Gender in Stakeholder Engagement

By Natasha Ezekiel

Director and Independent Social Safeguard Specialist

Email: natasha@risesustainability.com
linkedin: Natasha Ezekiel

Rise Sustainability Consulting

Mainstreaming Gender in Stakeholder Engagement
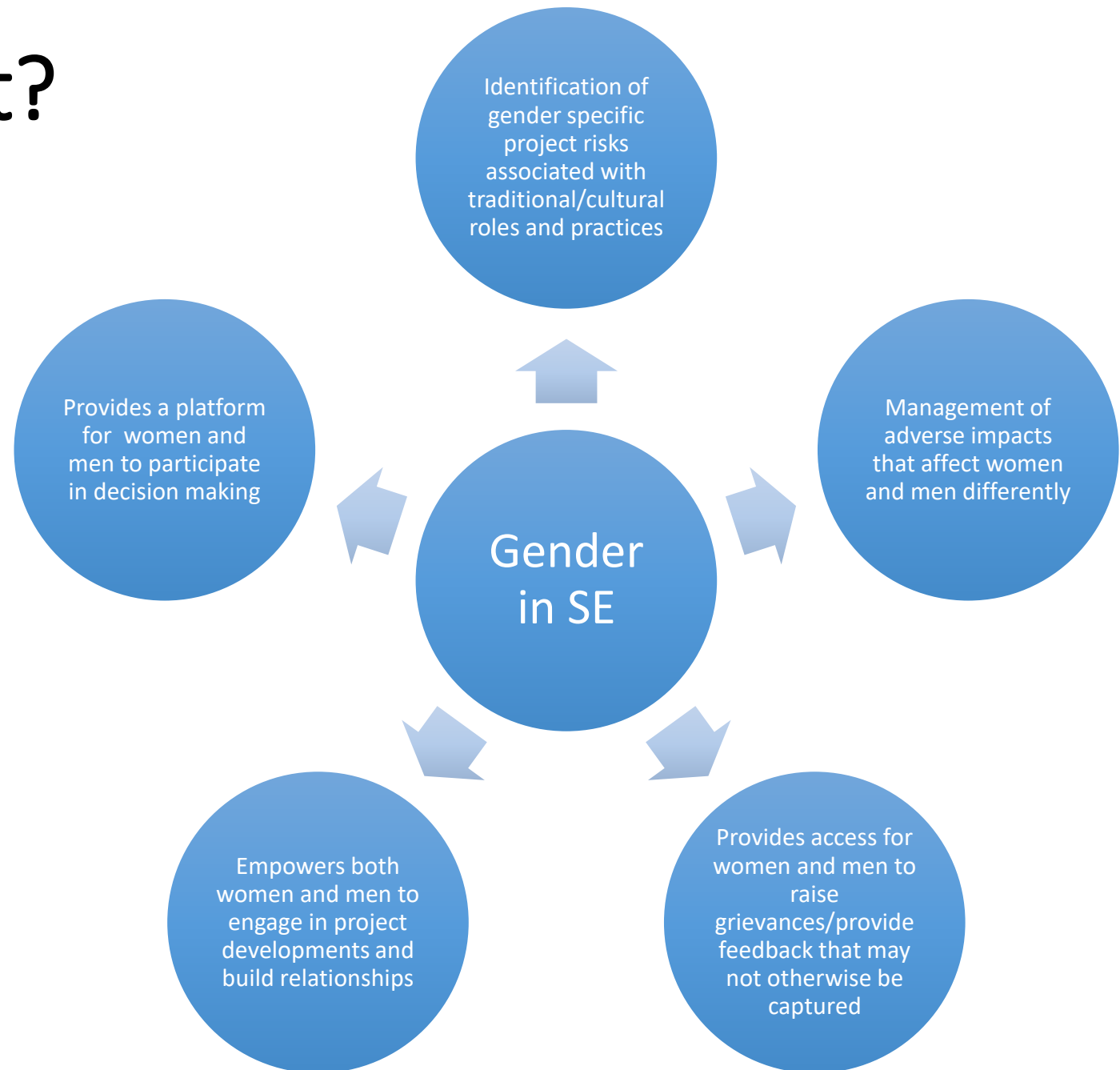
What is it?

