

GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION TOOLKIT

A guide for improving the social impact of infrastructure development projects from gender equality and social inclusion perspectives



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A. Introduction

THE WHAT

- The goal is to improve the social impact of overseas investment in large infrastructure in developing countries from social inclusive perspective, including gender equality.
- To achieve this goal requires identifying the impacts of large infrastructure construction and operation on the livelihoods of residents, governance of local community, and environments and ecosystem from the gender perspectives.
- This toolkit provides a set of practical actions for Chinese investors and partners to ensure positive social impact and gender equality when investing in large infrastructure in developing countries.

THE WHY

Overseas investment of large infrastructure is highly related with local livelihoods, community development, and environments and ecosystem conservation. Women is the main group and managers in local community, and ignoring gender perspectives in the construction and operation of large infrastructure negatively affect its social welfare effect.

The consequences of ignoring gender perspectives in the construction and operation of large infrastructure include:

- Insufficient investment in the ancillary facility which bring convenience during the construction and help residents to access the infrastructure during the operation.
- Increase the social risk to investor, which will rise the economic and social cost.
- Add the economic and mental burden of local residents, which has negative effect on the relationship between investor/contractor/operator and residents.
- Discount the social welfare of infrastructure, which decreases investment efficiency.
- Widen gender inequities and inequalities and violations of rights in society and in the economy by hindering access to infrastructure.

THE HOW

- Identify key areas that are highly related with infrastructure investment and influenced by gender inequalities to achieve the highest level of population coverage possible.
- Partner with women's organizations and other community-based groups to ensure accurate information is available to local communities, and gender perspectives are considered in planning, designing, and monitoring infrastructure investment.

THE WHOM

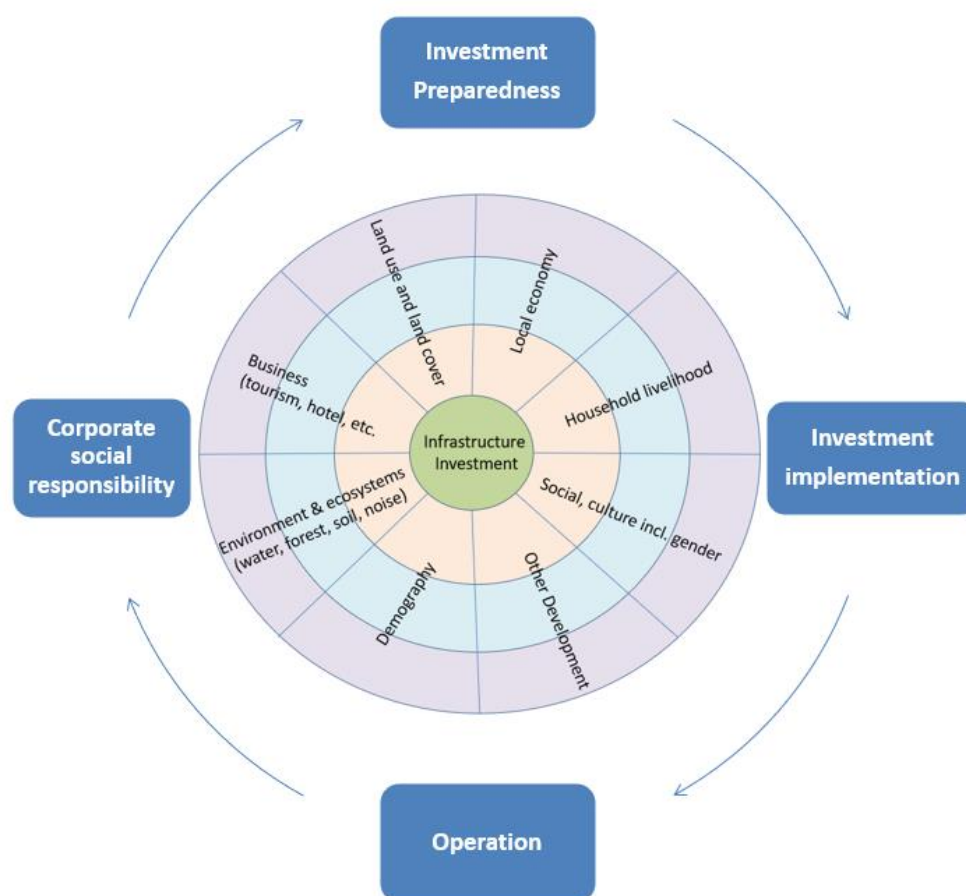
The target audience for this toolkit include:

- The government departments or office charging overseas investment in developing countries - from both investment countries and host countries.
- The overseas investors in large infrastructure.
- Local stakeholders responsible for planning, implementing, and monitoring overseas investment in infrastructure, including women groups.
- Multilateral development partners supporting overseas investment in large infrastructure.

B. Methodology

The Framework of Toolkit

The proposed toolkit follows a typical investment cycle, including investment preparedness, investment implementation, operation, and corporate social responsibility. It covers multiple areas with a focus on social, gender, and livelihood impacts of infrastructure development projects and relevant activities.



The toolkit aligns with

- The UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework — includes leaving no one behind, human rights, and gender equality and the empowerment of women as core programming principles at the country level;
- Existing international strategic plans and guidelines, such as UN Women Strategic Plan 2022-2025, Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2025 of UNDP, gender dimensions of the guiding principles on business and human rights; and
- Guidelines for ecological and environmental protection of overseas investment and cooperation projects issued by Chinese government.

Tactical principles for addressing intersectional gender barriers and implementing the toolkit

- Collaborate with a range of stakeholders and draw on the lived knowledge, experience, and trust-relationships of community and civil society groups for effective gender-sensitive response.
- Actively engage non-traditional stakeholders in planning and decision-making processes, such as women's, community-based groups, as well as government departments that coordinate gender equality and inclusive development.
- Be responsive to new evidence, evolving lessons, and emerging gender considerations in real-time, through social listening, learning, and adaptation in consultation with key stakeholder groups.

C. Components and actions of gender inclusion checklist

Investment preparedness	
Actions	By whom
<input type="checkbox"/> Carefully read and familiar with all the laws, institutions, policies, regulations, and norms that related with gender equality and infrastructure investment, especially in land management, indigenous habitants, employment, and community governance.	Investors and contractors
<input type="checkbox"/> Grasp the ecological, environment and social background of the project site and its surrounding area by collecting relevant information, conducting biodiversity investigation, ecological environment monitoring and evaluation of the proposed site area, and document the investigation, monitoring, and evaluation results. If the background value exceeds the local standard, international general rules, or the quality standards of investor's country, it is recommended to fully demonstrate the rationality of the site selection, and consider re-locating if necessary.	Investors and contractors
<input type="checkbox"/> Carry out environmental and social impact assessment according to the laws, regulations, policies, and norms of the host country (region) and take reasonable measures to reduce and eliminate possible adverse effects. If the host country (region) lacks the requirements for environmental and social impact assessment, it may organize it referring to international general rules and standards.	Investors, contractors, governments, NGOs, communities, and residents from host country
<input type="checkbox"/> Be familiar with the environmental and social impact assessment report or participate in the assessment if it is implemented by host country.	Investors, contractors, governments, NGOs, communities, and residents from host country
<input type="checkbox"/> Set clear responsibilities to eliminate the negative social and environmental effects during the construction and operations of the infrastructure.	Investors, contractors, governments, NGOs, communities, and residents from host country
<input type="checkbox"/> Be familiar with the regulation of compensation for land acquisition, including the compensation standards, consistency, and information transparency.	Investors, contractors, governments, NGOs, communities, and residents from host country

