

Gender In SEA and ESIA



Netherlands Commission for
Environmental Assessment

Checklist for a gender inclusive approach to SEA and ESIA



About the checklist

Gender equality is a human right and a condition for sustainable development. Women and men should have equal influence on the decisions that shape their lives and benefit equally from development interventions. Although well-intended, these interventions do not always lead to equal benefits and can even reinforce existing gender inequalities.

The integration of gender into impact assessment is recognised as good practice. It is a prerequisite in international benchmarks such as the IFC Performance Standards. These benchmarks include detailed requirements for inclusive impact assessment. This means that processes should incorporate gender analysis, differentiated between effects on men and on women and define appropriate measures to avoid and mitigate adverse effects.

The NCEA has developed this checklist to promote the inclusion of gender aspects in SEA and ESIA in our work. To find out more about the integration of gender in the various activities of the NCEA, please visit our [website](#).

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1. Gender in EIA/SEA: general questions

A gender inclusive approach is used if answers to the following questions are taken into account for every stage, topic, and stakeholder (group) in the EIA/SEA process and in the proposed project/plan.

- a. What are the differences in participation and influence on decision-making by women and men¹?
- b. What are the differences in benefits and disadvantages for women and men?
- c. Are these differences being monitored (via sex-disaggregated data and data on gender differences)?

For more information on how to answer these questions and how to use that information in diverse types of EIA/SEA programmes, the following sections introduce entry points for gender considerations in diverse stages of the EIA/SEA process ([section 2](#)) and lists of example gender issues for a diversity of themes that can be relevant in EIA/SEA ([section 3](#)).

¹ In a broader approach to gender equality, gender does not only refer to the differences between women and men, but also to other differences including those associated with people's socio-economic group, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, marital status and occupation.

2. Entry points for gender in the EIA/SEA process

Stage	What to do?	Why and how?
Scoping	Identify key gender issues	Use existing gender profiles and data of the country, e.g. from AfDB , Unicef (MENA region), World Bank , FAO (gender & land rights), USAID , the Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI), and the Gender Inequality Index . Consult project/plan documents and key stakeholders. See Examples of gender issues in EIA/SEA for references to sector-specific gender profiles and data.
Terms of Reference	Include a gender specialist as part of the team	Examples of activities and outputs for the gender specialist are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conduct a gender analysis (stand-alone or as part of a broader context analysis); • analyse national policies on gender equality; • develop a gender profile of the area or project/plan; • develop gender-sensitive indicators for monitoring; • identify opportunities for a strengthened gender focus in the EIA/SEA procedure; • identify relevant (local) stakeholders such as women's groups and gender advocacy groups.
	Consider the gender balance of the team	Gender balanced teams are most likely to consider the multitude of perspectives that stakeholders may bring in. In some cultures it is important to have female data collectors to be able to interview women. If it is not easy to find female (or male) team members, consider looking into networks of female professionals.
	Indicate the need to collect gender-specific and sex-disaggregated data	Gender-specific data can be collected on women's and men's work inside and outside of the household, their time use and their decision making. Socio-economic data should be collected in a sex-disaggregated manner, i.e. separately for women and men to see if they have different opportunities and resources resulting in different concerns and priorities.
Baseline data collection	Collect gender-specific and sex-disaggregated data	
Impact identification	Conduct a gender analysis	Gender analysis is a tool for examining differences between women and men in terms of their roles, powers, needs, constraints and opportunities, and the impact of these differences on their lives. Such differences can be examined at all levels (household, community, local and national level). Gender analysis can also be used to look into other diversity factors in societies, such as ethnicity, class or socio-economic conditions. It is conducted by an individual or team with gender expertise as well as technical knowledge of the programme, ideally using local expertise. Gender analysis combines information from various sources: desk research based on existing gender reports, surveys, and/or discussions with key persons, community groups, and government officials. It can be a stand-alone activity or part of a broader situational or socio-economic analysis. Key questions to be answered are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who does what? When, and how much time does it take? (gender division of labour, responsibilities and obligations) • Who has access to what? (means, resources, information and education, services) • Who owns, controls, decides what? (assets, resources, decision-making, participation) • Who needs what? (gendered consumption patterns)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is where? Who goes where? (gendered patterns of the use of public/private space, gendered migration patterns) • Why is it that way? (influencing factors concerning all of the above) • How do law systems, international and national policies, conventions and government practices support the above factors and/or overcome their negative effects?
	Identify the beneficial and adverse impacts on women and men	<p>Based on the gender analysis, the following questions need to be answered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the project/plan affect the factors identified in the gender analysis (positively or negatively)? • How are these factors expected to evolve under alternative scenarios and/or under a 'zero alternative'? • How can the project/plan help to overcome negative effects and enhance positive effects, hence contributing to achievement of project/plan objectives? <p>See Examples of gender issues in EIA/SEA for impacts associated with specific sectors, modules and themes.</p>
Public consultation	Ensure meaningful participation of female and male stakeholders from different socio-economic and user groups	Consider cultural perceptions on men's and women's participation in meetings. Who speaks? Can women and men meet together or would separate meetings better ensure everyone's meaningful participation? Especially if community women are not used or not encouraged to speak, could a women's group be invited so that women can speak with a united voice? Consider appropriate meeting times and locations on the basis of data collected on women's and men's tasks and time use.
Mitigation measures	Include measures to address the identified adverse impacts on both women and men	
Environmental management plan and Social compensation plan	Include a Gender Action Plan (or Gender Strategy)	A Gender Action Plan should describe the current gender situation (based on a gender analysis) and practical proposed actions, based on this analysis, to mitigate adverse gender effects and enhance positive gender effects of the project/plan. It should include clear objectives, indicators and targets. It is important to realize that for executing a Gender Action Plan investment of time, expertise and financial resources is required.
Monitoring and impact measurement	Include gender-sensitive indicators related to the identified impacts	Monitoring and impact measurement: gender-sensitive indicators are indicators that measure the differences in outcomes for women and men. They can be used in monitoring protocols/logical frameworks to ensure that progress reports discuss gender effects of the project/plan. It is not always possible to quantify the results obtained for gender equality. In many cases, a good narrative report of achievements can be more revealing and convincing than a fragmented account in numbers; these often fail to do justice to significant changes in gender relations. Indicators should take this into account.
	Design participatory monitoring mechanisms in which women and men participate	See 'Public consultation' (above)

