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# A GUIDE TO GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR THE EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES

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**Australian  
Aid**



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**Cover image:** Oxfam Partner, Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association, has been working with resettled communities in Zvishavane including Prietymore Shunya (pictured) to ensure that they are aware of their rights. **Photo:** Abbie Trayler-Smith/OxfamAUS.

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## FOREWORD

Oxfam considers discrimination against women and girls both a cause and a result of the inequality that drives poverty — and we are committed to

change this. We unashamedly fight for the future that we want to see, one free from poverty where everyone can access their full human rights and fulfil their potential. And where equality, particularly between men and women, is much more a reality than it is today.

Much progress has been made over the past 15 years in changing the global policy framework around the extractive industries. However, we continue to see that women enjoy fewer of the benefits

that these industries can bring, while also experiencing more of the negative impacts than men. This is why Oxfam believes that gender justice must be at the forefront of the reform agenda.

And this is why I am excited to present this updated guide to gender impact assessment as a tool for the industry to ensure that women's voices are meaningfully included in project decision-making. This is nothing short of vital if the sector is to realise its ambitions to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Helen Szoke**  
Chief Executive, Oxfam Australia

### ABOUT OXFAM

At Oxfam, we believe all lives are equal and no-one should live in poverty. We join forces with people who share this belief, to empower communities to build better lives for themselves. Oxfam is there, on the ground, not only to save lives in times of crisis, but also to develop lasting solutions. Our work spans wide because there are many causes of poverty. That's why we're also in front of decision-makers, governments and corporations, and speak out on the big issues. Together, we are tackling poverty by changing minds, systems and lives.

### ABOUT OXFAM'S EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES WORK

For nearly 20 years, Oxfam has worked to right one of the world's biggest wrongs: countries that are rich in natural resources are often poor and suffer from high rates of inequality, corruption, human rights abuses and environmental degradation.

The *Extractive Industries Global Program Strategic Plan 2016–2019*<sup>1</sup> guides our work. This plan unifies Oxfam's work on extractive industries across the Oxfam confederation under a common set of goals and objectives.

Our focus is to ensure:

- governments and companies increase financial transparency and pro-poor accountability for extractive industries revenue generation and expenditure;
- governments and companies adopt and implement laws and policies respecting Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC);
- companies respect and governments protect civil society space and the human rights of communities impacted by extractive industries operations; and
- gender justice becomes a central issue in global extractive industries reform efforts and women's rights are more progressively realised within the sector.

We work with partners in more than 30 countries across Africa, Asia, the Americas and the Pacific to achieve these goals.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

If the extractive industries are to deliver on their aim of contributing to sustainable development, it is vital that they work to realise women's rights and gender equality. A gender impact assessment is a tool that can help them do just that. By undertaking gender impact assessments, mining, oil and gas companies can:

- ensure that their activities respect the rights of women and men;
- promote women's empowerment and participation in community decision-making processes;
- identify and mitigate potential impacts; and
- increase the benefits of mining, oil and gas projects.

A gender impact assessment can also help companies to gain and maintain a "social licence to operate" with impacted communities and avoid conflict and costly shut-downs.<sup>2</sup>

While some progress has been made in recent years, the extractive industries continue to undermine women's rights and contribute to gender inequality, which hampers the development potential of the sector. Oxfam's work shows that large-scale mining, oil and gas projects affect women and men differently, and that women often bear the brunt of the negative impacts.

This is because the roles that women and men play vary in all societies, the assets that they can claim as their own differ and the rights they enjoy are not the same. These gendered divisions make women more vulnerable to changes caused by large-scale projects. For example, women's roles in many remote and rural communities mean that they are more dependent than men on resources such as water, food, forest products (medicinal plants for example), fodder and fuel wood found in the local environment. Women also tend to receive few, if any, of the direct benefits of large-scale mining, oil and gas projects, such as compensation for land or employment. As such, the extractive industries often create — and exacerbate existing — gender inequalities in the communities that host them.

But it doesn't have to be this way. Companies can pre-empt and avoid negative impacts if they are identified through a careful and thorough gender impact assessment as part of their community due diligence processes. Carrying out a thorough gender impact assessment involves including women in an early phase, before the beginning of the project cycle, in a participatory fashion. A gender impact assessment should prioritise the needs, interests, experiences and perspectives of women from communities surrounding a project.

A gender impact assessment identifies the likely impacts an extractive industry project will have on women, men, girls and boys, and how these may alter the roles of — and relationships between — these categories of people in project-affected

communities. An impact assessment can also identify opportunities for companies to have a positive impact for both women and men, adding value to a company's community development investments.

A gender impact assessment aims to:

- understand the many causes of vulnerability and marginalisation in communities, including gender;
- understand how an extractive industry project will impact on the rights of women, men, girls and boys and how negative impacts can be avoided;
- inform the design of gender-responsive company-community consultation and decision-making processes, including identifying barriers to women's participation;
- inform decision-making on community development projects or compensation packages so these address women's practical gender needs (to help their current activities) and strategic gender interests (to achieve greater equality in private and public spheres), as well as men's needs and interests; and
- involve women and men in project assessment, decision-making and planning.

This guide advises mining, oil and gas companies on how they, or their consultants, can undertake a gender impact assessment. It:

- describes some important principles and approaches that should underpin a gender impact assessment;
- provides a framework for companies to identify, understand and respond to the gender impacts of an extractive industry project; and
- outlines some key concepts, definitions and case studies.

Oxfam hopes that community-based organisations, women's rights organisations, researchers and others will also use this guide to identify and understand the gender impacts of extractive industry projects. Together we hope to influence mining, oil and gas companies to integrate gender considerations into their work and the sector more broadly to work towards gender equality.

