Gender Analysis and Action Plan Framework

Enduring Earth: Accelerating Sustainable Finance Solutions to Achieve Durable Conservation

NAMIBIA COMPONENT
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Project

Since 1993, WWF Namibia has supported the Namibia National community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) program, which has become one of the most acknowledged CBNRM approaches in the world. WWF support contributed to the Namibian government developing a legal framework for giving back to communities which had been disempowered during the colonial period both, the management and utilization rights, for the wildlife in the areas where they reside (through the establishment of Communal Conservancies). The establishment of Conservancies is driven by community demand and today is largely supported technically by the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) and from the Non-Governmental Organizations’ (NGO) side by the Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organizations (NACSO), of which WWF Namibia is a key financial contributor, and other local implementing partners. Since 1995, WWF’s support has been uninterrupted for the last 30 years and presently, through a variety of support mechanisms (ranging from financial and technical support through NACSO partners to direct technical support), WWF supports CBNRM in 86 established Conservancies.

Since 2008 WWF has been aspiring to setting up a long-term sustainable financing mechanism for the local community conservation or “Conservancy” program. In 2018, a pre-feasibility study was undertaken to scope if Namibia would be ready for a “Project Finance for Permanence (PFP)” intervention, and how such an intervention should unfold. So far, all PFP agreements closed focused on supporting the State Protected Areas Network in countries such as Canada, Brazil, Columbia, Peru and Bhutan. In Namibia, the pre-feasibility established that this unique sustainable funding mechanism could be applied to community conservation areas outside of the state PA system, complementing and amplifying inclusive conservation approaches in connected landscapes.

The formal PFP preparation period commenced in Namibia in July 2021 and, in March 2022, the country progressed to the official “preparation period,” which can take up to three years and ends with the closing of a conservation financing deal by members of the Enduring Earth partnership, willing supporting donors and the state and non-state conservation actors in Namibia (a “closing agreement”). The PFP preparation team, composed of WWF US and Namibia as well as TNC staff members, is currently delivering on the standard procedures for the development of a PFP in Namibia, with the closing of the deal foreseen for December 2024.

This GEF project will contribute to the PFP as a sustainable financing mechanism for the Namibian CBNRM/Community Conservancy programme, delivering sustained resources for effective biodiversity conservation and climate mitigation benefits. The financing mechanism will be accessible to all legally registered Community Conservancy compliant with the national legislation, which currently amount to 86 Community Conservancies and could increase to 100, effectively putting 20% of Namibia’s land area under conservation status. The detailed systems around the PFP funding mechanism are yet to be developed and agreed to in Namibia, however it is envisaged that a combination of sinking, possibly revolving and an endowment fund component will be established.

1.2. Gender policy – GEF and WWF
In accordance with the GEF Policy on Gender Equality, which recognized that a more systematic inclusion of gender aspects in projects could create positive synergies between improved environmental impact and greater gender equality, a high-level gender desk review was conducted to inform and guide the development of the “Enduring Earth: Accelerating Sustainable Finance Solutions to Achieve Durable Conservation” (WWF ID: G0038; GEF ID: 11014) project.

WWF adopted its Gender Policy in April 2011\(^1\) to drive stronger integration of a gender perspective in both its conservation work and its internal operations. The aim is to mainstream gender equality and women’s empowerment in WWF’s global network and programmes. That means striving to understand the different needs and capacities of both women and men in a workplace and programme context, actively working to redress inequalities, and making the most of what gender diversity can bring to WWF operations and conservation work.

Natural resource management programmes may affect women and men differently due to their rights, roles and responsibilities. The unique roles men and women play in their communities leads to different bodies of knowledge about the environments around them. Due to their roles gathering resources like wood, water and forest products, not to mention subsistence agriculture, women have a unique understanding of the natural resources around them. However, if women are not specifically included in the design of policies and programmes this knowledge can be lost. Increasing women’s participation in decision-making will ensure greater success and sustainability of projects while properly safeguarding natural resources and enhancing the shared benefits of their careful use.

WWF addresses this issue by helping women in developing countries gain better access to education, health care, decision-making bodies and sustainable livelihoods. Doing so helps ensure that the voices, skills and knowledge of women are incorporated into discussions and decision-making related to conservation in their families and communities.

The WWF Gender Policy is intended to ensure that the organization's conservation efforts take into account the different roles, needs, and perspectives of women and men, and that they contribute to gender equality and the empowerment of women. The WWF Gender Policy outlines the organization’s commitment to integrating a gender perspective in all of its conservation programs and activities. This includes:

- Ensuring that women and men have equal access to natural resources and benefits from conservation efforts
- Building the capacity of women and men to participate in conservation efforts
- Promoting the participation of women in leadership and decision-making positions in conservation
- Incorporating a gender perspective in the design and implementation of conservation projects
- Ensuring that conservation activities do not negatively impact women and men differently
- Monitoring and evaluating the gender impact of conservation activities

The policy also includes guidelines for the implementation of the policy, such as:

- Establishing gender-focused indicators to measure progress
- Providing training and capacity building opportunities for staff and partners on gender and conservation

\(^1\) [https://wwfint.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/wwfgenderpolicy_final_26may11.pdf](https://wwfint.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/wwfgenderpolicy_final_26may11.pdf)
• Engaging with local communities to ensure that conservation efforts take into account the different roles and needs of women and men.

It is important to note that the WWF Gender Policy is a living document that is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness in addressing gender inequality and promoting gender equality in conservation efforts. It is applied in various country contexts by the various Country Offices, which, in turn are guided by national laws and processes.

