

Q&A document

GEF-EAS Webinar 4 - Integrating Human Rights and Gender Considerations into NBSAPs

EN session 1

1. What kind of experience do you have regarding the challenges, opportunities, and self-integration of gender and human rights if you are already working on it?

From UNDP's perspective, in relation to the 2030 SDGs, the "leaving no one behind" approach actually refers to an intersectional approach. We need to keep in mind that when we're discussing inclusion for gender, indigenous peoples, and persons with disabilities, these aspects intersect significantly. Therefore, one of the challenges will be to monitor the range of intersections that occur across different levels of remoteness, vulnerabilities, and related factors.

2. May I now ask the presenters if you would like to add anything after hearing from the other presenters?

Well, for those participants who are part of the early action support, perhaps after this webinar, you can consider some priorities to address in this work and how it can support you with your NBSAP implementation, including all of the different topics that we've covered. UNDP and UNEP have provided a lot of resources and guidance, and with this webinar, you have a structured pathway for approaching human rights-based approaches and gender equality in your apps.

Yes, I would like to echo Catherine's sentiments and emphasize that H.R. is ready and willing to provide assistance and support for the integration of human rights into national biodiversity strategies and action plans. In addition to the resources I mentioned during the presentation, including the Environment Management Group's guidance on integrating rights into national biodiversity strategies and action plans, we also have other reference materials related to human rights and biodiversity. The work of the Special Rapporteurs on the environment and the rights of indigenous peoples, in particular, extensively addresses issues related to rights-based biodiversity action.

The main challenges and barriers at this point are partly related to resources and partly to expertise. We can certainly offer assistance in the expertise department, while the resources aspect may be more challenging. However, we are committed to working on both fronts.

EN session 2

1. How can countries address data gaps related to gender and biodiversity? These are critical data gaps that may not be readily available for updates. Could you please provide more details on this topic?

This highlights one of the challenges we face in the process, which is the existence of gender-related biodiversity data gaps in all countries worldwide. A good starting point is to recognize these gaps in the NBSAP and incorporate specific actions in the action plan to address them. Additionally, it's crucial to consider the types of stakeholders and experts involved in this process, leveraging existing networks and institutions where data collection is already taking place, and mobilizing that data for SAP planning and implementation.

2. Could you provide us with more in-depth information, including how human rights mechanisms, including national human rights institutions, can support the implementation of the apps? Although you've already given a brief explanation, could you please delve into more detail for the participants?

Certainly, there exists a wide array of human rights mechanisms, some of which are directly supported by governments, and others are independent, such as national human rights institutions, which are autonomous bodies established by governments to promote human rights at the national level. I believe that each of these mechanisms has a significant role to play.

The special procedures of the Human Rights Council consist of experts appointed by the Council to address specific human rights issues. For instance, the Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment and the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples have released thematic reports pertaining to biodiversity, including one from the Special Rapporteur on Indigenous peoples to the upcoming session of the Council, which examines conservation finance issues. The Special Rapporteur on the environment participated in the negotiations for the forthcoming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and produced several relevant reports in the lead-up to those negotiations. These independent experts have a vital role to fulfill.

Additionally, the human rights treaty bodies have made significant contributions. As previously mentioned, the Committee on the Rights of the Child has played a pivotal role in addressing children's rights and the environment. Furthermore, national human rights institutions, owing to their mandates, can offer direct technical support and guidance to the governments they collaborate with. Depending on their precise mandate, they may also receive complaints or petitions from individuals within their country's jurisdiction, related to issues concerning biodiversity loss and conservation.

Therefore, it is crucial to regard all these entities as potential contributors to the monitoring framework and as mechanisms for enhancing ambition and accountability regarding human rights violations linked to biodiversity loss.

If I can address the question about information regarding the participation of Indigenous peoples in existing steps, that is not something we have specifically analyzed. However, I did emphasize the general need for the process of developing new indicators to align with international human rights standards. This would entail ensuring adequate consultation and meaningful, informed, and effective participation of Indigenous peoples, including their free prior informed consent concerning matters that impact them. It is crucial that work in this area is undertaken.

It's worth noting that development is a national prerogative, and therefore, this process must be carried out on a country-by-country basis. Nevertheless, there may be ways to signal and provide guidance through the global process and negotiations in this direction. Notably, the Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework includes several references to the rights of Indigenous peoples, sending the right signals in that regard.

