

Strengthening the resilience of ecosystems and populations in four regional hubs in Northern Mauritania

ANNEX 8

GENDER ASSESSMENT AND GENDER ACTION PLAN



Annex 8: Gender Action Plan

Acronyms and abbreviations

| | |
|-------|--|
| CEDAW | Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women |
| EbA | Ecosystem-based adaptation |
| FGM | Female genital mutilation |
| GBV | Gender-based violence |
| PMU | Project Management Unit |

1. Part 1: Gender Analysis

1.1. Introduction

The overall objective of the 'Strengthening the resilience of ecosystems and populations' project is to contribute to improved resilience of local and vulnerable communities in four regional hubs in northern Mauritania. To fulfil the project's design requirements, this gender analysis was undertaken in accordance with GCF guidelines to inform the project design on gender barriers, constraints and opportunities for women to benefit from the project's activities. In addition, the Gender Action Plan (GAP) will ensure women and other marginalised groups are included in the project's activities. The GAP is based on the proposed project's logical framework and is focused on avoiding and minimising the negative impacts of the project's activities on local communities and maximising the positive impacts and social benefits, particularly for women and marginalised groups.

1.2. Methodology

This gender analysis primarily used qualitative data collection methods, including informant interviews with multiple stakeholders and partners (See Annex 7: stakeholder engagement plan) as well as mixed community consultations. The method involving open community meetings proved particularly effective as it allowed for the provision of information by individuals through open discussions, accompanied by immediate expressions of approval or disapproval and corroborated by testimonies or cases from other group members. This facilitated an accurate representation of the gender-related challenges faced by their respective communities. The gender analysis has also made use of: i) a desktop review of available literature; ii) gender equality studies conducted by research institutions and donor agencies; and iii) details made available by the government of Mauritania. The questions posed to the community members focused on the lived experiences of individuals and communities regarding the effects of climate change and their gendered responses to these challenges. This data collection method was preceded and supplemented by a review of existing literature on gender dynamics and equality in Mauritania — particularly within the rural and agricultural sectors — to establish a framework aligned with the project's objectives and anticipated impact. The findings of the gender analysis (Part 1) form the basis of the GAP (part 2).

1.3. Women's rights in Mauritania

Mauritania has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and its legal system includes four areas of law that impact women differently: Islamic law; Customary African law; Customary Arabic-Bedouin and Berber law; and (modern) Civil law. Women's rights in marriage remain uncertain, particularly under Islamic and customary African law.

In 2005, Mauritania ratified the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol)¹, pledging to promote women's rights and eliminate violence against them. However, at the national level, no comprehensive law addressing violence against women exists to date. Specific laws address particular forms of violence, such as rape and female genital mutilation, but offer no legal protection or recourse for women experiencing other types of violence, like spousal abuse and sexual harassment. The absence of a comprehensive legal framework

¹ United Nations. 2003. Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (The Maputo Protocol). Available at: <https://www.un.org/shestandsforspeace/sites/www.un.org/shestandsforspeace/files/protocolontherightsofwomen.pdf>

to safeguard women and combat violence, coupled with cultural acceptance of harmful practices against women, has perpetuated violence against women in the country².

The high illiteracy rate among women often leaves them unaware of their rights, and the distribution of information concerning women's rights remains inadequate.

1.4. General situation of women in households

Globally, progress has been made regarding women's rights; however, substantial effort is needed to achieve gender equality in Mauritania. In 2021, the Gender Development Index for Mauritania was 0.890 which categorises Mauritania in group five, the lowest group that comprises countries with low equality in HDI achievements between women and men. In addition, the Gender Inequality Index was 0.632 which ranks Mauritania 161st out of 170 countries³.

