

# The Case for Mainstreaming Gender in REDD+: Executive Summary

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## Why Gender Matters?

The loss of natural forests through deforestation and degradation is estimated to contribute approximately 17 % of global carbon emissions. REDD+ is a financial mechanism designed to compensate developing countries for measurable, reportable and verifiable reductions in emissions from specific activities in the forest sector. **Forests provide livelihoods, subsistence and income for more than 1.6 billion of the global poor, of whom women comprise 70%.<sup>1</sup>**

Women are primary users of forests. **Their specific roles, rights and responsibilities, as well as their particular use and knowledge of forests, shape their experiences differently from men.** These gender-differentiated needs, uses and knowledge of the forest are critical inputs to policy and programmatic interventions that will enable the long-term success of REDD+ on the ground.

**To ensure that REDD+ policies and programmes do not perpetuate or exacerbate existing inequalities between women and men, specific attention must be made to women's and men's needs and contributions at every stage of policy and programme development, from design through implementation and evaluation.**

**The business case for including gender considerations in policy planning and implementation is predicated on the human rights based approach<sup>2,3</sup>.** The business case presumes, for

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<sup>1</sup> World Bank, 2008: Gender and Agriculture Source Book

<sup>2</sup>The human rights based approach comprises the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, (CEDAW), together with eight other core international human rights treaties and other instruments that provide a robust basis for applying the human rights based approach to REDD+. A number of declarations, conventions, agreements or other international instruments inform the human rights basis for a gender perspective in REDD+. These include the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights which in aggregate set forth a clear anti discrimination framework. Gender, gender equality and frameworks to operationalize these are defined in the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), the Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and the Beijing Platform. Gender is recognized within the language of MDG 3 as both a stand-alone factor (a goal) and a condition for the achievement of other goals. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP) also pertains, enshrining the principle of Free, Prior and informed Consent (FPIC) The common understanding of the human rights approach is predicated on three pillars: (1) that the objective of [climate and] development policies and programme development is to fulfil human rights, (2) the approach identifies rights holders and addresses their capacity needs to effectively make their claims, and duty bearers and their capacities to meet their obligations, and (3) principles and standards derived from international human rights treaties should guide all development

example, that gender equality is a human right as set forth in the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and other international instruments. The rationale for mainstreaming gender is based on the knowledge that mainstreaming gender into REDD+ will:

- **increase efficiency (defined here as reducing transaction costs)**
- **increase efficacy (defined here as reducing greenhouse gas emissions) and**
- **increase sustainability (defined here as ensuring permanence and thereby reducing the risk of reversals for project investors, be they public or private)**

## Mainstreaming gender in readiness components

### Stakeholder engagement

Gender responsive stakeholder engagement strategies recognize women as primary forest users and protectors in REDD+ strategy, policy and program design, implementation and evaluation. Such approaches could promote a multitude of potential benefits, including poverty alleviation through income generation, and improved REDD+ implementation efficiency, efficacy and sustainability. Whereas engaging both women and men in consultations advances an understanding of women's practical needs (e.g. health, nutrition, education), ensuring that women have appropriate and adequate representation in decision-making has been shown to better address their strategic needs.

On the ground, REDD+ project lifecycles will be factored in decades. Opportunity costs of the use or non-use of different forest resources will shift over time, as will such variables as community needs and knowledge bases. Identifying viable alternative livelihoods and developing sustainable forest management will require processes that support innovation and are both inclusive and iterative. Engaging women in decision-making will contribute to participatory REDD+ interventions. This could result in greater likelihood of compliance with new and innovative approaches over time, thereby contributing to sustainability. If women are to be involved in decision-making, their full and effective participation may depend on additional training. In addition, it is important not to categorically isolate women from the broader social, cultural, economic and political context that give rise to and sustain gender inequalities.

