
Gender Assessment

FP156: ASEAN Catalytic Green Finance Facility (ACGF): Green Recovery Program

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**GREEN
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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The ASEAN Catalytic Green Finance Facility Green Recovery Program (ACGF GRP) is an innovative, multi-instrument, country-owned platform designed to scale up low emissions investments as part of COVID-19 economic stimulus. By investing in low emissions green¹ infrastructure specifically targeting post-COVID-19 recovery, the program will help countries avoid a rebound in emissions and environmental degradation, while stimulating economic growth by creating green jobs.
2. This document presents an analysis of gender and social inclusion issues that are being reflected in the design of the ACGF GRP. Section II presents a snapshot of challenges faced by different individuals and groups of people in the countries included in the ACGF GRP. Based on this baseline, Section III presents key priorities for the ACGF GRP, while Section IV presents the Gender and Social Inclusion Action Plan.
3. In the context of this document, **gender equality**: “refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women’s and men’s rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women’s issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women”².
4. In the context of this analysis, **social inclusion** acknowledges that different individuals and groups face different opportunities and barriers. The opportunity to access, participate in and/or benefit from ACGF development projects will be affected by an individual or group’s sex, age, whether they might have a disability, be an Indigenous person or from a minority ethnic or religious group, or find themselves categorized as an informal sector or migrant worker. These elements do not operate in isolation, so this analysis uses a range of publicly available metrics to highlight the possible intersections (intersectionality) and shed light on plural identities that can compound disadvantage and influence the capacity of individuals and/or groups to engage in ACGF investment projects.
5. Identifying the different ways men and women, and vulnerable groups, live and work helps to understand the risks and benefits of the infrastructure investment. Empowering women and vulnerable groups to participate in green infrastructure financing, planning, design, construction and management maximises the potential for success and sustainability of the investment.

¹ Green infrastructure, for the purposes of the ACGF Green Recovery Program, is defined as infrastructure with significant climate benefits that also has a demonstrable contribution to other environmental objectives such as reduced pollution, increased resource use efficiency and management of natural capital.

² [UN Women, Concepts and definitions](#)

II. COUNTRY ANALYSIS

6. Gender inequality and social exclusion is complex and determined by diverse norms and values across the region. Such disadvantage is not heterogenous, within a country a high proportion of women may be found in the workplace or formal leadership roles at the same time as high rates of girl child sexual exploitation or gender-based violence. The country analysis draws out individual indicators of gender inequality such as gender based stereotypes, drudgery, gender based violence, human trafficking and labour migration and highlights some intersectional dimensions of inequality and exclusion referenced to the priority project areas under the ACGF GRP. This is a synthesised analysis based on desk top research to inform projects developed under the ACGF GRP and not intended to be exhaustive. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities, women were already vulnerable prior to the pandemic due to insecure employment and lack of social protection, and gender norms that restrict their mobility and productivity because of home and care responsibilities³. This is an additional overlay not yet present in the statistics reported in this analysis.

A. Cambodia

7. A policy framework to support gender and climate change is in place in Cambodia. The *National Climate Change Strategic Plan* provides for mainstreaming of gender into climate activities with a specific emphasis to reduce gender vulnerability to climate change impacts. Complemented by the Ministry of Women's Affairs *Master Plan on Gender and Climate Change 2018-2030* and the *National Strategic Disability plan 2019-2023*, an overarching policy enabling environment for gender equality and disability inclusion exists.

8. Renewable energy: Renewable energy comprises 61 per cent of total energy consumption in Cambodia but less than one quarter of the population has access to clean fuel for cooking⁴. 82 per cent of Cambodia's population (principally women) use traditional biomass such as wood, charcoal or dung for cooking. This contributes to poor indoor air quality.

9. Low Carbon urban transport systems: Cambodia's urban transport sector can be characterised as a private oriented system, with motorcycles the most popular choice. Public transport is principally via bus and rail accounts for less than 10 per cent of passenger movements. Women are more likely to walk, use or pillion on a motorcycle or a use a bus for transport. Cambodia's road transport fatality rate is high and road crashes impose a heavy burden on the national economy. The annual economic cost of road crashes in 2013 was calculated at more than \$300 million and much of the care burden for the injured, due to gender norms falls to women and girls.

