



Centre for Science and Environment

Inclusion of Gender in Environmental Impact Assessment



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This document has been produced with the support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). The views herein shall not necessarily be taken to reflect the official opinion of the donor.



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Material from this publication can be used, but with acknowledgement.

Citation: Sujit Kumar Singh and Vikrant Wankhede 2018, *Inclusion of gender in environmental impact assessment*, Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi

Published by

Centre for Science and Environment

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Printed at Avantika Printers, New Delhi

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1 INTRODUCTION

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required to be undertaken for all major development projects in virtually all countries worldwide.¹ However, the process of EIA however has been reduced to a mere technical process with very little importance given to socio-economic issues, including those related to gender. On the contrary, it can be demonstrated how adverse impacts of development projects can be reduced with the full and equal participation of both genders, particularly women, because of their decision-making capacities, organic knowledge of local topography and ecosystems, and concern regarding drinking water, sanitation and health.

EIA processes can provide a good opportunity to address gender issues at an early stage of project planning, and explore means to reduce adverse impacts on women.

Despite the multiple roles women assume at the household level and the society at large, not the least as vital cogs of the economy, their representation and participation in decision-making processes remain abysmal. This can be attributed to strong patriarchal patterns and numerous gender-based assumptions in the society. Women and other vulnerable sections of the society are the first and most affected by consequences of developmental processes like displacement or relocation, loss of livelihood and reduction in access to natural resources, damage to the environment and increase in pollution levels.

An analysis of 12 countries, including India, reveals that in almost all countries the laws and regulations related to EIA mandate people's participation. Developers and government authorities conduct activities and organize events to ensure such participation to seek comments and inputs of the people. However, only a few countries, notably South Africa, Tanzania, Malawi and Kenya, have included some provisions for mainstreaming gender issues.

This report by CSE seeks to underline the nature and extent of the problem, and to provide a way forward so that countries can benefit from a more wholesome inclusion of gender issues in the EIA process.

2

WHY IS GENDER INCLUSION IN EIA IMPORTANT?

Women constitute half of humanity and, therefore, play an equally important role in the process of development. But it is not merely a question of numbers—any developmental programme must also reflect the interests and needs of women. Numerous studies indicate that better inclusion of women in developmental activities results in increased productivity, decrease in conflicts, and the strengthening of the social fabric of societies, besides promoting economic development.

The processes of EIA are inclusive, with countries mandating robust public participation, consultations, preparing environmental management plans and reviewing them etc. EIA processes can be made even better by integrating gender issues with them. Some of the immediate benefits of such inclusion would be greater acceptability of projects by communities, better decision making by the project proponents towards mitigating negative project impacts, improved planning by the proponents for providing alternate facilities to the communities. Women’s organic knowledge is also crucial to plan innovative compensation and benefit-sharing schemes, including local infrastructure improvement, education and skills training, and health services which can minimize adverse effects and help build trust and partnership between proponents and the affected communities.²

In the African context, the participation of women in numbers show a high involvement of women in the informal sector, which is known to be the backbone of developing economies. As per estimates, these numbers are high in countries such as Tanzania (90.7 per cent), Nigeria (87.8 per cent), Kenya (78.7 per cent), Uganda (84.2 per cent), Zambia (88.2 per cent), Ghana (82.9 per cent), and Mozambique (96.2 per cent).⁴ With such high involvement, it is important to look at the participation of women in different areas of decision making, especially in the EIA process, which plays a crucial role in project clearances. This is all the more important since during capital projects women are more prone to various issues of added domestic burdens, domestic violence, discrimination, increased presence in sex work due to lack of employment opportunities, HIV / AIDS, poor health care etc.

What is gender?

Gender refers to the socio-cultural definition of men and women, and the way in which societies distinguish men and women and assign them social roles. It is a matter of culture that refers to the social classification of men and women into “masculine” and “feminine”. The identities of men and women are determined by social, cultural, and psychological conditions, primarily dealing with the differences in the roles and relationships of men and women in a given society. The concept of gender deals with the sharing of benefits and power between men and women and emphasizes partnerships and interdependence. The word “gender” is not a substitute for women and men but a concept, a condition, a category, a component, and an integral part of development. There are so many activities that can be done by both, if given equal opportunities. “Gender” is not sex. “Sex” is biologically or naturally determined and permanent under normal circumstances. It is connected with biology.³

Although the process of EIA does include public hearings and consultations, these processes have been reduced to mere compliance assurances. The participation of women remains limited because of institutional and societal constraints such as:

- Lack of access to information
- Gender-blind policies
- Lack of agencies to voice opinions
- Patriarchal and hierarchical norms
- Male-dominated spaces
- Stereotypes attributed to women
- Illiteracy and lack of understanding of integral role of women in the participation process

It is important to move beyond mere participation of women in EIA and push for active membership at all stages of the process. Furthermore, this also has to be promoted at every level, right from the project-proponent level, to the level of stakeholders and government policy makers.



