



## Manual

# WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

**Authors:**

Nguyen Ngoc Ly (Team leader)  
Nguyen Thi Anh Thu  
Nguyen Thi Yen  
Dao Thi Thanh Thuy

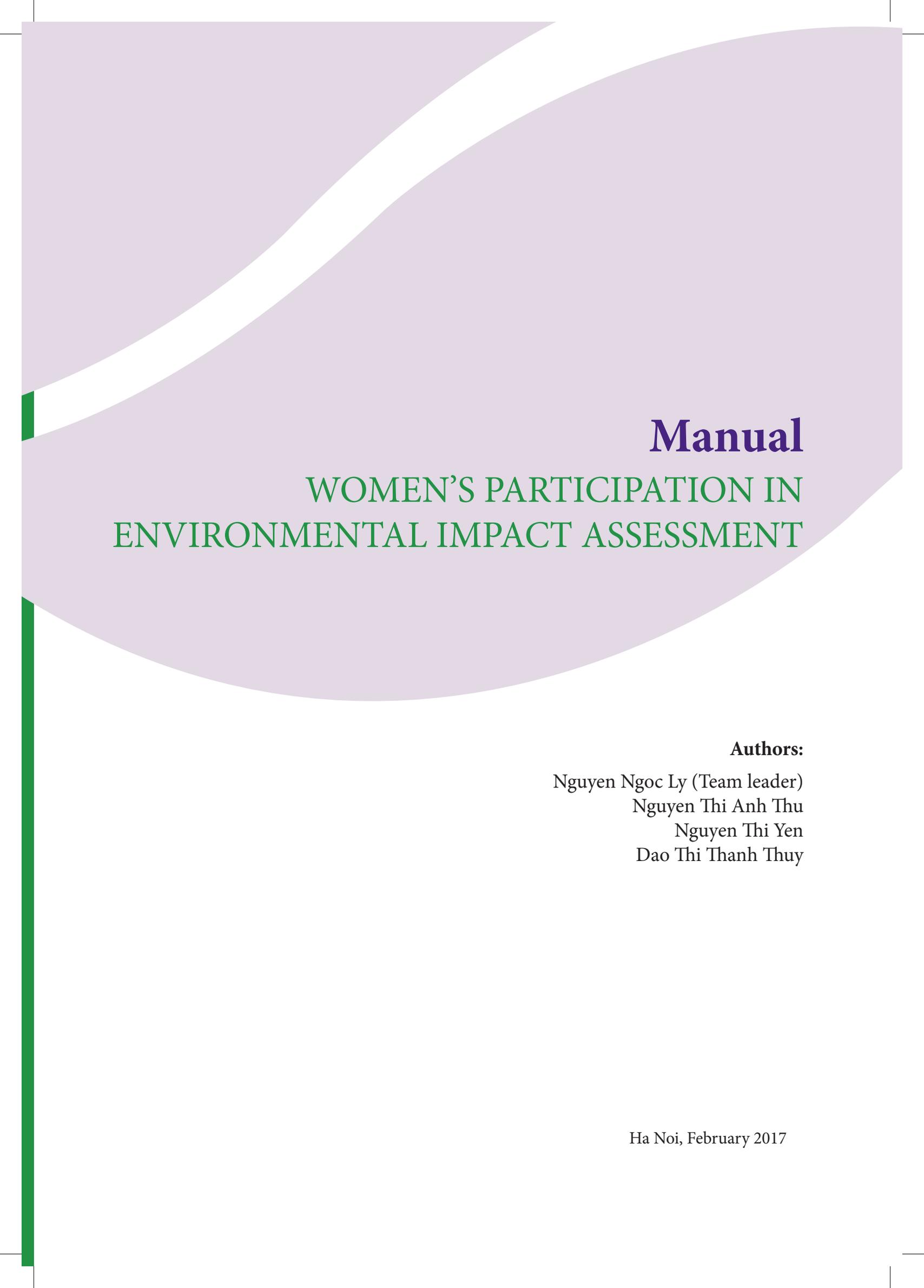


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# FIELD

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# Manual

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## ABBREVIATIONS

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ADB	Asia Development Bank
AIT-VN	Asia Institute of Technology in Viet Nam
CC	Central Committee
EP	Environment Protection
PAP	Project Affected People
MOLISA	Ministry of Labor – Invalids and Social Affairs
CECR	Center for Environment and Community Research
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMMP	Environment Monitoring and Management Plan
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GIS	Geographic Information System
HUST	Hanoi University of Science and Technology
IEE	Initial Environmental Examination
KT-XH	Socio - economics
MPI	Ministry of Planning and Investment
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
QLMT	Environment Management
SPS	Safeguard Policy Statement
PC	People’s Committee
RC	Review Council
VFF	Vietnamese Fatherland Front
VWU	Vietnam Women’s Union
VESDI	Vietnam Environment and Sustainable Development Institute
WB	World Bank

# TECHNICAL TERMS

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- 1. What is Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)?** Environmental Impact Assessment is the analysis and prediction the impacts of specific investment projects on the environment in order to institute environment protection measures for project implementation (Environment Protection Law 2014). In other words, EIA is the process of identifying, predicting, evaluating, and mitigating potential impacts of development projects on the environment and society prior to major decisions and commitments being made<sup>1</sup>.
- 2. What is Initial Environmental Examination (IEE)?** Initial environmental examination is the first appropriate assessment of predictable impacts on the environment of the proposed activities or activities implemented by the project owners. The IEE report comprises of baseline data on the existing condition of the physical and biological environment, the anticipated environmental impacts, and proposed mitigation measures<sup>2</sup>.
- 3. Who is the Community?** Within the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), a residential community (referred as community) is every household and individual residences living in the same ward, village, hamlet, quarter or the equivalent unit in rural and urban areas; sharing similarities, having certain mutual relationships and most likely being directly or indirectly affected by some factors from the projects.
- 4. What is Public Participation?** Public participation is the engagement of the people, who are directly or indirectly affected by a specific decision in the decision-making process, to impulse sustainable decisions by providing participants with necessary information so that they will be able to participate meaningfully, and by informing them of how their contributions may influence the decisions.
- 5. What is the meaningful participation of women in EIA?** The meaningful participation, known as women's actual participation and being empowered in an early participation in the process of screening, scoping, reporting, reviewing and approving EIA reports and monitoring, complying and enforcing, in which, participants are women sufficiently provided with relevant information in a comprehensive manner; they actively raise their concerns and their opinions are listened to in the context of no coercion. Their concerns and suggestions are considered and reviewed in decision-making processes in considering, evaluating, and approving EIA reports as well as monitoring the implementation of mitigation plans.

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1. Draft of "Regional Guidelines on Public Participation in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)" - Cambodia, Lao Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam". (10/2016).

2. CECR. Research Report, p.1.

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6. **Stakeholders<sup>3</sup>** – Including vulnerable individuals and groups, businesses, communities, relevant governmental ministries, local government authorities, academia, national and international NGOs, the media, and people who are concerned about the project, who may not live in the area directly impacted by the project.
  7. **Who are project affected people (PAP)?** They are individuals, households or organizations influenced by the implementation of the project, for example (i) living standard negatively impacted; (ii) housing or land, water resources, air, fixed or variable assets that are affected or restrained in use (in whole or in part of the assets; temporary or permanent impacts, direct or indirect impacts); or (iii) affected manufacturers or businesses, sales outlets (displaced or not displaced).
  8. **Who are the Vulnerable Groups?** They include ethnic minorities, women, the disabled, children, the elderly, etc. The vulnerable groups usually have livelihood difficulties, limited access to social interactions and public services; they are diffident in expressing their opinions and protect traditional cultural activities from external pressures. These groups frequently encounter challenges or are denied full access to various rights, opportunities and resources that are normally available to others, are thereby prevented from participating fully in the economic, social, and political events of the community in which they live.
  9. **What are Good Practices?** In this Manual, good practices are understood as tools, methodologies or models which are exceptionally better than others. The dissemination of the value of good practices will bring about practical benefits. These practices can be applied separately and independently to attract the participation of women in EIA.
  10. **What is Empowerment in EIA?** Empowerment in EIA is understood as one of the levels of public participation, with the aim of negotiating on final decisions between communities and decision-makers.

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3. *Regional Guidelines on Public Participation in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) - Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam* 2016.

## PREFACE

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The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is an important legislative tool for investment projects which minimizes project risks by assisting in the elimination and reduction of negative influences on both the environment and the lives of residents in project areas. Public participation, including the participation of women, in the development of the EIA report is a mandatory requirement according to the Environment Protection Law of Vietnam and Environmental and Social Safeguard Policies of the World Bank (WB) and Asian Development Bank (ADB).

The 2015 report by the Center for Environment and Community Research (CECR) “Assessing Women’s Engagement in Environmental Impact Assessment on Infrastructure Project in Viet Nam: Recommendation for Policy and Public Participation in EIA”, has shown that women with a profound understanding of their own communities have made significant contributions in the work of resettlement. However, they have faced certain barriers in public participation in the EIA. One of these barriers is the lack of instructive tools for investors, EIA consultants, women’s associations and other stakeholders in encouraging the participation of women in the EIA.

CECR wants to remove the above barriers and assist investors, consultants and other stakeholders in carrying out the effective participation of women in the EIA, as well as ensure benefits to the community in order to diminish risks to the environment and improve the efficiency of investment. For these reasons, CECR developed “The Manual on Women’s Participation in EIA”, and collaborated with the Asian Institute of Technology in Vietnam to organise the consultation process during the development of the Manual.

We hope that the Manual will be a useful guide for EIA consulting organizations and individuals to organize public consultations in EIA. The Manual will also serve as a reference source for investors, donors, women’s group and stakeholders with the purpose of promoting the genuine participation of women in the EIA and in environmental protection.

Asian Institute of Technology  
in Viet Nam



**TS. Fredric William Swierczek**  
Director

Center for Environment and  
Community Research



**Nguyen Ngoc Ly**  
Director

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# Part 1

## Introduction



*Women account for more than 50% of Vietnamese population, of which 48.4% participate in the workforce as compared to men with 61.6% (General Statistics Office, 2015). In addition to being the main workers, women also play a role in sustaining and developing families. Because of the worries over foods, water, childcare, and elderly care, the lives of women are profoundly attached to natural resources and local environmental conditions. They are also the keepers and preservers of family and community adaptability. In the field of environmental impact assessment (EIA), the active participation of women in the decision-making process is highly important factor, ensuring the sustainable development and adaptation to climate change (CC), which has been affirmed in Vietnam's Sustainable Development Strategy.*

## 1.1 Background

Over the past two decades, in the basin of Mekong River, investment projects of socioeconomic development, especially hydropower projects, have been exponentially increasing. These projects have significantly contributed to economic development while create considerable impacts on the environment and society, notably on the livelihood and sustainable development of the community. Nonetheless, these negative impacts can be avoided or mitigated, if people, especially those from marginalized groups i.e ethnic minorities, women, are involved in project designing from the earliest stage.

In Vietnam, public consultation activities in EIA have been legislated in the Environment Protection Law since 2015. However, many years of implementation have shown that this tool is considered as a formality to “legalize” the EIA process rather than an actual action towards recognizing and gathering opinions of the affected communities, thereby contributing to the reviewing and decision-making of development projects<sup>5</sup>. At the same time, genuine participation of women in EIA is limited. This indicates the lack of gender analysis in almost every step of EIA process. Specifically, women are not involved in Screening and Scoping steps in EIA<sup>5</sup>.