3. Did I understand correctly that the monitoring and evaluation framework was not finalized at COP15 and will instead be completed during the upcoming COP16?

Yes, that's correct. The monitoring and evaluation framework was not finalized at COP15. While some headline indicators were agreed upon, many of these indicators still required further elaboration. There is currently a notable gap in the sense that there are no robust indicators related to many of the targets that are directly relevant to human rights or that encompass human rights aspects within their implementation. The existing indicators framework does not adequately cover these considerations.

As a result, there is an ongoing discussion within the ad hoc technical expert group on how to potentially address these issues. The Special Rapporteur (SR) is actively working to advocate for several important aspects. Firstly, from a human rights perspective, it is crucial to disaggregate data according to the impacts on people with protected status and in various ways. Another important aspect is to ensure that indicators for issues like the protection of environmental human rights defenders are included within the overarching indicators framework.

Furthermore, the concept of other effective mechanisms for conservation is also complex, with significant human rights implications, especially concerning the rights of indigenous peoples to their lands, resources, and territories.

4. So, if the experts are advising us to use the global headline indicators during the revision of our maps, does that imply that we need to wait until COP16 for this to occur?

So, regarding the global headline indicators, there was an agreement on most of them, or at least the vast majority. Therefore, they can serve as a basis for development and should be incorporated into your work. However, it's essential to acknowledge that the entire indicators and monitoring and evaluation framework was not finalized. Discussions are ongoing within the ad hoc technical expert group, with the aim of making recommendations that will hopefully be adopted at COP16.

While the sequencing may not be ideal, it's crucial to recognize that these matters cannot be delayed either. The idea is to work with what is already available, as the development of an SAP

is a national prerogative. You can enhance it by addressing the gaps related to human rights indicators, and we are ready to provide support in that regard.

5. Is the GEF 7 EAS project's focus not to align the national targets with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework? The most recent brief shared does reference "Best practices in gender mainstreaming, stakeholder engagement, involvement of Indigenous peoples and local communities, and whole-of-government approaches are considered." Were the outcomes of the project revised post-COP15? Are these considerations expected to be considered more holistically for the GEF 8 project?

The project focus has not changed.

Project Outcome 1: NBSAPs are ready to be aligned and National Biodiversity targets are aligned with post-2020 GBF and relevant SDG targets

1.1 A rapid review of NBSAP is conducted: A rapid review of key thematic areas in the NBSAP is conducted to determine coherence between national targets and actions with the new goals and action targets of the GBF.

1.2. 1.2 National targets are reviewed and updated: National targets are updated to take on board the GBF and relevant SDGs, and to be made operational (i.e., measurable, costed, spatially-explicit where appropriate, grounded in programs).

1.3 NBSAP is reviewed and updated: Subject to national planning cycles, the existing NBSAP is reviewed for updates through an inclusive whole-of- government process to be in line with the GBF, and as appropriate, minor revisions are made, with the necessary consultations and processes for the plans to be nationally approved in due time.

The purpose of this webinar is to explore the human rights elements, including gender, of the project and these activities and outcomes.

We are exploring how the COP decisions relate to gender and human rights, for consideration during your work to align and update NBSAPs.

The project document was prepared in advance of the previous COP to ensure that all governments had funding by the conclusion of the COP to initiate their work, thereby expediting policy cycles. Over the past decade, there has been substantial feedback highlighting that one of the limitations was the delay in GEF funding, which typically arrived approximately a year after the COP had ended. So, it is accurate to state that the project was developed and approved before the COP took place. The project's outcomes and activities have remained unchanged. The primary purpose of the project is to ensure that national biodiversity targets align with the post-2020 global biodiversity framework by the end of this project. This alignment is achieved through a rapid review of the NBSAP with key stakeholder groups, identifying areas where new targets need to be incorporated and addressing any existing gaps. The goal is to make these targets operational and establish a plan to update the full NBSAP, potentially by two COPs from now or at the latest by the end of this COP.

What sets this webinar apart is the increased emphasis on human rights and gender considerations that emerged during the dialogue at the COP and are now integrated into the framework. With this webinar, our aim is to bring together experts and underscore how human rights considerations are embedded within the project and the work of the implementing agencies. This enables you to factor in these considerations during the target revision process, as it represents a fundamental opportunity to integrate human rights into our work, in line with the GBF and its associated considerations, which I outlined at the beginning of the project. It's important to note that there are no addenda to the project document; these considerations are aspects we hope you will take into account as you form your stakeholder committees and advance your target-related work. The GBF encompasses not only biodiversity but also these other critical considerations. I hope this clarification is helpful, and please feel free to reach out if you have any questions regarding the project implementation.

