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INNOVATION AND ACTION  
FOR FORESTS

# Taking Action on Gender Gaps in Forest Landscapes

Working Paper



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MARCH 2019

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# ACRONYMS

CIF	Climate Investment Fund
CGIAR	Consultative group of international agricultural research centers
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DGM	Dedicated Grant Mechanism
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FIP	Forest Investment Program
FFF	Forest and Farm Facility
FFPO	Forest-Farm Producer Organization
GHG	Greenhouse gases
IP	Indigenous peoples
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NTFP	Non-timber Forest Products
PES	Payment for Environmental Services
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, Supporting Conservation, Catalyzing Sustainable Management of Forests, and Increasing Forest Carbon Stocks
WBG	World Bank Group
WOCAN	Women Organizing Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management

# SUMMARY

Investments in forest landscapes and agroforestry will be critical in efforts to address climate change and rural poverty challenges in many countries. While it is the people living in and around forests that are best placed to make the efforts needed to transform them into more sustainable systems from both environmental and livelihoods perspectives, women and men in local communities typically receive very little technical or financial support to do so. This is particularly the case for women. In the context of forest landscape initiatives, two overarching arguments exist for why it is critical to address the challenges to integrating gender equality actions and investments and to take specific steps to address these challenges and enable successful implementation. First and foremost is a rights-based argument. These investments and efforts should not maintain gender inequalities, but rather work toward advancing gender equality, as all people have the right to fair and equal treatment. Secondly, a strong case can be made that many opportunities are missed and investments simply are not as effective and efficient as they potentially could be by being gender-responsive rather than ignoring gender considerations or being gender-blind. Thus, issues arising due to gender inequalities should not just be seen as problems, but as potential opportunities to take actions that enhance both gender equality and forest

landscape management, resulting in transformational change on both fronts.

Yet project designers, policy makers, and others making decisions affecting forest landscapes are not receiving much guidance on exactly what gender-responsive project activities and policy actions should be considered, which will vary according to different contexts. This paper explores these opportunities to enhance gender equality and forest landscape management with the goal of starting to provide such guidance. It reviews key gender gaps identified in forest landscape projects and programs in the literature. It examines what gender-focused activities and actions are being taken to address these gaps in many countries through a review of some of the projects and forest-sector investments supported by the World Bank Group and partners that are now incorporating such actions. The findings show that there is a wide range of gender-responsive forest landscape investments that can be considered by those wishing to contribute to and catalyze results on multiple sustainable development goals. By synthesizing and categorizing these actions, this paper aims to offer both inspiration as well as practical, concrete ideas on how to link knowledge with action in the context of this complex challenge. Much remains to be done, however.



Photo by Georgina Smith/ CIAT

# INTRODUCTION

There are two overarching arguments for why gender challenges within the context of forest landscape initiatives of all types should be seriously considered and for steps to be taken to address them. First and foremost is a rights-based argument—these investments and efforts should not maintain gender inequalities as all people have the right to be treated equally (Elias et al. 2017; RRI 2017). The second argument is that a strong case can be made that by ignoring gender concerns, many opportunities are missed and projects simply are not going to be as effective and efficient as they potentially could be by being gender-responsive<sup>1</sup> rather than gender-blind or neutral (Colfer et al.; 2016 Elias et al. 2017).

Across Africa, Asia, and Latin America, many communities and people living inside and close to forests are marginalized and poor. However, there is no one definition of “forest dependent poor” and estimating their numbers remains elusive (Newton et al. 2016; Shyamsundar et al. 2018). Research has shown that poor households obtain a significant percentage of their income from forests in many places (for example, Angelsen et al. 2014). There is also evidence of how important forests are for supporting food security and providing “safety nets” (for example, Shackleton et al. 2011; Wunder et al. 2014a,b). But stakeholders pursuing poverty reduction strategies in forest landscapes are increasingly realizing that in order to be more effective, they need to account for disparities across social groups and between men and women (Aguilar et al. 2011; Daw et al. 2015; Mai et al. 2011). This is because there are major differences in how, why, and where men and women access, use, manage, and benefit from forests (Agrawal 2009; Jagger et al. 2014; Mwangi et al. 2011, Peach Brown 2011). And while both men and women face huge challenges in the forests sector, there remain significant gender gaps in access to land and tree tenure (Colfer et al. 2016).

Thus, issues arising due to gender inequalities should be seen as potential opportunities to address systemic barriers, and by doing so, enhance both forest landscape initiatives and gender equality. Gender values, norms, attitudes, and behaviors are all potential leverage points (McDougall 2017). For example, a multi-site, multi-year study on community forest governance showed that participatory action research approaches can be used successfully to engage with and contribute to

constructively shifting social and gender attitudes and norms (Kantor et al. 2015; McDougall and Banjade 2015). Perceptions can be shifted of who are legitimate actors in the system, who makes decisions and how they are made, what is prioritized, and who acts as if they have “ownership” of community forests and other collectively managed natural resources. In Nepal, a shift from a forest protection orientation to one allowing income-generation activities benefitting the poor and women, while still conserving forest resources, has been a key outcome of inclusive and participatory planning processes (McDougall and Banjade 2015). Broader evidence with respect to enhancement of women’s control over assets (including natural assets such as forests) suggests that such changes have significant positive impacts in relation to children’s education and nutrition (Meinzen-Dick et al. 2012).

Yet project designers, policy makers, and others making decisions affecting forest landscapes are not receiving much guidance on exactly what gender-responsive project activities and policy actions should be considered, which will vary according to different contexts. This paper aims to explore these opportunities and begin to provide such guidance. It reviews key gender gaps that have been identified in relation to forest landscape projects and programs in the literature. It examines what gender-focused activities and actions are being taken to address these gaps in multiple countries through a review of many projects and forest-sector investments supported by the World Bank Group, the CGIAR, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and others.

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<sup>1</sup> Interventions that are responsive to gender can be thought of as being along a spectrum from gender-exploitative, to gender-blind, to gender neutral (all of which safeguards approaches usually check for, following a ‘do no harm’ principle), to gender-responsive, then gender-transformative approaches and interventions that actively promote gender equality—the shared control of resources and decision-making, and women’s empowerment as being central (McDougall 2017; Kantor et al. 2015).

# BACKGROUND AND REVIEW OF KNOWLEDGE ON GENDER GAPS IN RELATION TO FOREST LANDSCAPES

Efforts to mitigate climate change through forest-related actions have largely concentrated on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, supporting conservation, catalyzing sustainable management of forests, and increasing forest carbon stocks (REDD+). There is an expanding body of literature that explores forest landscape restoration efforts, in relation to REDD+

and other initiatives, using a “gender lens.” Table 1 summarizes some of the key findings from these gender analyses undertaken in a diverse set of countries. This research suggests that there remain significant *gender gaps* (disproportionate differences between men and women) in many respects in relation to forest landscape projects in many countries.