10. Sustainable agriculture and natural resources: Almost two-thirds of Cambodia's population depend on agriculture, forest products and fisheries for their livelihoods, and face regular seasonal food shortages⁵. Domestic cooking is the largest driver of wood consumption in Cambodia and a significant contributor to deforestation⁶. Annual river flooding events are exacerbated by deforestation and add to food insecurity. Poor maternal and child nutrition is reflected in the high rate of stunting (32 per cent) of children under 5 years. Food and water shortages

³ [Covid 19, economic crisis and gender equality in Asia](#)

⁴ [The Energy Report](#)

⁵ [Borgen Project \(2018\), Food shortages](#)

⁶ [Promoting sustainable cooking stoves](#)

also drive affected households into drought-related debt that can leave families, particularly women and girls vulnerable to labour exploitation and human trafficking.

11. Green multi-sector urban projects: With 1 in 4 people not able to access safely managed drinking water, and low rates of sanitation and waste collection and recycling, Cambodian women and girls suffer of the harshest drudgery in Southeast Asia⁷. High rates of water borne diseases and illness are attributed to poor water and sanitation infrastructure, and diarrhea is the second leading cause of preventable death for children under 5 years in Cambodia.

12. Markers of gender inequality and exclusion: Women’s workforce participation in Cambodia - 82 per cent is one of the highest in ASEAN⁸ – but women work overwhelmingly in low productivity/low value agriculture and services sector. Rates of gender-based violence are high. A UN multi-country study reporting that rates of economic abuse with higher in Cambodia than in other countries in the study. Noting that this may reflect the notions of male breadwinner, the report argues deep seated gender inequality is revealed through the number of men in the study reporting on participating in gang rape for “fun” or “entertainment”⁹. Lower rates of female enrolment in education, lower rates of pay for women for the same work as men¹⁰, high rates of maternal mortality and childhood stunting, as well as trafficking of women and girls for labour or sexual servitude also speak to deep gender inequality. Cambodia is rated in the top ten of countries with a high prevalence of modern slavery¹¹ and has the lowest rate in the region of women holding bank accounts¹².

13. Intersectional dimensions of inequality and exclusion: Cambodia also has one of the highest rates of disability in the world, caused primarily by preventable illness and disease. While landmine injuries continue occur transport related injuries are now a significant cause of disability¹³. For women with disability, 2 years of schooling is the average compared to 4 years for men with disability¹⁴.

B. Indonesia

14. Renewable energy: Indonesia is listed in the top 5 of the world’s most polluted countries particularly, due to its investment in coal fired power stations, petrol and diesel consumption and extensive land clearing. Widespread use of biomass for cooking fuel in rural areas due to lack of access to electricity, means indoor air quality is also poor. Mortality due to household and ambient air quality is the highest in the region at 112.4 per 100,00¹⁵. Environmental air pollution accounts for 29 per cent of deaths in Indonesia¹⁶ the majority women and children.

15. Low Carbon urban transport systems: 60–80 per cent of ambient air pollutants in metropolitan cities are attributed to vehicular emission, with transport overall contributing to nearly 13 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions in Indonesia. Motor vehicle numbers are expected to double between 2010 and 2035 and traffic congestion in Jakarta is internationally infamous¹⁷. Jakarta reports the worst air quality in all of Southeast Asia –

⁷ Wateraid [Cambodia](#)

⁸ [Womens World Banking](#)

⁹ [Partners for Prevention](#), (2015), “Why do some men use violence against women and how can we prevent it?”.

¹⁰ [Asia Foundation](#)

¹¹ 2018 Global Slavery Index

¹² World Bank, [Global Findex database](#)

¹³ [Disability in Cambodia](#) KaR (2005), “Poverty reduction & Development in Cambodia: Enabling disabled people to play a role”.

¹⁴ [UNESCO](#) (2018), “Education and Disability: Analysis of data for Asia Pacific countries”

¹⁵ [World Bank](#)

¹⁶ [WHO \(2015\) Indonesia Climate and Health Profile](#)

¹⁷ [New York Traffic](#)

poor air quality is associated with negative birth outcomes for women and increased risk of respiratory and cardiovascular disease¹⁸.

16. Mass urban transport systems are not widespread, with motorcycle taxis and buses from small commercial vehicles the most common form of public transport. Gender norms and religious beliefs that limit women's physical contact with men not from their family prevent women from using motorcycle taxis¹⁹.

17. Sustainable agriculture and natural resources: Similar to other ASEAN countries complex patterns of natural resource management by different ethnic groups and between men and women are observed²⁰. A common theme emerging from non-government actors working with women in sustainable agriculture and resource management is the invisibility of women's management and labour in formal policies, practices and consultations. Gender norms around the importance of boys and girls education operate to exclude women where policies for participation in consultation mandate a high school level of education (66 per cent of women have only primary education, compared to 52 per cent of men)²¹. Cultural practices and legal norms about land ownership and men emphasise male heads of households for consultation, compensation or decision making processes excluding not only women's voices in those households, but also female headed households and households with an absent adult male head working overseas²².

