Partnerships for Forests

Catalysing investments in forests and sustainable land use

Social & Gender External Guidance

March 2022

V2.0

Palladium
MAKE IT POSSIBLE

Contents

1. Introduction

1.1. About P4F

Partnerships for Forests (P4F) is a UK Government funded programme that works to catalyse investments in forest partnerships around the world. P4F started operating in 2015 and will run until the end of 2023. The programme's main objective is to address deforestation by working with businesses (mainly in the agriculture and land use sectors) to identify, pilot, and scale business models that reduce deforestation and/or improve land degradation across the tropical forest belt. The programme does this by supporting partnerships between the private sector, public sector, and communities, at a range of stages of maturity.
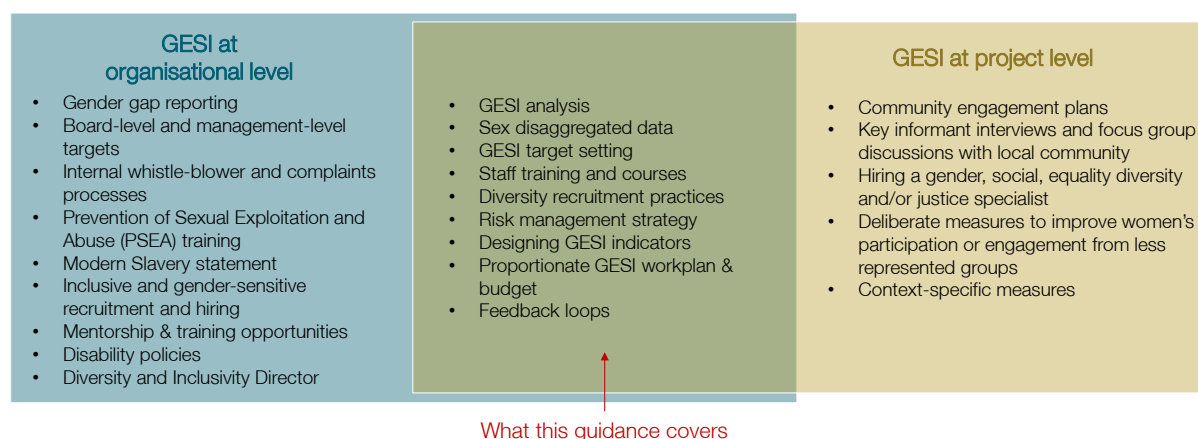
P4F provides support in the form of grants and technical assistance, with the aim to balance risks and generate benefits for all parties. Partnerships are selected based on their land use impact (and expected greenhouse gas impact), fit with our portfolio, business case, level of additionality[1], and their impact on communities. The programme also supports demand side measures that strengthen demand for sustainable commodities and activities to create the right enabling conditions for sustainable investment.

For more information about how the programme operates, please visit our website.

1.2. About this Guidance

This guidance report was written by a team of social and gender experts in P4F to help other organisations increase their ambition on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI). It intends to help organisations make changes at a project level,[2] but certain concepts can be used to improve organisational GESI understanding as well (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. This guidance provides organisations and projects with a starting point for becoming more ambitious on GESI and covers elements relevant for both organisational and project levels

GESI at organisational level
- Gender gap reporting
- Board-level and management-level targets
- Internal whistle-blower and complaints processes
- Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) training
- Modern Slavery statement
- Inclusive and gender-sensitive recruitment and hiring
- Mentorship & training opportunities
- Disability policies
- Diversity and Inclusivity Director

- GESI analysis
- Sex disaggregated data
- GESI target setting
- Staff training and courses
- Diversity recruitment practices
- Risk management strategy
- Designing GESI indicators
- Proportionate GESI workplan & budget
- Feedback loops

What this guidance covers

GESI at project level
- Community engagement plans
- Key informant interviews and focus group discussions with local community
- Hiring a gender, social, equality diversity and/or justice specialist
- Deliberate measures to improve women's participation or engagement from less represented groups
- Context-specific measures

---

[1] Additionality in P4F means that grant and technical assistance must not substitute or replace organisation's core funding, or subsidise activities that private sector companies or other partners should undertake themselves.

[2] A project is defined as a unique, transient endeavour undertaken to bring about change and to achieve planned objectives. It is time-bound and often has a discreet budget allocated to it, in contrast to an organisations' operations budget.

This guidance can be used by large and medium-sized companies, small and medium enterprises, entrepreneurs, local non-governmental organisations, think tanks, and agencies and be adopted to varying degrees of depth.

