

# Equality and Social Inclusion Integration Analysis Report: Strengthening Gender and Social Inclusion across the CGIAR Multifunctional Landscapes Program

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## CGIAR Multifunctional Landscapes Program

Multifunctional Landscapes is a CGIAR Science Program that aims to enhance the resilience, productivity, and sustainability of agricultural landscapes by integrating diverse land uses, ecosystem services, and livelihood strategies. The initiative supports evidence-based policies and innovations that balance food production with climate adaptation, biodiversity conservation, and social inclusion. By working with local communities, governments, and partners, it promotes landscape-level approaches to managing natural resources for long-term ecological and economic benefits. To learn more about the CGIAR Research Portfolio, please visit

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## Acronyms

ABCD4AE: Accelerating Agroecology through Asset-Based Community-Driven Development.

AoW: Area(s) of Work.

GESI: Gender, Equality and Social Inclusion.

ILRI: International Livestock Research Institute.

MFL: Multifunctional Landscapes.

SoLAR: Solar Irrigation for Agricultural Resilience.

SDC: Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

MELIA: Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning, and Impact Assessment

CIAT: International Centre for Tropical Agriculture

CIFOR-ICRAF: Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry

## Summary

This report presents a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) integration analysis of the CGIAR Multifunctional Landscapes (MFL) Science Program to assess how GESI considerations were embedded across Areas of Work (AoWs) and country sites, and to identify practical pathways for strengthening GESI integration. The analysis draws on interviews with AoW leads, Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning, and Impact Assessment (MELIA), and country teams in Kenya, Tanzania, India, Peru, Colombia, and Zimbabwe. The report is intended to inform programme-wide planning, resourcing, and capacity strengthening for GESI integration into the MFL science program.

Findings from the analysis show that while there is broad recognition of GESI as central to achieving equitable and sustainable landscape outcomes, current integration across the MFL programme remains uneven, with persist gaps in contextualised methodologies, ethical research practices, documentation of learnings, staff time allocation and limited dedicated budgets as well as weak institutional frameworks within countries of implementation. Across several AoWs, GESI is treated as a cross-cutting concern without clear indicators, tools, or accountability mechanisms, resulting in fragmented implementation.

This report therefore identifies multiple entry points for strengthening GESI integration across AoW and country sites priority, target groups including women, youth, indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities, and elderly persons, the persistent barriers they face as well as support needed by AoW and country site teams.

Overall, the report concludes that the MFL Science Program has high potential to advance GESI in a more coherent and transformative manner, provided that programme-level actions are taken to operationalise a clear GESI Integration Framework, establish dedicated budgets and focal points, strengthen practical tools and capacity, and institutionalise cross-AoW and cross-country learning.

# 1. Introduction

The CGIAR Multifunctional Landscapes (MFL) Science Program was developed to co-design and scale strategies for biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration, nature-positive production, and social equity across diverse landscape types. The program is structured around a number of Areas of Work (AoWs), working across multiple countries including Kenya, Tanzania, India, Peru, Colombia and Zimbabwe.

Before proceeding, it is important to note the institutional context in which this report and the associated activities were developed. The work was initiated at the beginning of 2025, when the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) component was structured as a standalone Area of Work (AoW6: Fairness, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion), and the MFL portfolio comprised seven AoWs in total. As a core output of AoW6, the analysis presented in this report was intended to generate project-level intelligence to support the mainstreaming of GESI across the wider MFL portfolio. Accordingly, data collection and analysis were conducted using the then-existing seven-AoW structure.

Towards the end of 2025, MFL undertook a structural redesign that reduced the number of AoWs and discontinued GESI as a standalone AoW, replacing it with an approach that embeds GESI across all Areas of Work. Under the revised structure, MFL now operates through five AoWs: (1) Agroecology+ Solutions and Innovations; (2) Landscape Optimization and Inclusive Planning; (3) Business Models, Markets and Sustainable Finance; (4) Governance, Institutions, Policy, and Inclusion; and (5) Performance Assessment and Evidence Generation.

As a result, this report refers to GESI not as a separate AoW, but as a cross-cutting, embedded component across the AoWs. However, the analysis continues to reference the original seven-AoW structure, as the research design and data collection were based on that configuration. Notwithstanding this, the findings and insights presented remain relevant and applicable to all five AoWs under the current MFL structure.

GESI is central to integrating social inclusion components across all five AoWs and country sites of the MFL science program. The importance of meaningfully including women, youth, indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities, and other marginalized groups is central to achieving equitable and sustainable landscape outcomes. Recognising

GESI as both a cross-cutting principle and a transformative driver of impact underscores the need for a clearer understanding of existing capacities, practices, and gaps in GESI integration within the programme.

## **1.1 Report Aim**

A needs assessment was undertaken with the aim to integrate Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) research elements, methods and practises across all Multifunctional Landscapes AoWs and Country sites. Data was gathered from AoWs and country site leads and their teams to assess existing GESI integration and capacity and to further co-develop plans to strengthen GESI across MFL. This exercise also served to find opportunities for identifying and strengthening existing socially inclusive approaches.