18. Green multi-sector urban projects: A presidential regulation in 2017 commits Indonesian cities to reduce waste by 30 per cent and divert 70 per cent of waste to landfill. Formal waste collectors and informal street recycling pickers are part of the existing management ecosystem and gender norms operate to exclude women from the higher value of waste products. Women are confined to scavenging at waste dumps, with both women and men reporting women don't have the ability to lift heavier recycled loads and gender norms determine that women shouldn't or have limited capacity to engage with strangers as required in the street recycling role²³.

19. Gender norms also affect ability to cope with urbanisation pressures and climate impacts. The flooding of Jakarta in January 2020 revealed distinct gender preferences in the clean-up phase with men preferring to be remain in the flooded location or close by to protect property, while for women, who would spend more time in the property, return was affected by concern for health effects from post-flood mould build up.

20. Markers of gender inequality and exclusion: Indonesia records the highest level of female entrepreneurs operating micro, small and medium enterprises²⁴ in the region, yet women's labour force participation is conversely one of the lowest in region. Only a third of women have a bank account, with the majority operating outside the formal financial system, without access to formal credit and protections²⁵. Mobile phone ownership is high at 77 per cent²⁶ although only 20 per cent of women have access to the internet²⁷. 33 per cent of women aged 15-64 years reported instance of gender-based violence in their lifetime²⁸. Indonesia is also reported to have the highest rates

¹⁸ [Climate change and women's health: Impacts and policy directions](#)

¹⁹ [Female Sharia Law Taxi](#)

²⁰ [Fair Enough? Women, men, communities and ecological justice in Indonesia](#)

²¹ [Asia Foundation, Achieving gender justice](#)

²² [Hearing women's voices managing natural resources](#)

²³ [The Role of Gender in Waste Management](#)

²⁴ [OECD](#)

²⁵ [USAid](#)

²⁶ [USAid](#)

²⁷ [Digital literacy and young girls in Indonesia](#)

²⁸ [UNFPA Indonesia](#)

of modern slavery with many women subjects to sex trafficking and forced domestic servitude within Indonesia and to Malaysia²⁹.

21. Intersectional dimensions of inequality and exclusion: Disability affects around 4.3 per cent of the population, with the prevalence higher in women. While women with disability are reported to have 2.3 years of education while men with disability have on average 1.5 years, this does not appear to be a determinant for labour market participation. Men with disability are more likely than women to be employed, it is likely that gender norms about appropriate work for women also operate as an additional exclusionary factor for women with disability³⁰.

C. Lao People's Democratic Republic

22. Renewable energy: Despite high levels of access to electricity from hydropower across Lao PDR, only 5.6 per cent of the population has access to clean fuel for cooking. Firewood remains the predominant fuel for cooking in Laos. Time use studies identify that women spend twice as much time as men, and walk longer distances, collecting firewood for household use³¹. Poor indoor air quality results in women, who spend more time indoors than men, bearing the burden of cardiovascular and respiratory disease at three times the rate of men³².

23. Low Carbon urban transport systems: Private vehicles are the principal public transport in Lao PDR's largest urban centres, with a bus system redevelopment project underway in Vientiane developing better intra-city connectivity and institutional capacity building. Women are reported to be the predominant users of public bus transport³³.

24. Sustainable agriculture and natural resources: 70 per cent of the population rely on natural resources for food security and livelihoods although there are differences in agricultural products and forestry-based activities depending on geography and ethnicity. Malnutrition is a significant issue, Lao PDR recording with the highest rates of childhood stunting (which can impair brain function) in South East Asia.

25. While women have equal rights to land ownership, cultural customs among the various ethnic groups still operate; women comprise only 13 per cent of registered agricultural landholders. Lack of formal land ownership rights impacts ability to participate in formal decision making and access credit.

26. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry is implementing the Strategy for Gender Equality in the Agriculture and the Forestry Sector (2016–2025) with an aim of equality of access for ethnic groups to natural resources, agricultural land, shelter, development funds and technical support. The Vision until 2030 policy has targets for women to hold at least 30 per cent of managerial leadership positions in the sector.

27. Green multi sector urban projects: There are estimated to be around 6000 premature deaths annually from poor quality water, lack of sanitation and waste management across Laos – only 26 per cent of households in urban areas have access to safely managed drinking water³⁴. Regular flooding in urban areas brings increased risks of water borne disease and illegal dumping due to sub-optimal municipal waste management increases contamination threats. Women bear the burden for ill family members.

