

A MANUAL FOR
GENDER-RESPONSIVE
LAND DEGRADATION NEUTRALITY
TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECTS
AND PROGRAMMES



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UN WOMEN, GLOBAL MECHANISM OF THE UNCCD AND IUCN



THE GLOBAL
MECHANISM
United Nations Convention
to Combat Desertification



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INTRODUCTION

Climate- and human-induced land degradation endangers the future survival of our planet. A new focus on achieving Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) seeks to spark and grow transformative efforts to avoid, reduce and reverse land degradation through gender- and socially-equitable means. As of July 2019, 122 countries of the 169 countries directly affected by desertification, land degradation or drought pledged to achieve land degradation neutrality at the national or sub-national level.¹ More than 82 countries have already set LDN targets towards halting land degradation by 2030, and 44 of the 70 countries regularly hit by drought are setting up drought management plans to ensure that droughts do not turn into disasters.² Many of the targets entail co-benefits for sustainable agriculture and food security, and link to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to advance gender equality, increase women's equal access to and control over land and natural resources, improve health and nutrition, reduce poverty, and restore ecosystems and climate change impacts.

This manual provides step-by-step guidance to Parties on integrating gender issues and promoting gender equality in the design of transformative LDN projects.³ It builds on work launched by UN Women, the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the International Union on the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in advising governments on integrating gender perspectives in the development of LDN initiatives, as mandated by the UNCCD Gender Action Plan (GAP), the Science Policy Interface LDN Conceptual Framework and related decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties.⁴ Given the recent adoption of the LDN Framework approach, only a few projects that explicitly incorporate the LDN approach have been submitted through the UNCCD and related funding sources. To supplement the small but growing number of LDN projects, this manual draws on related work around land degradation and gender.⁵

Gender-responsive LDN transformative projects and programmes strategically contribute to the achievement of LDN and address the needs of the most vulnerable groups, such as small farmers, rural communities and indigenous peoples, with a dedicated focus on women. The manual for gender-responsive LDN projects and programmes intends to equip national-level project developers with specific, pragmatic guidance and examples for mainstreaming gender perspectives across the lifecycle of an LDN project – to achieve greater effectiveness, better outcomes and stronger co-benefits. It contains strategic guidance to support countries that have set their LDN targets to mainstream gender issues in LDN action, to ensure that initiatives do not perpetuate or deepen historical inequalities or marginalize women's rights, erode their land rights or overlook their rights within indigenous and local communities.

SUMMARY CHECKLIST

Integrating gender perspectives in LDN transformative projects and programmes

What to do during the ‘project identification and development’ stage?

1. **Review national research reports and studies, where available, on women’s and men’s roles in and rights to land use, management and control** in order to best tailor project interventions.
2. **Align project goals to gender equality priorities in national plans** and strategies related to land, forest, watershed and natural resource use, management and governance.
3. **Conduct gender and social mapping and analysis** that outlines the context, problems, root causes and drivers that contribute to land degradation and women’s and men’s varied roles, rights and duties regarding land, productive and natural resources, and how the project interventions might affect them differently.
4. **Identify and reach out to stakeholders and partners**, ensuring gender-balanced representation, perspectives and expertise.
5. **Facilitate participatory, inclusive stakeholder consultations** that account for possible barriers for women and men to attend, participate and determine priorities for project design and implementation.

What to do during the ‘project concept and proposal’ stage?

1. **Craft project objectives** aim to both stop excessive loss of productive land and reduce gender inequality by leveraging co-benefits for optimal outcomes, endeavouring to align with Sustainable Development Goals on land degradation (SDG 15), gender equality (SDG 5), ending poverty (SDG 1), achieving food security (SDG 2) and mitigating climate change (SDG 13).
2. **Situate the project in a gender-responsive country context that:**
 - highlights gender equality and social equity priorities and gaps in national human rights

protections, laws governing land, productive and natural resources, environment, family and inheritance laws, and development, poverty and environmental plans

- identifies gender differences in livelihood and tenure security constraints that could impact women’s and men’s authority and incentives to invest in and contribute to LDN interventions
 - analyses women’s rights in different land governance regimes in the project areas, including their land and inheritance rights to communal, family, ancestral, indigenous, public and private lands, to ensure that they include guarantees and safeguards for women’s rights within the community. These should be equivalent to those of male community members and ensure equal benefits from project dividends
 - aligns project goals to national and global development and human rights commitments.
3. **Adopt a dual approach of gender mainstreaming and targeting women (twin track) to deliver multiple benefits in transformative LDN project and programme features**, including in activities related to land-use planning, climate-smart agriculture land management practices, agroforestry and landscape management, alternative livelihoods and reduced workloads for women.
 4. **Ensure gender-equitable responsible and inclusive governance** of projects and programmes through specific requirements – for example, by tackling gender discrimination and bias that exclude women from equal access, control and management of land and natural resources and by facilitating the free, prior and informed consent of women and men in indigenous and local communities.
 5. **Capture local knowledge** – gathered from women and men – to inform project progress, impacts, successes and shortfalls and potential scaling.

6. Set up a gender-responsive results framework or logframe that includes:

- indicators disaggregated by sex (as well as age, relevant identity and other social status factors)
- **gender-responsive indicators** that gauge gender differences with respect to participation and decision-making in projects from inception to delivery; women's and men's differing land rights, access to and use of land and resources, and how project interventions plan to mitigate and erase such differences
- indicators that capture **both the scope and the quality of the change** (i.e., people's experiences, opinions, attitudes and feelings) and seek to capture progressive outcomes of policies, processes and interventions and gender-related changes in society and the environment over time
- gender-responsive data collection that seeks a mix of **quantitative and qualitative indicators and participatory monitoring** that collects anecdotes and narratives from affected women and men.

7. Prepare a Social and Environmental Impact Assessment and a Gender Equality Impact Assessment to evaluate risks, mitigate adverse impacts, and align anticipated benefits with national and global priorities and human rights norms.

8. Earmark adequate gender project budget allocation to carry out the anticipated gender analysis, activities, monitoring and evaluation and to resource the requisite staff needed to ensure affected men and women benefit from the intervention.

What to do during the 'project implementation' stage?

1. **Institute a project Gender Action Plan** to operationalize the constraints and opportunities for women and men identified during the gender analysis phase, to serve as a project manual to ensure women's equal participation, management in and enjoyment of project activities and benefits and to require periodic reviews of gender action plan implementation.
2. **Ensure gender balance in the project team, hire local gender specialists** with expertise in gender analysis and mainstreaming in land, agriculture and climate change projects, and train all team members on gender mainstreaming in implementing project activities and goals.

3. Track compliance by setting up regular project review meetings and outreach with implementers, stakeholders and affected women and populations to review whether designed activities might need adjustment, change or strengthening.

What to do for 'project monitoring & evaluation, learning & reporting'?

1. Set up a clear project oversight and governance structure or body and include technical gender specialists and representatives from national institutions or ministries with gender equality mandates.

2. Set up a gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation plan that draws on the gender-responsive results framework, relevant national and SDG indicators, and feeds into periodic reports to the project management team and governance body. Such evaluation seeks to answer:

- How and to what extent have project components and the overall project achieved results related to gender equality? Was there reduction in or exacerbation of gender inequalities (identified in the initial gender analysis)?
- To what extent was the project aligned with the specific land degradation concerns and priorities for women and men?
- Were project opportunities, benefits and results distributed equally between men and women in the targeted stakeholder groups? Or did women suffer any detriment as a result of the interventions (e.g. with respect to division of labour and care-burdens or access and control of land and resources)?
- Have men's and women's perceptions (norms, stereotypes, values) been altered towards advancing gender equality, including within the land, agriculture and natural resource sectors?

3. Capture and report lessons learned, promising practices and what did not work well through narrative reporting and reliance on quantitative indicators.

4. Incorporate project outcome mapping to identify anticipated and unanticipated project outcomes and to inform national and global commitments, including the lessons learned and good practices related to mainstreaming gender in LDN projects that can be scaled up or replicated, and which should be documented and reported.

A. FOSTERING GENDER EQUALITY IN LDN TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES



Widespread and unprecedented rapid degradation of land threatens food production, water availability, biodiversity and energy security worldwide. Land degradation contributes to climate change, deepens poverty and induces displacement and migration,⁶ while those forces in turn worsen land degradation. When land is degraded and usable land becomes scarce, women are uniquely and differentially affected given their substantial role in agriculture and food production, greater vulnerability to poverty, and typically weaker legal protections and social status. Women constitute the majority of farmers in many of the regions most severely affected by desertification, land degradation and drought. Nearly 80 per cent of employed women in the least developed countries report agriculture as their primary source of livelihood,⁷ while women comprise 43 per cent of the world's agricultural labour force.⁸ While they often serve as environmental stewards, women tend to: be excluded from participation and leadership in conservation and management of land, lack access to agricultural extension services and institutional credit, and encounter barriers to participation in development, planning and policymaking processes. Unlike men, women often have less access to information, resources, and legal rights to land, natural and productive resources. Unequal power relations and gender-based discrimination in legal and customary systems in many societies even deny women user rights to plant trees, control soil degradation and enhance soil fertility.

1. New LDN approach

Governments have recognized the dangers of land stripped of its productive, life-sustaining, sheltering qualities. The UNCCD – one of the three environmental Rio Conventions adopted at the 1992 Earth Summit – oversees global coordination efforts to tackle desertification, land degradation and drought. In 2017, experts from the Science Policy Interface of the UNCCD issued a new approach to tackling the threat of land degradation and its devastating impacts. The Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) conceptual framework calls for a mix

of interventions to halt excessive loss of productive land.⁹ The operational guidance developed by the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD (i.e. secretariat) to assist countries to develop initiatives that promote this new LDN approach explains it as such: “As an innovative approach for managing land degradation, Land Degradation Neutrality aims to **avoid or reduce land degradation**, while also **reversing past land degradation**, in order to achieve the goal of **no net loss** of healthy, productive land at the national level. LDN encompasses inter alia approaches such as Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and Sustainable Forest Management for avoiding or reducing the risk of degradation, and restoration and rehabilitation for reversing past degradation.”¹⁰

LDN neutrality: a commitment to stop excessive loss of productive land by 2030

LDN outcome: amount of land degraded per year in each country offset by restoring an equal amount of degraded land

LDN target: to achieve LDN by 2030

Effective LDN programming requires thoughtful analysis of social realities in the affected areas. The UNCCD **Science Policy Interface (SPI)** calls on governments to account for poverty as “a root cause, and at the same time a consequence, of land degradation, and [for] gender inequality [which] plays a significant role in land-degradation related poverty.”¹¹ The SPI further concludes that in “most developing countries, land degradation impacts men and women differently, mainly due to unequal access to land, water, credit, extension services and technology,”¹² underscoring the need to address the persistent gender inequalities that fuel women's extreme poverty. Land degradation drivers – whether poor land-use management, over-extraction of natural resources or unpredictable climate patterns – intensify by insecure land tenure, unsustainable farming systems, short-sighted policies, and persistent social and gender inequalities.¹³

2. Mandate for gender-responsive LDN transformative projects and programmes

Scientific publications, the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, UNCCD's landmark Gender Action Plan of 2017, along with the other Rio Conventions, all reinforced by the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, unequivocally mandate the systemic mainstreaming of a gender perspective across all public and private sector endeavours. According to UNCCD guidance, LDN transformative projects and programmes must include a participatory gender-responsive approach to define land-use planning, adopt equitable land management decisions, and institute evaluation and adaptive learning systems. Financial mechanisms for LDN transformative projects and programmes likewise require concerted gender analysis and concrete steps to go beyond efforts to “do-no-harm,” and to actively foster empowerment for women and affected communities.

The UNCCD (Convention hereafter) explicitly stresses gender equality concerns and women's roles in addressing land degradation.¹⁴ Numerous **Conference of the Parties (COP) declarations and decisions** “pledge to address gender inequalities which undermine progress in the implementation of the Convention,”¹⁵ including by pursuing gender-responsive implementation at all levels, and by recognizing the crucial contributions of women to the effective implementation of the Convention.¹⁶ The Namibia Declaration¹⁷ and the Ankara Initiative¹⁸ call for specific actions related to gender issues and are indicative of the evolving commitment to gender mainstreaming in the implementation of the Convention.¹⁹

Accompanied by a landmark decision on “gender equality and women's empowerment for the enhanced and effective implementation of the Convention,”²⁰ the inaugural 2017 **UNCCD Gender Action Plan (GAP)** aims to support gender mainstreaming in the implementation of the UNCCD's 2018-2030 strategy and to advance national efforts to achieve the LDN targets.²¹ The GAP asserts that gender mainstreaming is essential “to address the gender inequalities that disproportionately undermine women's effectiveness as agents of change in the implementation of the Convention, [and] would enhance the achievement of

LDN targets.” The GAP outlines four priority areas to incorporate in LDN implementation: i) ensure women's participation in decisions taken during the design, planning, implementation and evaluation of initiatives to implement the UNCCD; ii) integrate women's economic empowerment in UNCCD implementation activities in order to eradicate their extreme poverty; iii) strengthen women's land rights and access to resources; and iv) enhance women's access to improved knowledge and technologies that relate to effective UNCCD implementation, including LDN.²²

Priorities for action under the UNCCD Gender Action Plan

- **Ensuring women's participation in decisions** taken during the design, planning, implementation and evaluation of initiatives to implement the Convention.
- **Integrating women's economic empowerment** in UNCCD implementation activities in order to eradicate their extreme poverty.
- **Strengthening women's land rights and access to resources.**
- **Enhancing women's access to improved knowledge and technologies** that relate to effective UNCCD implementation.

The UNCCD **2018-2030 strategic framework** (Dec. 7/COP.13) mandates all UNCCD stakeholders and partners to adopt gender-responsive policies and measures, strive for full and effective participation of both men and women in planning, decision-making and implementation at all levels, and enhance the empowerment of women, girls and youth in the affected areas.²³ The **2018-2021 workplan** specifically requires that gender issues be taken into account in plans to address desertification/land degradation and drought.²⁴ In defining Strategic objective 2 on improving the living conditions of affected populations, the workplan's results framework outcome 2.2 calls on affected Parties to draw on “UNCCD guidance and technical advice on integrating gender issues into UNCCD implementation and design of transformative LDN projects.”²⁵

The SPI's **2017 Scientific Conceptual Framework** that undergirds the new LDN approach instructs Parties to: integrate gender issues in their planning and implementation of LDN, undertake preliminary LDN assessments that include consideration of gender inequality and women's land tenure security, ensure women's genuine contributions to stakeholder engagements by accounting for gender imbalances in power and access to information, and require the inclusion of gender-sensitive indicators and sex-disaggregated data to accurately monitor progress.²⁶ The LDN Scientific Conceptual Framework contains a specific section on "Gender considerations for the design of preliminary assessments" setting out recommended practices ranging from gender-sensitive data collection to the engagement of gender equality experts to refine research methodology and incorporate a nuanced contextual analysis of the factors that undercut women's land rights.

Definitions

Gender equality

This concept focuses on the goal of achieving equality in rights, responsibilities, opportunities and benefits/outcomes for all women and men and providing potential for both women and men to shape their own lives and contribute to society in all areas. It implies that the knowledge, experience, contributions, priorities and constraints of women and men should be taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity between different groups of women and men. Gender equality is both a human rights issue and a driver for sustainable development. Gender equality is recognized as critical for the achievement of goals relating to sustainable development and natural resource management, including biodiversity.

