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## **FINAL REPORT:**

# **Assessing Women's Engagement in Environmental Impact Assessments on Infrastructure Projects in Vietnam: Recommendations for Policy and Public Participation in EIA**



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## ABBREVIATIONS

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ABD	Asian Development Bank
CECR	Center for Environment and Community Research
DONRE	Department of Natural Resources and Environment (province level)
EMP	Environmental Management Plan
EIA	Environment Impact Assessment
ESS	Environmental and Social Safeguards
FGD	Focus group discussion
IEE	Initial Environment Examination
LEP	Law on Environmental Protection
LGE	Law on Gender Equality
MONRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
MPE	Mekong Partnership for the Environment
PMU	Project Management Unit
RLDP	Resettlement Livelihood and Ethnic Minorities Development Program
RTWG	Regional Technical Working Group on EIA
SEI	Stockholm Environment Institute
SESIA	Supplemental Environmental and Social Impact Assessment Report
SPS	Safeguard Policy Statement
TSHPMB	Trung Son Hydropower Project Management Board
TSHPP	Trung Son Hydropower Project

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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In the Mekong region, investment projects are mushrooming and causing adverse environmental and social impacts such as increased pollution, loss of natural resources and livelihoods, and forced resettlement of project-affected people. Yet many of these adverse impacts may have been avoided if the needs and knowledge of all project-affected groups, especially ethnic minorities and women, had been reflected in the project design. Indeed, Governments in the Mekong region and development finance institutions recognize the importance of enabling all project-affected groups to participate in project decision-making. In Viet Nam, national legislations on environmental protection and the social safeguard policies of donors use the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) as a mechanism to ensure project-affected groups are consulted and investment decisions are influenced by their views.

Although the Government of Viet Nam, development finance institutions, and project developers support public participation in the EIA process, there are constraints that prevent some project-affected groups, particularly women, from participating. The aim of this research is to trace and analyze the constraints to women's public participation in EIAs in Viet Nam, and to ascertain the benefits of their meaningful participation in the process. The following questions guided this research:

- a) Are women involved in EIA deliberations at every step of the assessment?
- b) What are the constraints that women experience in participating in EIA deliberations?
- c) What are the benefits of women participating in EIA deliberations?

To answer these questions, the team studied the participation of women and men in EIA processes in two infrastructure projects i.e. (1) Trung Son Hydropower Plant, supported by the World Bank; and (2) Hoa Phu Landfill Project in Buon Ma Thuot supported by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The research team pursued a qualitative approach in data collection and conducted key informant interviews, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) in Hanoi, Buon Ma Thuot, and Trung Son. In all, the research team interviewed 41 people, including 23 women. The research team held six FGDs with 28 participants in total, of which 13 were women. The research, interviews and discussions revealed that institutional and social constraints limit women's participation in EIA processes.

The research team found that both projects lacked gender analysis in most stages of EIA. Formal institutions are in need of guidelines on consulting the public and women, and accountability mechanism on public consultation and disclosure. While the Law on Gender Equality (2006) requires the integration of gender equality into the preparation and implementation of laws, it has not been fully implemented. Policy enforcement is an issue, mainly due to the lack of gender expertise. The input of gender experts is not a requirement in project preparation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. Thus World Bank Operational Policies on Social and Environmental Safeguards are not sensitive to the differentiated impacts of proposed projects on women and men. Principles on disclosure do not stipulate or guarantee women's access to information. ADB's Safeguard Policy Statement (SPS) promotes women's participation in consultation but considers them as a part of the affected community or indigenous people rather than as a separate group of stakeholders.

It is important to consider women as a separate group of stakeholders because women and men in the same community typically do not have equal access to information. Unequal access to information reflects other inequalities between men and women such as disparities in education, proficiency in the national language, and gender roles and norms. Patriarchal social norms on family headship, gendered space, stereotypes against women's status and knowledge, and women's Vietnamese language skills are social factors that significantly influence women's level of awareness. These factors may also feed into stereotypical attitudes of project proponents, EIA consultation teams, and local Government officials towards women, and result in constraints on women's ability to express their views. In both projects, the only window of opportunity for women to raise their voices was through public consultation where the

quality of consultation and social norms on women's public behavior limited their ability to speak up and contribute their ideas. The effort to increase the number of women in consultation meetings was a success, but simply increasing the number did not enable women to speak out in a context they understood to be for men, hence their presence in the consultations had little influence in the final agreements.

Women had very specific concerns on livelihood and environmental issues such as drinking water, pollution of rivers, fields, gardens and air, and their health impacts but their concerns arose at the later stage of the project implementation due to lack of understanding of the impacts of the project during designing stage. Nevertheless, the active participation of women had significant results. For instance, suitable resettlement areas were identified thanks to women's knowledge on the local environment and ecology, plants, soil and water resources.

The research concluded that despite existing policies for public participation and social equality, the two development projects did not sufficiently incorporate gender issues and women's voices in the EIAs. Women were able to express their views in the EIA process only in a very limited way through public consultations where their participation was largely nominal (in that they were invited to attend the meetings) and passive (in that they did not speak up and assert their views). The research also concluded that a strong commitment for public participation is a key prerequisite for the inclusion of women's voices and interests in EIA processes. The research shows that the potential benefits of women's participation in EIA deliberations lie in their knowledge of environment and livelihood resources, and how these are being affected by infrastructure development in these two study sites. If women's voices were adequately heard and sufficiently allowed to influence decision making, resettlement plans might have been re-configured to prevent and reduce livelihood losses and threats to natural resources, such as air and water quality.

The recommendations of the research include the following:

- Amend the national legal framework on EIA and public participation to align with the Gender Equality Law;
- Reinforce accountability mechanisms in national legislation and donor's safeguard policies;
- Enhance the role of the Vietnam Women's Union;
- Use the competencies of NGOs and CSOs in facilitation, capacity building and joint monitoring throughout the EIA process; and
- Demonstrate best practices on gender-inclusive EIA to further enhance guidelines for gender mainstreaming in EIA.

## I. BACKGROUND

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Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) are used as regulatory, planning and decision-making tools for major medium- and large-scale development projects around the world. These assessments have three major components: scoping to inform planning and decision-making; documenting potential impacts (positive and negative); and engaging stakeholders throughout the project life cycle.

In Viet Nam, the first version of the Environmental Protection Act was issued in 1993, and has since been amended and adjusted twice. The second amendment became effective on January 1, 2015, and is now referred to as the Law on Environmental Protection (LEP). It establishes that the aims of the EIA are to assess impacts of the project on the natural environment, biodiversity, and community health. Public consultation is mandatory in the EIA process. Similarly, processes in EIA and public consultations have also changed and improved in order to meet environmental challenges in a more comprehensive way.

The institutional foundation for women's engagement in public participation in decision-making processes at all levels in Viet Nam was established when the National Assembly approved the Law on Gender Equality (LGE) in 2006. Article 21 Section 2 of the LGE states that the authorities responsible for drafting legal documents are obliged to mainstream gender equality in the process of developing legal documents. The article creates an important basis for promoting women's participation in steps of public consultations in EIAs. Notwithstanding the LGE, women's participation has not been fully implemented in public participation in EIA and more must be done to align practices with this Law.

At the international level, the United Nations recognizes and advocates for the participation of women in environmental protection. For example, the United Nations confirmed that men and women have different priorities, demands, knowledge and skills in the use of existing natural resources (UN DESA, 2004). In fact, women have often played leadership roles or taken the lead in promoting an environmental ethic, reducing environmental degradation, and reusing and recycling resources (United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, 1995). Women's views, ideas, insights and practices should be included in EIA reports and these inputs should be reflected in the implementation of measures and solutions to enhance the quality of EIA.

Furthermore, financial institutions such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) require public consultation and women's participation in consultations relating to EIA and Initial Environment Examination (IEE).<sup>1</sup> Both institutions have Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) for investment projects, including dams, hydropower, mining, transportation and other foreign-direct investment (FDI) projects. The Safeguards establish strong principles and criteria on gender inclusion in public participation to minimize the negative gender-specific impacts of these developments. The ADB Safeguard Policy Statement (SPS), which became effective on January 20, 2010, is one of the most gender-sensitive and responsive applications of the safeguard policies.

These documents establish standards, principles and criteria for public engagement, participation and gender equality in EIA consultations, nevertheless gaps remain in practice. For example, the ADB Safeguards do not require consultations with a gender expert during project implementation and do not consider the capacity or ability of those implementing the projects to address gender issues (Soentoro, 2009).

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<sup>1</sup> The IEE is a first assessment of the *reasonably foreseeable* impacts on the environment of a proposed activity or activities conducted by project proponent receiving funds from ABD. The IEE report should comprise baseline data on the existing condition of the physical and biological environment, the anticipated environmental impacts, and proposed mitigation measures.



In the Mekong region, economic growth and cooperation between countries has been accelerating through projects such as development of dams, mines, roads and industrial zones. Due to the magnitude of these projects, the impacts on the ecosystem, water, biodiversity, forests and the natural environment are adverse, as are the impacts on human life. Such environmental and social impacts worsen women's situation and increase inequality between men and women. To avoid these adverse impacts, there must be a strong consensus on safeguard principles.

These impacts can be minimized by reinforcing a transparent and inclusive EIA process that welcomes public participation. To support this, the Mekong Partnership for the Environment (MPE) is supporting a Regional Technical Working Group (RTWG) on Public Participation in EIA to formulate and promote guidelines for meaningful participation of women and other project-affected groups. The aim of the guidelines is to lead to more effective public engagement in EIA processes across the Lower Mekong Sub-region.

To provide inputs to the development of gender-sensitive technical guidelines on public participation in EIA for the Mekong region, MPE has supported the Centre for Environment and Community Research (CECR) to assess the progress of women's engagement in EIAs of infrastructure projects in Viet Nam, and to provide recommendations. The research focuses on the following questions:

- a) Are women involved in EIA deliberations at every step of the assessment?
- b) What are the constraints that women experience in participating in EIA deliberations?
- c) What are the benefits of women participating in EIA deliberations?