28. Markers of gender inequality and exclusion: Lao PDR has the highest maternal mortality rate in the region, with non-Lao speaking, rural women at the greatest disadvantage due to lack of access to health services. Gender

²⁹ US Department of State, [Country narratives](#)

³⁰ [Disability what can we learn?](#)

³¹ World Bank [Lao PDR Country Gender Assessment](#)

³² Morawska et al., "Association Between Indoor Air Pollution Measurements and Respiratory Health in Women and Children in Lao PDR", (2010) [International Journal Of Indoor Air and Health](#), 25-35.

³³ ADB [Transport sector gender tool kit](#)

³⁴ [Abundant Water Lao PDR](#)

inequality is reflected in traditional Lao phrases such as “*men are the net, women are the basket; The husband should lead, the wife should follow; A woman without a husband is like a ring without a stone. There is nothing of worth in it*”³⁵. These reinforce stereotypes that men are head of the household and decisionmaker.

29. Women are reported to work longer hours than men, spending seven hours a day on productive tasks and childcare, compared to 5.7 hours spent by men³⁶. Women hold a quarter of the seats in the Lao Parliament, but only 5 per cent of decision-making roles in government³⁷ and only 32 per cent of Lao women hold a bank account³⁸. Young women from ethnic minorities are the majority of irregular migrants to Thailand and China, vulnerable to forced prostitution³⁹. Lao PDR records a high prevalence of modern slavery at 16.8 per cent⁴⁰.

30. Intersectional dimensions of inequality and exclusion: Geographic location and ethnicity compound poverty and inequality. Rural women and girls have a significantly lower literacy rate at 73 per cent than rural men and boys (86 per cent), than urban women and girls (90 per cent) and urban males (96 per cent)⁴¹. Minority ethnic, rural households report the very highest levels of malnutrition and food insecurity, and lack of access to health services. Migration in Lao PDR is female dominated; women constitute 59.2 per cent of internal migrants. Significant numbers of ethnic women, constrained by both their status as women and as members of an ethnic minority, migrate to work in the sex industry. These women often expect to return home to get married and work in the agriculture sector⁴².

D. Malaysia

31. Renewable energy: Clean cooking is accessible to 97 per cent of the population. Renewable energy makes up only 5 per cent of total energy consumption. A policy for self-consumption solar is the only domestic focus and there are no standalone programs to facilitate vulnerable household access.

32. Low Carbon urban transport: 76 per cent of Malaysia’s population is located in urban areas. For women and people with disability, lack of seamless connectivity between modalities and “last mile’ connections, as well as unsafe walking and cycling environments are major barriers to equality and inclusion even where low carbon urban transport has been implemented⁴³. Similar to many other Southeast Asian cities, car ownership is a status symbol so gender norms about women’s roles, perceptions of safety and cultural norms about status that apply to both men and women, operate to discourage public transport use.

33. Sustainable agriculture and natural resources: The replacement of natural forests with oil palm and timber plantations is a feature of the Malaysian landscape⁴⁴. Similar to Indonesia, men and women lose access to forests and land to make way for plantations. Oil palm and timber plantations employ women in lower skill and casual roles, at lower rates of pay and less involvement in workplace decision making⁴⁵. For indigenous women, particularly in East Malaysia, replacement of forests with plantations, reduces availability of forest products traditionally used for housing, clothing, food and medicine.

³⁵ CUSO International submission to [UNWomen VAW](#)

³⁶ [World Bank](#)

³⁷ [UNDP Lao PDR](#)

³⁸ [Women in Lao PDR](#)

³⁹ [ADB Country Gender Assessment \(2012\)](#)

⁴⁰ [Global Slavery Index](#)

⁴¹ 2015 UNESCO Data set

⁴² UNDP [Lao PDR](#)

⁴³ [Transport matters; The Borneo Post](#)

⁴⁴ [High resolution global maps of 21st Century Forest Cover Change](#)

⁴⁵ [Centre for International Forestry Research](#)

34. Green multi sector urban projects: Liveability of cities and waste management are critical issues for Malaysia given rapid urbanisation and increased consumption. Only 24 per cent of waste is recycled⁴⁶ with the remainder in landfill, often dumped in fields and rivers, or destroyed through open burning. Liveability issues such as ability to walk in safety in clean public spaces affect women who spend more time in the home and local neighbourhood. Poor waste management practices are starting to impact water security⁴⁷. Failure of water security mechanisms has the potential to negate the gains made by safe piped water which significantly alleviated women’s time poverty given their gender roles as managers and major users of household water.

35. A national energy efficiency action plan was promulgated in 2015, covering commercial, industrial and domestic usage. Energy efficiency is rated at 4.2 per cent, lower than the global average of 5 per cent. The focus of the policy is to increase the uptake of energy efficient appliances as well as improvements in building energy efficiency. There are no specific loans or programs to encourage women or vulnerable households to transition to more energy efficient dwellings or appliances. An industry driven green building accreditation scheme is in operation.

