectares of important primary forest ecosystems that harbour significant biodiversity.⁹¹

⁹⁰ Adapted from Government of Australia response to CBD Call for submissions.

⁹¹ Adapted from RFN response to CBD Call and Project Design Document (2015) available at http://www.planvivo.org/docs/Bujang-Raba-PDD_2016-06.pdf



Women wildlife rangers in action. © International Fund for Animal Welfare

KENYA

Community women break gender stereotypes to become wildlife rangers

The International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) has been implementing a project called TenBoma in Kenya, with a view of improving wildlife security⁹² and thereby safeguarding the iconic African elephant and thousands of other species living in the landscapes they call home. TenBoma – meaning ten houses – is inspired by an African community security philosophy that if ten houses look out for each other, the broader community is safer. In 2018, the TenBoma Project implemented by the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) began to involve women in the community to expand wildlife security in the Amboseli ecosystem.

IFAW organized, engaged and trained community women's groups to get involved in wildlife security and ecosystem conservation and at the same time empower them through banking using tablets and livelihoods training. The women were trained on how to use cameras and photograph wildlife whenever they encounter them in their daily activities. Through this initiative, women were able to capture different wildlife activities as well as human wildlife conflict incidences, which provided evidence that women and men are equally affected by human wildlife conflict. The women therefore challenged IFAW to consider hiring women as community wildlife rangers so that they could contribute to law enforcement. It should be noted that these women come from the Maasai community, which is strongly patriarchal in nature, with elders (men), sometimes joined by retired elders, deciding on most major matters for each Maasai group.

⁹² This encompasses both wildlife poaching as well as human-wildlife conflict.

In the same year, IFAW recruited its first group of women rangers, named Team Lioness, in what became the first female Maasai Community Wildlife Rangers group in Kenya. Team Lioness were trained through a field ranger course and peer-to-peer learning, and since then they have been working alongside male counterparts in providing security around Amboseli National Park, including anti-poaching efforts and managing human-wildlife conflicts.⁹³

KENYA

Including women's priorities in Biocultural Community Protocol

In 2019, the Endorois community launched their Biocultural Community Protocol (BCP)⁹⁴. The Endorois are a minority and marginalized ethnic group from Baringo County, Kenya. In order to regain access to natural resources fundamental to their way of life after losing their lands, they applied to and obtained confirmation of their rights from the African Commission on Human and People's Rights. They then formed a community-based organisation, the Endorois Welfare Council, and began the process of preparing a BCP to safeguard their resources and put in place proper access and benefit sharing mechanisms.

Traditionally marginalized from decision making, women came together in groups to ensure their voices were heard in this process, and to add their support to the Endorois cause. One such group is the Endorois Women Forum, which represents women on matters involving their rights to participate in decision-making, and to be heard, and rights to resources and to ownership of land. The Endorois Women Forum succeeded in placing a woman representative on the Endorois Welfare Council, while youth are represented by both a male and a female representative. The Vice Chair of the Council's Board is also a woman. Through advocacy, Endorois women were represented during the preparation of the BCP and were able to share their ideas as well access capacity development to monitor the use of their resources.

Through this joint effort, the BCP is set to impact the entire community including men, women, youth groups and future generations to support the stewardship and conservation of their resources and to safeguard their access and benefit sharing rights, while addressing the threats they face as a community.⁹⁵ Affected stakeholders need to be aware that community level engagement, including that related to equitable access to benefits from land and biological resources, should also strive to ensure equal participation of women. Despite having much to contribute, their participation in community decisions is not a given.

93 Adapted from IFAW response to CBD Call.

94 Available here: http://www.abs-initiative.info/fileadmin//media/Knowledge_Center/Pulications/BCPs/Endorois-Peoples-Biocultural-Protocol.pdf

95 Adapted from CBD Women's Caucus response to CBD Call.

KYRGYZSTAN

Alternative avenues to empower women through biodiversity protection

BIOM Ecological Movement, a Global Forest Coalition member in Kyrgyzstan, has supported self-organized rural women's groups in generating sustainable livelihood initiatives, skill sharing and networking. In the remote region of eastern Kyrgyzstan, the village of Darkhan sits a few kilometres away from the giant Kumtor gold mine, the world's second largest producer of gold. The mine has had many impacts on local life, including changes in the landscape which exposed the community to high winds that are driving people away from the area. To counter this, and to increase their climate resilience and preserve local fruit varieties, women in the village have planted over 500 native trees and fruit bushes. By reducing winds and soil degradation and preserving native species, they are protecting the community's ability to feed and care for itself.