The lack of genuine participation of women is due to various barriers, including institutional and non-institutional barriers such as cultural factors and personal factors

Details of these barriers will be elaborated in Part II of this Manual. Lacking instructive tools to enhance the participation of women in EIA Reporting process is an existing technical barrier.

4. Nguyen Duc Tung, *Public consultations in EIA has yet to be authenticated.*, *Thiennhien.net*, <http://www.thiennhien.net/2013/11/26/tham-van-cong-dong-chua-di-vao-thuc-chat/>

5. *According to the Report “Assessing Women’s Engagement in Environmental Impact Assessments on Infrastructure Projects in Vietnam: Recommendations for Policy and Public Participation in EIA”, CECR, 2015.*

## 1.2

## Legal foundation for the participation of women in the EIA process

The participation of women in EIA is considered in 2 aspects: (1) Women are part of the residential communities which are directly or indirectly affected by the projects; and (2) Women are represented at all administrative levels by Vietnam Women's Union, a socio-political organization (SP). These two aspects are specifically demonstrated in the Environment Protection Law of Vietnam and other law documents directly related to EIA. Moreover, women's participation is also mentioned in relevant Laws such as Ordinance on Grassroots Democracy, Law on Gender Equality... and is specifically regulated by the policies of large financial institutions.

Section 18 of the Environment Protection Law 2014 specifies that EIA must be conducted from the preparation stage of the projects. Decree 18/2015/NĐ-CP guiding the implementation of this Law requires: "In the process of environment impact assessment, project owners must conduct consultations with Lead Committee of communes, wards and towns where the projects are implemented, organizations and residential communities directly affected by the projects; research and acquire objective opinions, reasonable recommendations of consulted stakeholders in order to minimize adverse impacts of the projects on the natural environment, biodiversity and public health". "The consultations with residential communities that are directly affected by the projects are conducted in the form of community meetings co-chaired by project owners and the commune People's Committees where the projects are implemented, with the participation of representatives from commune-level Fatherland Front, socio-political organizations, socio-professional organizations, residential quarters, villages/hamlets convened by the Commune People's Committees. Opinions of participants in the meetings must be fully and truthfully recorded in community meeting minutes".



Photo: CECR

Ordinance on the Exercise of Democracy in communes, wards and towns of the Standing Committee of the National Assembly No. 34/2007 / PL-UBTVQH 11, also clearly stipulates that “The draft of implementation plan for programs, projects at communes; guidelines, plans of restitution and support for ground clearance, construction of infrastructure, resettlement” are the contents that require inputs of the public and residents before being reviewed and decided by the competent authorities (Clause 3, Section 19).

Law on Gender Equality (2006) specifies principles and measures which stimulate the participation of women in all fields of socio-economic life, including that of environment protection (EP) and EIA. Section 19 of this Law requires the implementation of gender equity promoting measures, including measures regulating adequate proportion of female participants and beneficiaries.

Large financial institutions in the world, when developing investment policies in any nations, normally establish safeguard policies on the environment and society with very strict regulations on public participation with a special focus on the participation of women, youth, children and ethnic minorities. In Vietnam, the two largest known institutions, which are the World Bank (WB) and Asian Development Bank (ADB), also have the aforementioned policies such as Environmental and Social Safeguard Policies of the World Bank and Safeguard Policy Statement (SPS) of Asian Development Bank (ADB), which apply to every project in their investment portfolios.

Details of the legislation, legal documents of the Government and Safeguard Policy of donors can be consulted on the Internet as instructed in Annex 1.



*Photo: CECR*

## The importance of women's participation in EIA

United Nations Conference on Environment and Development recognized that “Women have an essential role to play in the development of sustainable and ecologically sound consumption and production patterns and approaches to natural resource management”<sup>6</sup>.

In Vietnam, the practical implementation of some projects in areas where women's participation is presented has shown that women play a considerable role in increasing the quality of EIA and they already have had ideas to create positive changes to the projects and communities. The 2015 Report “Assessing Women's Engagement in Environmental Impact Assessments on Infrastructure Projects in Vietnam: Recommendations for Policy and Public Participation in EIA” conducted by Center for Environment and Community Research (CECR) has pointed out factors contributing to the benefits which affirm the indispensable importance of women as follows:

*First*, in the context of the current society and gender characteristics, women usually have very specific concerns over the livelihood and the environment such as drinking water, polluted river, fields, gardens, air and impacts on health. Thus, the participation of women will facilitate the collection of information on potential influences of the projects on the environment for EIA Report, hence, assisting consultants in proposing more diverse, complete and adequate environment management plans, contributing to the quality improvement of EIA.

*Second*, in the communities, there are women who are actually attentive and profoundly comprehend local issues, thus, the participation of women will contribute initiatives which are valuable to the projects, such as: identifying the project location, resettlement localities, potential conflicts within the local communities that influence the projects, etc.

*Third*, the participation of women in EIA contributes to the improvement of women's awareness and understanding of environment, natural resources and livelihood protection responsibilities. In the process of participating in EIA, women are equipped with enormous information on the environment and measures to mitigate the negative impacts on the environment and society. This information will assist them better in executing environment protection measures within their families and communities.

*Fourth*, attracting the participation of women in EIA will contribute to the implementation of gender equality policies of Vietnam and increase the status of women in the decision-making process. In addition, the demonstration of women's participation in EIA will give projects more credibility to the investors/international financial institutions.

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6. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/environ.htm>

## 1.4

### Purposes

The purpose of the Manual on Women's Participation in Environment Impact Assessment in Vietnam (hereinafter referred as the Manual) is to promote the meaningful participation of women in the EIA process through introducing some principles, methodologies and providing instructive tools of best practices. The Manual is considered as a voluntary tool in the EIA process and the steps to promote the participation of women in order to:

- Strengthen the effective participation of women in EIA;
- Provide the tool kit and methodology guiding the promotion of women's participation;
- Assist stakeholders in clearly understanding the meaning of women's participation in EIA;
- Be used as a reference for those interested.

The Manual is used as a complement to the guidelines on public participation in EIA: "Regional Guidelines on Public Participation in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA" - Cambodia, Lao Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam" when applied in Vietnam to the regulations and practices over public participation in EIA of Vietnam and the sponsors.

## 1.5

### Scope

The applicable scope of the Manual includes:

- Development projects in Vietnam specified in the list of the projects subject to provide EIA Report according to the current legislation of Vietnam;
- Projects specified in the list of projects subject to provide EIA Report and EIA Summary Report or Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) Report in compliance with Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy of sponsors (Category A and Category B projects according to the classification of World Bank).

## 1.6

### Target Users

This Manual, first and foremost, is directed towards those who consider this as a tool to conduct public consultations and participation in the EIA process. Next are the (groups of) potential users, using this Manual as a reference to improve public awareness and understanding of the importance, rights and benefits of the participation of women, thereby, supporting the management and creation of a favorable environment to stimulate the participation of women, specifically?

- Government management agencies on environmental issues at all levels;
- Investors, sponsors, relevant local authorities (at provincial, district, commune levels);
- Fatherland Front, Women's Union and other relevant socio-political (SP) organizations (at provincial, district, commune levels), groups of local and national NGOs;
- Training programs on EIA, Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy, and public consultation and participation;
- Groups of Affected Women (GAW), groups of local female beneficiaries.

## 1.7

### Manual Structure

This Manual includes the 4 following parts:

**Part I - Overview:** Clearly states the legal foundation and the necessity to promote the participation of women in EIA. This part also demonstrates the purposes, scope and target users of the Manual.

**Part II – Meaningful participation of women in EIA:** This part demonstrates the purposes and contents of “meaningful participation of women”; explains the process and levels of participation in EIA steps, and major barriers to the participation. This is a foundation for the measures and tools in Part III and IV to tackle these barriers.

**Part III – Principles and process of meaningful participation of women in EIA:** This part presents major principles of the participation of women, necessary steps to develop a plan of women's participation in the consultation process in EIA steps as well as processes and separate activities designated for the engagement of women. The principles will facilitate the selection and combination of methodologies, tools and measures to promote the effective participation of women, depending on the unique characteristics of each project and locality.

**Part IV – Methodology and tools to promote the meaningful participation of women in EIA:** This part introduces groups of specific tools and measures to disseminate information mobilize and promote the participation of women in the key steps of EIA.

With this structure, users can use this Manual to identify stakeholders, combine measures and tools depending on specific situations at the communities where the projects take place, and develop plans immediately from the very first steps of EIA as well as identify resources necessary for these activities. The use of this Manual should be maintained flexible to serve the ultimate goal, which is the participation of women in EIA steps to condition them to develop their own potential and understanding in order to create added value to EIA and enables the projects to achieve economic, welfare and environmental efficiency.

# Part 2

## Meaningful participation of women in environmental impact assessment



## Part 2. Meaningful participation of women in environmental impact assessment

### What is the meaningful participation of women in EIA?

The meaningful participation of women in EIA, also known as women's actual participation in EIA, is a process which starts early from screening, scoping, reporting, reviewing and approving EIA reports, monitoring, complying and enforcing, in which, women participants are sufficiently provided with relevant information in a comprehensive manner; their opinions are listened in the context of no coercion, their concerns and suggestions are considered and reviewed in decision-making processes in instituting, evaluating, and approving EIA reports as well as monitoring the implementation of environmental management and monitoring plan (EMMP).

### Purposes

- ▶ To gather sufficient information from the community;
- ▶ To ensure that affected groups of women will participate in the decision-making and project execution process, improving their understanding of the project as well as its impacts on the environment and society in which they live;
- ▶ To ensure that women's opinions and concerns are listened to, considered and reviewed to create actual understanding and consensus from the community, which contributes to enhancing the quality of EIA.
- ▶ To facilitate women in practicing their rights and duties in protecting the environment, as listed in Gender Equality Law and Sustainable Development Goals until 2030 by United Nations.

