MODULE

3

A Gender-Responsive Approach to Forest Landscape Restoration

Concepts and Safeguards

CGIAR RESEARCH PROGRAM ON Forests, Trees and Agroforestry
CGIAR GENDER Platform
CIFOR
World Agroforestry
Alliance
Bioversity International
CIAT International Center for Tropical Agriculture Since 1967 Science to cultivate change

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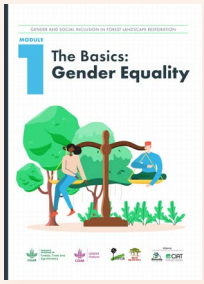
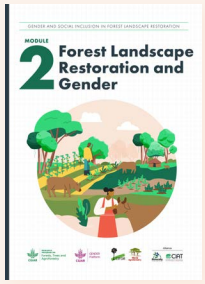
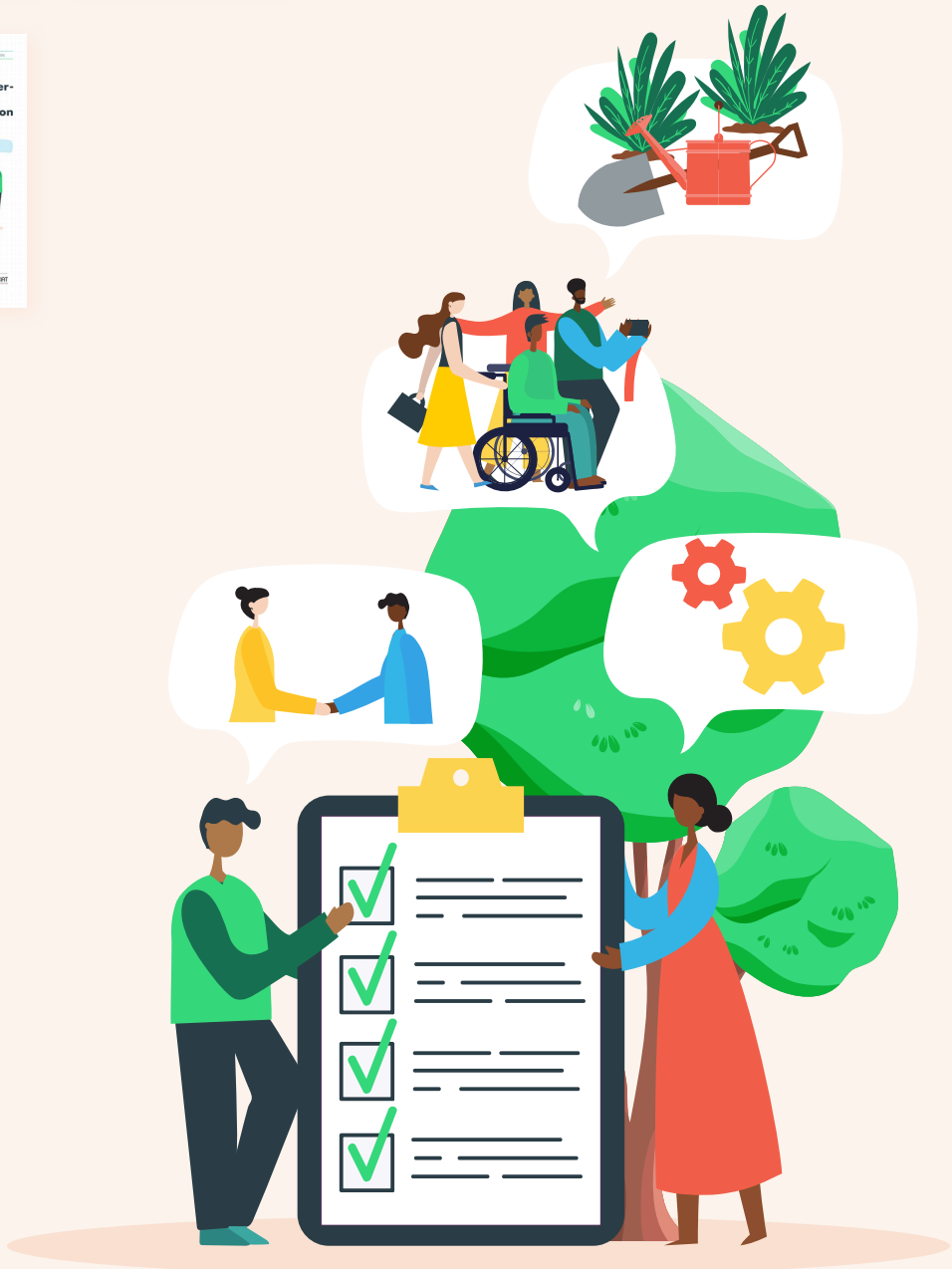
About this guide

This guide supports the Gender and Inclusion in Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) e-learning course. The course aims to build the capacities and understanding of diverse stakeholders on the gender and FLR nexus and address inequalities for more equitable and sustainable FLR.







