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Addressing Gender in Evaluations Guidance for Approach Papers

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I. Introduction

1. The four-year work program and budget of the GEF Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) under GEF-6¹ proposes to update and further strengthen guidance and methodologies in key areas, including gender and women's empowerment. This guidance for approach papers is primarily meant to inform evaluations conducted by the IEO, but can be useful for GEF Agencies conducting Terminal Evaluations of completed projects and other evaluative work. The depth of focus of IEO evaluations is informed by GEF strategies, policies and processes regarding the topics and focal areas being evaluated. This guidance for approach papers should be seen as a 'living document,' in the sense that it will be updated if there would be future revisions of the GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP). The latest version of this document will always be available on [the GEF IEO website](#).

2. Given the evolving nature of the GEF partnership—notably including the expansion of the number of GEF Agencies—there is a need to review and update the GEF M&E Policy as well as the Terminal Evaluation Guidelines. The terminal evaluation guidelines are meant to provide the GEF partner Agencies with guidance on the preparation of terminal evaluations. The IEO is consulting with the partner Agencies on how the present guidance may be improved. A future version will also include updated guidance on addressing gender in terminal evaluations. The latest versions of the policies and guidance documents for partner agencies can be found on [the GEF IEO website](#).

II. History

3. The Rio Conventions – namely the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the UN Convention on Combating Desertification (UNCCD) – for which the GEF serves as financial mechanism – recognize the important linkage between gender-related issues and achievement of the Conventions' goals and objectives.² Gender equality and empowerment of women (GEEW) considerations can be found in a selection of UNFCCC convention texts, conclusions and decisions,^{3 4} the 2015-2020 Gender Plan of Action under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD),⁵ as well as the convention text and Advocacy Policy Framework on Gender of the UNCCD.⁶

4. The GEF also serves as the financial mechanism for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and the Minamata Convention on Mercury. Both conventions do not specifically mention gender, but GEF's chemicals portfolio has generated (and has the potential to generate more future) impacts on the improvement of the health of women and children through active engagement of both women and men in awareness-raising and capacity building activities, as well as the eradication of exposure to these chemicals.⁷

5. The 2012 GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming requires GEF Partner Agencies to have policies or strategies that satisfy seven minimum requirements to ensure gender mainstreaming:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. institutional capacity for gender mainstreaming | 2. consideration of gender elements in project review and design |
| 3. undertaking of gender analysis | 4. measures to minimize/mitigate adverse |

gender impacts

5. integration of gender sensitive activities
 6. **monitoring and evaluation** of gender mainstreaming progress
 7. inclusion of gender experts in projects^{8 9}
6. The 2014 GEF Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) aims to operationalize GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming.¹⁰ The GEF-6 focal area strategies incorporate gender responsive approaches and indicators, and the related Project Information Form (PIF) now requests information on how gender consideration will be mainstreamed in project preparation. The GEF reports on results of gender mainstreaming to the GEF Council in the Annual Monitoring Review (AMR). A separate information paper on GEAP implementation is also provided to the Council on a yearly basis.
7. Conceptual clarity and consistence on gender terminology is important when explaining gender objectives. A glossary of gender-relevant terms can be found in annex 1.

III. GEF-6/IAP Core Gender Indicators

8. The GEF will further strengthen GEF-wide accountability for gender mainstreaming by enhancing gender-specific performance targets at all levels. At the corporate level, the GEF Results-based Management Framework will include a set of five core Gender Indicators to examine concrete progress on gender related processes and outputs within the GEF-6 Focal Area Strategies and Integrated Approaches Pilots (IAPs).
9. Adjustments may be made to the indicators based on initial implementation experiences. An overview of the core indicators is provided in annex 2, which translates at the project level into the following evaluative questions:
1. Are issues on gender equality and women's empowerment taken into account?
 2. Describe the **gender analysis** conducted during project preparation.
 3. Has a gender responsive project results framework been incorporated?
 4. Describe how differences, needs, roles and priorities of women and men are taken into account.
 5. What was the share of women and men as direct beneficiaries of project?
 6. What was the share of convention related national reports (e.g. NBSAP, NAPA, TDA/SAP, etc.) that incorporated gender dimensions?
 7. What is the **percentage of M&E reports** (e.g. Project Implementation Reports, Mid-term Evaluation Reports, and Terminal Evaluation Reports) **that incorporated GEEW issues, progress and results?**
10. While the first three questions primarily relate to project level analysis, the fourth and fifth question also relate to the high-than-project level evaluations the GEF IEO is often involved in.