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As per estimates, the number of women involved in the informal sector is very high in Tanzania (90.7 per cent), Nigeria (87.8 per cent), Kenya (78.7 per cent), Uganda (84.2 per cent), Zambia (88.2 per cent), Ghana (82.9 per cent), and Mozambique (96.2 per cent)

3 IMPACT OF INFRASTRUCTURAL PROJECTS ON GENDER

The Report of the World Commission on Dams, 2000 states that “gender blindness” of most projects worldwide have increased gender disparities by imposing a disproportionate share of the social costs on women without giving them a fair share of the benefits.⁵

Women often experience negative impacts of development projects more than men, and rarely receive the same benefits. Some of the key impacts of capital and large infrastructural projects on women are discussed in the following sections.

Environmental impact

- Environmental damage and degradation can affect women’s capacity to provide food and clean water to their families, which women and girls are often primarily responsible. This leads to an increase in their workload such as having to walk greater distances to access water, fuel or wood, forest products and land to plant food crops.
- Pollution of water sources and water scarcity threatens their health and agricultural productivity. This would have a direct impact on livelihood opportunities.

Social and health impact

- Due to sudden influx of a transient workforce during a project’s construction and operation, social and health problems, including those associated with law and order, are common. These problems can include increased alcohol consumption, domestic and sexual violence, sexually transmitted infections such as HIV and AIDS, and prostitution.
- Unsuitable resettlement sites can lead to security threats with respect to social, economic, and health security, such as lack of employment opportunities, natural resources, familiarity with the area etc.
- Dust, pollution, noise and bad odour released from the activity site have adverse impact on the health of women, men and children.
- When women work at project sites, children often accompany them instead of going to school, as there is no support system for women to enable them to send their children schools.

Economic impact

- Compensation, and rehabilitation and resettlement (R&R) benefits accrue to men due to family headship, deny women access to and control over economic benefits. This increases women’s economic dependence on men, disempowering them and deteriorates the existing inequalities
- Displacement caused due to loss of land leads to loss of livelihoods. Establishing new sources of income and shifting from traditional to a cash-based economy can lead to the loss of traditional values and way of life. This may also increase work burden on women.
- Women face food insecurity when there is a movement of men out of the villages for construction activities.
- Women can experience discrimination in the workplace. Employment and training opportunities are provided to men, and women are only left to

work in the most menial, low-paid positions.

- Women returning from childbirth or childcare may struggle to regain employment.
- Women can be marginalized due to lack of adequate training regarding new technologies, which may come from and reinforce gender stereotyping.
- Lack of availability of a proper crèche or childcare facilities deters new mothers from taking up jobs, increasing their dependence on men.

Gendered impacts are commonly overlooked during the design phase of energy infrastructure projects. Women are typically more adversely affected by the inflow of migrant workers, which is often accompanied by increased incidence of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Water borne illnesses affecting women are linked to lack of sound environmental and social management involving specific energy generation sources (e.g., water pollution in hydropower dam reservoirs). Careful implementation of safety measures and adequate sanitary facilities in the project area can help prevent occupational health risks, as well as the spread of disease.⁶



In Nepal, for example, FGD participants expressed their concern about the potential spread of disease under the KGS hydropower project



In Morocco, participants in both focused group discussions and consultations voiced strong concerns about the influx of foreign workers under the Noor 1 CSP Project⁷



The South African gold mining industry faced the challenge of the spread of silicosis. Gold mining companies failed to protect workers from silica dust inhalation while they worked in the mines. The impact of the same is strongly gendered. It is the mothers, sisters and wives who take care of the male mine workers at considerable personal and financial expense. Within households, women were required to withdraw from formal and informal work, or (in the case of girls) leave school, in order to take care of men with silicosis. This lays the fact bare that women in rural communities have been forced to assume an unfair burden of care and work as a result of widespread industry failure to protect mine workers from silicosis



In the extractive industry it is estimated that migrant miners in South Africa aged 30–44 are 15 per cent more likely to be HIV positive, and that a woman whose partner is a migrant miner is 8 per cent more likely to become infected⁸



The Marlin gold mine in Guatemala, established in 2005, suffered a set-back because of protests and conflicts. The company started extraction activities without free, prior and informed consent of indigenous communities. Many leaders of the struggle against the mining activities have been women. In 2008, several women protested against the building of power lines through their land by knocking over the mining company's pylons, resulting in huge losses for the company.⁹In 2010, the UN and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights called on the Government of Guatemala to suspend operations at the mine



Due to increased mining activities, communities in South Gobi, Mongolia have seen a significant rise in cases of domestic and alcohol-fuelled violence, and increased sex work. Similarly, reports of sexual harassment and rape have risen. Safety of local women has also become a concern, affecting the daily lives. Incidences of sexually transmitted diseases have also increased¹⁰

4

BENEFITS OF GENDER INCLUSION IN EIA

It is pivotal to consider women as a separate group of stakeholders since the concerns, needs and priorities of women are different than that of men. In case of developmental projects, most of these concerns crop up at later stages of project implementation. In this section, we discuss some of the benefits of active involvement of women in the EIA processes.