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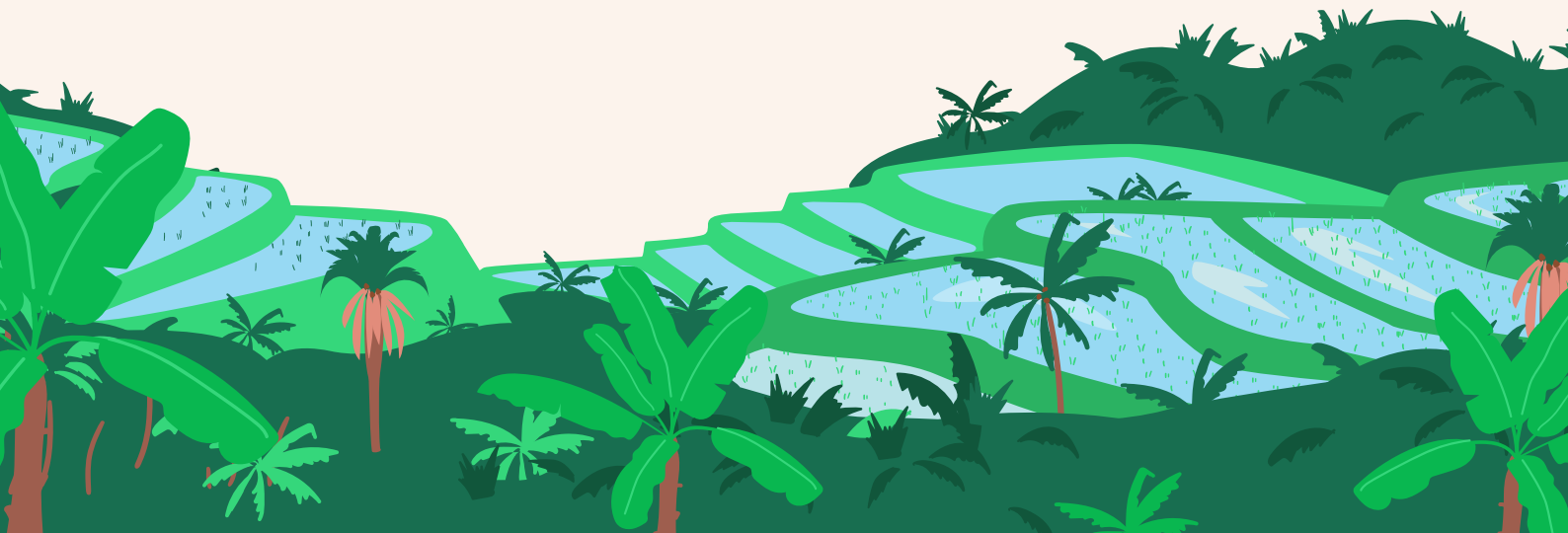


PART **ONE**

Conceptualising gender-responsive FLR

1 A framework for gender responsive FLR

Embedding gender into FLR activities offers opportunities to build upon the synergies between restoration commitments, climate change action and global commitments to sustainable development.[1]

As such, the **framework for gender-responsive FLR** is closely aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality and women's empowerment; this targets equal participation in decision-making, equal rights to resources, and policies to promote equality and empowerment.[1]

The framework for gender-responsive FLR:

Safeguards the rights of local women and men, including those that belong to indigenous groups

Ensures the equitable distribution of costs and benefits at a local level

Ensures equal voices and influence in decision-making related to FLR for women and men, and that this contributes to substantive equality in outcomes for women and men

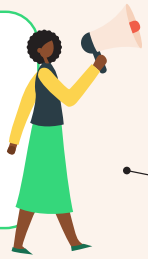
ENTRY POINTS FOR GENDER RESPONSIVE FLR[1,2]

Gender relations interact with FLR in a number of ways. Here are key entry points for gender-responsive FLR practices and interventions.

SECURE TENURE & ACCESS TO LAND
Carefully planned FLR efforts can enhance women's access to and/or ownership of land, as well as decision-making capacity over land use.

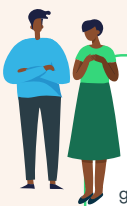
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT
FLR efforts offer an opportunity to engage with a diverse array of stakeholders, including women and women's organisations, recognising their knowledge, capacity and priorities.

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING
Women should be involved at all levels of decision-making during FLR efforts, including in programme development and land use decisions.



EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF FLR COSTS AND BENEFITS
FLR efforts should ensure programme benefits ranging from enhanced ecosystem services, compensation and livelihood opportunities are distributed fairly and that the benefits that are due to women are actually received by them. Further, any programme costs need to be distributed equitably between men and women.

FAIR & JUST COMPENSATION
FLR efforts should provide equal opportunities and compensation that is fair and inclusive of women, as well as safeguards against and/or fair and just compensation for any lost opportunities.



GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE MITIGATION
Gender-responsive FLR efforts must offer mechanisms for preventing gender-based violence and other forms of social backlash that may occur as a response to women's empowerment and/or changes in women's productive and reproductive labour.