The legal age for marriage is 18 for both women and men (Personal Code, Art. 6)⁴, with child marriage being prohibited and punishable by imprisonment and fines (Juvenile Justice Code, Art. 41)⁵. However, child marriage is widespread in the country, especially among rural, economically disadvantaged, and less educated girls who are married for their families' social and financial benefit. Nationally, there has been a trend of women marrying later. Some women in the age bracket 40-49 married at the average age of 16, whereas women in the 25-29-year age bracket married at 19. There is also an increase in age for the birth of the first child⁶. These changes are closely linked to the increase in the level of women's education. However, women of reproductive age (15-49 years) often face barriers with respect to their sexual and reproductive health and rights: from 2019-2021, only 29% of women had their family planning needs met with modern methods, and 37% of women aged 20-24 years were married or in a union before age 18⁷. The adolescent birth rate is 78 per 1,000 women aged 15-19 as of 2021⁸, up from 71 per 1,000 in 2011⁹.

Under the Personal Status Code, marriage is defined as a union between a man and a woman and requires the consent of both parties (Art. 1)¹⁰. However, consent is loosely defined, with "the silence of a young girl" considered as consent (Art. 9)¹¹. According to the law, a legal marriage comprises the bride and groom, the guardian or the *weli* of the bride (who serves to represent her in concluding the marriage contract), the dowry or the *sadaq*, and the consent of both parties (Art. 5)¹². Polygamy is legal, with men allowed up to four wives with the consent of existing spouses (Art. 28)¹³. Polygamy is rarely practiced among Moor communities but is prevalent among other ethnic groups in the country. Under customary law, which is not recognised by the state, a woman's first marriage requires parental consent, and Muslim women are expected to marry within their faith, whereas Muslim men do not face the same restriction. Cultural taboos against the mixing of social classes or inter-caste unions result in marriages among members within the same clan¹⁴. The husband is considered the head of the household

² Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, *Concluding observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of Mauritania*, 2014

³ UNDP. 2022. Human Development Report 2021/2022, Available at: https://hdr.undp.org/system/files/documents/global-report-document/hdr2021-22pdf_1.pdf

⁴ Government of Mauritania. 2001. Personal Status Code. Available at:

<https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/MONOGRAPH/96689/114337/F-2050531859/MRT-96689.pdf>

⁵ Government of Mauritania. 2001. Juvenile Justice Code. Available at: <https://features.hrw.org/features/african-union/files/Mauritania%20-%20Ordonnance%20n%202005-015%20portant%20protection%20pe%CC%81nale%20de%20%E2%80%99enfant.pdf>

⁶ Study on Demographics and Health in Mauritania (ESDM)

⁷ Republic of Mauritania. 2022. Demographic and Health Survey 2019-2021. Available at: <https://www.dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/SR274/SR274.pdf>

⁸ World Bank. 2021. Adolescent birth rate. Available at: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.ADO.TFRT?locations=MR>

⁹ <https://data.unwomen.org/country/mauritania>

¹⁰ Government of Mauritania. 2001. Personal Status Code. Available at:

<https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/MONOGRAPH/96689/114337/F-2050531859/MRT-96689.pdf>

¹¹ Government of Mauritania. 2001. Personal Status Code. Available at:

<https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/MONOGRAPH/96689/114337/F-2050531859/MRT-96689.pdf>

¹² Government of Mauritania. 2001. Personal Status Code. Available at:

<https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/MONOGRAPH/96689/114337/F-2050531859/MRT-96689.pdf>

¹³ Government of Mauritania. 2001. Personal Status Code. Available at:

<https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/MONOGRAPH/96689/114337/F-2050531859/MRT-96689.pdf>

¹⁴ Emery, Robert, *Cultural Sociology of Divorce: An Encyclopaedia*, SAGE Publications, Virginia, 2013.

(Personal Status Code, Art. 1)¹⁵ and is the legal authority of the household who can make decisions on behalf of family without the wife's consent¹⁶.

Although women and men both have inheritance rights, women's entitlements differs considerable from men's. Under Sharia law, a woman inherits only half of what a man does (Personal Status Code, Art. 253-259)¹⁷. Accordingly, a daughter may inherit only half of the property entitled to her male sibling¹⁸. When a family has only daughters and no sons, the inheritance of the deceased father is first distributed among his brothers and other members of the family and the remainder to his daughters and his wife¹⁹. Women face additional challenges in retaining property (both land and non-land assets) in divorce and widowhood, where their right to ownership of assets is often limited to objects related to women's work and daily life such as cooking and cleaning utensils (Personal Code, Art. 73-74)²⁰. In some cases, the family of the deceased father is granted full custody of the child (rather than to the living mother), allowing his family sole rights over the child's inheritance.