Source: Definition partly based on United Nations, OSAGI (Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues), 2001, Gender mainstreaming concepts and definitions.

Empowerment of women and girls

The empowerment of women and girls concerns their gaining power and control over their own lives. It involves raising awareness, building self-confidence, expanding choices and increasing access to and control over resources and actions to transform the structures and institutions that reinforce and perpetuate gender-based discrimination and inequality. This implies that to be empowered women must not only have equal capabilities (such as education and health) and equal access to resources and opportunities (such as land and employment), but they must also have the agency to use these rights, capabilities, resources and opportunities to make strategic choices and decisions (such as is provided through leadership opportunities and participation in political institutions).

Source: UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women. "Gender Equality, UN Coherence and You"; UN Women Training Centre, "Glossary: Empowerment of women and girls"

Gender analysis

Gender analysis is a critical examination of how differences in gender roles, activities, needs, opportunities and rights/entitlements affect men, women, girls and boys in certain situation or contexts. Gender analysis examines the relationships between females and males and their access to and control of resources and the constraints they face relative to each other. A gender analysis should be integrated into all sector assessments or situational analyses to ensure that gender-based injustices and inequalities are not exacerbated by interventions, and that where possible, greater equality and justice in gender relations are promoted.

Source: UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women. "Gender Equality, UN Coherence and You".

Gender mainstreaming

Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes. This should be done in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.

Source: ECOSOC agreed conclusions 1997/2

Gender responsive

A term used to describe laws, policies, programmes and public services that are formulated and/or delivered to: i) take into account existing structures and relations of gender inequality and seek proactively to overcome and remove them; ii) identify and bring attention to women's contributions and critical roles as agents and leaders, in order to facilitate gender equality, the empowerment of women and women's enjoyment of human rights.

Source: UN-Women working definition; with contribution from Carolyn Hannan. As cited in UN Women, Towards a Gender-Responsive Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, (2018).

B. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION AND DEVELOPMENT



Successful LDN programming requires a gender-responsive approach, analysis, solutions and implementation to determine hotspot land degradation areas for the most impactful, targeted projects. Women's active engagement, coupled with recognition and documentation of their unique knowledge, contributions and priorities, has been shown to enhance effective implementation and sustainability of resilience interventions.

Gender-responsive LDN transformative projects and programmes start with identifying interventions that will “benefit men and women equally and transform social, economic and institutional structures towards gender equality and women's empowerment...”²⁷ Projects must be defined and informed by gender analysis and social mapping and analysis grounded in outreach to women and men in affected communities in developing the project concept and parameters. This initial stage requires sufficient budgeting to cover costs for staffing and expenses to carry out needed analyses, outreach and stakeholder consultations. Some multilateral funds include initial grants to certified implementing entities to support and carry out initial gender analysis and social mapping (See Annex 2: Gender equality requirements in key funding sources that contribute to achieving LDN). A Gender-responsive Land Degradation Neutrality Framework – developed based on an examination of LDN-related projects from around the world – outlines the opportunities and safeguards that lead to a ripple of development and climate benefits that can flow from integrating gender into LDN projects.²⁸ See Figure 1: Gender-Responsive Land Degradation Neutrality Framework.

The project development and design stage should include the following steps:

1. Leverage gender equality in national plans and strategies

LDN transformative projects and programmes should aim to align with and leverage gender equality considerations in national plans and strategies related to land, forest, watershed and natural resource use, management and governance. Project planners must also be familiar with national and local priorities related to LDN and

gender contained in national development, agricultural/rural, environmental/climate, poverty alleviation and gender equality plans and strategies.²⁹ Such familiarity would facilitate and inform project identification. Where such plans and strategies lack gender analysis or mainstreaming, they may fail to reflect realities for communities and women in affected areas.

Sustainable land management in the Commonwealth of Dominica (2017)

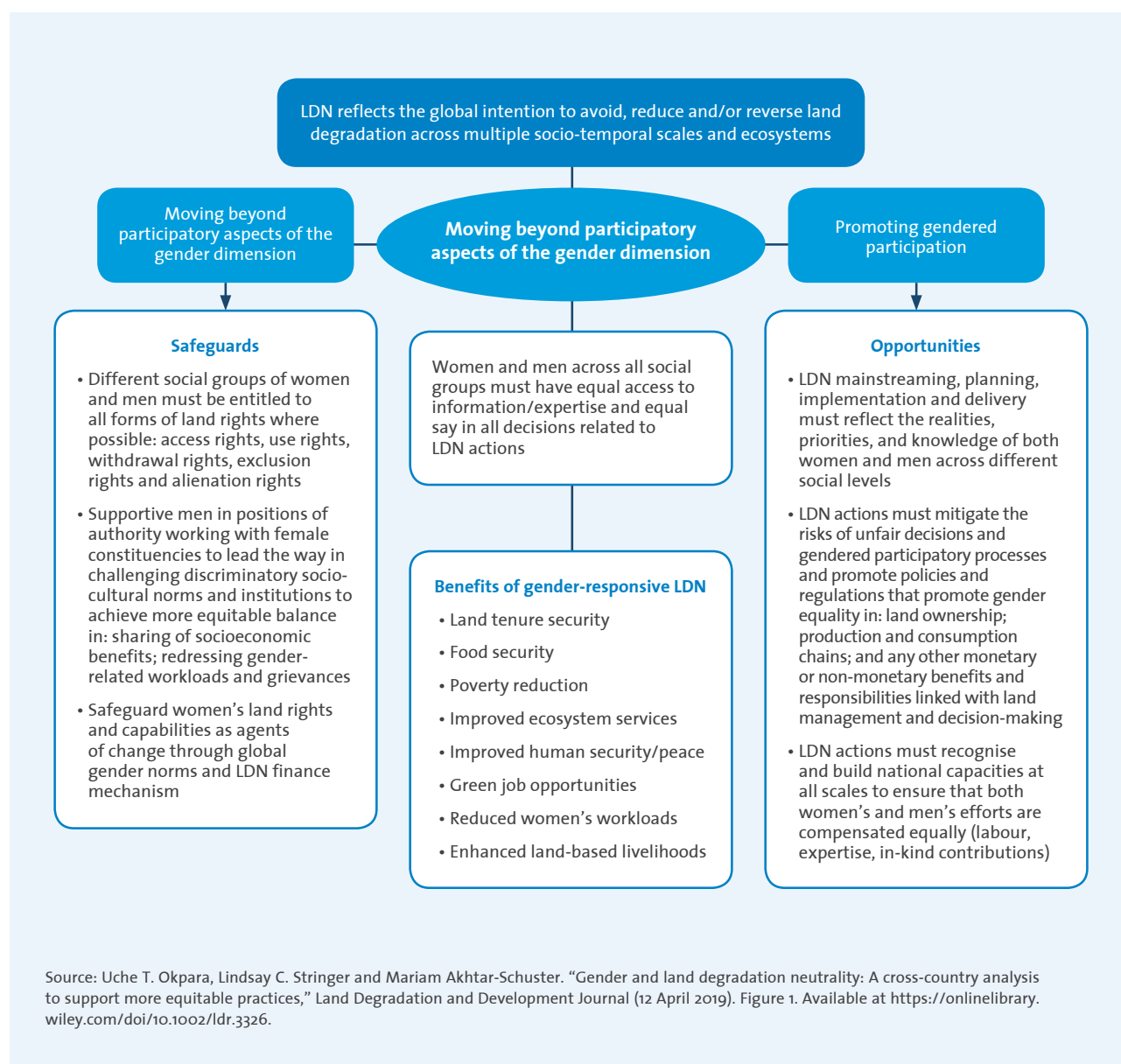
This Global Environmental Facility-funded project aligns with the country's national gender policy by stressing the harms of violence against women fuelled by inequality and by demonstrating the need for gender-responsive strategies in land-based projects. The gender co-benefits draw on: an understanding of ecosystem benefits for women (benefit-sharing); the initiation of gender-sensitive knowledge management by using sex-disaggregated data and language in publications and photos to avoid entrenching stereotypes; and the relative status of women, men and youth in terms of access to (and benefit from) the knowledge created.³⁰

The LDN target-setting process and subsequent LDN project and programme identification can thus correct for such deficiencies with robust gender and social mapping, analysis and consultation. The legal, regulatory and institutional framework governing land and natural resources (which includes environmental, family and property laws) must likewise be reviewed for gaps and opportunities to ensure gender-responsive provisions in LDN transformative projects and programmes, such as around aspects of land tenure security and access and control of resources.

LDN planners should assess national government reports and research studies, available qualitative and quantitative information and data to identify gender gaps or concerns in the land sector.³¹ Where disaggregated data on sex (or other socially relevant categories) is lacking and needed, LDN transformative projects and programmes can build in steps to ensure such data is collected and fed into national registries

and sector knowledge hubs. Project planning can also draw on additional data points found in government reports to the United Nations on related issues of gender equality in land and resource rights, such as reports on progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and reporting in compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). For a list of laws, policies and data sources to consult, see Section C (2) on country context analysis of the enabling legal and policy environment for LDN interventions.

FIGURE 1
Gender-responsive Land Degradation Neutrality Framework



The Science Policy Interface of the UNCCD instructs that: “The preliminary assessments for LDN should **include consideration of gender inequality and its impacts on land management, such as through land tenure arrangements**. In assessments and implementation of LDN, if women are not actively invited to participate, and regularly engaged, the impact of interventions designed to avoid, reduce or reverse land degradation will be much less than their potential because [of] **the strong influence of women in most land-based livelihood systems**.

If gender is excluded from the analysis of preliminary assessment data (e.g., poorly selected indicators, lack of advanced planning for the disaggregation of data by sex), then the findings will be incomplete or misleading. ... Preliminary assessments should be conducted strategically so that the data collected can be disaggregated by sex, socio-economic and ethnic grouping and age, against which progress and results can be measured.” (Emphasis added).

Source: Science Policy Interface, Scientific Conceptual Framework for LDN (2017)

2. Conduct gender analysis and social mapping

The development of LDN transformative projects and programmes, including the articulation of their approach, components and activities must be based on initial gender and social analysis that includes a localized analysis of land rights, division of labour within households and farms, benefit-sharing, access to and control of resources, knowledge and incentives.³² The most useful gender analysis for project development not only describes gender disparities and how men and women are affected differently, but also analyses why these differences exist and persist, and what would be needed to overcome them.³³ Project proposals should do more than describe, for example, that men control and manage most land in the project area while women lack secure access to land, productive and natural resources. Proposals should contain analysis that identifies the root causes and remedies, including through project activities, for such inequalities.

Gender and social analysis: To identify the optimal LDN intervention, target areas and beneficiaries, project developers should map out:

- The context, problems, root causes and drivers that contribute to land degradation by looking at the ways in which anticipated project interventions and outcomes will affect women and men differently;
- Underlying gender power relations and inequalities and how they intersect with project objectives; and
- The socioeconomic, institutional and political context of the project regarding gender equality opportunities and risks.³⁴

How? The first step requires **mapping of both stakeholders and issues** and an analysis of the realities and potential impact on affected and interested populations. The mapping should start by identifying potential partners and stakeholders who are affected by, or could facilitate implementation of, the project/programme.³⁵ The mapping should prioritize stakeholders with first-hand knowledge of how women are affected by land degradation and the ways women might be prevented from accessing or benefitting from activities and outputs of the planned interventions to avoid, reduce or reverse harm to productive land.

The mapping should cover reaching out and collaborating with:

- **Government actors:** Ministries and governmental agencies (often referred to as national gender equality mechanisms) with mandates covering women’s rights and gender equality, and gender focal points in relevant ministries such as those governing land, agriculture, planning, development, natural resources, poverty, social welfare and health;
- **Civil society:** NGOs, groups, associations and networks focused on gender equality and women’s rights, as well as advocacy groups;
- **Local associations:** Women’s collectives, farmers and agricultural associations, as well as local community groups and institutions;
- **Academia and research actors:** Local academic and research institutions and individuals studying gender issues concerning land, environment, climate change and natural resources.

Example of gender analysis ensuring women's access to project benefits

Kenya: The Nairobi Water Fund (2015-current), a public-private partnership provides in-kind payments to farmers in the Upper Tana River basin, north of Nairobi for implementing sustainable land management (SLM) practices, such as constructing water pans to reduce reliance on river water during the dry season, building terraces and grass strips to reduce soil erosion, and promoting agroforestry. To maximize the project's success, a gender analysis identified areas for targeted interventions. For example, in the covered region, women are assigned small plots primarily to grow food for household consumption and are tasked with planting grass for livestock fodder, whereas men control the large cash crops-producing fields and typically make land use decisions. Women who have limited control over land use and earnings from cash crops are less inclined and able to implement space-consuming or labour-intensive SLM practices, especially as they may be unable to access benefits, such as water from the pans to irrigate their vegetable patches. To enhance project outcomes, the gender analysis led to the recommendation that the Fund train field operators to address gender relations pertaining to SLM and to meaningfully consult both men and women, by including them in joint, co-ed and in separate meetings to consider their preferences and abilities at all planning phases in order to avoid worsening gender inequalities in local SLM practice.³⁶

How? The next step is the gender analysis process used to identify, understand and describe gender differences and the relevance of these differences to a specific activity (policy, programme or project). A gender context analysis will help identify constraints and opportunities for project activities leading to better results and sustainability of the projected intervention.

The analysis determines:

- the relevance of gender dimensions to the activity's success and sustainability
- gender differentiated impacts and risks linked to the environmental and social safeguard analysis
- factors that limit or facilitate equal participation of women and men in the programme/project and their level of decision-making authority
- specific gender differences, including women's and men's different rights, roles, needs, priorities, capacities and vulnerabilities relevant to the projected intervention or activity given social perceptions, cultural norms and gender stereotypes
- gender gaps in use, access, control and benefits over natural resources, land tenure security and land rights; food production and security; domestic and field workloads/division of labour; access to alternative livelihoods; as well as access to benefits and services, participation and decision-making.

The gender analysis relies on the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative sex-disaggregated data, gender statistics and information. The gender analysis can be a stand-alone activity, or it can be included as a key component of broader stakeholder analyses or social and situation assessments.

What questions to ask in a gender analysis?

- What are the differentiated ways that women and men access, use and control land, forests and watersheds?
- How do gender norms, caretaking and domestic duties play into this difference?
- Who has what in the project area – e.g. land, resources, animals, trees, income, assets – and legal rights to them?
- Who has final say and decision-making power in the household and the community?
- Who benefits from project activities and interventions?
- What challenges might women face in accessing and benefitting from project gains and are they able to do so without harassment and threats or increased care burdens?

Examples of LDN activities aimed at closing gender gaps

- Empowering female farmers relying on rain-fed subsistence agriculture by providing targeted agricultural extension services to address their specific needs.³⁷
- Increasing food production capacity of poor female and male farmers or livelihood support for fisherwomen and fishermen (providing for their differentiated needs, concerns, and abilities).³⁸
- Contributing to LDN target-setting by demonstrating the LDN approach in Turkey's Upper Sakarya Basin for scaling up at national level (Global Environment Facility project, 2017). The project introduced gender-sensitive livelihood strategies and climate-change resilient practices to enhance land productivity.³⁹
- Supporting the sustainable management of the Oasis landscape project in Tunisia (World Bank, in design) aims to improve local women's livelihoods and participation in developing local production activities. This is done by promoting ecotourism to reduce poverty and promote job creation, especially for women and youth, and by elevating the recognition of local knowledge and know-how of women and men.