**Table 1. Summary of Gender Analyses and Key Findings in Relation to REDD+ Initiatives**

Country (ies)	Findings	Source
Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic	Women rarely participated in discussions on climate change or REDD+, or in the development of related policy documents.	Peach Brown 2011
Democratic Republic of Congo	Women spend as much time in the forests as men, but men’s activities are more highly valued; men dominate forest governance.	Stiem and Krause 2016
Burkina Faso	Women were not involved in REDD+ decision-making processes, yet bore a high level of responsibility and labor burden of project activities.	Westholm 2016; Westholm and Arora-Jonsson 2015
Kenya	A REDD+ scheme used gender targeting and mainstreamed “minimum standards” but failed to address underlying inequalities. While project design was attentive to equity concerns in distributing benefits, in practice the benefits ended up in the hands of the elite, as the poor and women had no land entitlement.	Chomba et al. 2017; Kariuki and Birner 2016
Nepal	REDD+ project implementers had neither responsibilities nor strategies for applying gender-equitable initiatives, and the explicit inclusion of women in REDD+ program discussions was insufficient for addressing underlying power dynamics and gender imbalances.	Khadka et al. 2014
Vietnam	Large numbers of women participated in REDD+ meetings, but were rarely in leadership positions or members of REDD+ working groups. National organizations working on REDD+ have little capacity to implement gender strategies or concern for gender issues.	Pham et al. 2016
22 subnational REDD+ initiatives in Brazil, Cameroon, Indonesia, Peru, Tanzania, and Vietnam	In 2010–11, women were much less informed and knowledgeable than men about REDD+ initiatives starting up in their villages. By 2013–14, women’s focus groups (91%) were found to be equally aware of the REDD+ initiatives in their communities as male-dominated focus groups (92%). Over this period, women’s perceptions of well-being <i>decreased</i> in REDD+ villages relative to control villages.	Larson et al. 2015, 2018

# GENDER GAPS IN FOREST LANDSCAPES

There is increasing recognition of gender-differentiated roles and responsibilities in forest landscapes. Women are increasingly identified as change agents and eco-friendly managers who can influence the development and deployment of solutions. Nevertheless, there are still multiple gender gaps that need to be addressed. The various elements of gender gaps across countries and contexts, as found in the literature and forest landscape project documents, relate to common challenges that must be addressed to advance gender equality. These elements, and some specific examples of each for illustrative purposes (that is, they aren't found everywhere, and men may equally face these constraints in some places) are summarized in Table 2. They include gender gaps related to participation, leadership, tree and land tenure rights, forest use, division of labor and workloads, skills, ecological knowledge, access to technologies and inputs, access to information, access to benefits, control over project benefits and income, access to credit, access to markets, access to employment opportunities, and policy engagement.

It is evident that many of the inequalities seen in Table 2 are also very relevant for individuals and groups that have historically been marginalized or are less empowered, such as minority ethnic groups, migrants, indigenous peoples, youths, landless people, and lower castes or classes. Thus, understanding how gender intersects with other social power relations is getting increasing attention,

including in the context of forestry (Colfer et al. 2018; Djoudi and Brockhaus 2011). This “intersectionality” between gender and factors such as age, ethnicity, and caste poses additional challenges, but also offers opportunities. Initiatives that aim for more equal participation, benefit-sharing, and empowerment are likely to address other critical factors limiting desired outcomes and impacts (Djoudi et al. 2016; Houria et al. 2016; Thompson-Hall et al. 2016).

These gaps and challenges for considering and integrating gender in forest landscapes exist in varying degrees and levels across contexts and countries. Where a country or group may find one problem a defining burden, other places may have made significant efforts to address the same problem. Even when such efforts have been made, continual analysis and monitoring of progress are required. These gender gaps also overlap, and the policy, project, or programmatic responses to them are often sectoral in nature, rather than being addressed in a dynamic, collaborative, and comprehensive manner that likely is more effective.

In the following section, we further explore the sixteen types of gender gaps identified in Table 2. We identify six broad categories in relation to potential project and program activities, interventions, or actions aimed at catalyzing gender-responsive forest landscape interventions.



**Table 2. Types and Examples of Typical Gender Gaps Relevant to Forest Landscape Initiatives**

Gender Gap Related To:	Illustrative Examples of This Type of Gender Gap
1. <i>Participation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No or few women or gender experts on project team</li> <li>Forest management planning process is noninclusive</li> </ul>
2. <i>Leadership</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women have fewer leadership roles in community-based forest governance than men, and women's roles are often limited due to typical gendered responsibilities</li> </ul>
3. <i>Forest, Tree and Land Tenure Security</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women have more limited access to trees and tree products than men</li> <li>Women cannot own land and/or trees independently, therefore excluding them from the benefits of tree and land tenure along value chains</li> </ul>
4. <i>Forest Use</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spatial patterns of forest use reflect gender norms, security concerns, and women's more limited access to transportation</li> </ul>
5. <i>Division of Labor/ Workloads</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women face more constraints in hiring labor than men</li> <li>Women have greater time constraints than men due to their domestic workloads</li> </ul>
6. <i>Skills</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women have less access to technical forest-related training</li> <li>It is assumed women have less knowledge and fewer skills than male counterparts, so they are marginalized in participation and leadership</li> </ul>
7. <i>Ecological Knowledge</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women have distinct ecological knowledge that is not shared in policy processes and sustainable forest management project design &amp; implementation</li> </ul>
8. <i>Access to Technologies and Inputs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women have less access to forest product-related processing and other technologies</li> </ul>
9. <i>Access to Information</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women have higher illiteracy rates and less access to information (e.g. on sustainable forest management practices, agroforestry opportunities; via cellphones, radio, television)</li> </ul>
10. <i>Access to Forest and Agricultural Services</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rural advisory services typically don't address women's needs (e.g. inappropriate tree species; trainings at venues and timings when women can't attend)</li> </ul>
11. <i>Access to Benefits</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women have less access to payments for environmental benefits (PES) schemes than do men and more empowered individuals/groups</li> </ul>
12. <i>Control Over Benefits/ Income</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women have less control over income from forests, including non-timber forest products, than do men</li> <li>Program benefits typically go to male signatories</li> </ul>
13. <i>Access to Credit</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women in forest landscapes have less access to credit than do men (often linked to lack of land tenure security), or because of a lack of banking options</li> </ul>
14. <i>Access to Markets and Employment Opportunities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women are more likely to be engaged in informal and typically less remunerative markets than are men</li> <li>Women typically have less access to transportation means than do men, which can limit their participation in markets and employment opportunities</li> </ul>
15. <i>Policy Engagement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forest agency staff is unaware of gender issues; or how to competently integrate across policy and programming</li> </ul>
16. <i>Forest Laws and Regulations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forest laws and regulations ignore gender issues and opportunities</li> </ul>

Source: Authors' synthesis from literature and project reviews.

# GENDER-RESPONSIVE INTERVENTIONS TO CLOSE FOREST-RELATED GENDER GAPS



Many types of policy and program initiatives have been tried, tested, and proven effective—including political strategies, program designs, and project cycle activities related to forest landscapes. Thus, there are multiple options to consider for closing gender gaps (Kristjanson and Jensen 2018; Marin and Kuriakose 2017). Ideally, the earliest stages of project conceptualization identify critical gender dynamics, issues, challenges, and opportunities that can influence desired project outcomes. These identified issues can then be translated into designed actions to address those particular gaps.

To help overcome the sixteen types of gender gaps identified above, six general approaches to making forestry policy initiatives gender-responsive are suggested. These include:

- Strengthening women’s participation
- Strengthening forest, land, and tree tenure rights
- Equitable benefit-sharing mechanisms
- Supporting local institutions, networks, and platforms related to forest landscapes
- Strengthening women’s access to credit and value chains for forest-related activities and enterprises
- Building knowledge and skills of women

We discuss why each of these approaches is important to consider in the context of gender-responsive forest landscape initiatives and present a wide range of examples. There is considerable overlap between these six approaches. For example, actions aimed at strengthening women’s participation will also strengthen institutions.