## 2.1

## Participation process and levels of participation

### 2.1.1 | Participation process

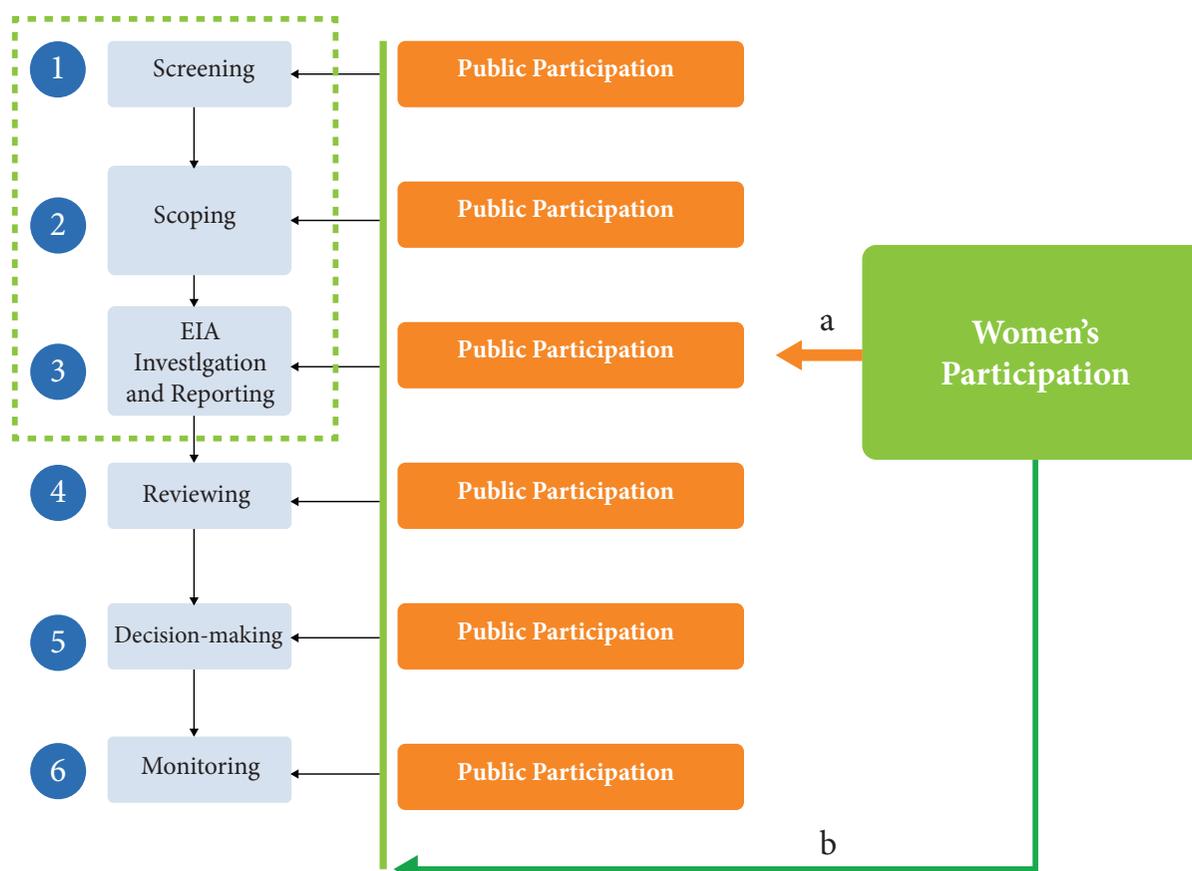
According to Regional Guidelines on Public Participation in EIA<sup>7</sup>, key steps in EIA that require public participation are: 1) Screening ---> 2) Scoping ---> 3) EIA Investigation and reporting ---> 4) Review of the EIA Report and EMMP ---> 5) Decision-Making on the EIA Report and EMMP, and 6) Project Monitoring, Compliance and Enforcement (See Figure 1); [Details are provided in Annex 2].

Regarding the current legislation of Vietnam<sup>8</sup>, EIA process includes the 4 following steps: 1) EIA Investigation and Reporting → 2) Review of EIA Report → 3) Decision-Making on the EIA Report → 4) Monitoring, Compliance and Enforcement.

Fundamentally, the regional 6-step EIA process and Vietnam's 4-step EIA process are similar. The first step "EIA Investigation and Reporting" according to Vietnam Government already includes the first 3 steps (screening, scoping and investigating and reporting EIA). Therefore, the EIA implementation process with women's participation in this manual is understood as the 6-key-step process of EIA.

7. Draft of "Regional Guidelines on Public Participation in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)" - Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam". (10/2016).

8. Decree No. 18/2015/NĐ-CP issued on February 14, 2015 by the Government.



**Figure 1: Key Steps In Environmental Impact Assessment Process**

Women’s participation in EIA can be conducted as part of public participation in every step of EIA. With each step in EIA, consultants may choose to apply proper levels of participation with appropriate tools and methods (Line a, Figure 1). In addition, women’s participation can also be implemented via separate activities for women with separate tools and methods that are suitable for women and specific local contexts (Line b, Figure 1), for example, women focus group discussion, in-depth interviews with affected women or interviews with key women.

### 2.1.2 | Levels of Participation

To make public participation in general and women’s participation in particular authentic and practically meaningful, women must be enabled to engage in 6 key steps of EIA (as mentioned in Figure 1) with different appropriate levels, depending on community and project characteristics, and local conditions. Level of Participation Framework, including 5 increasing levels (Annex 3) instituted by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), comprises of: Informing → Consulting → Involving → Collaborating → Empowering. Below are the purposes of each level:

*Informing* is to provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions to tackle the problems.

*Consulting* is to obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.

*Involving* is to work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

*Collaborating* is to partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.

*Empowering\** is to compromise the final decisions between the public and decision-makers.

Levels of public participation, including women’s participation, need to align with common goals and are subject to adjustment, based on specific conditions of the project. This can be changeable based on different steps throughout the whole EIA process, depending on specific purposes of the public participation at certain times. Table 1 provides suggestions regarding levels of participation corresponding to each step of EIA.

**Table 1: Suggestions on levels of public participation in each EIA step**

No	EIA Step	Level of Participation				
		Informing	Consulting	Involving	Collaborating	Empowering*
1	Screening	←————→				
2	Scoping		←————→			
3	Investigation and Reporting		←————→			
4	Review		←————→			
5	Decision	←————→				In several cases when FPIC principles are applied
6	Monitoring		←————→			

\* *Empowering here is understood as the public participation in compromising processes to finalize decisions with decision-making agencies.*

*Source: Draft of “Regional Guidelines on Public Participation in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)” - Cambodia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam”. (10/2016).*

## Barriers to women's participation in EIA

Women's participation in EIA usually faces difficulties and disadvantages that affect both the engaging opportunity and the quality of participation. Therefore, the identification of these factors will assist the consultants as well as women communities in actively seeking solutions before engaging and selecting appropriate tools, in order to foster the utmost validity of the meaningful participation of women in EIA.

The barriers are diverse and vary with different localities and area characteristics. The report "Assessing Women's Engagement in Environmental Impact Assessments on Infrastructure Projects in Vietnam" conducted by the Center for Environment and Community Research (CECR) in 2015 has identified several major types of barriers, as follows:

### Types of Objective Barriers

1. The lack of full institutionalization of women's participation in EIA and separate, specific instructions on the methods and tools for women's participation, as well as measures that encourage and stimulate the engagement of women in EIA. These are significant barriers and causes that limit the current participation of women in EIA.
2. Prejudice against women's status and knowledge within families and society.
3. Dissemination and Access to information: Women and men access information via different channels due to different gendered roles and social spaces. Ensuring adequate information access of the public and women particularly depends on the provision, dissemination of necessary information about projects and appropriate communication methods. The lack of details and the disuse of appropriate tools lead to shortage of information and knowledge about projects among the public. Women in affected communities, without proper understanding of the project impacts, are likely to arrive at consensus under bandwagon effect. When ill-informed or lacking feedback, women are timid and afraid to discuss and express their opinions. This is a tremendous obstacle to the effective participation of women.
4. Traditional customs and practices in several localities: Traditional and conservative practices are popular among some ethnic minority groups in daily manner and in the subconscious, which not only discourages but also hinders the participation of women.
5. Budget: Even though public participation expenses have been prescribed in legislation, generally these expenses are limited and exclusive budget allocation for women's participation is ignored. Similarly, legal documents of the government only prescribe general public consultancy meeting (with no mention of women as a special subject) once or twice. Thus, in the public participation plan, women groups are less likely to be considered as a group that needs to be systematically consulted.
6. The language barrier: For projects conducted in remote areas, where consulting communities consisting of many ethnic minority women who do not speak Vietnamese fluently, women's participation is a challenge. On one hand, interpreters are needed and must be paid; on the other hand, women themselves are afraid of expressing their opinions in Vietnamese.



Photo: CECR

### Types of Subjective Barriers

1. *Limited understanding of environmental impacts of projects:* Each project has its diverse impacts on the natural and social environment, depending on the project technology and scale. For women in the communities, full comprehension of the impacts of technology on the surrounding environment is not easy, especially on those in remote areas, or those who have low level of knowledge and limited access to information.
2. *Limited time:* Women play a “duo” role in the family and social spaces. In addition to daily income generating activities such as production and business, they also have to attend to household chores, taking care of their children, old parents and their children’s education,... so the time available for social participation in general and participation in EIA is restrained.
3. *Women’s diffidence:* Due to the gender prejudice which is deep-rooted in the behavior conduct, rural women, especially ethnic minority women who either rarely communicate in public or have limited knowledge, are less likely to demonstrate their ability to recognize the natural environment and their adaptation to the habitat.
4. *Limited communication ability:* Many women in the communities, when participating or exchanging opinions in the meetings, usually elaborate in an abtruse manner, use inaccurate words and lack of confidence and openness.
5. *Insufficient awareness of women’s role in EIA.* Many women do not fully understand the importance of their opinions to the projects. Instead, they usually focus on short-term goals such as income issues, jobs, restitution, resettlement and are only interested in the environmental issues when there have been negative consequences.

## Opportunities to promote women's participation in EIA

Despite the objective and subjective barriers, in the current context, there have emerged some opportunities to stimulate the participation of women in EIA, as follows:

*First*, Vietnam has adopted the UN's "Sustainable Development Goals 2015 - 2030", including 17 goals in which the 5th goal is "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls".

UN's Sustainable Development Goals have set the targets on the participation of women in socioeconomic and political fields. Vietnam Women's Union has created National Action Program on Gender Equity, Period 2016 – 2020, which affirmed the urgency of gender and women work in development.

*Second*, the Government's and the public's interests in environmental issues in general and EIA report quality in particular have been increasing, due to many environmental incidents from development projects within the past 5 years.

*Third*, the role of women in sustainable development has been recognized and promoted in political, socioeconomic, cultural, educational and environmental fields, especially since the Reform (1986) till now. Vietnamese women's political participation and contribution in the fields of development have been recognized and appreciated domestically and abroad.

The aforementioned opportunities and conditions are tremendous advantages which affirm the role of women in the work of environmental protection. Stimulating the participation of women in EIA is an enormous step towards implementing the Gender Equality Law, Environment Protection Law and conducting the sustainable development goals 2015 – 2030.



Photo: CECR

# Part 3

## Principles and process of meaningful participation of women in EIA



## Key principles in ensuring women's participation

To ensure the participation of women to be meaningful, several major principles need to be complied with, including general and specific principles, as follows:

### General principles

**Acknowledgment and Encouragement:** The participation of women must be widely recognized, valued and encouraged<sup>9</sup>. This is the overarching principle.

1. **Equality:** Ensuring the equal participation in EIA between male and female members of the affected communities, including groups of directly or indirectly affected women; male and female members of VFF, in socio-political or socio-professional organizations when they are consulted.
2. **Voluntary:** The participation of women stems from the awareness of the benefits of themselves, their families and communities, and their desire to engage in women's socio-economic activities. The participation of women is considered as voluntary, without any coercion and external manipulation;
3. **Democracy:** Women must be considered as a stakeholder. Women's opinions in EIA steps must be listened, recognized and considered in every decision. To ensure democracy in public participation, women are encouraged to raise their concerns, propose and suggest ideas on issues relevant to their interests and desires.
4. **Publicity and Completion:** *Women need to be fully and openly informed in a timely manner of their participation plan, specifically:*
  - **Information:** Including information on of the project, its positive impacts on the environment, potential disadvantages, mitigation measures, Environment Management Plan (EMP), restitution and resettlement plans, gender plans and other relevant information of the project. The project information must be publicized, detectable, accessible, and use perspicuous, appropriate languages.
  - **Women's participation plan** must be fully prepared in accordance with local practices and be financially secured in order for consultations exclusively for women in the plan to be organized, and to condition women to participate as completely as possible. Participation plans also need to be publicized for women to comprehend.
5. **Responsiveness and accountability:** Women's opinions need to be adequately responded by project owners/investors and competent authorities in a timely manner, upon all the absorbed opinions as well as unreasonable opinions to make them understand and to create a convincing consensus.