Resources for conducting gender analysis

- Gold Standards for the Global Goals Gender Equality Requirements and Guidelines (March 2018)
- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Socio-Economic and Gender Analysis Field Handbook (2001)
- FAO, Guidance note on gender-sensitive vulnerability assessments in agriculture (2018)
- Agricultural Cooperative Development International and Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (ACDI/VOCA), Gender Analysis, Assessment and Audit Manual & Toolkit (2016)
- Asian Development Bank, Gender Checklist – Agriculture (2006) (guides users through all stages of the project/programme cycle in identifying the main gender issues in the agriculture sector and in designing appropriate gender-sensitive strategies, components, and indicators).
- FAO & CARE, Good Practices for Integrating Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Climate-Smart Agriculture Programmes (2019).
- FAO, Practical Guide for Improving Gender Equality in Territorial Issues (Land and Water Division Working Paper no. 18, 2018) (useful examples of gender-responsive planning and analysis for enhanced landscape and territorial management).
- CARE International Gender Network, Good Practices Framework: Gender Analysis (2012)
- UN Women, Guidance note: Gender mainstreaming in development programming (2014)

3. Set up inclusive stakeholder mapping, outreach and consultation, and partnerships

To supplement and nuance existing strategies and data, project developers must plan participatory consultation with stakeholders and prospective partners to ensure equal opportunities for men and women to meaningfully participate and contribute their expertise to project design. Consultation and outreach must address potential barriers to participation and determine how to best involve and engage with different groups of stakeholders.⁴⁰ The outreach and consultation methods established at the project identification stage will accompany the project through the implementation and follow-up stages by providing an on-going channel for project impact input and course revisions, as needed.

3.1 Identifying and reaching out to stakeholders

It is critical to identify and reach out to those affected by the proposed interventions for effective LDN outcomes, reduced risks, and greater success in addressing the social and economic needs of affected individuals and communities. Stakeholders must include women who will serve as experts and come from affected populations, as well as local civil society organizations and women's groups (e.g. women's farmer groups, women's collectives and cooperatives, and women engaged in land, forest or fishing-based livelihood).

How? Planners must devise and put in place an **intentional outreach plan** to identify and reach affected subgroups in the community (or affected populations, such as small-holder farmers or fisherfolk) such as women and men of varied ages, family situations, indigenous and minority-status, ethnicity, disability and education level, as each may experience differing rights, roles and impacts vis-à-vis the project.⁴¹ National government gender equality mechanisms, academics, gender experts and women's civil society groups should be targeted, equipped with information about the potential project, and included in the planning process.⁴²

Questions to ask when identifying stakeholders and partners:

- Do key stakeholders consulted include individuals or groups with a mandate/main focus on gender issues (e.g. women's affairs ministry/agency or NGOs focused on promoting gender equality, women's rights or empowerment)?
- Is there gender-balanced representation among key stakeholders?
- Is there at least one stakeholder with the skills, expertise, and capability to raise and advocate for gender perspectives and analysis?

Women as stakeholders and experts in LDN transformative projects and programmes

The UNCCD Gender Action Plan recognizes structural inequalities that curtail women's land use and management rights (para. 11) and asserts that gender mainstreaming is essential "to address the gender inequalities that disproportionately undermine women's effectiveness as agents of change in the implementation of the Convention, [and] would enhance the achievement of land degradation neutrality (LDN) targets" (para. 8).

3.2 Facilitating meaningful, participatory consultation

Participatory stakeholder consultation determines the rights, roles, priorities, and skill-sets of women and men and their concerns and opportunities to contribute to the project (e.g. differences in primary sources of livelihood and income that should be addressed by the project). It also assesses their relationships to resources and issues at stake; different influences and impacts of the project on women and men (e.g. gender barriers may affect project success or could adversely impact women and girls by increasing their workloads).⁴³ For indigenous peoples and communities, in particular, project design must aim to ensure free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) for the proposed activities.⁴⁴

How? Consultations typically require: meetings, gathering or workshops with, ideally, an equal number of men and women beneficiaries/stakeholders separately and together in mixed groups; the assignment of male and/or female presenters/facilitators; meetings at convenient times and locations for both men and women; accommodation and funding for transportation and childcare services; organizers must ensure modes of communication that account for women's literacy levels and access to technology (such as Internet, mobile phone) and develop written and/or non-written means (such as radio, group gatherings, image-based leaflets) to reach the most vulnerable and marginalized; and, finally, they should consider setting minimum quotas for participation, consultation, decision-making and voting.

Biocultural community protocols

Effective LDN projects require extensive community mobilization, as well as constructive and proactive planning with community stakeholders. Creating a Biocultural Community Protocol is an increasingly popular approach to ensure that communities can effectively assert and claim their resource rights and responsibilities when faced with external actors, such as governments, companies, donors and NGOs. Although each community protocol is adapted to its local context, it is generally a community-led and owned instrument that promotes participatory advocacy for the recognition of and support for ways of life that are based on the customary sustainable use of biodiversity, according to standards and procedures set out in customary, national, and international laws and policies. "They can be used as catalysts for constructive and proactive responses to threats and opportunities posed by land and resource development, conservation, research, and other legal and policy frameworks."

Source: Natural Justice, Biocultural Community Protocols.

Resource: Natural Justice, Biocultural Community Protocols: Articulating Stewardship, Asserting Rights, Affirming Responsibilities (2013).

Useful resource: The CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS), CARE International and the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), Gender and Inclusion Toolbox Participatory Research in Climate Change and Agriculture (2014) provides detailed instruction for participatory consultation and research.

3.3 Leveraging project partnerships

In seeking partners, consider how local groups or community-based organizations, including women's groups and associations, can take on implementation of components or activities of the project as executing partners, and as part of project initiatives to develop capacity and empower local women.⁴⁵ Women's groups should play a key role in developing the baseline gender analysis. Many projects have found that community-based groups (such as women's collectives and self-help groups) are instrumental in helping set up social mobilization activities and coordination of rural women's representation in environmental advocacy leading to powerful project outcomes.⁴⁶

Examples of inclusive project partnerships

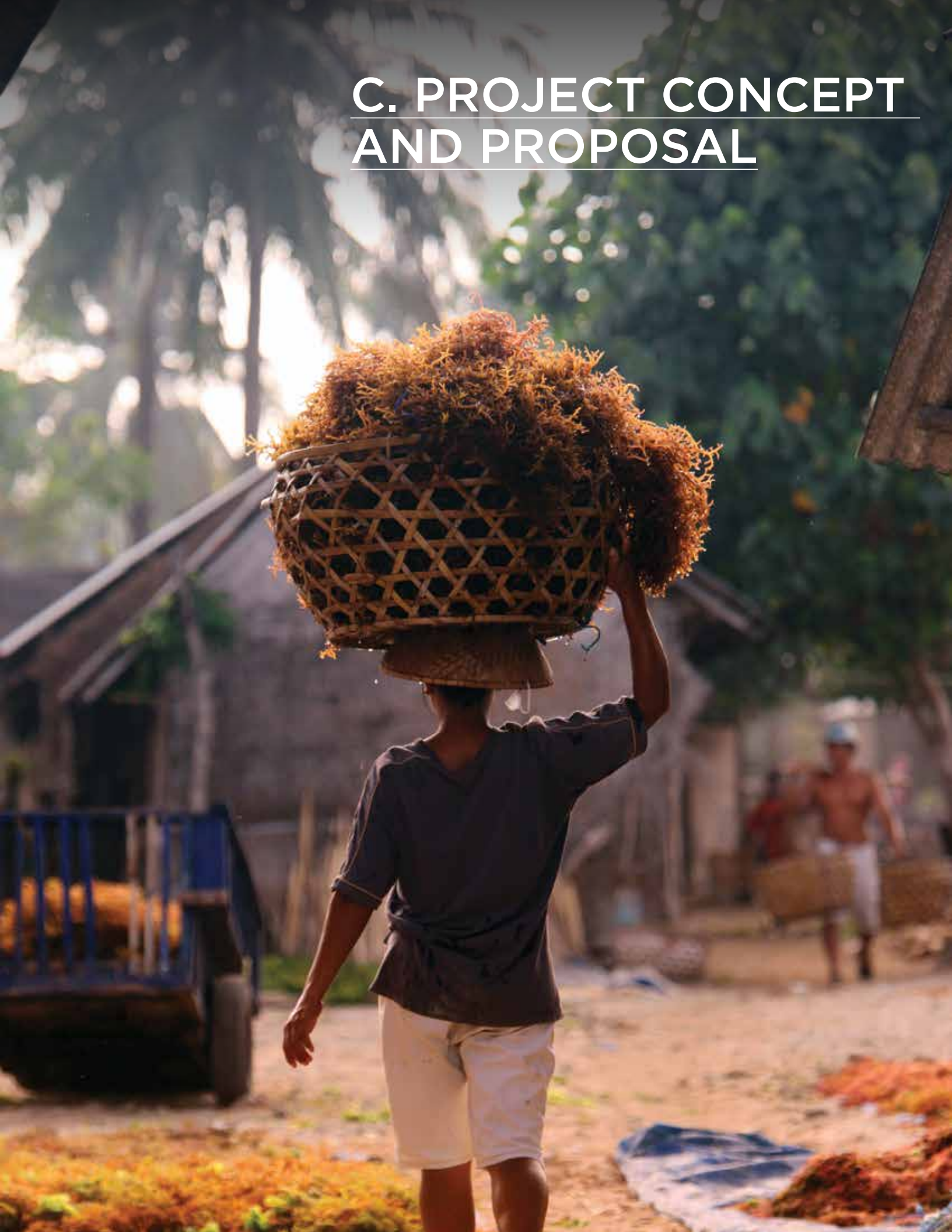
Projects should aim to engage a varied combination of stakeholders, agencies and institutions – including NGOs, civil society actors, community-based organizations, extension service-providers and gender ministries.⁴⁷

Dominica: SLM Project in the Commonwealth of Dominica engaged the National Council of Women in providing technical support for gender mainstreaming in SLM.⁴⁸

Albania: Promoting SLM through Integrated Restoration of Ecosystems in Albania designated the Kolonja Women's Association to lead the development of baseline gender analysis which led to the use of quotas to enlist women's participation in training activities.⁴⁹

Gambia: Community-based Sustainable Dryland Forest Management in Gambia employed the expertise of the Agency for the Development of Women and Children to coordinate participatory gender-based activities in forest conservation.⁵⁰

C. PROJECT CONCEPT AND PROPOSAL



At this stage, the project concept and proposal would build and expand on the robust outreach, planning and analysis established in the project development phase. This section follows UNCCD’s checklist for LDN Transformative Projects and Programmes (TPP) to ensure project proposals are gender-responsive, based on sound scientific guidelines and human rights principles and in compliance with the environmental and social safeguard standards of funding sources.⁵¹

1. Project objectives

Ideal LDN TPPs aim to stop excessive loss of productive land and reduce gender inequality by leveraging co-benefits for optimal outcomes. Project objectives may: i) stake dedicated gender equality goals that align with the UNCCD GAP; ii) directly and explicitly target women and the structural, institutional and social barriers that exclude them from the control and management of land, productive and natural resources; or iii) narrow gender disparities and equip women as agents of change who effectively “promote and protect their rights, manage their workloads, and use their knowledge to negotiate fairer laws and policies.”⁵² LDN transformative projects and programmes thus go beyond women’s participation in planning and decision-making to concrete approaches to tackle persistent gender power dynamics and barriers to gender equality. As such, competitive concept notes and proposals explicitly state the LDN co-benefits’ potential for gender equality. Gender mainstreaming is required for project compliance and is a pre-requisite for projects submitted to most funding entities.

2. Country context

Prospective LDN interventions should endeavour to advance the country’s national priorities, from national LDN targets to climate-focused strategies – such as intended nationally determined contributions (INDC/ NDC) and national action plans (NAP) – to broader development, poverty, land use, agricultural and rural reform, environmental and natural resource plans. A gender-responsive country context would align the intervention to gender and social equity priorities in national plans as situated within the local enabling legal and policy environment. The project country context section typically identifies the main root causes

and barriers (e.g. social, gender, fiscal, regulatory, technological, financial, ecological, institutional, etc.) and proposes project activities to address them.

Example of gender-responsive LDN project objectives

Mainstreaming biodiversity into the management of the coastal zone in Mauritius (Global Environment Fund, 2014)⁵³ combined a gender lens and a human rights-based approach to reduce the gender bias that assumes that men are the sole breadwinners, heads of households and chief recipients of household income. The project distinguishes women and men as household beneficiaries of project objectives and outcomes ensuring that: (a) women’s participation was not hampered by unpaid care work; (b) alternative care arrangements were considered as part of the development of sustainable and alternative livelihoods; (c) women’s participation would not worsen their unpaid workload; and (d) the project would not take advantage of gender bias in income.⁵⁴

2.1 Highlight national gender equality and social equity priorities and gaps

Project planners should avoid laying the project over existing social and legal inequalities. A description of the country’s enabling environment requires a review of existing opportunities and deficiencies in the national legal system in the context of gender equality in land, resources, inheritance, divorce and customary rights. Family laws (and where relevant, the religious or community laws that govern family and personal status issues) are especially critical to a transformative approach to LDN, as they tend to govern women’s rights to land and assets. Where such laws discriminate on the basis of gender, they can derail anticipated project outcomes. For example, national or local laws that regulate inheritance/succession and marital property regimes (and the rights of women in common law or informal unions and upon divorce) may limit women’s direct access to project interventions and benefits. Nationality and citizenship laws are also often relevant to ensure women gain and enjoy equal status in issues related to land and natural resource rights.

2.2 Identify gender differences in livelihood and tenure security constraints

The country context analysis should identify gender differences in land-tenure-related livelihood constraints and tenure security that could impact women's and men's resiliency, ability, incentive, and opportunity to invest and contribute to adaptation and long-term LDN interventions. In many contexts, women may be unaware of, or be ill-equipped to pursue, the process to obtain documentation or redress for denial of land certificates or forest use rights, unable to access agricultural inputs and climate-smart support services or have their role as farmers and agricultural actors underplayed. Land degradation impacts may also increase the migration of men to look for work, leaving women behind to manage the land, in addition to their already disproportionate domestic responsibilities, such as collecting firewood, fetching water, and taking care of children and the elderly.⁵⁵

2.3 Analyse women's rights in different land governance regimes in the project areas

Land and forest rights, especially for women, are critical to effective LDN outcomes. Since project areas will likely include varied land governance regimes, project planners must account for women's rights in different land governance regimes in the project areas, including their land and inheritance rights to communal, family, ancestral, indigenous, public and private lands, to ensure they include guarantees and safeguard for women's rights and to ensure equal benefits from project dividends. For example, project interventions should ensure that community management regimes include guarantees and safeguards for women's rights within the community that are equivalent to those of male community members, to ensure equal benefits from project dividends. Likewise, in many countries, legal regimes that regulate "family land" or "ancestral land" might undermine women's equal rights to use and manage the land, which could undercut uptake of LDN activities.