1.3. UK Legislation

As a UK funded programme, P4F subscribes to UK legislation on gender, labour, and human rights, as well international conventions to which the UK is a signatory. This includes:

- The Equality Act 2010
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Leave No One Behind Commitments
- DFID Policy Paper 'Leave No One Behind' 2017
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Various ILO Conventions and Protocols
- The Gender Recognition Act 2004
- DFID's Strategic Vision for Gender Equality 2018
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The UN Convention on all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- The UN Sustainable Development Goals

The UK Government is a leading donor towards poverty alleviation and invests in programmes that emphasise equitability in all aspects, including gender equality (this includes empowering women and girls, ending violence against women and girls, and eradicating modern slavery from supply chains). This ambition is reflected by UK Government-funded project partners globally and is an area of importance for P4F. Measuring our gender and social impacts holds both P4F and our projects accountable to the 'do no harm' principle and also represents opportunities for businesses to deliver on their Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) commitments (see Section 3.1).

Our original GESI guidance, published in 2016, aimed to ensure all P4F-funded projects were 'doing no harm'. Since then, there has been a shift to encourages partners to take a deliberate approach to improving gender and social impacts of a project or organisation and in so doing so move towards empowerment and transformational change (see Figure 2), and as such, our guidance has been updated.

Figure 2. Best practice categories for GESI

Category	Definition
Empowerment	Organisations and projects that make a deliberate effort to build assets, capacities, and opportunities for women and marginalised groups.
Transformational	Organisations, businesses, or projects that address unequal power relations and seek institutional and societal change to allow different groups to participate equally.

2. Background

2.1. Trends in the sector

In the agricultural sector globally, women make up 40% of the workforce but are often underrepresented in decision making bodies, statistical figures, or market due to institutional and attitudinal barriers. These barriers can include land tenure laws that only ask for men's names; domestic and caring responsibilities that leave women with less time available for education and training; and, uneven literacy and financial literacy rates, which mean some women are less confident about selling/negotiating.

In certain value chains and stages of production, the percentage of women's participation increases, but data is often scarce. In Cote d'Ivoire, for example, no official data is available on the level of workforce participation in the cocoa sector by women, however, anecdotally, women make up a significant proportion of the workforce across the entire supply chain. Despite this, on average, only 5% of cocoa production training attendees are women' (for more information click here).

ESG criteria are now widely used by companies as a way to prove their credentials beyond profitmaking to investors. Environmental criteria demonstrate how a company considers and mitigates its impact on nature. Social criteria examine how it manages relationships with employees, suppliers, customers, and the communities where it operates. Governance deals with a company's leadership, executive pay, audits, internal controls, and shareholder rights. For many of our partners seeking investment, the ability to communicate their social impact can be an important differential between themselves and others in the sector.

2.2. Why investing in social and gender outcomes is good for business

Integrating positive social and gender policies into business is not only an ethical consideration, but also makes good business sense. It is estimated that bringing women's participation in the workforce to the same level as men's would add up to USD28 trillion, or 26%, to global GDP by 2025. In an increasingly competitive global environment, setting a gender and social approach will also help businesses stand out to investors. Research has shown that at an organisational level:

(1) diverse leadership groups always outperform homogenous groups;
(2) organisations that set gender equality goals attract and retain the best talent and reduce the risk of employee turnover; and,
(3) diversity fosters creativity, innovation and helps an organisation create new markets and increase their market share.

2.3. P4F's vision for social and gender impact

P4F sees social and gender impacts as an important element of Forest Partnerships, Enabling Conditions and Demand Side Measures that can both help partners distinguish themselves from other players in the market, and provide them with a social license to operate in the long-term. Planning and implementing social impact policies and activities, and demonstrating their results, can happen at any stage of a business, but can be particularly important at a stage where companies are seeking investment.

Some specific actions that have seen partners improve in this area include:

1) More inclusive governance mechanisms;
2) Gender-conscious contracts with smallholder farmers;
3) Training for women on improved harvesting, processing, and techniques; and,
4) Improved social and gender impact reporting.

Within P4F, other project-specific activities related to GESI have included making smallholder contracts more inclusive by considering the situations and needs of marginalised and female smallholder farmers. For example, Komaza, a Kenyan micro-forestry company supported by P4F, designed new contracts to help female farmers secure profits from the sale of their timber. Since most women rent land in Kenya, this was achieved by getting land owners to sign as part of their contract so that they could not claim fees later on. The organisation has also provided options for the smallholders to be paid via mobile payments (M-PESA) that are more secure particularly for women that might otherwise be forced to split their profits with other members in the community or their family. In another example, Forestwise, an Indonesian organisation that sells illipe nut, supported collectors to adopt new practices for drying nuts that no longer require smoke drying – a common practice that is known to lead to lung problems and asthma particularly for women that are responsible for this activity (for more information link here).