SP session

1. You don't clearly mention if these process-like indicators lack a scorecard or a metric. How can we effectively measure impact and results?

It greatly depends on how you implement the actions and activities and how you can effectively track these indicators. Our recommendation is that you familiarize and share the indicators with the project's partners and stakeholders. For instance, if there's a steering committee involved, it would be highly beneficial for everyone to have a thorough understanding of these indicators. It's crucial that all partners comprehend that a portion of the agenda pertains to gender when, for example, there's an indicator related to gender during a meeting. Furthermore, it's important to involve women's groups or relevant partners.

As shown in Georgina's presentation, there isn't a one-size-fits-all approach for tracking these indicators and activities on a country-specific basis. We recognize that the understanding of gender and the implementation of gender-related actions may vary between countries. Therefore, we aim to provide flexibility to each country. The method for tracking indicators largely depends on the partners involved and the activities being carried out.

If it would be helpful, we can explore the possibility of direct communication to tailor a methodology or system specific to your country's needs, ensuring the effective implementation of gender-related activities. Feel free to reach out to us, and we can discuss this further as part of our technical support.

Perhaps I'll start with Roxana's question. I believe Roxana was specifically discussing the implementation of the gender action plan for this specific project and asking how we will measure progress. I assume this refers to how countries will implement the gender action plan for this specific project and the different indicators. But I assume that this gender action plan will be shared with the countries so that they can take it into account in the project implementation and find ways to compile data, precisely because it is an action plan. The indicators are indeed

process indicators because what we want to extract from the action plan is whether this activity has been completed? - yes or no. Have women been included in these activities? - yes or no. So, effectively, the indicators are process-oriented. However, when it comes to indicators to measure progress on target 22 and target 23, the implementation of the Gender Plan of Decision 15 and 11, Roxana is right. We need indicators that show us the progress, whether we have achieved this goal, whether we are progressing toward this goal. And obviously, this is work that is still being developed within the context of the monitoring framework being developed as part of the CBD process and will be finalized in the COP meeting in 2024. But in terms of what we can do as part of this project, as I mentioned, Component 2 of this project addresses monitoring systems and provides support to countries in designing their monitoring systems so that they can monitor progress toward different targets, including Targets 22 and 23. So, what we are trying to do in this project is to see how we can address some of these gaps. But once the guidance being developed by my colleague Philip Babb is available, it would be incredibly helpful to hear from countries whether the guidance is useful or what kind of support, tools, and materials would be helpful to support national implementation and help develop these monitoring systems.

2. How can countries address data gaps related to gender biodiversity? Those are the key data gaps that might not be ready and available for the NBSAP update.

Now, regarding NBSAPs, there are data gaps related to gender and biodiversity, and perhaps this information may not be available when the NBSAP is being developed. But what will be incredibly useful and is related to many of the decisions in the biodiversity package is to have actions on how these gaps will be addressed, what steps countries will take to address these gaps. I think that's a very important first step to start with. Then comes the development of monitoring systems and methodologies for indicators, etc. But I believe it starts with an assessment: Do we have the data or not? With which agencies can we work, for example, with statistical agencies, how can they help us close some of the specific gaps we have, especially with Targets 22 and 23, which must be included in the SDGs.

3. I understand that this gender action plan is relatively recent. I may be mistaken, but I would also like to mention that this is my first intervention in this meeting, which I have been eagerly awaiting since I was appointed as the CBD focal point for Guatemala. I received the Gender Action Plan, and of course, even before the emergence of this plan, I had an institutional strategy that has been guiding all my work at the National Council of Protected Areas. However, how can we further enhance this gender action plan? Will there be preparatory meetings, reviews, or regional support, for example? Are there opportunities for gender focal points to analyze and review progress or at least share our concerns, achievements, and limitations during the implementation of this plan, in order to address and close some of the remaining gaps in each country? This is undoubtedly important. I would like to suggest that we consider the possibility of regional meetings or find a way to take affirmative actions or innovations that contribute to the changes needed to effectively address the components of the Gender Action Plan. I am making this

request in the hope that we can improve and coordinate our efforts, leveraging the synergies among our countries and making progress in integrating gender considerations into the framework required by the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The CBD Secretariat is currently exploring the development of a specific platform to share experiences related to gender. There are also a couple of gender-specific initiatives that are looking at how countries can share their experiences and best practices. We will keep you updated on the progress of these initiatives. Your concern is very valid, and it is being taken into account to provide regional and national support in this regard. I will specifically follow up on gender issues, and I will keep you informed through this project. Thank you.