Economic development

With increased participation of women in development projects as stakeholders, policies developed and decisions taken by project proponents will be more inclusive. This helps projects gain acceptability among communities. It boosts employment opportunities, participation and, ultimately, boosts economic productivity. Gender equality should be addressed to promote effective development. For example, in Nepal, local women began to form farmer cooperatives and special agriculture producer groups after a hydropower project was completed. These groups collectively managed marketing and other produce-related activities.¹¹

Better decision making

Inclusion of women in decision making is known to address communitarian issues and the larger questions of economy. It has been observed that the concerns of women are more reflective of the concerns of the community as a whole. Moreover, the particular concerns of women are also different from those of men. Therefore, greater participation of women in the decision-making process results in a more wholesome redress of concerns. For example, it was observed during community consultations for the Trung Son Hydropower Project, Vietnam funded by the World Bank that women with their knowledge of the local environment and ecology, plants, soil and water resources, meaningfully contributed to the identification of more suitable resettlement areas than the ones initially suggested by the project proponents.¹²

Equal distribution of resources

As women get more opportunities of taking decisions during EIA, they are able to exercise more control over resources. The spending patterns, thus, remain controlled, prioritized and are equally distributed.

Improved planning

With the involvement of women, proponents can develop sound management plans and provide better facilities and infrastructure for health, sanitation, skill development, job opportunities, nutrition, education, recreation and other needs.

5 ROLES OF DIFFERENT ACTORS IN EIA GENDER INCLUSION

Inclusion of women in EIA has many benefits. It must be ensured that this inclusiveness be catered to at all levels, policy, proponent and the stakeholder level. At the outset, provisioning of gender-inclusive policy measures sets the tone for higher involvement of women and compels project proponents to develop relevant policy measures ensuring active participation of women.

Gender inclusion in EIA in Africa

Governments are one of the most important stakeholders in terms of providing policy level mandates for promoting gender-inclusive EIAs. Analysis of EIA policy measures in Africa sheds some light on the mandate for gender inclusion. Of the 11 countries listed, EIA laws and regulations of almost all countries such as Kenya, Tanzania, Botswana, South Africa (and India) have provisions for involvement of affected communities or public participation by way of comments and or public consultations.

However, only four countries, Kenya, Malawi, South Africa and Tanzania have stated provisions that ensure representation of women in EIA. For example, the Kenyan Environmental (Impact Assessment and Audit) Regulations, 2003 define “social analysis” as “assessing the social consequences from specific policy actions or project development which includes gender desegregation.” Although not direct, this provides some scope for involvement of women through the requirement of disaggregated information. The Environment Management Act, 1996 of Malawi mandates that one member of the country’s National Council for the Environment is nominated by and represents the National Commission for Women Development. The law in South Africa recognizes and promotes the vital role played by women in environment management and development, and makes the participation of women compulsory in EIA processes. Similarly, it also necessitates representation of women in the National Environmental Advisory Forum. Just like Kenya, Tanzanian Environmental Management Act, 2004 also defines “social analysis” and asks for gender disaggregation.

India’s Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation, and Resettlement Act

India’s Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation, and Resettlement Act of 2013 provides an example of how legislations can begin to address gender issues. This act recognizes that widows, divorcees and women abandoned by their families impacted by land acquisitions are entitled to compensation and other benefits. The Act acknowledges that compensation must be paid to people other than men (or to female-headed households). The Act also lays provisions for Social Impact Assessment (SIA) studies to address social and economic issues of communities affected by development projects.



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Although many countries have national policies, Acts, guidelines etc. for promoting gender inclusion (for example Namibia, where the Department of Environmental Affairs, Ministry of Environment and Tourism provides Guidelines for Integrating HIV and Gender-Related Issues into EIA), most countries do not have an exclusive framework for inclusion of the same at various stages of EIA. Even in cases of countries that have some provisions ensuring gender inclusion and representation, these stop short of listing detailed measures for active participation of women (see *Table 1: Status of gender inclusion in laws and regulations in Africa*).