1.3. Gender analysis and plan development process

The country's overall gender profile is drawn upon a desk review of literature, interviews/conversations with gender experts at the national level, and recently conducted local level research pertaining to Community Conservancies with regards to gender. Especially two studies are drawn upon: (1) a “WWF Gender Learning Review” undertaken with WWF Namibia and WWF Madagascar in 2020 by Joni Seager (jseager@bentley.edu). In Namibia, the study focused on community conservancies and gender issues emerging from them. The second study (2) is the Gender analysis and action plan undertaken for the project: Integrated approach to proactive management of human-wildlife conflict and wildlife crime in hotspot landscapes in Namibia (GEF ID 10244), a UNDP led GEF project currently under implementation by the MEFT in Namibia. The gender analysis focused on community conservancies and the issues reviewed are pertinent to the PFP.

Several Conservancies in north-western and north-eastern Namibia were visited for these assessments, including Tsiseb, Otjimboyo, Ohungu, Sorris Sorris, Torras, #Khoadi //Hoas, Ehirovipuka, Anabe, Sesfontein, Sheya Shuushona, King Nehale, Kyaramacan Association (Bwabwata National Park), Kwandu and Mayuni.

At this point no original local level research was undertaken for this GEF project. Detailed local level interviews and consultations will, however, be carried out by a team of consultants from the University of Namibia (UNAM) between January and November 2023, conducting in depth work on ESSF, IPPF and Gender for the overall PFP/N4L and WWF Namibia. The site-specific findings will be considered in the implementation modalities of the PFP.

2. GENDER CONTEXT IN NAMIBIA

2.1. Overview - Gender in Namibia

Namibia has made significant progress in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment over the years. The government has implemented policies and programs aimed at addressing gender disparities in education, health, and economic participation.

In terms of education, the country has achieved gender parity in primary and secondary education enrolment, but there are still disparities in terms of academic achievement and dropout rates. In terms of health, maternal mortality rates have decreased, but women and girls still face challenges in accessing quality healthcare, particularly in rural areas. In terms of economic participation, women in Namibia are underrepresented in the formal labor market, and face wage disparities when
compared to men. In terms of equitable political representation, women’s participation in politics is still lower, and they are underrepresented in leadership positions, albeit Namibia has women on a Ministerial level and now even a Presidential candidate (2023).

Despite challenges, Namibia has made some progress on women’s rights. The country has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in November 1992 and has a National Gender Policy (2012) in place which aims to promote gender equality and empower women. However, traditional and cultural practices still limit the rights and opportunities of women and girls in some communities. Overall, while there have been improvements, much work still needs to be done to fully achieve gender equality in Namibia. Efforts are needed to address persistent challenges, such as the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions and the wage gap, and to ensure that the rights and opportunities of women and girls are protected and advanced.

Table 1: Gender disaggregated key national development markers (Namibia Gender Analysis, LAC, 2017).  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>825 234 square kilometres (km2)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population (est 2015)</td>
<td>2.4 million female: 51% male: 49%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rural/urban density</td>
<td>urban 43%, rural 57% (2011)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>87.5% black, 6% white, 6.5% mixed race</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>predominantly Christian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Official language</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home language groups (2011)</td>
<td>Oshiwambo 49%, Nama/Damara 11%, Afrikaans 10%, Otjiherero 9%, Kavango 9%, Caprivian 5%, English 3%, Other 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status persons age 15-49 (2013)</td>
<td>60% women never married 18% women married (civil or customary) 16% women living together informally with a partner 2% women divorced/separated 1% women widowed persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status persons age 15+ (2011)</td>
<td>59% women never married 20% women married (civil marriage) 8% women married (customary marriage) 8% women living together informally with a partner 4% women widowed 2% women divorced/separated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female-headed households (2011/2013)</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married couples in a household (2011)</td>
<td>under 8% of households reported the presence of a spouse of the head of household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life expectancy at birth (2015)</td>
<td>65.1 years (females: 67.5 years, males: 62.5 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fertility (2011)</td>
<td>3.6 children per woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy (age 15 years and older, 2011)</td>
<td>89% overall (female: 88%, male: 89.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment (2016)</td>
<td>36% overall (female: 38%, male: 30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth unemployment (2016)</td>
<td>43% overall (female: 49%, male 38%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor / severely poor</td>
<td>28.7% population poor, 15.3% severely poor overall (2009/10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• female-headed households: 22% poor, 11% severely poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• male-headed household: 18% poor, 9% severely poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18% poor, 11% severely poor overall (2015/16) <strong>sex-disaggregated figures not yet available</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gini coefficient</td>
<td>0.597 overall (female: 0.513, male: 0.622) (2009/10) 0.572 overall (sex-disaggregated figures not yet available) (2015/16)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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2 Namibia Gender Analysis 2017 (lac.org.na)
The national gender disaggregated data shows that very high numbers of Namibian households are women led; few people are or have ever been married; comparing all markers women fare worse than men.