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cooperation and programming in all sectors and in all phases of the programming process. See <http://www.undg.org/?P=221>, <http://hrbaportal.org/> and [http://hrbaportal.org/?page\\_id=3386](http://hrbaportal.org/?page_id=3386)

<sup>3</sup> The UN-REDD Programme Strategy 2011-2015 highlights : "The Programme will be guided by five inter-related principles of the UN Development Group (UNDG):1 Human rights-based approach to programming with particular reference to the UNDG guidelines on Indigenous Peoples' issues; Gender equality, environmental sustainability, results-based management and capacity development

### **Property rights and land and resource tenure**

If women do not have rights to resources or property, and are not able to play a role in making rules about management of land, they may be less inclined to defer present livelihood benefits. Governments that embrace clear tenure systems are best positioned to make strong business cases for REDD+ by aligning incentives for investors and local communities. As primary users of the forests, ensuring women tenurial security could increase the degree of confidence about alignment of those incentives.

### **Enhancing ecosystem benefits of REDD+**

Local communities' knowledge of trees and non-timber forest products is not only heavily traditional and complex, but also often heavily gendered. With respect to biodiversity, for example, women's subsistence activities and knowledge of the forest can add value to community forestry activities such as forest monitoring, soil management, and forest restoration functions, and thereby contribute positively to the sustainable management of forests or enhancement of forest carbon stocks, two key constituent elements of the plus side of REDD+. This is particularly relevant in the context of non-timber forest products and food security.

### **Transparent, equitable and accountable management of REDD+ funds**

REDD+ funds must be managed transparently and equitably. Gendered dimensions of Payment for Ecosystem Services include differentiated access and control over resources, knowledge, decision-making structures and equal access to and distribution of benefits. A recent DFID study suggests that direct cash transfers to women can increase their bargaining power within the home, improve intra-household allocation of resources for human development, and lessen the risk of households' resorting to negative coping mechanisms.

Increasing evidence is mounting that corruption has differential impacts on women and men "in particular with respect to their access to essential public services, justice and security and in their capacity to engage in public decision-making."

### **Making early links to inclusive growth, social benefits and green economies**

The REDD+ process can become an engine for developing a low carbon economy and promoting growth and equitable development. REDD+ should ensure that women have equal employment opportunities ranging from implementation of new forestry practices, to administration and management opportunities.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Designing gender responsive REDD+ policies, programs and measures requires recognizing women as primary forest users with valuable knowledge and experience; clearly communicating the potential benefits to women; and developing enforceable measures that ensure those benefits are both protected and delivered. Gender safeguards, indicators, standards, inclusive and participatory designs for climate finance, benefit distribution and monitoring and evaluation systems are important tools to protect, incentivize and to facilitate accountability for gender-responsive frameworks.

Policy makers, programme staff and others lack the evidence base from which to understand the gendered dimensions of resource use, needs, access and knowledge. Establishing such an evidence base through the required collection and analysis of sex disaggregated data could help ensure the accuracy of problem definition (e.g. drivers of deforestation/contributors to sustainable management of forests), as well as potentially surface new opportunities for sustainable forest management. This could result in more precisely designed interventions, which would in turn increase implementation efficiency.

These will require a spirit of open inquiry, willingness to experiment with and pilot different approaches to REDD+, and a commitment to share best practices and lessons learned, and finally the opportunity to scale up successful strategies, approaches and tactics.

### **General Recommendations**

Clear direction, incentives, resources and mandates that are matched with accountability mechanisms must be made available to ensure gender mainstreaming is operationalized. These must be appropriately crafted for each level of implementation- from the international to the national and local levels.

On this basis, the following recommendations are made to national policy-makers:

#### *Build the evidence base:*

- Require the ongoing collection, analysis, and dissemination of sex disaggregated data
- Create accessible platforms for gender disaggregated data access and information exchange
- Use pilots to test key hypotheses and experiment with different elements of the value chain (e.g. Facilitate development of a group of women aggregators to address market access; direct investments to women owned/managed enterprises);
- Utilize impact evaluations and participatory or action research to inform trajectory/evolution of REDD+ and gender mainstreaming

### *Build Capacity*

- Establish cross-departmental networks for learning nationally, making special efforts to involve national women's machineries (gender equality coordinators, women or family ministries etc.) in the elaboration of national REDD+ strategies and plans
- Establish cross institutional networks for learning internationally (e.g. FIP, FCPF, UN-REDD Programme and GEF, IADB, AfDB (which administers the Congo Basin Forest Fund), others, f.ex. Amazon Fund)
- Convene facilitated regional dialogues and learning exchanges between REDD+ project proponents, programme staff and other government officials (with implementation responsibilities), policy makers, women's groups and local community members to develop regionally relevant guidance
- Work collaboratively with local, national, regional and international women's groups to utilize regionally relevant mainstreaming gender and REDD+ guidance to provide the basis of "train the trainer" programs that target local, national, regional and international levels. This information could also be used by these groups to inform and develop strategies and action plans that could facilitate mainstreaming gender and REDD+ at national and subnational levels