3.Examples of gender issues in EIA/SEA

The examples below are not complete lists of all relevant gender issues. They serve as inspiration to encourage you to investigate other gender issues that may be relevant in the context of your project. Lists of examples are available for the following topics:

Biodiversity

Climate Change

Coastal zones

Construction work and operation

Energy

Extractive industries

Food and agriculture

Forestry

Hydropower and large dams

Infrastructure and transport

Irrigation and drainage

Migration

Organizations

Resettlement

Sustainable land management

Tourism

Urban areas

Waste management

Water and sanitation

Resettlement

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- Women may require additional space (in size, location and quality) for household and/or 'informal sector' income-earning activities on the home compound.
- A lack of formal land ownership/property rights may prevent women from getting the land and/or compensation that they need.
- Erosion of existing social networks due to resettlement may affect women and men differently because of their roles in (and dependence on) community networks.
- Alternative livelihood options after resettlement may not be equally accessible or beneficial for men and women due to different occupational/educational backgrounds.

More information: see [this article](#) which includes concrete steps for taking gender into account in various stages of resettlement planning.

Construction work and operation [\(back to index\)](#)

- Construction and operational work may create more job opportunities for men than for women, and/or women may get lower salaries.
- Male-dominated construction/operation work often attracts female sex workers and results in high transmission rates of STDs (see [this publication](#) on HIV and EIA).
- Presence of female workers or supervisors requires suitable and separate housing/health facilities to guarantee their safety, health and dignity.
- Women and men may have different preferences in terms of food, housing, recreation, physical exercise etcetera when living on a construction/operational site.

Organizations

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- Cooperation with organizations with a gender policy/strategy (or at least awareness of gender issues) can improve gender inclusiveness and success of a project.
- Organizations with internal gender balance are most likely to integrate women's and men's different perspectives.

Extractive industries

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- Development of extractive industries makes low-wage and informal sector work less profitable and may push women out of the labour force (see [this article](#)).
- Jobs in extractive industries are often male-dominated and the wealth they generate may not be easily accessible for women.
- Extractive industries development often involves land use conversion and may challenge women's or men's land-based tasks such as water/firewood collection.
- Extractive industries are associated with specific health risks for labourers, which may influence men's health negatively.
- Simultaneously, these health risks may increase the workload of women if they are responsible for healthcare of household members.
- Temporary migration of (male) household members for work in extractive industries may increase the workload of women who stay behind.
- In the community where extractive industries are being developed, an influx of male labourers may increase problems of alcohol, violence, prostitution and abuse.
- Evidence shows that community decisions on the use of oil/gas resources are more sustainable if women participate.
- If extractive industries development will increase local availability of energy for the local community, other gender issues may play a role (see [Energy](#)).

More information: see [this tool](#) with a step-wise framework for gender assessment for mining projects.

Energy

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- Rising energy prices may make it more difficult for men and/or women to engage in certain income-generating activities.
- Improved energy access (especially electricity) can improve women's safety (and therefore mobility) at night.