Looking at Development and Gender Equity Indicators, first of all Namibia ranked in 2015 on the Human Development Index (HDI) as number 125 out of 188 countries worldwide. Namibia’s score on the HDI is better than the average for countries in sub-Saharan Africa, but ranks below its neighbours Botswana and South Africa. In terms of the Gender Development Index (GDI), Namibia ranks 0.986, thus nearly approximating a score of 1, which would signify perfect gender parity. When looking at the Gender Inequality Index (GII), the situation in Namibia looks less favorable. Namibia’s 2015 GII value is 0.474 and is ranked 108th out of 159 countries. In terms of the Global Gender Gap Index, Namibia is ranked at a whooping 14th rank out of 144 countries, indicating that on the indicators used women and men are scoring relatively equal, irrespective of the “level”. The Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), defines discriminatory social institutions as “the formal and informal laws, attitudes and practices that restrict women’s rights and girl’s access to rights, justice and empowerment opportunities. There are five sub-indices (1) discriminatory family code; (2) restricted physical integrity; (3) son bias; (4) restricted resources and assets; and (5) restricted civil liberties. In 2014, Namibia’s SIGI value was 0.1173, with “restricted access to resources and assets” scoring extremely poorly. While not gender disaggregated, the Multi-dimensional Poverty Index (MPI) is interesting. It identifies acute deprivations in the areas of health, education and standard of living. In Namibia (based on 2013 data), this index indicated that almost 45% of the population lives in multi-dimensional poverty, with an average deprivation score of 45.5%. An additional 19% of the population is vulnerable to poverty, while 13% live in severe poverty. According to the three dimensions of the index, deprivation in education accounts for 45%, followed by deprivations in living standards 33% and deprivations in health 22%. The regionally disaggregated data is of interest when considering the Community Conservancies. Reviewing the African Gender Equality Index compiled by the African Development Bank, Namibia is ranked third best country after South Africa and Rwanda. The index measures economic opportunities, Human development and Law & Institutions. There are other gender indices and score cards available for Africa and SADC, with Namibia consistently ranking amongst the top performing countries.

2.2. National Legal Frameworks and Policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legal Frameworks and Policies</th>
<th>Provisions for gender equality and women empowerment</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Gender Policy (2010-2020)</td>
<td>The overriding national policy instrument that requires all sectors to mainstream gender, promote women empowerment and overall bring about gender equality. The</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2 The GDI measures difference in achievements between males and females in three areas: health (measured by female and male life expectancy at birth), education (measured by female and male expected years of schooling for children and female and males mean years of schooling for adults), and command over economic resources (measured by female and male estimated GNI per capita). This it essentially takes the HDI values and disaggregates them by sex. (African Human Development Report 2016)

4 The GII measures gender-based inequalities in the areas of reproductive health (measured by maternal mortality ratio and adolescence birth rate), empowerment (measured by women’s share of parliamentary seats and comparative attainment of at least secondary education) and economic activity (measured by labour market participation). For the GII a value of zero means better gender equality.
| National Gender Policy and the overall function of ensuring and coordinating gender equality are under the custodianship of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW). |
| Married Persons Equality Act, 1996 (Act No. 1 of 1996) | Eliminated the discriminatory Roman-Dutch concept of marital power applicable to civil marriage. |
| Co-operatives Act, 1996 (Act No. 23 of 1996) | Guarantees that membership must be irrespective of gender and other social status. |
| Affirmative Action (Employment) Act, 1998 (Act No. 29 of 1998) | Promulgated to ensure that persons in designated groups enjoy equal employment opportunities at all levels of employment and are equitably represented in the workforce of a relevant employer. Women are amongst the designated social groups targeted by the Affirmative Action Act, 1996. |
| Traditional Authorities Act, 2002 (Act no. 25 of 2000) | Provides to promote gender equality with regards to positions of leadership. |
| Communal Land Reform Act, 2002 (Act No 5 of 2002) | Provides for equal access to land for men and women, and importantly that safeguard the rights of widows to remain on the land after the passing of their spouses. Through the provisions of the Communal Land Reform Act, 2002 the government has established Communal Land Boards guaranteeing a quota of women for boards’ membership. This provision is also provided for in the National Land Policy of 1998. |

Namibia has also sectoral legal frameworks, policies and regulations that pertains to conservation and in particular, wildlife conservation, but analysis has shown that these are silent on gender issues and the empowerment of women.

- The Environmental Management Act (Act 7 of 2007)
- National Policy of Community Based Natural Resources Management (2013)
- Nature Conservation Amendment Act (Act 5 of 1996)
- Revised National Policy on Human Wildlife Conflict Management (2018-2027)
- Regulations relating to controlled wildlife products and trade: Controlled Wildlife Products and Trade Act, 2008
- National Wildlife Crime Strategy
- Controlled Wildlife Products and Trade Act (Act 9 of 2008)

Namibia has **a National Gender Policy** in place which aims to promote gender equality and empower women. The policy was adopted in 1998 and is in line with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and other international instruments on gender equality and women's rights. The National Gender Policy aims to address the root causes of gender inequality and discrimination in Namibia, and to create a more equal and equitable society for women and men. The policy's main objectives are to:

- Eliminate discrimination and violence against women
- Promote gender equality in all spheres of life
- Enhance the participation and leadership of women in all decision-making processes
- Promote the empowerment of women and girls through education, training and capacity building.
The policy also includes specific strategies to address gender-based violence, improve the participation of women in the labor force, increase access to healthcare and education for women and girls, and promote the participation of women in politics and decision-making.

The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of the Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, which is responsible for coordinating the implementation of the policy’s activities and programs. The ministry also works closely with other government departments, non-governmental organizations, and civil society groups to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment.

The policy is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness in addressing gender inequality in Namibia.

Namibia has a Gender Action Plan (GAP) in place which is a comprehensive plan to promote gender equality and empowerment of women. The GAP is a government-led initiative that is developed by the Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare and is aligned with the National Gender Policy and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

The GAP is intended to be a strategic, action-oriented document that outlines the steps that will be taken to achieve gender equality and women’s empowerment in Namibia. It outlines specific targets and indicators to measure progress, and identifies key areas of intervention, such as:

- Gender-based violence
- Women’s economic empowerment
- Women’s political participation
- Women’s access to education and health services

The GAP also includes strategies and actions to address specific challenges faced by women in different areas of life, such as women in rural areas, women with disabilities, and women in the informal sector.

The implementation of the GAP is the responsibility of the Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, which coordinates the implementation of the plan’s activities and programs. The Ministry also works closely with other government departments, non-governmental organizations, and civil society groups to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment.

