**Handout 1.7:**

**GENDER SENSITIVITY WHEN ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS**

Extracted and modified from: Guidance to Advance Gender Equality in GEF Projects and Programs

Through their different roles and responsibilities and varied priorities and needs, women and men alike shape the drivers and pressures on environmental resources and systems. Women and men use natural resources in different ways. They also influence in different ways markets; policies; and global, regional, national, and local incentives and behaviors that impact the health of the global environment. As such, women are vital to tackling environmental challenges. Nevertheless, gender inequalities and gaps persist. The GEF Gender Implementation Strategy identifies three gender gaps most relevant to GEF projects and programs in the GEF-7 programming directions:

**Unequal Access to and Control of Natural Resources:** Women continue to be held back by structural constraints and gender norms related to access to and control of land, water, and other productive assets and biological resources. Even when the law guarantees women equal rights as men, many women have less control over natural resources. Research shows that if women were given same access to productive resources as men, agricultural productivity in developing countries could increase 20-30 percent, which in turn would reduce poverty, and improve women’s ability to support their families, and sustainably manage and use natural resources.

**Unbalanced Participation and Decision Making in Environmental Planning and Governance at All Levels:** Gender norms, women’s greater time constraints and other structural constraints continue to prevent women the same opportunities as men to decision-making related to the management and sustainable use of natural resources. Addressing gender gaps related to participation and leadership in decision-making processes, from the local to global levels, can help making institutions and policies more representative, as well as helping women better engage in decisions that shape environmental planning, policy-making, as well as sustainable solutions and practices.

**Uneven Access to Socio-Economic Benefits and Services:** Women, in many places, don’t have the same access to income-generation opportunities, credit, and technology as men. Moreover, women often face more obstacles than men in accessing financing, training and information. Broadening women’s socio-economic benefits can significantly contribute to improvements in the global environment in areas such as natural resource management, reducing land degradation, renewable energy, sustainable fisheries etc.

***Stakeholder engagement and analyses are conducted in an inclusive and gender-responsive manner, so that the rights of women and men and the different knowledge, needs, roles and interests of women and men are recognized and addressed.***

**GENDER SENSITIVITY IN PROJECTS (SUCH AS MPA MANAGEMENT PLANNING) INCLUDE EFFORTS TO:**

* **actively reach out to women’s organizations and gender focal points of relevant national ministries, nongovernment organizations and civil society;**
* **proactively ensure the involvement of more of the underrepresented gender if a strong gender imbalance exists among project stakeholders;**
* **identify gender differences in knowledge, interests, priorities, and power within stakeholder groups, as well as among different stakeholder groups**

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