## 2. THE GENDERED IMPACTS OF MINING, OIL AND GAS PROJECTS

Oxfam's work shows that the impacts of mining, oil and gas projects are not gender neutral. For example:

- Companies often fail to adequately consult with women when negotiating access to land, compensation or benefit-sharing agreements — this can disempower and disadvantage women, and may also undermine traditional decision-making structures.
- The payment of compensation or benefits often goes to men as the heads of their households or on behalf of their families and communities. This denies women access to and control over the financial benefits of mining, oil and gas projects. In turn, this encourages women's economic dependence on men, exacerbating existing inequalities.
- Extractive industry projects can force people off their land, leading to loss of land-based livelihoods. This can increase workloads for women in providing for their families where women are traditionally responsible for meeting the subsistence needs of families and are no longer able to do so.
- Extractive industry projects can cause a shift away from a traditional subsistence economy to a cash-based economy. This can lead to the loss of traditional values and way of life, which can then diminish women's traditional status in society and undermine their productive and leadership roles.
- Mining, oil and gas projects often cause damage or restrict access to land and pollute or deplete water sources. This can undermine women's capacity to provide food and clean water for their families, and subsequently lead to an increase in their workload because they have to work harder, longer or further from home to access water, food, forest products, fodder and fuel wood. When their previous livelihoods are no longer available or viable, women may resort to employment that is abusive or exploitative, such as commercial sex work.
- Men gain employment in mine, oil and gas projects and withdraw their labour from traditional subsistence activities. This can result in an increased work burden for women who become solely responsible for subsistence activities and providing for families, and can force women to become economically dependent on men and the income derived from formal employment. It can also result in the traditional roles of women being devalued.
- Extractive industry projects can trigger the influx of a transient male workforce — this can lead to increased alcohol use, trafficking of women for sexual exploitation, sexually transmitted diseases, HIV and AIDS, and violence against women, which can make women feel and be less safe in their homes and communities.
- Pollution from extractive projects and stress from relocation can lead to chronic illnesses among family members, particularly children and the elderly, increasing their care needs and women's unpaid care work.
- Resettlement disconnects people from their traditional support networks in the community, including informal conflict resolution mechanisms. This tends to have disproportionate impacts on women, who may be dealing with a range of other impacts such as increased financial dependence on men and household conflict and violence.<sup>3</sup>

### WHY ARE THE IMPACTS OF MINING DIFFERENT FOR WOMEN AND MEN?

The impacts of mining are gender differentiated primarily because women and men play different roles in households and communities in almost all societies. They have access to different resources and control of different assets, as well as different rights and responsibilities. Even among women in a community, roles, positions and status vary according to age, income, ethnicity and caste grouping. Consequently, women's capacity to seize the opportunities provided by new large-scale extractive projects vary, as do their abilities to cope with the risks and fall-outs from these developments.

Even a well-intentioned project can inadvertently and fundamentally change gender roles and relations. For example, extractive companies often consider men as the "head of the household" even though their role within the household may be limited to earning cash incomes. As such, men are typically paid compensation or benefits on behalf of the family. Men also more frequently gain employment in the extractive industries. Women typically have primary responsibility of care for children and the elderly, as well as of smaller livestock or food gardens for primary subsistence. In many poorer families, women and girls also fetch water and collect wood for fuel.

## CASE STUDY: WOMEN'S UNPAID CARE WORK IN SOUTH AFRICA

The South African gold mining industry is facing a series of massive class action lawsuits from many thousands of current and former mine workers, mostly male, with silicosis, a lung disease caused by breathing in silica dust. Silicosis clearly has a devastating impact on those people with the disease. It also has a devastating impact on the typically poor families and communities that send people to work in the mines -- this impact is strongly gendered. While mine workers experience the obvious impacts of ill health and absence from work, women experience different and significant impacts. It is women who take care of the sick at considerable personal and financial expense. Women have been forced to assume a heavy and unequal responsibility for care work because of widespread industry failure to protect mine workers.<sup>4</sup>

Extractive industry projects commonly destroy or restrict access to land and pollute or deplete water sources. As vital resources become scarcer, women and girls have to work harder to fulfil their responsibilities, reducing the time they can allocate to income-generating or community activities. All of this ultimately increases women's economic dependence on men and reduces their decision-making power within households, causing a shift in power relations that further tips the balance of power away from women.

In assessing social impacts, experts all too often tend to see "the community" as a homogeneous unit, without considering the differences in roles, rights, needs and interests, and asset ownership between women and men. Such implicit assumptions result in the production of knowledge on social impacts that claims to be universal and objective, but which is in reality only based on men's lives. A gender impact assessment can help companies to better understand the potential impacts of their operations and develop plans to avoid or mitigate any negative impacts.

## WHEN SHOULD A GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT BE UNDERTAKEN?

A gender impact assessment can be undertaken at any point in the lifecycle of a project, from exploration through to operation and closure. However, it is most useful when it is brought in at the early stages of a development so that project design and management plans can be adapted based on the assessment. Companies and consultants can undertake a gender impact assessment as part of or alongside an environmental and social impact assessment, which is required under most national legislation for large-scale extractive projects, as well as by international financial institutions and international standards. A human rights impact assessment and other social risk assessments should always include an assessment of gender impacts. A gender impact assessment can also be used when planning or reviewing company-community benefit-sharing agreements, community development plans or company-community consultation and decision-making mechanisms.