Table 1: Status of gender inclusion in laws and regulations in Africa

| S. no. | Country | Legislative framework | Provision of public consultation and hearing in EIA | Gender mainstreaming in EIA |
|--------|----------|--|---|-----------------------------|
| 1 | Botswana | Environmental Assessment Act, 2011 ¹³ Environmental Assessment Regulations, 2012 ¹⁴ | Section 7: Applicant conducts public participation to seek the views of the people or communities which are likely to be affected by the activity during scoping stage to explain the activity, its effects and benefits. Section 12: The competent authority, after receiving an environment impact statement from the developer, shall invite comments or objections of persons who are most likely to be affected by the proposed activity and other interested persons. | None |
| 2 | Ethiopia | Environmental Impact Assessment, 2002 ¹⁵ | Article 15: The Authority shall make any environmental impact study report accessible to the public to solicit comments on it, ensuring that the comments made by the public and in particular by the communities likely to be affected by the implementation of a project are incorporated into the environmental impact study report as well as in its evaluation. | None |
| 3 | Ghana | Environmental Assessment Regulations, 1999 ¹⁶ | Regulation 5: The Agency on receipt of the application and other relevant information shall screen the application taking into consideration the concerns of the general public and in particular of the immediate residents as part of the initial assessment. Regulation 17: The Agency holds a public hearing for the purpose of reviewing the environment impact statement after appointing a panel composed of not less than three and not more than five persons, out of which at least 1/3rd shall be residents of the geographical area of the proposed undertaking. | None |

| S. no. | Country | Legislative framework | Provision of public consultation and hearing in EIA | Gender mainstreaming in EIA |
|--------|---------|--|--|---|
| 4 | Kenya | The Environmental (Impact Assessment And Audit) Regulations, 2003 ¹⁷ | <p>Regulation 17: After the approval of the project report (not the EIA study report) the proponent shall, in consultation with the Authority, seek views of persons who may be affected by the project by publicizing the project and its anticipated effects and benefits.</p> <p>Regulation 21: The Authority shall, after receiving the environmental impact assessment study report, invite the public to make oral or written comments on the report.</p> <p>Regulation 22: Upon receipt of both oral and written comments, the Authority may hold a public hearing presided over by a suitably qualified person appointed by the Authority where the proponent shall be given an opportunity to make a presentation and to respond to presentations made at the public hearing.</p> | Regulation 2: Interpretation of “social analysis” means, assessing the social consequences from specific policy actions or project development which includes gender desegregation. |
| 5 | Malawi | Environment Management Act, 1996 ¹⁸ | Section 26: Upon receiving the environmental impact assessment report, the Director of Environment Affairs invites written or oral comments from the public for the purpose of review. | <p>Section 9: The National Council for the Environment shall consist of one member nominated by and representing the National Commission for Women in Development.</p> <p>The National HIV and AIDS Policy.¹⁹</p> <p>Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, through the Environment Affairs Department (EAD) shall be responsible for coordinating integration and mainstreaming of HIV and AIDS in Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) of capital projects. Large capital projects have been associated with rising HIV incidence in areas where they are implemented. The EIA process is seen to be the best entry point in addressing HIV prevention and mitigation of the impacts of AIDS brought about by the large capital projects.</p> |
| 6 | Namibia | <p>Environmental Management Act, 2007²⁰</p> <p>Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2012²¹</p> | <p>Regulation 7: Public consultation is conducted by the proponent after submission of application.</p> <p>Section 36: Public hearing is conducted by the Environment Commissioner at the stage of review of application.</p> | Guidelines for Integrating HIV and Gender-Related Issues into EIA, by Department of Environmental Affairs, Ministry of Environment and Tourism |

| S. no. | Country | Legislative framework | Provision of public consultation and hearing in EIA | Gender mainstreaming in EIA |
|--------|--------------|--|---|---|
| 7 | Nigeria | Environmental Impact Assessment, 1992 ²² | <p>Section 22: After completion of a screening report of a project, the Agency shall give the public an opportunity to examine and comment on the screening report and any record that has been filed in the public registry.</p> <p>Section 37: A review panel shall hold a hearing in a manner that offers the public an opportunity to participate in the assessment.</p> | None |
| 8 | South Africa | <p>National Environmental Management Act, 1998²³</p> <p>Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014²⁴</p> | <p>Regulation 1: An applicant must submit to the competent authority a basic assessment report, inclusive of specialist reports, an EMP report and, where applicable, a closure plan, which have been subjected to public participation.</p> <p>Regulation 21: An applicant must submit to the competent authority a scoping report which has been subjected to a public participation process.</p> <p>Regulation 23: On acceptance of the scoping report by the competent authority, an applicant shall submit an environmental impact report inclusive of any specialist reports, and an EMP report, which has been subjected to a public participation process.</p> | <p>Under the principles of the Act Section 2 (4)(q): The vital role of women and youth in environment management and development must be recognized and their full participation therein must be promoted</p> <p>Section 4: National Environmental Advisory forum shall be composed of representation from women, youth and persons disadvantaged by unfair discrimination.</p> |
| 9 | Swaziland | The Environment Management Act, 2002 ²⁵ | <p>Section 52: Every document required under the Act shall be subject to public review, before being finalized by the Authority.</p> <p>Section 53: The responsible authority shall request the Minister to convene a public hearing if at least ten written and substantiated objections have been submitted during the public review process. A public hearing is conducted, if the responsible authority is of the opinion that the public should make submissions or comments on the documents.</p> <p>Section 55: The Authority shall consider any comments placed by public prior to issuance or refusal of the licence, and shall respond collectively to all comments other than frivolous or vexatious comments.</p> | None |
| 10 | Tanzania | <p>The Environmental Management Act, 2004²⁶</p> <p>The Environmental Impact Assessment and Audit Regulations, 2005²⁷</p> | <p>Regulation 17: During the process of conducting an environmental impact assessment study, the proponent shall seek the views of the public following the approval of the project brief.</p> <p>Regulation 23: The Council, on the receipt of the environmental impact statement, shall invite the general public for comment.</p> <p>Regulation 27: Public hearing is conducted by the Council for comments which shall be compiled and be the basis for a review of the environment impact statement.</p> | <p>Regulation 3: "Social analysis" means assessing or estimating in advance the social consequences from specific policy actions or project development including gender desegregation.</p> <p>Under Schedule 2, the project screening criteria of the regulations inquires about the impact a project may bear on a social group or gender.</p> |