9. "Sustainable development will be an elusive goal unless women's contribution to environmental management is recognized and supported" (UN, 1995).

## Specific principles

1. *Appropriateness*: Appropriate in terms of time, locales, contents, language and participation format:

- Time: the organization of the meetings, workshops, interviews, surveys with female audience must avoid cultivation and harvest seasons, festivals, celebrations or times of rally, election, and organization meetings.
- Location: The meetings need to be organized in places where women can attend most conveniently.
- Content: Consultants should select consultation topics appropriate to women from each community, ethnic groups.
- Language: The consultations must be conducted in languages appropriate to women from residential, ethnic communities in different regions so that women of ethnic groups, social groups can understand.
- Participation format: Selected methods/format of women's participation should comply with traditional customs, practices and living conditions of communities, especially ethnic minorities and religious groups.

2. *Balance among groups of participating women*: Ensuring balanced participation of women groups with different economic conditions, ethnicities, status, and religions, in different regions or in urban and rural areas.



Photo: CECR

## Steps on developing plans of women's meaningful participation in EIA

To ensure the genuine and effective participation of women in EIA, it is necessary to develop plans to implement the following steps: collecting basic information and specific characteristics related to women when they participate in EIA, exploring capacity building needs, identifying financial needs and resources in order to plan for better participation of women; at the same time, connecting with government leaders to gain support for the women's participation plan. The steps below aim at assisting consultants in having a clearer view of necessary factors and conditions for encouraging women to participate in EIA. These steps are carried out simultaneously, without isolation, and are integrated to and complement the process of developing public participation plans.

### Step 1: Collecting and analyzing data related to women

This is the first step in the process of promoting meaningful participation of women in the EIA, including the 3 following activities:

#### Activity 1: Collecting women-related data:

Women-related information that should be collected in the first place, including:

- The number of female inhabitants/The total of inhabitants in villages, hamlets and communes.
- The number of female inhabitants of ethnic minorities/The total of inhabitants of ethnic minorities.
- The number of households with female heads/The total of households of villages, communes.
- The number of poor household heads who are women /The number of poor households of villages, communes.
- The number of poor household heads who are affected women/The total of affected households (directly or indirectly) of villages, communes.
- List of women in villages and communes participating in social work.
- Maps of affected households and affected households with female heads (Geographic Information System or other similar softwares can be used to identify directly affected households and potentially indirectly affected households).

#### Information on cultural and social characteristics should be collected, including:

- Which ethnic groups are residing in the project areas?
- How many ethnic groups are there? Which are they?
- What are the roles of women in each ethnic group? How does the matriarchy influence family work and social management in the community?
- What are the influences of customary practices on the autonomy of the women (for example: Women are not allowed to be seated in the same table with their fathers-in-law, brothers-in-law; pregnant women near term birth are not allowed to go outside...)?

- Normal and special methods of women's participation in their communities (Women's chapters, clans, families, religious rites...)
- Is the geographical distribution of households sparse or dense?
- Women's awareness towards the importance of their participation in EIA?
- What are the demands on capacity building for women's participation in EIA (if any): specific needs, target audience groups?

These aforementioned data can be collected from district-level minority offices, commune-level cadastral bases, commune-level women's unions, villages or heads of villages and trusted members of the communities, etc. In addition, these data can also be searched for on the Internet.

*The data collection on women is conducted when the consultants gather project background data.*

### **Activity 2: Identify groups of participating women**

The purposes of identifying women groups among stakeholders are to avoid overlooking any subjects and to serve as a foundation to provide appropriate methodologies and approaches to each women group in the participation plan, and simultaneously, to select women groups that pioneer in EIA participation when needed.

To ensure the principle of balance and representativeness, the identification of women focus groups among stakeholders should rely on similarities of influence levels, or of economic, cultural, social conditions, or of understanding levels of issues happen in communities where the projects are implemented. In reality, each group usually shares common characteristics and concerns.

Affected villages and communes may include:

- Groups of women from affected households (including directly and indirectly affected households).
- Groups of female heads of affected households: Household heads are single women, women whose husbands are out of town, have health problems or any other reasons that make their wives or first daughters become household heads.
- Groups of women from ethnic minority households: having same languages, same customary practices and same lifestyles.
- Groups of women from poor households which have the same economic situations.
- Groups of women having better understanding of local issues or key women groups: They are usually women engaged in local social work (communal officials, women's chapters/women's unions, heads of socio-political organizations, officials from local NGOs), trusted members of the wards/hamlets/villages/quarters or wives of village elders, village heads, commune presidents, secretaries, etc.

It is advisable to cooperate with communal Women's Unions, communal Fatherland Fronts, communal Presidents and Village Heads to identify women groups.

The selection of groups for participation plan depends on the number of members within each group as well as the project scope and capacity. If the number of groups within one village is too low and the villages are close, the identification can be implemented on a commune basis.

*The identification of women groups is implemented when consultants identify project stakeholders.*

A list of potential stakeholders is illustrated in Annex 4.

### Activity 3: Analysis

The information and data collected in Activity 1 and 2 above are used for the purpose of analyzing women groups and their capacity, specifying strengths and limitations of women and women groups when they participate in EIA. This is the foundation for the selection of tools and methodologies to promote women's participation, for the identification of appropriate capacity building activities as well as methods of working with local women.

Analysis results must answer the following questions:

1. What are the concerns of women?
2. What are usually the advantages and disadvantages to the participation in EIA of women groups?
3. By whom and by what are women groups usually influenced?
4. Do women groups have the ability to influence their communities? Who do they influence specifically?
5. Is it necessary to build capacity for women? Which capacity and methods should be enhanced?

*The analysis of specific local characteristics related to women is implemented when consultants identify project stakeholders.*

## Step 2: Developing the participation plan for women

The women's participation plan is part of the public participation plan and is developed in the process of public participation planning. Depending on the project scope, local conditions and characteristics, as well as women's capacity, the women's participation plan can be simply integrated into the public participation plan or be separated as a plan designated exclusively for women (as illustrated in Figure 2).



*Figure 2: Plan of women's participation in EIA process*

Women's participation plan should clearly demonstrate:

- The purposes of participation
- The participation details
- Expected outcomes
- Participating subjects
- Selected tools to disseminate and exchange information, methods, tools and measures to promote the participation of women and the elaboration of how these will be used.
- Specific women's consultation and participation activities and programs, including capacity building activities to promote the meaningful participation of women.
- Tentative time
- Location
- Tentative resources and budget

The table below puts forward some suggestions over the methods, tools and measures that are usually considered for selection for every step of EIA.

**Table 2: Selection of tools and measures to promote the participation of women**

Tools, method and measures	EIA Steps
Informing, disseminating information	Scoping, EIA Investigation and Reporting, Decision-making and monitoring;
Information dissemination meetings and consultation group meetings with women	Scoping, EIA Investigation and Reporting;
Survey and Investigation	Scoping, EIA Investigation and Reporting;
Women's focus group discussions	Scoping, EIA Investigation and Reporting, possibly Reviewing (if requested)
Consultation workshops	EIA Investigation and Reporting, Developing EMMP;
Organizing community-based events	Scoping, EIA Investigation and Reporting, Monitoring;
Developing key women's group	Can be used in every step of EIA
Gender-related trainings for individual stakeholders	First step of EIA – Scoping.

*The planning of women's participation promotion is conducted simultaneously with public participation planning*

### Step 3: Developing plans to improve women's awareness

On the basis of identifying the capacity building demands for women to participate better in EIA (conducted in Step 1), if it is necessary and consistent with the project requirements and capabilities, consultants will develop plans to improve women's awareness and capacity for EIA participation. These plans should reflect:

- What are the specific needs?
- For which subjects?
- Implementation methods (dissemination meetings or short training programs, or sharing sessions on communication experience...)
- When are they implemented?
- Who are the implementers?
- Which tools and materials are needed?
- Tentative budget

These plans should be proposed to the investors/project managers to review, approve and provide implementation resources. Depending on the actual needs of women and the project scope, a plan to improve awareness and capacity for EIA participation should be developed for women.

*The plan to increase women's awareness and capacity is developed while developing the plan for promoting women's participation and public participation.*

*Financial resources for the capacity building plan can be provided by the investors, local budgets or women's unions, depending on actual situations.*

### Step 4: Identifying demands for resources to implement activities specified in the women's participation promotion plan.

To conduct the women's EIA participation promoting plan, it is necessary to secure financial, human and facility resources. These resources should be adequately and meticulously calculated.

**1. The essential budget and financial resources for the women's participation includes activities specified in women's participation plan, particularly:**

- Women-related data collection
- Awareness raising activities (meetings, communication materials)
- Individual interviews
- Meetings/discussions designated exclusively for women
- Capacity building activities (possibly training)

- Interpretation of ethnic minority languages, printing of materials in ethnic minority languages, documents exclusively for women from the same ethnic minority groups and religions if possible and demanded.

A financial need identification template is demonstrated in Annex 5.

## 2. Human resources:

- Experts are needed to support the aforementioned activities (gender specialists, social experts, communication experts, and interpreters)
- Collaboration with local authorities, relevant government agencies at communities and border guards can be established if the project is implemented in border areas.

## 3. Facility resources: Meeting rooms, meeting location, training materials, communication equipment, etc..

*The identification of demands and resources allocation for women's participation is implemented when the public participation plan is developed.*

### Step 5: Mobilizing the support and commitment of stakeholders

Promoting the participation of women, on one hand, requires necessary resources, on the other hand, requires the support of stakeholders. To acquire the understanding, support and commitment of stakeholders, Women's participation promoting plan should be developed in a way that engages stakeholders, including investors, businesses, community stakeholders (women's unions, political organizations) and groups of leaders (aspiration hearings,...). This plan must be proposed and fully presented, first and foremost, to investors, project management unit and sponsors.

Simultaneously, it is necessary to build the relationships with local government leaders (PC at commune and district level and wards, hamlets, villages' management unit), women's union and related government agencies to attain their agreement, support, and instructions for women's participation.

Suggestions on women's EIA participation plan framework are demonstrated in Annex 6.



Photo: CECR

# Part 4

## Methodology and tools to promote the meaningful participation of women in EIA



*The methods and tools introduced in the Manual are categorized into 3 groups: (1) Groups of methods and tools to disseminate information; (2) Groups of methods and tools to promote women’s participation in EIA steps; and (3) Groups of methods and tools to mobilize the support of stakeholders.*

*The relative categorization of the tools and methods into 3 groups is based on the intended use of these tools and methods per se. In fact, certain tools can be used independently or utilized for both purposes: to convey information and to stimulate the participation of women, such as focus group discussions or community meetings.*

## 4.1 Methodology and tools to disseminate information

### 4.1.1 | Identifying information to be disseminated

The participation of women in every step of EIA requires specific, sufficient and timely information. Table 3 introduces necessary information for the participation of women in EIA steps.