<input type="checkbox"/> Check if there is any land acquisition dispute around the project site and its surrounding area, especially if female members give their consent to land acquisition.	Investors, contractors, governments, NGOs, communities, and residents from host country
<input type="checkbox"/> Calculate the cost including that to eliminate or alleviate the negative impact of infrastructure investment on environment, ecosystem, and society with fully consideration of local regulations and norms on employment, such as working hours, vacation, gender requirements, and so on.	Investors, contractors, and governments in host country
<input type="checkbox"/> Set up the monitor and communication team comprised by overseas investor, government department from host country, and community-based groups around the project site and its surrounding area, to monitor the impact of infrastructure investment and communicate with local residents.	Investors, contractors, governments, NGOs, communities, and residents from host country
<input type="checkbox"/> Communicate with the community and residents about the results of environmental and social impact assessment and open complaint channel about the infrastructure construction and operation.	Investors, contractors, governments, communities, and residents from host country
Investment implementation	
Actions	By whom
<input type="checkbox"/> Inform the communities and local residents around the project site and its surrounding area on the construction activity, e.g. blast, turn off water or power.	Investors, contractors, and government in host country
<input type="checkbox"/> Have clean signs for construction activity and potential risks around the project site and its surrounding area.	Investors, contractors
<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure the monitoring and communication team and the complaint channel are in order.	Investors, contractors, governments, NGOs, communities, and residents from host country

<p>Check the damage of community infrastructure caused by construction and waste disposal and make a response plan. Have a quick response if there is any damage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> roads <input type="checkbox"/> source of water <input type="checkbox"/> irrigation <input type="checkbox"/> drinking water <input type="checkbox"/> pipelines or village wells <input type="checkbox"/> drainage system <input type="checkbox"/> street lamp <input type="checkbox"/> others 	Investors, contractors, and governments from host country
<p>Check the risks caused by construction and waste disposal and make a response plan. Have a quick response if there is any risk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> house crack <input type="checkbox"/> accident <input type="checkbox"/> livestock and poultry loss <input type="checkbox"/> farmland <input type="checkbox"/> floods <input type="checkbox"/> mudslides <input type="checkbox"/> noise <input type="checkbox"/> air pollution <input type="checkbox"/> chemical pollution <input type="checkbox"/> vibrations <input type="checkbox"/> biodiversity loss <input type="checkbox"/> others 	Investors, contractors, and governments from host country
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Check if any measure taken by host country to have alternative livelihood for the farmers of land acquisition and those rent the acquisition land considering gender perspective, e.g. skill training to help them work off-farm, post job information.</p>	Investors, contractors, and governments from host country
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Provide capacity building for local residents to participate in the infrastructure construction considering gender perspective.</p>	Investors, contractors, and governments from host country
Operation	
Actions	By whom
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Provide capacity building for local residents to help them work for infrastructure operation considering gender perspective.</p>	Investors, contractors, and governments from host country
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Comply with the laws, policies, regulations, and norms on gender equality in employment in the host country.</p>	Investors and contractors

<input type="checkbox"/> Educate local residents for using the infrastructure from gender perspective in various forms, including text, pictures, videos, etc.	Investors, contractors, governments, and NGOs from host country
<input type="checkbox"/> Have clean signs for accessing and using the infrastructure and the connection with other infrastructure, such as the connection between new railway and road transportation.	Investors, contractors, and governments from host country
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide gender inclusive ancillary facility, such as nursing room.	Investors and contractors
<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure the monitoring and communication team and the complaint channel are in order.	Investors, contractors, governments, NGOs, communities, and residents from host country
<p>Check the risks caused by the operation of infrastructure and make a response plan. Have a quick response if there is any risk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> accident <input type="checkbox"/> livestock and poultry loss <input type="checkbox"/> noise <input type="checkbox"/> air pollution <input type="checkbox"/> water pollution <input type="checkbox"/> chemical pollution <input type="checkbox"/> vibrations <input type="checkbox"/> biodiversity loss <input type="checkbox"/> others 	Investor, contractor and government
Cooperate social responsibility	
Actions	By whom
<p>To host government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> follow the laws, regulations, and policies of the host government, <input type="checkbox"/> pay taxes 	Investors and contractors
<p>To stockholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> be responsible for the safety and income of their funds <input type="checkbox"/> strive to give shareholders a rich return on investment 	Investors and contractors
<p>To consumer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> provide safe, affordable, convenient, and comfortable goods or services for both women and men, children, and elders. 	Investors and contractors