From the activity, a GESI needs assessment analysis report was drafted as a practical and forward-looking resource to support GESI team coordinating role, inform MFL GESI integration, work plans, resourcing and capacity building contributing to a more coherent, intentional, and accountable approach to GESI integration across program. The aim of this analysis is to assess the extent to which GESI considerations are currently integrated across the AoWs and country sites of the CGIAR MFL Science Program, and to identify practical, context-responsive pathways for strengthening systematic, meaningful, and accountable GESI integration across programme design, implementation, learning, and policy engagement.

## **1.2 Scope of the Report**

This report presents an analysis of how GESI considerations are integrated into the AoWs of the CGIAR MFL Science Program, and identifies opportunities to strengthen inclusive approaches across countries and thematic areas. The assessment is based on a series of qualitative interviews designed to understand the extent to which GESI elements are embedded in ongoing work, the barriers faced by marginalized groups in landscape initiatives, and the support needs of teams implementing the MFL program.

The interviews followed a structured guide designed to explore:

- (i) the existing GESI-relevant experience that AoW and country teams bring from previous CGIAR initiatives;
- (ii) which vulnerable or marginalized groups are currently being targeted in their work;
- (iii) barriers limiting meaningful participation of these groups;

(iv) potential entry points for integrating GESI in planned MFL activities; and  
(v) the support, capacity, and resources needed to strengthen GESI integration moving forward.

To inform this analysis, interviews were conducted with AoW leads, the MELIA team as well as country focal points in Kenya, Tanzania, India, and Peru, Colombia and Zimbabwe. These discussions provided a broad, comparative view of GESI integration across diverse contexts and operational modalities within the MFL program. While the assessment draws on rich insights from these conversations, it also acknowledges that not all AoW teams and MFL leadership were available within the assessment timeframe.

This document synthesizes the themes emerging from the interviews and situates them within the structure and ambitions of the MFL Science Program. It is intended as a practical resource to guide program-wide GESI strengthening, inform GESI's cross-cutting support role, and contribute to a shared understanding of current capacities, gaps, and opportunities across the program. The report aims to support collaborative strategy development, help teams embed inclusion considerations into their 2025 workplans, and lay the groundwork for more consistent, intentional, and meaningful GESI integration across landscapes, countries, and thematic areas.

### **1.3 Context**

Interviews were conducted with AoW leads and country focal points, MELIA as well as with Kenya, Tanzania, India, Zimbabwe, Colombia and Peru country teams. Across AoWs, some staff have worked on gender and inclusion topics through previous initiatives such as Agroecology Initiative, Nature-Positive Solutions, ABCD4AE and bilateral work such as the SDC Solar Irrigation project.

From the interviews conducted with AoW leads and country representatives and their respective teams, it became clear that there are challenges with GESI specific expertise and capacities across countries and AoW within then the MFL program. The following examples from country sites demonstrate these challenges within the MFL from country sites:

- Kenya has a team with strong social science capacity within Alliance Biodiversity and the Center for International Forestry Research and World

Agroforestry (CIFOR-ICRAF), however, the team has noted that they lack experience with farmer typologies and participatory co-design methods from the Agroecology Initiative- which are core GESI methodology components.

- Tanzania draws on ILRI and local partners for GESI expertise as they have no dedicated full-time GESI staff. The team highlighted that they have had project work on improving and managing grazing land and pastoralist activities with local communities, but they have had to source GESI tools and approaches from different initiatives to assist with socially inclusive design methods as they lacked formal GESI structures within the country site.
- India depends on GESI components embedded within the Solar Irrigation bilateral and Mandla projects as it also lacks dedicated GESI staff. Work with women's Self-Help Groups within the Mandla project was cited as an entry point for India's GESI integration into MFL.
- Peru has a strong GESI component with an active GESI coordinator, consultant support, and strong interest in long-term GESI integration. The challenge however lies in having a limited budget to continue GESI related activities. As an example, the team relies on language translators to engage with indigenous communities that are vulnerable and marginalised during stakeholder meetings, limited budget in this regard means they are unable to continue to engagements and with the community members.
- Zimbabwe, just like Peru, has a strong GESI component with a dedicated budget to GESI activities and dedicated GESI focal points within the country. They do however experience challenges related to contextualised GESI methodologies and tools which hinder the development of appropriate intervention programs.
- Colombia is also faced with budget constraints as they do not have a core budget to cover staff time and operations to carry out GESI activities. GESI researchers within the Colombia country site are reliant on projects to fund GESI activities, budget cuts within the science program have also made it difficult to secure funds for GESI activities and researchers.

These country examples indicate the varied complexities of the challenges of GESI integration within MFL, with each country having its own distinctive take on how to

embed GESI, which tools to incorporate, funds available for allocation and capacities needed to execute GESI activities.

## 2. Methodology

This report employs a mixed-methods approach centred on primary data collection, qualitative analysis, and the use of AI-assisted analytical tools to integrate GESI into the MFL programme.

Primary data for the analysis was collected through a structured survey administered to AoW leads and country leads. The survey (see Annex A and B) captured practitioner perspectives on priority target groups, barriers to meaningful participation, existing GESI integration practices, and perceived capacity and data gaps. The survey instrument consisted of a combination of open and closed-ended questions, which allowed respondents to provide contextualised qualitative insights based on implementation experience and enabled comparative analysis across countries and AoWs within the science program.