| S. no. | Country | Legislative framework | Provision of public consultation and hearing in EIA | Gender mainstreaming in EIA |
|--------|---------|---|--|-----------------------------|
| 11 | Zambia | <p>The Environmental Management Act, 2011²⁸</p> <p>Environmental Protection and Pollution Control (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations, 1997²⁹</p> | <p>Regulation 8: To ensure that public views are taken into account during the preparation of the terms of reference, the developer shall organize a public consultation process, involving government agencies, local authorities, non-governmental and community-based organizations and interested and affected parties, to help determine the scope of the work to be done in the conduct of the environmental impact assessment and in the preparation of the environmental impact statement.</p> <p>Regulation 10: The developer shall, prior to the submission of the environmental impact statement to the Council, take all measures necessary to seek the views of the people in the community which will be affected by the project.</p> <p>Regulation 16: The Council shall distribute copies of an environmental impact statement to relevant ministries, local government units, parastatals, non-governmental and community-based organizations, interested and affected parties; for organizing, public meetings in the locality of the proposed project to receive comments on the environmental impact statement which shall be sent to the Council.</p> <p>Regulation 17: The Council shall consider the environmental impact statement and all the comments received to determine whether a public hearing is to be held, for which the Council shall appoint a person who, in its opinion, is suitable qualified to preside over the public hearing the observations of which shall be used to take a decision regarding the grant of an environmental clearance Under the fourth schedule of the regulations in Stage 1 of the preliminary actions: The developer appoints a coordinator for the environmental impact study, who will select a team of experts that will undertake the study; the team shall also include a person who is resident of potentially affected area.</p> | None |
| 12 | India | <p>Environment (Protection) Act, 1986</p> <p>EIA Notification, 2006</p> | <p>Once the Draft EIA report is ready, the proponent shall conduct a public hearing at or near the project site.</p> <p>There is a mandate which enables citizens of India to give comments on the draft EIA report.</p> | None |

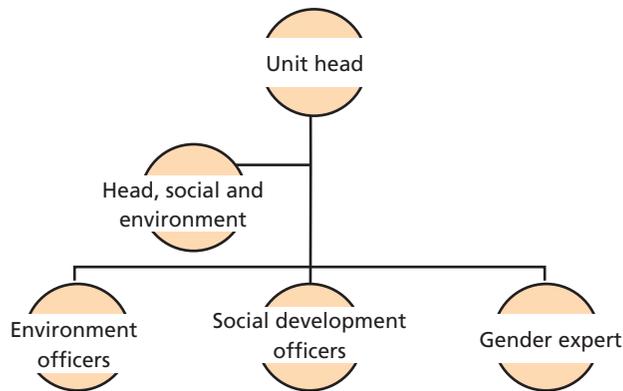
Source: CSE

Proponent level

Representation of women during the process of EIA cannot be limited to the level of the affected communities. For a better top-down assessment, the involvement of women at all levels, including at the management level, is crucial. Even company boards should have women representatives.

Additionally, women should be given the opportunity to develop their expertise in different fields so that they can act as designated unit heads, social and environment experts, environment officers, social development officers, gender experts, and vital cogs of grievance redress mechanisms. While they gain sufficient expertise, their equal participation under various heads must be ensured.

Figure 1: Some levels of the official hierarchy where women must have equal representation

