

FOCUS Mizoram Gender Strategy and Action Plan

Context

Gender mainstreaming seeks to ensure that the differentiated needs and priorities of rural women and men are taken fully into account in the project intervention. The gender strategy of FOCUS aims towards economic empowerment, strengthening decision-making and representation, and reducing workloads for women and men among the target groups.

The purpose of the strategy is to-

- a) Assess the differential access to opportunities and resources for men and women,
- b) Build their capacities to participate fully in the project activities such as land use planning, jhum and settled agriculture, livestock support and enable greater access to market and production and marketing of value chains and
- c) Ensure the dividends from project activities are equally shared between men and women. The strategy will also provide guidance on a gender inclusive approach at the organizational level. The strategy is a living document which will guide the overall project implementation for gender equality and women's empowerment. It acknowledges that a project design can have different implications for men and women, until affirmative actions are embedded in the project and accountability is inbuilt towards gendered outcomes.

As per Census 2011, Mizoram has population of 10.97 Lakhs, an increase from figure of 8.89 Lakh in 2001 census. Total population of Mizoram as per 2011 census is 1,097,206 of which male and female are 555,339 and 541,867 respectively. The total population growth in this decade was 23.48 percent while in previous decade it was 29.18 percent. Demographic details of FOCUS project districts shows that the selected districts taken together constitute 42.75% of the total geographical area of Mizoram; 28.13% of the state's population and 32.83% of the total number of households of the state. Total population of the project district as per 2011 census is 359056 of which female and male are 175910 and 183146 respectively.

Rationale

Lalhriatpuii (2010: 168) in her work, 'Economic participation of Women in Mizoram' has attempted to evaluate the level of women's participation in the economy in Mizoram in the 21st century and concludes that the productivity of women workers has not been harnessed in the true economic sense and that the percentage of employment of women in secured and stable employment such as the organized sector is much less than men of the region. Her comparison of the structure of occupational distribution of workers indicate that in Mizoram the primary sector still employs a large section of female population. Female participation in the work sphere in

Mizoram continues to be concentrated in the primary sector, as cultivators and agricultural laborers. Not only is the percentage high but the concentration of female workers in agriculture has shown an increasing trend. The annual growth rate of female agricultural laborer is 11.59% which is almost double the male annual growth rate of 6.86% in 2001 (Lalthansangi 2005: 40).

The Work Participation Rate (WPR) for women in Mizoram is 26 per cent, which is slightly higher than the national average. The employment rate among women is substantially lower than that among males in the state. Most of the labor of women is concentrated towards reproductive and care-work within the household and in the informal economy. As a result, women are poorly represented in the organized sector and this leads to lower remuneration and benefits. Although the overall state gender gap in wages is relatively small, the spatial and tribe-wise gender wage gap is substantial. A combined Economic Activity Index has also been prepared by using the different indicators of employment. This has been observed to be 63.6, on an average. (Mizoram human development report 2013).

Outcome

- 1) Empowerment and equal opportunities- Promote economic empowerment to enable rural women and men to participate in and benefit from profitable economic activities.
- 2) Participation in decision making- Enable women and men to have equal voice and influence in rural institutions and organizations (created through project interventions).
- 3) Equitable balance in workloads- Achieve more equitable balance in workloads and in the sharing of economic and social benefits between women and men.

The gender strategy is valid for the full duration of the FOCUS Mizoram and will be implemented by the staff of the PMU and DPMUs as specified in annex 2.

Activities and Outputs

FOCUS adopts a comprehensive gender strategy to ensure the appropriate focus, comprehensive approaches and timely support to the project activities. A range of activities is recommended which include some gender-specific strategies as well as integration of a gender focus in key mechanisms and processes of the project.