# 3. A FRAMEWORK FOR GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

By publishing this guide, Oxfam aims to support companies to conduct gender impact assessments to overcome the persistent and structural gender inequality that exists both within the sector and is exacerbated by extractive industry projects. Certainly, gender impact assessments can help companies to gain and maintain a social licence to operate, avoid conflict and costly shut-down, and ultimately add value to a company's business and community development

investments. That said, it is critically important that gender impact assessments focus on safeguarding the rights and interests of women and men from affected communities and not just on managing risks for the company. A focus solely on company risk management may be counterproductive as a failure to understand and address a project's gender impacts is likely to lead to reputational, legal and other risks.<sup>5</sup>

The United Nations Framework on Business and Human Rights sets out the obligations of business enterprises, namely that they respect human rights and avoid contributing to human rights harm by exercising "human rights due diligence". In other words, companies need to be able to "know and show" that they respect human rights by having policies and processes in place to identify, prevent, mitigate and enable remediation (e.g. via grievance mechanisms) of human rights impacts.<sup>6</sup> A gender impact assessment is a vital component of this due diligence process.

A gender impact assessment should not rely too heavily on desk research or interviews with government officials and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Although governments and NGOs will offer unique perspectives, they are not substitutes for strong community engagement. Community engagement must aim for a range of views, and include women, rather than relying on community representatives or elders, who are commonly men.

A gender impact assessment identifies the likely impacts an extractive industry project will have on women, men, boys and girls, and the relationships between them, in mine-affected communities. Its basis is a gender analysis that explores the relationships between women and men in society, and the inequalities in those relationships, by asking: Who does what? Who has what? Who decides? How? Who gains? Who loses? And: Which men? Which women?<sup>7</sup>

There are numerous frameworks and tools for conducting a gender analysis and gender impact assessment.<sup>8</sup> These frameworks have emerged from gender and development theory and practice, and all have their uses and limitations. The framework suggested in this guide pulls together elements from several frameworks and provides examples of how they can be used to understand the gender impacts of a mine, oil or gas project.

## 3.1 PRINCIPLES AND APPROACH

The principles that underpin a company's approach to gender impact assessment are as important as the framework and tools used to conduct the assessment. A gender impact assessment is — or should be — a tool with enormous transformational potential. It is much more than just a "technical fix". It can give

voice to women's perspectives, needs and interests, and can help to address power imbalances between companies and communities, and within communities.

Therefore, the following principles should underpin company approaches to gender impact assessment.

- Participatory: participation is a process of collective analysis, learning and action. A gender impact assessment that is not participatory will not be able to identify the likely impacts an extractive industry project will have on women, men, boys, and girls, and the relationships between them, in mine-affected communities. A participatory process can encourage consensus-building between women and men. Care should be taken to:
  - ensure that meetings and processes are timed appropriately to allow for women's and men's participation;
  - include processes such as interviews, focus groups and meetings that engage women separately from men — held alongside community meetings that involve both men and women — to ensure that women can freely express themselves;
  - ensure that language and information materials are accessible to women;
  - include female facilitators and interpreters in project teams;
  - facilitate feedback sessions to women separately and to women and men together and ensure that women are involved and participate in the review of findings and analysis;

- involve representatives of different cultural, ethnic and socio-economic groups from within the community; and
  - identify practical and cultural barriers to women's participation and ways to overcome these. For example, the company could consider providing childcare services or making sure the space provided for meetings is child friendly; and
  - identify any safety risks related to women's participation and implement ways to mitigate these risks.
- Focus on the most marginalised: those individuals and groups of people who are marginalised are most likely to bear the brunt of any negative impacts of a mining, oil or gas project and receive few benefits because their voices and perspectives have not been heard in decision-making forums. A focus on the most marginalised will lead, in many contexts, to a focus on women. The question to ask next is "which women?" and to consider other factors such as indigeneity or income/poverty that may also contribute to people's marginalisation and exclusion.
  - Human rights compatible: the process guiding a gender impact assessment and the outcomes from it must be consistent with international human rights standards. A rights-based approach requires the process to be based on inclusion, participation, empowerment, transparency, attention to vulnerable people<sup>9</sup> and non-discrimination.
  - Transparency: this is of critical importance to ensure trust in the gender impact assessment process. This means that all people from a project-affected community — including those not directly involved in the gender impact assessment — trust that the outcomes are fair. Transparency requires that information on the gender impact assessment process (including who is leading it, how people can get involved or share their views, and actions committed to by the company) is communicated widely and in various forms, recognising differing levels of literacy among community members.
  - Regular and proactive use of the information gained to improve the overall project outcomes: a gender impact assessment should not be a tick-box exercise, but an opportunity to shape ongoing company-community relations.

strong communication skills, gender analysis experience and a commitment to participatory processes. The best facilitator is someone who is trusted and respected by both the company and community. Effort should be taken to prioritise the inclusion and leadership of women in the assessment process.

Companies should not view all women and all men as homogenous groups. Instead, companies need to seek out and understand the different perspectives, needs and interests of young women and old women, women with a disability, women from minority ethnic groups, and young men and old men, men with a disability, men from minority ethnic groups, and so on. Companies need to look at potential overlapping forms of discrimination that may mean that some people are more likely to suffer the negative impacts of an extractive industry project than others. For example, an indigenous woman faces different forms of discrimination to a non-indigenous woman; a woman with assets and title to land faces different forms of discrimination to one without these. Companies should ask: "Which women and which men are set to lose and set to gain from this project?"

A gender impact assessment is an opportunity — along with other impact assessment processes and company-community consultation forums — for community members to learn more about an extractive industry project and what potential impacts the project may have on them.

Companies will need to invest time and resources to ensure a good gender impact assessment process. They should ensure that the process is led by a skilled facilitator who has

Too often, Oxfam hears from extractive industry companies that “local culture” prevents them from including women in company-community consultation. However, culture can be used as an easy excuse to discount the experiences and perspectives of women. In doing so, consultation processes can exacerbate any existing gender inequalities in project-affected communities by contributing to the exclusion of and discrimination against women.