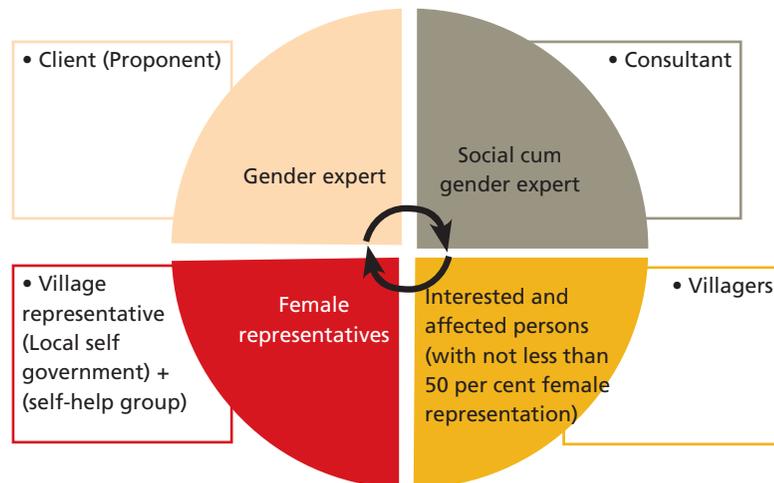


Source: CSE

Stakeholder level

The term “stakeholder” is a very broad category and includes everyone involved in the EIA process, right from government agencies, to the project proponents, affected communities, NGOs, CBOs, experts etc. Keeping in mind the huge involvement of each party in the EIA process, a framework for gender inclusion is essential to list down the roles played by each of these. *Figure 2: Matrix of stakeholders* provides an illustrative understanding of the stakeholders involved.

Figure 2: Matrix of stakeholders involved



Source: CSE

6 FRAMEWORK FOR GENDER INCLUSION IN EIA

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is used as a regulatory, planning and decision-making tool for large- and medium-scale projects across the globe. According to the United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) Division of Technology, Industry and Economics, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is an instrument used to identify environmental, social and economic impacts of a project prior to decision-making.

It aims at predicting environmental impacts at an early stage in project planning and design, exploring means and techniques to reduce adverse impacts, customizing projects according to the local environment and presenting options to decision-makers. An EIA can lead to both environmental and economic benefits for a project, such as reduction in cost and time taken for implementation and design of a project and lesser intervention in terms of legalities and regulations. A properly conducted EIA decreases conflict by promoting community participation, informing decision makers, and helping lay the base for environmentally sound projects.

Integration of gender with various stages of the EIA process

With regard to EIA, it is smart economics to involve both women and men. They both have different needs and knowledge of utilizing the environment. Women have a very important role in protecting and managing natural resources in their surroundings. Understanding their uses of the environment creates a more comprehensive assessment of positive and negative impacts the planned activity is likely to incur.

Their local yet unique knowledge of ecosystems and environment sustainability can enable successful implementation of the project activity with enriched opportunities for mitigation. In addition to providing equal opportunities and inclusion of the affected women in the process, gender-balanced teams with specialists and professionals must be made mandatory.

Various frameworks have been developed for gender assessment in the last few decades. Their suitability varies from region to region, place to place, and country to country. They must be further chiselled to meet local requirements. *Table 2: Framework for gender inclusion* lists recommendations for inclusion of women at every step of environmental impact assessment. The framework is relevant especially for policy makers and project proponents, in addition to other stakeholders for gender inclusion based on the local socio- economic dynamics.

Table 2: Framework for gender inclusion

| Step of EIA | Objective and procedure | Gender inclusion | Stakeholders |
|----------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Screening or project feasibility | It helps to decide whether an EIA is required for a project or not. A project is screened based on its projected impact on land and livelihoods, biodiversity, air, water, and amount of waste it is likely to produce. | <p>At this stage, it is advisable to conduct gender analysis based on data collected through reconnaissance surveys in the project-affected area to understand gender issues in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) How they are structured, how they function, and the roles and responsibilities of women and men (b) Livelihood (c) Income distribution (d) Health issues (e) Dependence on natural resources <p>Benefits: Doing so will provide a quick reality check on gender dynamics. Gathering information would help to determine and frame detailed Terms of Reference (ToRs) at the scoping stage.</p> <p>Method: Literature review (for example, review of other project reports), meeting with local authorities, public meeting, consultation with village and focused group discussions with women stakeholders etc.</p> | Local government, NGOs, CBOs, affected people, self-help groups etc. |
| Scoping | Scoping establishes environmental and social priorities, sets the boundaries for the study, and defines the Terms of Reference (ToR). Systematic and well-planned scoping forms the basis of an effective and efficient EIA process. | <p>At this stage, data collected from the reconnaissance survey can be used to explore in detail questions like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues in need of immediate redressal • How to proceed with the gender study • Extent of the gender engagement; and analysis needed • Kind of infrastructure and expertise needed • Target groups to be involved • Major constraints (such as women representation and active participation, language to be used, male-dominated spaces, other issues of marginalization etc.) • How to inform affected communities about the project and its implication • Appropriate strategies for participation of women • Appropriate indicators and benchmarks to monitor performance <p>Benefits: Makes assessment focused and inclusive</p> <p>Tools: Involvement of gender specialists, participation of women, identifying NGOs, CBOs, women groups and encouraging their participation, attracting attention of local authorities etc., with an objective to build consensus on set questions for gender assessment.</p> | Project proponent, gender specialist, affected women etc. |