- Gender analysis to identify the specific vulnerabilities of women and men, their livelihoods, current constraints, coping mechanisms, and solutions is greatly needed. As part of the PLUP and its annual update, FOCUS would undertake an analysis to promote a better understanding of gender organization of production systems including jhum and settled agriculture, livestock, existing value chains etc. This analysis will provide more clarity on the roles played by men and women in these production systems, the distribution of income, decision-making and benefits emerging from these economic activities. The analysis would provide a sound basis for guiding FOCUS interventions in the production system to ensure

that project activities do not adversely affect women's roles and status in the community (see annex 1 for checklist of topics that fall under gender analysis of production and marketing systems).

- Gender sensitization of project staff, partners and community leaders where needed, the project will converge with relevant Government Departments to undertake community awareness and training for both men and women on reproductive health, nutrition, hygiene and distribution of care-work within household.
- Women's Leadership-Participation of women from the most excluded group's will be an important priority for FOCUS. For such women, specific leadership development programs are recommended to ensure women representation in community institutions as a member and leader as well as participation in decision making. The new leadership among women will receive training from the project.
- Gender in stages-Identifying gender constraints and designing strategies to address them during preparation, integrating gender-specific activities during implementation and budgeting for them, evaluating progress with a gender lens, and redesigning activities or adopting better ones to fill gender gaps are important steps in the project cycle.
- Breaking barriers-Recognizing that women's full participation in household and community level activities and decision-making may be severely hampered by various prevalent norms and practices as well as gender based violence, the project will endeavor to address these through a series of needs based interventions. In addition to community sensitization, the project is also proposing adoption of quota for women in all local groups (FIGs) established by the project. If gender-based violence emerges as a critical concern at the local level, strategies such as 'vigilance groups' or mapping of 'danger zones for women' can be implemented. Using the findings of analyses to sensitize Village Councils and relevant government staff helps villages adopt goals such as being 'violence free for women. Male role models will be engaged to change mindsets and behaviors.
- Expanding choices for women's livelihoods without gender stereotyping is another important priority for FOCUS. For example, priority may be given to women member FIG for beneficiaries under poultry clusters, piggery, value chain development, nursery development, management of equipment and machinery, etc and ensure they benefit from technical training, extension services and production inputs.
- In order to reduce women drudgery in agriculture and allied sector in Mizoram, tools and equipment specially designed and friendly for women may be given. Equipment and machinery must be tailored to women's and men's roles in the various production systems of jhum, settled farming and terrace rice cultivation.

The types of machinery to be procured will be based on consultation with women and men and on the findings of the gender analysis of the production and marketing systems. It is expected that thanks to the machinery and equipment, women's and men's labor productivity will increase, drudgery will reduce. With the time saved, it is expected that women and men may be interested to take additional income generating activities like poultry, goat and pig rearing, nursery development, etc...,

- Expanding women's access to land: FOCUS will support poor households to access land titles for a specific area of jhum land for conversion to settled agriculture. In order to address this, the project will identify households that are without tenurial land rights to settled agriculture in each village and form a FIG. The selection criteria will include household that: (i) have participated in jhumming for the last three years continuously; (ii) do not have temporary pass and land settlement certificate for any land other than residential plot; (iii) do not have any member working in the government sector; and (iv) households that are dependent on wage labour for 75% of their income. A FIG in each village comprising about 10-20 members will be established and supported by the Lead Farmer. A land parcel will be identified using the land use maps and temporary pass will be issued for at least 0.5 ha per member. This allocation will be made not individually but for a group as a whole. FIGs will be provided training on improved farming methods, better agro-techniques and improved planting material for horticultural crops and timber and multi-purpose trees. The project will fund soil and water conservation works in these selected areas (contour bunds, contour trenches in areas not more than 25% slope and construction of water harvesting ponds, wherever feasible to provide for protective irrigation, terracing and bunding in less than 10 % slope areas). This will enable landless households to access land with tenurial rights and develop this land to reduce dependence on jhum. The project will support 10,880 households covering in total 2,720 ha. The membership of the FIGs will include poor women with no tenurial right and interested to invest in settled agriculture as a livelihood. The potential resistance within the community will be mitigated by involving men and community leaders throughout the process of selection of land, selection of beneficiaries, formation of FIGs, preparation of temporary passes/land certificates and implementation of project activities. FOCUS would need to work on perceptions and practices around the recognition and promotion of women's tenurial rights and the benefits to the whole community with enhanced access and usage of land for women for productive activities and improved nutritional outcomes.