Actions have also contributed to new livelihoods opportunities for migrant women and supported their integration into society, along with other excluded groups. Efforts have been made to increase awareness and action on gender equality and the environment by targeting school children in communities. Another result is that women's leadership and the number of women in decision making bodies has also increased.

In many local communities, young women are often economically dependent on men and excluded from decision making. This makes it difficult for women's groups to support them, as they are prevented from attending meetings or events. Women in the Chuy region have therefore been finding alternative ways, such as through needlework and tree planting sessions, to raise issues such as bride kidnapping, forced marriage and other gender-based injustices faced by women and girls. The group has also organised tree planting sessions with boys and young men to create space to discuss ending gender-based violence in the community.⁹⁶

LAO PDR

Putting women at the heart of NBSAPs

In 2018, UN Environment and its partners undertook a project to place women at the heart of the NBSAP process in Lao PDR. The pilot project, also implemented in Myanmar, aimed to ensure that gender concerns were incorporated into the NBSAP implementation, to promote gender responsive implementation and monitoring, and share lessons learned with other countries in the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). The initiative was funded by GIZ through a collaboration with the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity, the responsible ministries in each country, the UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) and the IUCN. A workshop in Lao PDR supported participants' understanding of the role of gender in biodiversity, and resulted in a draft national roadmap for implementing gender considerations. Lessons learned will be used for learning to scale up gender responsiveness in NBSAPs in other ASEAN countries.^{97,98}

96 Adapted from GFC response to CBD Call and photo essay 'Women's rights, traditional knowledge and biodiversity' (GFC, 2020) available at: <https://theecologist.org/2020/mar/19/womens-rights-traditional-knowledge-and-biodiversity>

97 Adapted from UN Environment response to CBD Call and: <https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/story/putting-women-heart-national-biodiversity-action-plans>

98 Workshop report available at: https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/content/documents/2018/gender_roadmap_workshop_report.pdf

MALAWI

Data driven forest management for equity

In Malawi, policy reviews were undertaken to assess the level of gender mainstreaming in policies in the environment and natural resource management sector. Based on the findings of these reviews, policy and implementation guidelines were enhanced to integrate gender considerations more effectively. Malawi's National Forest Landscape Restoration Strategy (2017) was developed based on spatial mapping of sex disaggregated data, to determine priority restoration areas to benefit both women and men.⁹⁹

MOZAMBIQUE

Engaging men and boys in addressing gender inequality in the household

The World Bank's Integrated Landscape Management Portfolio includes interrelated projects and activities that promote the sustainable management of renewable natural resources and improve livelihoods in the country's most vulnerable rural communities. A Gender Gap Analysis and Action Plan for the Portfolio aims to provide guidance on how natural resource management projects can address common manifestations of gender inequality that limit women's development, their potential to generate wealth for their families, communities and the economy as a whole, and their participation in managing natural resources. As well as interventions to increase women's participation in sustainable value chains, the plan places strong emphasis on engaging men and boys and addressing gender inequality at the household level.

One approach is through the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) – a step by step methodology that mentors household members (both men and women) to identify barriers to economic and social progress – which are often linked to gendered division of labour in the household – and to work together to find solutions and build stronger and more diverse livelihoods. Experience from Mozambique shows that GALS helps households increase their combined income, enjoy greater household equality and division of labour, and enables a stronger voice from women in the household and community. The portfolio is also supporting Community Savings and Credit Groups that help 3,000 households, primarily women, to improve financial planning and savings of households, which largely enables families to keep children in school, and/or apply ecologically sound farming practices.¹⁰⁰

99 Mphatso Kalemba (CBD Secondary National Focal Point, SBSTTA National Focal Point for Malawi), interviewed by Katherine Despot-Belmonte (Programme Officer, UNEP-WCMC) on 3 February 2020.

