

A. Gender Mainstreaming Plan

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1. The Rationale of the GMP

Gender is a critical component in GEF-funded projects as it underlies many inequalities of power over, access to and decision-making around natural resources. Understanding who uses which resources, and how his/her life and livelihood may be impacted (positively or negatively) is critical to ensuring project activities do not cause undue harm to anyone, and at the same time, guides the development of socially beneficial and sustainable conservation initiatives.

To ensure that the project meets CI-GEF Project Agency's Gender Mainstreaming Policy, a Gender Mainstreaming Plan (GMP) is developed during the Project Preparation (PPG) phase of the project. The aim of the GMP is to identify needs and opportunities to mitigate potentially adverse effects of the project, in particular cultural compatible and economic benefits, on men and women, as well as promote gender equity throughout the project. The GMP will identify the main gender-related issues that impact (or are impacted by) the project, develop culturally-appropriate solutions to address those issues, and explain how those actions will be monitored.

2. Project Introduction

Expanding the coverage and strengthening the management of wetland protected areas in Sichuan Province, China (hereafter shorten as "The project") aims to expand and strengthen wetland protected areas in Sichuan Province China and also to mainstream biodiversity conservation and sustainable utilization of wetland resources. The project will be implemented under the following components:

- Component 1: Strengthening Sichuan Province's institutional capacity on systematic planning and mainstreaming at provincial level to conserve and sustainably use wetlands resources. The focus of this component will be on strengthening Sichuan Province's institutional capacity to mainstream the conservation of wetland ecosystems and sustainable use of wetlands resources, and including biodiversity conservation into provincial development policies and plans.
- Component 2: Strengthening site level management and standards for wetland parks. This component will focus on strengthening site level management and improving standards for wetland park management at two wetland parks, namely: 1) Qionghai Wetland Park, and 2) Baihetan Wetland Park. It will focus on mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and the sustainable utilization of wetland resources. The project will support planning and development of sustainable wetland ecological industries by identifying products, production methods and markets. Wetland based livelihoods will be introduced to local communities by providing training, for example on skills, techniques and management. The rights of local communities to use wetland resources will be clarified, roles and responsibilities will be defined and conservation agreements will be signed between local communities and relevant government agencies over the rights of conservation and utilization of wetland resources. The project will also support the establishment of participatory management frameworks and guidelines for the two new wetland parks. Community conservation agreements will be signed and communities will be supported to provide management oversight

through trainings to local communities on participatory management and encouragement to participate in protected area management.

As per the signed Safeguard Screening Results and Analysis, there is no risk that the project may infringe on men's or women's human rights, nor will it create, aggravate or perpetuate inequalities/conflicts between men and women within households and communities.

However, the project will impact men and women in different ways and there are plans to demonstrate gender mainstreaming through wetland conservation of both components.

- Component 1: Ensure that both men and women benefit from environmental education programs and ensure that public awareness campaigns on wetland conservation and sustainable use target both men and women.
- Component 2: Active participation of men and women will be encouraged both in the PPG phase and implementation phase, stakeholder consultations, the development of the conservation agreements and any discussions on resource use and access rights.

3. The General State of Gender

The general state of gender equality in the project areas is rather high compared to other areas, especially comparing to other parts of Sichuan. Both Chengdu and Xichang have been awarded by the central government for outstanding work in promoting equity between women and men as per comprehensive standards including education and employment. In 2016 in Xichang City, 1,600 women have been trained by the local Women's Federation on national, provincial policies and legislation relevant to gender equity. Women from across the city, including the government staff, farmers, businessmen, teachers, etc. participated. The city government has established a *Women's Home* in every administrative village, which could be used as an information or management platform to communicate and mobilize farmers during the project implementation, especially women in the villages.

The Women's Federation is the governmental organization in charge of ensuring women's equal positions and welfare for men and women. The Women's Federations in both Xichang and Xinjin have conducted some projects to support women's income-generating activities, for example providing micro-credit to women in rural areas. The Women's Federations in both Xichang and Xijing would be important partners for project implementation.

4. Project-Specific Gender Considerations

4.1 Evolving traditional industries after wetland park construction

Traditionally farmers have had multiple uses of wetland resources, such as fishing in the wetland, aquaculture, cultivation and animal husbandry. Men and women, either in Xichang and Xinjin, shared this work equally, with the exception of fishing. Fishing is usually undertaken by men, with some women helping their husbands on fishing boats or for seasonal employment. In general, women have the same economic position and decision-making power as men.

Due to the wetland park construction, farmers received compensation including houses and cash, according to household population and cultivated land area, and there was no difference in compensation between men and women.

Along with losing their access to wetland resources, the household economy has been transformed to tourism (home-stay) or non-farming employment (sanitation workers in the parks). The two non-traditional economic activities provide higher cash income than traditional fishing or farming. However,

the changes of household economy have, in general, resulted in women having more advantages than men. For example, women usually take on responsibilities such as marketing, room preparation and front desk management, which are important in the tourism business and increase women's position in the family and society.

Correspondently, there are men, particularly those in the age range 45 – 55 and still strong enough to undertake income-generating work, that have difficulty in finding jobs in tourism, park management and other off-farm employment. Some have started to play cards or partake in other kinds of gambling to pass their time. Their esteem and social status has decreased since the park's construction. These 45 – 55 aged men would like to obtain certain rights to utilize wetland resources and rehabilitate traditional farming.

As well as being more successful with finding jobs in tourism and park management, most women still feel that working in these areas is not as hard as traditional fishing and farming.