To answer these questions, the research team reviewed and analyzed women's engagement in EIA processes in the context of the LEP and safeguard policies of the World Bank and ADB. In addition, the team also studied the participation of women and men in EIA processes in two infrastructure projects i.e. (1) Trung Son Hydropower Plant, supported by the World Bank; and (2) Hoa Phu Landfill Project in Buon Ma Thuot supported by the Asian Development Bank. Based on the research findings, the team developed concrete recommendations for the RTWG on public participation in EIA on how the guidelines can promote women's participation in EIA.

## II. OBJECTIVES

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This section explains the three specific objectives of this research.

### ***1 To fully understand gender aspects of engagement in EIA processes through reviewing the current procedure of EIA of infrastructure projects and assessing the involvement of women groups (technical experts and impacted women) in steps of EIA deliberations.***

The research aims to understand what groups of women participated in any aspect of EIA processes, as proponents, experts, government representatives, and members of affected groups, and how they were involved. The research also aims to identify differences in the perceptions of men and women about different issues. Understanding these differences would contribute to answering research question c) on the benefits of women's participation in EIA deliberations.

Gaining a more complete understanding of gender aspects of engagement in EIA processes will help reveal why women were not involved in consultation processes, as well as what factors (procedural, social, cultural) influenced them. Further to this, the research aims to understand the procedures and steps in the EIA process for large-scale investment projects and identify the barriers that prevent or discourage women's involvement in EIA.

This objective will be achieved through: 1) reviewing available regulations related to the EIA process, reports and other documents of the Government of Viet Nam, ADB and the World Bank; and 2) discussing this topic with women experts working in the EIA field and gender specialists through a consultation workshop. The process will help to map out actors involved in EIA processes of infrastructure projects. It will also help in the designing of tools for interviews with EIA practitioners, women and other identified groups at the local level.

### ***2 To study constraints and benefits of women's leadership in engaging in EIA in the selected projects***

The aim of the second objective is to achieve a greater understanding of women's engagement in EIA at the local sites and of the obstacles that exist in women's engagement in EIA process. The research focuses on individuals who worked on the investments side of the projects, but also on women who contributed to the preparation of the EIA report in different stages, women at the local level who were affected by the project, and women in leadership positions.

This objective will be achieved through key informant interviews, focus group discussions, observation and process documentation of meetings. Informants include officials at both local and central institutional levels involved in different stages of the project and who play a role in implementing EIA and safeguard policies. Furthermore, the research will engage with women's agencies and people at the field level. This will help to identify constraints that women face in working on EIA and the benefits that women brought to projects by participating in different stages.

### ***3 To provide recommendations for both national and regional EIA guidelines in the gender aspect in Lower Mekong countries***

The research findings are expected to expand the knowledge base on women's engagement in EIA processes, and the recommendations drawn from this research will serve as an input to the regional guidelines on public participation in EIA. With the acceleration of economic integration of the countries in the lower Mekong Sub-region, it is vital to ensure large-scale infrastructure projects in the region are environmentally sound and avoid adverse social and gender impacts. Including the voices of women has

the potential to enhance the quality of EIAs, and thus improve the quality of the project, specifically its environmental and gender-responsiveness.

This present report, inclusive of findings and recommendations, represents the fulfillment of this objective. Members of the team presented the draft report at the workshop of experts and incorporated their feedback into the final version. The recommendations of the final version were presented to the Regional Technical Working Group for their consideration as they develop guidelines on public participation in EIA for the Lower Mekong Sub-region.

In addition, EIA practitioners, development banks, investors, and governmental officials in Viet Nam and in the region can use the recommendations presented in this report as references. The research can provide a foundation for women's participation in EIA for future infrastructure projects in the region, and the development of best practices based on regional experience.

### III. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

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The research questions require integrated approaches to analyze public participation in EIA in general and the women participation in particular. Public engagement on EIA is affected by several factors: institutional, organizational, technical, cultural, historical, and environmental conditions, and local contexts where projects are implemented. Each element contains many different aspects. Furthermore, EIA is a highly technical process which must follow national laws and regulations while also complying with the policies of the donors (i.e. the World Bank in the Trung Son Hydropower Project case, and ADB in the Hoa Phu Landfill project).

The research identified a full range of stakeholders involved in EIA processes to understand the interaction of these stakeholders in relation to women's participation in EIA. Stakeholders include people who are directly or indirectly impacted by the projects (both positively and negatively), people who have directly managed the projects, and people who are responsible for policy-making and monitoring policy compliance related to EIA. The research team organized a consultation workshop with female gender experts in EIA during the initial stage of the research in order to identify target groups for research.

The research included the following activities:

- Analysis of public participation in general and women participation in particular related to EIA policies, LGE and safeguards policies of World Bank and ADB.
- Analysis of the EIA reports of the two projects on the participation of women in every step of the EIA process and the opportunities for women participation, to assess the current level of participation of women in EIA.
- Use of a qualitative methods approach in data collection: in-depth interviews with key informants, focus group discussions and professional workshops.
- Desk review of the literature to analyze the available documents.

#### 3.1 Research Framework

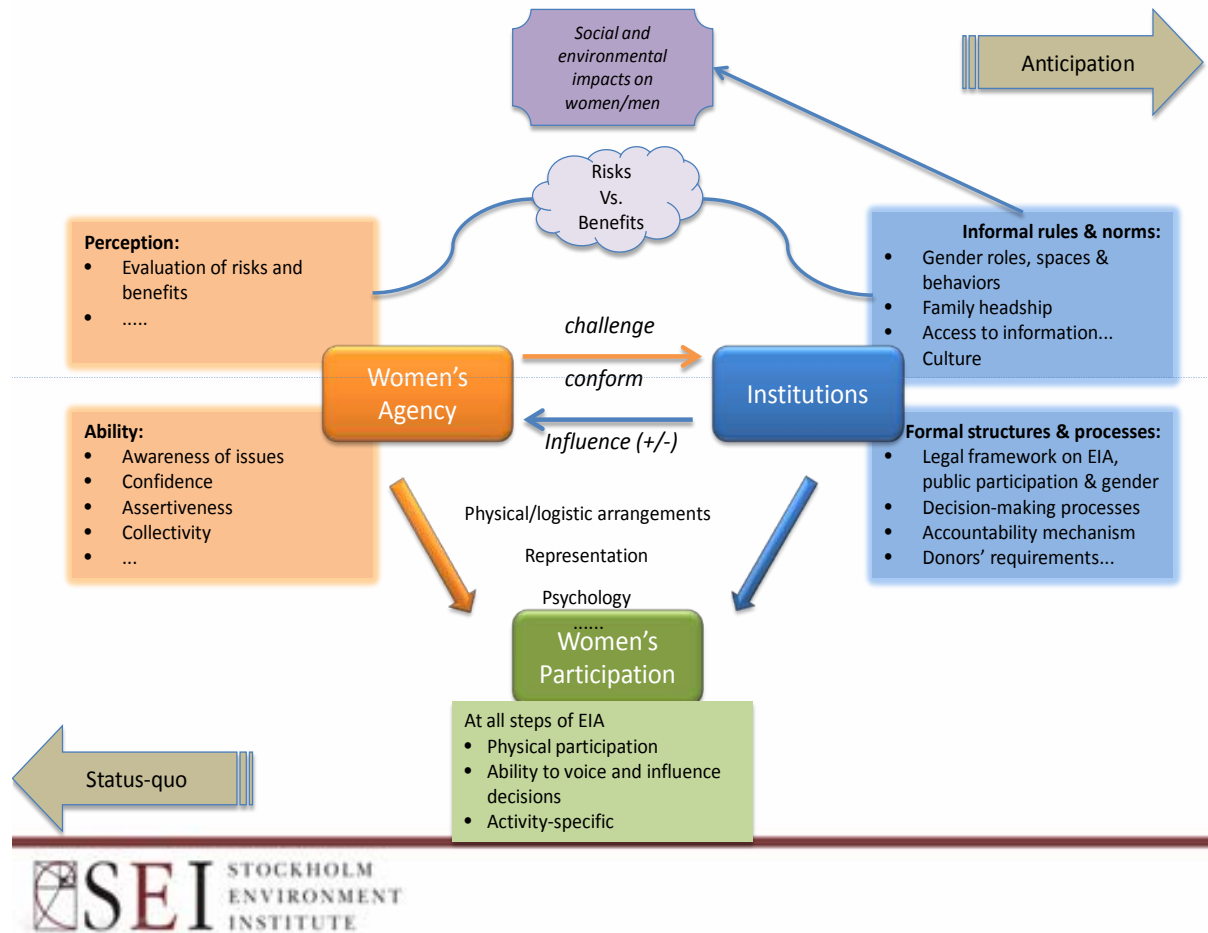
The research framework, developed with technical support from Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), comprises three core elements of institutions, women's agency and women's participation. Institutions have two dimensions: 1) formal structures and processes; and 2) informal rules and norms. The formal structure and processes relate to legal frameworks on EIA, public participation and gender; formal decision-making processes; accountability mechanisms; and donors' safeguard policies and requirements. The informal rules and norms refer to cultural and social expectations of women and men that define gender roles, family headship, and access to information among social groups. Formal and informal factors contribute to physical and logical arrangements that constrain or enable participation in consultation processes. Women's agency refers to their ability to enact changes in their lives. At the individual level, women can choose to challenge patriarchal arrangements that exclude them, or to uphold the status-quo. Various factors influence the choice a woman makes, including: her awareness of the social and economic impacts of development projects on her wellbeing; her evaluation of the perceived risks associated with contesting gender norms versus the benefits of participation in a consultative process; and her self-confidence and assertiveness to raise their voice in a male dominated domain.

The researchers assessed women's participation at all steps of the EIA process according to Agarwal's topology of participation (2001). Using this scale, the researchers determined whether their participation was nominal, passive, consultative, active or empowered.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Nominal participation is membership or presence by default; passive participation is attending to listen and be informed of decisions without speaking up; consultative participation is to be asked about a specific matter without influencing power; active participation is expressing opinions or taking initiatives; empowered participation is having influence over decisions.

**Figure 1:** The research framework on women's participation in EIA



### 3.2 Methodology

The research team pursued a qualitative approach in data collection in order to understand the extent, nature and outcomes of women's participation in EIA processes in two study sites. The research team prepared questions for in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) with informants in Hanoi, Trung Son and Buon Ma Thuot, and carried out the interviews and discussions in teams of 2-3 researchers and a local facilitator. The team carefully recorded information and data from in-depth interviews and FGDs.