100 Adapted from blog 'For Mozambique, promoting biodiversity conservation includes gender equality'. World Bank. 2020.

MYANMAR

Women's leadership and economic empowerment in fisheries

Through its project 'Accelerating Sustainable Coastal Livelihoods in Southeast Asia', the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) Myanmar is working with small-scale fishing communities to develop and sustain co-management of marine resources. In Myanmar's small-scale fishing communities, decisions related to fisheries management are typically taken by male community leaders, while women's roles in the fisheries value chain often remain undervalued. Furthermore, less attention is generally paid to managing resources that are harvested by women, such as gleaning – a method for collecting snails, shells, sea cucumbers, urchins, seaweed and fish in shallow coastal and estuarine zones and freshwater, or in habitats exposed during low tide. Recognising this under-representation in fisheries management, WCS has been working with the Department of Fisheries to promote female representation in small-scale fisheries management. For example, in Kyeintali sub-township in southern Rakhine State, WCS supported the establishment of 50 per cent female representation in the co-management committee. The project has also helped to empower women's active participation in its activities, strengthen their voices and representation, and build their confidence and leadership skills.¹⁰¹

PHILIPPINES

Women champions mobilize crowdfunding to save endangered buffalo species

The Tamaraw or Mindoro dwarf buffalo is a small hooved bovine endemic to the island of Mindoro, now critically endangered due to human habitation and hunting. An innovative finance solution was conceived, to develop a documentary to raise awareness on the decline of the buffalo, to mobilize funds. UNDP's Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN) worked with national partners and international women champions working *pro bono*, to produce a video that examines the significance of the tamaraw and how its survival is tied to the indigenous Mangyan People and the conservation efforts of rangers. The documentary has started to generate funds, and has inspired other individuals to take action and contribute to these efforts. Another woman champion in the Philippines was so inspired that she established Eco Explorations, an ecotourism organization, which donates a portion of proceeds to local communities and sustainable tourism initiatives.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Adapted from SwedBio submission to CBD Call.

¹⁰² Adapted from Government of Germany response to CBD Call. Germany is a donor to BIOFIN.

SOUTH AFRICA

Women are central to implementation of national community seedbank strategy

South Africa's Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, in collaboration with Bioversity International, initiated a community seedbank strategy to support smallholder farmers to revive and improve their traditional seed saving practices for the sake of food security and conserving national agricultural biodiversity. A pilot community seedbank was established in Gumbu, with strong spontaneous involvement of women – this active engagement was likely due to the women's roles in seed management. In 2017, 40 women farmers were managing the community seedbank. They gave priority to nutritious and tasty crops and varieties that are easy to combine in traditional dishes, require few inputs, are drought, pest and disease resistant and have a short growing cycle and long-term storage quality.

The women were trained in various aspects of community seedbank management, including seed registration and seed health. Close attention was paid to facilitating the organizational development of seedbanks, with particular attention to local power and gender relations. Open discussions were organized to enable all those present to speak up about issues and contribute to decisions. The most appropriate governance structures were also discussed, and a special committee was established – in Gumbu, with all those elected being women. The committee developed a plan for a new structure and obtained financing from Bioversity International and the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. The first seed collection included Bambara groundnut, bean, calabash, cowpea, finger millet, maize (red, yellow and white), melon, mung beans, pearl millet, pumpkin, sorghum and sweet sorghum and watermelon. The Gumbu women stated that they would use the new structure not only for managing their seeds, but also as a new space for women to meet and interact about other village matters. The pilot is being scaled up in the country, and various tools to support the scaling up of the experience could be applied in different contexts – they emphasise the centrality of women and give practical guidance in how to engage women as well as men.^{103,104} This initiative shows how building on women's expertise in biodiversity related sectors can empower them and support agricultural biodiversity.

TANZANIA

Women leaders shape urban nature

INTERACT-Bio (2017–2020), an initiative funded by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, has aimed to improve the utilization and management of urban nature within fast growing cities and the regions surrounding them. Women leaders have played a key role in project implementation in the city and associated municipalities of Dar es Salaam, as well as in partner NGOs. During the scoping phase, a senior female planner in the city of Dar es Salaam emphasised the importance of city greening efforts. Her proposal led to the development of a 'Thematic Atlas of Nature's Benefits to Dar es Salaam'.

¹⁰³ See <https://www.bioversityinternational.org/seedbanks/>

¹⁰⁴ Adapted from 'Implementing a national community seedbank strategy'. Bioversity International. 2017.