1.5. *Division of labour*

Rural women play an essential role in agriculture. Although only 25.4% of women in the country are classified as employed, many more participate in unpaid work in the informal sector and agriculture. Women are responsible for vital tasks related to food provision and household maintenance. They are involved in all phases of the agricultural cycle, from planting and weeding to the harvesting, conservation and maintenance of fields, storage, processing and marketing of produce. Women play an important role in market gardening and in milk product processing. In the fishery sector, women also contribute to the processing and marketing of fish and fish products. Women participate in almost all aspects of agricultural and livestock activities, while men primarily focus on land clearing and cultivating specific crops such as wetland rice. Men also take care of the herding and watering of large animals, while the curing of skins, the processing of milk products, and the care of small ruminants and poultry is the task of women. In addition, women undertake household tasks such as food processing and preparation, fetching water and collecting wood. Women are also the practitioners of traditional medicine. Although women in certain areas were traditionally responsible for rice cultivation, wetland rice cultivation is now predominantly handled by men, with women mainly focusing on irrigation, storage and marketing. In some areas, both men and women participate in the construction of small dams. Major decisions on land transfer and agricultural investments are generally made by the men in the extended family. While women generally do not own land or livestock, they usually make decisions regarding their work responsibilities and the income, derived from their activities.

1.6. *Impact of Climate Change*

As stated in Mauritania's National Adaptation Programme of Action to Climate Change (2004)²¹ and, more recently, in the country's first Nationally Determined Contribution (2021)²², climate change impacts men and women differently, with women often disproportionately affected by adverse impacts. For example, the increasing frequency of drought in Mauritania results in women having to walk longer distances for water and firewood or develop new income-generating activities, such as weaving and tie-dyeing. Men and women have different access to financial, social, or political resources and generally hold distinct roles and responsibilities within households. Women tend to balance domestic tasks such as cooking, cleaning, and childrearing in addition to agricultural responsibilities. It is common for women to maintain kitchen gardens for household consumption, while men maintain cash crops. Finally, because of gender inequalities with regards to financial assets, women tend to be responsible for poultry

¹⁵ Government of Mauritania. 2001. Personal Status Code. Available at:

<https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/MONOGRAPH/96689/114337/F-2050531859/MRT-96689.pdf>

¹⁶ OECD. 2019. Gender, Institutions and Development Database. Available at: <https://www.genderindex.org/wp-content/uploads/files/datasheets/2019/MR.pdf>

¹⁷ Government of Mauritania. 2001. Personal Status Code. Available at:

<https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/MONOGRAPH/96689/114337/F-2050531859/MRT-96689.pdf>

¹⁸ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, *Concluding observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of Mauritania*, 2014

¹⁹ Anwar, Zainah, *A Global Report on Equality in the Muslim Family: Mauritania*, 2010

²⁰ Government of Mauritania. 2001. Personal Status Code. Available at:

<https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/MONOGRAPH/96689/114337/F-2050531859/MRT-96689.pdf>

²¹ Republic of Mauritania. 2004. National Adaptation Programme of Action to Climate Change. Available at:

<https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/napa/mau01e.pdf>

²² MEDD. 2021. Contribution Déterminée au Niveau National (CDN): Mauritania. Available at:

https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/NDC/2022-06/CDN-actualis%C3%A9%202021_%20Mauritania.pdf

and small ruminants, whereas men care for larger and more financially advantageous livestock such as cattle. Consequently, men and women tend to experience the effects of climate change differently.