A new National Gender Policy (2021 – 2031) and its action plan are currently in development. To ensure ownership and implementation of the new policy, women groups such as the Namibian Rural Women’s Assembly and the Women for Conservation group have participated in providing input on challenges and recommendations based on their experiences.

2.3. International Legal Frameworks and Policies

As a member of international community, Namibia has acceded to and is party to several regional and international treaties, protocols and goals that promote gender equality and women empowerment. These are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional (SADC and Africa level) and International Agreements</th>
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<tr>
<td>SADC Declaration on Gender and Development</td>
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</table>
Regional (SADC and Africa level)
- SADC Protocol on Gender and Development

International level
- Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
- Millennium Development Goals (ended in 2015)
- Sustainable Development Goals
- UN Convention against Transnational Crime, 2000
- Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, known as the Palermo Protocol
- Universal Declaration on Human Rights
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- The International Labour Organization’s Convention No. 183

Amongst the various policy instruments, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is of particular interest. It is an international treaty adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979. It is often described as an international bill of rights for women and aims to eliminate discrimination against women in all forms. The Convention defines discrimination against women as "any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field." The Convention contains a number of specific provisions, including:

- The obligation of states parties to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all areas of life, including in the political, economic, social, and cultural spheres.
- The right to equality in the political process, including the right to vote and to participate in government.
- The right to equality in the workplace, including equal pay for work of equal value.
- The right to education and the elimination of discrimination in education.
- The elimination of discrimination in relation to health care and the right to health.
- The elimination of discrimination in marriage and family life.

CEDAW has been ratified by 189 countries and is considered the most comprehensive international treaty on women's rights. The treaty is legally binding, and countries that ratify it are required to submit regular reports to the CEDAW Committee, detailing the steps they have taken to eliminate discrimination against women and implement the treaty's provisions.

It is important to note that, although it is legally binding, CEDAW does not have a mechanism for enforcement, and it relies on the political will of states parties to implement its provisions.

3. GENDER ISSUES IN RURAL NAMIBIA – CBNRM

3.1. Gender issues and challenges in rural Namibia
Women in rural areas of Namibia face specific challenges in terms of access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities, as well as cultural and traditional practices that limit their rights and opportunities.

In terms of education, women and girls in rural areas may face barriers to accessing primary and secondary education, and may have lower levels of educational attainment than their urban counterparts. In terms of healthcare, women and girls in rural areas may have limited access to maternal health services and may face higher rates of maternal mortality. They may also have limited access to family planning services and information, which can lead to higher rates of unintended pregnancies. School attendance is often hampered by limited access to sanitary products during menstruation, severely hindering school attendance of adolescent girls. Overall, in Namibia 29% of young women are living with HIV/AIDS, compare to 8% for young men. A significant portion of these live in rural areas. Some consequences of HIV and AIDS include the domestic burdens of women and girls as they have to provide home-based care for those who are ill and for orphans in the households. In terms of economic opportunities, women in rural areas may have limited access to employment, and may be more likely to be engaged in unpaid and informal labor. They may also face discrimination and wage disparities in the formal labor market. Traditional and cultural practices in rural areas may also limit the rights and opportunities of women and girls. For example, early and forced marriage, as well as harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation, are still prevalent in some rural communities, although generally lower in Namibia than elsewhere on the continent. Gender-based violence is prevalent. Forced sex and rape, as well as domestic violence, in terms of physical and psychological abuse - often linked to excessive alcohol use are common.

While the Government of Namibia has implemented policies and programs aimed at addressing these challenges, such as the National Gender Policy, and the National Plan of Action to Combat Gender-Based Violence, much more needs to be done to ensure that women and girls in rural areas have the same rights and opportunities as those in urban areas.

3.2. Gender and CBNRM

Community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) is an approach to managing natural resources that involves the participation and empowerment of local communities, including women. In Namibia, women have traditionally played a limited role in the management of natural resources, particularly in rural areas where traditional gender roles often exclude women from decision-making processes and limit their access to resources. However, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of involving women in CBNRM in Namibia. This is because women's participation in natural resource management can lead to more sustainable and equitable outcomes and can also help to empower women and improve their livelihoods.

For example, the Government of Namibia has taken steps to promote the participation of women in CBNRM, such as through the development of gender-sensitive policies and programs, and the establishment of community-based organizations that involve women in natural resource management. The Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) has developed a Community Based Natural Resource Management Policy that emphasizes the need to involve women in natural resource management and to ensure that their rights and interests are protected.
Additionally, non-governmental organizations and civil society groups have also been working to promote the participation of women in CBNRM, through capacity building and training programs, as well as by providing technical assistance and support to community-based organizations.

In the CBNRM policy (of 2013) gender is mostly considered as a cross-cutting theme, meaning that it is integrated in all aspects of the policy and not just as a stand-alone component. The policy mostly aims to ensure that the rights and interests of both men and women are considered in the management of natural resources, and to promote the participation and empowerment of women in natural resource management.

Specific provisions include:

- The development of gender-sensitive policies and programs to ensure that the needs and perspectives of both men and women are taken into account in natural resource management;
- The establishment of community-based organizations that involve women in natural resource management and decision-making;
- Providing targeted support and resources to empower women and promote their participation in natural resource management;
- Encouraging the inclusion of women in leadership positions in community-based organizations and in natural resource management decision-making processes;
- Providing training and capacity building opportunities for women in natural resource management, and to raise awareness about the benefits of women’s participation in natural resource management.

It is important to note that even if a policy is in place, the implementation and the actual practice on the ground could be different and might not fully reflect the policy’s provisions.