Gender-responsive actions range from small project-specific activities to wider programmatic campaigns.

They can be implemented at different scales—from local to district or province-level, to national, regional, and global. They include improved technologies, techniques, and management practices, as well as institutional and policy reforms.

At the project or program level, potential gender-responsive forest landscape activities can be targeted at different people and organizations, including individuals, groups, and communities; civil society organizations; local, subnational, and national governments; and regional and international entities. Different stakeholders face different challenges and opportunities to enhance gender equality and the effectiveness of interventions. Ultimately, these diverse stakeholders are responsible for finding and implementing solutions.

Some gender gaps (and solutions) are more challenging and take longer to address than others. For example, changing laws is more difficult and takes longer than implementing specific project activities at the individual or community level. Other gaps that affect women cannot be addressed directly, but rather need to be worked out at the community governance level. This requires engaging with community authorities and is often based on customary rules. Complicated, local gender gap issues can require creative solutions—solutions that, in many cases, are essential precursors for the success of more direct solutions. For example, if community authorities are not willing accept more inclusive participation of women, then direct support to women on technical/managerial skills may not work. Table 3 highlights some of the different stakeholders whose circumstances must be considered, and whose solutions to a similar challenge may in fact differ.

**Table 3. Who Can Tackle Gender Gaps at Different Levels and Illustrative Solutions**

Level where gaps can be addressed	Relevant Stakeholders/Actors	Gender gap examples	Illustrative Solutions
Legal frameworks	Ministries of environment, land, agriculture	Noninclusive forest landscape laws and regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal framework that reflects diverse forest users' rights, and recognizes women's rights</li> </ul>
Government institutional policies, programs, and capacities	National and local government agencies involved in management and conservation of forest landscape resources	Outdated and noninclusive forest-related policies, projects, and strategies; limited funds, capacity, and knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design of more inclusive and equitable policies, programs, and projects</li> <li>• Improve the capacity of government agencies to implement programs and policies</li> <li>• Provide training and awareness campaigns to government staff</li> </ul>
Community governance	Community forest and natural resource management committees and groups	Limited participation, leadership, forest tenure, forest use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusive governance and institutional frameworks</li> <li>• Quotas for participation in community forest and land use decision-making bodies</li> <li>• Participation in territorial planning and forest management activities</li> <li>• Quotas for participation in managerial and administrative roles of community-based enterprises managed by women</li> <li>• Awareness-building actions on women's roles</li> </ul>
Donor/investor policies and programs	Development banks, donor agencies, private sector, etc. investing in forest landscapes	Limited funds, information, and tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design of more inclusive and equitable policies, programs and projects</li> <li>• Introduce more earmarked funding opportunities for gender-responsive actions</li> <li>• Develop more equitable benefit sharing mechanisms</li> <li>• Assist governments with awareness campaigns and other tools to implement gender-responsive programs and projects</li> </ul>
CSO/NGO support	Local NGOs and CSOs assisting rural communities in managing, restoring & conserving forest & tree resources	Limited funds; limited capacity, skills, and knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritize support to projects with gender-targeted interventions</li> <li>• Provide specific training and knowledge products on gender</li> <li>• Support local women's groups in knowledge exchange events</li> </ul>
Small groups and individuals	Women, women's groups, and mixed groups working in forest landscapes	Limited skills, lack of access to information and technologies; unequal division of labor/workloads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TA to women's forest user/NRM groups and networks</li> <li>• Training in forest management, marketing, and processing</li> <li>• Promoting women's leadership capacity strengthening efforts</li> </ul>

Source: Authors' synthesis from literature and project reviews. CSOs = civil society organization; NGO = nongovernmental organization; NRM = natural resource management; TA = technical assistance.

Coming back to the six suggested general approaches to making forestry policy initiatives gender-responsive listed above, we discuss each of these in relation to the current knowledge base and give some specific examples of project activities, approaches, practices or policies they can include.

## Strengthening Women's Participation

Increasingly, forests are being managed at the community level (FAO 2016). In forest areas of low- and middle-income countries, formal recognition of community-based tenure increased from 21 to 30 percent from 2002 to 2013 (RRI 2014) and this is likely to increase in coming years around the world. In many of these communities, however, men's participation in forest management decision making exceeds women's, and women seldom play leadership roles in such groups (Agarwal 2001; Sunderland et al. 2014). Women are excluded from forest decision-making bodies for many reasons. Forest agencies have historically been male dominated, and timber-related jobs are seen as men's work. As a result, women usually have limited access to information related to forest management (Agarwal 2001). When women do participate in forest user groups, there is evidence that improved forest condition is a result (Coleman and Mwangi 2015; Leisher et al. 2016).

Forest sector laws, strategies, and policies can be developed with inclusive, co-development approaches that increase women's participation. These include, for example:

- An inclusive institutional framework for engagement and participation in forest policies by women, indigenous persons, CSOs, NGOs, private sector
- Quotas or targets for female representation on forest decision-making bodies
- Participatory and inclusive forest landscape-level planning processes supported
- Capacity strengthening of women's groups, networks, and inclusive forest-related platforms
- Awareness-building actions on women's role in forestry value chains, including NTFP's
- Supporting women in forest leadership positions—for example, as heads of Forest Protection Committees in India (Gouri et al. 2004)

## Strengthening Forest, Land and Tree Tenure Rights

Although women play essential roles in the management of forest landscapes, rural women's tenure rights are much less secure than men's across most developing countries (FAO 2013). A recent assessment of national laws regulating indigenous peoples' and local communities' forest tenure found that almost all of them fail to adequately acknowledge and protect the rights of women, including women's rights to property, inheritance, community membership, community-level governance, and community-level dispute resolution (RRI 2017).

Indigenous women play key roles in customary management of forests in Nepal, for example, yet they are unable to obtain land certificates (Tebtebba 2018). And despite a constitutional right guaranteeing equal inheritance of land, it is still not happening in practice. Similarly, in Vietnam, despite the fact that ethnic women have the rights to land ownership and equal inheritance, in practice the land mostly goes to sons or nephews. In these countries and others, male migration has been increasing. Thus, women must manage both the farm and household, leaving little time for improved livelihood activities and longer-term investments such as in tree planting or land restoration (Tebtebba 2018).

Secure land rights empower women to participate more actively in community-level institutions, including those involved in forest management (Giovarelli et al. 2013; Segura et al. 2017). Research evidence shows links between women's land rights and enhanced decision-making power on food choices, nutritional, and educational outcomes at the household level (Giovarelli et al. 2013; Katz and Chamorro 2002; Kristjanson et al. 2017; Meinzen-Dick et al. 2017). Regarding reforestation and restoration activities that involve planting trees, secure rights for both men and women have been found to be key to success (Meinzen-Dick et al. 2017; Sun et al. 2011).