FREE, PRIOR AND INFORMED CONSENT
Communities, in particular Indigenous Peoples, must have the right to give or withhold their consent to proposed projects that may affect the lands they customarily own, occupy or otherwise use. This requires free and inclusive consultation with all interested and affected parties, including women, prior to a proposed development or project.

2 Safeguarding rights: tenure

The framework highlights the importance of safeguarding rights, in particular tenure rights. A **lack of secure tenure** places rural communities in a vulnerable position, particularly disadvantaged groups within those communities such as women and migrants.[3] If not everyone who is involved in or affected by an FLR programme is recognised and realises the benefits due to them, this can disincentivise affected community members and reduce their willingness to invest in land restoration activities.[4]

To prevent such a scenario, a thorough analysis of **land-use practices and claims, and customary and statutory tenure** is required prior to the implementation of FLR interventions. In addition, transparent and impartial mechanisms are needed to channel grievances and mediate conflict.

KEEP IN MIND

When addressing tenure rights, key questions to ask include:

- Which land is proposed for restoration?
- Who controls and uses the land- and what for?

This is important to understand because there may be multiple actors and claims to land that is considered unused; even though the claims may only be customary and not formally recognised.[4,5]

3 Enabling equitable participation and influence

The framework specifies the need for equitable decision-making. This requires developing an understanding of stakeholder's preferences for restoration objectives: **location, duration, scale, approaches, species and ecosystem services**. Such preferences are based on gendered sets of knowledge, rights and roles and responsibilities.[5]

To ensure that FLR interventions enable equitable participation and influence, it is crucial that **gender considerations be meaningfully integrated throughout the assessment, planning and implementation processes**.[5] Further, entry points for action and reform must be identified in collaboration with diverse local stakeholders.[6]

KEEP IN MIND

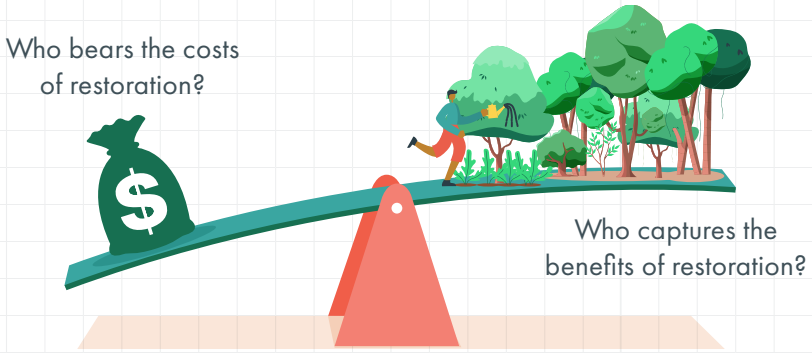
It is important to consider **who** can participate meaningfully and influence decisions at multiple levels in restoration initiatives.

UNDERSTANDING OF STAKEHOLDER'S PREFERENCES FOR RESTORATION OBJECTIVES

Such preferences are based on gendered sets of knowledge, rights and roles and responsibilities.

4 Enabling distribution of costs and benefits

The third component of the framework focuses on the costs and benefits of FLR interventions. Here it is important to ask:



Socio-economic benefits are essential for incentivising stakeholders. Inequalities based on gender and other factors of social differentiation persist with respect to access to and control of benefits. For example, previous studies have shown that engagement in restoration activities can increase the workload for women, with incommensurate and/or delayed benefits.[7]

A **cost-benefit analysis** should be conducted to understand who benefits from restoration and how, and who pays the costs in terms of time, labour and other resources.[6]

KEEP IN MIND

It is important to note that in addition to gender divides, inequalities also exist within gender groups. For example, women who are migrants may be more disadvantaged than other women groups.[7]