| Step of EIA | Objective and procedure | Gender inclusion | Stakeholders |
|-------------------|--|---|--|
| Data collection | Baseline data provides a detailed description of the existing status of various environmental and social components of the study area. | <p>At this stage, data is collected from project-affected areas on pre-tested questionnaires, depending on potential impacts on gender. Prepare questions for in-depth interviews (structured and non-structured), focus group discussions, resource mapping, etc. (see Annexure: Areas to be covered under data collection).</p> <p>The data must be collected in consultation with women, men, indigenous people, ethnic groups, women’s organizations and other community-based organizations, with active involvement of women and men separately and in groups or both to capture data diversity of the community.³⁰</p> <p>Benefits: Availability of disaggregated data on gender, women-specific concerns, information on possible impacts and potential solutions to mitigate adverse impacts.</p> | Affected people, gender specialists, investigation team (lead researcher, research investigators etc.) |
| Impact assessment | In this step, environmental and social impacts are characterized, evaluated and predicted to determine their significance. | <p>This step involves data entry, cleaning of data, outputs etc. Further, impacts on gender are identified, predicted and evaluated using the baseline information on the one hand and the features of the project on the other hand (cause-effect relationship)</p> <p>Gender impact predictions are often done by using expert opinions, drawing comparisons with similar projects and people and understanding larger gender issues.</p> <p>The criteria for evaluating the significance of gender impacts and their effects should be set in advance based on scoping and local standards, wherever possible. Where local standards are not available, acceptable international standards should be used, for instance those of International Finance Corporation (IFC), The World Bank or standards and guidelines of other countries which incorporate best practices on gender.</p> <p>As a good practice in gender impact evaluation, it is better to use established procedures as set during the scoping, or guidelines or relevant criteria which are comparable.</p> <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender assessment lets specialists and planners to understand the impact of a project on women, men, children, disadvantaged groups, and on the economic and social fabric of the communities.³¹ • A good gender assessment or analysis will help frame sound mitigation measures. | Gender specialist, investigation team (researchers) and other stakeholders etc. |

| Step of EIA | Objective and procedure | Gender inclusion | Stakeholders |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Mitigation | At this stage, the possible preventive, remedial and compensatory measures for each adverse impact are determined and recommended. | <p>The key objectives of gender mitigation are to ensure that the gender impacts remain within acceptable levels or enhance their socio-economic condition. Following are the mitigation hierarchies for deciding measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To avoid or prevent significant impacts on women and address their specific concerns • If not avoided, provide remedial measures for the impacts and specific concerns • Remediate and compensate | Gender specialist, and other stakeholders such as local NGOs, women groups etc. |
| Environmental Management Plan (EMP) | An EMP, also referred to as an impact management plan, is usually prepared as part of the EIA reporting process. It translates recommended mitigation and monitoring measures into specific actions and steps that have to be carried out by the proponent. Depending upon specific requirements, the plan may be included in the EIA report or can be prepared as a separate document. | <p>Gender Management Plan (GMP) is a framework that should be prepared separately and integrated with the EMP for implementation and execution of gender mitigation measures and alternatives. The objectives of a gender management plan are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that gender mitigation measures are properly implemented • To establish schemes and procedures for this purpose • To ensure that proposed mitigation measures comply with the laws and regulations of the host country, if applicable • A backup action plan when unanticipated impacts occur <p>The GMP outlines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A plan for operation or execution of the recommended mitigation plan, including assigning responsibility and timely completion • The detailed estimated costs to execute the gender mitigation plan <p>Benefits: A timely implementation of planned GMP will reduce agitation and conflicts, improve acceptance, help build rapport with local communities, and reduce regulatory roadblocks. It also sets examples for other projects.</p> | Project proponent, local governments, local NGOs and women groups |
| Monitoring | To check effectiveness of implementation of EMP. | <p>Some of the key issues to be considered during monitoring include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a senior official as the focal person for oversight of GMP implementation for coordination with and data management of all stakeholders • To monitor whether implementation of GMP is as per schedule • Monitor gender participation, and grievance disposal (establish a grievance redress cell) • Check the effectiveness of gender-sensitive measures in reducing risks and enhancing benefits of the project for women. | Affected people, project proponent, local governments, NGOs and women groups |

7 CASE STUDIES

The case studies given below demonstrate how projects have been able to balance the needs and interests of women at the planning and project stages with their other goals, resulting in fewer conflicts and better the relationship with local communities. On the other hand, it has been observed that projects in which gender inclusion has not been considered at an early stage fail to develop a rapport with the local communities and are likely to engender more conflict (see *Table 3: Case studies on gender inclusion in EIA processes around the world*).