2.4. Designing a gender and social approach for your project

Key to creating a social and gender approach that works for your project or organisation is bringing together a responsible group of staff across all levels of the project, including at the leadership level. This group, which we will call a GESI team, should be mandated to conduct research, make recommendations, create a workplan, set targets/indicators, and be responsible for monitoring and reporting on progress.

The team should: be gender and ethnically diverse, with an aim to have 50% women representation; have allocated time and support from their line managers, and; have pre-approved resources to do things such as hire specialists to support them (particularly if technical reports or research is needed). These arrangements also apply to ensuring diversity in governance arrangements with local communities. For example, in Ghana, as part of P4F's support to Landscape Management Boards, the teams have set targets for the number of women representatives on each level of the boards that were realistic and could grow over time– read more about how this was done here.

For every project, the GESI team needs to have the support of the leadership team to ensure actions and targets have buy-in and are owned by the business's top leaders. This means that leaders are regularly consulted, understand and approve methodologies, and can feed back on recommendations and results put forward by the group. Once the GESI team is assembled, designing a gender and social approach can be broken down into three steps[3]:

---

[3] Derived from Nicole Farnsworth, 'Gender Responsive Budgeting' TEDxPrishtinaWomen talk (2015),

Steps	What this could involve	Examples of organisational actions
Step 1. GESI Analysis	• Desk-based literature review • Adoption of GESI Tools (e.g. gender roles and responsibilities; daily activity clock; value chain actor questionnaires; gender audit survey – a useful manual can be found here). • Stakeholder mapping • Key informant interviews or focus group discussions (staff, in-country teams, suppliers, NGOs, etc.)	1) Identify the scope / framework (e.g. Gender at Work framework, Jhpiego Gender Analysis) that makes sense for your team's interests, resources, time, and context. 2) Map stakeholders impacted by your project – to identify these groups, you can review existing primary and secondary data on the local socio-economic context 3) Identify key questions for the analysis to answer and a rough outline of the final product 4) Design a responsibility assignment matrix (e.g. RACI matrix) with roles and responsibilities for different sections. 5) If relevant, organise trainings with the team members responsible for undertaking interviews, covering interview techniques, introductions/establishing rapport, biases, note taking, recording permissions, etc. 6) Collect primary data through interviews/survey with initially staff across all management levels, and ideally expanding to external community stakeholders. More about qualitative data collection can be found here.
Step 2. Targets	• Workshops to agree a shared vision on what GESI should look like for your project • Gender and social orientation training for staff • Recruitment/diversity targets • Development/review of key policies • Collection of disaggregated data (e.g. sex, disability, ethnicity, age)	1) Using the primary and secondary data collected, identify key challenges and opportunities facing the project and produce a set of recommendations for how the current environment could be improved. 2) Present findings to the leadership team along with proposed next steps (including short-term and long-term targets, potential results indicators, disaggregated data collection, level of resources, etc.) to establish the foundation of your GESI action plan/workplan. A template is provided in **Annex 1**. 3) Agree targets that the project can measure, monitor and report against (a useful guide can be found here). This can include making sure the targets are 'SMART' (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound).
Step 3. Project-specific activities	• Providing costed budget scenarios for GESI activities • Incorporating GESI indicators in a project's monitoring and evaluation plans • Setting up a Whistleblowing mechanism[4] • Regular GESI team check-ins • Inclusive recruitment practices	1) Based on the targets agreed with the leadership team, create and agree a GESI budget and resources needed to complete each activity (see section 2.5) 2) Set up workshops to agree indicators for each activity, process for collecting data, and frequency of collection/presentation of results (section 2.6) 3) Incorporate GESI into you're the project's risk management strategy (section 2.7) 4) Review other areas with potential social or gender impacts that could be improved in the project (e.g. recruitment practices, training) 5) Agree governance structure to review progress across the project's GESI workplan and designate a coordinator to keep track and facilitate progress meetings

Completing these steps will help your project reach the transformational category of GESI action (Figure 2), and in the future, could help the project to unlock unique funding opportunities with both donors and financial institutions.

---

[4] Whistleblowing is an important way to ensure your project is open, transparent, and safe. An internal mechanism allows employees to raise concerns about malpractice, any wrongdoings, any illegal activities (such as fraud). In cases where projects or organisations do not have this set-up, P4F projects can share information about our whistleblower hotline for the duration of their grant however it is encouraged that partners take the opportunity to create one.