**Table 3: Information to be disseminated in each step of EIA**

EIA Steps	Information to be disseminated
Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Outline of project proposal, Steps of EIA process;</li> <li>● Outline of Public participation plan in the future.</li> </ul>
Scoping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Project scope, scale, and type;</li> <li>● Alternatives in the project proposal;</li> <li>● Major concerns such as the benefits of the project to the local communities and the nation;</li> <li>● Steps in EIA process;</li> <li>● Direct and indirect, as well as potential impacts of the project;</li> <li>● Ground requirements and resettlement (if any);</li> <li>● Women’s participation plan and Public participation plan</li> <li>● Preventive and mitigating measures to reduce the project’s negative impacts;</li> <li>● Terms of reference for EIA investigation;</li> <li>● Women’s participation plan.</li> </ul>

EIA Steps	Information to be disseminated
EIA Investigation and Reporting (EIA report updates)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Key findings of any differences of women in relation social and environmental matters;</li> <li>● Initial findings from the investigation, research, analysis of project impacts, including solutions to address these impacts;</li> <li>● Feedback from investors, project management unit, relevant government agencies and competent authorities with jurisdiction over previous comments by women in particular (if any) or by the public in general;</li> <li>● Summary of the Draft of EIA Report (including mitigating measures, Environment Monitoring and Management Plan).</li> </ul>
EIA Report Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Final draft of EIA Report;</li> <li>● Environment Management Plan; Scoping report, Approved Terms of Reference;</li> <li>● Report on the implementation of women's (and public) participation plan and women/public's comments; approved comments, inappropriate comments and the reasoning behind.</li> </ul>
EIA Report Approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Approval of EIA Report;</li> <li>● Approved EIA Report (including mitigation plan, Environment Monitoring and Management Plan);</li> </ul>
Monitoring, Compliance and Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Regular monitoring reports, compliance measures and mechanisms to enforce compliance</li> </ul>

The information above should be presented in a concise, clear and comprehensive manner using simple languages, and avoiding technical terms. For projects implemented in areas with affected ethnic minorities who are not fluent in the national official language, the information needs to be translated into their own languages. All the tools used to convey information must adhere to women's characteristics and their gender roles. Depending on the project conditions, the specific characteristics of women in particular and the communities in general, investors and consultants can choose the tools below to accurately convey the information.

#### 4.1.2 | Methods and tools

##### 1. Leaflets, flyers

*Purposes:* Used to disseminate project information in a concise, complete and comprehensive manner, which is accessible to women and stakeholders.

*When to use:* This tool is used to announce initial information of the project and its steps: Scoping; EIA investigation and reporting and EIA report update.

*Contents:* The contents usually include a summary of the purposes, locations of the project; the benefits to people, major negative impacts on residents, what and how they are compensated for these impacts, when and how to file complaints, the address, phone number, and email address of investors, consultants, and Project management unit at central and local levels.

*Presentation:*

- The information in the leaflets or flyers should be succinct, legible and comprehensive. Avoid using specialized terms, official language abbreviations, and abbreviations of foreign languages or borrowed words.
- For areas with many women who are not fluent in the national official language, leaflets or flyers should be written in their mother tongues or popular ethnic languages in those areas.
- Leaflets should be designed with vivid and colorful images that are comprehensible to the information recipients.
- Leaflets can be designed in various forms, such as wall hangings, or objects that can be positioned in conspicuous places, so that it will be more effective to help recipients memorize information, for instance, leaflets printed in the form of wall calendars (exclusive calendars), desktop calendars, etc.

*Dissemination Methods:* Leaflets and flyers can be delivered to households at community meetings, or to each household with the help of village heads or communal women's unions, and can be exhibited in public locales such as village cultural houses or communal PC headquarters.

*Notes:* Leaflets and flyers should be beautifully, concisely and appealingly presented to the information recipients and can be maintained for a long time; they can be put in some places in the houses for people to see them regularly. Compared to those of flyers (printed in black and white, using normal types of paper), leaflet costs are higher, thus, budget allocation should be carefully considered.

## **2. Bulletins on loudspeakers**

*Purposes:* Used to directly convey the project information to the majority of local people, including women, both PAP and non-PAP.

*When to use:* Can be used in every step of EIA.

*Contents:* Including summarized project contents such as the purposes, locations of the projects, the benefits to people, major potential environmental, economic, and social impacts on the residents; what, how much, when and how they are compensated for these impacts; when and how to complain; the address, phone number, and email address of people who are accountable for receiving and responding to complaints (on behalf of investors, consultants, and Project management unit at central and local levels); the outcomes of EIA report approval and project implementation progress, etc.

*Implementation methods:* Information broadcasted from bulletins on loudspeakers at villages, communes/wards should be concise and focused for the purpose of memorization. For areas where women are not fluent in the national official language, a bulletin in their mother tongues should be prepared, using local words. Recommended broadcasting times are when women can spend the most time listening: for example, lunch time, dinner time or after work, which prove more effective results. Moreover, the common language in the communities needs to be broadcast. It is advisable to play the bulletins many times so that people who have not previously listened to them can listen again. Bulletins using national official language should be read slowly for people to recognize project-related issues that are relevant to their families.

**Usage notes:** The advantage of this tool is that the messages are spread quickly, accessible and time-saving for many people, especially for women who can listen while doing house chores. The information provided is transparent, too. However, retention ability of recipients cannot sustain long enough. Thus, the advisable maximum number of broadcasting times is 3 times/day and no broadcasting on resting time.

### 3. Posters

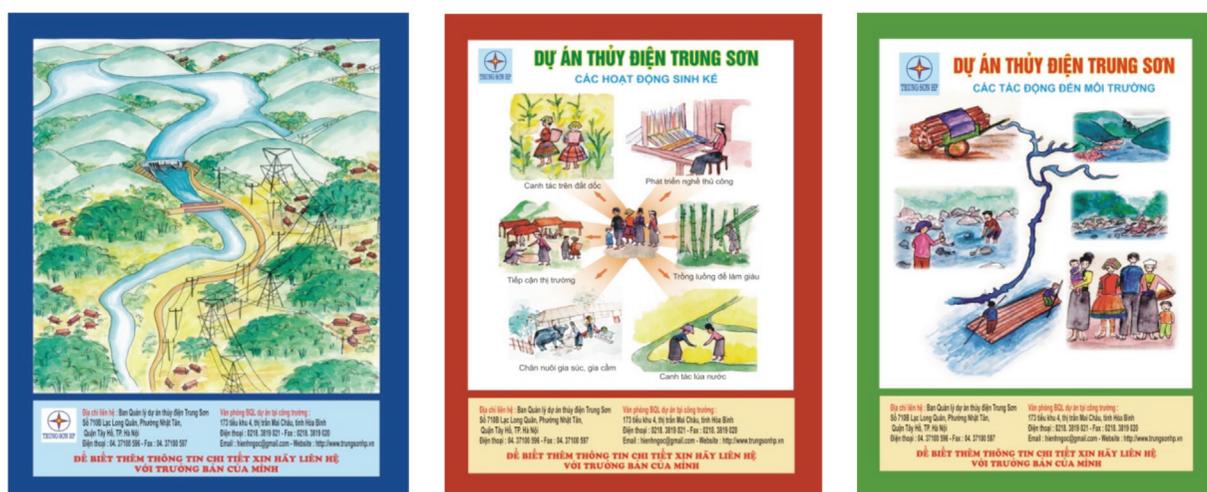
Poster is a communication tool in the form of large printed publications with vivid and appealing illustrations, which is designed to be stuck on walls or certain surface areas. It is a large-sized artistic information and communication publication, designed through highly aesthetic shaping techniques in order to visually convey key information of a product, an event or a problem to viewers.

**Purposes:** Used with the purpose of visually conveying concise information on specific topics to affected women and communities in order to encourage, warn or improve project awareness.

**When to use:** This tool can be used in such steps as: Scoping, EIA Investigation and Reporting, Monitoring, Compliance and Enforcement.

**Contents:** The content should focus on a specific topic, for example, a poster with an illustration of one or some potential negative impacts on the environment of the projects in order for the communities to contemplate and propose mitigating measures (such as landslides), or posters on products and future outcomes the projects will bring about in order for the women in particular and people in general to understand the project benefits, etc.

**Presentation:** Images and texts must match the information to be conveyed, are vividly colorful and appealing to viewers, and include concise, comprehensive annotations.



a b c

**Figure 3: Posters of Trung Son Hydropower Project**

The posters above are printed on A1-sized paper with 3 different topics: (a) A complete sketch diagram of key components of Trung Son Hydropower Project; (b) major environmental impacts of Trung Son Hydropower Project and (c) Livelihood activities – one of the programs developed to mitigate the social impacts when Trung Son Hydropower Project is implemented.

*Presentation locales:* Usually public places such as: communal PC, cultural houses at villages/hamlets, or other local public space.

*Notes:* The advantage of poster is the conveyance of information with images; therefore, they are memorable and accessible to many people. However, poster printing cost is higher than that of flyer and its economic efficiency is low if the number of prints is too small.

#### **4. Information Gallery**

*Purposes:* Used to convey detailed information to stakeholders and people in the communities including women, and to people who are interested in all the project information and the EIA implementation process. Information gallery is also a place where viewers can comment and consult as well as where the project personnel can collect feedback to improve the draft of EIA report. The review of EIA Report will therefore be more objective.

*When to use:* Frequently used in the process of completing the draft or before EIA report reviewing meetings.

*Contents:* Including all the project-related information available at the time of exhibition, such as: the project proposal, public consultation and participation plan and public consultation and participation reports, draft of EIA report, and Environment management and monitoring plan, leaflets, flyers, posters, videos, slides to introduce the project technology, etc.

*Organization Method:* Information exhibition is conducted immediately before the consultation workshops on the draft of EIA report or before the EIA report reviewing meetings. Investors/PMU or EIA consultants (on behalf of investors) cooperate with competent authorities, usually local PC, to organize the gallery. Exhibition location can be combined with the location of the workshop or of the Review council meeting, at densely populated areas or areas that are convenient for transportation so that local residents, individuals, interested organizations and especially women can easily access (such as government agency headquarters at communes, districts, etc.). Leaflets should be made available for the visitors to freely view and take away. Notebooks for commenting should be made public. Logistics to support visitors should be noted, such as providing free drinking water, resting seats or playgrounds for children, allowing women accompanying children to drink water and rest.

The exhibition period usually lasts 3 – 5 days so that many people can visit and comment. In case of necessity, experts can be mobilized, ensuring all-time availability to explain the issues the visitors are concerned about.

Particularly, in areas where many ethnic minority women who are not fluent in the national official language or are illiterate, materials in appropriate ethnic languages should be made available, or native people (preferably women) should always be present to support and instruct other women to learn about the information and to express their opinions if any.

*Notes:* This is the method to provide information for women (particularly) and the public (generally) in an in-depth, comprehensive and complete manner; and simultaneously, to facilitate two-way communication. Nonetheless, the limitation of this method is that the organization process is more expensive in terms of financial and human resources. Furthermore, not everyone can visit due to the lack of time and difficulties in travelling (in remote areas).

## Box 2: Information gallery of Thermal Power Project - Phu My 2

Phu My 2 Thermal Power Project in Ba Ria - Vung Tau province organized an exhibition of project information and images in the communal meeting room so that stakeholders could fully access the information necessary for the consultations later on. Here, the images of the technology, environment safety and project-related maps were hung on the walls; project introduction brochures in texts and images were placed on tables; a technical official from Electricity Consultation Corporation 2 was present to answer inquiries about technology; A notebook is available for the visitors to record their opinions, queries or issues that they were concerned about. 85 people at Phu My town visited and 8 opinions were recorded in the notebook. At Tan Thanh district, 30 people visited and 2 opinions were recorded.

### 5. Women meetings to disseminate information

**Purposes:** Used to convey necessary and complete project information in a direct and precise manner to the women involved; and simultaneously, to collect feedback and recommendations from women through interactions and discussions at the meetings.