- To include both women and men in engagement activities, with consideration for the traditional/cultural context in order to ensure that gender specific feedback is captured and incorporated into project design and management to mitigate such risks.

Example of lender requirements in gender mainstreaming in SE – International Finance Corporation:

- **IFC Performance Standard 1: Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts -** Paragraph 31 states that for projects with adverse impacts, an Informed Consultation and Participation (ICP) process is required, and should (i) capture both men's and women's views, if necessary through separate forums or engagements, and (ii) reflect men's and women's different concerns and priorities about impacts, mitigation mechanisms, and benefits, where appropriate.

Why is it important?

Identification of gender specific project risks associated with traditional/cultural roles and practices

Management of adverse impacts that affect women and men differently

Gender in SE

Provides a platform for women and men to participate in decision making

Provides access for women and men to raise grievances/provide feedback that may not otherwise be captured

Empowers both women and men to engage in project developments and build relationships

Gender Related Engagement Challenges And How They Can Be Overcome

Challenges:

- Traditional/cultural roles can limit or prevent access to women during engagement activities.
- Women's domestic and economic roles can limit their availability and willingness to participate.
- Women's participation may be limited or completely restricted in patriarchal societies that do not allow them to have a voice in the community or to make decisions. This can cause conflict in communities if not managed appropriately.
- Participation of women in engagement can be limited if facilitators are men.
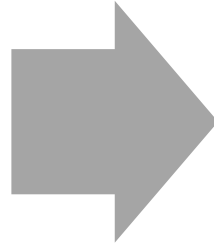
How they can be overcome:

- Understand the gender context to identify engagement approaches.
- Engage with the community, in particular women, to determine the best way to communicate with them.
- Engage with women in focus group settings facilitated by a female to capture views and information.
- Use participatory techniques to capture gender specific information e.g. gender matrices, seasonal calendars, ranking, community mapping/transect walks.
- Establish representative community committees that comprise 50% women.
- Identify and engage with women's cooperatives/groups. Where they do not exist, support the establishment of such groups.

4

Determining Engagement Approaches

Undertake stakeholder mapping/analysis and determine gender context

Develop engagement methods for stakeholder groups

Document approach in a Stakeholder Engagement Plan

- Includes identifying the key stakeholders and mapping and prioritising them based on level of impact, influence and interest.

- Data gathering through community leaders, government representatives and high-level online research to understand the gender context (e.g. gender indicators/data on education, labour force participation, health, agency/decision making and traditional and cultural practices).

- Establish culturally appropriate engagement methods (including on the grievance mechanism if relevant) for each stakeholder group with consideration for culture and gender, based on the gender context.

- Engage with stakeholder groups on approaches determined to gather feedback and suggestions.

- Develop an SEP that includes stakeholder mapping/analysis, gender context and engagement methods.

Questions to Help Determine Engagement Approaches

1. Are there barriers/challenges in participating in decision making and in attending meetings that may affect women/men? How can these be addressed?

2. How would women/men like to be consulted? How often? What would they like to discuss during these meetings? (manage expectations here)

3. What are the key messages / outcomes required from engagement activities? (e.g. providing information, gathering data, making decisions regarding project aspects, etc)

Engagement Approaches

Method	Description
Community Meetings	Captures the community at the same time, however encouragement for women's participation may be required and meeting times considered.
Community Committees	A community committee/forum comprised of community representatives, and with a gender balance, is a good way to elicit gender specific views and feedback.
Focus Group Discussions	A target group gathered that have commonalities by virtue of their gender, economic activity, interest or other aspect, that provides a platform for open discussions and to elicit specific information.
Seasonal Calendars	Undertaken with separate groups of men and women to understand land-based/economic activities and challenges throughout the year.
Gender Matrix	To understand the roles and responsibilities of men and women, resources required and socio-economic challenges / barriers.
Access and Control Framework	To gather gender differentiated information on the type/level of access and control that men and women have in the household, community and workplace (e.g. land, finance, education, etc).
Community Profiling and Transect Walks	To gather community level information on demographics, community infrastructure, livelihoods and needs.