PART **TWO**

Safeguards

1 Key safeguards

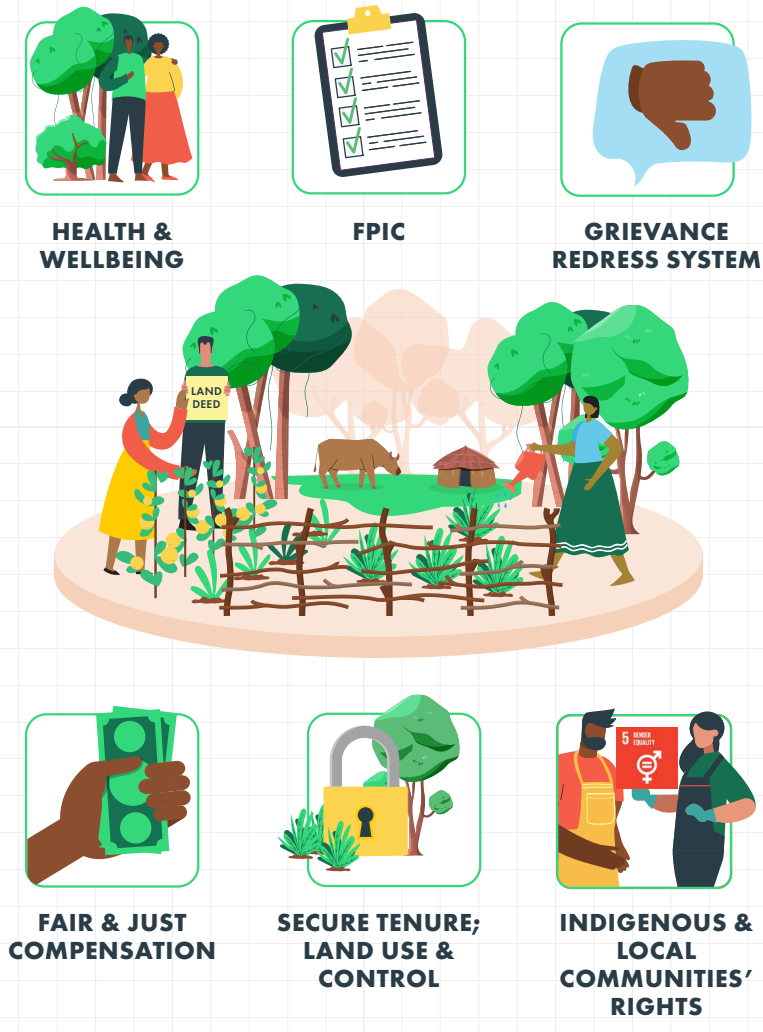
A critical issue in FLR is **safeguarding communities' rights and access to their land**.[8] In restoration initiatives, issues around rights can emerge in relation to claims around land, resources, participation and information. Being aware of the type of rights that can be affected and who holds these rights (whether individuals or groups) are important steps towards a rights-based restoration approach.

Community members with informal or insecure land tenure can lose access to lands claimed under restoration initiatives. Safeguards, such as robust engagement processes aligned with the principles of **Free, Prior and Informed Consent** (FPIC), adequate **grievance redress systems** and **fair and just compensation arrangements** must be in place to mitigate against such risks.[10]

If carried out in an inclusive way, FLR can be a vehicle for strengthening the rights of marginalised groups and can contribute to reducing inequalities based on gender or other factors of social differentiation.[7]

KEEP IN MIND

Women's access and ownership rights to forest, tree and land resources are often insecure, and in many instances, women's participation in decision-making regarding the management of forest resources is limited.[9]



SECURE TENURE

Secure tenure refers to the legal recognition that **rights granted by law will be enforced and protected by society**.[4] Secure tenure also includes the **realisation of benefits** from recognised rights.[11]

Safeguarding these rights includes the need to protect land rights, but also to protect the rights to resources such as trees and water.

If people's rights are not recognised by the state or by community members, a lack of secure tenure enhances their vulnerability. **Legal and cultural barriers can hinder the recognition of women rights** at the household, community and policy level. Women's individual rights are often defined by rules that determine their rights within their household, community or other collective structures.

In certain contexts, legal frameworks provide direct disincentives to forest restoration, as forested areas by default fall under the control and ownership of the state. In contrast, more secure rights to future benefits through enhanced tenure security have been found to have a positive effect on the likelihood of women to engage in restoration.

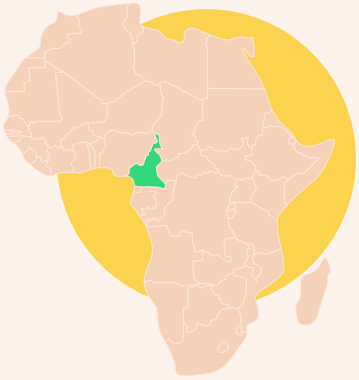
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Secure rights to future benefits through enhanced tenure security increases the likelihood of women in engaging in restoration interventions. Women's (and poor men's) insecure access to land can limit their motivation and ability to plant/manage trees over which they may not have decision-making authority or long-term access.[4]

CASE STUDY: SECURE TENURE SUPPORTS GENDER-RESPONSIVE ACTIONS IN FLR IN CAMEROON[12]

Gender entry point: Women's contested right to plant trees has been a challenge as customary rights are recognised at the collective but not the individual level. Strengthening women's rights required working with community members, chiefs and husbands, who are perceived as the rights holders, to convince them to let women plant trees on degraded (i.e., less valuable) land. Planting mangroves in tidal areas requires intensive monitoring and specialised equipment, and the rural women involved in the projects have limited financial resources and other heavy demands on their time. Further, without secure tenure or reliable protection for the forests, it was difficult to trust that their considerable efforts would be worthwhile.

Actions to promote gender-responsive FLR: In 2014, REFACOF worked with women from COOPEL to restore degraded mangrove forests. They also invested in promoting leadership and enhancing women's monitoring skills. Equipped with new knowledge, resources and equipment, and capacitated in mangrove reforestation techniques, women have taken ownership of mangrove restoration in coastal communities in Cameroon. REFACOF is working with these women to secure legal status for the mangrove areas as 'community forests' and elaborate clear frameworks for their management.



CASE STUDY BACKGROUND

The African Women's Network for the Community Management of Forests (REFACOF) has been working with women organised around the Cooperative of Fisher People (COOPEL) in Londji village, Cameroon, to restore degraded mangrove forest and plant orchards in coastal forest villages. In the mangrove forests, the issue of tenure is difficult to address because there is no clear legal or regulatory framework governing these areas. But restoring mangroves remains crucial for women to restore the fisheries on which they rely.