Culture is critical in shaping gender roles in any given context, determining how society values the opinions and work of women and men, and creating barriers or opportunities to realising women’s rights. Culture can offer women and men a source of strength, empowerment and social wellbeing, which can be drawn on for positive changes towards achieving gender justice. All cultures change over time, including in response to a variety of external influences, and within a single cultural context there is often a diversity of views about what that culture is or should be. Therefore, companies should ask themselves whose version of “culture” they are listening to and whose interests are being represented (and excluded). Are they listening to the views of women when it comes to culturally justified discrimination and exclusion of women? What are the social norms that may exclude women from public life?

## 3.2 A GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

The proposed framework for gender impact assessment has the following four steps:

- Step 1: collect baseline information about the community impacted by the extractive industry project.
- Step 2: discuss and analyse the information collected with women and other members of the community.
- Step 3: plan and agree to actions to avoid risk and have a positive impact.
- Step 4: review and undertake ongoing consultation with women and other members of the community.

### Step 1: Baseline

A gender impact assessment should start with a baseline study. This involves developing a profile of the socio-economic conditions of the households and communities affected by a mine, oil or gas project and identifying all potentially impacted people. A baseline study would typically include demographic and economic information, including income and poverty levels. This information should be disaggregated by sex, age, ethnicity, indigeneity and any other form of identity or marginalisation relevant to the community.

If a gender impact assessment is to identify the impacts a mining, oil or gas project will have on women, men, boys and girls, and the relationships between them, it is important to understand who does what in the community, and who has access to and control of resources and benefits in that community. A baseline study should therefore seek to understand the gender division of labour (or women’s and men’s roles and responsibilities) and develop an “access and control profile” (see page 11) in addition to collecting basic socio-economic data.

### Gender division of labour

The template below allows the gender division of labour to be mapped. Its basis is in understanding women’s “triple roles”, namely reproductive (or care) work, productive work (which is income-generating) and community-focused work. While both women and men may engage in reproductive, productive and community work, different value is attached to each type of work. Reproductive work, most of which is typically performed by women, is often unpaid and undervalued, and women’s paid work may be less visible and less valued than men’s.

Information on the gender division of labour should consider age and gender factors (that is, girls/boys, adult women/men, and elderly women/men), how much time each activity requires, if the activity is seasonal, and where the activity takes place. The location where the activity takes place (for example, in the household, fields or outside of the community itself) is important to understand because it has implications for women’s workloads and safety — for example, if women must travel long distances from home to do work.

The template can be adapted depending on how it is being used. For example, if using at a household level this can be included in household surveys or if using as part of a facilitated group discussion it can be used to guide discussions on who generally does what in a community.

GENDER DIVISION OF LABOUR TOOL						
	WOMEN/ GIRLS	TIME (HOURS PER DAY AND SEASONAL VARIATION)	ACTIVITY LOCATION	MEN/BOYS	TIME (HOURS PER DAY AND SEASONAL VARIATION)	ACTIVITY LOCATION
Reproductive/care activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- care of children and elderly or sick family members</li> <li>- subsistence farming</li> <li>- household food collection, preparation and cooking</li> <li>- water collection</li> <li>- fuel wood collection</li> <li>- fodder collection and care of livestock</li> <li>- washing clothes, cleaning and repair</li> <li>- other</li> </ul>						
Productive activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- fishing</li> <li>- cash crops (producing food other than for household use)</li> <li>- selling goods at market or from the home</li> <li>- formal (paid) employment</li> <li>- informal income-generating activities such as paid labour and services</li> <li>- other</li> </ul>						
Community (or socio-political) activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- maintenance of community infrastructure (such as water resources or education facilities)</li> <li>- participation in community meetings</li> <li>- political organising</li> <li>- community event organising (such as cultural or religious ceremonies and celebrations)</li> <li>- other</li> </ul>						

The activities included in the table are provided as examples only. Depending on the local context, activities may need to be considered in greater detail at the level of “sub-activities”, for example, clearing land, preparing fields, planting crops, weeding, watering and harvesting, rather than just “subsistence farming” or “cash cropping”. The degree to which women and men cooperate in performing activities, and how, will be revealed by this more detailed analysis.

The gender division of labour has implications beyond who does what in the community. For example, it gives companies

a better understanding of the limited time women may have to participate in company-community decision-making processes, or if some times of the year are better than others for company-community decision-making processes (for example, outside peak harvest times). It may also provide an insight into power relations in the household and community — for example, women who earn an income may have more influence over household decision-making. Further, women’s community work may be focused on managing community assets while men’s community work may focus on political activities that enhance men’s power and prestige.

### THREE COMMON MISTAKES IN UNDERSTANDING WOMEN IN COMMUNITIES

Some gender impact assessment experts treat the entire household as a homogeneous unit where everyone has equal power, rights and responsibilities, and the same roles. This is incorrect.

To assess the impacts of an extractive project, it is important to understand how “the household” functions; that is, the activities, roles and contributions made by individuals comprising the household.

Second, some gender impact assessment experts have pre-conceived assumptions about men’s and women’s roles; men are considered the “breadwinners” and women as “mothers/carers”. However, these views fail to consider, in the rural context of developing countries, the fact that many women work as farmers or act in other ways as the primary subsistence providers. Even where women are engaged in paid work, assumptions are often made that women are primarily home-makers.

Third, women-headed households frequently do not receive due consideration in a gender impact assessment, even though it is well known that many extractive industry projects cause increased in- or out-migration of men, leading to changes in the existing roles of women and men in host communities.

#### Access and control of resources

The differences between women’s and men’s access to and control of resources are a potential indicator of the power imbalances between them. Women often have access to resources, such as land, but may not have control over their use. They may be responsible for producing food crops on land that is owned and controlled by their husband or other male

relative. The access and control profile is concerned with both resources available to women and men, and the benefits that come from the use of these resources. So, for example, if land is sold, it is important to understand who has access to and control of the money received from the sale of that land, as well as who had access to and control of the land before it was sold.