The West African Sahel has experienced periods of long-term decline in rainfall that was intensified by shorter periods of severe drought. In addition to the high human toll, this series of droughts contributed to a decrease in species diversification, tree density and plant coverage throughout the region. Climate variability challenges dependence on natural resources for sustenance, particularly when alternative livelihood options are limited in rural areas. Insufficient water sources force women and girls to travel farther for water, exposing them to potential harm, violence and the social repercussions resulting from sexual assault. The health concerns that arise from carrying heavy water containers over long distances include dehydration, back and spinal injuries, fatigue, dehydration, and reproductive complications. This extra work also detracts from time that women would otherwise spend on productive activities, which sometimes results in decreased agricultural productivity, household food security, and overall household income. This problem is termed 'time poverty' and highlights the ways women experience less free time available than men as they are often involved in very time-consuming non-remunerated household work on top of outside work to supplement their household income. This means that they may have less flexibility to diversify their activities far from the home or participate in projects designed to improve their resilience. To compensate for this time allocation problem with regards to water collection, some households assign girl children the responsibility of collecting water, forcing them to leave school and contribute to household labour, thereby perpetuating social inequity. In addition, women are often excluded as climate change resources prioritise information dissemination methods accommodate men's abilities and needs. However, emerging literature on women's adaptation strategies, such as new technologies and climate-smart agriculture practices and collective action and information sharing strategies, emphasises the importance of recognising women's knowledge and preferred ways of learning across diverse contexts. Development agencies have started incorporating these considerations into their programme initiatives²³.

1.7. Access to land

Land rights are a particular concern in Mauritania, as few women own land. In the traditional economy, women, youth, and the servant class do not possess land. Decisions on and-use are generally determined by men and the elderly. Land governance in Mauritania represents a major component of sustainable development and poverty reduction. Implementing effective land policies is crucial for reducing poverty by stimulating economic prosperity and fostering self-sufficiency. Viable and inclusive land governance stimulates the consolidation of social peace and the inclusion of women and the poor in an open discussion about access to land security. Although many Mauritanian women desire land ownership, only 2,146 of 27,000 title deeds registered at the national level, or slightly less than 8%, are held by women (Table 1). Despite women's limited access to permits and land titles, authorities have not yet adopted an affirmative action policy that promotes increasing women's access to land. Investigations conducted with the help of officials and an analysis of the Land Tenure Office database showed that most of the data had not yet been disaggregated by gender. However, in 2015, the Land Tenure Office made efforts to allow data disaggregation by identifying names by gender, notably creating a database that includes gender as a key variable²⁴.

²³ McOmber, C. (2020). "Women and Climate Change in the Sahel", West African Papers, No. 27, OECD Publishing, Paris

²⁴ World Bank. 2015. Women's access to land in Mauritania: A case study in preparation for the COP. Available at: <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/pt/224621467991907919/pdf/100049-WP-PUBLIC-Box393216B-Women-s-Access-to-Land-in-Mauritania.pdf>

Table 1: A breakdown of access to land ownership in Mauritania, disaggregated by gender.

| Titles | Total | Disaggregated by Gender | | Percentage by Gender | |
|---|--------|-------------------------|--------|----------------------|-------|
| Permis d'Occuper (PO; occupying permit) | 38,574 | Women | 3,864 | Women | 10% |
| | | Men | 34,710 | Men | 90% |
| Official Deeds | 27,075 | Women | 2,146 | Women | 7.9% |
| | | Men | 24,876 | Men | 91.9% |
| Urban | 27,003 | Women | 2,143 | Women | 7.9% |
| | | Men | 24,860 | Men | 92.1% |
| Rural | 72 | Women | 3 | Women | 4.2% |
| | | Men | 16 | Men | 22.2% |

Source: Directorate of Land and State Assets

1.8. Access to and control over resources

In Mauritania, considerable gender disparities exist in men's and women's access to and control over resources, largely as a result of entrenched socio-cultural norms and legal frameworks. Women in rural areas have restricted access to land, water and credit, despite legal provisions recognising their rights. For example, less than 15% of women in Mauritania own land, and even fewer have formal land titles, which limits their ability to access agricultural inputs and loans²⁵. This gender gap is compounded by traditional customs that prioritise male inheritance of land and resources, further marginalising women's participation in agricultural productivity and economic decision-making²⁶.