Gender-responsive analysis would account for legal gaps, parallel and informal legal systems which might require harmonization around the regulatory and legal framework for gender equality and women's rights to

land, forests, productive and natural resources. This would include analysis of both women's access to land and resources (e.g. women often get smaller plots of lesser quality or only have the right to the land or trees through tenuous marital bonds) and women's ability to benefit from them. Given such realities, projects should aim to equip women with knowledge about climate change and LDN to enhance more meaningful participation and opportunities to turn knowledge into action.

What to include in the country context analysis on legal gaps and protections?

The legal and policy framework review should include:

- Constitutional provisions on gender equality, land, conservation, natural resource protection, poverty and rural rights
- Laws governing agriculture and farming/rural land; land reforms, cadaster/zoning, forest, pasture, grazing, grasslands, range lands laws, environment, conservation, national parks/protected lands, natural resources (including where relevant on exploitation of resources, such as mining, quarries), water protection, forestation, animal/wildlife laws, renewable energy, indigenous peoples' and women's rights
- Family law concerning land/immovable property/farms, joint decisions concerning land, inheritance
- Local/municipal law on governance and decision-making about land and natural resource issues
- Inter-agency coordination regulations and laws
- Development and environmental plans/strategies/policies (e.g. rural development, climate change, water/watershed, land, drought, biodiversity, forestry)
- Gender equality laws and policies
- Ratified international conventions (e.g. Rio Conventions, CEDAW, ICESCR) and consensus agreements (e.g. 2030 Agenda, Beijing Platform for Action)

Where to find information for country gender context assessments?

Information and data for a nuanced, gender-responsive analysis of the country context for LDN projects – particularly major political, legal and social factors that influence the realization of women’s land rights – can be accessed at the following knowledge hubs:

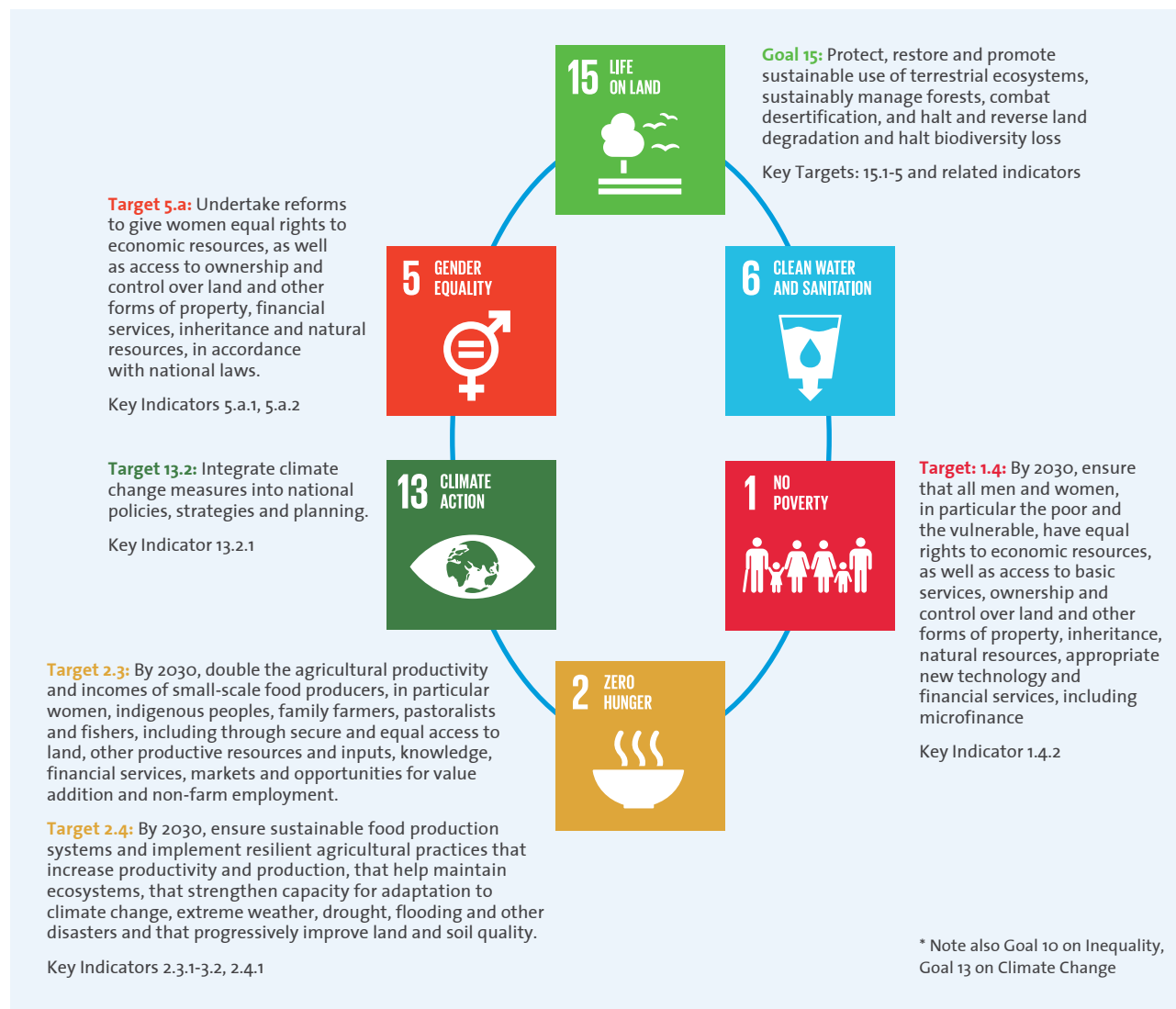
- FAO, Gender and Land Rights Database (GLRD), with 84 country profiles available.
- FAO-developed Country Gender Assessments (CGAs) provide an extensive national gender profile of agriculture and rural livelihoods, with 22 country profiles available across three regions (as of August 2019), .
- Regional development banks also offer country gender assessments, such as:
 - African Development Bank (AfDB) country gender profiles
 - Asian Development Bank country gender assessments
- PRINDEX: national surveys in about 100 countries of perceptions of property security by a representative sample of rights-holders – not only heads of household – accounting for women and young adults’ land rights; evidence is also available from 33 countries on women’s perceptions of tenure security.
- The World Bank’s Women, Business and the Law initiative tracks discriminatory laws and national data worldwide (189 countries), including on land ownership and tenure, marital property administration, non-monetary contributions, and economic empowerment.
- The Legislation Assessment Tool for gender-equitable land tenure (LAT) is based on 30 legal indicators to assess national gender-equitable land tenure in support of implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forestry in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT); completed assessments are available for 23 low- and middle-income countries.
- The Global Land Tool Network (GLTN)-produced Gender Evaluation Criteria assesses the gender-responsiveness of land tools and can be adapted to varied activities and contexts to sufficiently address the needs of both women and men.
- National research and synthesis documents from government agencies, such as women’s ministries and human rights commissions.
- Government reports and NGO supplementary/shadow reports to international treaty-monitoring bodies, such as for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as well as progress reports as part of the Universal Periodic Review, 2030 Global Agenda SDGs, or the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action country reports to provide information on women’s land and resource rights and the broader national gender equality context and enabling environment.

2.4 Align project goals to national and global development and human rights commitments

In addition to aligning with the country’s national priorities, the country context section should show how the project aligns with and contributes to country commitments to global and regional priorities. To do so, the proposal could highlight linkages and potential for leveraging data collection under pre-existing regional and global frameworks. A review of national land-degradation-related projects in over 34 countries under the UNCCD framework concluded that LDN action

would benefit from “merging project gender plans with existing gender schemes at both local and global levels.”⁵⁶ The project could, for example, connect to the SDGs on eradicating poverty (goal 1), improving food security (goal 2) and achieving gender equality (goal 5), and link across: the Rio Conventions; the Voluntary Guidelines of the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forestry in the Context of National Food Security; the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; and global gender equality norms and standards, such as those guaranteed by CEDAW and ICESCR.

SDGs and land-related indicators



3. Project description: Approach and activities for transformative LDN

Successful LDN transformative projects and programmes adopt a dual approach of gender mainstreaming and targeted interventions for women (twin track). In building the project components, project developers should draw on the initial gender analysis to develop a more extensive, critical interrogation of gender dynamics, their causes and persistence. For example, effective sustainable land and forest

management requires gender-responsive analysis, in part to determine hotspot areas in terms of degradation and to identify populations and power dynamics that could be tackled for the most impactful LDN intervention. The gender analysis would then inform the defining features of LDN transformative projects and programmes in the related checklist, developed by the Global Mechanism in collaboration with the UNCCD secretariat, and reviewed by the Science Policy Interface. This includes features that: are fundamental to LDN, deliver multiple benefits, promote responsible

and inclusive governance, promote the scale-up of what works, enhance (sub)national ownership and capacity, and leverage innovative finance (especially from the private sector).⁵⁷ The following sections illustrate ways to integrate gender perspectives into select features of the LDN transformative projects and programmes approach.

3.1 Features that are fundamental to LDN

LDN transformative projects and programmes employ a **landscape approach** that covers varied land types, sectors and jurisdictions⁵⁸ and as such require careful analysis of land tenure security, women’s rights to land and resources and decision-making inputs and authority of women of different ages, identities and social status across the multiple land regimes targeted by the project.

How? Ensure gender equal participation and decision-making. Project developers must build on the participation of women in planning and implementation, to ensuring women are key partners in decision-making, enjoy mandated equality and legal rights, especially where gender bias persists in social norms, practices and policies affecting land use, natural resource management, and access to benefits and finance.

How? Integrate and redress gender gaps in land tenure security and rights. A gender-informed land rights review is critical for LDN planning and for multi-impact and benefits projects. Equitable land use planning and land management are prerequisites for effective LDN programming, requiring addressing gender-based tenure insecurity and land rights. Women typically have different rights and duties based on land types (e.g. agricultural land, forests, watersheds/coastal land, mountain, protected areas), land governance and legal regimes (e.g. private, family, collective/communal, public land), as well as based on their familial and social status. The landscape approach to LDN thus requires thoughtful, nuanced gender analysis of women’s rights and land tenure security per land type, sector and jurisdiction (e.g. statutory, customary or indigenous law; communal and individual land rights) to identify and plan for the removal of gender-based constraints to fully realize LDN benefits.

Secure tenure is necessary for community mobilization and “buy-in” for adopting and strengthening sustainable, climate-smart agricultural (CSA) land management practices (such as conservation agriculture and integrated soil management) and for agroforestry and landscape management (such as community- or farmer-managed natural regeneration, which promises social, economic and environmental benefits).⁵⁹

Examples of gender-responsive communal land degradation projects

- Communal land boards comprised of women and men in Namibia assisted women to successfully acquire titles to traditional land.⁶⁰
- Systematic land registration procedures in Cambodia enabled distribution of land titles jointly to husband and wife.⁶¹
- Gender and formalization of native communities in the Peruvian Amazon (Center for International Forestry Research, 2019) raised awareness of affected women’s perspectives in the titling process. While Peru has laudably recognized indigenous peoples’ collective rights to land and forests in the Amazon for over four decades and national Peruvian law generally promotes women’s equality (e.g. equal inheritance rights), national laws do not specifically protect women’s land rights or their land tenure and associated rights within indigenous communities. Government officials overseeing land titling of native lands in Peru were not always sufficiently aware of important gender differences in forest use, management and decision-making, differing perceptions of the fairness of rules, tenure security and drivers of insecurity related to titling and formalization processes. To account for the impact of tenure insecurity of collective land on women within native communities, the project sought to strengthen women’s knowledge and capacity to better engage in the formalization processes, and to raise awareness about affected women’s perspectives about the titling process. The project provided for gender training and reflection opportunities for government representatives, indigenous federations and communities and supported exchange platforms for dialogue between government officials, communities and NGOs, women’s organizations and associations.⁶²

How? Advance gender equality with skills development and labour-reducing tactics. Effective projects have complemented technical improvements with skills-development training ranging from water-saving agricultural techniques to leadership and negotiation skills; convened facilitated community dialogues and multi-stakeholder discussion platforms to improve interactions with power-holders and service-providers; diversified community livelihood options, especially for women; and advanced gender equality through

behaviour and norm-change interventions.⁶³ Gender-responsive projects also address potential increases in labour and time burdens on women, especially given their existing disproportionate care responsibilities, women's often more limited financial means to access and invest in experimental practices, labour-saving technologies, additional workers or costly inputs, and their generally lower status and authority when it comes to land-related decisions.

Examples of gender-responsive technologies and training in LDN projects

The Zimbabwe Livelihoods and Food Security Programme (DFID/FAO)⁶⁴

Successful outcomes for gender equality (e.g. greater participation and control over assets by women), adoption of conservation agriculture techniques, increased harvest yields, and more sustainable farms were attributed to: concerted efforts to adopt the agricultural technologies most appropriate for local women's preferences and priorities; gender-sensitive training for female extension workers; the furnishing of bicycles for greater reach to client-farmers; and provision of subsidies that enabled women to acquire assets and improve their productivity. Going beyond promoting women's active participation at the farm level, the project mobilized resources to enable small-scale female farmers to invest in farm enterprise diversification, productivity-enhancing technologies and non-farm economic activities and livelihood strategies which contributed to food security.

Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Ethiopia and Kenya: Drylands Development Programme (World Agroforestry Centre/Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands)⁶⁵

Women's Village Savings and Loan Associations co-led the programme's planning activities, working with watershed committees, local governments, community groups and local farmers to organize trainings, change behaviour, and regenerate community natural resources through creating and supporting 33 watershed management plans. The women's associations helped farmers, especially women and non-member young farmers, get access to credit they needed and would not otherwise be able to access to invest in improved agricultural inputs and practices. Women's association members were able to influence the community platform's first steps, contributing to their own leadership skills and to advancing their interests (e.g. the platform bylaws require a minimum 40 per cent representation of women among the village thematic group delegates).

The programme improved sustainable practices on communal land, the adoption of new rainfall harvesting and conservation agriculture techniques and secured a supply of shorter-variety seeds leading to many farmers reporting a doubling of their field yields. Community platforms pooled membership dues to provide interest-free loans to extremely vulnerable farmers to access inputs needed to adopt new techniques. By focusing on the identification of male and female farmer innovators, the project elevated locally adapted and replicable practices and achieved greater results with only 19 per cent of the costs of a traditional cash-for-work programmes.

Examples of land use and land management activities applicable at each level of the LDN response hierarchy

Each is strengthened by gender-responsive targeting of affected populations, ensuring women's participation and benefit from interventions:

- **Interventions to avoid and prevent land degradation** apply to non-degraded land and intact natural systems. Interventions are mainly sustainable land management (SLM) and sustainable forest management (SFM) and practices that conserve soil fertility (nutrients, organic matter), minimize disturbance and erosion, and avoid contamination. Practices include: wise chemical inputs; reduced/zero tillage, crop rotations, retaining residues, green manure cropping; organic amendments; sustainable biochar; pasture phase; agroforestry; intercropping; permaculture, modifying logging practices to avoid future degradation, law enforcement, awareness-raising and capacity-building.
- **Interventions that reduce and minimize land degradation** can be conducted in partly degraded lands with reduced productivity. Such interventions constitute mainly SLM and SFM practices with a greater intensity than for avoiding and reducing land degradation. Interventions include, inter alia, organic matter addition, pasture phase, cattle rotation, fencing management, water conservation; active measures to reduce soil erosion (e.g. contour banks, vegetated hedges, wind breaks, terraces), correct degrading processes (such as acidification and salinization through liming and strategic reforestation, respectively).
- **Interventions to reverse land degradation by restoring and rehabilitating** target degraded and unproductive land. Interventions consist of substantial (possibly transformational) interventions to enhance productivity: high rates of organic amendment (compost, manure) to build nutrient levels and biological activity; amendments to address soil limitations, e.g. lime, gypsum, clay (to sandy soils), biochar, water harvesting; as well as interventions geared towards restoring vegetative cover through agroforestry, afforestation, reforestation, or mine reclamation practices, among others.