Case Study 1: Stakeholder Engagement Plan for a Hydro Project in Turkey

- **Assignment:** To develop a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) as part of an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment update.

- **Situation/Challenge:** Women do not have a voice in the community and there was resistance from the project team to include specific engagement methods in the plan.

- **Outcome:** Requirement to engage with women and men on the gender aspects of the SEP to ensure that it is culturally tailored in a way that does not cause offence or community/domestic conflicts. A recommendation to recruit female community liaison staff was also included in the plan.

Case Study 2: Community Development Feasibility Studies and Livelihood Restoration Plan (LRP) for a Planned Solar Project in Malawi

- **Assignment:** To identify community development needs and investment opportunities to inform a community development feasibility study and LRP.

- **Situation/Challenge:** No female representation in village leadership and lack of participation in decision making. Requirement to ensure that needs and opportunities for both women and men are captured.

- **Outcome:** Used a number of participatory approaches to capture information, including gender matrices, seasonal calendars and access and control frameworks. Projects identified included improved menstrual hygiene management and borehole installation, subsidised solar home kits and eco-stoves, business management/financial literacy training and capacity development, particularly in agriculture.

Case Study 3: Livelihoods and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion Studies for a Hydro Project in Liberia

- **Assignment:** To assess the baseline in relation to livelihoods and WASH to provide recommendations on related projects.

- **Situation/Challenge:** Gathering information on highly sensitive issues resulting from extreme poverty and legacy issues arising from past conflict and Ebola.

- **Outcome:** Undertook focus group discussions and community mapping to capture gender specific issues, needs and preferences regarding WASH. Recommendations included capacity development and other support in agriculture, community led sanitation programme and sensitisation regarding menstrual hygiene management and gender-based violence prevention. Also identified non-government organisations to support such programmes.

Example Engagement Tools

Gender Matrix

You will need a flipchart and some pens. Draw out the matrix on the flipchart (separate matrix for men and women).

Ask focus group participants to talk through their day.

	Labour	Time	Resources	Socio-cultural Factors
	Day to day activities	What time does the activity start and end. How long does each activity take? (timeline)	What resources / tools / equipment is required to carry out activities (e.g. income, land, credit)	Socio-cultural factors that influence behaviour - what are the main barriers/challenges that affect day to day activities?
Women or men depending on the group				

Example Engagement Tools

Access and Control Framework

Facilitator guidance: Use this tool to understand access and control of resources in a household or community.   Draw the matrix out on a flipchart. Write each of the resources on a post-it note and ask a representative from each group to place it in the relevant box. Please discuss each resource.

Access: Able to use a resource but do not have control over it. For example women may have be able to access land, but do not have control over it, for example, for selling.

Control: Makes final decisions about resource use (e.g. if it can be sold)

	Access to Resources		Control of Resources		Comments/Observations
	Women	Men	Women	Men	
Land					
Education and training					
Technology					
Cash					
Credit/Loan					
Marketing/selling					
Labour / staff					

Example Engagement Tools

Seasonal Calendar

For each focus group draw out this table on a flipchart. Talk through each month in relation to land based activities that are undertaken, from a gender perspective.

Month	Season (wet/dry)	Crops planted	Crops harvested	Other land based activities (eg grazing, fishing)	Resources Available /Usage (inc water, labour availability)	Challenges/Related Illnesses
Jan						
Feb						
Mar						
Apr						
May						
Jun						
Jul						
Aug						
Sep						
Oct						
Nov						
Dec						

Key 'Take-Aways'......

Understand the gender context to ensure a culturally sensitive and tailored approach to engagement.

Engage on the approaches identified to ensure that they are acceptable.

Know your stakeholders and their vulnerabilities / limitations.

Design a programme that allows for inclusive and participatory engagement throughout the project lifecycle.

Take-Aways

Thank you!

Contact Details:

Natasha Ezekiel
Rise Sustainability Consulting

Email: natasha@risesustainability.com
linkedin: Natasha Ezekiel