3.3. Recent local level reviews on gender and CBNRM

Some recent reviews on gender in the CBNRM sector and particular in Community Conservancies have been undertaken. In 2020, a WWF Gender Learning Review was undertaken in Madagascar and Namibia. The study identified to which extent goals of gender equality and equity were taken up in on-the-ground conservation efforts. In Namibia the study focused on the Community Conservancies. At the same time, consultations for the gender analyses and field consultations for the GEF project entitled integrated approach to proactive management of human-wildlife conflict and wildlife crime in hotspot landscapes in Namibia (GEF ID 10244) were undertaken with the same target groups. The findings from these studies are summarized in the following.

The key topics addressed include:

a. Participation and decision-making in community conservancies
b. Decision making and power relationships in and between households
c. Resource access and ownership incl. land and inheritance
d. Education, health, economic empowerment
e. Engendered household roles and responsibilities
f. Voluntary work, compensation and access to loan facilities/finance
g. Human Wildlife conflict and gender
h. Gender differentiated impacts on wildlife crime
a. Participation and decision-making in community conservancies

There is a high awareness about gender equality amongst Conservancy management as well as members. It is generally seen to be a welcome and important concept. Women want to be involved in community activities on the same basis as their male counterparts, including in conservation. They feel they have a lot to offer. For many women getting involved in conservancy work seems to give purpose and they are eager to be part of it. Namibia’s constitution supports equality. Article 10 prohibits discrimination on race, religious orientation, gender, amongst other. The value of having both women and men involved in formal conservancy structures is widely recognized. Some individuals find that a “diversity of ideas” will be promoted through gender diversity. It was highlighted especially by women interviewees that women are already involved in Conservancies, but mostly in informal roles. Some people mentioned that women might be more honest and more suited for financial management/ treasurer positions – a trend that is visible by the number of women holding such positions.

Table 2: Percent women in Community Conservancy management and employment

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservancy Management</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee (CMC) members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Chairpersons</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer/ Financial Manager</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff member (employed by</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conservancy e.g. as game</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>guard, ranger, treasurer,</td>
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<tr>
<td>manager, cleaner, office</td>
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<tr>
<td>administrator, Book keeper</td>
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<tr>
<td>etc.)</td>
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</table>

Notably there is a wide range of women representation in the different Conservancies, with some having high women representation on the CMCs and other low e.g. in #Khoadi//Hoas 33%, Ombazu 7% and Anabeb 30%. Only few CMCs are chaired by women. Attending Annual General Meetings (AGMs) it can also be observed that discussions are dominated by men, even if the overall village and conservancy composition and membership may have higher numbers of women so de facto women are not proportionally represented by women leaders. The AGM setting has been described to be “crowded”, and often women may sit together at the margins of the assembly, with the men at the spatial center of the meeting, influencing power displays.

b. Male dominance – “culture and tradition”

The reasons for male dominance and why women are less commonly taking up leadership positions were mostly attributed to “culture and tradition”. Manifestations of “traditions: include:

- Gender norms for women are that they do not speak in public; they are shy and trained not to make eye contact (especially with men) in a public setting;
- For men norms are they are expected to be “deciders” and to be the public spokes people for families and communities;
- Women were socialized to not contradict/argue with /raise counter positions to what men have said, especially in public;
- Women are socialized to be silent;

\* Data from the 2021 SOCCR is added here to the original research. Only 84 Conservancies were included in the review and the Kyaramacan Association.
Women often do influence decisions (around conservation and other matters), but primarily through behind the scenes, private conversations with the men in their households. Consequently, flowing from these explanations, both women and men say that women are reluctant to put themselves forward for CMC leadership positions or formal conservation roles.

It was mentioned frequently that these traditional norms are especially reinforced by traditional and religious leaders, most of who are men. The LAC Gender Report for Namibia (2017) clearly points out the imbalance of gender representation in such local level political leadership situations.

c. Decision making and power relationships in and between households, transcending into Conservancies

44% of all households in Namibia are female headed. Less than 8% of the Namibia population has ever been married. It seems that generally women have strong and responsible family roles to fill. However, it has been reported that men sometimes do not inform women about Conservancy matters and meetings by the men, and women report that they are not being informed, something they say can be easily improved.

It has been reported that while men are encouraging women to take up formal roles in Conservancies, they are not willing to take up household responsibilities in turn. This means that women have to carry a double burden if they take up formal roles in Conservancies. This means that any conservancy work would be on top of women’s household and family responsibilities, which are non-negotiable. While there might be wider family arrangements for e.g. child care, leaving children with grand parents or siblings and allowing some room for taking up employment or leadership roles, such double “burden” is not always negotiable.

Many women express they wish to get involved in Conservancy work, to get a “purpose” and contribute to the community. One woman at #Khoadi//Hoas Conservancy made the impassionate observation that “when a woman just stays at home, she doesn’t know her own potential”. A woman from Anabeb Conservancy echoed this, saying that because of traditional attitudes women were “left to just sit, and we get used to just sitting”.

d. Resource access and ownership incl. land and inheritance

Land ownership: Land ownership is often mentioned to a gender impediment to women. Namibia’s National Land Policy was adopted in 1998. It is based upon a set of fundamental principles that stem from the principles in the Namibian Constitution and the “national commitment to redress the social and economic injustices inherited from the colonial past.” The principles are: equality before the law; a mixed economy; a unitary land system; focus on the poor; the rights of women; security and protection; sustainable use of land and natural resources; public accountability and transparency; land as property; “land” as a renewable natural resource; and multiple forms of land rights. The principle on women’s rights specifies that widows and widowers will be entitled to maintain the land rights they enjoyed during their spouse’s lifetime. However, some of these rights are disputed in customary systems and family practice.