- Improved energy access (for cooking) may save women's time that was otherwise used for gathering firewood etcetera.
- Use of improved energy resources (for cooking) may decrease harmful health effects of indoor biomass burning (causing 3.5 million deaths annually, mostly women).
- Access to energy may improve men's and women's opportunities for entrepreneurship.
- Access to energy may improve men's and women's access to healthcare, education, and information/communication media.

Food and agriculture

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- Women may be less entitled or inclined to adopt sustainable land use options if they have insecure land tenure arrangements.
- Women may have to use less productive lands if they have no formal access or entitlement.
- A lack of formal land ownership may deprive women from agricultural credit because they have no collateral.
- Improved technologies for farming and food preservation may not benefit women if they are less educated or have no access to credit.
- If women are responsible for household food supply, they may benefit greatly from improved access to food or to small-scale production methods.
- Women may benefit less from printed information on agricultural methods and technologies if their literacy is lower than men's.
- Women's specific knowledge due to their activities in e.g. small-scale production, preservation and preparation of food can be useful in interventions.
- Local food security may be harmed if resource use is prioritized towards typical men's farming sectors such as commercial and export farming.
- Women's agricultural tasks - which may include e.g. keeping livestock, sowing, weeding, harvesting, and post-harvest tasks - are easily forgotten.

More information: see [these modules](#) on gender issues in various agricultural activities.

Irrigation and drainage

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- Women may not be equally represented in water users associations and other decision-making bodies, so that their needs are not sufficiently taken into account.
- Female-headed households may get unfavourable time slots for irrigation, sometimes at night, at which they cannot use their right due to a risk of harassment.
- If women are responsible for agricultural water supply, increased water availability near their homes can free time for other occupations.
- On the other hand, increased water supply near the home may decrease women's mobility and social contacts that they had while fetching water.
- Women may not benefit fully from irrigation/drainage technologies if they do not have access to credit.
- If water rights are tied to land rights and women have no formal land ownership, women may face difficulties in accessing water sources.
- Increasing water prices may affect women and men differently if they have different tasks (e.g. cooking, hygiene and subsistence agriculture vs. commercial agriculture).
- (New) irrigation technologies may not be appropriate for use by women, either physically or culturally.

Water and sanitation

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- Women/girls may not be able to benefit from WASH facilities if they are not separate from men's.
- If women are responsible for household water supply, increased water availability near their homes can free time for other occupations.
- On the other hand, increased water supply near the home may decrease women's mobility and social contacts that they had while fetching water.
- Girls may not go to school if there are no (separate WASH facilities and good water supply, particularly after puberty).
- Women may not be able to use remote (water/sanitation) facilities, especially at night, because of fear for attacks/harassment.
- Women may wait until dark to urinate/defecate outside in privacy if they have no sanitation facilities, leading to a risk of harassment.

- In that case, women may drink less during the day to avoid urinating, leading to physical problems such as urinary tract infections.
- If women are responsible for household healthcare, increased health problems due to a lack of water/sanitation facilities may increase the time spent for this task.

Hydropower and large dams [\(back to index\)](#)

- Women and men may depend in different ways on natural resources in the area that will be eliminated, for women e.g. firewood and drinking water.
- Hydropower and dam infrastructure may block women's routes for fetching water and firewood.
- Due to their activities and stronger voice in the community, men may benefit more from dam/reservoir opportunities such as large-scale irrigation and electricity.
- Women can however also greatly benefit from such opportunities for e.g. water collection and electricity for household/income generating activities.

Infrastructure and transport [\(back to index\)](#)

- Infrastructure may support men and women in specific tasks – for women e.g. fetching water and firewood and marketing crops – if they have transport options.
- On the other hand, infrastructure may block traditional routes used by women to fetch water and firewood, and increased transport may form a danger for them.
- Cultural constraints may limit women's access to private and/or public transport.
- Infrastructure development often focuses on roads, without accounting for footpaths that women and children may use more often.
- Women's and men's transport necessities may differ in location (e.g. schools and markets for women) and timing (e.g. rush hour for men, other times for women).

More information: see [this toolkit](#).

Forestry [\(back to index\)](#)

- Women may have knowledge different from men's on forest management due to their use of forest resources for firewood, consumption and medical purposes.
- Depletion of forest resources may increase women's labour and/or costs if they are responsible for fetching firewood.
- On the other hand, conservation measures that bar entrance into forests can have the same effect.
- Communities often have customary rights to forest resources, which may distinguish between use by men and women or use for (men's/women's) different purposes.

