

Annex 5. Policy for SwedBio's work on gender equality

The global context – *Women and men have different access to land, biological resources and ecosystem services*

The roles of women and men in the management of biodiversity, and the rights and access of men and women to land, biological resources and ecosystem services, vary between and within countries and cultures. In many contexts, gender-based differences and inequalities tend to favour males. Gender roles and responsibilities, as well as inequalities in rights and access can lead to additional gender inequalities related to biodiversity. For example, gender inequalities related to access to knowledge, needs and priorities, risk and vulnerabilities, and decision-making power.¹

Women are vulnerable to the loss of biodiversity

Women and men can end up being vulnerable in different ways when biological resources are depleted. Women are often more vulnerable than men. This is partly because women's roles can often be "invisible" compared to that of men. Policies, programmes and initiatives may not fully take into account the differences in how women and men use and contribute to biological resources. Such "gender gaps" often disadvantage women compared to men. Moreover, underlying socio-cultural norms may hinder women's equal access to natural resources and decision-making related to them.²

Biodiversity programmes provide an opportunity to alleviate inequalities

Loss of biodiversity and ecosystem degradation undermines sustainable and equitable development, especially for people living in multidimensional poverty. Biodiversity policy and programming in many contexts still offer few opportunities to build on women's specific roles and capacities compared to those of men. National and global biodiversity governance often lack the perspective of women, indigenous peoples and local communities. Changes in the availability and management of biodiversity may affect women and men in different ways, which can perpetuate or alleviate inequalities. Biodiversity policy and programming are therefore also important entry points for women's empowerment, where women are supported to overcome gender gaps and fulfil their potential – including to promote biodiversity goals.³

Global policies to guarantee equal rights and access to resources for women

A number of policy processes and frameworks are relevant to SwedBio's work on gender equality for sustainable and equitable management of biodiversity and ecosystems.

¹ Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (2019) *Addressing Gender Issues and Actions in Biodiversity Objectives*, https://www.cbd.int/gender/doc/cbd-towards2020-gender_integration-en.pdf

² Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (2019) *Addressing Gender Issues and Actions in Biodiversity Objectives*, https://www.cbd.int/gender/doc/cbd-towards2020-gender_integration-en.pdf

³ Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (2019) *Addressing Gender Issues and Actions in Biodiversity Objectives*, https://www.cbd.int/gender/doc/cbd-towards2020-gender_integration-en.pdf

The UN Convention on Biological Diversity recognizes the vital role that women play in the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and affirms the need for the full participation of women at all levels of policymaking and implementation for biological diversity conservation.⁴

The Strategic Plan for Biological Diversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Target 14 states that; By 2020, ecosystems that provide essential services, including services related to water, and contribute to health, livelihoods and well-being, are restored and safeguarded, taking into account the needs of women, Indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable.⁵

The Committee on World Food Security (CFS) outlines Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems.⁶ The principles state that responsible investment in agriculture and food systems fosters gender equality and women's empowerment by:

- i. Ensuring that all people are treated fairly, recognizing their respective situations, needs, constraints, and the vital role played by women;
- ii. Eliminating all measures and practices that discriminate or violate rights on the basis of gender;
- iii. Advancing women's equal tenure rights, and their equal access to and control over productive land, natural resources, inputs, productive tools; and promoting access to extension, advisory, and financial services, education, training, markets, and information;
- iv. Adopting innovative and/or proactive approaches, measures, and processes to enhance women's meaningful participation in partnerships, decision-making, leadership roles, and the equitable sharing of benefits

The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) describes gender equality as one of the key leverage points, where efforts can yield exceptionally large effects on sustainability, in its global assessment report 2019.⁷

FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Small Scale Fisheries describe gender equality as integral to responsible fisheries and sustainable development. The guidelines also outline policy recommendations that have integrated several gender equality related measures.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development sets out an ambitious framework of universal and indivisible goals and targets to address a range of global societal challenges. Many of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and associated targets relate directly to biodiversity and ecosystems. The SDGs confirm that biodiversity is at the centre of many economic activities, particularly those related to crop and livestock agriculture, forestry, and fisheries. The SDGs and the Strategic Plan for Biological Diversity 2011-2020 are mutually supportive and reinforcing.⁸

⁴UN Convention on Biological Diversity UN Convention on Biological Diversity (1992), preamble.
<https://www.cbd.int/convention/text/>

⁵ Aichi Targets, <https://www.cbd.int/aichi-targets/target/14%7D>

⁶ The Committee on World Food Security (CFS) 2014, *Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems*

⁷The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) (2019) Summary for policymakers of the global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, Paragraph D3.

⁸ See for example Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity 2019, *Biodiversity and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development- Technical Note*, <https://www.cbd.int/development/doc/biodiversity-2030-agenda-technical-note-en.pdf>

The global guiding policy framework for gender equality is the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The convention can be described as an international bill of rights for women. It was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979.⁹

The Swedish foreign policy context

Swedish foreign policy is committed to safeguard gender equality as an integrated part of the efforts for global management of natural resources and ecosystem services. The Swedish strategy for development cooperation in this regard states that long-term sustainable development, management and use of natural resources and ecosystem services are crucial for people being able to overcome poverty. This is particularly important for women and girls, and local communities and indigenous populations, which are also important actors to safeguard sustainable development. Gender equality, empowering women and girls and the rights of women and girls are goals in their own right, as well as a condition and a means of achieving sustainable global development.¹⁰ Efforts to forward gender equality and women's rights are integrated in the Theory of Change of SwedBio. SwedBio's aims to contribute to global gender equality as a stand-alone development goal and a SwedBio mission statement on gender equality highlights our commitment to giving women and men equal voice and opportunity to contribute to SwedBio's vision:

SwedBio's mission statement on gender equality

SwedBio works for a world that is sustainably managed and where rights are equitably fulfilled, with people being able to make sustainable choices for biodiversity-rich and resilient futures while thriving in harmony with nature. SwedBio applies a gender equality perspective to all its activities, partnerships and dialogue efforts, with the aim of enabling the full and effective participation and knowledge of women, indigenous and disadvantaged groups to the local, regional and global policy level. SwedBio supports its partners to develop methods for and accelerate the implementation of gender equality guidelines and policies within their work. SwedBio follows the lead of partner organisations and their priorities in creating spaces for mutual learning on forwarding gender equality.

Gender equality is mainstreamed into SwedBio's Theory of Change

Gender equality is mainstreamed into all parts of SwedBio's Theory of Change, including the actions, enabling trajectories for change and desirable long-term changes in both of SwedBio's impact pathways: the Collaborative partner implementation and the Dialogue for knowledge and policy pathways. Gender mainstreaming is not separate from the ordinary mission of SwedBio, rather, it requires that a gender equality perspective is applied to all ordinary tasks within the framework of SwedBio's work for biodiversity and ecosystem management. For example, when thinking about how to reach its desirable long-term changes, SwedBio considers how to frame a description of a problem, as well as the solution

⁹ United Nations General Assembly (1979) Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>

¹⁰ The Strategy for Sweden's global development cooperation in the areas of environmental sustainability, sustainable climate and oceans, and sustainable use of natural resources (2018–2022).

from the perspective of women, men, girls and boys. SwedBio takes as a starting point the insight that men and women have unequal access to rights pertaining to biodiversity and ecosystem management. SwedBio strives to enable women and men on equal footing to take part in the work for biodiversity, globally as well as locally. It is worth noting that even though this exercise focuses on women and men, all genders are equally important and considered.

SwedBio collaborates with Stockholm Resilience Center in order to gain synergies to easier reach their respective goals. There are several opportunities for this regarding gender equality, such as regarding policies, guidelines, education, knowledge sharing and capacity building. SwedBio and Stockholm Resilience Center are building capacity to better understand and work with gender together. Shared knowledge about gender equality is used for funding applications. When policies and guidelines get adjusted, this policy for gender mainstreaming and the knowledge within SwedBio is used for inspiration.