Gender-responsive forest sector laws, regulations, and interventions that protect and enhance women's rights are thus critical, and can include, for example:

- A legal framework that reflects forests' multiple uses and diverse users' rights
- Contracts (related to concessions, PES schemes, REDD+ efforts, and so forth) signed by both spouses
- Laws that recognize community-based tenure, including specific provisions on respecting and protecting women's rights

## Designing Equitable Benefit-Sharing Mechanisms

Benefit sharing is central to many improved forest landscape management initiatives, including efforts aimed at reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, fostering conservation, ecotourism-related services, sustainable management of forests, enhancement of forest carbon stocks (REDD+), and many different types of payments for environmental services (PES) schemes. Developing fair and equitable benefit-sharing arrangements “requires a good understanding of the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and their prioritization, the stakeholders involved in addressing these drivers, the incentives needed to reverse deforestation and degradation trends, and suitable mechanisms for distributing benefits against agreed responsibilities and obligations” (Chandrasekharan Behr 2012).’

These benefits can be monetary payments. They can also be actions that provide nonmonetary incentives for behavioral change (such as planting, or protecting trees and forests). These actions often relate to institutional and capacity-strengthening efforts at various levels, from local (such as trainings in improved agroforestry or forest management practices) to national (such as technical assistance to forest agencies). These benefits can go to individuals, communities, organizations, government agencies, and businesses for actions that change land use and reduce emissions. Since these changes have costs associated with them, these benefits should outweigh the costs. For many years, the need to design *equitable* benefit-sharing approaches has been argued at the international and national levels, to build legitimacy for REDD+ and other programs so that the people affected by program actions are treated fairly and equitably (IUCN 2009).

Pham et al. (2013) describe four main types of REDD+ benefit-sharing mechanisms:

- Market-based instruments: PES, such as national-level mechanisms found in Brazil and Vietnam; and project-level PES schemes found in almost all countries, especially in Latin America). Community forestry systems/ collaborative forest management: e.g. Nepal, Tanzania
- Community forestry systems/collaborative forest management (e.g. Nepal, Tanzania)
- Fund-based approaches:
  - Independent: FUNBIO (Brazil), PROFONANPE (Peru)
  - Managed by state: Amazon Fund (Brazil), Reforestation Fund (Indonesia), FONABOSQUE (Bolivia)
  - Within state budget: donor aid (Nepal, Mozambique, Vietnam)
- Forest concessions: Many countries, such as Cameroon and Liberia, have laws that require concessionaires to allocate a certain portion of their revenues to improving

community livelihoods, with institutional arrangements in place for implementing this requirement.

In attempting to ensure equitable benefit-sharing, all these approaches face an additional challenge when it comes to women (or any individuals or groups that have traditionally had less voice, power, and agency). Therefore, actions to strengthen the capacity of forest agencies to develop programs with participatory, inclusive, approaches will be key. These could include, for example:

- Forest product and services certification schemes that benefit women
- Equitable PES and REDD+ initiatives
- Schemes for financial market/private sector investment in reduced deforestation efforts benefitting women
- Transparent and publicly available information on forest-related revenues collection, distribution, and management
- Direct payments to women for planting and protecting trees via cellphone (such as M-Pesa in East Africa)

## Supporting Inclusive Local Institutions, Networks and Platforms Related to Forest Landscapes

Successfully and sustainably managing community forests requires collective action and strong local forest institutions. Under a community-driven land management approach, local institutions refer to local governance structures, and thus to the way communal and collective decisions are made. Under a recently conducted behaviorally informed gender gap analysis in Mexico, for example, researchers showed that in the context of natural resource and forest management, women’s participation in productive activities and communal decision making are correlated (World Bank 2018). The study found that women’s economic participation is vulnerable to gender-exclusive social norms, low social status, and other behavioral barriers. As a result, women’s participation in community forest decision-making processes is now being promoted, and steps are being taken to ensure they are not being hindered by social structures and entrenched power asymmetries during meetings (World Bank 2018). Forest project reviews also show that women’s participation can be supported in the following ways:

- Gender parity rules can be stipulated for local councils, cooperatives and producer organizations to open up greater access by women to key decision-making arenas. Such rule changes can also include social support measures for women, for example by asking communal leaders to help women speak out in meetings and become more confident.
- Dedicated spaces such as schools or medical facilities can be provided for women to meet and discuss

community issues. Every morning, most women walk their children to the nearest school in many countries.

Thus, educational facilities could be a space to present programs or activities, without forcing women to leave their homes and routines for too long. Medical facilities, churches, market places, and community centers also can be convenient meeting spaces and places to share information about programs and subsidy schemes that women can apply to.

There is evidence that organizing women into groups for effective collective action can help them overcome their reluctance to speak out, act, or intervene. This is particularly important for obtaining credit, machinery and tools, access to resources and support services, as well as bulking products to access new markets (Shackelton et al. 2011). Excluding women from community forest groups has been found to have negative efficiency consequences as well as social ones (Agarwal 2001; Agarwal et al. 2006). Thus, making these organizations more inclusive is an important first step.

Capacity-strengthening efforts, such as leadership and technical trainings targeted at women in particular, have been found to result in enhanced and more sustainable management of forests (Moss 2011; Mwangi et al. 2011). These can include the following types of interventions:

- Equitable training of community members or women's forest user groups in tree nurseries, forest management and protection, monitoring, eco-tourism services, and so forth
- Establishment of village-level demonstration plots with tree species that meet different needs
- Knowledge exchange workshops and south-south visits among women's forest-related groups
- Provisioning community tree nurseries with seeds and seedlings targeted to women's and men's needs
- Training of women and youths in harvesting and processing technologies for forest products, such as grasses, teas, herbs, cosmetics, medicinals, aromatic plants, sustainable charcoal, honey

Networks that link up and empower female forest users are increasingly being recognized as offering innovative investment opportunities. For example, Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (WOCAN)<sup>2</sup>, established in 2004, is a women-led international membership network of professional women and men and women's associations. It focuses on improving policies regarding gender within the agriculture

and natural resource management sectors, strengthening the roles of professional women in implementing policy objectives for rural women's empowerment and gender equality within these sectors, and addressing organizational barriers that obstruct women from realizing positions of leadership and influence to take on such roles. WOCAN has developed courses on leadership, gender-integrated planning and related topics, and a certification standard called W+ ([www.wplus.org](http://www.wplus.org)) to measure different aspects of women's empowerment as outcomes of gender-transformative agriculture, forest landscape, and natural resource management projects.

The African Women's Network for Community Management of Forests (REFACOF)<sup>3</sup> is another example of a gender-forests network. It aims to empower African women to influence REDD+ processes and projects and secure women's rights in forestry and natural resource management. It was created because the lack of collective action among women's organizations was seen as a pressing issue. Strengthening women's forest landscape-related networks and partnering with men has allowed them to advocate for comprehensive gender equality across Africa.

### **Strengthening Women's Access to Credit and Value Chains for Forest-Related Activities and Enterprises**

Little or no access to credit by women for forest-related activities and enterprises is the norm and not the exception (Haverhals et al. 2014). Thus interventions aimed at strengthening equitable access to credit are badly needed in many countries. These include credit programs targeted at women and other traditionally less empowered groups involved in non-timber forest products (NTFP) activities, for example. Loans or subsidies to tree nurseries created and run by women is another example.