Data collected using the survey was then analysed using qualitative comparative methods and AI-assisted analysis tools. This method of analysis was useful to identify recurring themes and patterns and to support cross-country and cross-AoW comparisons. This approach also enhanced analytical consistency, enabled the systematic identification of common and divergent GESI-related challenges across country and AoW contexts.

The analysis focused on key thematic areas which included identifying GESI Components carried over from previous CGIAR initiatives and bilaterals, current integration ratings, key GESI entry points for GESI integration into MFL, target groups identified and the barriers they face as well as support needed by AoW and Country teams.

The methodology also included an assessment of data availability and use, drawing on survey responses to identify existing gaps in cross country and AoW collaboration and learning practises as well as monitoring and evaluation strategies and tools that can be used to strengthen GESI integration into the MFL science program. This also informed the identification of evidence for GESI integration and implementation, accountability mechanisms and capacity constraints. Lastly, insights generated from

analysing the survey data was used to identify practical entry points for strengthening GESI integration across the MFL science programme planning, implementation, capacity strengthening, budgeting and collaboration and learning.

Building on the methodology outlined above, the following sections present the analytical findings structured around a set of interrelated thematic areas that emerged consistently across interviews and document review.

### **3. GESI Components from Previous CGIAR Initiatives and Bilaterals**

Prior projects related to GESI are highlighted in this section to establish a foundational understanding of how GESI has been conceptualised and operationalised across different contexts, providing pathways to envisioning how best GESI integration in the MFL programme can be achieved, while also identifying transferable strengths and gaps that need further assessment. From data collected across AoWs and country sites where MFL is being implemented, past CGIAR initiatives which had (strong) GESI components include:

- [The Agroecology Initiative](#) incorporated core GESI methods and tools such as participatory design methods and the inclusion of vulnerable and marginalised youth and women in agroecological transitions. Country teams have incorporated past expertise, tools and social engagement approaches into the MFL program. Researchers in the Zimbabwe country team have used lessons learned on behaviour change and agency to inform methods of engagement and research processes, they are doing by drawing on the “ladder of power and freedom” as tool of analysis to understand the changing gender dynamics within communities, whereby men felt their agency was decreasing while women was increasing as a result of women becoming empowered by socially inclusive policies. Kenya country team are taking lessons learned from women and youth engagement from agroecology research work to develop multiple pathways to addressing gender and social inclusion challenges in ways that are context specific and appropriate to specific groups and communities.
- [Environmental Health & Biodiversity](#) and [Nature Positive Solutions](#) have respectively influenced thinking and practises on inclusive governance, global, regional and community engagement, advocacy as well as behavioural change

across country sites and AoW where MFL is being implemented. As an example, research work in Colombia through the Be Real project includes gender assessments to explore how gender norms and structures influence biodiversity conservation, thus signalling a shift in research practices that account for more equitable and balance gender dynamics.

- Bilateral projects form part of the CGIAR organisations funding and research mechanism. Successful bilateral projects that have had significant GESI research components being transferred into the MFL science program include the SDC SoLAR Irrigation project in India that incorporates working with women's self-help groups, the B-REAL project in Colombia, Peru and Kenya focusing on youth and inclusive policy engagement. Additionally, the ABCD4AE bilateral project in Peru focusing on regenerative cacao had historically limited GESI focus, but newer thinking is emerging around women's role in cooperatives, decision-making, indigenous-language barriers, and youth engagement.

Further insights gathered from the interviews held with country teams revealed that GESI as a core element within the MFL science program and bilateral projects was not often implicitly addressed, with key systematic and explicit approaches missing. There is however a strong willingness to carry over tools, methods, expertise and lessons learned from previous initiatives and bilateral projects, with a need for clearer frameworks under the MFL program.

## **4. Overall Rating of Current GESI Integration and Potential to Strengthen**

During data collection interviews, AoWs and country site leads and their team members were asked to assess the current level of gender and social inclusion implementation into the MFL program. Table 1 presents reflections and results from the responses provided.

**Table 1.** GESI Integration at Country and AoW level

Country Site & Area of Work	Current Level of Integration	Potential for Strengthening
Kenya	Moderate to strong: Kenya has a well-established participatory approaches and strong staff capacity.	High: The team needs support and capacity building in areas of GESI ethics training, tools to document GESI related learnings, as well as guidance on cultural sensitivities for researchers and partner organisations.
Tanzania	Weak to Moderate: There is strong interest for GESI centred research activities but are limited by factors such as lack of appropriate structures, budget and GESI dedicated researchers.	High: The team needs a dedicated budget and personnel, GESI frameworks to support research activities and better GESI planning processes for research activities.
India	Weak to Moderate: The India country team has limited staff time allocation and budget for GESI activities and rely on bilateral projects to integrate GESI components into the country's overall activities.	High: The team can benefit from dedicated GESI personnel, securing adequate funding for GESI activities and conducting GESI specific capacity building workshops.
Peru	Moderate to Strong: The team has strong GESI coordination with other country sites and have provided support for GESI related activities to other areas of work.	Moderate: The team can benefit from cross country collaborations and sharing methodologies, GESI capacity building and further GESI awareness training programs.
Zimbabwe	Strong: The country team has a dedicated budget allocated to GESI activities, GESI considerations are integrated across various areas of work with GESI specific GESI outputs from research projects.	Moderate: The team needs support with contextualised GESI methodologies that suit different social groups and community perspective, more GESI sensitive and trained social scientists as well as staff time allocation for GESI activities.
Colombia	Weak to Moderate: There is no dedicated budget for GESI activities and no specific focus on GESI as a stand-alone component and the team relies on bilateral projects to provide gender researchers with time allocation and activities.	Strong: The country team need will benefit from dedicated GESI budget, structural and budget support, cross country learning mechanisms and better GESI considerations in research planning processes.