Waste management [\(back to index\)](#)

- If waste management at the household/community level is women's responsibility, innovations in waste management may take away one of their income sources.
- On the other hand, waste management innovations may reduce women's exposure to hazardous/toxic materials.
- If women are less educated/literate than men, they may be more vulnerable to health hazards of dealing with waste and require different training on this topic.
- New waste management initiatives may create job opportunities for women and/or men (depending on cultural roles) to be involved in sorting, recycling, reuse.
- Women and men often have different preferences/standards in terms of hygiene and cleanliness, leading to different priorities for waste management.
- A lack of good waste management may lead to health dangers and increase women's responsibilities for household healthcare.

Tourism [\(back to index\)](#)

- Development of the tourism sector creates jobs in sectors that may be considered 'women's jobs', such as cleaning and cooking.

- Tourist sector development may create opportunities for women's income-generating activities in the informal sector, such as production and selling of souvenirs.
- However, formal and informal jobs in the tourism sector are often the ones with lower status and salaries than men's jobs in and outside of this sector.
- In addition, work in the tourism sector is in most cases seasonal and cannot provide an income year-round.
- In some contexts, tourism may encourage women to work as sex workers, with associated health risks.
- Improved education, e.g. on foreign languages, can help women and/or men (depending on their responsibilities) to benefit more from tourism sector development.
- Tourism may lead to increasing prices of electricity, food and water, which can increase women's and men's different expenditures.

Biodiversity

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- Women may have specific knowledge on the use and preservation of diverse plants and trees due to their use for consumption/medicinal purposes.
- Women may have specific responsibilities in biodiversity conservation, such as managing local seed banks.
- Men and women may have different biodiversity conservation priorities; e.g. for women food and medicinal resources, for men timber and other high-value resources.
- If species collected for food/medication etc. become scarce and their collection takes more time, women's time spent in education/occupation may be reduced.

More information: see [this factsheet](#), containing country-specific examples of women's biodiversity knowledge and activities.

Climate change

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- Climate change has negative effects on different resources on which men and women depend, including e.g. firewood and water for women.
- If climate change limits the availability of resources including water and arable land, men's preferences may be prioritized over women's.
- Women and men may have different mechanisms and opportunities for coping with climate change-induced disasters including droughts, floods and cyclones.
- Climate change may affect women's and men's workloads differently, e.g. women's re-planting activities after crop failure and men's maintenance work after cyclones.

More information: see [this publication](#) with factsheets on climate change and gender effects for water, food security, natural resources, energy, and disaster risk reduction.

Migration

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- Where men migrate for employment opportunities, women's responsibilities in financial and social care for the household may increase.
- Labour migration is done by both men and women, but women often travel smaller distances and stay in their home country while men more often go abroad.
- While traveling, women can be exposed to harassment, abuse or trafficking.
- Immigrant women often face more challenges in finding a job than immigrant men, especially where women are perceived to be dependent on men.
- Immigrant men are more often than women perceived as a threat to stability and culture in the host society, which may lead to harassment or fewer opportunities.
- Immigrants may not have a strong social network, which is especially a problem for men and women without a steady income.
- If migrant women succeed in finding a job and building an independent life, this may greatly contribute to their independence and confidence after their return.
- Migration may be more difficult for women than for men in contexts where cultural restrictions for their mobility exist.
- HIV/AIDS prevalence is higher among migrated men and women than among those who stay behind.
- Migration of one or more household members may lead to redefined (gender) roles – either positive or negative – among those who stay behind.

More information: see [this factsheet](#) and [this report](#).

Sustainable land management [\(back to index\)](#)

- Insecure land tenure arrangements may limit women's ability or incentive to make long-term land management decisions.
- Inequitable access to secure property rights may force women to use marginal and highly degradable lands.
- If interaction between men and women is restricted, women's information on land management from (often male) extension officers may be limited.

More information: see [this publication](#).

Coastal zones [\(back to index\)](#)

- Women are often involved in small-scale fishing nearby the shore or in inland waters; men are often engaged in large-scale offshore fishing.
- Where this is the case, women are more vulnerable to coastal problems of pollution.
- Women may need different space, equipment and expertise than men for 'invisible' fisheries activities such as conservation/processing and trading.

Urban areas [\(back to index\)](#)

- Women may have specific needs to be taken into account in urban planning, including shelters, hostels, crèches and separate sanitation facilities.
- Women may rely more heavily than men on public transport options and may culturally require separate public transport facilities.
- Urban areas may have higher numbers of (female) sex workers that require special health and safety facilities.
- Improved market access may greatly enhance women's wellbeing where the majority of market vendors are women.

More information: see [this article](#), which includes an extensive checklist for gender analysis and project design in urban development.