A case study from the southern region of Mauritania highlights these challenges, where men largely dominate decision-making processes related to natural resources, including water management and grazing rights. This control affects women's ability to engage in productive activities such as farming or livestock rearing, which are necessary for household income and food security. However, gender-sensitive initiatives, such as the World Bank-funded Community-Based Watershed Management Project²⁷, have demonstrated some progress in empowering women by improving their access to water for irrigation and livestock²⁸.

1.9. Gender and agricultural livelihoods

Agriculture in Mauritania is characterised by gender-specific roles, with men and women participating in different tasks within the sector. Women in rural areas are involved in subsistence farming, food processing and livestock management, all of which contribute to household food security²⁹. However, they face obstacles in fully participating in and benefiting from the agricultural economy. Women make up nearly 43% of the agricultural labour force, yet they have limited access to land, financial resources, training and agricultural inputs. Less than 10% of women have access to formal agricultural extension services, which limits their capacity to improve productivity and resilience to climate impacts. These

²⁵ World Bank. 2021. Gender Equality: A Necessary Condition for Promoting Inclusive Growth in Mauritania Available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2021/06/01/gender-equality-a-necessary-condition-for-promoting-inclusive-growth-in-mauritania>

²⁶ World Bank. 2015. Women's access to land in Mauritania: a case study in preparation for the COP. Available at: <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/224621467991907919/women-s-access-to-land-in-mauritania-a-case-study-in-preparation-for-the-cop>

²⁷ World Bank. 2005. Community Based Watershed Management Project. Available at: <https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/project-detail/P087670>

²⁸ World Bank. 2021. Gender Equality: A Necessary Condition for Promoting Inclusive Growth in Mauritania Available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2021/06/01/gender-equality-a-necessary-condition-for-promoting-inclusive-growth-in-mauritania>

²⁹ FAO. n/d. Role of women in agriculture. Available at: <https://www.fao.org/4/v9324e/v9324e01.htm>

disparities create a gap in the agricultural sector, reducing women's opportunities in commercial farming and agribusiness³⁰.

Instances in the Brakna region demonstrates the challenges and opportunities for women in agriculture. Women's cooperatives engaged in rice production have benefited from increased access to irrigation and farming technologies, resulting in higher yields and income³¹. However, limited access to land tenure and markets remains a considerable challenge for these women. Further interventions are required to ensure equitable access to resources, training, and decision-making in the agricultural sector, which is necessary for improving food security and reducing poverty in Mauritania.

1.10. *Participation of women in politics*

Under the Constitution, women and men have equal rights to hold public office. The government has instituted several measures to ensure and increase the participation of women in the public and political space. One such measure is the electoral law introduced in 2006 that requires a minimum of 20% of all municipal council seats to be reserved for women. In 2012, the country reformed the electoral law to add 51 new seats to the National Assembly, of which 20 are reserved for women. In 2013, the government introduced financial incentives for political parties that nominate more women than required by the quota for national assembly seats. As of February 2021, only 20.3% of seats in parliament were held by women.

In 2015, women members of parliament (MPs) in Mauritania created an action plan to advance gender equality. This plan followed a training session in Nouakchott on strategic planning on the work of the women's caucus in parliament involving approximately 40 female MPs, civil society organisations and government officials. The workshop, jointly organised by the parliamentary women's group REFPAM, IPU and the National Assembly, included training on frameworks for protecting women's rights. Priority areas for 2016 include promoting new laws to combat violence against women and girls, and strengthening female MPs through study visits, training activities and other projects.

Despite these measures, women remain underrepresented in public service, particularly in ministerial, judiciary and foreign service roles. Limited access to education and employment, the lack of financial support for female political candidates, and the traditional stereotypes of women's role in society compared to men contribute to the low level of female political participation.³² Women from Haratine communities, in particular, have limited or no access to public and political life³³.

1.11. *Access to justice*

The justice system in Mauritania consists of courts that apply the principles of both civil and Sharia law. Although the Personal Status Code outlines provisions for the application of these two legal systems, judicial officials do not always abide by it. Under Sharia law, a woman's testimony holds half of the evidentiary weight of that of a man. Moreover, in cases of rape, judges can accuse the victim of fornication outside marriage (*zina*), and theoretically, imprison the victim on these grounds³⁴.