MELIA	Weak: MELIA is a cross-cutting evaluation and impact group that also monitors research work across the MFL program. There isn't a dedicated budget or focal point for GESI related operations.	Strong: The Melia team needs a targeted guidance and knowledge exchange platforms to be able to monitor and incorporate GESI specific research work.
Area of Work 2	Weak to Moderate: The team relies on the GESI AoW and other researchers from different country sites to assist with better integrating GESI components into research activities.	Strong: The team needs a dedicated budget and personnel, GESI frameworks to support research activities and better GESI planning processes for research activities.
Area of Work 6	Moderate: GESI was treated as a cross cutting topic within the AoW, there was therefore a lack of dedicated GESI experts within the AoW as well as limited budget to carry out GESI focused activities.	Strong: The AoW could benefit from developing appropriate indicators, inclusive methodologies and disaggregated data with the guidance of the GESI AoW.
Area of Work 7	Weak : AoW 7 operates at regional and global engagement events. It also relies on having engagements with other AoW to ensure participation of marginalised groups at the events. There is however no dedicated GESI budget, staff time allocation and projects related to the GESI.	Strong: GESI Integration can best be achieved by knowledge exchange platforms and community of practise lead by the GESI AoW.

The data presented in Table 1 indicates wide variations in the current integration of GESI across country sites and AoWs, with most contexts demonstrating weak to moderate integration alongside a consistently high potential for strengthening. Countries such as Kenya, Peru, and Zimbabwe show relatively stronger foundations, including participatory approaches, cross-country coordination, and dedicated GESI budgets, yet still require targeted support in ethics training, contextualised methodologies, and staff time allocation. In contrast, Tanzania, India, Colombia, and MELIA face more structural constraints, including the absence of dedicated budgets, limited personnel, and reliance on bilateral or cross-cutting arrangements, which restrict systematic GESI integration despite strong interest. Across AoWs 2, 6, and 7, GESI is largely treated as a cross-cutting issue without dedicated expertise, indicators, or resources, resulting in fragmented implementation.

Overall, the analysis highlights that while commitment to GESI is evident across the programme, meaningful integration will require sustained investment in the form of practical support and guidance, inclusive tools and methodologies, dedicated budgets and personnel, frameworks, capacity building, and cross-country learning mechanisms led by the GESI experts.

## **5. Key Entry Points for GESI Integration into MFL**

The identification of key entry points for integrating GESI into the MFL science program is critical to ensuring that planned interventions are socially inclusive, equitable, context-responsive, and transformative. Building on existing capacities, partnerships, and thematic priorities across AoWs and country sites, these entry points highlight where GESI considerations can be systematically embedded within program design, implementation, governance, and learning processes. They also reflect opportunities to address structural barriers that limit the meaningful participation of women, youth, persons with disabilities, and other marginalized groups, while strengthening ethical research practice, inclusive decision-making, and accountability mechanisms.

Framed in this way, the entry points provide a practical pathway for aligning MFL objectives with broader research practices that should ensure inclusive, people-centered, and socially just agricultural and food systems transformation. The following key GESI entry points into MFL through AoWs and country sites have emerged from collected data as follows:

### **AoW1: Agroecological, nature-positive, regenerative, and nutrition-sensitive landscape-level solution bundles**

AoW1 focuses on the needs of landscape users and surrounding areas, while sustainably safeguarding natural resources and ecosystem services. It applies human-centered design and transdisciplinary approaches to harness local knowledge, strengthen stakeholder efforts and participatory co-innovation strategies to develop basic, advanced and cutting-edge solutions that are socially inclusive and gender transformative (CGIAR, 2024). AoW1 can serve as a platform for enabling inclusive dialogues, youth and gender responsive methods and tools and policy advocacy as key GESI entry points. This is particularly relevant for country sites such as Kenya, Zimbabwe and Peru which have strong GESI integration systems and components but

would benefit from strengthened lessons recording mechanisms, capacity building and community exchange platforms.

## **AoW 2: Multi-scale, inclusive, and adaptive planning, integration and governance**

AoW2 envisions landscape stakeholders implementing multifunctional land and water use, planning and governance and the bundling of eco-agrifood system solutions developed and strengthened in AoW1 to optimize sustainable food production, livelihoods, environmental gains including biodiversity benefits, and balance synergies and trade-offs. There is a strong opportunity to embed GESI in vision-to-action processes, participatory and inclusive governance structures, district-level planning in country sites and multistakeholder platforms through AoW2. Tools such as governance handbooks offer a space to integrate GESI indicators and decision-making guidelines. Projects such as the Cacao agroforestry co-design in Peru, participatory agroecology transitions in Kenya, and Mandla co-design spaces in India all show the necessity of inclusion-centred facilitation. AoW2 can thus be impactful for integrating GESI through gender-responsive methods and approaches tailored to the unique contexts of communities.