Source: Global Mechanism, LDN TPP (August 2019 draft)

3.2 Features that deliver multiple benefits

The LDN projects checklist specifies several paths towards achieving multiple benefits, including by:

- Linking to multiple SDGs by designing interventions that generate multiple environmental, economic and social benefits, while taking into account the different needs and priorities of women and men⁶⁶
- Providing economic incentives that benefit both men and women to improve livelihoods (e.g., creation of green jobs and enhanced access to inclusive credit lines)
- Promoting land use decisions that account for “social, cultural and economic factors and their impacts, including consideration of vulnerable groups and gender; [and the] participation of relevant stakeholders representing key land uses and land governance systems in the intervention area/landscape; ... [and/or]
- Identify[ing] land-based pathways for improving livelihoods, sustainable food systems for current and future generations.⁶⁷

Examples of LDN projects with multiple benefits

Gender equality and women's empowerment – as a cross-cutting SDG accelerator – constitutes a critical co-benefit for and from LDN transformative projects and programmes. Examples of such projects include:

Sustainable Forest Management and Conservation Project in Central and Southern Benin (GEF, 2017)

Gender equality in The project focuses on outcomes that: reduce women's time and labour on household chores, for example, making harvested forest/land produce available near family settlements; increase capacity for women's education and training on processed forestry products and sustainable forest/land management/conservation and ways to use this knowledge to generate alternative income; and enhance women's overall health by building accessible primary healthcare centres near villages.⁶⁸

Enhancing Agroecological Systems in the Northern Prefectures of Central African Republic (GEF, 2016)

The project prioritizes women due to their heavier productive, reproductive, and community-based workloads and existence of land-related gender disparities. It targets 8 million women by focusing on women's access to land tenure security; enhances organizational capacity of women's producer groups; provides inclusive investment and growth opportunities for women; institutes gender-sensitive early warning systems; promotes pro-women services centered on creation of ecological value chains and technologies to reduce women's work time and increase their productivity; and employs a gender and socio-economic development specialist to oversee the project's gender mainstreaming.⁶⁹

Initiative for Women and Land (Initiative Femmes et Terroirs) in Niger (2011-2015)

The Initiative targeted Women's Village Savings and Loan Association groups (known by the local name, Mata Masa Dubara, meaning roughly "enlightened women" or "women on the move"). These women's associations brought their decade-long management experience to develop a social enterprise to manage degraded pastoral land area in the Tambaraoua community. They formed a co-ed community management committee to guide community restoration actions by clearing 50 hectares of degraded land of an invasive weed, reseeding the area with locally available grass species useful for fodder and planting the area with seedlings to produce gum arabic. The group employed village men, women and youth to implement annual weeding, seeding and grass-cutting and established a village surveillance committee to guard against illegal grazing or cutting.

Since managing the community's lands has traditionally been relegated to men, the women strategically created a village management committee with a majority of men to ensure their buy-in and support for the action but reserved key management positions within the committee for women to give them control of critical elements of the enterprise's governance and financial management. They codified in by-laws the enterprise's governance and revenue-sharing that distributed revenues between the enterprise, the protection committee and local authorities, including governmental technical services and the village treasury. Ensuring equitable and inclusive sharing of benefits and payments from cash-and-carry fodder sales for labour costs, to creating jobs and compensating efforts of all the major stakeholders encouraged overall buy-in and pre-empted potential conflict about benefits and revenues-sharing. The village continued operations independently after the project's closure, reaping robust economic gains and observing the return of wildlife that had disappeared from the area.⁷⁰

Programme Oasis Sud in Morocco (2006)

This public-private partnership to protect desert oases from desertification due to excessive exploitation of natural resources integrates SLM with income-generating activities to ensure sustainability, successfully targeting and working with women in "a society with deep-rooted traditions." Extensive gender-based interventions included capacity-building and training in agro-food production and tent-weaving techniques; facilitation of experience-exchange including inter-cooperative exchange visits; participation of local women cooperatives in national and international exhibitions; supporting the creation of new associations, economic interest groups, and federation units that bring together various women cooperatives for their mutual benefit; providing daycare services; and establishing and equipping multimedia classrooms welcoming women and youth.⁷¹

3.3 Features that promote responsible and inclusive governance

In many countries grappling with land degradation and drought, women continue to be excluded and marginalized from equal access, control and management of land and natural resources.

How? LDN transformative projects and programmes account for these realities by seeking to:

- Safeguard land rights of local land users, including individual and collective access to land, land tenure and resource rights, inheritance and customary rights – by tackling discriminatory bias in tradition, practice or law that undercuts women’s rights in these areas.⁷²
- Ensure free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples and local communities for any activities affecting their rights to land, territories and resources⁷³ – ensuring women within such communities have and can claim their rights, access information and be equipped with skills and authority to provide meaningful inputs into such consent processes.
- Define mechanisms for ensuring gender-responsive engagement of key stakeholders in project design and implementation.
- Ensure strong gender equality, inclusiveness, accountability and transparency in land-use decisions and planning.
- Avoid forced displacement/involuntary resettlement resulting from LDN interventions⁷⁴ – with particular safeguards contemplated based on the different impacts experienced by men and women in terms of livelihood options, access to markets, schools and health facilities, and workload due to such displacement and climate-induced migration.
- Strengthen or develop a grievance redress mechanism⁷⁵ – accounting for women’s status and ability to access and prevail under such redress avenues, given greater risks of stigma and higher illiteracy rates among women in many affected communities.

Example of gender-inclusive participation and governance

Indonesia: Improving indigenous women’s access to land and participation in natural resource management (2001-current): The project targeted landless Kasepuhan women in West Java who were excluded from land-related decision-making and natural resource management. The Indonesian Institute for Forest and Environment worked with the Kasepuhan community to raise awareness about the impact of gender disparities and supported Kasepuhan women forming women’s organizations where they could learn about their rights. As a result, women began partaking in forest resource management and in cultivating previously underutilized land, while encouraging reliance on sustainable foraging techniques, pond management and environmental conservation.⁷⁶

Resource: FAO, *Governing land for women and men: A technical guide to support the achievement of responsible gender-equitable governance of land tenure* (2013).

The Adaptive Collaborative Management (ACM) approach, tested across settings in Africa, Asia and Latin America, guides practitioners wishing to strengthen gender equity and inclusiveness of marginalized groups in community-based activities such as forest and land management. The use of ACM methodology in six communities in Uganda has resulted in reforestation of over 50 ha of degraded forests by local communities with women engaged in the management of these forests benefitting from and owning the trees planted in central forest reserves and on farmlands.

Resource: CIFOR: Mukasa, C. and others, *Adaptive Collaborative Management: A Simplified Guide for Practitioners* (Association of Uganda Professional Women in Agriculture and Environment, 2016). This ‘how-to’ guide for ACM provides simplified directions for project planners.

Increased gender equality and women's empowerment, reduced rural poverty and enhanced resilience

The FAO gender-sensitive participatory “Dimitra Clubs” approach enriches land degradation projects (as part of climate change adaptation initiatives) by promoting active community involvement, access to information and collective action intentionally designed to boost gender equality and women's empowerment and to contribute to reducing rural poverty and enhance resilience. Dimitra Clubs are informal groups of women, men and youth – mixed depending on the community – that meet regularly to discuss and identify their priorities and challenges, make informed choices and take collective action to solve these problems using their own resources.

The clubs – active in the Sahel region and Central and East Africa (Burundi, Central African Republic, DR Congo, Ghana, Niger, Mali and Senegal) – are often equipped with wind-up, solar-powered radios and cell phones. Community radio stations collaborate with the clubs by broadcasting information requested by clubs, their debates and achievements so as to inspire other communities. Given their credibility with the community and village leaders, the clubs serve to boost rural people's participation in local governance and women's leadership, improve their access to local decision-making processes and facilitate more equitable gender power relations. Clubs have noted examples of transformative changes, such as breaking food taboos, combating early marriage and gender-based violence, improving girls' education, improving dialogue between women and men at household and community levels, and reducing women's work burden.

In central **Mali**, the co-ed Dimitra Clubs in Kedou village in Mopti identified erosion as the greatest threat to the scant arable land available in an area where 90 per cent of the rocky, cliff- and rock-filled land is ill-suited for crop cultivation. To protect land, the clubs involved the villagers in building stone barriers by placing rows of stones along contour lines to avoid erosion. Additional stone barriers helped conserve water reserves given concerns about silting of the village dam, a critical source of water for the sizeable production of shallots and other local crops in the village.

3.4 Features that promote the scale-up of what works

To accurately capture local knowledge and project impacts, success and shortfalls, information and data must be gathered against an initial gender-informed baseline, complete with sex-disaggregated indicators and gender targets (see more below in the section on the Gender-Responsive Results Framework). LDN transformative projects and programmes “employ science based and local and indigenous knowledge as well as best practices including sustainable land management that contributes to land-based climate change adaptation and mitigation [and] capture and disseminate what is learned from the interventions and identify ways to address knowledge gaps through accessing all knowledge forms, and where necessary conducting research.”⁷⁷

How? Learn from affected women's experiences.

Projects most accurately capture features that can be scaled up while improving the well-being of women and men in targeted communities by specifically reaching out to affected women of varied social groups and backgrounds for their expertise and inputs. The GAP reinforces the importance of scaling that builds on “enhancing women's access to improved knowledge and technologies that relate to effective UNCCD implementation” by drawing on indigenous and rural women's “valuable knowledge, which is needed in order to increase food production.”⁷⁸ Studies for example, show that woman-to-woman training can boost subsistence food production, and women's use of extension services increased by 600 per cent through targeted delivery.⁷⁹

4. Gender-responsive results framework

LDN transformative project and programme proposals typically require a section on expected results from the proposed interventions and activities, a monitoring and evaluation process to track these results, and increasingly, information about the potential from lessons learned, especially around replicating and scaling up interventions. At a minimum, a project results framework should disaggregate indicator data by sex (as well as age, relevant identity and other social status factors), where such data is available. Such data collection creates a baseline against which to measure progress and to identify gaps where such disaggregated information is lacking at the national or sub-national level.

4.1 Gender-responsive indicators

Results indicators include output, outcome and impact indicators, as well as the different indicator types (e.g. quantitative and qualitative). Indicators should gauge gender differences with respect to participation and decision-making in projects from inception to delivery, as well as women's and men's differing land rights, access and use of land and resources and how project interventions plan to mitigate and erase such differences.

Tracking the impact of the project intervention on land cover and land use changes must include data collection for socioeconomic analysis, which includes the impact of LDN on women and households.⁸⁰ Land degradation impact assessment, land productivity and watershed evaluation likewise require socioeconomic indicators and analysis to gauge impact. Other seemingly gender-neutral measurements – such as drought (Standardized Precipitation Index, Palmer Drought Severity Index), rainfall variability (Inter-Annual Rainfall Variability,

Rainfall Seasonality Index, Precipitation Intensity), aridity and precipitation trends – also carry gender implications. For example, understanding women and men's different roles and experiences due to these weather phenomena

Examples of gender-responsive indicators

- Number or percentage of women and men among the project/programme beneficiaries
- Female and male rates for participation or enrolment in outreach programmes (ideally also disaggregated/divided by age – girls and boys and women and men – and/or other social identities (e.g. rural or urban, indigenous or non-indigenous, social status)
- Number or percentage of rural women with access to agricultural extension services at the end of the project compared to the baseline at project inception.

Example of project-based perception indicators

In the GEF-funded Programme for integrated development and adaptation to climate change in the Niger Basin (2019), the six-year project Gender Action Plan couples numeric and perception indicators to capture the reality and perceptions of the effectiveness and impact of the project's outcomes for women.

Activity

Land certification/titling policy enacted and implemented (access to land for 9,000 women)

Indicators

- Ratio in volume of land as accessed by women and men, compared to baseline
- Community satisfaction (disaggregated by sex and poverty ranking) with changes in land access and titling.

New gender-responsive CSA technologies in crop and livestock production developed through research and transferred to extension services

Ratio between the amount and type of agricultural inputs that women and men use, compared to baseline

Extension packages on good practices in gender-responsive CSA developed by extension services. This will include: (i) establishment of 45 multifunctional platforms for women's groups and (ii) support for 100 women's groups working in natural resources management

- Percentage of women capable of handling improved pastoral and agriculture activities
- Community satisfaction (disaggregated by gender) with changes in natural resources management

Training for men and women farmers conducted on gender-responsive CSA technologies on-farm or at functional farmer training centres (e.g. agrometeorological data use support for 10,000 women in their agricultural activities, sensitizing 500,000 women on climate change adaptation techniques and other resources)

- Number of women farmers implementing climate-resilient agriculture technologies and practices
- Number and percentage of women and men trained in sustainable production technologies, soil and water conservation, agroforestry, etc.

would help identify hotspots and high-risk areas for optimum impact from planned LDN interventions.

To measure equal opportunities, access and rights for women and men, indicators should draw on **both the scope and the quality of the change** (i.e. people's experiences, opinions, attitudes and feelings) and seek to capture progressive outcomes of policies, processes and interventions.

Examples of indicators for long-term changes in society and the environment

Depending on the LDN interventions, indicators could:

- Track improvements for the situation of indigenous women who face very different adaptation challenges, not only from indigenous men (owing to the gendered division of labour in indigenous cultures), but also from other women such as female farm workers⁸¹
- Set targets towards a goal of equal participation and representation of women and men, especially in decision-making processes and bodies under the project (in case of a low baseline, aim to progressively increase targets for the project throughout the implementation timeframe);⁸²
- Adapt to the project-level, SDG indicators 5.a.1 and 5.a.2 (under Goal 5 on gender equality) and indicator 1.4.2 (under Goal 1 on ending poverty) to capture the extent to which laws and practices afford women and men equal and secure access to land use, control and ownership.
- Aim to link up data collection of these key SDG indicators to tally sex-disaggregated data on land rights in law and in practice, both documented and as perceived by their beneficiaries. Note: the FAO guide to States on monitoring indicator 5.a.2 to realizing women's land rights in law.

4.2 Gender-responsive approach to data collection

A gender-responsive results framework should thus contemplate participatory methodologies, such as focus group discussions and social mapping tools, perception and opinion surveys to collect data for qualitative

indicators that will complement and allow for nuanced analysis of quantitative data to present a more accurate picture of impact and sustainability. A results-oriented framework accounts for how the project is affected by gender relations and how the project affects women's status. To that end, the baseline and end line analysis provide critical information for the specific project as well as for broader learning about gender equality in the context of LDN outcomes.

