

ITTO POLICY GUIDELINES ON GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWERING WOMEN (GEEW)

I. PURPOSE

1. ITTO is committed to gender mainstreaming and enhancing gender equality outcomes across its policy and project work. ITTO's Policy Guidelines on Gender Equality and Empowering Women (GEEW) institutionalize this commitment. The Policy Guidelines serve as a framework for gender integration and mainstreaming in ITTO policies, plans, programmes, projects, activities and internal functioning and are intended to enhance the impact and effectiveness of the Organization's operations in all areas and at all levels.

II. RATIONALE

2. Through the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, all ITTO Members recognize the crucial role of gender equality to realizing sustainable development and are committed to advancing Sustainable Development Goal 5: To achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. In this context, ITTO recognizes that:

- Gender equality and empowering women are essential to achieving sustainable forest management, including the sustainable management of tropical timber producing forests, which is a core ITTO objective.
- Women participate in the forest sector in diverse ways and within different cultural and geographic contexts, including as part of indigenous and local communities, as migrants, as farmers, and as workers, technicians and professionals.
- In many rural communities, particularly in producer countries, men and women typically play different roles in forestry and agroforestry systems. Women are often primary collectors and users of forest resources, such as fuelwood, wild foods and medicinal herbs, have traditional knowledge of forest management practices that are often inherently sustainable, and make specific contributions to tropical forest value chains which are important for household incomes and well-being.
- Due to a variety of interrelated cultural, social, economic and institutional factors, which vary from country to country and sometimes within countries, women are often disadvantaged in the forest sector. Specific disadvantages vary depending on the sphere(s) in which the women operate, which may be rural, urban, indigenous, local, national, technical, professional, public and/or private.
- Despite their crucial role in forest management, many women are limited in their control over forest land; access to financial resources, technology, education and training; share in forest-based benefits; and decision-making opportunities.
- Women are also often disadvantaged in tropical timber-based industries where they may not have equal access to employment opportunities or receive equal pay for equal work.
- In many Member countries, women are underrepresented, particularly at senior levels, in forest authorities, institutions and organizations, as well as in tropical forest-based processing and manufacturing industries and international trade groups. This hampers their ability to influence, and bring their perspectives to bear on, public and private sector decisions.
- In addition to cultural biases, the lack of sex-disaggregated data and statistics on the role of women in forestry, particularly in trade and industry, hampers the development of policy interventions to address gender inequalities.
- The potential of women to engage in, contribute to and benefit from the international forest-based economy as leaders, participants and agents of change, has yet to be fully realized. More work is needed by all stakeholders at all levels, including the ITTO.

III. OBJECTIVES

3. The objectives of the Policy Guidelines are to:

- Enhance the effective integration and mainstreaming of gender considerations in all aspects of ITTO's policy and project work.
- Build the capacity of ITTO and its Members to promote gender equality and empower women in the tropical forest sector.
- Strengthen the role of women in ITTO's governance structure, including in the work of the Council and Committees, ad hoc expert panels and working groups, and the Secretariat.

IV. PRINCIPLES

4. The Policy Guidelines reflect and flow from the following guiding principles:

- Gender equality is a core value of ITTO. Achieving ITTO's objectives will be accelerated by efforts to close the gender gap and empower women at all levels.
- Integrating a gender perspective means promoting equal opportunities, rights, voice, influence, leadership and benefits for women at all levels and in all spheres of ITTO's work.
- Gender equality is a matter of human rights. In order to achieve gender equality, it is often necessary to overcome historical biases and empower women to exercise their rights and fulfill their potential to contribute as full and equal members of society.
- Gender equality is an issue that concerns both women and men, recognizing that the roles of men and women in forestry systems may differ across cultures. Involving men is essential to bring about changes in attitudes, behavior and biases that disenfranchise women.
- Achieving gender equality and empowering women depends on generating information on the current situation of women in specific forest sector settings and cultural contexts and identifying social, economic and technological inequalities between men and women.
- Implementation of the Policy Guidelines will be consistent with applicable laws of ITTO Member countries and seek to advance the goals of relevant international instruments, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

V. GUIDELINES

5. The Policy Guidelines address and provide guidance on eight core elements: (1) ITTO policies, action plans and thematic programmes, (2) ITTO project cycle, (3) capacity building, (4) statistics and information, (5) learning, knowledge management and communication, (6) networking and partnerships, (7) internal functioning and (8) accountability.

Element 1 – ITTO policies, action plans and thematic programmes

- ITTO's policy papers and guidelines will integrate a gender perspective and mainstream gender considerations wherever relevant.
- ITTO's strategic action plans will incorporate gender mainstreaming, including women's empowerment, as a strategic priority, as well as a key cross-cutting strategy to achieving other priorities set out in the plans.
- To the extent possible, ITTO thematic programmes will include one or more objectives focused on raising awareness of gender roles, norms and relations and promoting gender equality in the programme context.