The Communal Land Reform Act 5 of 2002 provides for the allocation of rights in respect of communal land which is owned by the State. In terms of this law, customary land rights are meant to endure until the death of the person holding the right. If a husband dies, the communal land
allocated to him must be reallocated to his widow if she wishes, and she is entitled to remain on the land even if she re-marries. If there is no surviving spouse when the holder of the land right dies, then the land will be re-allocated to a child of the deceased identified by the Chief or Traditional Authority as being the rightful heir. This rule applies to spouses in civil or customary marriage. However, widows often face significant practical difficulties in asserting their land rights, particularly in matrilineal communities. Moreover, although the Act provides for the allocation of land rights in the event that one spouse dies, it is silent on the rights of the husband or wife should a divorce occur. Another gap is the law’s failure to address the disposition of the land in the case of a polygamous marriage or to provide prohibitions or remedies for “land-grabbing” by relatives of the deceased.

Overall, while the legal context seems well set in Namibia, there are many frustrations on land rights and allocation and a disenfranchisement of women, that needs to be addressed.

Other natural resources
Access and ownership of other natural resources is governed by the national legal framework and does not discriminate between men and women. However, some differences in opportunity to unlock the natural resources value were reported. For example, women are often involved in timber and non-timber forest resource use including grass for craft making. However, they are usually engaged in smaller enterprises and not usually in e.g. setting up of carpentries, which are usually owned and managed by men. Women often lack the implements to sustainably utilize some resources on a commercial level. This may be linked to economic and business know how (see further below) – economic empowerment.

e. Education, health, economic empowerment
While in Namibia the statistics on gender equity in terms of education, health and economic empowerment are relatively equal, there remain issues as pointed out above. Aside from certain gender norms that are bound and reenforced through traditions and culture, there are gender specific difference which e.g. revolve around menstruation, child birth, maternal health, care giving, household chores and responsibilities, as well as behavioral expectations. The fact that women outlive men with a significantly average life expectancy needs to be unpacked as well, and a focus on health amongst men is needed. The life expectancy is curtailed by hard labor, pressures on being the bread winner, but also unhealthy lifestyles, such as poor diets and alcohol abuse.

In the context of Conservancies and CBNRM specifically, some observations revolve around economic empowerment. At this point very few women hold paid positions within the Conservancies, such as community guards, rangers and trackers. Wary attitudes especially among the men were recorded such as: “they are not trained; they couldn’t do the hard work/field time in difficult terrain; they would find the field work too arduous; they are not strong enough; it’s dangerous for them to go too far from home; women wouldn’t know how to deal with dangerous animals”.

Evidently women responded by saying: “they DO apply for these jobs, but are not considered; They have as much skill and experiences in dealing with dangerous animals as it’s part of their daily lives; they have considerable [physical strength; they want these jobs; they say that the world is changing and women now have challenging occupations such as in the police force; the problem, women say,
“is not their capacity, but the attitudes of men.” However, the emergence of a female rhino rangers cohort in six conservancies in northwest Namibia is a positive development.

f. Engendered household roles and responsibilities
As already described under the traditional norms, women are still seen to have to deliver on certain household responsibilities and duties which men would not want to take on. In local Oshiwambo tradition, young men are not allowed into the kitchen, and they never learn how to cook for themselves and even less so how to cook for a whole family! Doing washing, collecting water and firewood, and many more activities are associated with women. Men of course have their own responsibilities, which are equally burdening. However, they are better positioned to hold roles of power and engage in economically productive, i.e. paid employment. Often the attitude of men is that they hold their handle on money as a power tool. They express that they are the bread winners, bring the much needed household cash – and women have to abide by their rules because of that. Men often move far to find a paid employment. They send money to their family and only come and visit rarely. Sometimes they maintain two families – one in the rural area and another in town – without the consent of either one. When coming home for a much needed holiday, they assume an attitude of “they need the holiday”. The work of the wife who needs to tend after the household on a daily basis is not equally regarded.

In the context of the Conservancies it was reported that a young women from Khowarib, who used to hold a Conservancy position, had to resign once she had a child. Her family expected her to look after her child and give up her employment. As mentioned above, men would “allow” women to become more active in CMC roles, but they would not want to take over household chores to enable women to participate more fully.

g. Voluntary work, engendered views on benefits, compensation and access to resources and finance
Women still often hold voluntary positions in Conservancies, which in their nature are important but unpaid for. This is a common phenomenon in social and development work, where women are active as community mobilizers and in conflict resolution, or as change agents as they are often the primary educators in the families. But women get frustrated if they cannot also reap financial rewards, which are so important to gain more independence of decision making and from men.

The already mentioned old-fashioned and traditional views on gender roles are prevalent and deeply engrained especially in rural Namibian societies. It is often heard that men complain that they feel “left behind” with all the women empowerment talk and work – but the truth is that the power pentaculum still leans very strongly towards maintained power positions of men. Notably, many of the “enabling” conditions for women to participate more actively in the paid for work at Conservancies are missing. For example, ranger and game guard uniforms are usually available only as “men” fits. It should be noted that women participate very enthusiastically e.g. in game counts, while few of them would take the lead in being a “sector” organizer or driving the vehicles, they clearly are engaged fully and positively in the game count activity. There are some conservancies such as Uibasen (Twyelfontein), in which women have taken strong lead and are chairing and leading the CMCs extremely eloquently. Uibasen is one of the most affluent conservancies in the (north-)western Conservancy cluster with good income from tourism. The conservancy has had women leadership for the past decade, with women leadership since 2013. It is clear that once you have a woman in a leadership position, she can unlock the power balance. Often women know that
they can rely on other women for the work and they encourage them to step up to the challenges, too.