IV. Gender Considerations and UN-SWAP

11. UN-SWAP (UN system-wide Action Plan) constitutes the first accountability framework for gender mainstreaming in the UN system. It includes a set of 15 common system-wide Performance Indicators towards gender equality and empowerment of women (GEEW), one of them being Evaluation.^{11 12}

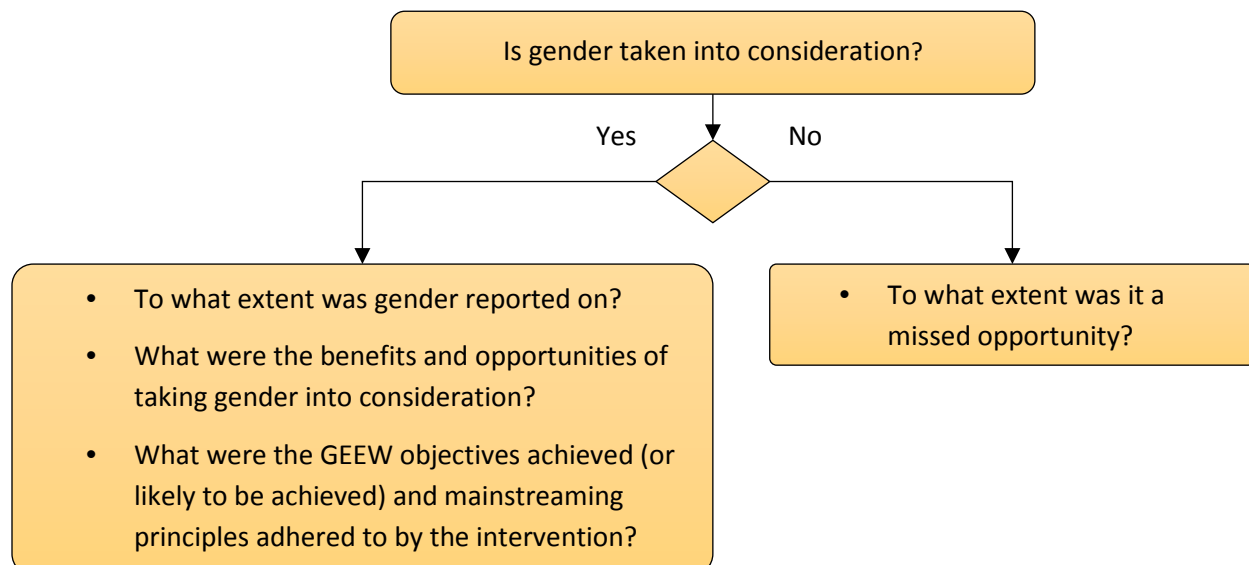
12. To report on progress against the UN-SWAP Evaluation Performance Indicator the GEF IEO conducts a meta-analysis of evaluations managed and/or conducted during each calendar year, which assesses the level of integration of gender dimensions in our evaluations. For each evaluation managed and/or conducted the IEO reports on the following 4 criteria:

1. GEEW is integrated in the **Evaluation Scope of analysis and Indicators** are designed in a way that ensures GEEW-related data will be collected.
2. **Evaluation Criteria and Evaluation Questions** specifically address how GEEW has been integrated into the design, planning, implementation of the intervention and the results achieved.
3. A gender-responsive **Evaluation Methodology, Methods and tools, and Data Analysis Techniques** are selected.
4. The evaluation **Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations** reflect a gender analysis.

13. In 2014 the GEF IEO reported voluntarily for the first time on these criteria and the IEO did not meet the minimum requirements.¹³ We certainly need to do better in the years to come. A more extensive explanation on the four criteria can be found in annex 3, and further guidance can be found in the UN-SWAP Evaluation Performance Indicator Technical Note.¹⁴

V. Evaluative Questions

14. Irrespective of the replenishment period, financial mechanism or focal area of a project, program or portfolio of projects and programs, there are some basic evaluative questions that can form the starting point for evaluating gender:



15. Based on previous resources mentioned, taking into account the UN-SWAP criteria, the GEF-6/IAP core gender indicators as well as the GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy¹⁵ and related main evaluation criteria, a selection of guiding questions for consideration include:

Relevance	To what extent was the program aligned with the needs and priorities of both men and women? How have different needs and priorities of men and women been taken into account in reaching the global environmental benefits to which the GEF is dedicated?
Effectiveness	Was gender integrated into programmatic goals and objectives (direct project outputs, short- to medium-term outcomes as well as longer term impacts envisaged)? Was a gender responsive results framework been incorporated into the project design and implementation consistent with the objectives? Were gender-disaggregated targets set and were gender-disaggregated indicators used? Was the benchmark survey or baseline study gender sensitive? Which GEEW principles were used (e.g. equality, participation, social transformation, inclusiveness, empowerment, etc.) in the design, planning, implementation of the intervention and the results achieved? Was gender mainstreaming an explicit requirement in all job descriptions, job responsibilities, and terms of reference for the project implementation, studies, consulting work, and training?
Efficiency	How was the assessment of gender integration into the design, planning, implementation of the intervention and the results achieved included in the M&E?
Results and Sustainability	What were the GEEW objectives achieved (or likely to be achieved) and mainstreaming principles adhered to by the intervention? To what extent has GEEW inclusion led to better results? (outcome and impact) Do the intervention results respond to the needs of all stakeholders, men and women, as identified at the design stage? Were the results achieved equitably distributed among the targeted stakeholder groups? Is the level of stakeholder ownership sufficiently gender sensitive or gender specific to allow for project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? What are the assumptions about gender roles, norms and relations that supported or hindered the project? And how will these factors affect the sustainability of the results?

VI. Gender Considerations in Evaluation Methodologies

16. Major IEO evaluations would benefit from the inclusion of an external gender specialist to assist in the development of the evaluation approach paper, the implementation of the evaluation as well as

the reporting of evaluative findings. The inclusion of gender experts would also be in line with the minimum requirements of the 2012 GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming.

17. Gender relevance is a complex term, given that different GEF Agencies make use of different gender screening or gender marker systems. One of the action points in the GEAP is to further “explore the most efficient way to categorize the gender relevance of the GEF projects by building on the practices, expertise, and experiences of the GEF Agencies and other relevant partners.” In anticipation of a more streamlined GEF categorization of gender relevance it is currently advised to not aim for hard conclusions towards an intervention’s gender relevance.

18. Ensure a focus on gender, not just women; gender equity is the process of being fair to men and women, boys and girls. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of all are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity and heterogeneity of different groups of women and men. A full glossary of terms is added in annex 1.

19. A document worth mentioning is the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Guidance Document on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation.¹⁶ The document provides further guidance on conducting ‘gender equality responsive evaluations’. One chapter is dedicated to data collection, analysis, interpretation, validation and reporting. Keep in mind that in the end we evaluate interventions against GEF policies and strategies, and some of the guidance – and examples of GEF Agencies – go beyond what is currently demanded by the GEF policies.

a. Document Review/Portfolio Review/Meta-Review

20. Evaluations often start with a desk review element, looking into the paper trail of an intervention. Keep in mind that requirements for reporting on gender have only been added recently to GEF templates and only apply for focal area projects under the GEF-6 replenishment. Also keep in mind that some of the GEF Agencies might do more than what is or has been reported. Taking gender considerations into account during data analysis and interpretation should go beyond simple counts of participants or tallying mentions of ‘gender,’ ‘women,’ ‘female,’ etc. Always ask agencies whether a gender assessment has taken place and to share the details of such analysis.

- Have gender-related goals, needs and priorities been identified and realized? Was a gender analysis conducted during project preparation? What is the number/percentage of M&E reports that incorporated GEEW issues, progress and results?
- What have been key enabling factors and deterrents from reaching GEEW objectives and/or mainstreaming related principles into the intervention? Have the GEF-6/IAP core gender indicators and UN-SWAP gender considerations been covered? The evaluation report should indicate the extent to which gender issues and considerations were incorporated where applicable.
- Was the institutional capacity of the implementing and partner agent(s) reviewed for integrating gender into development activities? Did capacity development take place in order to address knowledge gaps on gender issues? Were progress and outcome of these activities monitored, evaluated and reported upon?

b. Selecting Key Evaluation Stakeholders

21. The selection of key evaluation stakeholders is not a methodology per sé, but an integral part of the evaluation's field research element, for example to select interviewees, the target groups for surveys, or the development of focus groups, reference groups or peer review groups. Gender sensitive identification and selection of key evaluation stakeholders should take into account the following points:

- Identify and select key female and male stakeholders and their interests, positive or negative, in the project. Who has been involved? Who was most dependent? Who has had an economic stake? Brainstorm on all possible stakeholders using the above questions as a guide, talking with various stakeholders and asking them who they would see as potential key evaluation stakeholders. The list of stakeholders may grow or shrink as the analysis progresses and the understanding deepens.
- Marginalized key evaluation stakeholders may lack the recognition or capacity to participate on an equal basis, and particular effort must be made to ensure and enable their participation.
- Keep in mind the literacy levels, language skills, and time and logistical constraints of key evaluation stakeholders identified, especially of marginalized stakeholders.
- It may not be possible to have all identified stakeholders involved; Use an inclusive and transparent approach in the identification and selection of key evaluation stakeholders, informing key stakeholders about the process and reasons for their inclusion, or exclusion from actual engagement.

c. Stakeholder Mapping

22. Stakeholder mapping / stakeholder analysis under this header focuses on the mapping and analysis that took place (or is planned to take place) in the intervention that is being evaluated.

- To what extent did the stakeholder mapping take into account different activities, capacities, access to resources, roles, needs and priorities of both men and women?
- Did a gender analysis take place to identify the potential negative impacts of project intervention on women as well as men?
- Did a gender-sensitive social analysis or assessment take place?

d. Interviews/Focus Group Discussions/Consultation Workshops

- Stakeholder consultations with all key groups, including women's groups, and with the appropriate women (the ones directly or indirectly affected by an intervention as beneficiary as well as implementer, user and community member) at the table.

e. Surveys

23. When developing and administering surveys please do take into account the earlier mentioned GEF-6/IAP core gender indicators, UN-SWAP gender considerations, evaluative questions, and pointers towards the identification and selection key evaluation stakeholders.

Annex 1: Glossary of Terms

All definitions of terms are coming from the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP):

Gender analysis: is the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated information. Men and women both perform different roles. This leads to women and men having different experience, knowledge, skills and needs. Gender analysis explores these differences so policies, programs and projects can identify and meet the different needs of men and women. Gender analysis also facilitates the strategic use of distinct knowledge and skills possessed by women and men.

Gender equality: refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development.

Gender equity: is the process of being fair to men and women, boys and girls. It refers to differential treatment that is fair and positively addresses a bias or disadvantage that is due to gender roles or norms or differences between the sexes. It is about the fair and just treatment of both sexes that takes into account the different needs of the men and women, cultural barriers and (past) discrimination of the specific group.

Gender mainstreaming: is a globally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality. Mainstreaming involves ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities. Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women as well as of men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality.

Gender relevant: or a gender relevance assessment states that depending on the type of intervention and scope of activities, the degree of relevance of gender dimensions may vary. Once it has been assessed that gender plays a role in the planned intervention, a gender perspective should be integrated in all phases of the project cycle. The UNDP Gender Marker questions whether it is legitimate to have initiatives where gender equality and/or women's empowerment issues can be considered, not applicable, or relevant at all.

Gender responsive results: are changes that respond to the inequities in the lives of men or women within a given social setting and aim to remedy these inequities.

Gender sensitive: considers gender norms, roles and relations but does not address inequality generated by unequal norms, roles or relations. While it indicates gender awareness, no remedial action is developed.

Gender specific: considers gender norms, roles and relations for women and men and how they affect access to and control over resources, and considers men and women's specific needs. It intentionally targets and benefits a specific group of women or men to achieve certain policy or program goals or meet certain needs.

Sex-disaggregated data: is data that is collected and presented separately on men and women. Sex describes the biological and physiological differences that distinguish males, females and intersex.

Women's empowerment: has five components: (1) women's sense of self-worth; (2) right to have and determine choices; (3) right to have access to opportunities and resources; (4) right to have power to control own lives both within and outside the home; (5) ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally.

Annex 2: Overview of GEF-6/IAP Core Gender Indicators

Outcomes	Gender Indicators	Source of Verification
Project design fully integrates gender concerns.	1. Percentage of projects that have conducted gender analysis during project preparation. 2. Percentage of projects that have incorporated gender responsive project results framework (e.g. gender responsive output, outcome, indicator, budget, etc.).	Project Document at CEO endorsement
Project implementation ensures gender equitable participation in and benefit from project activities.	3. Share of women and men as direct beneficiaries of project. 4. Share of convention related national reports incorporated gender dimensions (e.g. NBSAP, NAPA/NAP, TDA/SAP, etc.).	Project Implementation Reports, Mid-Term Evaluation Reports, and Terminal Evaluation Reports.
Project monitoring and evaluation give adequate attention to gender mainstreaming.	5. Percentage of monitoring and evaluation reports (e.g. Project Implementation Reports, Mid-term Evaluation Reports, and Terminal Evaluation Reports) that incorporates gender equality/women's empowerment issues and assess results/progress.	Project Implementation Reports, Mid-Term Evaluation Reports, and Terminal Evaluation Reports.