The key informants and FGD participants can be divided into two groups: A) policy makers, governance, practitioners of EIA and gender; and B) women who described and reconstructed the extent, nature and outcomes of women's participation in EIA processes at the two study sites. These groupings support the research framework and reflect the recommendations of EIA and gender experts who participated in a workshop held 4 June 2015

The participants in group A are as follows:

- Government Officials/authority, environmental managers
- Local authority: CPC, village leaders
- Project Management Unit (PMU)/project operators/ project proponent representatives
- Donors
- EIA Appraisal Committee members, EIA Consultant Team representatives

- Social and gender experts in Viet Nam
- Women community leader/Women's Union

The participants in group B are women stakeholders as follows:

- 1) Project proponents: leaders of investment projects/organizations
- 2) Experts in different related technical fields including environmental experts who are members of EIA consultant teams
- 3) Social/gender experts, and members of EIA teams
- 4) Local people who are directly or indirectly impacted by projects
- 5) Leaders/members of local Women Unions at localities impacted by projects
- 6) Team leaders of EIA consultant teams
- 7) Leaders at provincial/district people's committees/DoNREs and members of EIA appraisal committees for inter-provincial projects
- 8) Governmental officials of the Department of EIA and Appraisal of Vietnam Environment Administration who participated in EIA appraisal committees of interprovincial /important projects at the national level
- 9) EIA experts or related technical experts or social experts who participate in EIA appraisal committees as member
- 10) Teachers of EIA subjects at universities
- 11) Leaders of national NGOs who are interested in EIA processes and participate in monitoring community consultations during EIA
- 12) Gender specialists or gender focal points working with international organizations or donors who are responsible for integrating and monitoring gender mainstreaming into investment project's environmental and social impact assessments and resettlement programs and plans
- 13) Experts who participate in formulation/preparation of EIA related regulations and guidelines

The researchers developed checklists (see Annex 1) to guide interviews in each target group. During the interviews, while the research team asked questions from the checklists, the interviewers responded to the flow of conversations with interviewees, and were also guided by the objectives of the research project.

### **3.3 Activities in Hanoi**

The research team conducted key informant interviews and group discussions in Hanoi from June to July 2015. A total of 16 people were interviewed in Hanoi (see Annex 2). Some of the key informants represented the Department of EIA Appraisal of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and departments related to environmental and social safety, while others were gender experts of the World Bank and ADB who were directly involved in the implemented activities related to Trung Son Hydropower Project and Hoa Phu Landfill. Other key informants were experts who conducted public consultations in the two project sites and PMU staff members of Trung Son Hydropower of Viet Nam Power Corporation.

The team also held two consultations in Hanoi. The first took place in June 2015 with women experts on gender and EIA, to seek their input into the research design. The second consultation was organized in November 2015 to present the research findings and collect recommendations on the report. It involved female experts, government officials, academics and representatives of NGOs working on gender and EIA.

### 3.4 Data collection from two field sites

The team conducted two site visits to Trung Son Hydropower Project and Hoa Phu Landfill in August 2015. Each team had a key researcher, a junior researcher and a local liaison. Before conducting the site visit, the teams reviewed and discussed the questions, basic interviewing rules, and recording method.<sup>3</sup> The team sent its program, discussions topics and questionnaires to the management boards of the two infrastructure projects for comments and suggestions, and incorporated their feedback into its approach.

#### *Data collection on Trung Son Hydropower Project*

The research team conducted 12 key informant interviews with representatives of local government agencies, political and social organizations (namely the Trung Son Project Management Board, Community People Committee, Women's Union, Fatherland Front staff members of Ta Ban village, Co Me and To Xuoc villages). The team also conducted eight in-depth interviews with women and men who were directly or indirectly impacted by the project from Ta Ban, Co Me and To Xuoc villages in Trung Son. They also conducted one FGD with men and one with women in Ta Ban village (see the list of interviewees and FGDs in Annex 2).

**Table 1:** Summary descriptors of study sites in Trung Son

<i>Study site</i>	<i>Number of households</i>	<i>Ethnic groups</i>	<i>Livelihoods</i>
Trung Son Commune	561	Thai, Muong	Agriculture (rice, cassava, maize), forestry (bamboo), livestock, fisheries and handicraft.
Ta Ban village	183	Thai, Muong	Income mainly from bamboo, cassava and maize.
Co Me village	112	Thai, Muong	Income mainly from planting bamboo plantations, cassava and rice. Most Thai people are farmers.
To Xuoc village	30	Thai, Muong	Income mainly from bamboo, cassava, maize and livestock.

#### *Data collection in Hoa Phu Landfill Project, Buon Ma Thuot City*

The team conducted three key information interviews with local representatives of government agencies and political and social organization i.e. DAKURENKO, DAKURENKO Project Management Unit, Division of Natural Resources and Environment of Buon Ma Thuot. Two in-depth interviews were conducted with women who live next to the landfill.

A total of four FGDs were organized (see Annex 2). The team conducted FGDs with local representatives of government agencies and political and social organization. This included the Project Management Board of the City People's Committee, DAKURENKO, DAKURENKO Project Management Unit, Division of Natural Resources and Environment of Buon Ma Thuot. The FGDs also included local leaders of Hoa Phu Commune, such as the Commune Chairman, Office of CPC, Commune Fatherland Front, and chairman of the commune women Representatives from Village 11, which is adjacent to the landfill: village chiefs, representatives of the Fatherland Front, representatives of farmers, and officials in charge of rural water. The team also conducted FGDs with local people who lost their land and had to resettle as well as people who live next to the landfill.

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<sup>3</sup> Interviews were conducted by a team: key researcher leads the interview while junior researcher takes note and manages the recorder. Information in recorder will supplement to the notes when needed.

### *Limitations in data collection*

At the time the research was conducted, more than five years had passed since the EIA consultations in the Trung Son case and more than one year in the Hoa Phu case. Therefore, informants' recollections were limited and did not generate sufficient insights on women's subjectivity and agency from their experiences with the public consultations on EIA. The people affected by and living near the Hoa Phu Landfill project were unwilling to meet with the research team because of their anxieties about the project. Thus, data on women's perspectives from this group are limited.



#### IV. POLICY ENVIRONMENT FOR EIA AND WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN VIET NAM

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This chapter presents a gender and discourse analysis of relevant policies and frameworks on gender equality, public participation and EIA. The analysis includes legal frameworks in Viet Nam, as well as policies from ADB and the World Bank. The intention of this chapter is to shed light on how and whether the policy environment has enabled women's participation in EIA processes.

##### 4.1 Legal framework for Environmental Impact Assessment and Community Participation

One article in the first Law on Environment Protection (LEP), issued in 1993, addressed EIA, but today a full chapter in the revised LEP (2014) deals with EIA (Chapter II, Articles 18 to 28). More specific guidelines on the implementation of EIAs can be found in Decree No. 18/2015/ND-CP, Articles 12 to 17, and Circular 27/2015/TT-BTNMT, Articles 6 to 11. According to the LEP and guiding documents, public consultation must be a part of EIA. Specifically, the project proponent shall consult with communities and organizations that are directly impacted by the project while conducting the EIA and after drafting the EIA report. The consultation aims to collect and address "objective comments" and "reasonable recommendations" from the consulted parties in order to "minimize negative impacts to natural environment, biodiversity and community health". The guiding documents do not specify how to conduct the consultation during the assessment, but they do elaborate the consultation procedure on the EIA report. According to the guideline, the project proponent should send the draft EIA report to Commune People's Committee at the project site and to organizations that would be directly impacted by the project. The consultation shall be co-organized by the project proponent and the People's Committee, with the participation of representatives of formal mass organizations, professional organizations and residential clusters. Their feedback shall be documented and returned to the project proponent within 15 working days.

The LEP and guiding documents do not mention women's participation, though it can be assumed that mass organizations include the Vietnam Women's Union. In practice, however, the Women's Union is not involved in such consultations. The feedback is mainly provided by the People's Committees and Vietnamese Fatherland Front.

##### 4.2 Policies on gender equality of the Government of Viet Nam

The Law on Gender Equality was issued in 2006 and is the most important document for promoting and implementing gender equality in all fields including in EIAs. Article 4 of the Law defines that the goal of gender equality is to "eliminate of gender discrimination, creating equal opportunities for men and women in economic - social development and human resources development, towards real equality between men and women, supporting cooperation between men and women in all areas of social life and their family". Article 6 states six basic principles on gender equality which must be applied in all aspects, legal and socio-economic development (box 1)

**Box 1**  
**Six basic principles of gender equality**

1. Men, women are equal in all areas of life, society and family.
2. Men, women are not treated discriminately
3. Measures to promote gender equality will not be considered gender discrimination
4. Policies to support and protect mothers will not be considered gender discrimination
5. Ensuring integration of gender equality in preparation and implementation of the laws
6. Implementation of gender equality is responsibility of organization, family and individuals

Article 19 requires implementing measures that promote gender equality, including measures ensuring rational proportions of men and women or ensuring adequate proportion of women participants and beneficiaries. Article 20 requires the basic principles of gender equality applied in legal system development, specifically in developing, modifying, and amending legal documents.

The implementation of policies in different sectors has progressed at varying rates. More must be done to fully apply the LGE and mainstream gender into the LEP and regulations on EIA. The principles and requirements for measures to promoting gender equality are not considered and incorporated in new legislation on EIA, specifically Decree 18/2015/ND-CP and Circular 27/2015/TT-BTNMT.

### **4.3 Policies on Environment and Social Safety of the World Bank**

The World Bank's Environment and Social Safeguards are described in its Operational Policies 4.00 and Bank Procedures 4.00. The Safeguards encompass environmental assessment and environmental action plans, performance standard for private sector activities, natural habitats, water resource management, pest control, indigenous people, physical cultural resources, involuntary resettlement, gender and development, forest and safety of dams. The Bank's Operational Policy on Gender and Development refers to gender assessments as silo exercises to feed into the Bank's country assistance strategy and inform the bank's policies and decisions on their supported projects. It does not articulate any specific preposition in to EIA processes.