In rural areas men and women mostly depend on their farming activities for income. In Conservancies additional income opportunities through tourism and associated businesses, employment, hunting and other are being created. Other socio-economic opportunities could be unlocked through investments into improved returns from farming, and business development. The economies of scale is not simple in wide-ranging rural Namibia, but innovative ideas need to continuously be developed and ideated to keep opportunities emerging.

h. Human Wildlife conflict and gender

Human Wildlife Conflict (HWC) is a central issue to conservation and prevalent in most Conservancies. Local communities are living with large wildlife such as elephants, lion and other predators on a day-to-day basis, and other dangerous animals such as crocodile or hippo are encountered. Smaller species such as snakes and scorpions are common. HWC incidents include livestock predation, damage to crops, stored food, infrastructure (water points, fences, gates) and properties, attacks on and loss of human lives. Of course, such attacks impact on every single household member. Often men, who are mobile and out of the house a lot are targets of attacks. However, it has been observed that women and children are also often attacked, especially along rivers, when they are collecting water, taking the livestock to drink or doing their laundry.

With wildlife numbers increasing and wildlife corridors becoming more active, clear mitigative measures are needed to keep community members safe and engaged. Certain gender specific investments should be made, starting with ensuring that women who may be less involved in Conservancy governance have adequate information and training on avoiding HWC. They can then further educate their children on relevant measures. Compensation needs to be equitable and women similarly to men need to be able to access support measures such as elephant proof water points or lion proof mobile kraals.

i. Gender differentiated impacts of wildlife crime

Poaching, either for subsistence (bushmeat) or commercially (e.g. Rhino horn/ivory) is almost exclusively committed by men. With quotas having be low e.g. in north-western Namibia due to the drought for some time, community members are missing the meat allocations they would receive and it has been reported that this has led to some more bushmeat poaching. Women would possibly be aware, but not commit the crime directly. It is noted that some Conservancy members are involved in poaching and this needs to be considered, as it can disadvantage those who play by the rules. More consistent law enforcement is needed and reporting and understanding that poaching is wrong and impacts the entire community. Women led households could potentially be more negatively affected, if they do not engage in the poaching, but the common resource gets exploited at their expense. Women are mothers of young men and boys, and spouses to husbands – they have a strong moral leadership role to play, to educate the next generation and e.g. report illegal actions. They need to be supported to become part of a value system that is pro conservation, reaping benefits and taking responsibility. So far, these powers are mostly untapped in Conservancy management and community-based conservation per se.
There are several best practices for promoting gender equality and empowering women in Namibia and elsewhere in Africa. Some examples include:

- Providing targeted education and training programs for women and girls, which can help to improve their economic and social opportunities. Nacso has developed a social and gender awareness training\(^6\) that is geared towards Namibian Community Conservancies and is part of the ongoing governance work. This manual and the training should be regularly updated, and specific funding be availed for specific gender awareness training and exchanges.

- Enhancing women’s participation in decision-making and leadership positions, through quotas and other affirmative action measures. In line with Nacso’s governance training materials\(^7\) and the CBNRM standards specifically include women in leadership. Learn from the women led conservancies in Namibia and facilitate information sessions, possibly online videos and exchange visits.

- Providing economic empowerment opportunities for women, such as through microfinance programs, enterprise development, and access to credit and financial services. The PFP aims to include a socio-economic fund which would allow community members to engage in eco-business and SME development. Specific provisions for women beneficiaries should be made.

- Addressing gender-based violence (GBV) through legal and policy reforms, as well as through awareness-raising campaigns and support services for survivors. Based on some inspiring work in Mozambique, a pilot project is being conducted under Nacso in Namibia’s Kavango-east and West regions, setting up working with “girls clubs” in local Community Forests and Community Conservancies. These girls’ clubs allow girls and young women to learn about life skills and discuss issues relevant to them, including GBV. Similar approaches to specifically work with girls and young women in Community Conservancies could be upscaled, depending on resources and capacities. The experience and lessons learnt from the pilot in Kavango can be shared by social media, whatsapp, youth fairs and through exchange visits. A specific Nacso Training Manual on Girl Clubs could be developed and posted on the website.

- Promoting women’s rights and gender equality through legislation and policies, such as through the adoption and implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and support to the effective implementation of national gender policies. In Namibia, specific awareness materials should be shared and made available. The Nacso training manual should be regularly updated with relevant materials.

- Increasing access to sexual and reproductive health services and information, which can help to reduce maternal mortality and improve the health and well-being of women and girls. Overall Namibia’s CBNRM Programme is looking for improve linkages to health and education delivery in rural areas. The PFP would create some critical foundations for such work to be rolled out nationwide.

\(^6\) [https://www.nacso.org.na/sites/default/files/1.05%20Social%20%20Gender%20Awareness.pdf](https://www.nacso.org.na/sites/default/files/1.05%20Social%20%20Gender%20Awareness.pdf)

\(^7\) [Resources & Publications: Training Manual | NACSO](https://www.nacso.org.na/resources-and-publications/training-manual)
• Encouraging the participation of men and boys in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women, as men and boys can play a key role in changing social norms and attitudes that perpetuate gender inequality. In all gender approaches advocated through Nacso the inclusion of boys and men is seen as critical as not to create further gender rifts. Especially in the discussion on GBV girls/women and boys/men are equally needed in the discussions.

• Identifying men champions of the gender equality and women’s empowerment cause, who can be involved in activities to help promote positive changes and reduce gender inequalities. It is important to identify strong role models who really advocate gender equality – especially based on the finding from the current situation in the Conservancies, where men are still very dominating. Strong women need to be supported to be visible as leaders, in the communities, the supporting NGOs and the Government.

While these suggestions seem quite generic, they are key to supporting women in any context, including in local Conservancies. A powerful example is the #Khoadi//Hoas Conservancy, which established a “women desk” as early as 1999, which after some years of inaction was revived in 2017. Women said they created this group specifically because they needed a channel for their voices. They felt invisible and disregarded in the mainline of the formal conservation structures. Their goal is broad “to improve lives of women living in the area’. They established a “women against crime” initiative, which assists women in their community who suffer domestic violence. They want to help the poorest of the poor amongst themselves, e.g. by providing toiletry items and assisting with health measures for small children.