## **AoW 3: Leveraging markets, business models and financing mechanisms**

AoW3 envisions market actors to co-create knowledge on markets and consumer preference and develop inclusive business models and financial mechanisms for MFL. It focuses on resilient livelihoods and economic viability of landscape approaches. It achieves its vision through improved market and non-market incentives, mechanisms and strategies to enhance landscape multifunctionality and improve access to sustainable food and non-food products.

AoW 3 can be instrumental in integrating GESI elements such as equitable value chains and inclusive market innovations that account for differentiated impacts across social groups. Example of inclusive markets and value chains in country sites include the Peru country team developing a value chain analysis and evaluation for the Be Real project, in order to integrate gender considerations in their tools. Another example is in India, whereby practise of value-added fish processing actively involve women as key actors, providing them with the opportunity to manage production, make decisions, and handle marketing, in turn creating inclusive pathways into local value chains.

#### **AoW 4: Enabling institutions and policies**

AoW4 predicts national governments and local policy actors in various countries to use evidence produced from collaborative research for their policy processes and investment prioritization (CGIAR,2024). AoW4 enables the integration of GESI through policy and institutional engagement, producing contextualised land use plans through government structures, aligning land use with administrative boundaries, as well as incorporating GESI considerations into governance and planning processes.

Existing policy work done in Tanzania can be an example of how GESI can be integrated to address barriers faced by marginalized communities, women, and youth through stakeholder-community workshops and policy dialogues with various policy actors and government structures.

#### **AoW 5: Evidence-based performance assessment**

AOW6 is focused on getting MFL stakeholders such as research institutions, academia, government, private sector, development organizations and donors, to use performance assessment frameworks to monitor develop incentives for their sustained transformation (CGIAR, 2024). Both qualitative and quantitative assessment approaches are used in the AoW performance assessments-depending on the country context and stakeholder preference.

AoW 6 thus presents an opportunity for integrating GESI components into current approaches to research through inclusive multistakeholder driven assessment that ensure marginalised voices are accounted for. This can further be amplified by supporting and guiding the use of appropriate indicators, methodologies, improved researcher expertise and collecting disaggregated data by age, gender, ethnicity, religion and other social identities to address the diverse context specific needs of youth, women, indigenous and marginalised groups.

#### **AoW7 and MELIA: global engagement, advocacy and cross-country learning**

AOW7 serves as a support area dedicated to engagement and learning, adaptively informing and refining research priorities through continuous feedback loops with other AoWs. By leveraging knowledge management, capacity sharing, communications, and engagement strategies, AOW7 advances the integration of scientific evidence within MFL. In contrast, MELIA is focused on Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning, and Impact

Assessment of the MFL science program, drawing on established methodologies and an understanding of bilateral donor requirements (CGIAR, 2024).

Both MELIA and AoW7 provide valuable opportunities to integrate GESI by facilitating collaboration across AoWs—particularly AoW1, AoW2, AoW3, and AoW5. GESI can serve as a central theme for community engagement and advocacy, fostering communities of practice, enhancing multi-stakeholder engagement, and operationalizing the existing GESI Theory of Change through improved coordination and capacity development.

## 6. Key Target Groups Identified and Barriers Faced

### 6.1 Target Priority Groups

This section details key target groups engaged by Country Site and AoW teams from past and present research projects and initiatives. Included are also barriers they identified groups face in accessing, participating in, and benefiting from planned interventions (see Table 2).

**Table 2.** Priority target groups Engaged

Target Priority Group	Country Site/Area of Work	Engagement Description
Women	Across all country sites and AoW.	Majority of country sites and AoW research activities have been geared towards engaging with marginalized and disadvantaged women.
Youth	Kenya, Peru, Zimbabwe	Youth engagement has been recognized as an important GESI component, but research work related to youth inclusion has only been achieved by country sites with strong GESI integration mechanisms and tools.
Men	N/A	The group has rarely been explicitly addressed within AoW and Country sites but it has been acknowledged as needed group to engage with—especially with challenges related to gendered power dynamics, patriarchal communities and gendered water and land labour practices.
Indigenous communities	Colombia, Kenya, Tanzania, Zimbabwe.	Different country sites have varied understandings and engagement methods with indigenous communities, these include groups recognized by governments as indigenous in

		Kenya and people indigenous to specific regions in Colombia and Tanzania.
Ethnic Minorities	India, Colombia, Peru, Kenya, Tanzania	Different countries also have varied contexts for understanding and engaging ethnic minorities due to geographic, colonial, racial, religious and other social aspects. Engagement with Mestizos communities in Peru has been a targeted group for GESI related research.
Persons with disabilities	N/A	The group has rarely been explicitly addressed within AoW and Country sites but it has been acknowledged as needed group to include.
Elderly Persons	Zimbabwe	Elderly people as a marginalized group has emerged in research work done in Zimbabwe's. Dialogues we held with community elders to discuss norms, culture and agroecology issues and to also impart indigenous knowledge to the youth.