Recent research on women's roles in forest-related value chains is also highlighting opportunities for women (and others that have been traditionally marginalized from commercial activities) to benefit more if these value chains become more gender equitable (Elias and Arora-Jonsson 2016; Ingram et al. 2014). Ingram et al. (2016) found that women are mostly active in harvesting and small-scale retail trade, while men are running the larger forest-related businesses. Interventions aimed at improving the position of women (most did not target relations between men and women) included improved technology and marketing advice, infrastructural support, value-adding to

<sup>2</sup> [www.wocan.org](http://www.wocan.org)

<sup>3</sup> <http://genderandenvironment.org/resource/the-african-womens-network-for-community-management-of-forests-refacof-empowering-african-women-to-influence-redd/>

products, and improved marketing. Ingram et al. (2016) cite examples here of the mushroom chain in Mexico (Marshall et al. 2006), honey in Rwanda (Matabishi 2012), shea in Mali (Traoré 2002), and NTFP chains in Africa (Shackleton et al. 2011). Other successful efforts included organizing women producers and processors into groups and linking them to traders in the *sabai* grass (*Eulaliopsis binata*) chain in India (Singh 2012) and the shea chain in Senegal (Souare 2002).

In a gender-targeted review of three other internationally traded NTFP's—gum arabic, gum olibanum (frankincense), and honey from Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, and Zambia respectively—Shackleton et al. (2011) suggest the following actions for enhancing women's benefits: "greater recognition of informal markets, the opportunities and constraints associated with them, and their position relative to export markets; improved support for collective action where this can provide women with greater voice, negotiating power, and help with economies of scale; more targeted training that addresses areas identified by women as useful and important to them; time-saving technologies and support systems such as child care; and creating greater gender awareness amongst stakeholders."

Other interventions aimed at enhancing efficiency as well as equity of forest-related value chains that are increasingly being seen include:

- Inclusive market-oriented activities such as quality improvement campaigns, networking with traders, trade fairs, and so forth
- Support for collective action (such as forest user groups and NTFP marketing groups)
- Interventions introducing labor-saving technologies that free up women's time (such as nut cracking machines, trees for fodder and woodfuel, energy efficient stoves, and biogas plants) (Haverhals et al. 2014)

## Building Knowledge and Skills

Another gender gap prevalent in the forest sector is the frequent reality that women are not receiving forest

landscape-related information and skills enhancement opportunities as much as men. Even in countries where REDD+ processes have been underway for many years, for example, it appears that women remain much less informed and knowledgeable about restoration and tree-planting opportunities and potential benefits than men (Larson et al. 2018). Empowering women (and men) in NTFP enterprises, agroforestry, and other activities involves a wide range of supportive actions, including targeted trainings, technology transfer, business skills development, leadership and negotiation capacity strengthening, and enhanced access to and ability to use market information (Haverhals et al. 2014; Ingram et al. 2016).

Supportive intervention options include:

- Equitable and accessible (language, location, timing, methods appropriate for women) technical training opportunities aimed at meeting diverse needs and constraints (such as agroforestry techniques, beekeeping, business skills development)
- Inclusive market-oriented activities such as quality improvement campaigns, networking with traders, trade fairs, and others
- Awareness campaigns highlighting forest-related opportunities for women and men (for example, through social media, radio, and TV)
- Interventions introducing labor-saving technologies that free up women's time (such as nut cracking machines, trees for fodder and woodfuel, energy efficient stoves, and biogas plants)
- Targeted training of female forest advisory services/extension personnel
- Training of female "lead" forest advisors/facilitators
- Funding forest and agroforestry-related rural "edutainment"—TV, radio shows, and media campaigns that highlight women's pivotal role in reforestation, agroforestry, land restoration, tree-planting, and climate change mitigation efforts
- Supporting citizen science approaches (farmer/forest experimentation) that integrate women's (and men's) traditional knowledge with scientific knowledge

# EXAMPLES OF GENDER-RESPONSIVE FOREST LANDSCAPE INITIATIVES

Globally driven but nationally implemented forest-related initiatives such as REDD+ are increasingly recognizing that despite their main focus on reducing carbon emissions from forests, people play a central role in the success of the initiatives. This has led to more emphasis on inclusive processes, as well as including gender-responsive actions that address gender gaps, and a concern that these efforts have been ineffective to date (Chomba et al. 2017; Larson et al. 2018). A recent study analyzed subnational REDD+ initiatives in six countries to see how well they were doing with respect to desired gender outcomes. It found that perceived well-being decreased in REDD+ villages relative to control villages for both men and women, but the decrease was much worse for women (Larson et al. 2018). The authors suggest that these declines may be partly due to unrealized expectations for REDD+, but clearly point to the need for more attention to gender in REDD+ initiatives.

Other lessons learned from REDD+ experience to date (see Table 1) show that gender is often addressed superficially: even when women participate, they lack the awareness and information of REDD+; many actions increase women's workload; women are often left out of REDD+ benefits; and women's preferences regarding benefits are not considered. Failing to address gender thus has serious detrimental impacts on women's well-being and program delivery.

In response to these concerns, many countries have developed or will be developing gender-REDD+ roadmaps with action plans. Here we review seven of them to understand just what kinds of gender-responsive actions are being proposed and starting to be implemented in a wide range of countries.

## REDD+ Gender Action Plans/Roadmaps

We reviewed gender action plans (also referred to as roadmaps<sup>4</sup>), developed in the context of integrating gender into REDD+ processes in seven countries, in order to learn what types of specific gender-responsive actions and activities they included. Lessons from the similarities and the differences across this diverse range of experiences are drawn. The seven countries are Mexico, Ghana, Uganda, Cameroon, Vietnam, Nepal, and Guatemala.

The syntheses are found in Annex 1. These gender action plans continue to evolve and the brief descriptions provided in the Annex are not intended to be comprehensive. Rather, they are illustrative for learning purposes—particularly for countries that are just starting with such initiatives.

Important to note is that all the roadmaps have used highly collaborative, participatory processes that include many diverse individuals and groups—men and women—in their development. Beyond such critical inclusive processes, however, it is informative to note common actions across most of these plans. These include:

- **Trainings/capacity strengthening** targeted to the needs of women (including needs related to weather, climate change, greenhouse gases (GHG), REDD+, related policy frameworks, gender considerations, safeguards, and the national REDD+ strategy, forest governance, forest management, and agroforestry techniques)
- **Collective action**—support to existing and new *inclusive* forest user groups
- **Rules, targets, quotas**—aimed at equitable *participation* and *benefits* from forest-related programs, including women in leadership positions
- **Joint signatures** (both spouses, or women only where appropriate) on contracts or certificates (such as land/tree/forest rights certificates)
- **New credit and financing mechanisms** targeting women's forest and agroforestry-related enterprises and groups
- **Earmarked budgets for project activities** that explicitly target and help close gender gaps

Many of these plans have focused primarily on inclusive processes as a necessary starting point. Getting more inclusive rules, policies, and processes in place, ideally with gender champions in positions of power, is critical to the success of any gender-responsive actions taken. A second key step is beginning to shift the focus from having women on committees and in community forest-related meetings toward actions that ensure their participation is meaningful and their needs are met, and benefits from forest initiatives are actually reaching them. That is easy to say and not so easy to do in practice in many instances. Below, we summarize several initiatives that are attempting to do so, to illustrate what this looks like in practice.

4 <http://genderandenvironment.org/resource/cameroon-ghana-ugandas-gender-redd-roadmaps-a-national-policy-level-initiative/>.