Policy and methods development

SwedBio supports policy and methods development for gender equality in all aspects of its work for biological diversity and ecosystem services. SwedBio is a 'knowledge interface', bridging across practice, policy and science, connecting local experiences and realities in developing countries to global policy processes. SwedBio also manages collaborative partnerships with strategic contributions, both financial and technical, to partner organisations in developing countries. A gender equality perspective is mainstreamed into the Collaborative Partner Implementation as well as the Dialogue for Knowledge and Policy (previously referred to as the 'knowledge interface' programme component) pathways.

In the Collaborative partner implementation work

SwedBio announces calls for proposals specifically devoted to developing and applying methods for engaging with women as the target group, women's coalitions and networks, as well as projects addressing gender equality involving all genders.

SwedBio applies gender mainstreaming to all projects and collaborations, starting already at the stage of screening applications. SwedBio also regularly follows up on partners' gender equality work. For example, some partners monitor their work using gender equality indicators.

SwedBio engages in continuous dialogue with all its partners regarding gender mainstreaming in their work. The dialogue is an integrated part of the partnership, in order to develop the work with an emphasis of local ownership and guidance of local knowledge as well as for mutual learning.

SwedBio provides dialogue-based support to partner organisations that look to implement projects and activities that aim at forwarding or building capacity on gender equality.

SwedBio promotes and encourages its partner organisations to develop gender equality policies, guidelines, or other steering documents.

SwedBio explores participatory methods to highlight and bring forward knowledge from diverse women to inform its policies and practices for project, programme, and policy development. In particular, SwedBio explores creative methods with partner organisations to reach communities to inform and use education, cultural expressions and local knowledge to reflect over norms at large.

SwedBio supports and facilitates coalition-building and networking between partner organisations for the exchange of experiences and knowledge of their work for gender equality.

In the Dialogue for Knowledge and Policy work

SwedBio actively promotes women's right and gender equality in global and regional policy dialogue, bringing forward the perspectives and priorities of diverse women on issues pertaining to biodiversity and ecosystem management. SwedBio develops position papers and policy briefs on issues related to gender equality and biodiversity.

SwedBio supports networking and coalition-building of women and provides support to build common ground and leverage to influence regional and global policy debates.

When engaging in policy dialogue, SwedBio promotes and supports representation of diverse women, and actively strives to uphold a gender balance in presence in meetings, side events, and panels.

SwedBio supports and builds the capacity of partner organisations to engage in the monitoring of the implementation of gender equality policies in local, regional and global contexts, as well as equal access to rights pertaining to biodiversity and ecosystem management for women and men.

SwedBio assesses policy interventions with a gender analysis which includes asking the following questions:

- In what policy foras do we engage?
- What problem is the policy addressing and how does that problem play out differently for women and men?
- What does the solution look like for women and men?
- What actors or organisations do we collaborate with? With what subgroups within the organisations do we collaborate? Do they have the right competencies to advocate the issue?
- What does the gender balance look like in expert teams, panels, delegations? What voices are not being heard?
- How can we team-up with and support those voices that are not being heard and/or who are vulnerable when speaking up?
- How do we draw on the experiences of diverse women's networks and delegations to inform our policy work and promote learning?
- Do we have the right competencies on this policy issue, or do we need to consult external expertise?

Central insights that guide the SwedBio's efforts for gender equality

- Women who are environmental and human rights defenders are increasingly vulnerable and face multiple types of human rights violations.
- Representation of diverse women's voices in policy fora is central to forwarding the gender equality agenda as well as for sustainable and equitable management of biodiversity and ecosystems.
- The work for gender equality is guided by dialogue with partner organisations which reflect understanding of local conditions, premises and priorities.
- Women do not represent one experience but are diverse in their background, knowledge and access to power. Women's opportunities in life are shaped by intersecting identities such as cultural background, age, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, class or income and other circumstances. These multiple factors shape women's identity, access to resources, life opportunities, power and influence.