## 6.2 Barriers Faced by Target Groups

This section outlines the primary structural and contextual barriers gathered from data collected across country site and AoW. The barriers have been sighted to have negatively affected the meaningful participation of identified key target groups. The barriers are also herein interconnected and reinforce existing inequalities in access, voice, and benefit sharing, these are discussed as follows:

**Limited Decision-Making Power:** Women remain significantly underrepresented in cooperatives, landscape governance bodies, and community dialogue platforms. This limits their influence over agenda setting, resource allocation, and institutional priorities, resulting in interventions that often fail to reflect women's needs, knowledge, and lived realities. The exclusion of women from leadership and governance spaces thus perpetuates gendered power imbalances and weakens inclusive outcomes.

**Language and Cultural Norms:** Language, culture, norms and present as key barriers and points of misalignment with local governance systems constrain participation, specifically for indigenous and ethnic groups. In Peru, indigenous communities require translation into local languages and culturally sensitive facilitation approaches to enable informed and meaningful engagement. In Tanzania, pastoralist governance norms and decision-making structures differ from formal program

assumptions, leading to exclusion when customary systems are not adequately recognized or integrated.

**Time and Mobility Constraints:** Women's disproportionate burden of unpaid care and domestic work restricts their availability to participate in meetings, trainings, and consultations. These time constraints are compounded by mobility challenges, including high travel costs, long distances, and remote geographies, particularly in Peru, Zimbabwe and Tanzania. Such conditions disproportionately extend to ethnic and indigenous minorities, marginalized men and older community members.

**Economic Exclusion:** Limited access to productive assets, credit, agricultural inputs, and market opportunities remains a critical barrier. In several contexts, including India, women's engagement in agriculture is largely informal, unpaid, or unrecognised. Their exclusion from formal farmer status restricts access to extension services, financial mechanisms, and programme benefits, reinforcing economic dependency and vulnerability.

**Youth Marginalisation:** Youth are frequently excluded from land ownership, economic value chains, stakeholder engagements and leadership roles within their communities and related development organisations. This limits their decision-making power, access to resources, and long-term livelihood opportunities, contributing to disengagement from agricultural systems and reduced programme relevance for younger populations.

**Disaggregated Data:** Insufficient availability of disaggregated data related to sex, age, gender, ethnicity, religion and social categories, constrains effective GESI integration into MFL country sites and AoW. Without contextually relevant baseline information, research teams across MFL are unable to clearly identify ideal target groups to reach and engage and how interventions impacts differ across groups and regions. This gap weakens evidence-based planning, adaptive management, and accountability, underscoring the need for strengthened GESI-responsive monitoring, evaluation, and learning systems.

## Examples of barriers identified per target group:

### Women

- **Barrier example:** In Peru, women participate in cacao harvesting but rarely attend governance meetings because they are held late in the evening when unpaid care workloads peak.
- **Barrier example:** In Kenya, women may not own land, preventing them from accessing soil restoration incentives.
- **Barrier Example:** In Tanzania, Mobility patterns mean men often attend meetings, but women are not consulted even when decisions affect household grazing strategies.

### Youth

- **Barrier example:** In Kenya, youth feel excluded from decision-making in farmer groups and have less access to land for testing innovations, they also have limited access to land for testing innovations.

### Indigenous communities


- **Barrier example:** In Peru, technical trainings are often conducted only in Spanish, leaving many indigenous women uncomfortable participating. This also affects decision-making capabilities as women and other minorities rarely speak during cacao cooperative assemblies.

## 7. Support Needed by AoW and Country Teams

This section outlines the critical support required by Areas of Work, country teams, and cross-cutting functions to enable more systematic and effective integration of GESI across the MFL program. While varying levels of integration and practice are evident, the analysis demonstrates that most teams are constrained by structural and operational gaps, these are outlined as follows:

### 7.1 Cross-Cutting Needs

- A clear GESI framework for the MFL Program aligned with the GESI Theory of Change. This can be instrumental in embedding GESI components in throughout research project activities-conception to conclusion.
- Standardized tools and appropriate methodologies would enable to researcher across MFL to consciously incorporate existing and develop new tools that are



responsive to gender and social inclusion needs. These can be in the form of socially inclusive facilitation guides, survey modules, capturing and documenting GESI related lessons as well as landscape assessment frameworks. Tools and methods should ideally be adaptable to the local context of research activities and their intended beneficiaries will benefit researchers and research activities within the program.

- Researchers need training on ethical field engagement practises for researchers and field workers; using intersectionality as a research method, tool and practise guide; applying GESI needs and analysis methods for community engagement and project conception. As an example, the Peru research team would benefit from training on how to run women-only or youth-only focus groups respectfully in indigenous communities.
- There needs to be dedicated GESI staffing across all AoW and country sites within the MFL program to ensure that GESI core components are included across all levels of research and project management aspects. This will also enable directing funds towards GESI specific elements within AoW and research activities.
- In order to not rely on bilateral projects for GESI budgets, country site and AoW team need strategic GESI budget lines for research activities and operations. In some of the AoWs and country sites, there is no dedicated operational GESI budget even though staff and time are readily available exists.
- There is a need for AoWs and country sites to receive guidance on GESI integration into workplans and existing activities, this can be achieved through capacitating country and Aow leads, consistent involvement of GESI staff into research activities and operations, as well as GESI intensive monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track the level of GESI engagement and integration.