Annex 3: Explanation of UN-SWAP GEEW Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Annotation
1. GEEW is integrated in the Evaluation Scope of analysis and Indicators are designed in a way that ensures GEEW-related data will be collected.	If gender responsive, the evaluation will analyze how GEEW objectives and GEEW mainstreaming principles were included in the intervention design and how GEEW results have been achieved. Gender responsive evaluation requires and assessment of the extent to which an intervention being evaluated has been guided by organizational and system-wide objectives on GEEW. Indicators for the evaluation of the intervention should include GEEW dimensions and/or additional indicators are identified specifically addressing GEEW; mixed indicators (including quantitative and qualitative indicators) are preferred.
2. Evaluation Criteria and Evaluation Questions specifically address how GEEW has been integrated into the design, planning, implementation of the intervention and the results achieved.	GEEW dimensions are integrated into all Evaluation Criteria and questions as appropriate and/or criteria derived directly from GEEW principles are used (e.g. equality, participation, social transformation, inclusiveness, empowerment, etc.).
3. A gender-responsive Evaluation Methodology, Methods and tools, and Data Analysis Techniques are selected.	Triangulation of data is done to ensure that the voices of both women, men, boys and girls are heard and used; additional time or resources (time, staff, funds) to implement a gender-responsive approach is considered and planned for, etc. mixed-method approach are preferred to make visible diverse perspectives and promotes participation of both women and men, boys and girls from different stakeholder groups Data collection methods including, desk reviews, focus groups, interviews, surveys, etc. are identified and accompanying tools, e.g. questionnaires, observational tools, interview guides etc. developed integrating GEEW considerations (e.g. interview guides ensure that women and men are interviewed in ways that avoid gender biases or the reinforcement of gender discrimination and unequal power relations, etc.). During data screening and data analysis, special attention is paid to data and information that specifically refer to GEEW issues in the intervention, and making the best possible use of these in the overall assessment of the intervention.
4. The evaluation Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations reflect a gender analysis	The evaluation report's findings, conclusion and recommendations should reflect a gender analysis. The evaluation report should also provide lessons/challenges/recommendations for conducting gender-responsive evaluation based on the experience of that particular evaluation.

Endnotes: Relevant Gender Guidelines, Policies and Convention Text

- ¹ [GEF/ME/C.48/01 Four-Year Work Program and Budget of the GEF Independent Evaluation Office – GEF-6, May 2015.](#)
- ² [Mainstreaming Gender at the GEF, February 2013.](#)
- ³ [UNFCCC Decisions and Conclusions: Existing Mandates and Entry Points, October 2014.](#)
- ⁴ [UNFCCC/CP/2014/10/Add.3, Decision 18/CP.20 Lima Work Programme on Gender, December 2014.](#)
- ⁵ [CBD COP 12 Decision XII/7, Mainstreaming Gender Considerations, October 2014.](#)
- ⁶ [UNCCD Advocacy Policy Framework on Gender, September 2013.](#)
- ⁷ [UNEP Report on Activities of the Global Environment Facility in relation to the Minamata Convention during the Interim Period, October 2014.](#)
- ⁸ [GEF IEO OPS5, TD16, Sub-Study on the GEF’s Policy on Gender Mainstreaming, October 2013.](#)
- ⁹ [GEF POLICY:SD/PL/02, Policy on Gender Mainstreaming, May 2012.](#)
- ¹⁰ [GEF/C.47/09.Rev.01, Gender Equality Action Plan \(GEAP\), October 2014.](#)
- ¹¹ [UN-SWAP A plan to improve gender equality and the empowerment of women \(GEEW\) across the UN system, November 2014.](#)
- ¹² [UN System-Wide Action Plan \(SWAP\) for the Implementation of the CEB Policy and the Empowerment of Women: Performance Indicators Technical Notes, December 2014.](#)
- ¹³ [UN-SWAP Evaluation Performance Indicator: 2014 Reporting Cycle Results, July 2015.](#)
- ¹⁴ [UN-SWAP Evaluation Performance Indicator Technical Note, August 2014.](#)
- ¹⁵ [GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy, November 2010.](#)
- ¹⁶ [UNEG Guidance Document Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation, August 2014.](#)