**When to organize:** Can be organized in the steps of Scoping and EIA Investigation and Reporting.

**Contents:** Project information is concisely presented, including a summary of the project location, the project purposes, the benefits to women, potential environmental, economic and social impacts on women, what and how they are compensated for these impacts, and when and how to complain. In addition, in the meetings, the enhancement of women's awareness of their rights and benefits when participating in EIA can be integrated into the first part of the meetings. Open-ended questions should be prepared to find out women's concerns, their needs, aspirations and difficulties.

**Organization Methods:** Meetings should be organized near the residential areas, avoiding the main period of harvest seasons or days of storms, floods or local festivals. To avoid wasting time and as women are afraid of participating in many meetings, it's best to integrate these meetings into the meetings of communal women's chapters.

The information must be adequately provided in the national official language and/or in ethnic minority languages if there are many members who are ethnic minority women and not proficient in the national official language. Consultants or the representatives of investors/PMU should be readily available to explain relevant queries if any.

If possible, in the meetings, it is advisable to use popular visual tools (such as videos, slides, images, maps/diagrams, texts and drawings on large sized paper pinned up for everyone...) to assist women in receiving information. "Questions & Answers" is also a technique used in meetings so that all the conveyed information is clearly affirmed.



**Figure 4: Use of visual tools in disseminating information**

*Notes:* This method of conveying information has the advantage of ensuring the complete and accurate delivery of information to the women related to the projects, and of creating a forum for women to take initiatives and discuss the problems they have not been clear about. In addition, this method also creates the opportunity to increase women's awareness of their rights and benefits to EIA. However, the limitation of this method is supplementary budget requirements for consultants and participants.

#### **6. Bulletins on television, newspapers and radio**

*Purposes:* Competent authorities (investors, involved government management agencies, local authorities...) can use television (graphic news broadcasting), printed newspapers (text newspapers) and radio (voice news broadcasting) to quickly disseminate project information to the majority of the communities and women in the local communities or across the country.

*Time:* Can be used throughout the EIA process.

*Contents:* Information usually broadcasted through this channel includes a summary of project proposal; information of the progress or any violations in EIA of the project; responses of stakeholders to the comments of women and local communities.

*Organization Methods:* Competent authorities (investors, PMU, local authorities, etc.) collaborate with radio and television stations at local/central level, printing newspaper to publish the information. Through local women's unions, women are informed of the TV channels, or newspaper issue, radio frequency and broadcasting time. For projects involving many ethnic minority women, it is advisable to broadcast the information on TV channels specialized in ethnic languages (Example: VTV5 Channel).

*Notes:* This tool allows many people to access the information, creates viral effects of supporting or opposing, and publicly and quickly spread information. However, more resources are required.

### 4.1.3 | Indicators determining the outcomes of information dissemination

The important thing here is not only to list the disseminated information, but to determine whether the information has been thoroughly conveyed to the right audience. This will assist consultants in examining the work efficacy; and in allowing investors to see the efforts and professionalism of the consultants the promoting the participation of the public generally and of women particularly in EIA.

**Table 4: Suggestions on indices to identify thoroughly disseminated information**

No	Questions (a)	Answers(b)	Collection Methods (c)
1	Which tools are used to disseminate the information? The number of broadcasting/ dissemination times?		Statistics mentioned in the women's participation plan.
2	The number of women engaged in the dissemination/receipt of the information?		Collecting data immediately when organizing each information dissemination activity.
3	The number of women who are involved in the project who have received leaflets/flyers (if any)		Statistics can be gathered from the village heads.
4	The number of women participating in the information dissemination meetings (if any)		The statistics can be gathered from women's chapters at villages or from the list of women participating in the information dissemination meetings.
5	The number of women visiting the information gallery (if any)		Statistics from information gallery organizers.
6	The number of women who received information from the bulletins on village loudspeakers		Statistics from the communication activities or village heads.
7	The ratio between the number of women receiving conveyed information and the number of women who should receive conveyed information		Gathered from Questions 3, 4, 5, 6

## Methods and tools to promote women's participation in EIA steps

### 4.2.1 | Methods and tools

#### 1. Women focus group discussion

Women focus group discussion is a specific informational collection technique, in which a small group of subjects (usually people who share common characteristics such as: jobs, ethnicities, residential areas) gather together to discuss and finalize their perspectives, opinions, and attitudes, towards a certain issue of the project.

*Purposes:* Used in public consultation, and participation in EIA, enabling women to be more confident in expressing their perspectives, also used to focus on identify issues that they are interested in as well as their initiatives to the projects.

*When to apply:* Usually used in public consultation in initial steps, such as Scoping and EIA Investigation and reporting. Sometimes, this technique can also be applied to gather supplementary information in reviewing step (if requested by the Review council).

*Contents:* Including issues related to the contents on which the project needs to consult with the public. However, it is advisable to not cover every issue but only select appropriate issues in which women are interested or which is within their grasp. Specifically, some examples would be their concerns over environmental impacts, jobs, incomes, health issues, mitigating initiatives of negative impacts on environment, society and livelihood, etc.

*Organization Methods:* Women focus group discussion should be organized in groups of women with the number of participants not exceeding 20. Focus group discussions are to give all participating women the opportunity to raise their opinions. Discussion duration should not be too long to ensure the focus and efficacy.

If there are ethnic minority women who are not fluent in the national official language, local people who can support the process of interpretation should be made available under the help of the communal heads, women's unions, and the village heads or village elders.

Among the contents that need to be consulted, environmental issues should be prioritized in the first section of the meeting agenda, followed by social issues, compensation, and resettlement. It is necessary to brief the participants beforehand so that they will have sufficient knowledge to express their opinions.

The meeting instructors should apply the guiding, sharing, and discussing tools that are appropriate to the participants, speak slowly and deliver ideas clearly, and wear clothes that are suitable for participants. In addition, they should learn the cultural characteristics and local customs beforehand to lead the discussion appropriately and encourage people to express their opinions.



Photo: CECR

### Box 3: Suggestions on guiding measures for women panel discussion

Create a comfortable starting atmosphere, such as: open and friendly self-introduction to participants. Use concise suggestions. Actively invite some of the people who you know can readily express their opinions first. Encourage people who have raised their voice and those who will raise their voice with applause or by suggesting to them the benefits if they express their thoughts. Put forwards questions-answers. When they have incorrect comments, do not criticize them,; instead, keep calm and patiently explain to them, preferably using well-founded evidences and recording any invalidities in terms of legislation or project-related safety policies, etc.

It is advisable to collaborate with women's unions, communal cadastral offices, village elders or trusted people in the villages to organize the discussion (finalize the meeting purposes; determine time and agenda, location, language, necessary information, and possible difficulties in the meetings).

It is possible to take advantage of family relationships, of people from the same ethnic minority groups or prestigious village elders, of chiefs who are male (if patrilineal) and trusted women from ethnic minority groups (if matrilineal) to mobilize women to participate in focus group discussion.

The timing should avoid major periods of harvest seasons, preliminary and final reviews at the communities, and holidays, festivals or days of storms and floods. Mass tools can be used to invite participants: sending invitation letters, sending phone messages, sending invitations via email and using loudspeakers of the villages/hamlets. Before the meeting day, it is necessary to remind participants via loudspeakers of the villages/hamlets.

*Notes:* This method has the advantage of collecting enormous multi-dimensional information, and details from women's groups that can complement the evaluation of consultants or support the decision-making process of mitigating measures. In addition, it also encourages women to take initiatives and be proactive in local environment protection; at the same time, it offers women the opportunities to express their concerns. The challenge to this method is the necessity to gain support of investors, local authorities and local women's unions. It also requires more resources to implement.

## 2. Consultation workshop

*Purposes:* Organizing this workshop to collect comments from the communities on a large scale, including women, over issues of negative project impacts on the environment and society, while at the same time create consensus on issues that have been agreed on in the discussion.

*When to use:* Workshops can be organized during the EIA investigating and reporting phase in order to discuss and contribute ideas to the draft of EIA Report and Environment Management Plan.

*Contents:* Normally, the main contents of EIA consultation workshops are research outcomes or findings on negative environmental and social impacts of the projects, as well as proposing impact mitigating measures.

*Organization Method:* It is necessary to specify the participation of women among workshop participants (representatives from affected female communities, representatives from women's unions, women with understanding of the workshop topics, and prestigious women in the clan). Workshop materials should be delivered to the hands of each participant over a sufficiently long period of time for them to read and contemplate beforehand (usually 1 week). For ethnic minority women, if necessary, materials should be translated and interpreters should be made available at the workshops.

The combination of texts and images will enable participants to easily grasp information. These techniques below are recommended for better quality workshops:

- **Topic-based group discussion:** Topic-based discussion is a opinion collecting technique implemented through discussions among members within a group. The number of members in one group should not exceed 20 people. In order to give women the opportunity to openly express themselves, it is possible to arrange women into one discussion group (if participants are not really confident). In group discussions, the organizers should prepare recordings, tools such as boards, A0-sized paper, pens, etc, to best facilitate the discussions.
- **Brainstorming:** is an active discussion technique aimed at encouraging new, unique ideas on a certain topic from all the participants. Members are encouraged to actively discuss, without any limits on ideas, in order to create a “storm” of ideas related to an issue.

*Notes:* This method's advantage is collecting information from varied participants who have certain understanding of EIA of the project, at the same time exploring collective creative ideas, and investing in human intellectual through topic-based group discussions or other operations based on the “brainstorming” technique. Nonetheless, the number of participating women will probably be limited. Moreover, traveling to workshops are inconvenient for some female participants when they are organized far from the participants' areas.

## 3. Survey

Survey is a qualitative and quantitative method of collecting information from the public through surveys or personal interviews, group discussions (including in-depth interviews with PAP, people who have relevant understanding of customary practices, socio-economic conditions and age groups, gender, social jobs of the samples).

*Purposes:* Used to collect qualitative and quantitative information related to the project, to serve the analysis and development of EIA Report as well as to monitor the implementation of the environment management plan.

*When to use:* Can be used in such steps as: Scoping, EIA investigating and reporting, monitoring, compliance and enforcement.

*Contents:* Collected information includes overview of demographics, residents' incomes, area, environmental issues (sewage, waste, polluted air, dust, landslides...), biodiversity, livelihood issues, etc.

*Organization Methods:*

- For surveys, it is advisable to design mostly fixed questions, open-ended questions should be used for in-depth interviews. Use answer option/options available in the questions to acquire the information. The number of stats should not be overwhelming, especially for female subjects. The questions should be understandable. Do not use many technical terms, or if necessary use them with clear annotations. For areas with many ethnic minority people, the questionnaires should be translated into the ethnic language spoken by the majority of the population there.

In the research sample, it is necessary to determine a certain target proportion of women, depending on the local characteristics. It is advisable to collaborate with communal women's unions or women's chapters to smoothly implement the investigation. In case the respondents are illiterate or have difficulties in writing, investigators can support by writing down their answers. When collecting information into the questionnaires, avoid major harvesting seasons, local holidays.

- For personal interviews: it is advisable to conduct in-depth interviews with some women representing affected households with an emphasis on considerably affected households. Select confident people with good understanding to acquire more information. In addition, it is advisable to conduct personal interviews with key women such as representatives of communal women's unions, prestigious women or those who have good understanding in the villages/hamlets/communes to collect information.

Questionnaires for women should be exclusively designed, focusing on issues that they are most concerned about and are able to give accurate answers. Questionnaires should not include too many questions. The interviewers, in addition to receiving thorough training on the method, should learn about the culture and traditional customs of the local people to have an appropriate approach for optimal information collection.