Table 3: Case studies on gender inclusion in EIA processes around the world

| S. no. | Project | Country | Changes engendered by gender inclusion |
|--------|--|----------|---|
| 1 | Trung Son Hydropower, ThanhHoa province ³² | Vietnam | <p>The active participation of women resulted in significant positive outcomes. Women in Ta Ban village, Trung Son commune (ThanhHoa province), with their knowledge of local environment and ecology, plants, soil and water resources, have meaningfully participated in community consultations.</p> <p>The inputs provided by them during the consultations, contributed to identification of more suitable resettlement areas than the ones initially suggested by the project proponents. This resulted in changing the location of two resettlement areas.</p> |
| 2 | Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) - supported electricity ³³ | Zanzibar | <p>Lack of representation of women during planning and implementation of the project resulted in the dominance of men in decision-making process on electrification. As a result, institutions important to women's productive enterprises (i.e. kindergarten and grinding machine) were not included as targets for electricity supply, despite being close to the electricity grid. Institutions important to men, such as mosques and a fish market (where men gathered), were connected.</p> <p>This example underscores the need to pay close attention to who were included during the decision-making process in a given project, as gender-unaware energy interventions can adversely affect women.</p> |
| 3 | Nam Theun (NT) 2 Hydropower Project ³⁴ | Laos PDR | <p>Gender assessment conducted for the project highlighted that women and girls with limited access to education and off farm employment would face greater risks during the resettlement process and, thus, would require ongoing attention and support.</p> <p>The project's comprehensive environmental and social mitigation design was changed based upon the assessment and required amendments were made accordingly.</p> |

| S. no. | Project | Country | Changes engendered by gender inclusion |
|--------|---|---------|--|
| 4 | Ouarzazate Solar Power Station also called Noor Power Station ²⁸ | Morocco | During the initial assessment stage of the project, it was highlighted that in the Ghassate community surrounding the project, girls and women were lagging behind men in the field of education. This issue was taken up positively by the project proponent and the agency decided to build a secondary level girls' school in the area. This would not have been possible if gender issues had been neglected at the early stage of assessment. |
| 5 | Rampur Hydropower Project ²⁸ | India | The project is located in one of the hilly states in India. The villagers of the locality had to travel 8-10 km to reach the nearest medical facility. Poor transportation facilities added to the challenge. The problem had significant effect on the women in the community, especially during their maternity period. The project proponent provided free medical services and mobile health vans which visit the nearby villages twice a week and provide necessary medical treatment. Women below poverty line and their children were also provided financial assistance during pre-and post-natal periods. |
| 6 | Community-Based Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Project ³⁵ | Nepal | The project, during the appraisal stage, encouraged participation of women. The project aimed at expanding the coverage of improved water supply and sanitation facilities to poor and remote areas, and improving health and hygiene practices related to waterborne and sanitation-related diseases. Some of the key project results were decrease in the time spent by women and girls in transporting water. Latrines were constructed in 44,768 households, of which 8,909 were in ultra-poor households and 354 were school latrines. This contributed to the safety of women and girls. Sanitation coverage among the rural population increased from 20 per cent (2002) to 33.5 per cent (2010). Finally, a total of 690 water users' committees were formed with 52 per cent of women members. The participation of women in decision making in water users' committees contributed to the sustainability of water systems and changed the status of women in the communities for the better. |

ANNEXURE

Areas to be covered under data collection for gender assessment

Broadly speaking, the areas that need to be covered under data collection during the process of EIA are:

- Women's role in the family decision-making process
- Composition of women-headed households
- Economic independence and occupational profile
- Dependency on land and impact of land acquisition
- Land ownership patterns
- Access or dependence on natural resources: If there is dependence on and access to natural resources, then assessment of resources in terms of:
 - (a) Expenditure
 - (b) Substitutes
- Access to common property resources: If there is dependence on and access to community resources, then assessment of community resources in terms of:
 - (a) Distance
 - (b) Accessibility
- Issues on health
 - Health profile (birth rate, mortality rate, etc.)
 - Occupational health
 - Distribution of households by expenditure on health
 - Distribution of households by common diseases
- Issues of girl child (education, health, access to government amenities, challenges etc.)
- Issues of single mothers (composition of families, challenges, livelihood and potential threats etc.)
- Dependency and impact on local or small businesses (includes shops, carts, hawking etc.)
- Accessibility and impact on infrastructure—roads, hospitals, dispensaries, shops etc.
- Perception towards potential benefits in terms of skill and infrastructure development, employment, education, health, cooperatives and other economic opportunities

This list is not exhaustive. It may vary and can be customized as per the local context. While assessing gender issues, gender specialists should arrange meetings at a time convenient for women to attend and in venues where they feel comfortable to engage in discussions.

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Lately, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has unfortunately been reduced to a mere technical process with little imagination utilized in identifying problems or tailoring solutions for them. A perfect example of this straightjacket approach has been the way EIA processes have dealt with issues of gender. Socio-economic emancipation of women must be at the very core of EIA. Many adverse impacts of development projects can be avoided with the full and equal participation of women at all levels because of their uniquely grounded decision-making capacities, organic knowledge of the local topography and ecosystems, and the most direct experience of concerns regarding drinking water, sanitation and health.

This report by CSE seeks to underline the nature and extent of the problem, and to provide a way forward so that countries can benefit from a more wholesome inclusion of gender issues in the processes of EIA.



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