Public consultation is a cross-cutting principle. The Operational Policy on Environmental Assessment (OP 4.01) classifies proposed projects into four categories based on the significance of their potential adverse impacts on the environment. For projects classified in category A (significant environmental impacts) and B (site-specific environmental impacts) the proponent must conduct EIAs and consult project-affected groups and local NGOs on environmental implications of the project, and take their views into account. For projects category A, the proponent must conduct at least two consultations: "(a) shortly after environmental screening and before the terms of reference for the EA [environment assessment] are finalized; and (b) once a draft EA report is prepared".<sup>4</sup> The Operational Policy on Natural Habitats requires consultation with "key stakeholders, including local nongovernmental organizations and local communities, and involve such people in design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of projects, including mitigation planning". In addition to provisions on public consultation in social and environmental assessments and throughout the project implementation process, the Operational Policies on Involuntary Resettlement and on Indigenous People require the project proponent to engage affected communities in the design, implementation and monitoring of the project resettlement or management plans.

Disclosure is another key principle in the Operational Policies to ensure meaningful participation of stakeholders in EIA. For instance, the Operational Policy on Environmental Assessment specifies that the project proponent shall provide "material in a timely manner prior to consultation and in a form and language that are understandable and accessible to the groups being consulted" before and after the EIA is conducted. The Operational Policy on Involuntary Resettlement requires further disclosure of the rights of displaced persons to, "technically and economically feasible resettlement alternatives". The Operational Policy on Indigenous People emphasizes the principles of free, prior and informed consent.

The Operational Policies are not sensitive to the gender differentiated impacts of proposed projects on women and men, not to gender issues that constrain women from participating in public consultations. The Operational Policy on Indigenous People (OP 4.10) vaguely suggests giving "special

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<sup>4</sup><http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/PROJECTS/EXTPOLICIES/EXTOPMANUAL/0,,contentMDK:20403235~menuPK:4564185~pagePK:64709096~piPK:64709108~theSitePK:502184,00.html>

attention to the concerns of Indigenous women, youth, and children and their access to development opportunities and benefits” but does not specify how to do so in a EIA public consultation. On a positive note, however, among the eight Performance Standards on Environment and Social Sustainability of the International Finance Corporation, a member of the World Bank Group, the performance standard on Indigenous People requires the assessment of land and natural resource to be gender inclusive and specifically considers women’s role in the management and use of these resources.<sup>5</sup>

#### **4.4 ADB Statement on Environmental and Social Safeguard Policies**

In 2009, ADB issued the Safeguard Policy Statement (SPS) which consolidated three safeguard policies on environment (Environmental Safeguards), resettlement (Involuntary Resettlement Safeguards), and ethnic minorities (Indigenous People Safeguards). The SPS describes policy principles and special safeguard requirements that their clients must fulfil under the three key safeguard areas. It also outlines processes their clients must carry out to implement the safeguard policy, as well as ADB’s roles and the procedures for monitoring, supervision, and due diligence throughout the project life cycle.

The SPS defines meaningful consultation as

“a process that (i) begins early in the project preparation stage and is carried out on an ongoing basis throughout the project cycle; (ii) provides timely disclosure of relevant and adequate information that is understandable and readily accessible to affected people; (iii) is undertaken in an atmosphere free of intimidation or coercion; (iv) is gender inclusive and responsive, and tailored to the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups; and (v) enables the incorporation of all relevant views of affected people and other stakeholders into decision making, such as project design, mitigation measures, the sharing of development benefits and opportunities, and implementation issues.”

Meaningful consultation is a cross-cutting policy principle in all key Safeguard areas. The Environmental Safeguards spell out the requirement to ensure women’s participation in consultation, to engage affected people and concerned NGOs as stakeholder groups in the project preparation and decision-making process, and to disclose information in timely manner, in an accessible location and in forms and languages understandable to stakeholders. In addition to meaningful consultation, the Involuntary Resettlement Safeguards require participation of affected people in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of resettlement plans. The safeguards also draw attention to the needs of vulnerable groups such as the poor, the landless, women and children, elderly and indigenous people. The Indigenous People Safeguards require culturally appropriate and gender-sensitive social assessment, capacity development and grievance mechanisms.

Though there is an emphasis on women’s participation in consultation, the SPS does not define women as a separate group of stakeholders but considers them as a part of the affected community or indigenous people. The SPS does not specifically deal with the fact that women and men do not have equal access to information in the community because of disparities in education, lack of proficiency in the national language, and gendered roles and norms. The principles on disclosure do not include provisions to overcome these obstacles to women’s access to information.

The Indigenous People Safeguards require respect for customary rights to land and ancestral domain but do not address the conflict between customary laws and women’s rights. In the absence of explicit support for women’s rights, the Safeguards enable existing gender inequalities to persist and reinforce longstanding inequities in access to and control over resources.

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/1ee7038049a79139b845faa8c6a8312a/PS7\\_English\\_2012.pdf?MOD=AJPERES](http://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/1ee7038049a79139b845faa8c6a8312a/PS7_English_2012.pdf?MOD=AJPERES)

Overall the SPS strongly promotes women's participation in consultation, yet the lack of gender expertise weakens enforcement. There is no requirement to have gender experts' inputs in project preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The SPS also offers little guidance on gender mainstreaming.

## V. RESEARCH SITES

### 5.1 Trung Son Hydropower, Thanh Hoa province, Viet Nam

Trung Son Hydropower Project (TSHPP) is a medium-scale government project with the designed capacity of 260 MW. The dam is located in Trung Son commune, Quan Hoa district. It is expected to generate an average of 1,018.6 GWh annually (PECC4, 2008). The total estimated cost of the project is \$412 million, of which \$330 million was provided through a loan from the World Bank. The project was built by the Vietnam Power Corporation.

The project's infrastructure includes a dam of 84.5m high with a crest length of 513m, a reservoir covering 13 km<sup>2</sup> with capacity of 348.5 million m<sup>3</sup>. It also includes a main road of 20 km connecting Mai Chau district (Hoa Binh province) to Trung Son district (Thanh Hoa province), a dormitory hosting 4,000 workers at peak periods, and 65 km transmission line (PECC4, 2008).

The project's headwork is 95 km southwest of the town of Hoa Binh and 195 km northwest of the Thanh Hoa city. The reservoir tail is approximately 9.5 km from the Lao border. The total project area is approximately 78,000 ha encompassing six communes and a township of three districts of two provinces (four communes in Quan Hoa and Muong Lat districts, Thanh Hoa province; two communes in Moc Chau district, Son La province; and Muong Lat township of Thanh Hoa province). Some 2,327 households and 10,591 people were directly impacted or resettled. Ninety per cent of them were from Thai, Muong, and H'mong ethnic minority groups (SESIA-TSHPP, 2011). Their main livelihoods were upland rice cultivation (70-80%), livestock raising (10%), collecting bamboo and other non-timber forest products and logging. The poverty rate in those impacted communities was high, particularly among the H'mong group (DRCC, 2008). The TSHPP also affected three national conservation areas i.e. Xuan Nha in Son La province, Pu Hu in Thanh Hoa province, and Hang Kia – Pa Co in Hoa Binh province.

The project EIAs and other assessment were conducted between 2008 and 2010. Construction commenced in 2011 and is still on-going. It is expected that the reservoir will be filled in 2016 and the hydropower plant will be completed in 2017.

**Figure 2:** Location of Trung Son Hydropower Project



The first EIA of Trung Son Hydropower was conducted in 2008 by the Power Engineering Consulting Joint-stock Company 4 (PECC4) – this is a state-own company offering consultancy services on energy development and investment. The affected communities were consulted after the EIA report was drafted. A summary of the draft EIA report was sent to commune People's Committees and the Fatherland Fronts, a quasi-governmental organization - propaganda hand of the party, in the nine affected communes. The results of public consultation were recorded in Chapter 8 of the EIA report. There was no objection to the content of the EIA report, neither was there a record on women's participation. This EIA report was approved by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment on 17 June 2008.

Since 80% of the project investment was a loan from WB, the project had to comply to WB's social and environmental safeguards. The project proponent had to conduct a Supplementary Environmental & Social Impact Assessment (SESIA), Environmental Management Plan (EMP), the Resettlement, Livelihoods and Development Planning (RLDP) of ethnic minorities based on the guidelines of World Bank. Those reports were approved by the World Bank in January 2011.

The public consultation for social and environmental impact assessment was held in three rounds and in conjunction with the resettlement program. The first round was conducted in July 2008 in 14 villages affected the reservoir area. The second round was conducted between December 2008 and January 2009 in 27 villages affected by the road construction. The third round was conducted in 12 villages in 2009 to 2010. The public consultation with directly affected villages includes 2 parts: the public consultation on environmental impact, and public consultation on compensation and resettlement. At the district level, public consultations were conducted in Muong Lat, Quan Hoa districts, Thanh Hoa province and Mai Chau district, Hoa Binh province, Moc Chau district, Son La province. The participants came from authorities, at least one representative from each of the affected villages in the district and the appropriate representatives from the provincial authorities. At the provincial level, public consultations were conducted in 3 provinces including Thanh Hoa, Hoa Binh and Son La with the involvement of the relevant departments, such as power office, minority office, agriculture and rural development office, resources and environment office, the labour and social affairs office. At the national level, public consultation with civil society organizations was held in Hanoi in March 2010 with the representatives from social organizations, NGOs, international agencies and individual others. (SESIA -TSHPP, 2011).

Representatives of Vietnam Rivers Network and PanNature were involved in the consultation as observers. The public consultation meeting at village level using various methods such as using local language, audio materials, art work to ensure ethnic minorities as H'Mong, Thai, Muong understood and communicated their thoughts on the project. The public consultation targeted ethnic minority women as a consulted group, therefore the number of women participated in consultation meetings was significantly high compared to those that invite household representatives. There were 2,324 people taking part in the consultations, of which women accounted for 40%. The participation of women from more mainstream ethnic groups such as Thai and Muong was higher than that of marginalized ethnic group such as H'Mong, 43% and 25% respectively.

## **5.2 Solid waste landfill in Hoa Phu, Buon MaThuot**

Hoa Phu commune covers 5,104 hectares, located 14 km away from center of Buon Ma Thuot city. The commune has 3,413 households (16,419 people); of which, 808 households (5,115 people) are ethnic minority. Their livelihoods include cultivation of rubber, sugarcane and small farms. Hoa Phu commune was selected to host the solid waste treatment plant (SWTP) of Buon Ma Thuot city. The SWTP is a component of the Secondary Cities development project funded by ADB which aims to turn Buon Ma

Thuot, together with Ha Tinh and Tam Ky city (in Ha Tinh and Quang Nam province respectively) into regional economic development centers.