Gender responsiveness at the organizational level

FOCUS project will set up a Committee for Gender Mainstreaming (CGM) in FOCUS at PMU and the respective DMU's. This committee will also act as Gender Grievance Redressal Forum when needed. The CGM is formed in order to:

- To promote enabling and safe working environment for female staff.
- Work towards building a gender sensitive and responsive environment across all the institutions of FOCUS.
- Organize program towards building a gender inclusive work place.
- To build staff capacities on gender issues, advocates for relevant policies to be adopted within the organization and deal with issues of abuse and sexual harassment issues.

Grievance and Complaint Handling System

A nodal person from within the team at the state and district level would be identified for receiving the complaints and grievances. The CGM/Gender Grievance Redressal Committee may be formed at PMU and DMUs respectively, members will be nominated by the State Project Director at PMU level, while at the DMU level, the member may be appointed by the respective DPM. At least one person in each of the committees would be a woman. Each of the committees would maintain a grievance lodging register which would be kept with the concerned nodal person. According to the nature and seriousness of the complaints, a priority list will be prepared. There should be a separate minute's book with each of the committees where all proceedings of meeting would be recorded. The concerned committee would look into the complaints and grievances with all seriousness. Decision will be taken based on the testimony of the complainant and ability of the accused to provide evidence to prove their innocence, and the same will be communicated to the complainant. A complaint registration system will be developed at all the levels. The person lodging a grievance shall have to provide all the details to the nodal person through a letter, email or any written communication. In case of complains of urgent nature, contacts could be made over phone, but same will have to be followed by a written communication.

Gender and vulnerable groups in M&E

Integrating gender dimension in M&E and reporting on gender through sex-disaggregated data is imperative in all IFAD projects. Integrating gender into M&E system helps to measure the extent to which a project has addressed the different needs of women and men, and has made an impact on their lives and overall social and economic well-being. It also facilitates to improve project performance during implementation, allows for mid-term course correction, and makes it possible to derive lessons for future projects. Project reports will clearly identify the extent to which the project has reached women and men the degree to which they have benefited from project activities and outputs. This involves gender disaggregation of data on project activities and outputs to see if women have fully participated in group membership, group leadership, training, livelihoods activities, credit activities and enterprise support. Further, gender disaggregation is needed to see if women have benefited in terms of outcomes - such as

increasing production - or impacts - increased income and assets. As some indicators are better measured on a household basis, these need to be disaggregated by gender of the household head. Special studies may also be undertaken on measures to reduce women's drudgery and on other issues regarding women's welfare and empowerment (for example access to health services, and household decision making). Some ideas of gender-sensitive monitoring indicators¹ in FOCUS could be developed using the following Table:

Gender-sensitive indicators for M&E

Particulars	Questionnaire / issues to identify gender-sensitive indicators
Gender division of labour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is the gender division of labour or work burden at the household level? In other words, who is more responsible for working in the household, women or men? - When the project got started, have men started sharing household work with women, or do women now have to work more?
Gender differences in access and control over resources (e.g. income, employment, land, social services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who controls income in the household? Do the man and woman equally contribute in decision making on expenditure relating to household income? - Who participated in the project training more, female or male? What have been the outcomes of training in applying the knowledge to household economics? - In whose name is the land under the household control? Do both man and woman equally contribute in deciding the types of crops to be grown in the household land? - What different kinds of social services do the man and woman receive or enjoy? What influences do these services have into the woman's health and ability to access information?
Gender differences in information and knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are there gender differences in accessing the same information (about amount of information and how to access)? - Are there any differences in economic opportunities between man and woman due to different amount of information accessed?
Decision making patterns in the household and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who in the household has the decision power? (Compare with the contribution of man and woman in the total household income; whether person contributing the most in total income has the decision power). - The participation of female and male in activities of community (the voice and respectfulness opinions in community activities).
Women and men's attitude and self-confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The difference between female and male about self-confidence in all different project and community activities (on participation and responsibility).
Gender differences vulnerability and coping strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Differences in dealing problems and in adjusting to external shock.