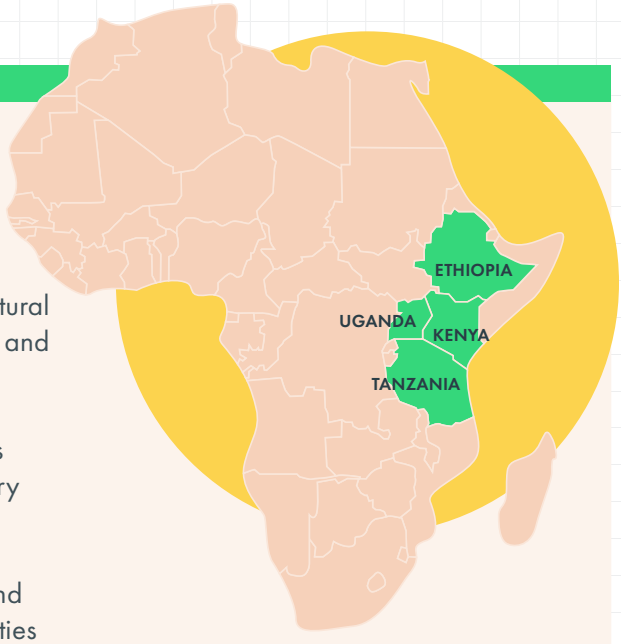
SECURE TENURE (CONTINUED)

CASE STUDY: EAST AFRICAN MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE DISCUSSES GROUNDING GENDER EQUALITY IN FLR[13,14]

Gender entry point: Participants discussed the risks if restoration efforts continued without consideration of structural inequalities, gendered labour, or women's property rights and insecure land tenure.

Actions to promote gender-responsive FLR: It was recognised that, in many countries, women have secondary rights to land through their male family members. Without women having secure tenure to trees or land or both, it becomes difficult for them to participate in tree planting and women can therefore be marginalized in restoration activities and benefits. In Tanzania, for example, women plant trees but don't have land tenure. Because of such issues, women may not be able to realise the full potential of restoration. Additionally, participants mentioned 'Komaza' a forestry company that supports local women to plant trees on unused, degraded land in the coastal region of Kenya. "When we planted the trees eight years ago, no one had any interest in this land. But now when it's not even time for harvesting but just thinning, the men show up and assert their claims on the land," said the participant.

Actions recommended by participants included documenting the different ways men and women use the forest, mapping exercises and monitoring actions. It was emphasised that issues need to be approached contextually. It is important to understand that tenure issues may differ within a country, depending on the area or region, or the cultural context.



CASE STUDY BACKGROUND

In 2017, a dialogue on FLR and gender equality delved into the East Africa experience with the aim to examine how restoration is experienced on the ground, how different countries are implementing it, and its challenges in terms of gender equality. Drawing on examples from Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda and Tanzania, country representatives, restoration implementers, scientists and gender specialists discussed the benefits of grounding gender equality in FLR and the risks of not doing so.

LAND USE AND CONTROL

A major challenge in safeguarding Indigenous peoples' rights, access to and control of land is that **land tenure may exist in law but may not be enforced in practice**.[11] Even if Indigenous peoples have legal title deeds to their lands, the lands may often be leased out by the state as mining or logging concessions without consultation of Indigenous peoples, let alone their free, prior and informed consent.[16]

Restoration initiatives rely on the **availability** of land for implementation. Therefore, in addition to identifying restoration-suitable areas through satellite maps and aggregated data, a thorough understanding of land-use practices, claims, and customary and statutory tenure relations is essential:

- Land that may seem available for restoration may **actually be used by indigenous or local communities**. This is particularly relevant for women, who are more likely to use marginal or less productive landscapes.[1]
- **Land is used and valued in different ways by different people**. Land (as well as water) is unique compared to other 'assets' precisely for its life-giving quality. Land also gives meaning to people's lives, and as such is more than a source of material wealth but also valuable as part of cultural identity. Hence, access and claims on these lands are inevitably coveted, contested and negotiated in multiple ways by multiple people. Indeed, multiple actors - including women and men - can simultaneously claim and use one parcel of land for different purposes. For example, women may collect firewood from an area that men simultaneously use for livestock grazing. Additionally, perceptions about land degradation and priorities for restoration depend on social dynamics as well as gender roles and norms. Men and women observe degradation at the spatial locations in which they spend most time and effort.[1]

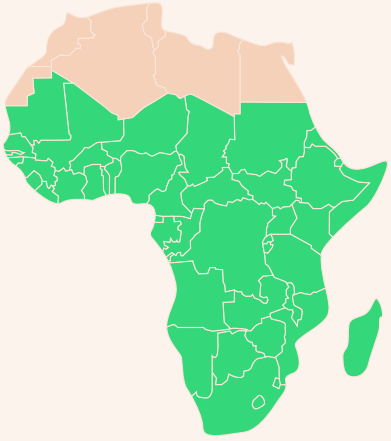
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Forced evictions and the dispossession of lands can have particularly severe impacts on indigenous women, such as contributing to their workloads and time-poverty and negatively affecting their income-earning activities.[17]

CASE STUDY: GENDER-BASED CONSTRAINTS IN FLR INITIATIVES IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA[18,19]

Gender entry point: When analysing land management practices, project officers realised that when women improve the productivity of their land, they ironically increase the risk of losing it. Women access land through their husbands or other male family members and have limited decision-making power over the land they farm. Land allocated to women is usually less fertile and their plots tend to be smaller.