It is very important to ensure that the implementation of these best practices is inclusive, meaning that they take into account the specific needs and perspectives of different groups of women and girls, such as those living in rural areas, those with disabilities, and those from marginalized communities. But any local initiative that is started with compassion is a good and inclusive start.

In the following, some specific elements for a gender action plan are provided for the PFP and the GEF supported component on the Endowment Fund in particular. Specific gender screening will apply during project implementation and it is suggested that in future any PFP should consider a standalone gender plan such as this one developed under the GEF contribution.
### 5. GENDER ACTION PLAN AND GENDER RESPONSIVE RESULT FRAMEWORK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Components, Outcomes &amp; Outputs</th>
<th>Gender specific action (*to be filled out for all activities – even those that are not being carried out with GEF funding – given the dependencies between activities)</th>
<th>Responsible entity</th>
<th>Indicators and Targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Component 1: Deploying Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) for priority conservation areas in Gabon and Namibia</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• 1.1. Conservation goals, funding package and project conditions agreed by key stakeholders (including government, donors, NGO partners) in target countries, for improved financial sustainability and management of priority conservation areas in Gabon and Namibia</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.1.1 Institutional capacity assessments, capacity strengthening plan and training for key organizations responsible for the priority conservation areas, to design, receive and execute the PFP</td>
<td>Consider affirmative action guidance when filling relevant positions; Provide gender sensitivity training to WWF Team of 6 and other relevant stakeholders; Improve and continue to implement institutional best practices in terms of gender and gender reporting for Nacso, all member NGOs, the beneficiary conservancies (86), as well as the fund administrator for the endowment (tbc). Integrate gender into assessment and training.</td>
<td>WWF/Team of 6 and partners</td>
<td>• Gender assessment questions part of assessments and training • One gender awareness training for WWF/Team of 6 • GEF gender analysis and plan shared with WWF/Team of 6 • UNAM consultancy on ESSF, IPP also uses a gender-responsive approach in consultations and consults local communities on relevant gender issues to flesh out and continuously inform the PFP development</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.1.2 Conservation plan, community engagement plan and financial model for target country PFPs</td>
<td>Review conservation plan with a view to identifying gender mainstreaming opportunities; Set gender targets e.g., for service organisations (hiring female field staff) and Conservancies; Consider a State of the Communal Conservancies Report (SOCCR) focusing on gender; Include possible costs for gender training.</td>
<td>WWF/Team of 6 and partners</td>
<td>• Catalogue for gender specific opportunities is developed including gender targets for organizations and Conservancies • Potential SOCCR focusing on gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Components, Outcomes &amp; Outputs</strong></td>
<td><strong>Gender specific action (</strong> <em>to be filled out for all activities – even those that are not being carried out with GEF funding – given the dependencies between activities</em>)</td>
<td><strong>Responsible entity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Indicators and Targets</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.1.3 Operating manual, including institutional and governance arrangements for each PFP</td>
<td>Gender mainstreaming and gender response modalities, are included in the Operating manual, as appropriate</td>
<td>WWF/Team of 6 and partners</td>
<td>• Operating manual updated to include a gender provision, as appropriate</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.1.4 Single close signed by parties to the deal</td>
<td>N/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1.2. Enhanced capacity for domestic resource mobilisation in Namibia to achieve PFP goals and commitments</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.2.1 Prioritized list of potential sustainable finance mechanisms and detailed feasibility assessments (political, legal, social, institutional, financial) of prioritised financial mechanisms, including revenue projections and existence of key enabling conditions</td>
<td>Potentially reflect on gender sensitive elements of the mechanisms, e.g. socio-economic sinking fund for development – to include gender action plan</td>
<td>WWF/Team of 6 Consultants e.g. developing background on socio-economic fund</td>
<td>• Funding mechanisms include clear gender action plans; for example socio-economic fund to address gender priorities in line with key issues identified in the gender analysis • Fund administrator has gender policy in place</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.2.2 Engagement, outreach, and advocacy strategy (including communication materials) aimed at securing support and commitments to sustainable financial mechanism implementation</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>1.2.3 Roadmap for the implementation of sustainable financial mechanisms endorsed or institutionalised by government</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td><strong>1.3. Transition, sinking and/or endowment fund(s) capitalized to invest in improved management effectiveness in priority conservation areas</strong></td>
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| 1.3.1 Establishment and capitalization of a transition, sinking and/or endowment fund in each country for improved management of priority conservation areas | Funding mechanisms include gender review and action plan; for example conservation plan can be linked to some gender specific provisions, as well as the socio-economic fund. | WWF/Team of 6 | See above: • Funding mechanisms include clear gender action plans; for example socio-economic fund to address gender priorities in line with key conditions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Indicators and Targets</th>
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</table>
| Component 3: M&E and KM | | | issues identified in the gender analysis  
• Fund administrator has gender policy in place |

**Component 3: M&E and KM**

3.1 Effective project knowledge management and M&E contributes to efficient decision making and adaptive project management

3.1.1 Project lessons and KM products

| Potentially dedicate a KM product on gender; featuring socio-economic grants dispersed to women and gender disaggregated data on CMC/Conservancy performance | Fund administrator | TBD; KM product to be considered |

3.1.2 Project M&E plan informs adaptive project management

| Monitor performance on gender in conservancies, e.g. females in CMC (by position), number of female game guards etc. Potentially dedicate SOCCR on gender | Fund administrator; potentially Nacso/WWF Comms | Consider SOCCR on gender |