How? Employ a combination of gender-responsive data collection indicators and methods.

- **Qualitative gender-responsive indicators** could capture women's experiences of constraints to their access to agricultural extension services and their views on the best way to address those barriers and whether such strategies have been applied in a given project.⁸³
- **Combined quantitative and qualitative indicators** could be the number of women and men farmers who received training on sustainable agroforestry food production methods complemented by measures that assess whether training materials have sufficiently integrated a gender perspective and whether the capacity of female and male trainers to provide gender-informed training on agroforestry food production methods has increased.
- **Participatory monitoring** ensures that women from varied stakeholder groups can inform and shape project indicators and support data collection efforts in ways most acceptable to the community.

Gender-responsive budgets are meant to be a practical application of gender mainstreaming efforts because measures designed to contribute to gender equality need to be supported by the necessary allocation of resources. Gender-responsive budgets serve as an accountability and transparency tool as they objectively show the real value of resources targeted to men and women respectively.

Resource: UN Women training manual on gender-responsive budgeting, Available at <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2010/1/gender-responsive-budgeting-in-practice-a-training-manual>

5. Project impact

Project proposals require Social and Environmental Impact Assessment and a Gender Equality Impact review to evaluate risks, mitigate adverse impact, and align anticipated benefits with national and global priorities and human rights norms. These preliminary studies form the basis for the project activities. Environmental and social safeguards aim to improve sustainable development benefits and to prevent risks and potential damage to the environment and targeted communities, as well as to avoid entrenching gender inequality. Pursuant to the GAP, LDN interventions should endeavour to decrease the burden on women and ensure that women not only contribute to, but also benefit from, the interventions. In ensuring social and environmental safeguards, a nuanced analysis of possible harms and targeted benefits for affected women of various backgrounds should include consideration of aspects related to indigenous peoples and women's rights; land acquisition and involuntary resettlement; biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of living natural resources; community health, safety and security; and cultural heritage.⁸⁴

6. Budget/gender-responsive budgeting

Gender mainstreaming within the project cycle requires adequate budgetary allocations to carry out the anticipated analysis, activities, monitoring and evaluation and to resource the requisite staff needed to ensure affected men and women benefit from the intervention. A gender-responsive budgeting approach “is not about whether an equal amount is spent on women and men, but whether project/programme measures and activities are adequately funded to address men's and women's differentiated adaptation [or land degradation neutrality] needs” and that “both women and men benefit from the planned project/programme.”⁸⁵ Governments pledged to “promote gender-responsive budgeting by tracking and reporting resource allocation to gender equality and women's empowerment”, according to the GAP. Countries that intentionally financed women's involvement or activities consequently report high returns from their investment.⁸⁶

How? Earmark adequate gender project budgets. Such allocations should:

- Implement the project **gender action plan**⁸⁷
- **Identify and carry out dedicated gender activities** such as:
 - Gender and social mapping and analysis
 - Targeted awareness-raising campaigns for local women that may use multiple communication forms distinct from and in addition to more traditional text- or Internet-based communication⁸⁸
- Cover staffing needs, such as dedicated gender equality expert(s) or coordinator on staff, as well as staff time to carry and apply gender analysis and activities; a staff person/time to coordinate and oversee gender mainstreaming efforts; additional gender experts/consultants as needed
- Support training of project staff or gender training for executing entities or local communities and stakeholders.⁸⁹

Resources for gender-responsive indicators and methods

- Annex 2: Examples of gender-responsive indicators in climate change projects
- Annex 3: Sample indicators for gender-responsive LDN TPP
- Green Climate Fund and UN Women, *Mainstreaming Gender in Green Climate Fund Projects*
- Asian Development Bank, *Tool Kit on Gender Equality Results and Indicators (2013)*
- FAO, IFAD & World Bank, “Gender in climate-smart agriculture”: module 18 for gender in agriculture sourcebook (2015)
- FAO, *Sex-disaggregated data in agriculture and sustainable resource management: New approaches for data collection and analysis (2019)*
- FAO, *Guidance note on gender-sensitive vulnerability assessments in agriculture (2018)*
- Care International, *Participatory Monitoring & Evaluation in the Green Climate Fund and How Civil Society Can Engage (2019)*
- Climate Investment Funds, *Gender and Sustainable Forest Management: Entry Points for Design and Implementation (2017)*

D. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION



This section outlines key implementation “means” to ensure requisite gender-responsive project activities such as: sound gender and social analysis, context-based and stakeholder-informed planning, ongoing channels of input and participation by affected communities and experts, robust monitoring, evaluation and learning.

The **UNCCD Gender Action Plan** outlines potential intervention measures and proposes four mechanisms for implementation; namely, working with women’s organizations; developing strategic partnerships to support implementation; mobilizing financial resources to tackle gender inequality in LDN programme implementation; and monitoring and reporting on interventions to ensure meaningful results for women in line with their needs and priorities.⁹⁰

The UNCCD Global Mechanism in the **LDN TPP Guide** specifies that “proposals should also include a Gender Action Plan (GAP), which provides an overview of how gender equality will be promoted within the project. In line with the objective of promoting gender equality in terms of access and impact of climate funding, proposals for programmes and projects with well-designed gender elements may be given preference.”⁹¹

1. Gender Action Plan

Building on the gender analysis conducted during the planning phase, the project-level gender plan operationalizes the constraints and opportunities for women and men identified during the gender analysis phase and serves as a project manual to ensure principles and aspirations are translated into enforceable activities.

2. Staffing – gender expertise

Gender-responsive projects endeavour to have gender balance in the project team and to hire local gender specialists with expertise in gender analysis and mainstreaming in land, agriculture and climate change projects. While all team members (including management and field outreach staff) should be trained and familiar with gender mainstreaming principles and promote gender equality goals in implementing project

What to include in a Gender Action Plan?

A project-level Gender Action Plan typically:

- Identifies gender-responsive actions that address and strengthen the voice and agency of women and men in LDN interventions, including activities that document and draw upon indigenous and rural women’s knowledge and strategies that relate to effective LDN implementation.
- Defines responsibilities for integrating gender aspects into project design (e.g. job descriptions explicitly include such actions).
- Accounts for a gender-balanced project team (including ways to ensure their recruitment and retention) and the use of local gender experts.
- Allocates sufficient funds for gender analyses and participatory stakeholder consultations.⁹²
- Includes gender performance indicators and sex-disaggregated targets (as part of the results frameworks and possibly additional, indirect gender-equality-enhancing targets).
- Builds in periodic (e.g. monthly, quarterly, annual) evaluation in reports and project team meetings to check in on progress on implementation on Gender Action Plan activities and goals (considering periodic evaluation by gender experts from outside the project team).
- Documents and makes presentations on gender-responsive development and human rights impact.⁹³

activities, gender expertise is a specialized discipline and the project should engage gender experts/specialists in overseeing gender mainstreaming activities⁹⁴ and in providing technical backstopping to project staff, field implementers, partners and involved communities. That is, the implementation team should have staff with gender expertise and gender focal points embedded in partner organizations who are aware of and trained to address gender inequalities among beneficiaries.

The project should specify the mandate and scope for the gender specialist role and oversight authority for the project. Budgets must be earmarked for the salary of a gender specialist and for the costs associated with

the responsibilities of gender mainstreaming in the project. Clearly outlined Terms of Reference (TOR) would aid tailored recruitment of a gender expert, ideally with strong grounding, background or experience in land and natural resources and climate change. See Annex 4: Sample Terms of Reference template for Gender Specialist for LDN transformative projects and programmes.

Examples of LDN project-based Gender Action Plans

Turkey: Contributing to LDN target setting by demonstrating the LDN approach in the Upper Sakarya Basin for scaling up at national level (Global Environment Facility, 2017)⁹⁵

The project's **Gender Action Plan** conditions the success of land degradation prevention, mitigation and project evaluation on the following activities:

- Identifying women who are affected by land degradation in the project area (from survey and existing data) to ensure their participation in the project
- Determining the extent to which land degradation has led to, for example, a decrease in income (analysed by gender)
- Measuring the effects of problems by identifying women's current working conditions, income sources, nutritional status, sociocultural structures (via questionnaires and existing data)
- Ensuring awareness of LDN, to determine the number of women willing to participate in the actions to be made for LDN (via questionnaires and interviews)
- Giving education in-place: Describing LDN with socioeconomic analysis, to provide efficient use of natural resources as a source of livelihood, increasing the occupational capacity of women farmers and NGO-based production unions to ensure the effective and active organization of women in rural areas, and providing trainings on organizing in the form of cooperatives
- Cultivating women champions to share their experience of the project, including best practices with the wider public
- Identifying ways to support local government agencies (e.g. ministries of education, agriculture, forestry, etc.) by introducing women's issues in LDN
- Creating income sources from LDN with government, local governments and NGOs (e.g. chambers of agriculture and trade) and proposing livelihood alternatives, providing information on government grants, incentives and loans provided by the private sector. Such alternatives will be based on needs and desirability surveys with affected women and men to prioritize among, for example, changes in natural resource use, good agricultural practices, and income derived from handicrafts using local resources, medicinal and aromatic plants from forests, mushrooms, resins, vegetable food products, animal food products, or wool.

[Note that the GAP should go beyond a specific component to the entire project and include gender expert staffing]

Asian Development Bank Gender Action Plans include clear targets, quotas, gender design features and quantifiable performance indicators to ensure women's participation and benefits. Key aspects of the GAP are incorporated into project assurances to encourage buy-in from executing agencies and other project partners. The GAP presents:

- preparatory work undertaken to address gender issues in the project
- quotas, targets and design features included in the project to address gender inclusion and facilitate women's involvement and/or ensure tangible benefits to women
- mechanisms to ensure implementation of the gender design elements
- gender monitoring and evaluation indicators.

Resource: Asian Development Bank, Gender Action Plans in ADB Projects (tools and sector gender checklists) at <https://www.adb.org/themes/gender/project-action-plans>.

Example of gender-responsive project staffing

Armenia: Adaptation Fund project, strengthening land-based adaptation capacity in communities adjacent to protected areas (Thematic Focal Area: Agriculture)

Following a thorough and thoughtful gender and social consultation phase and analysis of the legal and policy context, the project required that the Gender Action Plan (GAP) be implemented by a Social and Gender Specialist hired as permanent staff of the project management unit. The specialist will have clear oversight on: incorporating the GAP into project planning; establishing sex-disaggregated indicators for project performance and monitoring; conducting gender-monitoring visits to the project sites and reporting on gender equality and gender-responsive activities within the project. They will equally be responsible for: implementing regular socioeconomic and gender assessments; providing recommendations on measures to avoid, minimize and/or mitigate adverse gender impacts; and organizing awareness-raising workshops. At the project inception stage, the specialist will organize a training on gender sensitivity for staff involved in the management and implementation of the project. The project management team will include reporting on progress of GAP activities in quarterly progress reports to the NIE [national implementing entity].⁹⁶

3. Tracking compliance and outcomes

The project Gender Action Plan and the Gender-responsive Results Framework serve to ensure the gender-mainstreamed planning and design become effective during and beyond the project life cycle. Project planners should institute regular project review meetings and outreach with implementers, stakeholders and affected women and populations to review whether designed activities might need adjustment, change or strengthening. This should be part of the envisioned ongoing outreach channel for project input launched during the project development stage.


How? The project team should continuously assess compliance with gender equality goals:⁹⁷

- Do the initial gender and social analysis presumptions and information regarding the needs, interests and priorities of women and men remain valid? What additional, more nuanced, supplemental analysis might be needed?
- What known or new challenges, barriers or restrictions have come up during the implementation to curtail equal participation of men and women in activities, decision-making processes or the distribution of resources and benefits?
- Are there any unintended consequences of backlash against women's involvement, such as gender-based violence or social stigma that need mitigation?

At the project level, tracking outcomes allows for real-time adjustment of planned activities, budget priorities, staffing and partnerships. Adaptive, flexible management is typically necessary to ensure the sustainability of gender-responsive activities during and after project implementation. Needed project activity adjustments might be indicated when:

- A selected technology or approach fails to consider women's time and labour responsibilities, making it impractical to fit into their daily life, or demand too much of their time. In addition, training women on efficient use of technology and equipment and ways to maintain or adjust them to women's changing needs could help course-correct project activities.⁹⁸
- In a food security adaptation project, "despite introduction of drip irrigation for use by poor female subsistence farmers, women might not be taught to install, operate or maintain the irrigation system nor have access to or control over the necessary financial resources to ensure the longevity of the irrigation system's benefit to them."⁹⁹

More broadly, project implementers should track compliance, impact and outcomes from the project activities in line with country commitments outlined in the country context section, as well as regional and global standards around land rights and governance, sustainable development, human rights and gender equality.

A close-up photograph showing a person's hands, wearing bright orange nitrile gloves, carefully planting a young mangrove sapling into a muddy tidal flat. The sapling has several vibrant green leaves and a thin, dark stem. The person's legs, also in orange, are visible in the background. The ground is a mix of grey mud and light-colored sand, with some water visible. The overall scene conveys a sense of environmental stewardship and reforestation.

**E. PROJECT
MONITORING,
EVALUATION
AND LEARNING**

1. Project oversight and governance

The LDN transformative project/programme template requires a clear governance structure or body in place to ensure successful and timely project implementation. Common structures include a management unit, a technical or advisory multisectoral group, or steering committee. It is typically helpful to include technical gender specialists from national institutions or ministries in such structures. For example, the Armenia Adaptation Fund project, Strengthening land-based adaptation capacity in communities adjacent to protected areas in Armenia, the project management unit includes a gender specialist and a monitoring & evaluation expert to oversee GAP progress implementation and evaluation.

Funding sources and donors typically prefer projects with strong project coordination mechanisms that seek to “strengthen or develop institutional arrangements through collaboration with the range of actors at multiple administrative levels.”¹⁰⁰ Projects can draw on existing coordination bodies, such as intergovernmental hubs or multisectoral groups, adapt subgroups from bigger coordination bodies, or create new ones. Representatives from gender equality machinery, ministries with a mandate over gender equality, women’s rights or human rights and, as appropriate, experts from research institutions/academia, women’s rights groups or affected women’s collectives should form an integral part of any project governance and coordination structure.

Example of governance

Namibia: The Integrated Landscape Approach for Enhancing Livelihoods and Environmental Governance to Eradicate Poverty (2018) Global Environment Fund project aims to reduce poverty through sustainable nature-based livelihoods, protect and restore forests as carbon sinks, and promote LDN. It names the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare as a key stakeholder and works with the University of Namibia to lead in the development of the gender investment framework.

2. Evaluation and lessons learned

Building on the project’s stakeholder input channels and gender-responsive results framework replete with qualitative and quantitative indicators and participatory monitoring methodologies, project planners should institute a monitoring and evaluation plan that feeds into periodic reports to the project management team and governance body.

How? Evaluations should review whether identified or emergent gender concerns have been integrated into every stage of the project cycle with an eye to highlighting strengths and shortfalls of the actual implementation and to recommend lessons learned for future interventions and national priorities, as well as to share and exchange project-based know-how between countries, experts and civil society. Ultimately, project evaluations could generate much-needed evidence on how concerted attention to gender in interventions and programmes can contribute to more equitable and sustainable outcomes.