Actions to promote gender-responsive FLR: The SLM project changed its approach to emphasise tenure rights and gender issues. In Burkina Faso, it joined forces with a network of experts, in collaboration with local actors, to promote a process for clarifying women's tenure rights at the household level. In Kenya, the SLM project developed land-lease guidelines to allow widows and other landless farmers secure access to land. Indicators to measure how the initiative enhanced technology adoption and improved women's bargaining and decision-making power within the household were reviewed.



CASE STUDY BACKGROUND

In Benin and Burkina Faso, an analysis of 20 programmes promoting sustainable land management (SLM) over the past 20 to 30 years showed that female farmers do not participate and benefit from SLM programmes as much as male farmers do.

LAND USE AND CONTROL (CONTINUED)

CASE STUDY: LESSONS FROM AGRO-INDUSTRY INVESTMENTS IN INDONESIA

Gender entry point: Agroindustry investors established letters of agreement between the companies and communities that do not recognise customary rights to land. While there is nothing specific that restricts women from holding land titles, in practice men appear as the titular household head. Women's exclusion from negotiation spaces, and a lack of recognition in letters of agreement confirming their resource use rights, limits the opportunity for their voices to be heard and their ability to participate in meetings and decisions. This not only restricts their access to land, but also excludes them from decision-making on the distribution of benefits.

Actions to promote gender-responsive FLR: Initiatives and policies that target legally recognised landowners risk ignoring overlapping land uses and claims, and place rural women and men at the sidelines of FLR efforts. It is therefore critical to avoid making decisions with a select group of people and to ensure that all involved have sufficient information with space to disagree.

For more information on this case study refer to:

- Elmhirst R, Siscawati M, Basnett BS and Ekowati D. 2017. Gender and generation in engagements with oil palm in East Kalimantan, Indonesia: Insights from feminist political ecology. *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 44(6): 1135-1157
- Li TM. 2014. What is land? Assembling a resource for global investment. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 39(4):589–602.

CASE STUDY BACKGROUND

In rural Indonesia, complex and overlapping claims to land are common. An area of land can be claimed as customary land by Indigenous peoples whose rights to plant trees might be recognised by departments of agriculture, but not those in charge of forestry. The same area may also be claimed by migrants who have cleared the land and/or settled there, or it may be allocated as a concession to private logging or oil palm companies. Even when formal property rights are clearer, such as in many parts of South Asia, land-related disputes and conflicts within the household, the larger kinship network or among different social groups, communities, the private sector and states, remain some of the defining features of rural landscapes.

FREE, PRIOR AND INFORMED CONSENT

FPIC is an international human rights standard that aims to **protect the rights of Indigenous people to self-determination and self-governance** as well as to their land, territories and resources, by enabling Indigenous people to negotiate the terms under which a project will be designed and implemented. The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples refers to FPIC as the "right of Indigenous peoples to give or withhold their free, prior and informed consent to projects, laws and policies that may affect their rights".[15] Forest Peoples Program, a non-governmental organisation focused on human rights, refers to FPIC as: "the principle that a community has the right to give or withhold its consent to proposed projects that may affect the lands they customarily own, occupy or otherwise use".[20] International and national regulations define which social groups are entitled to FPIC and the associated processes of consent and consultation.

LESSONS FROM REDD+ ON FPIC

Large groups of indigenous and local peoples are at risk of forcible exclusion or displacement due to the rush of land grabs in developing countries in the name of food security and climate change. These threats have elevated the importance of FPIC as a mechanism to safeguard local and Indigenous peoples' rights.[20]

In response to a concern that the infusion of financial capital in REDD+ is likely to exacerbate vulnerabilities among already marginalised communities, the Cancun Agreements adopted by UNFCCC COP16 included a set of social safeguards for REDD+. This is particularly important in light of a recent systematic review of REDD+ studies, which found that most projects had not applied FPIC. REDD+ projects were commenced prior to community consultation, and information was purposefully withheld to manage community expectations.[10]

These safeguards, which incorporate FPIC, refer to 'respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous communities' and 'full and effective participation of all stakeholders.' Efforts to design and implement FLR must learn from these experiences, and ensure that FPIC is secured from both women and men in local and indigenous communities.[1] This is of relevance to FLR because REDD+ initiatives are key mechanisms for realising FLR pledges.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Men are far more likely to hold land titles than women and so compensation schemes risk being skewed against women. Further, as men and women adopt different roles and have different needs, restoration initiatives may result in the displacement of women's resources–for example, conservation schemes may restrict access to firewood that is traditionally collected by women, contributing to their labour burden and time-poverty, or woodlots could displace women's crops.[21]

FREE, PRIOR AND INFORMED CONSENT (CONTINUED)

CASE STUDY: GENDER- RESPONSIVE ENTRY POINTS IN FPIC IN INDONESIA

Gender entry point: Indicators and guidance used in Oil Palm Roundtable to apply FPIC use gender-neutral language and do not explicitly mention that women need to be included in negotiations. As a result, women and marginalised groups are excluded from decision-making and benefit sharing. This shows that even well-intentioned restoration initiatives can reinforce social divides.