### CASE STUDY: IMPACTS OF MINING ON ACCESS TO RESOURCES IN EASTERN INDIA

In India, women own only about 10% of the land even though they represent a large proportion of rural labourers, particularly in the farming sector. Their ability to perform this work has been significantly affected by large-scale mining projects, which have resulted in loss of agricultural land, overall environmental degradation and fewer livelihood resources for subsistence communities. The in-flow of cash incomes also create new gender inequalities. The monetising of the local economy by a new mine tends to put women in lower status jobs or render them less economically active because traditional systems of subsistence and livelihoods reliant on natural resources are no longer available or feasible, or become devalued in the community.<sup>10</sup>

When developing the access and control profile, companies should keep in mind that:

- access to a resource means that someone can use that resource; and
- control is the power to decide how a resource is used and who can use it. The person who controls a resource can decide, for example, if it can be sold.

A series of facilitated discussions with members of the community that focuses on understanding the perspectives of women should first identify assets and resources in the community, and then explore who accesses and controls these assets and resources. The following questions are designed to guide these discussions.

- What resources do men/women require to fulfil their roles and responsibilities?
- Who has access to these resources — for example, exclusively women or men; mainly women or men; or women and men equally?
- Who controls these resources?
- How is the project likely to affect assets and resources in the community?
- How is the project likely to affect women’s/men’s access to and control over these assets and resources?<sup>11</sup>

ACCESS AND CONTROL PROFILE				
	ACCESS		CONTROL	
	WOMEN	MEN	WOMEN	MEN
<b>Community and/or household resources</b> - land (field, forest) - water - equipment - community infrastructure - labour - cash - bank accounts - social services - legal services - other				
<b>Community (or socio-political) activities</b> - income for essential family needs - income for discretionary spending - royalties/compensation - decision-making authority - other non-cash assets - opportunities for education/knowledge-building - status or prestige - other				

The access and control profile should consider which women and which men (for example young or old, indigenous or those from poorer families) have access to and control of the resources and benefits identified. The access and control profile should also identify which (if any) institutions control or mediate access to community resources – for example, land user groups or government departments – in addition to individual men or women.

The resources and benefits included in the table are provided as examples only. Those undertaking an assessment should identify the resources available in a particular community in detail. Finally, the resources that an extractive industry project may want to access, such as land, water or labour, should also be identified, along with who from the community would benefit from this access.

## Step 2: Dialogue and analysis

Step 2 builds on what was learnt about a community through the baseline study and begins to develop an understanding of the likely impacts of an extractive industry project on women and men, and the relationship between them, in project-affected communities. The basis for this stage of the gender impact assessment is dialogue with women and men from the impacted community, and joint analysis.

The dialogue and analysis can form around four key issues. These are:

1. Understanding the structural and institutional causes of gender inequality and women’s marginalisation.
2. Understanding the barriers to women’s participation in decision-making processes and how these could be overcome.
3. Understanding women’s practical gender needs and strategic gender interests and how the extractive industry project might undermine or support women to realise these.

4. Identifying project impacts and ways to avoid or minimise negative impacts.

These four issues or focal points for dialogue and analysis are not mutually exclusive. There will be areas of overlap between them. Dialogue and analysis should be an iterative process where issues are revisited or reconsidered as further information emerges through the dialogue and analysis. This should continue through the life of the project and not end after it has been approved. Depending on the local context, and the perspectives of women from the community affected by the project, other issues may need to be considered at this stage of the gender impact assessment.

### Structural and institutional factors

The underlying causes of gender inequality and women’s marginalisation are found in most, if not all, institutions in society – this includes the family, community, religion, market and state. Each of these may discriminate against women (deliberately or not) and perpetuate gender inequality. Through their interactions with these institutions, mining, oil and gas companies may inadvertently condone or tolerate discrimination against women. An institutional analysis seeks to understand the broader factors (or systemic causes) that contribute to gender inequality, and identify how a company’s interactions with relevant institutions could help them to better serve the interests of all women and men from communities affected by oil, gas and mining projects. Many institutions also provide important support networks for women – an institutional analysis should understand how.

The starting point is for the company and the affected community members to identify relevant institutions. Relevant institutions could be those that approve or permit extractive operations; facilitate company-community consultation, decision-making and dispute resolution processes; provide security to project areas; implement corporate-funded community development programs; or are part of the extractive project’s supply chain, such as local businesses.

INSTITUTIONS	EXAMPLES
Family	Household/extended family
Community	Community decision-making bodies such as assemblies, councils or tribunals, community-based service providers, land or water user groups, women’s groups
Market	Co-operatives, local firms and small businesses, multinational firms, state-owned enterprises, unions, private security providers
State	Government (executive and legislative), bureaucracy, military, police, courts
Religion	Faith-based institutions

An institutional analysis should consider the following questions for each relevant institution via a series of facilitated discussions with members of the community. These discussions should focus on understanding the perspectives of women.

Whose interests does the institution serve, and as a result, who gains and who loses (which women and which men)?

If these institutions are to serve the interests of all women and all men in the community (or all their own members) what needs to change?

- The institution's priorities and objectives?
- The formal and informal rules that govern how decisions are made and by whom?
- The way that decisions are implemented?
- How resources are allocated and used?
- Who does what in the institution?

How might the company's interaction with the institution exacerbate gender inequality and women's marginalisation?

What could the company do differently to ensure that the relevant institution better serves the interests of all women and all men from the project-affected community?

Here are some examples of how extractive industry companies can positively influence relevant institutions:

- Insist that government-sponsored community consultation processes deliberately seek out women's active participation even if that is not usual practice.
- If community decision-making bodies such as local assemblies prioritise men's interests over women's, actively seek out women's leadership groups and offer them the same level of recognition as more formal decision-making bodies.
- Ensure that state providers of project security such as the police act in ways that protect and promote human rights, including the rights of both women and men to exercise freedom of association and peaceful assembly, and to move from one place to another.