36. Markers of gender inequality and exclusion: Workforce participation rates for women are relatively low for the region at 54 per cent⁴⁸. Despite the highest household internet usage in the region, half of female headed households have no IT equipment or connection to the internet. Child marriage rates have increased – driven by poverty and cultural norms⁴⁹.

37. Gender norms mean women are overwhelmingly the caregivers for household or family members with long term disability. Strong links have been identified between the provision of such care and poverty⁵⁰.

38. Intersectional dimensions of inequality and exclusion: A race-based affirmative action policy to address inter-ethnic social and economic disparities has operated in Malaysia for 50 years. Although inter-ethnic income differentials have significantly reduced⁵¹, pockets of poverty persist for all races. For indigenous Malaysians, 13 per cent of the population, poverty rates are reported to be significantly higher than the national average⁵² and indigenous women and children invisible in national statistics, as they are reported within a larger cohort⁵³.

39. Migrant workers from Indonesia, Myanmar and Nepal are approximately 20 per cent of the labour force. Poverty among this group is reported to be higher and while leave, medical coverage and working hour regulation is mandated by law, there is limited enforcement. Female migrants make up about 20 per cent of the migrant cohort overall, working often as domestic helpers. These female workers are specifically excluded from the protections of the employment law⁵⁴.

E. Myanmar

40. Renewable energy: Only 66 per cent of Myanmar’s population has access to electricity, and only 13 per cent of households have access to clean fuel for cooking⁵⁵, despite the overall national energy consumption containing a high percentage of clean energy (61 per cent). Supply reliability is an issue with regular service interruptions - diesel

⁴⁶ [The Edge markets](#)

⁴⁷ [Selangor Water Crisis](#)

⁴⁸ Thee Edge, [“Retain women in the workforce”](#)

⁴⁹ [South China Morning Post](#)

⁵⁰ [National Health and Morbidity Survey \(2019\)](#)

⁵¹ [Beyond stereotypes, understand ethnic inequality malaysia](#)

⁵² [Statement by UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty & Human Rights](#)

⁵³ Khor, et al “Do Not Neglect The Indigenous Peoples When Reporting Health and Nutrition Issues of the Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Populations in Malaysia” [British Medical Journal](#).

⁵⁴ [Statement by UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty & Human Rights](#)

⁵⁵ [The Energy Report](#)

generators are the primary back up power supply. Lack of reliable access to electricity curtails women’s freedoms and limits their movements given gender norms that assign cooking and providing food to family, to women.

41. Low carbon urban transport: Outdoor air quality in Myanmar’s largest city Yangon is poor largely due to increasing traffic⁵⁶ combined with pollution resulting from agricultural burning and industrial activity in other major cities such as Mandalay. Public transport is provided by petrol and diesel municipal bus services with women reporting crowding, limited service and concerns about safety⁵⁷.

42. Green multi-sector urban projects: Yangon and other cities in Myanmar are under pressure from increasing rural migration. With an additional 7 million people expected to live in Yangon by 2050, informal settlements are growing, and sanitation, water and waste management systems are strained. Women are the largest resident group in these informal settlements⁵⁸, drawn to work in the industrial zones that operate in the outskirts of the major population centres. Low cost social housing is limited.

43. Sustainable agriculture and natural resources: Small scale agriculture, shifting cultivation, commercial logging and fuel wood for household cooking have resulted in Myanmar recording the third highest deforestation rate in the world⁵⁹. In addition, charcoal harvesting for cooking and sale has resulted in significant mangrove degradation in coastal areas, while informal tenure and community ownership of land impacts women’s ability to manage resources to meet their food and livelihood needs⁶⁰.

44. Extractive industries in many ethnic border areas have contributed to or exacerbated conflict in regional areas and have limited livelihoods for subsistence farmers. While men more easily obtain formal and informal work in mines, the economic transition to a cash economy places women and girls at risk of poverty and subsequent exploitation from transient workers. Myanmar has a prevalence of modern slavery of 11 per 1000 – this includes young women and girls from minority ethnic groups in rural areas forced into marriage or prostitution often across the border to neighbouring countries⁶¹.

45. Markers of gender inequality and exclusion: While Myanmar’s constitution guarantees gender equality, it has the lowest female participation rate in Parliament in all the Mekong countries⁶². Traditional views about women’s role being in the home are commonly held across all the ethnic groups in Myanmar⁶³, and women’s tolerance to men’s violence within marriage is the highest in the region⁶⁴. Half of the female working age population works⁶⁵, although at lower wages. The International Office for Migration reasons the gender pay gap is driven by culturally determined views about what is suitable work for women and girls.