Decision No. 937/ QD-Committee of May 16, 2013 approved the SWTP construction plan. The SWTP is located in village No. 11, Hoa Phu commune, Buon Ma Thuot city, Dak Lak province. Total area of Phase I is of 10.8 hectares for construction works. Solid waste landfill is semi-submersible and floating half scale. The expired period is 7 years (from 2016 to 2022). The solid waste landfill serves the area inside and outside of Buon Ma Thuot city.

The project main activities include building the 813 m long line to transfer garbage from industrial zones, constructions of operating buildings, two cells of sanitary landfill, and central drainage ditches. Total investment is of 13 million US dollars. Dak Lak Urban and Environment Company manages and operates the project.

This project has prepared an EIA report in compliance with the LEP 2005, Decree 29/2011 and the Government approved the EIA report in May 2014. To comply with ADB's regulation, the Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) has been prepared for this landfill following the Safeguard Policy Statement (June 2009) of the Asian Development Bank. Consultation meetings on IEE were held with representatives of nine organizations and two communities with the participation of 112 people (including 34 women). The Provincial People Committee and consultant team organized the consultation meetings and invited people potentially impacted by the landfill project.

## **VI. WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN EIA IN TRUNG SON HYDROPOWER AND BUON MA THUOT SOLID WASTE LANDFILL**

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Both projects conducted social and environmental impact assessments in compliance with the safeguard policies and procedures of WB and ADB. As discussed in the above section, public consultation, disclosure, participatory planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of environmental management and resettlement plans are mandatory in EIA processes that should create an enabling environment for women to participate. This section discusses the quality and outcomes of women's participation in the consultations, and explores factors that influence their participation in the two case studies.

### ***Equality by number does not guarantee equal voice***

The percentage of women involved in consultative meetings on Trung Son Hydropower Project was 40% of the participants. Despite the relatively large representation of women, most of them did not speak out, especially in the presence of largely male village leaders. In one third of the total 53 village consultations, "the speakers were mostly men and household heads. Most women did not contribute any opinion during the consultation process" (Village Consultation Report, Trung Son Hydropower PMU, 2010). In many Northern mountainous communities such as those affected by Trung Son Hydropower plant, attending meetings is an important job of men. Therefore, women are not confident to speak out in such platforms that are supposed to be for men. When the invitation was sent to the representative of the household, men generally responded. A woman only participates if her husband is busy or the invitation addresses her directly.

The dominance of men in consultations was observed in the consultative meeting on IEE report of the Solid Waste Landfill Project and mitigation measures. There were 112 participants in that meeting, including representatives of Provincial People's Committee, social-political organizations such as Fatherland Front, Women Union, and other organizations. Some 30 per cent of them were women. Women participants did not voice any opinions, hence had little influence in the final agreements.

### ***Issues raised during consultations***

The interviews with the impacted communities showed that women had very specific concerns on livelihood and environmental issues such as drinking water, pollution of rivers, fields, gardens and air, and their health impacts. These are issues that directly affect the performance of their reproductive and caring roles. Meanwhile men had different concerns i.e. traffic, compensation and housing – as these related to their socially assigned role. Subsequently, the participation of men in meetings on land and compensation was higher than women's. As a result of these male-dominated consultations, environmental concerns were largely overlooked. Women from communities impacted by the solid waste project in Buon Ma Thuot city are now complaining about dust, water pollution, and bad odors released from the landfill site. They are worried that their children's health and their small businesses will be affected.<sup>6</sup>

In Trung Son Hydropower Project, on the other hand, the active participation of women made significant outcomes. Women in Ta Ban village, Trung Son commune (Thanh Hoa province), with their knowledge on the local environment and ecology, plants, soil and water resources, have meaningfully participated in community consultations and importantly contributed to identification of more suitable

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<sup>6</sup> Results from the women group discussion in Buon Ma Thuot.



resettlement areas than the ones initially suggested by the project proponents. This resulted in changing the location of two resettlement areas.<sup>7</sup>

Mrs. Ngan Thi Tien, 54 years old and Muong ethnic group, has actively participated in community consultations organized by the project proponent. She said with confidence: *"I am married to a Thai husband and it is tradition that we take care of housework and men should be in important events. But we know some better places for resettlements than men regarding clean water resources. We were involved in resettlement consultations where we helped to choose new locations better than original one."*

*Photo: Mrs. Ngan Thi Tien, Ta Ban village, Trung Son Commune, Thanh Hoa province*



## 6.1 Elements of meaningful participation

**Serious commitment:** Trung Son Hydropower Project is an unprecedented project in Viet Nam where extensive public consultation was conducted on environmental and social impacts and resettlement planning with 53 impacted communities and concerned non-governmental organizations. The whole process took three years (2008–2010), organized by social experts and monitored by local NGOs such as the Rivers Network, PanNature, and Green ID. This created a climate of trust between people and the project's proponents. Social and gender experts were also allowed to engage with the proponents and learn more about the proposed project and its impacts on villages.

**Disclosure:** The Trung Son Hydropower Project made deliberate efforts to inform affected communities about the project and its implications. Assessment reports such as EIA, Environment Management Plan (EMP) and Resettlement Livelihoods and Ethnic Minorities Development Program (RLDP) were made available at the commune level. Each affected village received a summary report of the EIA, EMP and RLDP that highlighted key potential impacts of the project on the environment, livelihoods and the communities. The project information was also presented in posters, calendars and audio tapes in local languages i.e. H'Mong, Thai, and Muong. However, there was no consideration on gendered differences in accessing information, hence no attempt made to cater to different communication channels for women. The Project's officials communicate with communities mainly through village leaders, and most of village leaders are men. According to Mr. Ngan Van Quan, Head of To Xuoc Village, he can talk directly with officials from the project management unit whenever he has difficulties concerning the resettlement and cultivation. Thus, women did not have their own communication channel.

The consultation becomes ineffective if the consulted parties are not provided sufficient information. In the solid waste landfill project in Buon Ma Thuot city, neither impacted people nor local authority were properly informed about the project. The project information was posted in commune offices. The information was mainly about the project construction plan, complaint and grievance mechanisms. Mr Nguyen Dang Huy from Hoa Phu Commune People's Committee (CPC) complained that

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<sup>7</sup> Result from interviews of PMU and women groups in Trung Son and from interview with social expert in Hanoi..

ADB had conducted two impact assessments on the resettled communities but there was no feedback since then. Mr. Nguyen Dang Huy added that the CPC was not engaged in the impact assessment as their envisaged role was to coordinate the land acquisition and resettlement. The lack of information and clarity on the project resulted in either blind consensus or the absence of feedback in the consultation because people hesitated to discuss when they did not have sufficient information. Many interviewed people expressed their concerns over its anticipated impacts on health and the environment such as the deterioration of roads, bad odor, waste water leakage to underground water. Ms. Vo Le Quynh Nhu, Hoa Phu Commune, said: "We are very worried that the landfill [project] will contaminate river water, fields and gardens, especially causes dust. We are already affected by a mining project, and the road has been degraded. This solid waste landfill project will worsen the road condition, and create more dust and more garbage."

Language and a "safe" space: Ethnic minority women were reluctant to speak up in public consultation because of their lack of confidence in speaking in public and using the mainstream language. Consultation meetings on Trung Son hydropower project were organized with mixed groups of women and men. Though there was an attempt to separate women and men for group discussion in some communities, the meetings took place in one place, normally the village head's house, and discussions were largely done in the plenary. It was observed that when ethnic minority women talked among themselves in their own language, their discussions were lively. Most of them resigned to silence in the plenary session especially when they were asked to speak directly to the "outsiders" i.e. consultant groups in the mainstream language. Women in Tan Huong village, Thanh Son commune (Thanh Hoa province) explained that they understood the discussion but they were "too shy" to speak up (Trung Son Hydropower PMU, 2011). The report on public consultation of Trung Son Hydropower noted that ethnic minority women were less fluent in Vietnamese compared to men. This is one of the key reasons behind women's lack of confidence in expressing their views.

During the consultation on the Solid Waste Landfill project, women did have things to say and have their own way of expressing themselves by using keeping their voices down, whispering and offering unsolicited random comments (Ms. Vo Le Quynh Nhu, agriculture staff from Hoa Phu Commune People's Committee). Their voices were largely ignored because they did not present in the men's style i.e. using mainstream language, standing and loud, particularly in male-dominated forums. Women's speaking style should be recognized and accommodated such as creating space that women feel comfortable to express their views. Ms. Khuc Thi Thanh Van, a social expert suggested to use interactive and participatory tools in discussions with women.

Creating platforms for women to feel confident and respected to express their views is crucial for their meaningful participation.

## **6.2 Institutional constraints to meaningful participation of women**

Table 2 shows how gender has been incorporated into stages of EIA deliberations of the two studied projects. In both projects, gender analysis was absent in most stages of EIA. The only window of opportunity for women to raise their voices was through public consultation where the quality of consultation and norms on women's public behavior, as discussed in the previous section, determined the ability of women to speak up and contribute their ideas. Out of 53 village consultations in the Trung Son hydropower project, there was only one evidence showing that women's opinions influenced the decision on resettlement sites. There was no record of women's concerns in the solid waste landfill in Buon Ma Thuot. Despite an extensive public consultation process, there is no record of gender implications and how gender-differentiated concerns would be addressed in the EIA report of Trung Son hydropower project. Why were gender issues not properly identified and addressed? Why were women's concerns not properly registered or fell within the cracks in the consultation process?