4.2 Baseline data of gender

As per the requirement of CI-GEF Environment and Social Management Framework (ESMF), the project developed the following data as baseline for monitoring and evaluating the progress made by the project regarding gender equity.

- Information and communication
35% of village heads of the administrative villages around the two wetland parks are aware of the GEF project. In the two areas, 8 – 10% village heads are women.
Because the project is not formally launched and most farmers don't know about it, it is difficult to estimate the ratio of men and women who know the project well. However, at the very beginning of the project implementation, once the demonstration villages have been selected, the project will start to establish sex-disaggregated data on villagers' awareness of the project.
- Number of men and women that participated in PPG phase activities of the GEF project

During the PPG phase, the project Executing Agency has conducted at least 9 meetings at the village level, namely:

- 1) Township and village heads of the ten administrative villages around Qionghai Wetland, August 28th, 2016, Xichang;
- 2) Township and village heads of the administrative village around Baihetan Wetland, September 5th, 2016, Xinjin;
- 3) Focus Groups of women from three 3 selected villages around Qionghai Wetland, Xichang, Feb. 15th, 2017, Xichang;
- 4) Focus Groups of two selected villages around Qionghai Wetland, Feb. 16th, 2017, Xichang;
- 5) Focus Groups of the villages around Baihetan Wetland, Feb. 18th, 2017, Xinjin;
- 6) Focus Groups of the villagers around Qionghai Wetland, April 23rd, 2017, Xichang;
- 7) Focus Groups of two selected villages around Qionghai Wetland, April 24th, 2017;
- 8) Focus Groups of the administrative village around Baihetan Wetland, April 25th, 2017, Xinjin;
- 9) Migrants for Baihetan Wetland Park construction, April 26th, 2017, Xinjin.

Altogether >310 participants attended these meetings, of which around 43% were women.

5. Strategies to Avoid Gender Inequality within Project

5.1 Objective Statement

The GEF project will provide equal access, opportunity, participation and benefit of sustainable wetland management for men and women.

In particular the GEF project has three specific objectives, namely:

- To establish a comprehensive information system regarding wetland resource management which includes information-sharing, opinion-collection, discussion and gender considerations.
- To assist both men and women to adapt and benefit from wetland park construction and management.
- To document project experience and lessons and conduct policy advocacy for gender inclusion in wetland management regulations.

To achieve the above objectives, gender will be incorporated into the project documents including Project Context, Project Justification, Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, Project Budget and Financing.

5.2 Activities

- Formally launch of the project with the communities

The project management team and its local partners will visit all the relevant villages in the Qionghai and Xinjing-Baihetan Wetlands to launch the project. The launch could be conducted alongside village cultural activities or regular village meetings. The GEF project information will be introduced to participants and their feedback will be collected. The opportunity to participate will be equal for both women and men.

- Train project staff and management teams of the two wetland parks

It is important for all the project staff and management teams of the two wetland parks to fully understand and appreciate the importance of gender issues to sustainable wetland management. The project will provide trainings to the groups mentioned above at the beginning of the implementation phase and it will be mandatory for all project staff and management teams. Experts will be hired to provide the training, which has been budgeted for in the first-year. Not only the CI-GEF policy but also positive and negative gender cases will be discussed among training participants.

- Ensure different interests of both men and women are incorporated into the negotiation of conservation agreements

The project aims to conduct 2-3 conservation agreements in Qionghai Wetland Park to promote community-based conservation and sustainable wetland resources utilization. Information will be provided to both men and women to ensure equal weight of opinions and access to decision-making. The conservation agreements will pay equal importance to gender advantages when designing conservation and livelihood activities.

- Design and set up a dynamic information system

The project will give high priority to providing equal project information to both men and women and ensuring both have equal opportunities to express their concerns. Effective discussion and communication will help the project to achieve better results.

A dynamic information system like a smartphone APP will be developed and promoted with all stakeholders of the two wetlands. In general, around 50% of mobile phone subscribers use smart-mobile. However, in Xichang the percentage is higher than the average of all China. The demands and habits of both men and women of different ages and educational backgrounds will be surveyed and addressed. Apart from project information being available via the APP, relevant government policies,

plans and projects will also be available and the APP will encourage both men and women to put forward and discuss their opinions and comments.

- **Develop special arrangements for gender issues**

Special arrangements for gender issues will be developed. For example, organic farming and fishing will be piloted to address the concerns of the 45 – 55 age group of men who want to obtain certain rights to utilize wetland resources and rehabilitate traditional farming. Women will be provided with training on home-stays which will not only focus on increasing income but also on how to efficiently spend time in the tourism business.

- **Document and advocate gender policy**

For demonstration purposes, the project will allocate resources for experiences-learning and policy advocacy. Case studies, workshops, and publications will be used to document the project results and enhance the project's impacts on other wetlands.

6. Monitoring & Evaluation of Gender

6.1 Monitoring & Evaluation Methodology

The project will employ the Participatory Monitoring & Evaluation approach. A Monitoring & Evaluation team composed of representatives of the key stakeholders will be established. The ratio between men and women will be roughly 1:1. The team will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the project on gender. Knowledge about gender will also be delivered to the team at the beginning of the implementation phase.

6.2 Monitoring & Evaluation Indicators

The following indicators have been developed to assess the impact of the project on gender:

- Number of men and women that participated in project activities including meetings, workshops and consultations (ratio of men and women participating in an activity conducted by the project); target is 55:45.
- Number of men and women that received benefits (including employment, income generating activities, training, access to natural resources, land tenure or resource rights, equipment and/or leadership roles from the project); target is Men: 1,710 and Women: 1,390
- Number of strategies and plans (e.g. management plans) derived from the project that include gender considerations. Target is 3.