Given every project will have a different set of targets, the remainder of this guidance is focused on three areas most GESI teams will need to consider: budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, and risk management.

2.5.   Budgeting

Socially inclusive and gender responsive budgeting involves applying GESI principles to the budgeting process and design for the GESI intervention. This means allocating a sufficient and equitable share of resources to ensure that your project does not perpetuate gender and social inequality. All grants provided by P4F should be designed to deliver economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and *equity* – reflecting FCDO's approach to value for money and additionality of activities.

Developing the project budget is usually part of the initial project design phase but should be reviewed on a regular basis. The P4F team is available to help projects make resourcing decisions on GESI objectives. Note that P4F permits changes to budgets throughout project implementation, so it is never too late to include a social and gender approach within your budget. If your project is receiving a P4F grant, your budget can include GESI costs that are clearly linked to project activities.

The following considerations should be taken into account during the budgeting process:

Project stage	Key considerations
Planning	- Ensure you have time, resources, and capacity to conduct a GESI analysis & needs assessment and factor this time into HR costing in the budget – see Section 2.4. - Related to the GESI analysis and needs assessment, ask yourself: - Who is participating in or influencing decisions on the way the money will be spent? Is this a good representation? Consider whose inputs you will need before you make decisions on the budget, so that the budget process is inclusive. - How long will the GESI assessment take, and when can the data be used to inform budget development? - Using your GESI analysis, do you understand the needs and barriers faced by the social groups that will be affected by the intervention? Have you considered how you will meet or avoid these? - To translate your GESI targets into the budget, you will need to estimate the financial costs of implementing these activities effectively and equitably (here is a useful guide to help you). - Start plotting what activities are needed to meet your objectives and put these into the project workplan - Related to the project team, ask yourself: - Who is going to implement these activities? What positions/roles and how many staff will you require? - Have you benchmarked fair rates/salaries for these positions? - Do you already have this resource in-house or will you need to source external support? - How will expenditure under each budget line affect women, men and other social groups differently?

Implement-ation	At budget implementation stage, there are some considerations that can improve the effectiveness of the planned interventions that you can budget for: • **Participation:** you are less likely to achieve your GESI targets if you have not allocated enough resources to ensure diverse and equitable participation or access. Given barriers and gaps identified in the GESI assessment, do you need to allocate more funds to allow full participation of those most vulnerable/marginalised in the intervention activities? (e.g. fees for participation or covering expenses, language translation, childcare facilities, or disability access requirements). • **Diversity:** Have you ensured there is a balanced and diverse team of personnel at both project management and field/project delivery staff levels? • **Capacity:** Do you need to allocate funds to fill HR or capacity gaps that are barriers to meeting GESI objectives? (e.g. assign responsibility for M&E activities and ensure the individual/team have dedicated time for GESI data collection and have resources to hire a dedicated GESI position). • **Training:** Does your team and other relevant implementing partners have the training to deliver the planned activities? Do you also need to deliver training to beneficiaries to engage them in the project? (e.g. budget for training teams on relevant skills needed to deliver the planned activities or to hire an external GESI expert). • **Monitoring:** Allocate budget for collecting disaggregated data – consider the size and complexity of your stakeholders and interviewees when allocating how much will be needed (e.g. budget to develop and implement an ESG monitoring tool). ○ Will the project conduct community outreach, key informant interviews, focus groups, or other types of workshops throughout implementation? • **Risk management:** If your project risk assessment has identified gender, safeguarding or other social challenges that could hinder delivery or effectiveness of your GESI targets, you can include budget for introducing specific mitigations (e.g. budget to develop or improve a community grievance mechanism).

2.6. Monitoring, evaluation and learning

Setting gender and social targets based on analysis (see Section 3.2) and baseline data will significantly increase your changes of achieving your targets. Incorporating GESI considerations across your project's monitoring plans and budget will allow you to better understand vulnerabilities, successes, issues, and lessons that can improve your operations.

It is important to set targets and monitor changes in social impacts over time. At P4F, we encourage projects to report on all direct actions they have taken to improve the livelihoods and wellbeing of community members. The P4F team has adapted UNDP's Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (link here) to monitor the changes effected by projects (see Table 1). All data should be gender disaggregated at a minimum, but may also be disaggregated for other characteristics like age, disability, socio-economic background and education, where appropriate. Additionally, qualitative information could be collected based on the experiences, attitudes, opinions, and feelings about the changes that have occurred.