At each stage of development, the project benefited from the leadership of women heading key municipal bodies, including the Ilala Municipal Council. The project engaged with the Ilala Municipal Council team, headed by a woman, to develop a Local Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (LBSAP). The team leader guided the project team to align the LBSAP with Municipal Council priorities as well as ensure an inclusive process. The Ilala LBSAP development process also benefitted from support from a senior woman representative of the division responsible for NBSAP implementation, and provided the national level perspective throughout the process. All city level products and processes developed for Dar es Salaam were endorsed by the Dar es Salaam City Director, who is also a woman. Finally, contributions to technical products and outreach activities were successfully implemented by a range of NGOs, all led by women. The leadership role played by these women has made a significant impact, not only on the achievement of project goals, but through their attention to inclusivity, to ensuring that capacity has been built for women and men towards a greater appreciation and sustainable use of nature's benefits in urban settings.

UGANDA

Women with no assets access carbon purchase agreements as loan collateral

Trees for Global Benefit (TGB), an initiative of the Environmental Conservation Trust of Uganda (ECOTRUST), is a cooperative community carbon offset scheme developed to enable poverty reduction through effective management and protection of forest ecosystems on which local people depend. TGB seeks to reduce unsustainable exploitation of forest resources and the decline of ecosystem quality, while diversifying and increasing incomes for rural farming families. Both men and women are given an opportunity to attend trainings, plant trees, and access carbon finance through TGB. Programme recruitment involves the entire household. Women who have purchased, inherited or been granted access to land by their spouses are encouraged to plant trees and TGB has also put in place provisions for the spouse or children to inherit a place in the Programme in case of death.

The main gender responsive strategies employed include:

- Undertaking gender sensitive socio-economic analysis before introducing the programme in a new community;
- Working with all members of a household, including in situations with multiple wives;
- Designing activities around time-sensitive events during the day and within the community to include different groups of stakeholders;
- Raising awareness of the potential extra workload the project may impose on some members of the household, especially women and youth;
- Involving women in leadership responsibilities;
- Working with organizations focused on vulnerable groups, including women's networks; and
- Providing avenues for marginalized groups to access social services (e.g. ensuring those without assets are able to use carbon purchase agreements as collateral for loans).

To date, over 2,000 farmers have been supported to invest in sustainable management of their land, leading to improved management of at least 3,000 hectares of private land. Over 3,000 households were mobilized to participate in sustainable forest management, and 25 per cent of the project activities were led by women. More than 400 of these women have been able to use their carbon purchase agreements as collateral for loans.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵ Adapted from IUCN submission to CBD Call.

ZAMBIA

Women gain entry into wildlife governance and employment

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) supports an Integrated Land and Resource Governance Programme (ILRG) that carried out an assessment, during implementation, to analyze the drivers and threats to Zambia's wildlife and forestry resources management in relation to gender issues. The aim was to provide information and recommendations for the ILRG Programme¹⁰⁶ and to act as a resource for Zambia's wildlife sector on gender responsive natural resource management.

The assessment found that although communities have rights to manage wildlife and forestry, there are no guidelines on women's roles within these governance systems, only strong gender norms that support male dominance in these sectors. The limited funds of community resource boards (CRBs) are generally not being used to serve women's interests, and women's representation and voice in resource management institutions such as CRBs and community forest management groups are very low. Women do not have the same employment opportunities as men in the wildlife sector. The criteria for wildlife scout¹⁰⁷ selection ends up excluding even well qualified women candidates, and education qualification requirements end up excluding many women. Yet the assessment makes clear that both women and men interact with wildlife, depend on it for subsistence and cash income, and bear responsibility for the sustainable use of wildlife resources.

Based on the assessment findings, the programme is working with civil society partners on practical ways to improve women's participation and empowerment within the natural resource management sector. In 2020, it is supporting the training of the first cadre of female wildlife scouts, and rolling out gender sensitive election guidelines and training for CRBs in partnership with the Department of National Parks and Wildlife and Zambia's National Community Resource Board Association.¹⁰⁸ This type of gender assessment is an important resource for multiple actors, especially in contexts where information on gender linkages and issues is lacking.

¹⁰⁶ The USAID 'Integrated Land and Resource Governance' (ILRG) initiative is part of a wider initiative on strengthening tenure and resource rights, running from 2018 to 2021, with a possible extension to 2023.

¹⁰⁷ Wildlife scouts' main activities include protecting wildlife from poaching, responding to human-wildlife conflict incidents, participating in ecological monitoring and supporting environmental awareness.