In this study, it was found that gender-equal participation is not mandatory and there is no further (or limited) guidance on the implementation of fair compensation. Further information is needed to clarify who can legitimately represent a community when seeking FPIC. Guidance on minimum criteria for the recruitment of those agents of implementation that will be facilitating FPIC should include awareness of key gender issues, gender disaggregated data collection, enhancing gender equitable participation in the FPIC process and gathering stakeholder feedback.[21]

For more information on this case study refer to:

Basnett, B. S., Gnych, S., & Anandi, C. A. M. (2016). *Transforming the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil for greater gender equality and women's empowerment.* CIFOR Infobrief, 166. Bogor, Indonesia: CIFOR.

CASE STUDY BACKGROUND

Research that assessed how FPIC was applied in the large-scale conversion of land into palm oil plantations in Indonesia found that women were often not directly included in the negotiations on partnership agreements with companies. This was the case even when they stood to lose land that they used or managed for household food provisioning. Even in fairly gender-equal communities, companies tended to meet mostly with men. This was due to the companies' gender assumptions on who made decisions within the household, resulting in men often invited to discuss parternship agreements with external actors.

FAIR AND JUST COMPENSATION

Where land tenure and use changes are unavoidable, it is critical that the **affected people receive fair and just compensation**. Local people's exclusion from current land uses or from their lands can be seen as more legitimate if landholders or users perceive they were fairly compensated. Yet, states or companies commonly dictate the price of compensation, setting it far below market rates or the local opportunity costs of changing land uses.[22] Discussions on compensation are important as the opportunity costs for restoration tend to be lowest where people are poorest.[1]

Compensation is a highly contentious and complex issue. For example, should an Indigenous people deem a portion of land to be sacred, it cannot be assigned a market value and compensation for land use changes would therefore be unacceptable.[19] Additionally, restoration interventions may not be desirable or form part of the self-determination goals of indigenous groups.

Research on large-scale land acquisition for oil palm expansion in Indonesia, for instance, showed that in some cases compensation is negotiated between the oil palm company and the household head.[22] As men are far more likely to hold land titles than women, **compensation schemes risk being skewed against women**. Further, as men and women adopt different roles and have different needs, restoration initiatives may result in the **displacement of women's resources**; for example, conservation schemes may restrict access to firewood that is traditionally collected by women contributing to their labour burden and time-poverty, or woodlots could displace women's crops.[1]

FLR interventions should undertake impact assessments that consider both men and women. Research from Vietnam and Kenya identified gendered differences in preferred compensations, largely because women are not permitted to control cash-based compensations.[22]

For more information on this case study, refer to:

Nijbroek, R. P., & Wangui, E. E. (2018). *What women and men want: Considering gender for successful, sustainable land management programs.* Brief Series: Lessons for gender-responsive landscape restoration. Bogor, Indonesia: CIFOR, GLF.

GRIEVANCE REDRESS SYSTEMS

Grievance redress systems or mechanisms are implemented to ensure **conflict is addressed fairly, accessibly and effectively**, and are particularly useful for handling any complaints that emerge during the design and implementation of restoration interventions.[24]

Fair, transparent and impartial mechanisms are essential to mitigate the risks of displacement and unfair compensation for land and livelihoods. In restoration initiatives, such mechanisms can apply lessons learned from similar systems that have been promoted during land formalisation and other environmental initiatives.

In the case of restoration initiatives, such grievance redress systems should:

- Review existing regulatory regimes (statutory and customary, whether formally recognised or not) and grievance redress systems that may already be in place, to identify how **existing norms and practices support or hinder women's involvement** in cases of conflict, and to determine how these can be applied for restoration initiatives.
- **Assess existing conflict-resolution mechanisms** that address how women and men should be involved in identifying how their implementation could affect them, including existing safeguard and redress systems.
- **Consider compensation mechanisms that are fair and just as well as irreversible impacts that may emerge** from implementation of restoration initiatives identifying differentiated impacts and distribution of costs.[24]

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The implementation of ineffective grievance redress mechanisms by restoration interventions may hinder women's involvement in cases of conflict thereby contributing to their disempowerment.[24]

For more information on this case study, refer to:

TMG Working Paper. 2019. *Making sustainable land management work for women smallholders.* TMG.