While companies cannot be expected to change all institutions in society, they should not underestimate the power they have to positively influence those with whom they have important relationships.

The second aspect of the institutional analysis requires companies to identify institutions and networks that provide support for women, and to consider how an extractive industry project might support or disrupt them. Such institutions and networks may include extended family groups, faith-based groups, healthcare providers or agricultural extension workers and local "change agents" working to promote women's rights and gender equality.

Which institutions and networks provide support for women?

How might an extractive industry project support or disrupt these institutions?

What impact will these disruptions have on women and how could this be prevented or mitigated?

### Women's participation in decision-making processes

It is vital to understand who makes decisions in households and the community, who is excluded and why, and how those who are typically excluded or marginalised from community decision-making processes can be included. As such, companies should develop strategies to address barriers to women's participation.

A series of facilitated discussions with members of the community that focus on understanding the perspectives of women should explore how people are involved in household and community decision-making processes, and how they would like to be involved in future decision-making processes with the company. The analysis seeks to better understand power dynamics in the community and home. The following questions are designed to guide these discussions.

#### HOUSEHOLD

- Which decisions are made at the household level?
- Who makes these decisions? Who has the power to make these decisions?
- Who influences the choices made in these decisions?
- Who benefits from these decisions and how?
- Who misses out? What effect does that have?

#### COMMUNITY

- Which decisions are made at the community level?
- What issues are women responsible for making decisions about?
- How are these decisions made?
- Are there issues women are not able to make decisions about? Who makes these decisions?
- If women (or some women, such as young women) are excluded from decision-making processes, or if they are only able to participate in certain ways, why is this so?
- How would women like to be involved in company-community decision-making processes?
- What barriers might need to be overcome to enable women to participate in company-community decision-making processes?

This analysis can inform the design of company-community consultation, engagement and decision-making plans. It can also inform decisions about compensation payments and livelihood restoration programs. It should also inform how a company implements its commitments to Free, Prior and Informed Consent.

Oxfam defines Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) as the principle that Indigenous Peoples and local communities must be adequately informed about projects that affect their lands in a timely manner, free of coercion and manipulation, and should be given the opportunity to approve or reject a project prior to the commencement of all activities. FPIC processes must be ongoing. Project developers should facilitate community participation in decision-making throughout the life of the project, and communities should have the opportunity to give or withhold their consent at each phase of project development where changes to project design entail potential impacts on communities.

FPIC is established as a right for Indigenous Peoples under international law and is emerging more broadly as a principle of best practice for all project-affected people. Consistent with the human right to non-discrimination, FPIC is a right of both indigenous women and men.<sup>12</sup>

## CASE STUDY: PROMOTING WOMEN'S INCLUSION IN DECISION-MAKING

A mining company operating in the Savannakhet Province of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) established a community development scheme to promote community decision-making, planning and management of development projects in communities impacted by the mine. The scheme established agreements between the mine and surrounding villages, each of which was required to set up a dedicated committee to manage funds and make decisions. To include women in decision-making, the scheme required the committee comprise an equal number of male and female representatives. For some women, the scheme has provided a first opportunity for village representation.

While the scheme has met a number of women's strategic needs, it has some limitations. Community members have said that it is more difficult for women to participate in the committee due to their roles and responsibilities in the family and community. The company does not have strategies in place to provide women with relief from their day-to-day responsibilities to enable their participation. In addition, while the community development scheme is committed to gender inclusion, gender is not applied as an explicit analytical tool for program planning or evaluation, or within the operation's broader program of community engagement and development.<sup>13</sup>

### Women's practical gender needs and strategic gender interests

Companies often make important contributions towards the development needs of local communities. This analysis is designed in part to ensure that women's views are heard and prioritised in the planning of development activities and that the wide range of women's needs and interests are identified, rather than only a narrowly defined set of needs.

Companies must understand two key concepts:

- Practical gender needs are those things that women (and men) require to undertake their everyday activities or fulfil their responsibilities, according to traditional gender roles or division of labour.
- Strategic gender interests are those things that enable women (and men) to transform existing power imbalances, leading to greater equality between women and men.

It is not always possible or desirable to make the distinction between practical gender needs and strategic gender interests as these often form part of a continuum, or meet both ends. For example, a woman's ability to earn a wage may mean that she can provide for her family (which might be a practical gender need), but also strengthens her influence over household decision-making (a strategic gender interest). What is important is that both the immediate needs of women and those things that might help women challenge gender inequalities are identified.

The aim is to understand women's practical gender needs and strategic gender interests, and identify how the mine, oil or gas project might undermine or support women to realise these. An example is provided below.

PRACTICAL GENDER NEEDS	POTENTIAL NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF MINE, OIL OR GAS PROJECT	POTENTIAL PROJECT RESPONSES OR STRATEGIES
Access to clean water	Increased competition from the project for use of water resources	Building water infrastructure that women can access easily and efficiently
Access to land to grow food for the family	Restricted access because community fields and forests are part of the project area	Negotiated access agreements involving all affected women and men
Access to forest products (such as food and medicinal plants), fodder and fuel wood	Destruction of forests means that these products are located further away from the community	The company maps forest areas, analysing how women and men access and use these resources, and designs project plans to mitigate any impacts
Money to pay for healthcare, education etc.	Traditional livelihoods are affected and women are unable to access other employment due to skills shortages/ cultural barriers etc.	The company supports women's employment in the extractive industry project and/or hires businesses owned by women in its supply chain
STRATEGIC GENDER INTERESTS	POTENTIAL NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF MINE, OIL OR GAS PROJECT	POTENTIAL PROJECT RESPONSES OR STRATEGIES
Ability to contribute to decisions about development in the community	Company policy of negotiating land access with heads of household means that women are excluded from decision-making processes	The company supports the culturally sensitive participation of women in decision-making in company-community decision-making forums, and addresses any potential safety risks that participation might pose to women
Ability to influence decisions in community forums	Women's greater workload due to decreased access to natural resources results in less time to contribute to community forums	The company implements measures to lessen women's workloads (e.g. by working with government to provide affordable health and childcare facilities and mitigating for impacts on natural resources) and supports leadership training through its community development fund or women's rights organisations
Decision-making within the household or family	Women's increased care activities reduce the amount of time spent in income-generating activities, resulting in less decision-making power	The company supports women's empowerment programs to increase understanding of women's multiple roles
Legal rights to land	Women excluded from compensation/ benefits	The company works with government to ensure titles include names of women and men