<p>To staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> provide fair wage for women and men <input type="checkbox"/> provide equal promotion opportunities between women and men <input type="checkbox"/> provide capacity building between women and men <input type="checkbox"/> provide equal workfare between women and men <input type="checkbox"/> provide gender inclusive working environment <input type="checkbox"/> provide equal job welfare between women and men 	Investors and contractors
<p>To nature resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> save resources by improving management efficiency and optimizing management process <input type="checkbox"/> regular environmental impact assessment 	Investors and contractors
<p>To community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> provide employment opportunities for communities considering gender equality <input type="checkbox"/> provide donations for the community's public welfare considering gender equality 	Investors and contractors

Reference

The information contained in this gender inclusiveness checklist was informed, in part by the following sources;

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Case Study of High-Speed Railways in Indonesia

**An Analysis to Integrative Aspects of Gender Equality, Disability,
and Social Inclusion in Infrastructure Development**



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Summary

This case study aims to provide the suggestions to prepare the gender equality and social inclusive toolkit of overseas investment in developing countries by investigating the impact of Chinese investment in Indonesia. To understand the context of the implementation of Chinese investment in Indonesia, UNEP-IEMEP collaborated with the Women Research Institute (WRI) to conduct joint study. For this reason, the Kereta Cepat Jakarta Bandung (KCIC) High-Speed Railway (HSR) project was selected as a pilot project to reflect the impact of the Chinese overseas investment project on local livelihoods and women's empowerment.

A field level project impact assessment of gender and livelihood of local communities and households was carried out by UNEP-IEMP and WRI. Combined with desk study on the policy, laws, regulations, and norms of gender equality in Indonesia, numerous small group discussions were held with the local government officials and NGOs. Key informant interviews with local and relevant experts and household interviews were held for qualitative data about project impact.

The study found that the HSR bring labor mobility and more tourists to Bandung and motivate small and medium enterprises around the railway stations. However, it has caused some negative effects on the local area, especially during its construction. The project led to land acquisition among 300 households and caused farmland reduction and loss. Livelihoods of local farmers were severely affected as no support to alternative livelihoods was provided by the project, especially for those household rented farmland for livelihoods. Some original infrastructure in communities were destroyed during the construction of HSR, such as road, drinking water, and drainage facilities, which caused inconvenience for work and schooling of residents. Some household experienced house cracks and poultry and livestock loss due to blast and landscape change. Women suffered more serious because they are the principal housekeepers and labors in agricultural sector in Indonesia.

There are several important points related to the Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) aspects from this case study:

- 1) The Indonesian government has a strong policy and regulatory framework for mainstreaming GEDSI in infrastructure development projects. Nevertheless, this case study identifies a major gap in concrete follow-up efforts to ensure the implementation and sustainability of GEDSI aspects in infrastructure development projects.

- 2) Women community members are the most active agents in advocating for citizens' rights in implementing HSR projects. However, this is not balanced with the implementation of commitments from local governments and project implementers to involve them.

- 3) Community involvement (especially the involvement of women and people with disabilities) in project implementation, management, and monitoring, at least in the communities involved in this case study, tends to still be very weak. This is sufficient

to illustrate that the existing policy framework at the central level has not been optimally implemented at the grassroots level.

4) Civil society Organizations (CSOs) has a very large role in filling the gap between policy and implementation, especially in terms of encouraging community participation in every stage of the project.

5) The absorption of local workers, especially residents living around the project area, is generally still very weak, especially the involvement of women and disabled residents. On the other hand, the involvement of women and people with disabilities in working on infrastructure projects also requires caution, the government must carry out risk analysis and identify separate mitigation efforts related to this.

6) Risk analysis and mitigation of negative impacts from project implementation are still very weak so that many aspirations and needs of the community, especially from vulnerable groups, especially women and groups with disabilities, are not accommodated.