## World Bank Group-Supported Forest Investment Examples

Forest landscape projects and investments supported by the WBG are increasingly including gender analyses as well as actions and activities that are explicitly aimed at addressing gender-related constraints and opportunities (Kristjanson and Jensen 2018). These also offer illustrative examples of the kinds of gender-responsive forest interventions that can be considered by forest agencies and others. Several of these are summarized here to highlight the types of specific actions that are possible and stimulate ideas for similar ones in future project designs.

### *Adding a Gender Lens to Forest Programs in Mexico*

Addressing gender issues in practice involves targeted analyses to understand critical gaps that can be addressed in specific contexts. Community forest management in Mexico, for example, is widely recognized for its scale and level of sophistication. Since the 1990s, the Government of Mexico has run a series of community-focused programs that provide incentives and advice to improve forest management. Based on a system of collective land ownership and sound community governance structures, the country's forest sector policies and programs recognize ejidos and communities as central to rural development. Mexico's community forest management strategy includes targeted incentive programs (such as subsidies) related to infrastructure, access to finance, technical assistance and forest management-related capacity strengthening. However, roughly 80 percent of forest landowners are male, and subsidies have traditionally gone to those with land titles.

Therefore, women's opportunities to benefit from public programs have been limited. Community governance structures and decision-making bodies have also been predominantly male, further limiting women's participation in forest management.

A recent gender analysis, led by the WBG's Environment and Natural Resources group, analyzed perceived and actual barriers women face in accessing natural resource management programs in Mexico. The study team identified multiple barriers to women's participation. These include complex sign-up procedures, lack of aspirations, low self-efficacy and confidence, and lack of commitment to follow-through with intentions (World Bank 2018).

Based on the initial study, the team is using insights from behavioral science to design solutions that simplify procedures, increase women's aspirations through role models, and provide commitment devices such as SMS reminders and hotlines to support women through the application process.<sup>5</sup> These innovations, which are being field-tested, are intended to provide solutions for replication at landscape level. This "action research" will contribute to the much-needed evidence of the benefits, costs, and impacts of gender-responsive approaches in forest landscape investments. It will also test and demonstrate innovative and relatively low-cost solutions and actions that similar programs in other countries could adopt.

Under a World Bank Loan linked with a dedicated grant mechanism (DGM) aimed at indigenous and local communities, women-targeted finance windows have been established and are expected to enable women to access finance for productive natural resource management



Photo by Gerardo Segura/ World Bank

5 Funded by the Climate Investment Funds (CIF) and Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF)

activities. Both activities are intended to enhance women's livelihoods through productive natural resource management and to allow women to receive benefits from incentive programs, but also from enhanced access to sustainable value chains in forest landscapes. Creating this special supply, however, will require strengthening women's capacity and demand for these programs. The gender analysis described provides the necessary inputs to work towards that objective (Box 1).

### **Box 1. Case Study: Strengthening Demand for Targeted Women Programs**

In 2017 the National Forestry Commission (CONAFOR) program in Mexico called "Productive Forestry Projects for Women" was initiated. Of the 51 applications received, 10 projects were approved for a total amount of US\$548,223 (the subsidy per project can range from US\$10,000 to US\$100,000) to support manufacturing of furniture, handicrafts, charcoal, and food from forest products. The reasons for not approving the remaining 41 projects vary; they include noncompliance with eligibility criteria, submission of incomplete application, no accreditation of legal ownership of land or lack thereof, or failure to specify the location where support would be applied. The submission of incomplete applications could be explained by: 1) public servants/technical advisors and forestry promoters facing challenges when communicating application processes and addressing barriers that women face; 2) women lacking the capacities to apply; and 3) women not knowing about the existence of the program or lacking detailed information (few women applied to this program). Furthermore, in order to receive this special women-only subsidy, women must contribute between 10 and 50 percent in cash or in kind under the 2017 program. Women often lack cash or access to credit to provide the necessary counter-financing. As of 2016, only 38 percent of rural women had a bank account, and access to financial services was low. Only 11 percent of the rural population requested formal credits and only 5 percent of ejidos and communities engaging in sustainable forest management accessed financial services. Thus, there are important opportunities to make projects and programs more gender inclusive and better targeted to women, something the World Bank.

### **Côte d'Ivoire Forest Investment Project**

A recent US\$15 million World Bank Forest Investment Project in Côte d'Ivoire, supported by the Forest Investment Program, aims at conserving and increasing the forest stock and improving access to sources of income from sustainable forest management for selected communities in target zones. The design team identified and included actions to address project-relevant gender gaps. These gender actions include the following:

- Support for the development of participatory community forest management plans that must include women in leadership positions in all committees
- Training and technical assistance earmarked for women and youth associations engaged in forest restoration activities
- Establishment of performance-based contracts, signed by both women and men, for planting and protecting trees on-farm near and inside gazetted forests
- The inclusion of a requirement that 50 percent of incentive-based subproject funds must be directed to targeted gender activities
- The inclusion of a technical assistance component that includes sharing knowledge with women about potential agroforestry species that meet their needs
- A specification that the project implementation and M&E manuals must include sections detailing: 1) actions and indicators aimed at addressing gender gaps identified during project preparation; 2) gender-based violence (GBV) risk related to project implementation; and 3) a grievance redress mechanism for addressing GBV.

This project is still fairly unique in an explicit inclusion of gender activities, and a budget for them, targeted at addressing constraints faced by women in the project area who will be implementing many of the actions. This raises the likelihood of achieving enhanced equity goals as well as the effectiveness of the project in achieving its sustainable forest management objectives.

### **Other Forests-Gender Initiatives**

#### **W + Certification Standard**

An innovative approach (and tool) that addresses the need for project implementers to measure how women are benefitting from interventions is the W+ certification standard for women's empowerment (WOCAN 2018).<sup>6</sup> This instrument was created by WOCAN in response to the need to measure the impact of women's empowerment and accelerate investments to address persistent gaps in women's access to resources and capital. W+ provides

<sup>6</sup> www.wocan.org and wplus.org

metrics to measure women's empowerment within existing and new projects across six areas: time, income, health, leadership, education and food security. This platform enables governments, companies, and individuals to achieve transparency and effectiveness using a results-based framework. The emphasis of the standards is on the enhanced recognition of women's roles in the forest sector.

The standard provides certification for economic development or environment projects that generate increased social and economic benefits for women. These benefits can be in the shape of time- and labor-saving mechanisms, improved renewable energy technologies, and/or participation in forest and agriculture activities. Women stand to benefit from the certification in two ways: first, from project activities that meet the criteria for the certification (determined through consultation with the women beneficiaries during project design), and second, from direct payments to women's groups that are generated through sales of the W+ units and provided by the project developers.

The application of the W+ Standard demonstrates that many "forest smart" interventions involve saving time and efficient use of water and fuelwood, which are particularly beneficial to women. For example, the W+ certification has been used in biogas digester projects with women's groups in Nepal and Indonesia. This has resulted in measured and verified energy and time savings for women, along with improvements in income, assets and leadership capacity. The W+ Standard is also being applied in agroforestry-, water-, and food-related projects across Africa and Asia.