The evaluation stage should seek to incorporate:

- Outcomes from the three LDN indicators (land cover, land productivity and soil organic carbon stock), national LDN and gender equality targets, relevant SDG targets, starting with SDG 15.3 and its indicator 15.3.1 on LDN, as well as SDG 5 (gender equality) indicators 5.a.1 and 5.a.2 on women’s land rights, SDG 1 (ending poverty) indicator 1.4.2 on land tenure security; SDG 2 (end hunger) indicator 2.4.1 on productive and sustainable agricultural land.
- Data from relevant gender-specific indicators in existing national policies and plans’ M&E systems, where available.
- Methods for gender-responsive evaluation and adaptive learning applied throughout the project cycle.¹⁰¹

The lessons learned stage should draw on:

- Qualitative lessons learned, promising practices and what did not work well, through narrative reporting.
- Results of the project outcome mapping – a methodology used to identify anticipated and unanticipated project outcomes that go beyond the project that can then feedback to national and global commitments.

- Input from the gender-responsive stakeholders input channel established during the project development stage to form part of regular monitoring and validation of project implementation outcomes (which include participatory methods involving women and men to increase ownership and sustainability; separate interviews and focus groups with men and women project participants; and tapping CSOs' expertise to support this process).¹⁰²

3. Reporting outcomes

Project-based lessons learned and outcomes hold substantial importance to the review of broader frameworks and can and should inform and transform national, regional and global commitments, priorities and standards advanced under the 2030 Agenda SDGs, the Rio Conventions and human rights treaties. LDN transformative project/programme outcomes can generate a critical evidence base that should be shared and disseminated widely and strategically. Project-generated gender-relevant promising practices and lessons learned should be documented and disseminated throughout the project cycle, ideally through a mechanism dedicated to monitoring and reporting intended and unintended gender impacts in project design and implementation. Having a project communication strategy in place would help promote and showcase lessons learned through varied communication channels and media. Effective sharing of reporting can lead to powerful synergies across sectors and institutions:

- Reporting outcomes to environmental knowledge management platforms, such as the UNCCD Knowledge Hub, FAO Knowledge Management Coordination efforts, and the Joint Liaison Group, which consists of the Executive Secretaries of the three Rio Conventions and aims to enhance coordination, collaboration, knowledge-sharing and outreach across the Conventions.
- Gender-responsive LDN project outcome reports can inform the revision of the UNCCD Gender Action Plan, contribute to the shaping of human rights standards around women's land and resource rights, and enforce sustainable development approaches that foster resilient, gender equal communities.

To **assess the successful integration of a gender perspective in the evaluation process**, the evaluation should aim to answer the following queries:*

1. How and to what extent have project components and the overall project reached results related to gender equality?
 - Did the project reach its LDN goals and reduce vulnerability for both women and men?
 - To what extent was the project aligned with the specific land degradation concerns and priorities for women and men?
2. Were there changes (increase or decrease) in women's and men's participation in and benefits from interventions through the project life?
 - Were benefits and results distributed equally between women and men and equitably between targeted stakeholder groups?
3. What reduction in or exacerbation of gender inequalities (identified in the initial gender analysis) have been observed?
4. Has the project led to more equal opportunities for men and women, or did women suffer any detriment as a result of the intervention (e.g. with respect to division of labour and care-burden, time poverty or access and control of land and resources)?
5. Have men's and women's perceptions (norms, stereotypes, values) been altered during the course of the project implementation towards advancing gender equality, including within the land, agriculture and natural resources sectors?
6. What lessons learned and good practices related to mainstreaming gender in LDN projects can be scaled up or replicated and should be documented and reported?

*Adapted from IUCN, Training Session on Mainstreaming Gender in the Project Cycle (2018) and Adaptation Fund Board, p. 17.

ACRONYMS

ACM	Adaptive Collaborative Management
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
COP	Conference of the Parties
CRIC	Committee on the Review of the Implementation of the Convention
CSA	Climate Smart Agriculture
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GM	Global Mechanism
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LDN	Land Degradation Neutrality
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SPI	Science Policy Interface
TPP	Transformative Projects and Programmes
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

ANNEXES



ANNEX 1 Useful resources

■ Adaptation Fund

Adaptation Fund Board, *Guidance Document for Implementing Entities on Compliance with the Adaptation Fund Gender Policy* (3 March, 2017)

Further Compliance with the Environmental and Social Policy and the Gender Policy of the Fund (15 February, 2019)

■ GCF

UN Women and Green Climate Fund, *Mainstreaming Gender in GCF Projects: A practical manual to support the integration of gender equality in climate change interventions and climate finance* (2017)

■ GEF

UN Women, *Leveraging Co-Benefits Between Gender Equality and Climate Action for Sustainable Development: Mainstreaming Gender Considerations in Climate Change Projects* (2016)

GEF, *Guidance to Advance Gender Equality in GEF Projects and Programs* (December 2018) (See Checklist for Project Development Stage, sample indicators)

■ UNCCD/LDN

UNCCD/CRIC, *The UNCCD Gender Action Plan as a mechanism for improving the living conditions of affected populations: first experience and way forward*, ICCD/CRC(17)/CRP.1 (16 January, 2019).

UNCCD/Science-Policy Interface, *Scientific Conceptual Framework for Land Degradation Neutrality* (2017)

UNCCD/GM, *LDN Transformative Projects and Programmes: Operational guidance for country support by the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD* (August 2019).

UNCCD Gender Action Plan: Draft Advocacy Policy Frameworks: Gender, Drought and Sand and Dust Storms accompanies the strategy to implement the 2018-2030 Strategy, ICCD/COP(13)/19 (2017); abbreviated version available at https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/documents/2018-01/GAP%20ENG%20%20low%20res_0.pdf.

UNCCD Draft Advocacy Policy Framework on Gender, ICCD/CRIC(10)/20 (2011), Available at https://www2.unccd.int/sites/default/files/sessions/documents/ICCD_CRIC10_20/20eng.pdf

■ Gender and LDN projects/programming

Verona Collantes and others, "Moving towards a twin-agenda: Gender equality and land degradation neutrality," *Environmental Science and Policy*, vol. 89, (November 2018), pp. 247-253. Available at <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1462901118306713>

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■ Gender and LDN-related projects/programming

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World Bank & IFAD, *Toolkit for Integrating Gender-Related Issues in Land Policy and Administration Projects*, (n.d.), Available at <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTARD/Resources/GenderLandtoolkit.pdf>

■ Gender and land-related data information for country context assessments

FAO, "Gender and Land Rights Database". Available at <http://www.fao.org/gender-landrights-database/en> (includes 84 country profiles)

Prindex, "Gender Report: 33 countries." Available at <https://www.prindex.net/reports/womens-perceptions-tenure-security-evidence-33-countries/> (features national surveys in 100 countries of perceptions of property security and evidence from 33 countries on women's perceptions of tenure security)

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(tracks discriminatory laws and national data worldwide, in 189 countries, including on land ownership and tenure, marital property administration, non-monetary contributions, and economic empowerment)

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■ Gender analysis resources

ACDI/VOCA, *Gender Analysis, Assessment and Audit Manual & Toolkit* (2016), Available at <http://www.acdivoca.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ACDI-VOCA-Gender-Analysis-Manual.pdf>

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CARE International Gender Network, *Gender Analysis, Good Practices Framework*, (2012), Available at <https://www.care.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Good-Practices-Brief.pdf>

ANNEX 2 Gender equality requirements in key funding sources that contribute to achieving land degradation neutrality

Several major international mechanisms disburse environmental and climate financing, including for implementation of the UNCCD, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Multilateral development banks can also provide substantial resources for LDN transformative projects and programmes under thematic investments in agricultural development, forest conservation and sustainable land management, livestock management and watershed rehabilitation through grants, concessional and non-concessional loans, risk-sharing instruments, guarantees and equity investments.¹⁰³ Over the past few years, most such major financing institutions have adopted gender-specific policies and action plans. The table below outlines the gender equality and mainstreaming requirements for the four major funding sources that contribute to achieving LDN.

Finance mechanism	Gender mandate	Gender and social requirements	Gender mainstreaming guidance
<p>Green Climate Fund (GCF)</p> <p>LDN in GCF project result areas of:</p> <p>Mitigation: Reduced emissions from forestry and land use</p> <p>Adaptation: Increased resilience of most vulnerable people and communities; Ecosystem and ecosystem services; Health and well-being, and food and water security.</p>	<p>Gender Policy and Action Plan (revised 2018)</p> <p>GCF issued the first gender equality guide to climate finance.¹⁰⁴</p>	<p>The GCF Concept Note must “provide the expected environmental, social and health, and economic co-benefits...the gender-sensitive development impact, which will aim to reduce gender inequalities in climate change impacts”, per the GCF Concept Note User’s Guide.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial gender, social & environmental assessments and safeguards reports as part of the proposal submission process • Inclusion action plan as part of its funding proposal submission process¹⁰⁵ • Use the guidance and templates at GCF Gender Analysis/Assessment and Gender and Social Inclusion Action Plan Templates • Project-level gender and social inclusion action plans and gender-responsive indicators • Guidance is available to accredited entities submitting funding proposals on the type of gender-related documentation required during the project planning, preparation and development stage. 	<p>UN Women, Mainstreaming Gender in GCF Projects: A practical manual to support the integration of gender equality in climate change interventions and climate finance (2017)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Table 3 includes key queries <p>UN Women and GCF, Handbook on Leveraging Co-Benefits Between Gender Equality and Climate Action: Mainstreaming gender considerations in climate change projects (2016)</p> <p>GCF gender resource page: Green Climate Fund, Mainstreaming Gender: Gender Action in Practice</p>

Finance mechanism	Gender mandate	Gender and social requirements	Gender mainstreaming guidance
<p>Global Environment Facility (GEF)</p>	<p>Policy on Gender Equality (2017) moves from “do not harm” to “do good.”</p> <p>Gender Equality Action Plan require gender analysis, equitable participation and gender-responsive data monitoring.</p> <p>GEF Gender Implementation Strategy (GEF/C.54/06) (June 2018)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National-level gender analysis and project gender analysis • Consultations with women, individuals and networks that work on gender equality and including gender experts in projects • Developing project components with gender-specific targets; collecting sex-disaggregated monitoring data • Creating budget items for gender-related activities. <p>Project Identification Form (PIF) gender requirements: Project core indicators (target results anticipated at PIF stage) include Project Core Indicator 11: Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as a co-benefit of GEF investment.¹⁰⁶ PIF project justification requires a section on “Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment” that details the gender dimensions of the project, gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote women’s empowerment. The project must identify which project result areas are expected to contribute to gender equality, with a focus on the GEF cycle programme priorities, which for GEF-7 include: access to and control of resources; participation and decision-making; and socioeconomic benefits and services.</p> <p>Project results/logical framework must include gender-sensitive indicators.¹⁰⁷ GEF introduced a gender tagging system designed to label and track GEF projects and programmes that expect to contribute to gender equality and women’s empowerment.</p> <p>Gender considerations at CEO endorsement/ approval request must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o A summary of the findings from stakeholder consultations and the gender analysis or equivalent socioeconomic assessments, including elaboration on the gender context of the project, identified gender differences and gaps, and gender-differentiated impacts and risks. o A Gender Action Plan or equivalent that elaborates on concrete and project-specific actions to address gender differences and gaps, gender-differentiated impacts and risks, and opportunities to promote the empowerment of women that support project objectives and outcomes. 	<p>GEF, Guidance to Advance Gender Equality in GEF Projects and Programs (December 2018)</p> <p>The GEF Gender Implementation Strategy (GEF/C.54/06) (June 2018) outlines practical steps and required actions to implement the principles and mandatory requirements specified in the GEF Policy on Gender Equality.</p> <p>GEF, Emerging Best Practices in Mainstreaming Gender at the GEF (forthcoming)</p>

Finance mechanism	Gender mandate	Gender and social requirements	Gender mainstreaming guidance
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o A stakeholder engagement plan that reflects on and clearly describes actions on stakeholder engagement. o Gender-sensitive indicators that will be used to track, monitor and report on gender results.¹⁰⁸ <p>The GEF Accreditation Panel requires that all applicants seeking to become a GEF Project Agency demonstrate compliance with the minimum gender equality action requirements.¹⁰⁹ The GEF reviews member entities to ensure compliance with its Gender Equality Action Plan, to ensure incorporation of gender perspectives in project development.</p>	
<p>Adaptation Fund for climate adaptation and resilience activities; per UNFCCC’s Kyoto Protocol</p>	<p>Gender Policy and Action Plan of the Adaptation Fund (2016) applies gender mainstreaming to all Fund projects and programmes</p> <p>Adaptation Fund Board, Guidance Document for Implementing Entities on Compliance with the Adaptation Fund Gender Policy (3 March, 2017)</p> <p>Further Compliance with the Environmental and Social Policy and the Gender Policy of the Fund: Update of the Project/Programme Performance Report and Guidance for Unidentified Sub-Projects (15 February, 2019)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender-equal and responsive climate adaptation measures and strategies are prioritized. • Compliance with gender policy and articulated gender considerations in projects and programmes is required. • Gender-responsive stakeholder consultations are needed throughout all stages of the project/programme; must avoid underrepresentation of either men or women; consider targeted selection of participants, time, location, format, and process of engagement to reach men and women.¹¹⁰ • Initial gender assessments must inform intervention design, entry-points and gender goals, set up baseline, select gender-responsive indicators and design gender-responsive implementation and monitoring arrangements.¹¹¹ • Grant support is available for national IEs to carry out initial gender analysis. • A gender-responsive project/programme budget must account for gender mainstreaming activities. • A grievance mechanism must be established and known to stakeholders who wish to raise grievances and complaints related to gender equality and women’s empowerment, or to environmental and social risks and impacts. 	<p>Adaptation Fund Board, Guidance Document for Implementing Entities on Compliance with the Adaptation Fund Gender Policy (3 March, 2017)</p> <p>Further Compliance with the Environmental and Social Policy and the Gender Policy of the Fund: Update of the Project/Programme Performance Report and Guidance for Unidentified Sub-Projects (15 February, 2019)</p>

Finance mechanism	Gender mandate	Gender and social requirements	Gender mainstreaming guidance
LDN Fund	The LDN Fund purports to “promote gender equality and social inclusion from project design through to implementation on the ground” as part of one of its projected benefits to improve livelihoods by tackling land degradation with LDN project investments. ¹¹²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As an impact investment fund established by institutional investors, gender equality is considered a key component of its environmental and social management system that forms part of the investment due diligence process. • The LDN Fund aims to: integrate special gender aspects in its assessment process; actively engage companies’ corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, focusing on gender equity; seek commitments from operators; ensure equal opportunities and support; guarantee good working conditions and safety; provide fair payment; facilitate work-life balance; and ethically source through sustainability certification – which can be used to facilitate the incorporation of social and gender aspects.¹¹³ 	Preparation of projects is supported by a grant-making Technical Assistance Facility (TAF). The TAF, run by the IDH Sustainable Trade Initiative, developed the IDH Gender Toolkit to facilitate gender mainstreaming in the preparation of LDN Fund projects, with a focus on incorporating “gender aspects into supply chain approaches.” ¹¹⁴

- For more information on financing land degradation neutrality, consult the practical guide for the development of LDN transformative projects and programmes, at <https://www.unccd.int/actions/ldn-programme/ldn-transformative-projects-and-programmes>.