46. Peace is not yet sustained and women, children and the poor in conflict-affected areas are some of the most vulnerable. Large movements of people within and across Myanmar’s borders is a regular feature, with a census in 2014 recording that over 11 million residents (approximately 20 per cent of the population had migrated internally or externally)⁶⁶.

⁵⁶ Aung, WY et al, (2019), [Air Quality Myanmar](#)

⁵⁷ [Yangon women fight sexual harassment on buses](#)

⁵⁸ [The emergence and growth of slums](#)

⁵⁹ [Asia Dialogue - Deforestation Myanmar](#)

⁶⁰ [Myanmar Land Rights program accelerating gender equality](#)

⁶¹ [Global Slavery Index](#)

⁶² [Myanmar Sustainability Strategy](#)

⁶³ Women’s Organisation Network, [Voices of Myanmar Women](#)

⁶⁴ [UNWomen](#), Myanmar Country Focus

⁶⁵ [Census, Women's workforce participation](#)

⁶⁶ [IOM](#), About Myanmar

47. Internet use in Myanmar is lower than most other ASEAN countries, with less than half the population using the internet. A clear gender distinction is evident with the rate of women’s access and usage of the internet only 60 per cent of that for men⁶⁷.

48. Intersectional dimensions of inequality and exclusion: Conflict and ethnicity is at the heart of intersectional inequality in Myanmar. The migration phenomenon noted above is a result of conflict and poverty with many ethnic men and women reporting targeting, discrimination and exclusion in their home villages because of ethnicity, gender or socio-economic status⁶⁸. Women from ethnic minorities in conflict affected areas have lower rates of literacy and are at risk of trafficking for sexual servitude and forced labour⁶⁹.

F. Philippines

49. Renewable energy: Renewable energy comprises 40.7 per cent of total energy consumption in the Philippines, with ambitious targets to increase this laid out in the National Renewable Energy Program (NREP)⁷⁰. There is no reference to gender or women in the program.

50. Only 45 per cent of the population has access to clean cooking⁷¹, despite 93 per cent of the population having access to electricity⁷². This contributes to poor indoor air quality, and the health impacts are felt by women and children who spend more of their time indoors than men⁷³.

51. Low Carbon urban transport systems: The majority of the Philippines’s transport infrastructure is in Manila⁷⁴, with the rest of the archipelago reliant on private transport. Women report sexual harassment in public spaces and around public transport hubs as a regular occurrence⁷⁵.

52. Sustainable agriculture and natural resources: Agriculture remains a significant employment sector with 33 per cent of men and 17 per cent of women working across agriculture and natural resource management and harvesting⁷⁶. Deterioration of soils and loss of biodiversity are attributed to over-cultivation, poor land management and industrialization⁷⁷. An FAO study found women farmers did not equally benefit from agricultural investment or extension opportunities due to societal and cultural norms prevalent across the country that applied gender-neutral practices and approaches⁷⁸. In addition societal and cultural norms regarding the role of women and men operate to limit women’s roles in formal decision making, for example, that the husband is the traditional head of the family, thereby having the first chance to apply for a land title⁷⁹.

53. Green multi sector urban projects: Half of the Philippines population is urbanised with predictions this will increase to 84 per cent by 2050⁸⁰. Only half the urban population have access to safely managed drinking water

⁶⁷ Statista (2019)

⁶⁸ [Ethnicity and Conflict in Myanmar](#)

⁶⁹ [Hardships of Ethnic Women](#)

⁷⁰ [Renewable energy and energy security in the Philippines](#)

⁷¹ IRENA Energy Profile: [Philippines](#)

⁷² [ADB basic statistics](#)

⁷³ WHO 2017 [Household air pollution](#)

⁷⁴ ADB 2017 [Transport connectivity](#)

⁷⁵ [UNWomen Philippines](#)

⁷⁶ [FAO \(2018\) Country Gender Assessment of Agriculture](#)

⁷⁷ UN 2019 [Balancing Act for Philippine farmers](#)

⁷⁸ [FAO \(2018\) Country Gender Assessment of Agriculture](#)

⁷⁹ FAO (2018) above

⁸⁰ [UNHabitat](#)

services and sanitation services⁸¹, and informal settlements are a feature of urban fringe areas, comprising around 1 per cent of the population⁸². Women in these settlements are more vulnerable to sexual and domestic violence⁸³.

54. Similar to other Southeast Asian countries, growing volumes of waste due to increasing consumption and demand for pre-packaged goods, together with lack of recycling, are contributing to pollution and environmental degradation. Recycling or “picking” of waste occurs with women operating around 30 per cent of “junk” or recycling shops, dealing with goods at the lower end of the recycling value chain⁸⁴.