Element 2 – ITTO project cycle

- The ITTO project cycle will integrate and mainstream gender issues. Gender equality will be addressed in all phases of the project cycle, including project formulation, implementation, monitoring, review and evaluation.
- The needs and interests of women and men, including their effective participation and outcome benefits, will be equally taken into account and promoted within ITTO-funded projects.
- All ITTO projects will be “gender-sensitive” and will examine gender roles, norms, relations and potential project impacts through a gender analysis and seek to generate gender co-benefits in project design.
- Wherever possible, ITTO projects will be “gender transformative” by including one or more objectives focused on raising awareness of gender roles, norms and relations and positively changing (transforming) those roles, norms or relations to improve gender equality and empower women. Such projects will include women’s organizations and/or networks as project partners and, where appropriate, as Executing Agencies.
- In all cases, the gender analysis will:¹
 - Be appropriate to the project field (e.g. forest management, forest industry, trade), as well as the project scale (local, national, regional, international).
 - Include the collection of quantitative sex-disaggregated data where possible, as well as qualitative information provided by stakeholders, both women and men.
 - Generate information and data to inform project design, interventions and desired outcomes, including budget allocations.
- Men and women will be provided with equitable opportunities to be included in stakeholder consultations and decision-making during project formulation, implementation and evaluation.
- ITTO will promote the collection, analysis and use of gender equality indicators and sex-disaggregated data in project monitoring, reporting and evaluation.
- ITTO will utilize a results-based management approach in monitoring, reporting and evaluating gender-related project outcomes and impacts, with evidence of actual results used to make course corrections as needed.

Element 3 - Capacity building

- ITTO will seek to enhance the capacity of Members to establish, strengthen and implement laws, regulations and policies designed to achieve gender equality and empower women, particularly within the tropical forest sector.
- The Executive Director will promote a shared commitment to gender equality within the Secretariat and ensure that staff members have the understanding, training and capacity needed to carry out these Policy Guidelines.

Element 4 – Statistics and information

- In addition to its programme and project work, ITTO will integrate gender in its data collection and statistical processes, with a view to generating sex-disaggregated data for all applicable organizational functions and categories of information. This will include data collected through national reporting on ITTO’s criteria and indicators for sustainable management of tropical forests.

¹ Additional guidance on gender analysis is contained in the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation.

Element 5 – Learning, knowledge management and communication

- ITTO will enhance learning on gender equality **and empowering women** as part of its knowledge management activities, including sharing experiences and lessons learned, upscaling best practices from different situations and cultural contexts, and working to develop a better understanding of gender and the international tropical timber economy.
- The Secretariat will develop tools, products and platforms suitable for a variety of audiences to raise awareness of the importance of gender equality to achieving ITTO's objectives and to communicate the Organization's efforts and achievements in promoting gender equality **and women's empowerment** in its policy and project work.

Element 6 – Networking and partnerships

- The Council, Committees and Secretariat will work with TAG and CSAG to strengthen gender mainstreaming in the ITTO.
- The Executive Director will develop alliances with organizations and networks that work on gender equality, in particular UN-Women and regional women's organizations **and** networks, and explore opportunities to develop joint gender equality initiatives with CPF partners.

Element 7 - Internal functioning

- ITTO will strengthen efforts to seek gender balance in the Council bureaus, expert panels and working groups.
- The Executive Director will ensure an office atmosphere and culture that is respectful of women employees at all levels, enables them to reach their full potential, and promotes inclusion and transparency.
- The Executive Director will take gender into consideration in engaging consultants, awarding procurement contracts, and appointing members of Thematic Programme Advisory Committees.

Element 8 – Accountability

- ITTO will establish an accountability mechanism and timeline to track progress and measure success on gender integration and mainstreaming, including women's empowerment, within the Organization's policy and project work and management practices.
- The Executive Director and permanent Committees will monitor and regularly report to Council on the implementation of these Policy Guidelines.
- ITTO programme and project managers will ensure Executing Agencies and other partners report regularly on gender integration in ITTO-funded programmes and projects, which may include developing gender sensitive indicators to measure progress.

VI. IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

6. The Policy Guidelines will be operationalized through actions taken within existing resources, as well as through priority activities identified by the Council in ITTO's Biennial Work Programmes (BWPs) which require additional voluntary contributions from Members, beginning with the BWP 2018-2019. The Secretariat will propose implementation activities for Council's consideration for inclusion in the BWPs.