*Require gender integration throughout the readiness process and across the entire value chain, and provide the support necessary to implement it.*

- Utilize monitoring and evaluation plans to operationalize gender mainstreaming requirements, standards and accountability mechanisms. Develop Gender Action Plans, and gender based indicators to serve as roadmaps for implementers, and to function as accountability tools at the institutional levels.

In addition, multilateral and bilateral readiness support platforms are recommended to:

- Integrate gender mainstreaming guidance, tools and strategies into the guidance, guidelines and tools provided<sup>4</sup>
- Ensure that capacity building efforts at the global and regional levels are gender sensitive
- Establish gender chairs or representatives on all decision making bodies- from the local level (e.g. village committees) to national (e.g. REDD+ bodies), to the international levels (e.g. FIP, FCPF Participant Committee and UN REDD Policy Board), and ensure the required capacity building.

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<sup>4</sup>For the UN-REDD Programme, this will be developed in an accompanying guidance note that will explore how UN-REDD Programme can mainstream gender in instruments such as Operational Guidance on Engagement of Indigenous People and forest dependent communities, the National Programme Guidance, the National Programme Document Template, Participatory Governance Assessments for REDD+ and overall monitoring frameworks.

### ***REDD+ Phases Specific Recommendations***

The recommendations below link more closely to phases of REDD+. As most experience to date lies in phase 1 readiness, these recommendations contain more details for immediate phase 1 action.

#### *Phase 1 REDD+ Readiness:*

- Require analysis of existing national statutory, formal and informal customary laws and traditional practices, laws and regulations that protect or promote gender equality/equity, assessment of same at regional (e.g. African Union) and international (e.g. CEDAW) levels, including specific lens on rights to political participation, land tenure, employment/wage equity. This information can inform the degree to which there are rights based or other differences enshrined in customary or statutory law, whether/how these have been implemented, and in turn inform an approach that moves toward policy coherence.
- Require collection, analysis, and use of gender disaggregated data particularly in assessing drivers of deforestation and degradation, and contributors to sustainable forest management, conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks. This information can, in turn, inform issues of differential access, use of and responsibilities between men and women in the forest as well as distinguish strategic needs, all of which are critical elements to the design of effective policy and programmatic interventions.
- Collaborate on development and use of country specific gender sensitive standards and indicators- the CCBA model of international standards linked to country specific indicators enables appropriate interpretation thereby increasing the chances of improved efficiency and efficacy. Bottom up approaches to develop indicators that are informed by international standards are also being formulated;
- Gender sensitive architecture, including consultation requirements, procedural guidance, and decision -making quotas (e.g. require and evaluate women to be present and participate in consultation, consider women –led and women only consultations as subcomponent, require minimum 30% women representatives on decision making committees from project through national levels);
- Target and engage women’s organizations on gender analysis of national strategy and policy framework; collaborate with women’s organizations on gender sensitization training for environmental, forest conservation and indigenous peoples groups and REDD+ capacity building;
- Require gender specific representation on all relevant decision-making bodies, e.g. UN-REDD Policy Board, Participant’s Committee of the FCPF, National REDD+ Task Forces, Commissions, and Committees etc.

*Phase 2 REDD+ Readiness:*

- Gender sensitive participatory budgeting,
- Gender analysis of project and program designs;
- Gender analysis of national strategy implementation
- Requirements, mandates or other provisions for gender-balanced participation in decision making bodies
- Gender-inclusive consultation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation systems

*Phase 3 REDD+: Pay for performance...means EQUAL pay for performance*

- Gender finance quotas or set-asides via gender responsive budgeting processes applied to project funding;
- Mandatory gender audits of funds spent; conditional release of subsequent tranches linked to gender performance indicators or standards
- Gender monitoring, particularly around women's role as forest users/managers, and equitable access to and distribution of benefits