**Table 2.** Women's participation in EIA stages in Trung Son and Buon Ma Thuot Projects

Stage	EIA process	Women's engagement in EIA of Trung Son Hydropower	Women's engagement in EIA of Buon Ma Thuot Solid Waste Landfill
1	<b>Screening</b> (consider dependency level of the community to the impacted environment in order to determine if EIA is needed)	No analysis on gender implications of the impacted environment.	No analysis on gender implications of the impacted environment.
2	<b>Scoping</b> (which impacts and issues should be considered)	Potential gender-specific impacts and issues were not proposed for further exploration.	Potential gender-specific impacts and issues were not proposed for further exploration.
3	<b>Baseline study</b> (e.g. population, location, water management, agriculture, energy)	No gender disaggregated data, or any gender analysis.	No gender disaggregated data, or any gender analysis.
4	<b>Prediction and impact assessment</b>	No prediction on gender-specific impacts	No prediction on gender-specific impacts
5	<b>Public consultation</b> (reporting and presenting findings in environmental & social impact studies; identification of key impacts; discussing solutions)	Women's attendance in public consultation was 40%* Concerns of women and men were captured, but not systematically presented in the public consultation report. No gender disaggregated data and gender analysis in environmental and social impact assessments reports	Women's attendance in public consultation was 30%** There was no record on the results of public consultation. No gender disaggregated data and gender analysis in environmental and social impact assessments reports. Project proponent informed local Women's Union about employment opportunities for women.
6	<b>Decision to approve project</b>	Public consultation led to the change of two resettlement locations. Women played an important role in recommending the new sites.***	Gender specialist and a local gender coordinator provided inputs to the preparation of the IEE.
7	<b>EIA reports and monitoring plans</b>	No report and recommendation on how Women's concerns should be addressed.	No report and recommendation on how Women's concerns should be addressed.

Source: Key informant interviews in both study sites.

(\*) Public consultation report, 2010.

(\*\*) IEE report.

(\*\*\*) TSHPP PMU, 2010, Environmental Assessment, p. 34; Interview with the World Bank social expert - Ms. Khuc Thi Thanh Van.

### 6.3 Research findings on gender-inclusive participation

This section presents analytical findings of the research, grouped into three thematic clusters: guidelines to operationalize gender-inclusive principles; awareness, attitudes and sensitivity to gender and culture; and language, cultural and norm-related barriers.

#### 1. Guidelines and required capacity in operationalizing gender-inclusive principles

- a. *Lack of guidelines on the conduct of public consultations.* WB's Operational Policies on Environmental Assessment (EA), Natural Habitats and Indigenous People require consultations with affected people and concerned NGOs on the terms of reference for the EA on the draft EA report, and throughout the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of project

interventions. There is no further elaboration or guidelines on how to operationalize this requirement. ADB's "meaningful participation" has not evolved beyond a statement of principle.

- b. *Lack of capacity in integrating gender in the safeguard policies.* WB's Operational Policy on gender and development provides only a general statement on the need to conduct a gender assessment to inform country and sectoral development strategies. ADB's policy on gender and development and guidelines for gender mainstreaming do not specify how to mainstream gender into ADB-funded projects. The ADB gender specialist admitted that operationalizing the gender policy is challenging. Subsequently, women's participation was mainly a matter of their numbers in attendance, not in terms of facilitating women's voices and addressing their concerns.
- c. *Gender expertise is not required in an EIA consultancy team.* The assessment of environmental and social impacts is undertaken by consultants. Consultants often conduct their work under contracts and very specific job descriptions. It was found that EIA consultant groups very rarely engage with gender specialists and the consideration of gender issues is not included in the terms of reference of consultant group leaders or members. In addition, EIA consultant team leaders are often men. Therefore, content on the promotion of women's role in the consultation should be included into consultant contracts and terms of reference. Promoting gender mainstreaming in the EIA processes requires both a change in contracting arrangements supporting gender mainstreaming and a raising of awareness on its importance. For example, project staff should be able to provide convincing evidence about the benefits and effectiveness of women's participation in the EIA and mandatory policies (e.g. ensuring the inclusion of gender or social experts as members of EIA consultant groups) should be proposed and implemented."<sup>8</sup>
- d. *Lack of full institutionalization of women's participation in EIA and public consultation.* The integration of gender in EIA is still new in Viet Nam and is mainly due to requirements of international financially supported projects. There are currently no requirements from Viet Nam.<sup>9</sup> As a result, EIA reports generally do not have gender considerations. "Currently, in EIA reports (prepared by government funded projects in accordance with Vietnam EIA regulations) there is often little or completely no gender considerations."<sup>10</sup> There is also almost no role for the Vietnam Women's Union in the EIA process.
- e. *Lack of an accountability mechanism on public consultation and disclosure.* Public consultation is stipulated unevenly in Viet Nam's Environmental Protection Law and the safeguard policies of the WB and ADB. What made the consultation process of Trung Son hydropower project outstanding is the close monitoring of WB officials and NGOs. The lack of monitoring such as in the case of ADB-funded project in Ban Ma Thuot, resulted in poor consultation and caused frustration among affected communities. Engaging NGOs in monitoring and facilitating public consultation potentially improves the quality of public consultation.

## **2. Levels of awareness, attitudes and sensitivity to gender and culture issues**

- a. *Limited awareness and skills of project proponents, investors and local officials on public consultation and the importance of women's participation.* It is viewed that community consultations are time-consuming, and can slow the project's progress, cause major changes, and even have the potential to stop the project altogether. Public consultations are often held in a conventional way, where project proponents inform rather than solicit the views of their audiences. Interviews with officials reveal that there is an assumption that the community is

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<sup>8</sup> Interview with the environmental Officer at ADB Viet Nam

<sup>9</sup> Interview with DAKURENCO expert group discussions, Buon Ma Thuot.

<sup>10</sup> DAKURENCO expert group discussions, Buon Ma Thuot.

generally ignorant of technical issues, hence under-value the knowledge and opinions of the community. Consulting women was seen as an extra task, repetitive and an unnecessary required step<sup>11</sup>. "The awareness on gender equality of technical experts in general, and PMU in particular, is relatively low and uneven. Promoting the participation of women in processes of EIA depends on the PMU."<sup>12</sup>

- b. *Lack of knowledge and sensitivity to local culture by consulting groups and project proponents.* Understanding the cultural elements of each ethnic group is also very important to ensure the effective participation of women. There are ethnic groups where the inequality between men and women is greater, and as a result, in some ethnic groups women are viewed as more inferior to men (e.g. H'Mong, Kinh, Hoa) than in some other groups (e.g. Thai, Tay). For example, "for White Thai ethnic (West Thanh Hoa, close to Son La), women feel able to express themselves in meetings. So they join the consultations more comfortably. Although, their education level is not high, they do not hesitate to take part in consultations. Meanwhile in H'Mong ethnic groups, most women do not participate and they communicate less<sup>13</sup>." In addition, in some ethnic groups, men and women often hesitate to communicate and share opinions with strangers from outside of their communities, especially when trust has not yet been built. More knowledge and sensitivity to local culture will enable proponents and consultants to tap and solicit people's views more effectively, in a way that does not threaten or intimidate.
- c. *Access to information.* Women and men have different channels of accessing information due to gendered roles and social spaces, that is the locations where women often visit and comfortably interact with others. If information is disseminated through men's channels such as public meetings, it is unlikely that women will be fully informed, thus constraining them from participating meaningfully in the consultation.
- d. *Fear of opposition from the affected community.* Neither local officials nor project investor/proponents are motivated to conduct meaningful public consultation and full disclosure for different reasons. Local officials found it difficult to react and handle critical comments, questions and objections from the consulted groups because they do not have capacity to respond, and sometimes perceive the critical comments as discrediting their authority<sup>14</sup>. The investor/project proponent simply avoids being challenged by critical questions from the affected groups.

### 3. Language, cultural and norm-related barriers

- a. *Vietnamese language barrier.* Despite efforts to disseminate information in local languages and accommodating women's group discussions in the consultations of Trung Son hydropower project, the consolidation of opinions and the conversation between the community and the consulting group during the meetings were conducted in Vietnamese (Kinh). Ethnic minority men have better language skills because they have better access to formal education and have more mobility. Therefore comments were mainly from men. Women almost exclusively talked to each other in local languages, and had to express their opinions, if at all, through the men.
- b. *Male-dominated space.* The domination of men in public space is manifested in not only their higher attendance rate (compared to women's), their influence over the discussion, but also the well accepted male manner in public speaking and presentation (vs. woman's style as discussed in

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<sup>11</sup> Interview with PMU staff, solid waste landfill project in BMT.

<sup>12</sup> Interview with Ms. Khuc Thi Thanh Van, social expert, Trung Son Hydropower Project.

<sup>13</sup> Ms. Khuc Thi Thanh Van, social expert.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with Phan Thi Thanh Ha, District Department on Environment and Natural Resource Management, Buon Ma Thuot

the previous section). Participants in consultation with Hmong villages affected by the Trung Son Hydropower Project were mainly male and the number of female participants was not high. Even when women participated and were physically present in meetings, they often waited for men to express their opinions.

- c. *Prejudice against women's status and knowledge.* The prejudices linked to the subordinate position of women in family and society are a major barrier to the participation of women. They are often afraid to speak up and share their ideas at consultations due to the view that they are in a lower social position than men. One woman affected by the hydropower project observes that "when participating in meetings, often men express their opinions. Women are timid, and afraid to speak in public<sup>15</sup>". In addition to the barriers of the traditional role and status of women, prejudices of local authorities linked to women's education levels, and priorities, concerns and interests is also one of the reasons why women were not invited to participate in community decision making processes. According to Mr. Pham Ba Sac, a Trung Son Commune Fatherland Front (CFF) representative, women are less knowledgeable, so they are reluctant to participate. He believed there was a "lack of learning opportunities and conditions as there is no time, as almost all the day time they spend farming field, on production of handicraft products, planting cassava, and bamboo shoots. They have to earn a living and have no time for learning and studying about women's rights." Moreover, it was found that women from ethnic minority groups often thought that after they married, there is no need to continue to participate in formal learning activities. With such a prejudice, women are often neglected during consultations.
- d. *Social norms on family headship.* One of the main reasons why women were not invited to take part in consultations is due to traditional practices which dictate that men are the heads of households. In Vietnamese families, most husbands are named heads of household, despite the current laws and regulations which define that both husband and wife have the equal right to act as heads of household. When inviting representatives of households or families to a meeting, it is common that household heads are invited, and this tends to be men. If a meeting requires that participation of women, they must be invited directly. "When there are invitations to meetings, men often go. If invitations are directed to women, then they will go.