INDIGENOUS AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES' RIGHTS

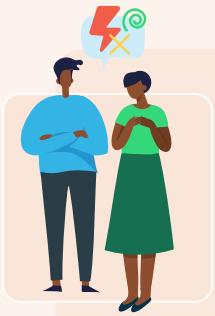
According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), **limited recognition of customary access to land and ownership of land** can result in increased vulnerability and decreased adaptive capacity. Formally recognising and securing the customary lands of Indigenous peoples and other communities is important for reducing emissions for many reasons, including that indigenous and community lands are important carbon sinks, holding at least 17% of the total carbon stores in forests –with potential for more through restoration.[26]

The benefits of tenure security extend far beyond climate actions. Tenure security helps Indigenous peoples and communities protect their land from intruders like illegal loggers or miners, and from expropriation by governments or big businesses. Secure land tenure creates powerful incentives for Indigenous peoples and communities to invest in the management of their lands by providing them with confidence that they will benefit from their long-term investments.[26]

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

The health and well-being of women can be strongly impacted by two factors:[27]

- Gender-based violence
- Conflict and state fragility



GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

Around the world, it is estimated that one in three women and girls will experience gender-based violence (GBV) during her lifetime.[27] Rooted in discriminatory gender norms and laws, and often exempt from punishment, **GBV occurs in all societies as a means of control and exploitation that further reinforces gender inequality**.[27]

Patterns of gender-based abuse are observed across environmental contexts, affecting the security and well-being of nations, communities and individuals.

GBV constitutes a significant obstacle to women's and girls' participation in environmental and conservation activities. In a recent study by IUCN and USAID, 177 (59%) of 300 survey respondents, noted they had observed GBV of some type in the course of their work to implement environmental and sustainable development projects.[29] For example, a survey respondent from Mexico explained that a woman stopped participating in project activities because her husband got angry when she spent time in environmental conservation activities or ecosystem restoration. Another respondent from Kenya mentioned that a woman was beaten by her husband for attending a community group meeting.

To better address GBV in environmental programming, the study recommended:

- Prioritising GBV in institutional policies;
- Raising awareness and deploying existing tools and approaches for including GBV considerations; and
- Building strategic alliances.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Restoration interventions can reinforce or challenge gender relations in participating communities, thereby contributing to GBV. For instance, women's absence from the homestead to participate in interventions, as well as changes in their capacities to make decisions, exert public influence or earn an income, can feel threatening to men in their households or communities. This highlights the importance of engaging both women and men in restoration intervention design and implementation.[28]

For more information as well as a compilation of tools and approaches, see chapter 8 in the study[29] as well as IUCN's Gender-Based Violence and Environment Linkages Center.

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING (CONTINUED)

CONFLICT AND STATE FRAGILITY

According to estimates from the UNHCR, more than 80 million people in 2020 were forced to flee their homes in war zones.[30] While camps for displaced persons offer refuge for those escaping violence, they also pose severe environmental challenges, with an estimated 26,183 hectares of forests consumed annually by forcibly displaced families.

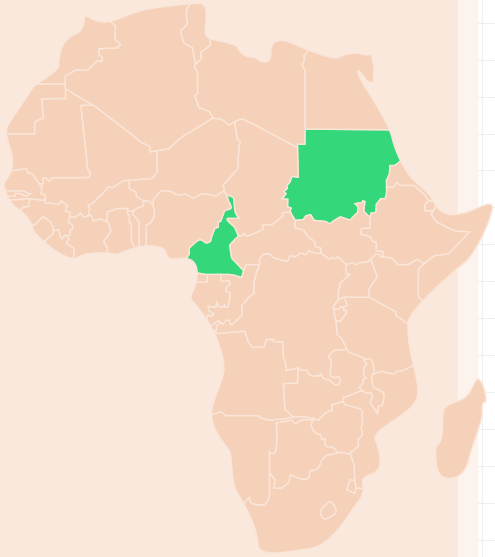
Environmental degradation is therefore increasingly recognised not only as a potential cause for conflict but also a consequence of it.[30]

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Amidst conflict, state fragility and environmental degradation, women may be exposed to additional threats and vulnerabilities. As restoration interventions are increasingly engaging with conflict or post-conflict areas, being mindful of such dynamics is of critical importance.[27]

CASE STUDY: LAND DEGRADATION AND GBV IN SUDAN AND CAMEROON

Displaced women and girls living in refugee camps in Darfur, Sudan, may travel three to six miles outside refugee camps, three to five times per week, to collect resources such as firewood and water.[31] They are vulnerable to sexual and gender-based violence on these trips. The UN-African Union Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) enacted several initiatives to mitigate these attacks, including employing more female peacekeeping officers and conducting GBV awareness trainings for the military and police.[31] Additionally, UN entities, including UNAMID, promoted more efficient technologies and sustainable livelihoods, such as a water project with rolling water containers to increase women's access to resources and decrease their reliance on dangerous and time consuming trips fetching water.[29]



A photo essay from Cameroon[32] provides an illustration of a similar situation from Cameroon's eastern region, currently hosting the majority of the 290,000 refugees who have fled across the border from the Central African Republic. CIFOR and partners are now working to empower both refugees and host communities to protect, restore and sustainably use Cameroon's forests.

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