¹⁰⁸ Adapted from blog 'Wildlife Resource Governance in Zambia: Where are the Women?'. USAID. 2020.

REGIONAL/ MULTI-COUNTRY EXAMPLES

AFRICA

Women participating in city planning and decision-making processes

The Urban Natural Assets for Africa programme, implemented by the Cities Biodiversity Center of ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability), has had a particular emphasis on incorporating both qualitative and quantitative aspects of gender in all project activities, including integrating gender focused perspectives into dialogues and also increasing the number of women participating in city planning and decision-making processes. In addition, the programme has focused on gender through:

- (i) Ensuring urban green areas are designed by women and therefore incorporate women's needs, perspectives and realities;
- (ii) Enhancing women's adaptive capacity to deal with climate risks at household and community levels through ensuring women are the beneficiaries of nature-based solutions and are involved in their design;
- (iii) Ensuring enabling environments for women to thrive when working with men in African cities; and
- (iv) Ensuring women are the focal points in programme cities to support capacity building, and to foster women champions for future sustainability work.

Madam *Sipora Liana* (City Director: Dar es Salaam City) on the left and Madam *Grace Mbena* (Senior Planner, Dar es Salaam City) on the right, viewing the illustrated map of biodiversity in Dar es Salaam.



This project worked in four cities in countries across Sub-Saharan Africa, namely: Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; Lilongwe, Malawi; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; and Cape Town, South Africa.

One of the innovative approaches has been to use the computer game Minecraft to engage participants, particularly women and youth, in city planning exercises. The tool was found to be very effective in engaging women and youth; after initial support on how to use the game and site visits to get a sense of the opportunities and challenges on the ground, women and youth were found to be among the most active participants using this technology. Using easy-to-use information and communications technologies can offer an effective and participatory visual approach with which to engage participants from diverse backgrounds, including those with low literacy levels. ICLEI together with project partners SwedBio, the Stockholm Resilience Center, the JRS-Foundation, the Global Biodiversity Information Facility, and the African Center for Cities, designed this innovative approach.¹⁰⁹

ASIA

Mainstreaming gender equity in large scale mangroves programme

The Mangroves for the Future (MFF, 2006–2018) programme aimed to build the resilience of coastal communities in 12 countries, responding to local gender needs and interests. MFF activities were designed to ensure that both men and women equally share the benefits achieved from the promotion of sustainable livelihoods and sustainable coastal resource management plans.

Some key actions included:

- Development of a Gender Mainstreaming Strategy including quantitative indicators to increase gender equality (governance, access and control over resources etc.);
- Development of Gender Analysis Toolkit for coastal resource dependent communities – applied in all target sites across 11 countries;¹¹⁰
- Regional dialogues on findings of the gender analysis contributed to advocacy and consultation on options for increasing gender equality in the programme; and
- A small grants programme to provide opportunities to test innovative solutions to address coastal resilience, which can then go on to inform policy processes, address specific knowledge or practice gaps or be scaled up and replicated through external bodies such as government and donor-funded projects.

Over 75 per cent of all MFF Small Grant Fund projects responded directly to local gender interests, demonstrated outcomes for gender equality and women's empowerment, and monitored sex-disaggregated indicators relating to time use, leadership, health and security, income and assets, and food and water security among others.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Adapted from SwedBio submission to CBD Call.

¹¹⁰ Available here: <http://www.mangrovesforthefuture.org/assets/Repository/Documents/Gender-Analysis-Toolkit-for-Coastal-Management-Practitioners.pdf>

¹¹¹ Adapted from IUCN submission to CBD Call.

ANNEX 1. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT TOOLS AND TOOLKITS TO STRENGTHEN GENDER RESPONSIVE BIODIVERSITY POLICY AND ACTION

The following are examples of recent tools and toolkits, which Parties and stakeholders can use and adapt in capacity development actions to support gender mainstreaming in biodiversity actions. They can be considered to be best practice because they go beyond generic gender mainstreaming guidelines on biodiversity and focus on specific issues that are important either because they are emerging issues, such as Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) and private sector engagement (through ABS and responsible investments in land) or because they tackle how to improve gender outcomes in sectors that typically have entrenched gender biases against women (such as fisheries). One tool, the Legal Assessment Tool on Human Rights and Biodiversity Mainstreaming, is useful as it includes gender considerations in legal instruments, which are an essential bridge between policy and implementation in many contexts. Most contain step by step guidance as well as case studies. They are presented in order of date and then alphabetically by author.