The interview time should avoid major periods of harvest seasons, preliminary and final reviews at the communities, holidays, festivals or days of storms and floods, avoid cooking time or official working time. There should be an appointment in advance.

Interview locations should be convenient for interviewees' travelling, possibly their homes, their offices or their cultural houses, etc. If the interviewees are ethnic minority women who are not fluent at the official national language, local interpreters should be made available.

In the process of interviews, encourage interviewees by giving suggestive examples, or by breaking down the question for it to be easily answered. Create comfortable atmosphere during the interviews by having a friendly attitude, showing a readiness to listen or creating a fun atmosphere by telling jokes attached to local customary practices or interaction contents. It is recommended to use supporting tools to ensure the accuracy of the information such as recordings (with the consent of the interviewees).

*Notes:* This method allows the thorough collection of quantitative and qualitative information of issues necessary for EIA report. Respondents are generally more solicitous about the information they provided. However, higher expenses and good interviewing skills are required.

#### **4. Organizing activities attached to local events**

In some localities, there are numerous activities of socio-political organizations such as EP contests, or environmental awareness raising campaigns on occasions like World Environment Day, in which women are the key force. Therefore, when possible it is recommended to integrate EIA activities into local events.

*Purposes:* To attract many women to participate and to create viral effects within the communities, creating cooperation and support for the project as well as collecting creative ideas for EIA reporting and EMMP implementation monitoring.

*When to use:* Can be used in such steps as: Scoping; EIA investigating and reporting, and monitoring.

*Contents:* Activities should be designed according to the local events, including disseminating the project information to the women communities, or collecting their opinions about the project via contests and communication campaigns, etc.

*Organization Methods:* Contact local women's unions to develop plans and integrate the information to be conveyed or consulted to in the plans. Prizes to encourage participants are recommended.

*Notes:* This method has the advantage of easily creating consensus and evoking the enthusiasms in women. However, a drawback is that not every occasion is suitable and not every locality has events to collaborate. Moreover, it is inevitable to invest more time and budget when using this approach.



Photo: CECR

## 5. Key women's groups

*Purposes:* Using key groups of women who have good understanding and are highly responsible to stimulate the participation of women, so as to collect high quality information for EIA.

*When to use:* In principle, this method can be applied to every single step of EIA. In the case of making decisions that require public opinions, the comments of these key women's groups are particularly noteworthy.

*Contents:* Activities can include information dissemination, consultation meetings with women, encourage women to directly contribute opinions to the consultation or participate in the workshop, survey, etc.

*Implementation Methods:* The project can cooperate with women's unions and local authorities to establish key women's groups to participate in EIA. Each group should include 3 – 5 people, including prestigious women with good understanding of cultural, socio-economic, and environmental issues within their women's local communities (officials of women's unions, female officials working for PC).

*Notes:* This method has the advantage of allowing women to actively and profoundly participate in EIA. The information provided by them is highly reliable. Within the women's unions, key women have already been selected and trained. Nonetheless, it is difficult to develop such groups without the budget and the support of local authorities.



Photo: CECR

## 6. Phone, email, and hotline

*Purposes:* These tools are used by project owners, sponsors, and competent government authorities with the purpose of gathering additional project information, facilitating two-way communication between stakeholders and affected women, and receiving information of EIA-related violations.

*When to use:* Can be used throughout the whole process of EIA.

*Contents:* Exchange of complementary information, collection of background information and potential impacts of the project or proposals on mitigating measures, social issues and compensation, provision of violation information, compliance and enforcement of EMMP, or EIA-related complaints.

*Organization Methods:* Inform affected women groups of the mailing address, phone number, email address of the representatives of investors, consultants or involved government management agencies which are responsible for the project from the beginning. The aforementioned agencies must be committed to receiving constructive information from women or informants. Hotline numbers are usually available in the project leaflets and flyers from the investors, or in the communal headquarters. For women within communities, it is necessary to establish a separate and free hotline (possible through the local women's unions) to encourage them to take initiatives in providing information.

*Notes:* Using these tools has the advantage of allowing receiving and providing two-way information in a timely, quick and direct manner. With email, the information can be stored for later use without wasting informant's travelling time. However, note that not every informant has adequate capacity or is willing to cooperate to share information via emails and phone. Therefore, it is necessary to build friendly and healthy relationships to foster the cooperation in exchanging information via phone and emails within allowed conditions. On the other hand, many women are afraid of using these tools for fear of identity exposure or conflicts, especially in the case of violation reports. Thus, it is necessary to develop mechanisms to ensure confidentiality and safety for the informants. Phone and hotlines for this purpose should be free to be more convenient for users, especially women.

## 7. Website

*Purposes:* This tool can be used by project owners, sponsors, and competent government authorities to disseminate information about project proposals or to gather comments from numerous interested people, and later complement these informations to the review and decision-making process of EIA report.

*When to use:* Used principally in providing initial information, in such steps as review, EIA report and decision-making.

*Contents:* Information posted on websites can be a summary of project proposal, the draft of EIA report and the approved EIA report.

*Organization Methods:* Investors or sponsors, competent government agencies updating information to the website should inform women in the project areas through local women's unions of the website address as well as information storage duration and the address to send feedback for the draft of the Report.

*Notes:* This tool allows disseminating information widely to women's groups and social communities. Nonetheless, the limitation is that in many places, women do not have reliable access to the Internet, thus, they cannot access the information.



Photo: CECR

#### 4.2.2 | Indicators measuring participation

To evaluate whether the participation of women is authentic and meaningful or not, it is recommended to use indicators measuring participation. This both assists consultants to examine the EIA consultation efficacy in their EIA Investigation and Reporting as well as assists investors in seeing the efforts and the professionalism of consultants in EIA.

**Table 3: Suggestions on indices measuring the participation**

No	Questions (a)	Answers(b)	Collection methods (c)
1	Which methods/tools are used to stimulate the participation of women?		Identified from the implementation report of the Public or Women's Participation Plan
2	How many separate activities are there for the participation of women?		Identified from the Public or Women's Participation Plan
3	How many women were engaged?		Collected at activities with the participation of women
4	How many women commented compared to the total number of participating women.		Collected at activities with the participation of women

No	Questions (a)	Answers(b)	Collection methods (c)
5	How many women commented compared to the total number of people who commented		Collected from records of consultancy of consultants; workshop minutes;
6	How many opinions of women are accepted (included in the approved EIA report)?		Collected from records of consultancy of consultants; workshop minutes;
7	The ratio between the number of accepted opinions of women and the total of accepted opinions?		Collected from records of consultancy of consultants; workshop minutes; reports of consultation outcomes, public participation and responses of the project/investors on receiving comments from the communities.
8	What are some specific constructive comments of women?		Collected from records of consultancy of consultants; workshop minutes; reports of consultation outcomes, public participation and responses of the project/involved management agencies.

## 4.3

### Methods and tools to advocate for the support of stakeholders

#### 1. Developing the relationship with investors, sponsors, women's unions and local authorities

*Purposes:* Used to create a convenient environment and advocate for the support of resources (personnel, finance, time) from competent authorities to the participation of women in EIA.

*When to use:* In every step of EIA, especially in the first step.

*Contents and Methods:* Identify individuals who are directly responsible for the project and discuss with them about the role of women in EIA (from practical experience, actual efficiency, and the benefits of the participation). Provide and present them with the proposal of women's participation plan to gain their understanding and support. When meeting with the local authorities, it is necessary to have local women's union join the discussion.

*Notes:* When using this method, the reliability of the information directly provided for competent authorities must be guaranteed. This method also requires time and skills (explanations and persuasion).

#### 2. Gender training for involved competent authorities

*Purposes:* To improve the awareness of the gender and the roles of women in EIA for involved competent authorities, thereby, strengthen their support for the participation of women in EIA.

*When to use:* Should be implemented in the first step of EIA

*Contents:* Regulations on gender equality policies of Vietnam and particularly in the field of EP, sponsor policies on gender equality and women's participation for projects with foreign investment (ODA); and the importance of meaningful participation of women in EIA.

*Methods:* Need to propose to investors or sponsors about the necessity of gender training for project-related competent authorities. When investors agree to support, this activity should be integrated into the women's participation plan. Individuals of the following agencies which involve in the projects should be identified: investors, government management agencies, and local authorities. Separate training for each group or joint training can be considered, depending on the conditions of each project.

*Notes:* This method is based on the legal basis of gender equality; thus, it has justifiable evidence to convince competent authorities; however, the limitation is the dependence on the awareness of gender equality of the heads.

## 4.4

### Measures to promote the participation

To create favorable conditions for consultants in stimulating the participation of women in EIA, it is necessary that investors, sponsors and involved local authorities provide some supporting tools.

#### 1. Training for groups of consultants

The understanding of EIA consultants towards gender issues, culture and customary practices of local ethnic minorities, as well as their consulting communication skills play an important role in encourage women to participate in EIA. In reality, knowledge and experience in sociology, gender, and culture of ethnic minorities of certain groups of EIA consultants are weak or incomplete. Thus, it is necessary to equip them with these knowledge and skills. It is suggested that investors and sponsors provide resources for this training. EIA consulting units or units that specialize in organizing short training courses of EIA capacity building, gender, consultation and participation in EIA will organize these training courses.

#### Box 1: Training for EIA consultants in Trung Son Hydropower Project

*EIA consulting unit has conducted training for the consultants group on:*

- Consulting techniques for different subjects and ethnic groups; communication skills especially for various types of impacts of each area.
- Behavior conduct and taboos in rituals of ethnic minority groups presented by ethnographic experts;
- The use of materials and tools in the consultation process.

*Source: Villages Consultation Report of Trung Son Hydropower Project (2011)*



*Photo: CECR*

## **2. Training to strengthen women's capacity**

It is necessary to gain the support of local authorities and investors to strengthen the participation of women in EIA, first and foremost in supporting capacity building for women in the knowledge areas and skills that they are weak at. The following are the knowledge and skills that have been identified as capabilities to be increased: i) communication and presentation skills; ii) negotiation and persuasion skills; and iii) digital literacy (email, website...).

Depending on the specific components and characteristics of each affected women's group and depending on the evaluation results of training demands for such groups, investors or/and local authorities should collaborate with local women's unions to organize training for these groups.

## **3. Support of gender experts**

To create favourable conditions for stimulating the participation of women in EIA, investors need to engage gender experts to support EIA consultants. Officials from investing agencies, project management units or EIA consultants rarely have sufficient knowledge of gender. Hence the collection of information does not include gender-disaggregated data; with scant attention to the proportion of participating women. This is accompanied by the lack of experience in encouraging women to express their opinions at meetings, etc...