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<sup>15</sup> Interview with a woman, 33 years old, Buon Ma Thuot.

## VII. CONCLUSIONS

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The research found that despite the inclusion in existing policies for public participation and social equality, gender issues and women's voices were not sufficiently incorporated and addressed in the EIAs of the two researched projects. In a very limited way, it was only through public consultation that women were able to express their views in the EIA process.

To get a closer look at the quality of women's participation, we refer to Agawal's typology of participation (2001) and conclude that women's participation in the consultations of the two researched projects was largely nominal (i.e. they were invited to attend the meetings) and passive (i.e. they did not speak up and assert their views). In the case of Trung Son hydropower plant, women's participation was consultative i.e., their opinions were recorded but there was no evidence that they had been followed up or addressed.

There are many institutional constraints to women's meaningful participation such weak access to information, gender norms and male-dominated social practices, cultural insensitivity and the pervasive stereotypes towards women's status, and weak capacity particularly of government officials, project holders, and EIA consultation team to enable gender-inclusive consultation processes. However, those constraints have not been properly recognized and addressed by donor agencies, investors and local authorities. Those interviewed explained that the lack of detailed guidelines on gender mainstreaming constrains their knowledge and awareness on gender inclusion.

A comparative analysis of the consultation processes of the two projects shows that despite the lack of gender mainstreaming guidelines in the safeguard policies of both donor agencies, a strong commitment for public participation is a key prerequisite for the inclusion of women's voices and interests in EIA processes. In Trung Son hydropower project, the consultation process was executed with the monitoring of the donor agency and NGOs. Where a serious effort towards public consultation takes place, the chance for women to share their knowledge and assert their opinions is higher. Unfortunately, the absence of gender expertise reduced the opportunity for meaningfully integrating women in the consultations in Trung Son hydropower project. Meanwhile in Buon Ma Thuot, while the ADB has strong safeguard policies, which include gender inclusion, the participation did not result in tangible result. There seems that little or no significant efforts in making information about the project and its potential impacts adequately available. The lack of information and clarity on the project resulted in either blind consensus or the absence of feedback in the consultation in Buon Ma Thuot, because people hesitated to discuss when they did not have sufficient information. The chance for women to express their opinion is therefore very limited.

The research shows that the potential benefits of women's participation in EIA deliberations lie in their knowledge of environment and livelihood resources, and how these are being affected by infrastructure development in these two study sites. If women's voices were adequately heard and sufficiently allowed to influence decision making, resettlement plans might have been re-configured to prevent and reduce livelihood losses and threats to natural resources, such as air and water quality.

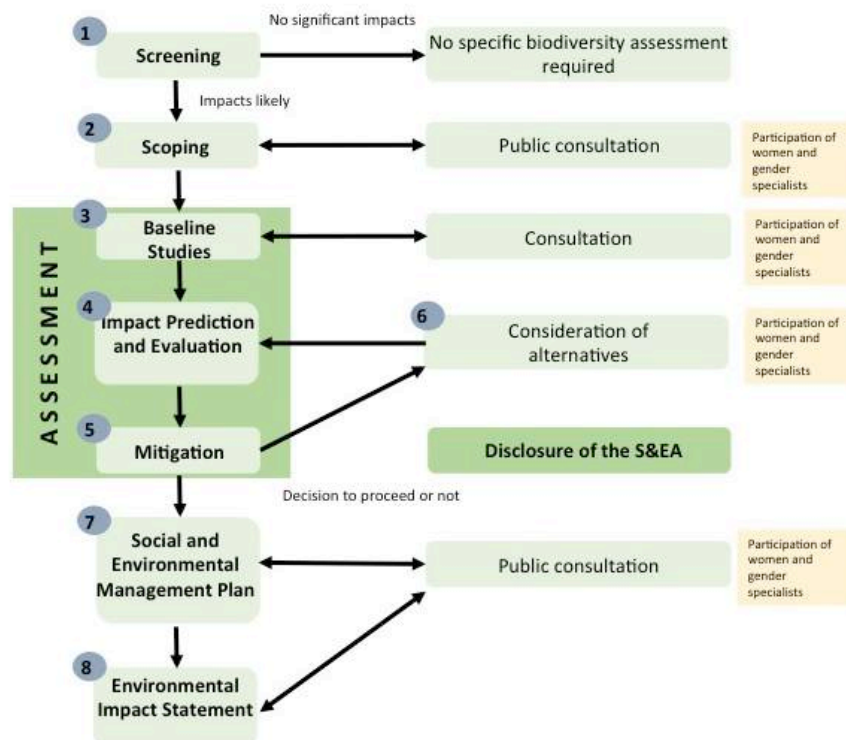
## VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations are proposed based on the discussions of the expert meetings organized before conducting the field trips, the findings of this research project, and the consultative workshop on the research findings. These recommendations are applicable to specific areas, such as institutions, participation process of women, and measures to improve the capacity and position of women in environmental and social impact assessments. Furthermore, there are some specific recommendations for the Regional Technical Working Group on EIA that is currently preparing guidelines for EIA consultations within the MPE Program.

### 1. Amend the national legal framework on EIA and public participation based on the Gender Equality Law

- a. The Environmental Protection Law and its guiding documents (the Law) should incorporate conducting a social and gender impact assessment in the scope of EIA and strategic environmental assessment. Currently, the Law only focuses on assessing the project's impacts on the natural environment, bio-diversity and community health. This overlooks the impacts of the changing environment on the well-being, culture and livelihoods of the affected communities. Subsequently, the Law should stipulate the need to attend to gender-specific impacts in EIA and the Environmental Management Plan as well as measures to address such impacts.
- b. Gender specialists, affected communities, marginalized social groups (i.e. women, ethnic minorities) and other concerned organizations should be consulted from the project scoping phase (step 2) onward to ensure potential impacts of the project are foreseen and properly studied (see Figure 3 below). This will enable affected women and their communities to actively participate in the EIA process, subsequently improve the quality of EIAs.

**Figure 3.** The inclusion of women and gender specialists in Social and Environmental Impact Assessment stages



Source: Adapted from Le Trinh, 2015. *Environmental impact assessment and social aspects of investment projects in the country*.



- c. More detailed guidance on the EIA process should be developed to ensure women and ethnic minorities access and fully understand project information and its potential impacts on their communities and wellbeing; and to enable them to effectively discuss and negotiate their concerns and interests. The guidance should state a minimum requirement for a percentage of women's participation; culturally-sensitive methods for consulting women and ethnic minorities; templates for reporting quantitative and qualitative gender-disaggregated data.
- d. Gender and social impact assessment should be part of capacity requirement and specified in the terms of reference for the for EIA consultation team.
- e. The EIA appraisal team should include a social and gender specialist.

## **2. Reinforce accountability mechanisms in national legislation, donor's safeguard policies and in practices**

- a. The Environmental Management Plan should spell out measures addressing gender-specific concerns and interests based on clear and accessible information on the effects of the project on well-being, livelihoods and environment.
- b. An independent party such as NGOs/CSOs and National Women's Machineries such as the Vietnam Women's Union should be given a monitoring role with a clear mandate and guidelines for reporting in EIA processes and throughout project implementation.

## **3. Enhance the role of Vietnam Women's Union in EIA and Public participation**

- a. The Vietnam Women's Union, as a representative body of women, should have an equal role to the Fatherland Fronts in reviewing and providing feedback on EIA draft reports as well as monitoring the implementation of EMPs. Their role should be spelled out in the legislation.
- b. The Vietnam Women's Union should be assigned a proactive role in ensuring women's access to full project information, soliciting and representing women's voices in consultation platforms.

## **4. Use the capacity of NGOs and CSOs in facilitation, capacity building and joint monitoring throughout the EIA process**

- a. Institutionalization of NGO's and CBO's in monitoring of public consultation in government's and donor's policies and guidance.
- b. Capacity of NGOs and CBOs should be strengthened to better engage in EIA process

## **5. Demonstrate best practices on gender-inclusive EIA to further enhance guidelines for gender mainstreaming in EIA**

- a. Guidelines for gender inclusion in public participation in EIA for Viet Nam and other Lower Mekong countries should be developed and implemented.
- b. Best practices on how to engage women in public participation should be developed and shared among countries.

## **6. Contribute to the development of the Regional Guidelines for Public Participation in EIA**

- a. Share the findings of this research with the Regional Technical Working Group (RTWG) on EIA.
- b. Enhance the awareness on the participation of women within the RTWG in order to promote the participation of women in community consultations during EIA processes as part of a regional EIA standard.
- a. The regional EIA guidelines should refer to and invoke existing regulations and legal frameworks on public participation, and advocate to amend them to include the explicit need for the participation of women in EIA processes.

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### Checklists of questions for key informant interviews, in-depth interviews (seven target groups), and group discussions

#### **Target group 1: Government Officials/authority - Local authority: CPC, village leader**

- What are the public participation clauses in the legal framework in EIA?
- Are there explicit clauses that constrain the participation of women? Or is the report gender-blind?
- What are the steps involved public participation in EIA, as provided by the legal framework?
- Are there issues of gender equity integrated in the EIA policy framework?
- Decision making steps in EIA
- Incorporation or not of gender in decision-making
- Reasons for not including women in decision-making
- What are the leadership roles of women and men in EIA?
- What are benefits and constraints of engaging women in EIA process?
- Were they invited to meetings related to the project? Why/why not?
- Did they express their opinions in the meetings? Why/why not? Were their opinions taken into account by decision makers?
- What are risks for women in participating and expressing their opinions?
- What are environment social impacts on women and men?

#### **Target group 2: PMU/project operators/ project opponent representatives**

- Incorporation or not of gender in decision-making?
  - \* What are steps in decision - making process regarding environment measure of EIA?
  - \* Are there gender issues incorporation into this decision – making steps?
- Reasons for not including women in decision-making?
- What are the leadership roles of women and men in EIA?
  - \* Who are leader of EMP and measure?
  - \* Who are working on supplementary and EIA?
  - \* Are there women in leadership and management?
  - \* What is the proportion of man and women implementation of EMP and measure?
  - \* Who?
- Can women have access to EIA-related information?
- How well were women informed about the project? Is the information understandable and meaningful to women?
  - \* Project information have informed to women and men or not? What are differences in information transfer to women?