Mainstreaming Gender into ABS Value Chains – Gender Toolkit. UNDP. 2019.

The UNDP-GEF Global Access and Benefit Sharing Project’s gender toolkit helps ABS professionals in the design of gender responsive interventions to accelerate gender equality and women’s empowerment while at the same time advancing progress on access and benefit sharing. This resource features context, analysis, country case studies and lessons learned to identify entry points to design gender smart and ABS value chains.

Responsible Investments in Property and Land (RIPL) Resource Platform. Hosted by Landesa. ¹¹²

The platform’s resources offer practical guidance for companies, governments and communities to make socially responsible investments in agricultural land. The RIPL builds on existing guidance with the objective of synthesizing best practices, contributing concrete examples to address existing gaps and levelling the playing field by developing guidance for investment stakeholders. The initiative is funded by the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID) Land Governance for Economic Development (LEGEND) Program. RIPL resources include guidebooks for Tanzania that integrate gender dimensions extensively and a gender thematic primer also offers step by step guidance.

Gender in Fisheries – A Sea of Opportunities. IUCN, USAID. 2019.

Summarizes research on the intersection of gender and wild-caught fisheries, exploring the ways in which fisheries offer important entry points to enhance gender equality and women’s economic empowerment while also contributing to more effective interventions and more sustainable outcomes. This guide is a resource for actors working in sustainable fisheries management, who can access the latest evidence on gender empowerment and sustainable fisheries management, find tools and

¹¹² Landesa Rural Development Institute (Landesa) is a non-profit organization that partners with governments and local organizations to secure legal land rights for poor families.

resources to conduct gender analyses, design strategic interventions to strengthen program design and implementation through the development of comprehensive gender action plans and learn more about how to develop results chains to define goals and refine assumptions.

Legal Assessment Tool on Human Rights and Biodiversity Mainstreaming. IDLO. 2018.

A collaborative partnership between SwedBio and the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) has contributed to developing legal assessment tools that provide policy advice for countries to work towards biodiversity mainstreaming. Two of these tools are being piloted in Kenya, with a view to defining concrete legislative and policy actions towards biodiversity mainstreaming. The tools aim to guide States in mainstreaming human rights and biodiversity in the implementation of global biodiversity commitments at the national level. They recognize that to advance the conservation of biodiversity it is essential to overcome gender barriers, which prevent the meaningful participation of women in related decision-making processes. The Legal Assessment Tool includes indicator questions on gender mainstreaming in national biodiversity legal frameworks that Parties can usefully consider in assessing the gender responsiveness of their own biodiversity related legal framework:

- Does your legal framework recognize the special roles of women in biodiversity management?
- Does your legal framework provide mechanisms to disaggregate and differentiate how women impact or are impacted by biodiversity conservation and management?
- Does your legal framework make provision for affirmative action on the roles of, and participation of women in decision making concerning environmental and biodiversity management?

It may be useful for lawmakers and governments in different contexts to consider the answers to these questions and apply a ‘gender lens’ to national legal instruments, which are often a key mechanism to translate policy commitments into practice. Compared to policies, laws tend to include more concrete provisions for action and gender responsive policies may not be successful if not backed up by gender responsive laws. For example, a country may have a policy provision to promote equal access to land and natural resources but a legal framework, which in practice is biased against women.

Building Resilience with Nature and Gender in the Eastern Caribbean – A Toolkit to Mainstream Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (Organization of Eastern Caribbean States 2020)

The toolkit aims to guide the incorporation of EbA into adaptation practice. This toolkit brings together relevant methods and resources to help users easily access, understand and adopt EbA principles in climate change adaptation while integrating gender and social inclusion practices at both national and regional levels. Case studies and suggested indicators for gender responsive EbA are useful, as are the links to various resources.

ANNEX 2. RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS ON GENDER AND BIODIVERSITY

The following are examples of recent research and knowledge products that may be useful resources. Many were submitted as responses to the CBD Secretariat's request for best practice submissions. They are presented in order of date and then alphabetically by author.