## ANNEX

### Annex 1. List of legal documents and policies

No	Name of the documents and policies	Hyperlink
1	Law on Environment Protection 2014.	<a href="http://vbpl.vn">http://vbpl.vn</a>
2	Government decree, No. 18/2015/NĐ-CP issued on 14/2/2015	<a href="http://vbpl.vn">http://vbpl.vn</a>
3	Ordinance on the exercise of democracy in communes, wards and towns. 34/2007/PL-UBTVQH 11 on April 20, 2007	<a href="http://www.chinhphu.vn">http://www.chinhphu.vn</a>
4	Law on Gender Equality. 73/2006/QH11 November 29, 2006	<a href="http://moj.gov.vn">http://moj.gov.vn</a>
5	Safeguard Policy Statement, 2009, ADB	<a href="https://www.adb.org">https://www.adb.org</a>
6	Environmental and Social Framework Setting Environmental and Social Standards for Investment Project Financing, 2016, Worldbank (WB)	<a href="https://consultations.worldbank.org">https://consultations.worldbank.org</a>

### Annex 2. Six key steps in environmental impact assessment

1. **Screening** – the process of reviewing a project proposal to determine whether an environmental impact assessment, or any other form of environmental assessment, is required before the project can proceed to implementation.
2. **Scoping** – the process to determine the scope of the EIA and the data needed to be collected and analysed in order to assess the impacts of the project proposal on the environment, which results in establishing a terms of reference (ToR) for the EIA.
3. **EIA Investigation and Preparation of an EIA Report** - the step of the EIA process that involves identifying and evaluating potential impacts and risks of a project proposal.
4. **Review of EIA Report and EMMP** – consideration of the EIA Report by the relevant EIA Authority.
5. **Decision-making on the EIA Report** - the formal decision made by the lawfully determined decision-maker (typically the EIA Authority) about whether to approve an EIA report (and associated documentation, including the EMMP) or not, noting that other regulatory permits, licenses or approvals may also be subsequently required for the project proposal to proceed to implementation.
6. **Monitoring, Compliance and Enforcement** - direct and indirect activities, undertaken internally or externally, to identify actual activities, impacts and overall performance of a project and the comparison of these findings to commitments in the EIA report and EMMP.

## Annex 3. Levels of Public Participation Framework (according to International Association for Public Participation)

					
	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Public participation goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To compromise the final decision between public and competent authorities
Promise by the project proposers and relevant authorities to the public	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look for your advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what decided.
Example techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Fact sheets</li> <li>● Websites</li> <li>● Posters, leaflets, billboard;</li> <li>● Newspaper announcement;</li> <li>● Radio bulletins;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Public comments;</li> <li>● Focus group discussions;</li> <li>● Surveys</li> <li>● Public meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Workshops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consensus building</li> <li>● Participatory decision making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ballots</li> <li>● Delegated decision</li> <li>● Negotiation</li> </ul>

## Annex 4. Suggested list of potential stakeholders

*This list is used in activity 2 of step 1 when identifying relevant women's groups.*

Relevant groups	Relevant organizations and individuals	Roles and functions in the EIA process
<p><b>Government, competent authorities of Ministries, departments at the central and local level.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government agencies at central, provincial, district and local level (PC at different levels)</li> <li>• Agencies in charge of pollution control, such as water pollution, waste and soil pollution, noise and air pollution (Department of Natural Resources &amp; Environment/ Department of Environment/ Natural Resources &amp; Environment Office).</li> <li>• Agencies in charge of nature protection, cultural heritages and landscapes. (Department of Culture, Sports &amp; Tourism; District Cultural house)</li> <li>• Agencies of health and safety at provincial, district, communal levels</li> <li>• Agencies controlling land use, spatial planning and space zoning (Department of Natural Resources &amp; Environment; District office of Natural Resources &amp; Environment)</li> <li>• Specialized Agencies (at department, office levels, etc....) in charge of agriculture, energy, forestry, aquaculture, etc, or agencies whose benefits are affected (ministry, department, office level, communal/ward officials)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributing technical knowledge and expertise to EIA process.</li> <li>• Allowing access to environmental and social data.</li> <li>• Supporting PAP and other stakeholders to understand the concepts and participate in EIA process.</li> <li>• Disseminating the information on the project proposal and the EIA processes.</li> <li>• Sending materials and official participatory comments to Project proposers, EIA consultants and competent authorities over EIA.</li> </ul>

Relevant groups	Relevant organizations and individuals	Roles and functions in the EIA process
<b>Project Affected People</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Land owners, land users.</li> <li>● Native people and minority groups in and about the affected areas.</li> <li>● Vulnerable groups including women, children, the elderly, the disabled, and the poor.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Women's groups:</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Groups of women in affected households (including directly and indirectly affected)</li> <li>● Groups of female heads among affected households: Household heads are single women, women whose husbands are out of town, or have health problems or any other reasons that make their husband unable to register as household heads.</li> <li>● Groups of women from ethnic minority households: Same languages, same customary practices, same mindset.</li> <li>● Groups of women from poor households: they have the same economic situations.</li> <li>● Groups of key women: They are usually women engaged in local social work (communal officials, women's chapters/women's unions, heads of socio-political organizations, officials from local NGOs), trusted members of the wards/hamlets/villages/quarters or wives of village elders, village heads, commune presidents, secretaries, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Knowing about the project proposal in their areas that can affect them.</li> <li>● Reading and reviewing the information of project proposals that can affect them</li> <li>● Participating, within their power, with Project proposers, EIA consultants, other PAP and stakeholders to discuss about project proposal.</li> <li>● Helping identifying the risks and potential impacts of project proposals, as well as identifying the preventive strategies and possible alternatives for projects.</li> <li>● Identifying and conveying demands, desires and expectations of the communities to the project proposal.</li> <li>● Contributing, submitting information, materials, ideas together with Project proposal, EIA consultants, and competent authorities over EIA.</li> </ul>

Relevant groups	Relevant organizations and individuals	Roles and functions in the EIA process
<b>Other stakeholders (including: local, national and regional non-government organizations, industrial and commercial associations, media, research and training organizations, regional organizations)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Local, national, international groups interested in the field of environment, society and development (NGOs);</li> <li>● Manufacturing and service businesses;</li> <li>● National associations of businesses such as Chamber of Commerce, commercial association, etc;</li> <li>● Mass organizations/non-governmental organizations such as the Women's Union, Youth Union, local community groups, population groups, etc;</li> <li>● Groups representing environment users, for example: farmers, fishermenm women using local natural resources for consumption, commercial, toursim purposes;</li> <li>● Research institutes, universities and other academic centers;</li> <li>● Local and central media organizations;</li> <li>● Influential groups in the communities such as prestigious people, clan heads, religious leaders, village heads, teachers, etc.;</li> <li>● Prestigious scientists, researchers and educators.</li> <li>● Local NGOs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Contributing technical knowledge and expertise to the EIA process.</li> <li>● Allowing access to environmental and social data.</li> <li>● Supporting PAP and other stakeholders to understand the concepts and participate in EIA process.</li> <li>● Disseminating information on the project proposal and the EIA process.</li> <li>● Sending materials and official participatory comments to Project proposers, EIA consultants and competent authorities over EIA.</li> </ul>

## Annex 5. Financial need identification template

TT	Activities	Sub-activities requiring budget	Quantity	Budget
1	<b>Information dissemination</b>	Design and print leaflets/calendars/posters		
		Disseminate via radio		
		Disseminate via mass media (TV, radio, newspaper)		
		Women groups meetings to disseminate information (meeting location, tea, drinks, participant fees)		
		Disseminate information through key women's groups/ or Women's Union		
2	<b>Information collection – Promoting the participation of women</b>	Focus group discussion		
		Workshops with the participation of women (meeting location, tea, drinks, participant fees)		
		Surveys (per diem, informant fee)		
		Organize activities related to local events (Which events? How much is the budget?)		
		Establish key women's groups (meeting budget for key groups)		
		Phone and email (allowances for officials in charge of receiving information and responding)		
		Hotline, website		
3	<b>Capacity building</b>	Capacity building meetings via Women's Union		
		Capacity building training for the public		

## Annex 6. Suggestions on framework of women's EIA participation plan

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Title: WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION PLAN

Project Name: .....

EIA Implementation Unit: .....

Implementation time: .....

*Women's EIA participation plan requires the following sections and information<sup>10</sup>:*

### 1. Description of the project:

- ▶ Overview of the project includes: Reasons, objectives, activities, scope, and implementing time.
- ▶ Description of the EIA process includes: A summary of objectives, methods, and activities of EIA process, including activities of public and women's participation in EIA.
- ▶ Information related to women in project areas: Proportion of population, cultural, and ethnic characteristics.

The aforementioned information will help identify activities and the scale of women's participation for the women's participation plan.

**2. Relevant women's groups:** As mentioned in Step 1 of the development process of women's EIA participation plan, this section needs to identify local women's groups who participate in EIA.

### 3. Purposes and women's participation process:

This section should specify the goals of women's participation in EIA process. This purpose is identified depending on the specific characteristics of local women and on the project scale. The goals of women's participation generally are:

- ▶ To collect sufficient information from the public;
- ▶ To ensure that affected women's groups participate in the process of decision-making and project implementation, to increase their understanding of the project as well as its negative impacts on the environment and society where they are residing.
- ▶ To ensure comments and concerns of women are considered, reviewed to arrive at actual consensus from the public, increasing the quality of EIA;
- ▶ To enable women to practice their rights and duties in protecting the environment, implementing Law on Gender equality and realizing Sustainable Development goals to 2030 of United Nations.

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9. "Adapted from the Sample Public Participation Plan Template in the draft of Regional Guidelines on Public Participation in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)" - Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam - 2016

#### 4. Methodology, tools and techniques:

This section should specify which methods, tools, techniques are used to implement the participation of women. The identification of tools for women's participation will depend on women's characteristics, the goal of participation, and project conditions. The identification of tools can be referred to in Part 3 of this Manual.

**5. Key activities and schedule of events:** On the basis of the methodologies chosen, a list of key activities can be identified and a schedule of events can be drawn up. At this point, practical considerations such as weather, or public holidays and religious festivals, should be taken into account when planning activities. Activities in this section include every activity of women's participation in EIA process, such as: all the activities related to information dissemination, consultation, communication, capacity building... These activities can be arranged in order of EIA steps or be combined between the EIA steps, depending on specific conditions of each project.

Suggestions on key activities and schedule of events framework elaborated in the table below.

Specific activities	Methods/ tools	Purposes	Participating subjects	Location	Outcomes/ roducts	Time	Assignee	Budget
(This column will list specific activities of women in order during their participation in EIA of EIA steps)	(The appropriate tools identified in Part 4 above)	(The purpose of the activities. Ex: providing information, capacity building, collecting feedback...)	(Specific women's groups are the focused key targets and will participate in the activities)	(Locations where the activities take place. Ex: Village A, commune X)	(Outcomes of activities can be meeting minutes, images, leaflets, exhibition materials...)	(Tentative time for the activities)	(Name of the person in charge of the activities)	(Tentative budget for each activities)
...								

#### 6. Roles and responsibilities of stakeholders:

This section should clarify the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in the EIA process. Stakeholders include investors, communal/ward PC, local WU, etc.

**7. Budget:** Budget to implement women's participation plan is part of public participation budget. This budget will be thoroughly calculated based on activities listed in the table above.

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# MANUAL ON WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN ENVIRONMENT IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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## VIETNAM PUBLISHING HOUSE OF NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENT AND CARTOGRAPHY

### **Head office:**

No. 85 - Nguyen Chi Thanh, Lang Ha, Dong Da, Hanoi  
Tel: (84-4) 3773 4371; 3835 5958; 3834 3646; 3835 9277  
Fax: (84-4) 3834 4610 E-mail: info@bando.com.vn;  
Website: www.bando.com.vn

### **Hanoi Branch:**

No. 14 - Phao Dai Lang, Lang Thuong, Dong Da, Hanoi

### **Ho Chi Minh Branch:**

No. 3 - Tran Nao, Binh An Ward, District 2, Ho Chi Minh City

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CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY RESEARCH

Address: Suite 501&502, E1 Buiding, Trung Tu Diplomatic Compound, No.6 Dang Van Ngu, DongDa, Hanoi, Vietnam

Phone: 043-9728 063/064

Email: [cecr.vn@gmail.com](mailto:cecr.vn@gmail.com)

Website: <http://cecr.vn>

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