## 7.2 Area of Work Specific Needs

### Area of Work 1

- Tools for gender-responsive co-design.
- Strategies to ensure marginalized groups influence solution design.

### Area of Work 2

- Integrating GESI into governance systems.
- Land use planning processes.

### Area of Work 3

- Market analysis tools that capture gendered participation and barriers.

### Area of Work 4

- Integrating GESI considerations into policy assessments and national dialogues.

### Area of Work 6

- Templates for disaggregated data.
- Qualitative indicators.
- Integration of GESI into performance dashboards.

### Area of Work 7

- Materials for inclusive community engagement.
- Advocacy with gender-sensitive framing.

### MELIA

- Dedicated budget and staff time allocation.
- Capacity building to impart GESI concepts.
- Knowledge exchange platforms with GESI researchers.

## 7.3 Country Specific Needs

### Colombia

- Dedicated budget for GESI activities.
- Cross country learning and knowledge exchange platforms .
- Leadership and personnel training on GESI integration.



### India

- GESI capacity building workshops.
- Dedicated GESI budget.
- Cross AoW and Country learning platforms.



### Kenya

- GESI Ethics Training.
- Partnerships Relations Training.
- Staff Safety Training for Field Workers.
- Capturing GESI lessons from the country site and success stories of women and youth on the ground in their own voices.



### Peru

- GESI capacity building..
- CGIAR Gender Awareness across the board.
- Cross country learning opportunities and platforms.
- Partnerships with Feminist Groups & other related stakeholders



### Tanzania

- Embedding GESI into research planning processes.
- Dedicated GESI budget.
- Incorporating Gender indicators to assess future impact.
- Better staff allocation.



### Zimbabwe

- Cross centre learning opportunities.
- Culturally sensitive programming for community engagement.
- Researchers trained in social sciences to facilitate community engagement.



## 8. Conclusion and Recommendations

### 8.1 Conclusion: Overall Potential for GESI Integration in MFL


This GESI analysis report demonstrates that the MFL science program has a strong foundation and high potential for advancing gender equality and social inclusion across its AoWs and country sites. Across interviews, teams consistently expressed motivation, awareness of social inequities, and recognition of GESI as integral to achieving sustainable, resilient, and equitable landscape outcomes. In several contexts which include Kenya, Peru, and Zimbabwe, GESI considerations are already embedded through participatory approaches, dedicated coordination and dedicated budgets.

The analysis also highlights that current GESI integration remains uneven and largely dependent on individual initiatives and bilateral projects. In many AoWs and country teams, GESI is treated as an implicit or cross-cutting concern rather than a structured and resourced component of program design, implementation, and learning. Structural constraints such as the absence of a program-wide operational framework, limited dedicated budgets, insufficient staff time, and gaps in standardized tools, indicators and data continue to restrict systematic and scalable GESI integration into the MFL program.

The findings thus indicate that MFL is well positioned to address GESI integration gaps. Previous CGIAR initiatives and bilateral projects provide a rich repository of methodologies, partnerships, and lessons that can be adapted and scaled.

### 8.2 Key Recommendations and Immediate Next Steps

**Program-Level Actions:** Key actions for successful GESI integration within MFL must include a) the operationalization of a GESI Integration Framework that defines minimum standards for GESI integration across AoWs and country teams, clarify roles and responsibilities, and provide guidance on how GESI should be embedded throughout the research cycle, b) establish minimum dedicated GESI budget lines at both AoW and country levels, c) third, appointing designated GESI focal persons within each country team and technical AoW is essential to anchor responsibility, coordination, and follow-through and lastly, d) the establishing cross-AoW GESI



working groups to facilitate peer learning, and ensure that GESI considerations are integrated into joint planning and delivery processes rather than addressed in isolation.

**Tools and Guidance:** The need for practical, context-sensitive tools that translate GESI principles into actionable guidance for researchers and practitioners should be developed according to the different AoW and country site contexts. The tools should include inclusive facilitation guides, stakeholder and targeting matrices, co-design prompts, and GESI-responsive data collection checklists.

**Capacity Strengthening:** The program should invest in modular training packages covering gender responsive and transformative approaches, participatory governance, ethical field engagement, and intersectional research practice. These trainings should be practical and tailored to different AoWs, team and leadership roles and country contexts. Furthermore, country and AoW teams should be provided with GESI integration tools during key processes such as study designs, stakeholder dialogues, knowledge dissemination as well as monitoring and evaluation phases. Time constraints and heavy workloads should also be addressed by explicitly recognizing GESI responsibilities within workplans and staffing allocations.

**Long-Term Direction and Engagement with Interest Groups:** There is a need for sustained long-term engagement with existing partner organizations and communities of interest. This entails developing long-term partnerships with donor and funder organizations, government stakeholders, women's organizations, youth associations, and indigenous institutions so as to strengthen structural and institutional mechanisms and provide contextual relevant support for the benefit of vulnerable social groups and the broader MFL program.