Unpacking fact and myth in gender roles, recognizing non-monetary contributions to household income – *Spatial and temporal differences in the use of forest fauna: age and gender impacts in three Shuar communities in Morona Santiago, Ecuadorian Amazon.*¹¹³ Zapata Rios, G., Segovia Salcedo, M.C. 2020.

This research highlights that in the case of the Shuar people, hunting is an activity practiced by women and children, as well as men, far from gender stereotypes of hunting being an exclusively male domain. Men, women and children hunt different species in different areas and at different times. For territorial and natural resource management strategies to be sustainable, they therefore need to include different groups within communities and understand the roles of both women and men – which can yield surprises.

Other research on household income with the Indigenous Council of the Tacana People in Bolivia also confirms the importance of including both income and other benefits for a more complete understanding of traditional economies in regions with a high concentration of biodiversity, such as the Amazon. This approach makes visible and values women's unpaid work and the contribution of nature.¹¹⁴

Gender, environmental and climate innovation – *From words to action: Projects with Innovative Solutions to Promote Nature Conservation, Climate Action and Gender Equality.* UN Women, UNDP, UNEP 2020.

This report highlights projects from the Latin American and Caribbean region with innovative environmental solutions that are providing effective conditions for greater gender equality and the empowerment of women in different spheres. It also includes lessons learned and recommendations to encourage the development of future initiatives. The projects presented in this publication are financed by global environmental funds, implemented under the leadership of national and/or local authorities and have received technical assistance from UNDP, UNEP and UN Women. One of the projects analyzed presents the experience of a regional initiative to boost climate resilience in urban systems through Ecosystems based Adaptation (EbA) – this is useful as many gender/biodiversity knowledge products are more focused on rural areas.

113 'Diferencias espaciales y temporales en el uso de fauna silvestre: efectos de la edad y el género en tres comunidades Shuar de Morona Santiago, Amazonía ecuatoriana.' In book 'Igualdad de Género y Empoderamiento de las Mujeres en el Trabajo de WCS en la Amazonía Andina y la Orinoquía'. WCS. 2020.

114 Adapted from WCS submission to CBD Call.

Gender based violence and environment linkages: The violence of inequality. IUCN. 2020.

This publication establishes that patterns of gender-based violence (GBV) are observed in different contexts in relation to environmental management, affecting the security and well-being of nations, communities and individuals, and jeopardising meeting the SDGs. This analysis reveals the nature of GBV across three main contexts explored in this paper: access to and control of natural resources, environmental pressure and threats, and environmental action to defend and conserve ecosystems and resources. Research findings demonstrate that ending GBV, promoting gender equality and protecting the environment can be positively linked. Biodiversity and environmental actors need to take account of these risks and address them in interventions, for example as part of safeguard policies. IUCN has also developed an online Gender-based Violence and Environment platform¹¹⁵ featuring resources and tools, promising practices, visual data and other information to support learning and action.

Gender and water – Gender Equality and Goal 6 – The Critical Connection: An Australian Perspective. Australian Water Partnership. 2019.

The Australian Water Partnership (AWP) supported the development of a study on the Australian experience of gender equality and SDG Goal 6, with a particular focus on water resource management. *Gender Equality & Goal 6: The Critical Connection – An Australian Perspective* identifies key areas of action for international development actors and governments, which can contribute to more sustainable and effective water management outcomes for all people while decreasing the inequalities prevalent in many societies. It also provides case studies and outlines the implications for improving policy and practice. The AWP has produced a number of other studies on water management that consider gender and environmental factors, including river basin planning.

Hindu Kush Himalaya Assessment and Call to Action. ICIMOD. 2019.

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) completed and launched the ground-breaking ‘Hindu Kush Himalaya Assessment: Mountains, Climate Change, Sustainability and People’ in 2019. The Assessment was produced by the combined efforts of more than 350 researchers, practitioners and policy specialists and integrated a strong focus on gendered impacts throughout, including in dedicated sections on gender. The launch of the report has sparked a global conversation about the importance of mountains and action required to enhance ecosystem resilience, halt biodiversity loss and land degradation.

Gender and environment statistics: Unlocking information for action and measuring the SDGs. IUCN, UNEP. 2019.