In the long term, this study recommends the availability of a toolkits with checklist that can help ensure the integration of GEDSI aspects and principles in infrastructure projects. It is hoped that the results of this study can be used as consideration in preparing the gender toolkit.

Gender equality and social inclusion at local level in overseas investment has attracted common interest and it is also an enrichment to environment, social, and governance (ESG) followed by enterprises. At the time, only the impact of the early stage of HSR project on local livelihoods and women's welfare could be studies, as it has been operated since October 2023. There is a lot to be studied on this topic in the future, such as developing the social impact assessment framework and tools, exploring the effective mechanisms/models for multilateral cooperation to improve beneficial social effects in overseas investment, and identifying the long-term impact of overseas infrastructure investment.

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Case Study of Pokhara International Airport in Nepal for Developing Social and Gender Inclusive Toolkit for Chinese Overseas Investments



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Summary

China has been one of the major foreign investors in Nepal recently, and the construction of Pokhara International Airport (PIA) is one of the major cooperative projects between China and Nepal in the field of infrastructure development. Though the airport site selection completed by the Government of Nepal in 1971, the construction did not begin until 2016 due to the lack of funds and other reasons. With financing support from the Export-Import Bank of China, Asian Development Bank, and the OPEC Fund, the PIA was built by China CAMC Engineering Co., Ltd. The PIA, a “National Pride Project” in Nepal, was completed in 2022, and the regular domestic air traffic was open in 2023.

A field level project impact assessment of social, gender, and livelihood of local communities and households was carried out by UNEP-IEMP and LI-BIRD in October-December 2023. Combined with desk study on the policy and norms of gender equality in Nepal, numerous consultations were held with the PIA project management, local government officials and the tourism business sector. Twelve key informant interviews with local and relevant experts and three focus group discussions were held for qualitative data about project impact.

Though the PIA is supposed to bring more tourists, prosper the tourism industry, and to drive the local economy, it has caused some negative effects on the local area during the construction stage. The project substantially changed the landscape of the highly fertile agricultural land for ever. Farm land and livestock had to be drastically reduced. Livelihoods of local farmers were severely affected as no support to alternative livelihoods was provided by the project. The existing irrigation system was replaced by a smaller system that limits the type and number of crops grown in the remaining farms. Women suffered from loss of their secondary income sources. Social networks were disrupted as households dispersed following land acquisition. The project did not provide enough job opportunities, during construction and operation, for nearby residents.

With increasing expansion of Pokhara Municipality and urbanization, PIA is now a part of Pokhara municipal town. The human settlement around the airport is dense. There are restrictions on construction of large buildings and industry around the airport. Reduced irrigation facility, restricted access, and noise and vibration from aircrafts are the major impacts on communities around the airport. There is very limited government support for development activities in these communities. There is a huge gap and mistrust between project management and local communities.

Based on the PIA case study, several recommendations have been made. For Chinese investors and contractors, a higher-level engagement with and accountability to local agencies in implementation of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) recommendations, inclusion of local community development support in the project budget and workplan, and capacity building and transfer of skills to the national workforce are recommended. Recommendations for the Nepal government include

developing policies for a separate Socio-economic and Gender Impact Assessment and a formal Public Welfare Committee to monitor and evaluate the social and gender impacts on local communities. A more intensive role of the Pokhara Municipality in addressing project induced impact on local communities is also needed. In the case of PIA, there is good opportunity to link the tourism business sector with affected local communities so that these communities can also benefit from the increasing tourism in Pokhara.

Gender equality and social inclusion at local level in overseas investment has attracted common interest and it is also an enrichment to environment, social, and governance (ESG) followed by enterprises. It is too early to study the medium- and long-term impacts of PIA project on local livelihoods and women's welfare as it has been operated without scheduled international flights since January 2023. There is a lot to be studied on this topic in the future, such as developing the social impact assessment framework and tools, exploring the effective mechanisms/models for multilateral cooperation to improve beneficial social effects in overseas investment, and identifying the long-term impact of overseas infrastructure investment.

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