55. Markers of gender equality and exclusion: The Philippines is the highest performing ASEAN country in the World Economic Forum’s Gender Gap Report (the WEF Report), ranked 13th out of 149 countries. Principally due to its empowerment of women in politics, women are also represented in civil service decision making roles. Overall attitudes to women’s empowerment within the family are also consistently higher than elsewhere in the region⁸⁵ and 81 per cent of women aged 15-49 report making their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations and contraception⁸⁶. However the Philippines Commission for Women notes societal norms dictate that “men are the leaders, pursuers, providers, and take on dominant roles in society while women are nurturers, men’s companions and supporters, and take on subordinate roles in society”⁸⁷.

56. Gender norms operate as a barrier to workforce participation for women in the Philippines. The labour force participation rate for women aged 15+ is 46 per cent⁸⁸ and a Department of Labour and Employment surveys reveal that 30 per cent of working women report that household or family duties prevent them participating in the labour market⁸⁹. 55 percent of married women and girls aged 15-49 years report experiencing intimate partner violence in the preceding twelve months⁹⁰. Nationwide it is estimated only 30 per cent of such assaults are reported, with women in minority ethnic or religious groups even less likely to report such crimes⁹¹.

57. Intersectional dimensions of inequality and exclusion: Large pockets of inequality remain with around 25 per cent of the population living below the poverty line, including 10 million women, principally indigenous women and those living in conflict affected areas⁹². Child labour also affects children in poor families with up to 20 per cent of children aged 5-17 years working. Boys represent about 60 per cent of child labourers⁹³. The Philippines is also regarded as a hub for child sex exploitation including cyber exploitation with poverty and being out of school as risk factors⁹⁴. Around half of people with disability are recording as being in work with men more likely to work than women⁹⁵.

⁸¹ ADB [Basic Statistics 2020](#)

⁸² [UNHabitat](#)

⁸³ World Bank [Philippines Urbanization Review](#)

⁸⁴ [Gender in Waste Management](#)

⁸⁵ World Bank Gender indicators

⁸⁶ World Bank [DataBank](#)

⁸⁷ OECD [Social institutions and gender index](#)

⁸⁸ World Bank [DataBank](#)

⁸⁹ [East Asia Forum](#)

⁹⁰ [UNWomen Violence against Women database Philippines](#)

⁹¹ OECD [gender index](#)

⁹² UNDP Philippines, [Country Information](#)

⁹³ [UNICEF](#)

⁹⁴ UNICEF above

⁹⁵ [Employment of Persons with Disability](#)

G. In summary

58. The unique economic development and ethnic and cultural diversity of each country adds to the complexity of gender inequality and vulnerability assessments. Indonesia, Malaysia, and Philippines have the highest rates of GDP per capita, underpinned by high rates of urbanisation. The correlation between higher GDP and gender equality is reflected at the top line gender and social statistics; the higher GDP is associated with lower rates of maternal mortality and higher female education achievement and literacy. It is the deeper detail though where disparities emerge – for example contrast the increasing prevalence of obesity in the female population aged 18+ in Malaysia and the rates of stunting for children under 5 years (associated with lack of maternal/child nutrition) in Lao PDR.

III. INTEGRATING GENDER AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IN THE ACGF GRP

59. This section identifies gender and social inclusion entry points in the four priority areas for investment under the ACGF GRP.

Renewable energy

60. Large scale renewable energy projects provide opportunities for direct employment for women and for men. Quotas for female recruitment, together with gender sensitive workplaces including part time work, separate male and female toilets, and PPE designed for women's body shapes all contribute to a gender equality workplace and successful retention of staff.

61. Land acquisition processes and project design for large scale renewable energy projects are also opportunities to advance women's participation in consultation and decision-making. Preliminary decisions about projects, their location, related land acquisition transactions and operation of infrastructure are mostly the domain of men, as gender norms and cultural practices mean women may not hold formal title to land, or authority to negotiate, or have decision making roles in local authorities negotiating compensation. Yet women engage with land and access energy in ways different to men.

62. From a consumer perspective, energy access improves productivity. Routine domestic drudgery can be alleviated, and time taken to perform menial tasks reduced. The World Bank calculated that switching to an improved cookstove can save an average 4.7 hours per week in fuel collection and 25 minutes less to cook a meal⁹⁶. This has significant health benefits for women and their children, particularly as it removes indoor air pollutants. Additionally, time efficient cooking appliances provide more time for income earning activities, study by the women/children or leisure. Pro poor, gender sensitive subsidies can remove barriers to electricity access⁹⁷. Combined with low/no collateral credit programs to support the purchase of energy efficient appliances including televisions and smart phones, renewable energy projects can reduce the costs of energy access and use, also improve access to information for women and their families. Digital payment systems also support increased digital literacy and financial inclusion.