From UNDP's perspective, we also provide technical assistance to countries. It's great that you've joined your country's core team that is working on the adaptation of biodiversity strategies and action plans within the framework of this new CBD. You now have Georgina de Moya, who provides technical assistance to countries, especially those in Latin America. She has your contact information to continue the discussion. We are also evaluating the possibility of having a regional space for exchanging experiences during these early phases of adapting biodiversity actions and strategies. The same applies to the gender action plan. The team will contact you to provide the technical assistance you need for all the institutional arrangements required.

I just wanted to add that we have received several requests from the global team to facilitate these regional groups. So, your comment is very welcome, and we will take it into account. We will let you know when we can facilitate an online exchange to have these gender discussions.

FR session

1. In your opinion, is gender management just about equality between men and women, or is it about taking all vulnerable groups into account?

For the UNDP, in line with the MDGs (Millennium Development Goals), the social inclusion approach must encompass all vulnerable groups, following the principle of "leaving no one behind". This means that the gender approach can also encompass indigenous people or those with disabilities, among others. It is therefore essential to think increasingly cross-sectorally, and not to limit ourselves to a single layer of vulnerability.

2. Are there any funds available to support gender-related considerations? If so, which ones?

The GEF microfinance program, where I work, is currently operational in 126 countries and supports microprojects from a gender perspective. Around 35% of these projects aim to empower women and promote their participation in decision-making. The Microfinance Program's national

strategies are aligned with the GEF Small Grants Strategy (SPANB), as well as with national climate change contributions, adaptation action plans, and other land degradation initiatives.

However, it is likely that the GEF Small Grants Programme finances projects at national level in certain countries.

- 3. I'm originally from Congo-Brazzaville. I'm Mr Gangaji, the Biodiversity Focal Point. My question concerns the integration of all these aspects into our plans. I mentioned earlier the question of funding to see how we can integrate these aspects. Sometimes we want to take more comprehensive action, but we're limited by financial resources in particular. That's why I'm asking this question, to understand how we can integrate the consideration of all these vulnerable strata into our new plans, which will be revised, if funds are already available. You mentioned the Genoa Fund, so please tell me if this applies to my country. Sometimes we don't have access to this information.**

For Congo-Brazzaville, the contact person for the GEF Microfinance Program is Bourges Jose Djoni-Djimbi, in collaboration with Desira Juthizere Atipo Obouene. The GEF has been supporting projects in Congo for five years now. I'll provide the link to their e-mail address in the chat, as well as my own. I would like to point out that for each country, as is the case for Congo-Brazzaville, our projects are generally concentrated in certain areas of the country, notably in the north. However, during each four-year GEF cycle, we plan to rotate the target zones and territories at national level.

Emails: bourges.jose.djoni-djimbi@undp.org; atipo.desira@undp.org

- 4. How will national coordination be established? Following this discussion, what are the next steps and actions to be taken?**

Terence: As far as future action is concerned, I think the NBSAP Early Action Support Project could address this. The dates and venue of the new COP16, initially scheduled to take place in Turkey, have not yet been determined. It is likely that the conference will be held in a European zone country in 2024. This process of updating NBSAPs is part of a wider cycle involving other elements to be taken into account. For example, there is the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership supported by the German government in partnership with Colombia. It is to consider not only the updating of the NBSAP, but also the ambition of the NBSAP and the monitoring of this process. To draw an analogy with nationally determined contributions (NDCs) to combat climate change, within the UNDP, we would like to see the same emphasis placed on NBSAPs as is given to NDCs. Therefore, among future actions, alignment between the different climate and biodiversity processes could be of great importance.

Justine: We will support countries in the various components. To do this, we need countries to understand what their gaps and needs are. We can then find ways of addressing all these aspects in the relevant components. For example, with regard to gender and biodiversity gaps. UNEP-

WCMC is leading component two on monitoring systems. It would be very useful to understand the needs of countries and then develop useful guidelines and documents to help meet these challenges.