### **The Forest and Farm Facility**

The Forest and Farm Facility (FFF) is a partnership between FAO, IIED, IUCN and Agricorn. This initiative is operating in at least eleven countries (Bolivia, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Liberia, Gambia, Kenya, Zambia, Liberia, Nepal, Myanmar, Vietnam) as well as regionally and globally. Their approach focuses on *forest-farm producer organizations*<sup>7</sup>, with a strong gender lens. It funds partnership agreements and small grants with smallholder, women, community

and Indigenous Peoples' producer organizations and governments at local, national, regional and international levels that:

1. Strengthen smallholder, women, community and Indigenous Peoples' producer organizations for business/livelihoods and policy engagement;
2. Catalyze multi-sectoral stakeholder policy platforms with governments at local and national levels;
3. Link local voices and learning to global arena through genuine participatory processes/communication and information sharing.

By strengthening and empowering forest-farm producer organizations to develop business plans, for example, these groups are able to gain access to credit and strengthen forest-related value chains. Women's active participation and leadership in these organizations is supported by FFF rules and actions that include:

- Sex disaggregated monitoring
- Budget allocations to gender-targeted activities
- FFPOs self-assessments and gender-based value chain analyses
- Targeted support to women-only organizations
- Women as a focus of capacity development efforts
- "Women champions" as mentors (e.g. Nepal, The Gambia, Kenya, Bolivia)
- Small grants and access to finance for women's enterprise groups

Beyond the country level, regional and global grants are given to these organizations to help link them to regional and international networks and platforms that represent forest and farm producers and forest rights holders. These platforms allow local groups to bring their efforts to the notice of global decision-makers to facilitate successful local-level investments, and help shape international and national policies and actions through the sharing of knowledge and experience among local forest and farm producers.

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7 [www.fao.org/partnerships/forest-farm-facility/en/](http://www.fao.org/partnerships/forest-farm-facility/en/)

## 6.0 CONCLUSIONS

This paper argues that issues arising due to gender inequalities should be viewed as potential opportunities to take actions that enhance both gender equality and forest landscape management, resulting in transformational change on both fronts. It examines what this means in a very practical sense for project designers, policy makers, and other forest landscape decision makers. It reviews the literature and a wide range of forest-related projects and programs in many countries in order to bring together ideas as to specific gender-responsive investments, project activities, and policy actions that can be considered in different environments.

Prioritizing these actions requires context-specific analysis, which is why gender analysis prior to, or during, the conceptualization stage of projects is so critical, along with monitoring sex-disaggregated outcome measures during implementation. The widespread lack of sex-disaggregated data in the forest sector makes this investment an imperative for governments and others. A better understanding of how sex, ethnic group, age, asset wealth, and so forth influence forest landscape decision-making is also badly needed in many countries.

Most of the interventions reviewed here focus on women. Yet gender scholars argue that much more attention to the interactions between men and women, gender dynamics and power issues, and men's roles and behavior from the household to the political arena (Colfer and Minarchek 2012) is needed. The emphasis on inclusiveness, seen across a wide range of interventions covered here, is about getting a better balance of men and women making decisions about forest landscapes together. But further work is needed in bringing together evidence of the types of interventions that are successfully tackling gender issues and opportunities from a starting point of the men.

While this review does not examine gender-responsive forest landscape interventions from a safeguards viewpoint, the World Bank and other agencies do follow strict procedures to ensure no harm will be done. For example, gender-based violence is a serious threat in some places, and actions taken to empower women may in fact put some at risk. Thus safeguard approaches are critical and complementary to those explored in this paper.

This review offers suggestions to developers of forest landscape projects (and those investing in them) on a wide range of practical, gender-responsive actions that will lead to more effective and equitable impacts. It highlights

interventions to consider in the design and implementation of such projects and programs that include the following:

- Earmarking training and technical assistance for women and youth in areas such as leadership; NTFP production, processing and marketing; environmental and ecotourism services; forest management; forest restoration or agroforestry practices, with a focus on appropriate tree species for men and women
- Supporting the development of participatory community forest management plans that include women in leadership positions in all committees
- Establishing performance-based contracts with joint signatures for planting and protecting trees on farms, as well as near and inside forests
- Including budget line items for gender-targeted activities
- Including actions and indicators to address specific gender gaps identified in project conceptualization

For governments, particularly forest-related agencies, the findings suggest potential gender-responsive actions that include:

- Forest policies, strategies, and legislation that include gender considerations
- Training forest personnel in the collection of sex-disaggregated data and inclusive, participatory engagement, and forest landscape management planning processes
- Providing targeted communication channels and feedback mechanisms (such as text messages) to potential female applicants of forest landscape programs
- Facilitating registration for forest-related programs in easily accessible spaces where women already go (such as schools, local markets, and health care centers), and training and hiring female technical advisors
- Earmarking training and technical assistance to women and youth groups engaged in forest restoration activities

For investors, development agencies, and private sector actors, potential actions to consider are:

- Supporting gender analyses in forest landscapes and taking steps to include them in forest strategy documents
- Employing new mechanisms such as the W+ Standard to channel funds directly to women and to measure the impacts of gender-responsive forest landscape efforts
- Supporting the use of innovative tools such as participatory resource mapping and citizen science to improve understanding of gendered forest landscape restoration constraints and opportunities to address them
- Encouraging a value chain approach for the design of

interventions that assist women and other marginalized peoples to participate in and benefit from value-added activities

- Investing in research into labor-saving innovations that will help relieve women's workloads
- Finding ways in which to make direct payments to women (for example via cellphone) for forest restoration and agroforestry activities
- Supporting rural women's leadership capacity strengthening activities

The thought of designing and implementing gender-transformative landscape initiatives of any type (projects, programs, policies, or capacity strengthening efforts) can be quite daunting. Here, we have attempted to highlight not only why this should be seen as an opportunity and not just a problem, but to offer as many concrete ideas as possible from the literature and project experience at the World Bank and elsewhere for consideration by those facing this challenge.



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# ANNEX 1. GENDER-REDD+ ACTION PLANS: WORKS IN PROGRESS FROM SEVEN COUNTRIES



**Mexico** - Gender-REDD+ Action Plan. REDD+ and gender have been thoroughly analyzed in Mexico under a number of initiatives and programs, including World Bank lending (Forest and Climate Change, Forest Entrepreneurship), the FCPF, and FIP (including the DGM). In addition, multistakeholder initiatives have focused on this priority issue. Most recently an innovative behavioral science approach has complemented previous work and provided new insights on empowering women in productive natural resource management (see Box 1). Clear, realistic, and appropriate targets are presented for women's participation in REDD+ related activities in Mexico's Gender-REDD+ Action Plan. Results are organized into goals, recommendations, and indicators:<sup>8</sup>

- Goal 1: Facilitate application processes and accommodate time lines to community decision-making procedures
- Goal 2: Mainstream gender at all policy and government levels
- Goal 3: Enhance policy coherence across programs, institutions, and levels of government
- Goal 4: Distribute legal land tenure more equally throughout the population and work around customary laws
- Goal 5: Promote women's representation and participation in decision-making processes
- Goal 6: Fight the poverty traps resulting from women's time burdens, economic marginalization, and blunted aspirations
- Goal 7: Provide accessible information on programs
- Goal 8: Mitigate scarcity scenarios by reducing complexity and access barriers through simplification, improved choice architecture, and nudging
- Goal 9: Expand women's self-concept through role models
- Goal 10: Target influencers to reframe social norms

**Ghana** - Emissions Reduction Program: Ghana Cocoa Forest REDD+ Programme (GCFRP) (Supported by FCPF and IUCN). The Ghana REDD+ Gender Action Plan was developed by the National Gender Sub-Working Group (GSWG, part of National REDD+ Working Group, held within the Forestry Commission), the Forestry Commission, led by the Climate Change Unit (CCU); the National REDD+ Secretariat (NRS); the Safeguard Focal Persons (SFPs); and the IUCN Global Gender Office and country Project Office in Ghana.