63. Employment in renewable energy infrastructure construction extends beyond construction to operations and maintenance. With gender sensitive PPE and workplace facilities, supportive management can lead changes to traditional gender norms on appropriate work roles for women. Traineeships help construction companies develop their pool of skilled workers, useful beyond the initial construction project the worker is trained in. Scholarships, in partnership with the private sector and local universities, combined with paid internships or alternatively traineeships during project construction work, offer pathways for economic empowerment for individual women. Internationally the employment of women in the renewable energy workforce has already accelerated past the traditional oil and gas workforce⁹⁸

⁹⁶ World Bank [Databank](#)

⁹⁷ Gender and Renewable Energy [Entry Points](#)

⁹⁸ [Renewable Energy, A Gender Perspective](#)

and gender sensitive recruitment and employment policies will propel the sector in Southeast Asia to gender parity in employment.

64. Opportunities for women’s entrepreneurship activities related to renewable energy abound. Sale of solar panels or energy efficient appliances are one example where financial barriers to market entry can be removed or smoothed to encourage female entrepreneurs. Business skills training for women and disadvantaged groups is also an entry points for economic empowerment of women and poverty alleviation. Other entry points such as education for construction workforces on sexual health, gender equality and people trafficking.

Low Carbon urban transport systems

65. Transport systems provide a pathway to empowerment for women and girls, where the transport meets the timing of their need for mobility and is safe and accessible. Separately mapping men’s and women’s existing movements and speculative future movements in proposed new modalities, gives an insight into the different ways women and men, and people with disability, currently engage with public transport and identify how they may want to use public transport in the future. Women tend to use public transport during off peak times, when there are fewer services available, they may make “chained” trips with multiple purposes for example in one trip taking children to school, attending work and shopping for food. Considering these aspects provides critical data to inform gender sensitive and inclusive service design, as well as pricing policy, leading to improved efficiency and sustainability.

66. Participatory methods in consultation (such as female specific consultation and quotas for overall female participation in consultation) inform designers and operators of the different user needs for accessibility, affordability, safety and appropriate timetabling and enhance sustainability of the design. Built infrastructure such as ramps, rest benches and secure lighting to enhance security, and ticketing systems that provide low cost multiple short trips, as well as women only carriages and female staff can all address women’s urban travel needs and those of vulnerable groups.

67. Entrepreneurship opportunities can be created by reserving a percentage of high traffic vendor spaces in urban transport infrastructure for entrepreneurship or community activities for women and disadvantaged groups.

Sustainable agriculture and natural resources

68. The use of natural resources is determined by who can access them and who can manage them. Across Southeast Asia women have less access to formal management of land and natural resources.

69. Supporting women’s improved land tenure security and resource access – through participation in resource management committees or local governance regimes, as well as access to processing and marketing opportunities encourages women and men to remain with family and networks and reduces the vulnerability across the region to migration and its related threats.

70. Ensuring equal access to training on cultivation of resources improves the ecosystem and can provide a buffer for food security challenges (eg planting mangroves encourages more fish) as well as identify new income sources. Additional value can be captured, through providing opportunities to understand and connect to ecotourism initiatives or logistic supply chains.

71. Targets and quotas for female participation in institutional natural resource managers or technical roles are an entry point and their successful implementation in Philippines Forestry Department has changed stereotypes about appropriate roles for women⁹⁹.

Green Multi Sector Urban Projects

72. Access to safe water and modern hygiene and sanitation infrastructure is limited for the urban poor. Up to 100 million people in urban and rural South East Asia are without sanitation, with the largest cohorts in Laos and Cambodia. Improving access to safely managed water and sanitation will have an immediate benefit in improving health outcomes, including for women who need it in ways different to men (pregnancy and menstruation).

73. Even in cities with well-established urban infrastructure increasing urbanisation is stretching capacity and resulted in a resurgence in public health issues from water related diseases such as dengue and leptospirosis¹⁰⁰. Improved water management and sanitation will improve health outcomes and alleviate women's time poverty reducing the burden to care for ill family members.

74. The ADB operational plan for accelerating gender equality also identifies sectoral gender entry points¹⁰¹.

⁹⁹ FAO, [Gender Assessment of Agriculture & Rural Sector Philippines](#)

¹⁰⁰ [Institute Pasteur Rise in disease](#)

¹⁰¹ [Accelerating Gender Equality Operational Plan](#)