Increased production	<p>Number of HH reporting adoption of environmentally sustainable and climate resilient technologies and practices (please indicate for male headed and women headed households in AOS)</p> <p>Gross returns from spices (for both male headed and female headed households in annual outcome survey)</p> <p>Gross returns from livestock (for both male headed and female headed households in annual outcome survey)</p>
Increased income and assets	Number of HH reporting increase of >100% in household incomes (please calculate for male headed and female headed households in annual outcome survey)

Implementation arrangements

- 1) 50% representation of women and at least one women member should hold the post of Office Bearers under FOCUS community institution.
- 2) 50% women representation in village cadre worker viz. Lead Farmer, Community Animal Health Worker.
- 3) Preferences to be given to women at different level of staff/community cadre selection and recruitment under FOCUS. The same may be reflected in the advertisement when conducting recruitment under the project.
- 4) Networking and linkages with other institutions/agencies for addressing women issues, organizing gender sensitization program, observing and organizing specific days such as International Rural Women's Day, Soil Day, International Women's Day, World Environment Day etc.
- 5) Conducting survey on innovative local technologies (tools and equipments) which can reduce women work drudgery (weeding, fodder) and providing technical support on decreasing women weeding drudgery in consultation with technical experts.
- 6) Advocacy with line department, institutions and agency on inclusion or to favour women for availing different available schemes and social entitlements. While priority may also be given to women headed households, poorest of the poor family, differently abled households and vulnerable groups.
- 7) Use gender analysis to understand the different roles, interests and priorities of women and men, and tailor policies, programmes and projects accordingly.
- 8) FOCUS put efforts on providing rural women with economic and social development opportunities through capacity building, awareness and assistance, participation in activities to improve productivity of crop and livestock, and participation in value chains and more remunerative access to markets. .

Costs and financing

Sl. No	Sub-Component	Activities	Unit	Unit cost	Timeframe				Financing plan		Total amount (in rupee)
					20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	IFAD	Convergence	
1	M&E and Knowledge Management	Gender studies, workshop	Per year	25000	1	1	1	1	100000	0	100000
2	M&E and Knowledge Management	Case studies	Per year	50000	1		1		90000	10000	100000
3	Dissemination and Communication	Printing of gender related IEC	lumps um	10000	1	1	1	1	30000	10000	40000
4	Capacity building and knowledge sharing	Training of project staff on gender related studies	Per year	50000	1		1		50000		50000
Sub total									270000	20000	290000
Grand total									290000		

Results framework

Project Objective: The overall goal of the project in Mizoram is to increase agricultural income of 64,500 households, and to enhance their resilience to climate change. This would be achieved through the development objective of increasing the environmental sustainability, profitability of farming systems practiced by highland farmers and equal distribution of benefits between men and women.

Project outcome objective	Project outcome indicator	Use of project outcome information
The overall goal of the project in Mizoram is to increase agricultural income of 64,500 households, and to enhance their resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. 70% of the <i>jhum</i> households farming for three or more years on the single plot. ii. 75% of the households reporting increase in more than 100% in household income. iii. Soil carbon percentage of at least 4% on <i>jhum</i> land. 	

to climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. Real increase in net annual farm income (in 2017 prices) to INR 1,274.5 million. v. Number of trees increased to at least 20 per ha on <i>jhum</i> land vi. 64,500 households reporting adoption of environment friendly sustainable and climate resilient technologies (use of agro-forestry, soil and water conservation, improved planting material and integration with livestock. vii. Gross returns from spices increased to INR 277 million. viii. Gross returns from livestock increased to INR 267.9 million. 	
Intermediate outcome	Intermediate outcome indicator	Use of intermediate outcome monitoring
Component 1: Improved <i>jhum</i> management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Of the total lead farmers, at least 30% are women 2) At least 50% of institutions created are sustainable 3) At least 30% of office bearers post in traditional or community institution are held by women members 4) At least 30% of women member FIG have attended capacity building program under the project. 	Under achievement in the indicators, if any would be analysed for improving community mobilization and capacity building strategy.
Component 2: Value chain and market access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Of the total CAHW and CRP, at least 30% are women. 2) At least 30% of women member FIG have attended capacity building program under the project. 	Under achievement in the indicators, if any would be analysed for improving community mobilization and capacity building strategy.
Component 3: Project management	Complaints received by Grievance redressal Committee are addressed by the project through Gender Grievance Redressal Committee.	Experiences and learning from the project are factored into management decision-making for improving subsequent project performance

Annex 1. Gender analysis of agricultural production and marketing (Reference: Gender Mainstreaming in Agriculture & Allied Sectors by MANAGE)

The format below can be used for analysis of roles played by men and women in different crop production activities, livestock rearing, household and off-farm production activities. Participation of both male and female members of the households should be ensured for analyzing the activities performed in each sector.

Gender Analysis of Activities				
	Males	No. of days	Females	No. of days
Crop Production				
Cropof				
Field 1				
Task -1.....
Task - 2
Task - 3
Livestock Production				
Animal				
Task -1.....
Task - 2
Task - 3

The following table can be used in a focused group discussion for understanding the access and control profile of men and women over different resources, in a household and community.

Access & Control Profile

Resource	Access		Control		Comment
	Women	Men	Women	Men	
Land					
Equipment					
Labour					
Cash,Gold/Jewellery					
Employment Opportunities					
Education/Trainings					
Others					

The information generated using the above tables will help the extension functionaries and the community to understand the existing scenario of gender division of work/roles, work

load and the time spent on different activities. Further, it will be helpful to plan the extension activities as per the needs of the farming community

Annex 2. Roles and responsibilities

(a) Position in the project	(b) Roles in the implementation of the gender strategy
Deputy Director- Horticulture, PMU	She is the Chairperson in Gender Mainstreaming Committee and is responsible for making sure that each activity is planned effectively and ensure that all the matters are dealt with in an orderly, efficient manner. The Chairperson must make the most of all his/her committee members, building and leading the team in the implementation of the gender strategy.
Manager- Gender & Community Inst. PMU	She is the Secretary in Gender Mainstreaming Committee and plays the role to be guardian of the process of meetings. She will make the arrangements for the meetings and keeps formal records of the committee process and decisions: the minutes of the meeting. This also includes keeping records of correspondence.
Manager- Knowledge Management, PMU	She/he is the member in Gender Mainstreaming Committee and plays the role of a committee member, participate at committee meetings and offer help and support to any tasks that need completing. He/she is responsible for ensuring that all decisions are taken in the best interests of the committee and that his/her role is carried out effectively in implementation of Gender Strategy.
All Asst. Manager-Planning at DMU's	She/he is the member in Gender Mainstreaming Committee and plays the role of a committee member, participate at committee meetings and offer help and support to any tasks that need completing. He/she is responsible for ensuring that all decisions are taken in the best interests of the committee and that their role is carried out effectively. She/he will be a Chairman of Gender Mainstreaming Committee at DMU and key person in the implementation of Gender Strategy at the respective DMUs.
1 Female Technical Officer and 2 Staff at Circle (preferably female) at DMU's	She/he is the member in Gender Mainstreaming Committee at DMU and plays the role of a committee member, participate at committee meetings and offer help and support to any tasks that need completing. He/she is responsible for ensuring that all decisions are taken in the best interests of the committee and that their role is carried out effectively in implementation of Gender Strategy.

Note: Approval for appointing Officers and staff may be sought from State Project Director and respective District Project Managers.