ANNEX 3 Sample indicators for gender-responsive LDN transformative projects and programmes

(Indicators were gathered and adapted from Global Environment Facility and Green Climate Fund guidance documents, FAO, the International Land Coalition, IUCN and related projects)

Consultation/participation indicators

- o Number and percentage of women and men and actively participating in project consultations, planning, workshops and committee meetings, further disaggregated by other useful social indicators such as age, minority or social group
- o Number of women and men in decision-making positions relating to the activities or in the project context, further disaggregated by other useful social indicators such as age, minority or social group
- o Number and percentage of women and men serving in leadership positions relating to the areas of intervention or in the project context; women in leadership positions with regard to land, water, forest and other biological resources (e.g. manager, lead farmer, entrepreneur)
- o Survey of perceptions of quality and quantity of participation and ability to influence project development, planning and decision-making, disaggregated by gender, age, minority and social group

Benefit-sharing indicators

- o Number of women and men benefitting from organized workshops and training opportunities within the programme or project, disaggregated by other useful social indicators such as age, minority or social group
- o Number of women and men receiving programme or project benefits, disaggregated by other useful social indicators such as age, minority or social group
- o Number of women and men benefitting from tools and resources, disaggregated by other useful social indicators such as age, minority or social group
- o Number of women and men benefitting from financial investments, due to programme interventions, disaggregated by other useful social indicators such as age, minority or social group
- o Number of women and men engaged in benefit-sharing discussions
- o Number of poor households that are project beneficiaries; number headed by women/men
- o Number/proportion of women with improved access to financial mechanisms (e.g. credit, affordable loans) for LDN/CSA/climate resilient products and services
- o Number of farmers who adopted CSA practices/agroforestry/intercropping/soil fertility measures disaggregated by gender and other relevant social indicators
- o Number of associations (e.g. market cooperatives, producer associations) created and number of participating farmers engaged in project areas, disaggregated by gender and other social indicators
- o Women and men who consider themselves better off (e.g. livelihood, income, nutrition) now than before the project intervention, disaggregated by gender and other social indicators
- o Income from agricultural and non-agricultural sources, disaggregated by gender, as a result of the project

Access to resources, inputs & knowledge indicators

- o Share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure
(based on SDG Indicator 5.a.1 and should draw on available Census data, generally from National Statistical Offices).
- o Percentage of women who perceive their rights to land protected against dispossession or eviction, disaggregated by type of tenure
- o Number of women and men/farmers (by gender) that have:
 - a formal certificate of land title issued by, and registered with, government authorities
 - the right to sell land and/or use land as collateral
 - plots owned individually or jointly, relative to total number of plots and to total land area
 - Share of male and female producers/farmers who
- o purchased (received from the project) improved seeds/saplings/fertilizer/fodder
- o received agricultural extension services/technology
- o received training on climate-smart agriculture/technology
- o have access to credit for agriculture (by source of credit: formal/semiformal/informal)
- o own productive assets for agriculture (can be specified depending on the type of agricultural activity)
- o use weather/climate information services
- o are actively involved in community associations for natural resources management
 - Number of improved irrigation or drainage systems adopted by farmers, disaggregated by gender and other relevant social indicators
 - Change in average time spent by women and men to reach the nearest market
 - Number of women and men who have knowledge of laws relating to the areas of intervention
 - Number of women and men trained on land rights issues and redress mechanisms (e.g. land tenure security, control and management rights, inheritance)
 - Number of women who exercised their land rights

ANNEX 4 Sample Terms of Reference template for Gender Specialist

(Based on IUCN training materials)*

TERMS OF REFERENCE

CONSULTANCY	Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan
WORK PERCENTAGE	100%
LOCATION	(country name)
OBJECTIVE(S)	To produce a gender-responsive proposal for the “Strengthening the resilience of coastal ecosystems and communities in (country name)” project

1. BACKGROUND

Guiding questions:

- *What is the project and what issues does it address?*
- *What are the objectives and who are the intended stakeholders and beneficiaries?*
- *Why is gender considered important in this project?*

The IUCN, on behalf of and in collaboration with the Government of (country name), requests funding from the Project Preparation Facility (PPF), in order to prepare the **Strengthening the resilience of coastal ecosystems and communities in (country name)**. This project will address the tremendous climate change risks faced by the population living on the (country name) coastal zone by reinforcing green infrastructure and providing the local population and national administrations with the capacity to plan, build and maintain climate change resilience and adaptation systems, as well as the necessary information and decision mechanisms for long-term coastal planning and to avert the foreseeable/possible disasters. Developing this initiative will require carrying out feasibility studies, developing the full GCF project document and monitoring/evaluation system, the definition of institutional arrangements, and the costing of proposed activities under the project.

Gender equality and equity are matters of fundamental human rights and social justice, as well as a precondition for sustainable development. Women in (country name) play major roles in their households and communities, as well as in formal and informal sectors, producing more than 60 per cent of agricultural products, carrying out a majority of trading activities in rural areas, and heavily engaging in the artisanal fishing industry. However, women in (country name) also remain disadvantaged in society compared to men, facing many inequalities that limit their ability to participate in decision-making activities, access resources and services, and own and inherit property. While (country name) has taken many steps to close gender gaps in the environmental sector, continued efforts must be made to ensure sustained and forward progress toward gender equality and sustainable development. Based on previous information, and to ensure a gender-responsive process, it will be necessary to develop a gender analysis for this project that will provide information for a gender action plan. These actions will ensure that gender is mainstreamed in every stage of the project, from development to implementation to monitoring.

[Notes for organization seeking to engage the consultant]: What is missing? What would you add?

* Note that the underlined portions of the text are instructions to the organization seeking to engage the consultant, so that they can suggest amendments and tailor questions and/or wording as they see fit.

2. GENERAL SCOPE

Guiding questions:

- *What is the focus of the gender analysis and action plan? How will this information be used?*
- *How will the consultant gather information for the gender analysis (e.g. desk review, interviews, etc.)?*
- *Who will the gender specialist coordinate with to gather and share information?*

Gender consultants will be required to gather gender information at the national and local level and develop a gender analysis, focusing in the areas where the project will take place. The Gender Specialist should make sure women as well as men are equally (in number) meaningfully (able and enabled to freely express and voice their issues) represented in the consultation. The Gender Specialist will also exchange gender information and coordinate activities with the other consultants on the project to ensure that participatory and inclusive approaches, gender-responsive considerations, and sex-disaggregated information are included in the baseline methodologies, tools and analyses of other studies and assessments. When analyzing the social context, the consultants should put special attention to differences between relevant social groups distinguishing in particular needs and interests, concerns and vulnerabilities of indigenous peoples and vulnerable groups and relevant differences between men and women.

What is missing? What would you add?

3. TASKS

Guiding questions:

- *Expanding on the points above, what are the main responsibilities of the consultant?*
- *Are there specific questions that need to be answered in the gender analysis?*
- *What information should be used in the gender analysis?*
- *How will the consultant share findings to inform the project?*
- *What parts of the project will the gender action plan guide?*

List three tasks for the Gender Specialist and some main points important to each task.

The consultants will be expected to undertake the following tasks:

Task 1: *Conduct a gender analysis with a particular emphasis on coastal ecosystems management and planning, community resilience and livelihoods in the areas defined by the project.*

The gender analysis should elaborate on gender roles in socioeconomic activities and natural resource management, dependencies on natural resources, environmental degradation, women's access to productive resources and their legal rights, as well as their influence in collective decision-making. The gender analysis should also include a review of national, regional and international gender equality and environmental mandates and policies, specifically in areas related to women's rights, land rights, climate change, fisheries, coastal and marine areas, among others. It should respond to key research questions, including but not limited to: i) What is the context? ii) Who does what? iii) Who owns what? iv) Who decides? v) Who participates and benefits? vi) What norms, traditions or cultural restrictions affect the relations linked to productive or environmental aspects? Finally, the gender analysis should provide recommendations to mainstream gender and promote gender equality into the project.

As part of the gender analysis methodology, consultations with a wide network of in-country gender experts should be encouraged. Additionally, the analysis should use project-level baseline information, country-specific sector sex-disaggregated data and examine gendered differences in human endowments, economic opportunities, voice and agency.

Task 2: *Coordinate activities to mainstream gender in other areas of assessment and analysis within the project.*

The Gender Specialist should have planning meetings with other teams in charge of assessments and analysis. Meetings should occur as necessary throughout this process to ensure gender is considered and addressed as a cross-cutting component. The Gender Specialist should collaborate and coordinate with other teams in field visits to ensure participatory and inclusive methods are used and sex-disaggregated information is collected from local consultations. The consultants are encouraged to provide inputs to other draft studies and assessments. The Gender Specialist should also be involved in completing reporting related to and complying with requirements and provisions established by project standards, such as the Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) mandated by IUCN. The latter includes the following: i) providing inputs to the ESMS Screening on gender-relevant risks and ii) coordination with the consultant(s) hired for the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment and exchange and input to the assessment process with regards to gender aspects.

Task 3: *Develop a gender action plan to guide and advise gender mainstreaming in the project*

The gender action plan should draw upon results from the gender analysis and provide strategies and gender-related activities to the project to overcome barriers (gender gaps) identified during the gender analysis. The action plan should also include gender-responsive indicators with sex-disaggregated targets based on baseline information collected as part of the gender assessment; and timelines, responsibilities and allocated budget (the cost must be included in the project budget) for implementation of gender-related activities. The gender action plan should not only focus on external outcomes, but also provide guidance to the internal management and organization of the project (e.g. staff communication, reporting, monitoring and evaluation, etc.). The gender action plan for the project should provide guidance in relation to strategies; capacity-building initiatives; strategic alliances with (country name)'s gender machinery and women's organizations, as well as relevant civil society organizations with strong work on gender; and monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure gender is mainstreamed into all project components. The monitoring and evaluation systems should show how project activities contribute to reducing gender gaps in sectors related to the project.

The following sections are just examples and should be tailored based on the specific needs of the project.

4. KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

4.1 Education

- Degree in social sciences, Social Work, Gender/Women Studies, Development Studies, Community Development, Sociology, or related field.
- Advanced training in Gender and Development studies.

4.2 Work experience and competencies

The gender specialist (or team of consultants) should have the following:

- At least 10 years (combined) experience in advocacy for gender issues and evidence-based results in gender analysis and mainstreaming, especially in institutions and projects that deal with climate change, agriculture, land use and management, environment and natural resources management.
- Significant experience with gender issues and social impacts is required with some experience in relevant socioecological and gender analysis frameworks.

- Previous experience in project management or monitoring and evaluation.
- Demonstrated experience of working in challenging knowledge-based and results-based environments.
- Experience with capacity-building and training development programmes.
- Experience working with stakeholders at multiple levels, including local, regional and national.
- Strong analytical ability to design, implement and evaluate gender-mainstreaming options for promoting natural resources management, climate adaptation and resilience.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and a strong team player with proven communication skills and diplomacy, as well as the ability to work effectively with multicultural and multidisciplinary teams, demonstrating sensitivity and respect for diversity.

4.3 Language requirements

Excellent verbal and written communication skills in relevant language(s) is required.

5. TIMELINE

What is a reasonable timeline for this consultancy?

The consultancy will be implemented over the period of 55 days. It is expected that the consultant will provide and submit a work plan of responsibilities for the process.

6. BUDGET

In general, the budget will cover the salary of the consultants. Any other expenses related to the consultancy should be previously requested in the submitted work plan.

7. SCHEDULE OF DELIVERY

Deliverables	Due date
Consultancy work plan	7 days from date of signature of the contract
Final gender analysis	37 days from date of signature of the contract
Final gender action plan	55 days from date of signature

Is anything missing from the sections above? What would you add?

ENDNOTES

- 1 UNCCD, “The LDN Target Setting Programme”, Available at <https://www.unccd.int/actions/ldn-target-setting-programme> (accessed on 24 July 2019).
- 2 UNCCD, “Momentum to recover land health picks up as rural livelihoods improve”, Available at <https://www.unccd.int/news-events/momentum-recover-land-health-picks-rural-livelihoods-improve> (accessed on 13 August 2019).
- 3 The Manual to Support the Integration of Gender Equality in LDN Project Development reflects the experiences and lessons learned during the workshops developed by UN Women in partnership with the IUCN and UNCCD, and will be launched at COP 14. This manual provides step-by-step guidance to Parties on integrating gender issues and promoting gender equality in the design of transformative LDN projects. (UNCCD Secretariat, “Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues: Gender, ICCD/COP(14)/18 (24 June 2019), para. 10).
- 4 ICCD/COP(14)/18, paras. 6–12.
- 5 This manual benefitted from inputs and expertise of representatives from FAO, the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) research programme on Forests, Trees and Agroforestry, the Green Climate Fund, Global Environmental Facility, UNDP and multiple non-governmental organizations devoted to land, natural resources, gender equality and indigenous peoples’ rights.
- 6 UNCCD, “Desertification, Land Degradation & Drought: Some Global Facts and Figures”,
- 7 Women also account for an estimated two-thirds of the world’s 600 million poor livestock keepers. (FAO Stat, “The Female Face of Farming”, Available at <http://www.fao.org/gender/resources/infographics/the-female-face-of-farming/en/> (accessed 23 July, 2019).
- 8 Women, on average, comprise 43 per cent of the agricultural labour force in developing countries. (Ibid).
- 9 UNCCD Global Mechanism, Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality at the Country Level: Building Blocks for LDN Target Setting (2016). Available at https://knowledge.unccd.int/sites/default/files/inline-files/Building%20blocks%20for%20LDN%20target%20setting_o.pdf.
- 10 UNCCD Global Mechanism, Practical Guide for the Development of LDN Transformative Projects and Programmes (LDN TPP Guide): Operational guidance for country support by the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD (August 2019 draft; forthcoming).
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- 12 Ibid.
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- 105 The Green Climate Fund requires: i) funding proposals to include an initial gender and social assessment that includes a snapshot of the gender equality situation in the region, country or project area; relevant gender issues in the proposed project; and the opportunities to bring about "positive change for both women and men;" and 2) accredited entities to submit a gender and social inclusion action plan at the project preparation stage that includes specific gender-responsive activities the project will undertake; provide relevant gender-performance indicators; sex-disaggregated targets; timelines; responsibility lines; and a budget against each proposed activity.
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THE MANUAL FOR GENDER-RESPONSIVE LDN PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES INTENDS TO EQUIP NATIONAL-LEVEL PROJECT DEVELOPERS WITH SPECIFIC, PRAGMATIC GUIDANCE AND EXAMPLES FOR MAINSTREAMING GENDER PERSPECTIVES ACROSS THE LIFECYCLE OF AN LDN PROJECT – TO ACHIEVE GREATER EFFECTIVENESS, BETTER OUTCOMES AND STRONGER CO-BENEFITS.

It contains strategic guidance to support countries that have set their LDN targets to mainstream gender issues in LDN action, to ensure that initiatives do not perpetuate or deepen historical inequalities or marginalize women’s rights, erode their land rights or overlook their rights within indigenous and local communities. It builds on work launched by UN Women, the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the International Union on the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in advising governments on integrating gender perspectives in the development of LDN initiatives.



**THE GLOBAL
MECHANISM**
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