This report aims to enable better understanding of the links between gender and the environment by proposing 18 gender-environment indicators to measure gender equality and women’s empowerment across the focal areas of right to land, natural resources and biodiversity; access to food, energy, water and sanitation; climate change, sustainable production and consumption, and health; and women in environmental decision making at all levels. The report also examines enabling conditions at the national level, including through case studies conducted in Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Kenya and Mexico. It provides recommendations addressed both to the national statistics systems and inter-agency UN expert groups, and proposes ways that the links between gender and environment could be considered in the SDGs. Parties may consider this report as they work on monitoring and evaluation of national and project level statistics.

¹¹⁵ Available at: <https://genderandenvironment.org/agent-gbv-env/>

Women’s central role in conserving agrobiodiversity – *Agrobiodiversity Index Report 2019: Risk and Resilience*. Bioversity International. 2019.

The report assesses dimensions of agrobiodiversity in ten countries to measure food system sustainability and resilience. A case study from Ethiopia confirms that women are key to resilient food systems as seed keepers. The examples of the diverse roles of women farmers in Tigray in northern Ethiopia also illustrate the role of women as agrobiodiversity guardians and innovators in other rural contexts. The case study finds that women’s innovations are at the heart of agricultural development, allowing them to maintain and increase diversity in farming and food systems to build resilience. The detailed case study contains examples of these innovations, which could inform biodiversity practitioners’ efforts to strengthen agrobiodiversity and include measures targeting women as well as men.

Collective actions for women’s empowerment – *Women’s empowerment, collective actions, and sustainable fisheries: lessons from Mexico* Torre, J., Hernandez-Velasco, A., Rivera-Melo, F.F. et al. 2019.

This article documents how women’s roles are changing when collective actions are implemented to increase fisheries sustainability. Women as cooperative leaders, collaborative decision-makers, and entrepreneurs have become active promoters of good practices: (i) fishery and ecosystem restoration; (ii) environmental monitoring; and (iii) marine conservation. Through these actions, women are empowered in different ways. They have acquired resources (e.g., knowledge, opportunities) and decision-making power, which enable them to facilitate project developments (e.g. research, cooperatives) that promote fisheries sustainability. This research highlights elements that contribute toward empowering women in small-scale fisheries in these five contexts, with applicability elsewhere. These elements include access to role models, such as female scientists leading environmental monitoring; the support of civil society organizations; and a willingness, by men and women, to learn and change the status quo. Similar research in other contexts can be useful to identify and scale up what is working in terms of promoting women’s strategic gender interests and challenging gender norms.

Gender, environment and poverty – *Gender, Poverty and Environment in Rural Kyrgyzstan* (UNEP 2017)

This research raises concerns as to how development can reduce poverty, save the natural environment and bring social justice. Key questions include: ‘what are specific interlinkages among the issues of gender equality, rural poverty and environmental degradation?’, ‘what are gender implications for sustainable livelihoods in rural Kyrgyzstan?’, and ‘what are the gendered effects of biodiversity loss and climate change?’ Similar national level research into gender-environment/ biodiversity linkages and issues in other contexts could usefully inform policy and programming in biodiversity and related sectors, as it can act as a ‘baseline’ against which to measure the effectiveness of policy and projects, and also because it can be an especially useful resource when projects are designed without the participation of gender experts.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ Adapted from: https://www.kg.undp.org/content/kyrgyzstan/en/home/library/womens_empowerment/gender--poverty-and-environment-in-rural-kyrgyzstan.html

Gender, biodiversity and food security – *Gender and innovation in Peru’s native potato market chains*. Escobar, S.S., Hambly Odame. H., and Thiele, G. Chapter in ‘Transforming Gender and Food Security in the Global South’. IDRC, ILRI. 2016.

Peasants or *campesinos* in the Central Andes of South America are the traditional custodians of a vast genetic pool of Andean crops and tubers. Traditional Andean farming systems depend on women’s knowledge to maintain such vast biodiversity, and women have preserved the genetic biodiversity of the potato despite serious adversities such as constant climate stress. In order to promote native potato innovation and help smallholder producers respond to emerging markets, the Papa Andina (Andean Potato) regional initiative sought to add value to the production, processing, use, and biodiversity of native potatoes. Papa Andina facilitates a participatory approach as well as demonstrations and events with value chain actors known as Stakeholder Platforms. The research presents findings on how the initiative has empowered female peasant producers, and why this is important to understanding gender, household food security and biodiversity issues. Such research on the interlinkages between biodiversity, gender and food security and nutrition can be important in other contexts given women’s prominent roles in both biodiversity and food security and nutrition.

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