Gender actions including in Ghana's Gender Action Plan include:

- Establishment of a Gender Desk within the Forestry Commission
- Development of a women-centered conditional cash transfer program to advance gender equality
- Trainings for GSWG regarding institutional coordination and monitoring, reporting and verification tasks, training of women's groups and other project implementers, gender awareness campaigns
- Participatory and gender-responsive processes for developing Management Plans for each (forest) Hotspot Intervention Area
- Gender trainings of local communities and stakeholders in landscape restoration projects
- Gender trainings for regional safeguard focal points and forestry commission staff in all 10 regions
- Awareness raising with the regional safeguard focal points about safeguards issues in relation to REDD+ and the different gender roles and rights issues that need to be considered in REDD+ implementation
- Identification of challenges to, and opportunities for, ensuring robust safeguards processes to enhance social inclusion and gender equality, especially around drivers of degradation and cocoa expansion and production

<sup>8</sup> See World Bank (2018), Chapter 4 for more details.



**Uganda** - Gender-REDD+ Roadmap. This was developed by the REDD+ Gender Task Force, supported by FCPF, together with representatives Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development; gender focal points of development partners; and IUCN's Global Gender Office. It includes the following actions:

- REDD Gender Task Force (GTF) established
- Gender-sensitive safeguards included in National REDD+ Strategy
- National Park REDD+ project management committee that is 40 percent female
- Knowledge-sharing event on gender mainstreaming in forest-related interventions
- GTF support to traditional authorities and local governments on mechanisms for women's land acquisition and training women on land acquisition procedures
- Study on sustainable forest management and agroforestry opportunities for women and gender-responsive practices in forest management and conservation initiatives
- Facilitating women's organizations, CSOs, and women parliamentarians to develop a common advocacy agenda to review of current legal framework, and the national legislation in view of REDD+.
- Fostering a dialogue with traditional authorities/local government institutions on women's rights issues pertinent to land tenure. Trained local women on land acquisition procedures
- Establishing contacts with the Women Parliamentarian Association and the gender focal points of development partners to identify representation in the Task Force.

**Cameroon** - Gender REDD+ Roadmap. The development of Cameroon's Gender REDD+ Roadmap involved IUCN's Global Gender Office, the National Gender Task Force for REDD+ and Climate Change, the National Civil Society Platform for REDD+, and Cameroon's Gender REDD+ Task Force, supported by FCPF. The Roadmap includes the following actions:

- Development and validation of a National Strategy on involvement of indigenous people (IP) in REDD+ processes to ensure active participation of IPs in national REDD+ processes
- Training of gender focal points of different ministries, regional focal points of the civil society REDD+ and climate change platform, IP representatives of the Ministry of Environment, national and regional gender-based organizations, and different development partners and research institutions
- Training of over 40 members of the national gender task force on gender and REDD+ with a focus on gender advocacy and REDD+; gender and development approach; gender sensitive planning and gender-responsive budgeting
- Fundraising activities to sponsor the functioning of the task forces and the implementation of prioritized activities from the Gender Action Plan.
- National Gender Action Plan for REDD+ and Climate Change for 2015–2016, which presented the Logical Framework on Interventions, Activity schedule, and Fund-Raising Strategy
- A National Gender Action Plan that presents seven intervention axes, as a part of national gender mainstreaming axes in REDD+.



**Nepal** - Gender Integration in REDD+ and the Emission Reduction Program (ERPD) in Nepal. Supported by FCPF, this Gender Action Plan was developed by WOCAN, the REDD+ Implementation Center (RIC), the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation, and the Chief REDD-IC. The Emission Reduction Program includes:

- A gender analysis and Gender Action Plan that is mainstreamed in the ERPD, with gender components in all seven intervention areas (that is, improved community-based forest management (CBFM) and governance, handover of national forests to CBFM regimes, promoting private forestry, expanding alternative energy with biogas plants and improved cookstoves, enhancing pro-poor leasehold forestry, integrated land-use planning, and protected area management)
- Consultations with relevant stakeholders and institutions at the local, subnational, and national levels
- A rule that parish-level forest user group committees must be 50 percent female, and the vice president or secretary must be a woman
- A rule that both men and women must be signatories on bank accounts to receive community forest project benefits
- A target of 30 percent of forestry project benefits (such as loan programs to forest enterprises) going to women
- In each community parish, benefits should be earmarked, 25 percent for forest management, and 35 percent goes to the community, including women
- A target for supporting buffer zones, ecotourism, and energy efforts that include and empower women



**Vietnam** - Empowering ethnic minority women for REDD+, climate change, and sustainable development projects. This project, supported by FCPF, is led by Tebtebba (Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education), along with the Center for Research in Upland Areas (CERDA). A Gender Action Plan was developed as a part of the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) for the ERPD, and includes the following actions:

- Self-governing groups (SGGs) formed, to be incorporated into legal co-ops
- 21 percent of the heads of the SGGs are women, and 65 percent of women benefitted from meeting attendance, capacity building, and institutional development initiatives
- Knowledge sharing on gender-related government policies, programs, rights
- Applications for forest user rights through household certificates
- Women's group participation in government forest plantations
- Requests for certified tree seedlings and technical trainings from government
- Training in Free and Prior Informed Consent (FPIC); laws, policies, and programs related to REDD respectful of the availability of women from their domestic chores, the community cycle, and other sociocultural events
- Community dialogues with provincial authorities



**Guatemala** - Gender-REDD+ Roadmap. This was developed within the PROBOSQUE program, together with The Ministry of Environment and National Resources, (MARN); the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Food (MAGA); National Forest Institute (INAB); National Council for Protected Areas (CONAP); and FIP/CIF (Forest Investment Program of the Climate Investment Funds). MARN, MAGA, INAB, and CONAP gender experts led the highly consultative process of Roadmap design. This Roadmap includes:

- Recognition of the importance of equitable access to and benefits from: 1) land tenure rights; 2) biodiversity and environmental services; 3) access to forest-related information; 4) full and effective participation of women and men in forest governance; 5) women's leadership, and empowerment in decision-making; and 6) compliance with local, national and international laws, and treaties and conventions on women's rights
- Strategic actions, defined by women, for mainstreaming gender throughout the REDD+ phases, with specific training needs identified related to weather, climate change, greenhouse gases (GHG), REDD+, related policy frameworks, gender considerations, safeguards, and the national REDD+ strategy
- Financial mechanisms for women and men to access private banking resources
- Capacity building on forest governance for public institutions, IPs, women's groups, and local communities
- Consolidation and diversification of IPs, women's groups, and local communities' livelihoods, through the promotion of productive models





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The Program on Forests (PROFOR) multi-donor partnership generates innovative, cutting-edge knowledge and tools to advance sustainable management of forests for poverty reduction, economic growth, climate mitigation and adaptation, and conservation benefits. Through its programs, PROFOR is advancing forest-smart development, which recognizes forests' significance for sustaining growth across many sectors, including agriculture, energy, infrastructure, and water.