- The work for gender equality involves engaging with women and girls, men and boys, as well as non-binary people in order to break down destructive gender stereotypes that can be harmful to all genders.
- In cases of conflicting views on gender equality between global human and women's rights policy and customary practices, SwedBio recognizes that while human rights are universal and apply to all, cultures are living phenomena that change over time. Therefore, SwedBio supports efforts for gender equality that are guided by the concerned Indigenous peoples and communities themselves.¹¹

Tools available

The Gender Integration Guide for implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity¹²

This guide on gender mainstreaming sets out key gender issues that influence the achievement of each biodiversity objective. It also suggests actions that can be taken to realize more sustainable and gender-responsive biodiversity outcomes.

The Gender Toolbox by Sida¹³

The Gender Toolbox gathers knowledge material and method support on gender equality in the form of tools, briefs and thematic overviews. Among those helpful to SwedBio's work are the tools for Gender Analysis¹⁴ and Gender Mainstreaming¹⁵. Policy briefs are also available on Women and Land Rights¹⁶, Women and Food security¹⁷, and Gender and the Environment.¹⁸

UN guidelines for gender inclusive language¹⁹

These guidelines provide hands-on tips for how to write in a gender inclusive manner.

Gender mainstreaming with an intersectional perspective²⁰

This document by the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research explains how gender equality work can be improved with an intersectional perspective.

¹¹ Aligned with reasoning in ICCA gender policy, <https://www.iccaconsortium.org/index.php/2018/10/08/gender-policy/>

¹² Secretariat of the (2019) *Addressing Gender Issues and Actions in Biodiversity Objectives* https://www.cbd.int/gender/doc/cbd-towards2020-gender_integration-en.pdf

¹³ Sida Gender Toolbox, <https://www.sida.se/English/partners/methods-materials/gender-tool-box/>

¹⁴ Sida Gender Analysis- Principles and Elements <https://www.sida.se/English/publications/159386/gender-analysis--principles--elements/>

¹⁵ Sida Gender Mainstreaming <https://www.sida.se/English/publications/159382/gender-mainstreaming/>

¹⁶ Sida Women and Land rights, <https://www.sida.se/English/publications/159444/women-and-land-rights/>

¹⁷ Sida Women and Food Security <https://www.sida.se/English/publications/159448/women-and-food-security/>

¹⁸ Sida Gender and the Environment, <https://www.sida.se/English/publications/159426/gender-and-the-environment/>

¹⁹ UN Guidelines for Gender Inclusive language, <https://www.un.org/en/gender-inclusive-language/guidelines.shtml>

²⁰ Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research (2015) *Gender mainstreaming with an intersectional perspective*, <https://www.includegender.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Gender-Mainstreaming-with-an-Intersectional-Perspective-pdf.pdf>

Collaborations

SwedBio provides technical and financial support to a selection of international organisations, institutes, universities and civil society organisations, including Indigenous peoples and local communities' organisations, primarily based in developing countries. SwedBio supports regional and global networks of these kinds of organisations. SwedBio supports initiatives that bring diverse women's knowledge and priorities to regional and global policy agendas. SwedBio supports initiatives by and for women and non-binary persons, as well as initiatives that include and target men and non-binary persons in order to achieve gender equality.