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# Annexures

## Annex A. Interview Guide: Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) in Country Sites – Multifunctional Landscapes Program.

### Interviewer Introduction:

Thank you for participating in this interview. We are conducting this conversation to understand how Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) elements are integrated within your country site for the Multifunctional Landscape Science Program. Your insights will help identify GESI entry points, strengthen inclusive practices, and support the co-development of a needs assessment protocol for future interventions.

<p><b>Section 1: Context</b></p>	<p><b>Collect the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Name, organization, and current role or position</li> <li>Which country site are you currently working in? (Options: Vietnam-Laos Corridor, Peru, Colombia, Tunisia, Senegal, Kenya, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, India).</li> <li></li> </ul>
<p><b>Section 2: GESI Landscape at Country Site</b></p>	<p><b>Dedicated GESI staff</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there designated staff members responsible for gender and inclusion at your country site?</li> <li>If yes, could you please share their names and roles?</li> </ul> <p><b>Budget:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there a dedicated budget for GESI activities in your country? If yes, describe the percentage allocated and the kinds of activities planned.</li> </ul> <p><b>Other projects</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there any bilateral projects focussing on GESI that are integrated within MFL that are especially relevant for your country context? If so, please elaborate further.</li> </ul> <p><b>Entry points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Which <b>AoW</b> in your country site do you see clear entry points for GESI integration? Could you give examples?</li> <li>Can you share any <b>promising practices</b> (or success stories, or lessons learned) related to gender and inclusion from previous projects or initiatives in this site that can be implemented within MFL?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Section 3: Targeting vulnerable groups and barriers to their participation</b></p>	<p><b>Vulnerable/marginalized group identified?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Which <b>vulnerable or marginalized groups</b> are you currently considering or targeting in your country site? (e.g: Women, youth, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, indigenous groups, elderly persons).</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What <b>barriers</b> do marginalized groups face in your country site? (E.g: land rights, access to finance, training exclusion, GBV, mobility constraints, underrepresentation, etc.)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Section 4: Opportunities and support for GESI</b></p>	<p><b>Assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you assess the current level of gender and social inclusion in your country's implementation of the program? What is the reason behind this rating?</li> </ul> <p><b>Support Needed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What types of additional support or capacity-building would you need to strengthen your country's GESI efforts, particularly from Area of Work 5? (e.g., technical training, GESI budgeting tools, partnerships, M&amp;E frameworks, cross-country learning, etc.).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Section 5: Final Thoughts</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you have any additional suggestions, recommendations and identified opportunities for how GESI integration could be improved within your Area of Work or across the MFL Science Program?</li> </ul>

# Annex B. Interview Guide: Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) Integration in Multifunctional Landscapes – AoW Leads.

## Introduction to Interviewer:

Thank you for taking the time to speak with us. This interview aims to **explore how Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) elements are integrated into your Area of Work (AoW)** within the Multifunctional Landscapes (MFL) Science Program. We also hope to identify opportunities and needs for strengthening inclusive approaches in your current and future work. The insights you provide will inform collaborative GESI strategies across AoWs and country teams.

<p><b>Section 1: Context</b></p>	<p><b>Collect the following:</b> Name, organization, and current role or position Country or region where Area of Work is being implemented</p>
<p><b>Section 2: Carry over from Initiatives</b></p>	<p><b>GESI Carry-over from Initiatives?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you previously carried out any GESI-related work in other CGIAR Initiatives, such as Nature Positive or Ukama Ustawi?</li> <li>• If so, are there elements of that work you are able to carry over into your current AoW?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Section 3: Targeting vulnerable groups and barriers to their participation</b></p>	<p><b>Vulnerable/marginalized group identified?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which vulnerable or marginalized groups are you currently considering or targeting in your Area of Work? (e.g: Women, youth, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, indigenous groups, elderly persons).</li> <li>• Are there specific components or activities within your project that directly target any of these groups?</li> <li>• If yes, please describe these activities?</li> </ul> <p><b>Barriers to participation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What challenges or barriers have you observed that limit the participation of marginalized groups in previous initiative projects you've been involved in?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Section 4: Opportunities and Needs for GESI Integration</b></p>	<p><b>Integration of GESI in the AoW</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What potential entry points or barriers to address do you see for integrating gender and social inclusion in your AoW? (e.g: access to land, inputs, extension services, leadership roles, etc.)</li> </ul> <p><b>Capacity in AoW</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does your AoW have sufficient capacity in GESI Staff? How many and how much FTE? In which countries?</li> </ul> <p><b>Dedicated GESI budget</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does your Area of Work have a dedicated budget for GESI activities?</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If yes, could you share the approximate percentage allocated and the types of activities planned under this budget?</li> </ul>
<b>Section 5: Support needed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>What forms of support</b> or resources would help you better integrate GESI into your AoW? (e.g: training, planning tools, dedicated budget, partnerships, disaggregated data collection tools, etc.).</li> <li>• What kind of support would you <b>expect from AoW 5</b> to strengthen GESI integration in your work?</li> </ul>
<b>Section 6: Final Reflections</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you have any additional suggestions, recommendations and identified opportunities for how GESI integration could be improved within your Area of Work or across the MFL Science Program?</li> </ul>



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