An example of how P4F has supported a company to consolidate and improve their impact reporting comes from Veja Shoes, a French shoe company with operations in the Brazilian Amazon. Although the company had previously collected baseline data on the gender and social environment from two communities, they did not have monitoring systems in place to effectively measure changes from the company's actions. With support from P4F, new data collection and monitoring systems were put in place, and a new report revealed the significant impact that Payments for Ecosystem Services had on the wages of local smallholders (you can read the compiled analysis on the company's impact on local livelihoods here).

Table 1. Potential indicators across UNDP's five types of capital (to be disaggregated by gender)

Financial capital   - # of people receiving premium payments (and a description of these payments)   - # of people with new or additional income streams or livelihoods (and a description of this change with testimonials)   - # of individuals with access to additional or new credit for implementing sustainable land use and forest management practices (and testimonials)
Human capital   - # of individuals who have received training (and a description of the training with testimonials from training participants)   - # of individuals with improved access to health or education services (and testimonials from local community members)
Social capital   - # of beneficiaries in the organisation with new or improved access to decision-making spaces (and a description of this change)   - # of beneficiaries in the organisation with improved working conditions (and a description of this change)   - # of people with access to a network of peers designed to improve knowledge sharing or support
Physical capital   - # of individuals directly affected by improvements in infrastructure supporting a sustainable supply chain #   - # of individuals directly affected by improvements in access to clean and affordable energy   - # of individuals directly affected by improvements in communication infrastructure or services and access to information
Natural capital   - # of people benefitting from improved ecosystem services (and a description of this change)   - # of people benefitting from improved access to natural capital (with testimonials and a description of this change)

2.7.   Risk management

To integrate GESI in project activities it is important to apply a gender lens to your due diligence process and risk management strategy. These processes are designed to identify and mitigate weaknesses and vulnerabilities, including those around social inclusion.

When conducting due diligence on partners or suppliers, steps can be taken to ensure that activities will be delivered in a socially inclusive and gender responsive manner. These include:

- Checking partners'/suppliers' policies relating to social impact and the protection of people as part of your due diligence process (e.g. prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), discrimination based on gender) (a practical guide on how to incorporate a gender-lens into due diligence and risk management can be found here);
- Ensuring that all stakeholders are represented in the project preparation and due diligence processes, including those belonging to marginalised groups;
- Prioritising the identification and removal of potential barriers (e.g. literacy, culture, gender and power imbalances, divisions within the community, etc.) to marginalised groups engaging;
- Engaging experts when evaluating activities that have a complex social or gender element, where the scope of work is outside the expertise of your organization.

Steps can also be taken as part of your risk management activities. These include:

- Ensuring safeguarding risks are considered during your assessment – not just practical delivery or operational risks;
- Checking that the impacts of the risks you are assessing include impacts on marginalised groups;
- Considering if all groups have equal access to participate and have been meaningfully included in consultations;
- Managing safeguarding investigations in a way that protects the victim/survivor (a few tools can be found in the RSH Resource Library);
- Tailoring approaches to risk and designing mitigation strategies to reflect how risks can affect people differently based on their gender, disability, age, or education; and,
- Being aware of contexts where women may be disproportionately impacted (both positively and negatively) by your activities and ensuring this is reflected in your risk assessment.

3. Annex 1. GESI Action Plan Template[5]

GESI Action Plan GUIDANCE
Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Action Plan
* This Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Action Plan should mirror the project outputs/activities that form part of your project workplan and that you have listed in your project proposal.
* Per each output/task/activity in your project (to be listed under column A), under column B please identify concrete activities or GESI features that will ensure women's and vulnerable groups' participation and/or benefits.
* You should identify clear targets and indicators for each activity under column C.
* Column D (baseline) should be filled in if and as appropriate: not all tasks/activities and related indicator will have something to be reported as baseline.
* You will then be expected to use this action plan to report and monitor progress against set activities and indicators on a quarterly basis, filling in columns H and I.
* Column G should present whether specific resource allocations have been set / are needed to implement the set activity (this could be a % of an activity line, or a dedicated budget line on the budget template). Resources can represent both Level of Effort (hours or days of experts/time, for a specific GESI expect for example) or other expenses (e.g. training or meeting costs).
* Column F should describe who is the responsible person among the team members to ensure each activity gets delivered. The responsibility should not be limited only to the designated GESI champion, but is expected to be shared across relevant team members.
* You can add as many lines as needed.

Project-specific GESI Action Plan							6-monthly Progress Reporting	
Project Name (if relevant):							**Reporting Quarter:**	
Project Task	GESI Proposed Activities	Indicators	Baseline	Timeline	Responsible person	Resources Required	6-monthly Progress Rating (R/A/G/N.A.)	Detail Progress for the relevant period, focusing on specific outcomes of each activity delivered and explaining rationale for RAG rating