Definitions and boundaries

Gender equality

Equality between women and men (gender equality) *refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys.*²¹

Intersectionality

Gender is a social variable, which crosscuts with other social variables such as age, ethnicity, class, religion, disability, sexual orientation and others. Intersectionality refers to the fact that these social variables interact, and that the individual is at the crossroads of these. For instance, a woman is never merely a woman but always has a certain ethnicity, age, sexual orientation etc. An intersectional approach examines the ways in which diverse socially and culturally constructed categories interact at different levels to produce different forms of inequalities. Different forms of oppression, which may be based on issues such as ethnicity, gender, class, disability or sexual orientation do not act independently but interact and shape one another. Thus, it is necessary to be very specific about which group of women or men that is referred to as the specificities vary a great deal.²²

Gender mainstreaming

Gender Mainstreaming is a globally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality. Mainstreaming is not an end in itself but a strategy, an approach, a means to achieve the goal of gender equality. Mainstreaming involves ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities - policy development, research, advocacy/ dialogue, legislation, resource allocation, and planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects.²³

Gender

Sex and gender are concepts used to make a distinction between biologically given and socially constructed differences. Sex refers to biological differences between women and men regardless of age, ethnicity or other variables. Gender refers to socially constructed differences between the sexes, norms and cultural expectations on women/girls, men/boys; and how femininity and masculinity is defined.²⁴

²¹ United Nations, UN Women <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm>

²² Sida Gender Equality in Practice https://www.sida.se/contentassets/0c376ea02bfa471aa57caefbc5d2d12f/gender-equality-in-practice_298.pdf

²³ United Nations, UN Women, <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/gendermainstreaming.htm>

²⁴ Sida Gender Analysis- Principles and Elements <https://www.sida.se/English/publications/159386/gender-analysis--principles--elements/>

Because gendered norms and perceptions of masculinity and femininity can be harmful to men, women, and those that do not define according to these binary categories, gender equality involves transformation of gender norms beyond ensuring the rights of women and girls.

Further information

For further information, please see SwedBio's strategies, guidelines, programme document and workplan.

Appendix. Recommendations for implementation of the policy

The following recommendations have been developed by Ramboll to support the management of SwedBio's mission to enhance its work with gender mainstreaming. We will consider these recommendations when further operationalising our policy.

- Ensure implementation of the policy and gender equality plan. Implementation is a continuous development and improvement of SwedBio's work, which should be streamlined with ordinary processes and procedures. Measures that support implementation are:
 - Follow-up and evaluation
 - Organisation and areas of responsibility
 - Learning and continuous development
 - Capacity-building and acquiring competencies
- Develop *partnership guidelines on gender equality*, which clarifies what partners need to consider in developing their proposals, criteria for partnership, reporting guidelines for gender equality, including suggestions for gendered indicators, and requirements for sex-disaggregated data.
- Develop a *dialogue guide* for the continuous partnership dialogue on gender equality. The dialogue guide should be a practical tool for programme officers to use in different stages of the partnership, including new partnerships, monitoring of project implementation, reporting as well as in the promotion of mutual learning. The dialogue guide should include questions and answers to difficult questions regarding cultural relativity and postcolonial views and support for a constructive dialogue with partners. Developing the dialogue guide together with trusted partners such as ICCA Consortium is a constructive way forward.
- Set-up a plan with targets and indicators for SwedBio's work for gender equality the coming 2-5 years.
- Ensure SwedBio's own reporting procedures and communication are gender mainstreamed, for example by a review of existing documentation and communication, ensuring that women are portrayed as active agents, a gender balance in pictures, ensuring the annual report highlights gender equality efforts.
- Promote learning opportunities for SwedBio staff members as well as partners. For example, by inviting partner organisations to share their experiences of working with gender mainstreaming, including sharing challenges and best practice. Make use of SwedBio's access to knowledge via partner organisations with local knowledge and perspectives.
- Arrange learning sessions together with partner organisations to explore and test gender analysis tools available to decide on a recommended practice for the work of SwedBio and its partners.
- Ensure that SwedBio's relevant steering and policy documents are in line with the gender equality policy. For example, the anti-corruption policy, partnership policy and staff member policy.

- Ensure that SweBio has the relevant competencies to forward the work on gender mainstreaming. Competencies can be acquired by learning opportunities, collaborations or recruitment.