Companies should also consider men's needs and interests, for example, if they are feeling disempowered when the construction phase of a project ends and they are out of work. This has implications for the men but also on gender relations if men's frustrations translate into violence in the home.

## CASE STUDY: INDIRECTLY ADDRESSING WOMEN'S STRATEGIC GENDER INTERESTS

A mining company operating in Balochistan in Pakistan specifically focused on meeting women's practical gender needs, however, in doing so, indirectly met some strategic gender interests of women in the region.

The company initiated a program for "Lady Health Visitors", which trained female health workers to provide health and hygiene services and information sessions specifically for women. The program offered a much-needed source of medical attention in the region for women during childbirth, and empowered and built the capacities of female health workers. The mining company also provided literacy and sewing classes for women, with the intention of providing them with contracts to supply the mine with uniforms.

The Balochistan Government eventually terminated the mining company's lease and operations halted, ending funding for these women's programs. However, the knowledge women gained through these programs has enabled some of them to continue to earn money independently. Balochistan society is patriarchal and segregated by gender. By indirectly addressing women's strategic gender interests, these programs could succeed as men were not threatened that the company was trying to change the cultural landscape.<sup>14</sup>

### Identifying project impacts

This final part of the dialogue and analysis stage of a gender impact assessment requires that the company and women and men from affected communities collectively identify project impacts and agree on ways to avoid or mitigate any negative impacts.

The analysis should consider how the mining, oil or gas project will impact on:

- women's and men's work and livelihoods, for example:
  - Will women's workloads increase? Will they need to travel further to access the resources necessary for their reproductive or productive activities? Will men's labour still be available if men are employed by the extractive industry project? What steps can be taken to ensure that women's workloads do not increase?
  - Will women's ability to earn a livelihood be compromised? Will the resources women rely on for productive work such as land still be available for their use? What alternative resources can be made available and how will their use by women be secured?
  - Will women be forced to undertake other higher-risk work such as transactional sex to earn an income?
- who has access to and control of resources and the benefits derived from use of those resources, for example:
  - Who uses the resources that the project may acquire or access, such as land? Who would otherwise benefit from the use of those resources? Who will receive compensation for the access of those resources by the project? What can the company do to ensure that women are not disproportionately affected?
  - Are resources (and the benefits derived from access to those resources) in effect being transferred from women to men? If yes, what needs to change to guard against this?
- women's practical gender needs and strategic gender interests, for example:
  - If women's livelihoods are negatively impacted by the extractive industry project, will this increase women's economic dependence on men? What needs to change so that the project does not increase women's economic dependence on men?
  - If men receive most compensation or benefits from the project, will this increase men's power and decision-making authority? Will women's influence in their households and communities be reduced? What can the company do to ensure that both women and men benefit from the project? How can women maintain (or increase) their level of influence?
  - Will women feel safe in public spaces or when travelling between home and their place of work if there is an influx of a male workforce? What needs to happen so that women feel safe?

An alternate approach could be used that identifies the shocks a mining, oil or gas project will cause for communities, for example relocation/resettlement, loss of livelihood or loss of income for mine construction workers when the construction phase of a project ends. In the case of relocation, for example, most communities end up worse off than before they were required to move.

- What shocks will the project cause?
- Who is most affected by this shock?
- How are they affected?
- How do women respond when they experience shocks? How do men respond when they experience shocks? What are the impacts of these different experiences on gender relations?
- How can these shocks be avoided or mitigated?
- How can women be best supported? How can men be best supported?

The analysis should consider impacts on women and men at the household level (or family lives), on their livelihoods (or economic aspects of their lives) and in community life. The analysis should specify which women and men may experience the impacts identified.

The questions above are designed to help identify project impacts on both women and men. This list is not exhaustive,

as there may be more context-specific questions required to identify project impacts. There is some overlap between the questions above and those in other sections of this guide, such as the stand-alone identification of women's practical gender needs and strategic gender interests. This is because revisiting these questions at the identification of impact stage may reveal additional information that the company can act on.

## CASE STUDY: MINING-INDUCED RESETTLEMENT IN MOZAMBIQUE

"There is no land to produce food and growing food is a woman's task," said a member of the Tete Provincial Women's Central Committee as she discussed the impacts of mining-induced resettlement in Mozambique with Oxfam.

Involuntary resettlement is a deeply complex and disruptive process, with potential to place vulnerable people at great risk. An Oxfam study found that people who were resettled to make way for the Benga coal mine in Mozambique have been significantly disadvantaged. Resettled people had no choice but to move from the fertile banks of the Revuboe River at Capanga, to Mualadzi, a remote location with poor quality soil and an insecure supply of water for personal and agricultural use.

The many forms of disadvantage that people in Mualadzi face because of this include food and water insecurity; loss of economic opportunities; fracturing of community; uncertainty and limited access to information; and deficiencies in the remedy process. Women and men experience these impacts differently. For example, the loss of fertile farming lands has reduced the variety of foods available for household consumption and women's status in the community as food producers has been affected.<sup>15</sup>

Contemporary global standards recommend that planning processes are participatory and include gender analysis to ensure that resettlement risks, impacts and costs are understood and addressed in specific contexts.