#### **Target group 3: Donors**

- Who were involved in each step of EIA process
- Were their needs reflected in EIA process
- Are there gender-related requirements? Yes: what are they? Whether these requirements are addressed – no/yes and why not?
  - \* Do donors have any documents related to EIA process? What are they?
  - \* How these documents require women's participation?
- What are benefits and constraints of engaging women in EIA process?
  - \* Do donors have any practises to ensure effective implementation?
  - \* Does EIA process have regulations require women's participation?
  - \* How does incorporation gender requirement policy of donors conduct in EIA process?

- \* Are there documents decide to approve regarding women's participation?
- \* What are risks that the donor and project opponent face? What are solutions?

**Target group 4: EIA Appraisal Committee Member/s**

- Incorporation or not of gender in decision-making
  - \* Are women's aspects have been considered during the EIA appraisal process or not?
  - \* Are members of EIA appraisal committee are women or not?
- Who were involved in each step of EIA process
- Reasons for not including women in decision-making
  - \* What are reasons that women's aspects have not bring into evaluation process?
- What are the leadership roles of women and men in EIA?
  - \* What are their position (president , secretary , member)
- Were they invited to meetings related to the project? Why/why not?
- Did they express their opinions in the meetings? Why/why not? Were their opinions taken into account by decision makers?
- What are risks for women in participating and expressing their opinions?

**Target group 5: EIA Consultant Team representative/s**

- What are the leadership roles of women and men in EIA?
  - \* What are the steps in the EIA process?
  - \* Who were involved in each step of EIA process?
  - \* Are there comparison proportion between men and women for participation in EIA process?
- Incorporation or not of gender in decision-making
  - \* Are there any clauses about EIA implementation or consideration of incorporation of gender in EIA on women?
- Reasons for not including women in decision-making
- Can women have access to EIA-related information?
- Do EIA actors and women themselves expect women to participate in EIA processes?
- What are benefits and constraints of engaging women in EIA process?
- Were they invited to meetings related to the project? Why/why not?
- Did they express their opinions in the meetings? Why/why not? Were their opinions taken into account by decision makers?
- What are risks for women in participating and expressing their opinions?
- What are differences of environmental impacts on men and women?

**Target group 6: Environmental managers and Gender experts in Viet Nam**

How the impacts of water pollution, air pollution, noise pollution components to women, children than men? More specific?

- Who is considered the head of household?
- How do you understand gender incorporation and implementation?
- Which steps need to be done to incorporate gender or women's role into EIA?
- What is the social perception of women's position in society, and their role in environmental decision-making?
- What is the traditional role of women and men in housework and family decision-making process?

**Target group 7: Women Community leader/Women's Union**

- Who were involved in each step of EIA process?
- What type of participation of women and each step of EIA?

### **Check List of questions for in-depth interviews of affected women and men**

**1. How do women see project's impacts on their lives and livelihoods (benefits, social and environmental impacts, compensation)?**

- \* How are the advantages of project affect to your life? More specific?
- \* How are the disadvantages of project affect to your life? More specific?
- \* How are the components of water, air, land affect to your life, agriculture, economic, social? More specific? disadvantages of project affect to your life? More specific?

**2. Were they invited to meetings related to the project? Why/why not?**

- \* Was the project information informed to community? Through meetings of Women's Union or community? Who informed (village leader, women leader, Committee leader)
- \* Are information understandable women?
- \* When were you inform about project and EIA?

**3. Did they express their opinions in the meetings? Why/why not? Were their opinions taken into account by decision makers?**

- \* Do you express your individual opinions or through Women's union?

**4. Do women want to be consulted in EIA process? Why/why not?**

**5. What are risks for women in participating and expressing their opinions?**

- \* Do you feel shy when you express your opinions at meetings? Why?
- \* Which are components in water pollution, air pollution; noise pollution,... affect to women and children than men?

### **Questions for group discussions of affected women and men**

1. Who is considered the head of household?
2. What is the social perception of women's position in society, and their role in environmental decision-making?
3. What is the traditional role of women and men in housework and family decision-making process?
4. How well were women informed about the project? Is the information understandable and meaningful to women
  - \* Do you feel shy when you express your opinions at meetings? Why?
5. What do they think are effective ways to influence decision making? (collectively)
  - \* Do you know any effective ways for collectively process?

## Interviewees and their affiliation

No	Name	Sex	Position - Organizations
<b>HANOI</b>			
1	Phan Anh Dũng	M	Deputy Director General of EIA department, MONRE
2	Nguyễn Văn Sơn	M	Environmental Specialist of World Bank Hanoi.
3	Mộng Hoa	F	Staff of World Bank Hanoi
4	Khúc Thị Thanh Vân	F	Women social expert/ member of EIA and settlement program of Trung Son/member of World Bank Environmental and Social Panel of Experts
5	Lê Hoàng Lan	F	EIA specialist, member of EIA Appraisal Committee/women leader
6	Phạm Văn Phúc	M	EIA expert of ADB Hanoi
7	Nguyễn Thu Giang	F	Gender Specialist of ADB Hanoi
8	Bồ Thị Hồng Mai	F	Staff of World Bank Hanoi
9	Nguyễn Văn Nghị	M	Staff of World Bank Hanoi
10	Nguyễn Thu Nga	F	EIA expert
11	Đàm Ngọc Anh	F	Project Coordinator, PMU Trung Son In Hanoi.
12	Nguyễn Hồng Phượng	F	Policy Division Coordinator, PanNature
13	Nguyễn Đức Tùng	M	Vice Director, VESDI
14	Nguyễn Thị Hiền	F	EIA expert, a member of Appraisal Committee of Trung Son Hydropower EIA report.
15	Nguyễn Thị Vân Huệ	F	EIA expert
16	Ánh Tuyết	F	EIA lecturer/expert, Hanoi Poly-technique University
<b>TRUNG SON</b>			
17	Trần Quốc Hùng	M	Staff of Trung Son Hydropower PMU
18	Nguyễn Hồng Phương	M	Staff of Trung Son Hydropower PMU
19	Trần Minh Thông	M	Staff of Trung Son Hydropower PMU
20	Nguyễn Văn Quân	M	Tổ Xước village
21	Chị Lương Thị Thắm	F	Tổ Xước village
22	Đình Xuân Diện	M	Chair, Trung Sơn Commune People Committee
23	Lương Thanh Xuân	M	Deputy Chair, Trung Sơn Commune People Committee
24	Vy thị Ký	F	Trung Sơn Commune
25	Phạm Bá Sắc	M	Trung Sơn Commune
26	Ngân thị Quàn	F	Cò Me Village
27	Ngân Văn Chiến	M	Tà bán Village
28	Nguyễn Văn Phước	M	Tà bán Village
29	Ngân Văn Phận	M	Tà bán Village
30	Lương Thanh Đồng	M	Tà bán Village
31	Ngân Thị Tiền	F	Tà bán Village
32	Phạm Thị Lợi	F	Tà bán Village
33	Phạm Thị Dừa	F	Tà bán Village



34	Phạm Thị Xới	F	Tà bán Village
35	Phạm Mạnh Hưng	F	Head of Co Me Village
36	Lương thị Quyền	F	Tổ Xước Village
<b>BUON MA THUOT</b>			
37	Nguyễn Thị Thái Thanh	F	Dakurenco
38	Phan Thị thanh Hà	F	Buon Ma Thuot Environment and Resource Department
39	Nguyễn Văn Cảnh	M	E Bur –Dakurenco Landfill
40	Nguyễn Ngọc Đông Quỳnh	M	Village No. 8, Hòa Phú commune
41	Võ Lê Quỳnh Như	F	Hòa Phú commune

## ANNEX 3

### Participants in group discussions

No	Name	Sex (M/F)	Position-organization
<b>TRUNG SON</b>			
<i>Women group, Tà Bán village, Trung Sơn commune</i>			
1	Nguyễn Thị Cầu	F	Seller
2	Phạm Thị Lợi	F	Former head, Women's Union
3	Phạm Thị Dừa	F	Head, sub-village Women's Union
4	Phạm Thị Xới	F	Famer
<i>Men group, Tà Bán village, Trung Sơn commune</i>			
5	Ngân Văn Chiến	M	Elderly People Association
6	Phạm Văn Mười	M	Secretary, Village Communist Party Committee
7	Phạm Bá Lân	M	War Veteran Association
8	Nguyễn Văn Phước	M	Chief, Village Communist Party Committee
9	Ngân Văn Phận	M	Village Head
10	Lương Thanh Đồng	M	Deputy Village Head
<b>BUON MA THUOT</b>			
<i>Group discussion of project representatives</i>			
11	Nguyễn Thị Thái Thanh	F	Deputy Head of Planning - Investment - Engineering
12	Nguyễn Thị Hoàng Lân	F	Staff
13	Phan Thị thanh Hà	F	Natural Resources and Environment Division in Buon Ma Thuot
14	Nguyễn Văn Tiến	M	Urban development Company
<i>Group discussion of local leaders, Hoa Phu Commune : Chair of Commune, chief of the CPC, the commune's Fatherland Front President, and Chair of the Women commune</i>			
15	Kiều Thị Nga	F	Chair, Hoa Phu commune women union
16	Từ Văn Hợi	M	Chair, Hoa Phu Commune People Committee
17	Nguyễn Đăng Huy	M	Hoa Phu Commune Office
18	Nguyễn Thị Hương	F	Vice chair, Hoa Phu Commune Fatherland Front
19	Nguyễn Thị Thái Thanh	F	Deputy Head of Planning - Investment - Engineering
20	Nguyễn Thị Hoàng Lân	F	Dakurenco
<i>Groups discussion in Hoa Phu Commune, communities who lost their land</i>			
21	Nguyễn Thị Tân	F	Village 1 Hòa Phú commune
22	Phan Văn Thanh	M	Village 2 Hòa Phú commune
23	Chu Thị Vinh	F	Village 4 Hòa Phú commune
24	Đặng Minh Hùng	M	Village 4 Hòa Phú commune
<i>Group discussions with representatives of the village 11, Hoa Phu commune</i>			
25	Mạnh Văn Chánh	M	Village Head
26	Nguyễn Mạnh Đạt	M	Secretary
27	Đào Ngọc Thiện	M	Farmer Association
28	Dương Đình Hải	M	Security