## CASE STUDY: INCREASED RATES OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Large-scale mining projects bring rapid inter- and intra-household changes to a community that can contribute to increased incidences of gender-based violence.<sup>16</sup> Large migrating male populations, and the cultural and economic changes that the extractives sector can trigger, may increase the rates of gender-based violence in affected communities. In one study in Uganda, for example, women reported increased cases of domestic violence resulting from struggles within the family to control land or money received or anticipated from compensation from the extractives sector.<sup>17</sup>

Sex work and domestic and alcohol-fuelled violence have increased since the onset of mining in communities in the South Gobi, Mongolia. Reports of sexual harassment and rape have risen, and local women say that they no longer feel safe to walk alone at night. Incidences of sexually transmitted diseases and teenage pregnancy have also increased. These changes are linked to the influx of transient populations and migrants to the region, employment conditions, infrastructure development and other cultural and economic changes.<sup>18</sup>

### Step 3: Planning

A gender impact assessment aims to understand gender dynamics within a community, the potential impacts of an extractives project and mitigation measures, which are covered by steps 1 and 2 of this guide. A gender impact assessment also aims to inform the design of gender-responsive engagement, decision-making and planning.

This section focuses on the planning stage of the gender impact assessment and involves identifying and agreeing on actions with the community, documenting the many actions that will have arisen from the baseline study, and dialogue and analysis.

These actions should be documented in relevant project planning and management documents including:

- company-community benefit-sharing and compensation agreements
- community development plans, which may include support for women's self-identified empowerment programs or livelihood strategies
- company-community engagement, consultation and decision-making plans
- community grievance mechanism protocols<sup>19</sup>

- resettlement action plans
- environmental management plans
- social impact management plans
- local procurement and employment plans
- safety and security plans including in agreements or contracts with external security providers
- project closure plans

The actions should also be summarised, ideally in a stand-alone gender action plan or at a minimum included in a separate section of the project's communities plan.

The gender action plan should be a publicly available document so that there is clear accountability for the gender impacts of the extractive industry project and the company's commitment to avoiding and mitigating negative impacts. Making the gender action plan public will also promote improved practice among the extractives sector more broadly. Finally, in addition to publishing the gender action plan, the contents of the plan should be communicated by other means such as at community meetings to ensure that all community members, including those with low literacy, understand the company's commitments.

## CASE STUDY: THE IMPORTANCE OF ACTIVELY ENGAGING WOMEN

A mining operation on Lihir Island in Papua New Guinea has taken some positive steps to address gender impacts. For example, the company collects gender-disaggregated data for its social monitoring program and has appointed a women's officer as part of its Communities team. Unfortunately, these positive steps have been undermined as women have been largely excluded from decision-making about mining on their lands.

Lihir is a matrilineal society in terms of land ownership, which means that land rights are inherited through a woman's bloodline. However, under *kastom* (the local cultural protocol for behaviour and interactions) men are responsible for managing the land and negotiations around it. Traditionally, women should not work outside their clan groups or speak publicly in front of mixed clan groups. Nevertheless, women do have a traditional role in decision-making within their clan groups. As in every society, cultural norms are open to different interpretations. According to some women on Lihir, men have misrepresented *kastom* by claiming that women should not speak out, which has served to diminish women's status within the matrilineal society. While other women do not necessarily disagree that it is a man's role to manage land on behalf of their mothers and sisters, they do feel that both men's and women's perspectives are important and must be heard. With the advent of mining negotiations, however, they feel that women are increasingly "left out" and that the company has endorsed the male-centric interpretation of *kastom*.

While the company has not prevented the participation of women, it has not actively encouraged it either, which would set an example to other parties. For example, women have never been appointed to the negotiating table for the agreement between the mining company and local communities. There are no requirements for other parties such as the local government and councils to include women. The company has not attempted to address the barriers women face in speaking out publicly, such as by engaging women separately from men. As a result, women in Lihir are frustrated because they are not receiving their fair share of benefits. They are concerned that women's and youth programs are not receiving financial support; that women are not receiving information about opportunities for development; and that some men are misusing the benefits by spending money on drugs, alcohol and extramarital relationships.<sup>20</sup>

### Step 4: Review and improve

The final stage of a gender impact assessment is to agree on plans to regularly monitor, evaluate, improve and report on implementation of the gender action plan. Company commitments to review and improve should be included in the gender action plan.

Evaluation of company progress towards implementing its gender action plan and the impact of its actions on women, men, boys and girls from affected communities should be led by someone who is trusted and respected by both the company

and community. This person should have program monitoring and evaluation expertise and be independent from the company. This will ensure objectivity, transparency and greater trust in the evaluation process.

Plans for review and improvement should be underpinned by a commitment to a participatory process that is focused on the most marginalised members of affected communities and that is human rights compatible.

## 4. CONCLUSION

A gender impact assessment can be a tool of enormous transformative power when it is used properly, is participatory, focuses on the most marginalised, is human rights compatible, and transparent. It can give voice to women's perspectives, needs and interests, and can help to address power imbalances between companies and communities, and within communities.

Company-led gender impact assessments can have positive multiplier effects that extend to other project sites.

Strengthening corporate gender capacity is a crucial step toward the mining, oil and gas sector being better able to realise women's rights and gender equality. The information gained through a gender impact assessment allows companies to tailor the project towards mitigating negative impacts and enhancing positive outcomes for both women and men from project-affected communities.



*Teberebie, Ghana: Communities relocated to make way for gold mines in Ghana often struggle with loss of agricultural land, unemployment, and environmental damage. Often women bear the brunt of these impacts. Photo: Neil Brander/Oxfam.*

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