Regarding legal proceedings, many courts conduct their sessions in Arabic, and interpreters are not always available. In addition, there is inadequate legal aid and counselling available to women, a lack of training among legal and judicial officers on women's rights and gender sensitivity, and a reliance on conciliators (*mouslihines*) to settle cases outside of the formal justice system³⁵. Consequently, certain

³⁰ World Bank. 2015. Women's access to land in Mauritania: a case study in preparation for the COP. Available at: <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/224621467991907919/women-s-access-to-land-in-mauritania-a-case-study-in-preparation-for-the-cop>

³¹ World Bank. 2015. Women's access to land in Mauritania: a case study in preparation for the COP. Available at: <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/224621467991907919/women-s-access-to-land-in-mauritania-a-case-study-in-preparation-for-the-cop>

³² Mauritanian For Women's Rights, *Mauritanienne Pour les Droits de la Femme (MPDF) Parallel Report to the Government's Report*, 2014.

³³ Anti - Slavery International and Minority Rights Group International, SOS Slaves, *Observations on the second and third reports periodic submitted by MAURITANIA, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against women 58th Session*, 2014.

³⁴ Human Rights Council Working Group, Universal Periodic Review Twenty-third session 2-13 - Mauritania, 2015.

³⁵ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, *Concluding observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of Mauritania*, 2014

crimes against women, including rape and domestic violence, have been largely unreported due to the stigmatisation of victims, the potential for imprisonment, and the low conviction rate of offenders³⁶. Wealthy perpetrators often avoid prosecution, or if prosecuted, avoid prison by settling outside of formal courts.

1.12. Gender-based violence (GBV)

Although there are no specific laws criminalising domestic violence in Mauritania, the government has instituted measures to prevent it. The government has developed a National Action Plan on Gender Based Violence (2014–2018) and a National Strategy for the Promotion of Women (2015–2019), both of which address violence against women. In addition, the government has organised community-based awareness-raising campaigns in cooperation with civil society and established family dispute units in all regional capitals of the country. However, in the absence of a specific law, women rarely seek legal redress for domestic violence, and there is limited police intervention in reported cases. Instead, women rely on family members, community leaders and local NGOs to resolve domestic violence cases³⁷.

Domestic violence is a pervasive problem throughout the country³⁸. Under the Penal Code, rape is a criminal offense, with perpetrators subject to penalties ranging from forced labour to death penalty (Art. 309–310)³⁹. However, the code fails to provide an explicit definition of rape, allowing for subjective interpretation of the law and the omission of marital rape⁴⁰. In practice, rape cases often go unreported in the country due to the social stigma attached to rape victims. Moreover, if the rape victim is married, a judge may, under Sharia law, accuse the woman of adultery or sexual intercourse outside of marriage (*zina*), and if found guilty the woman may face imprisonment. To address this issue, the government has enacted various awareness-raising campaigns to encourage women victims of rape to file a formal complaint and provided in-service training for judges and law officers to ensure a clear distinction between rape victims and those who have committed *zina*⁴¹. Nevertheless, impunity for rape continues to be a problem, with girls held in slavery often being victims of sexual violence and assault, and rape offenders often avoid prosecution through monetary settlements outside of court.

To date, there is no law prohibiting sexual harassment, which occurs often, especially in the workplace and schools, where girls are reportedly at risk of sexual harassment and abuse by teachers. Regarding female genital mutilation (FGM), there is no specific legislation prohibiting this practice; however, the government has instituted efforts, including legal measures to combat it. Under the Juvenile Justice Code, FGM is prohibited by law and is punishable by imprisonment as well as fines ranging from 120,000 to 300,000 ouguiyas (Art. 12)⁴¹. The Penal Code also bans child mutilation (Art. 328)⁴². Moreover, the government developed a National Strategy against Female Genital Mutilation in 2008 and a draft law criminalising FGM in 2010. In 2011, religious leaders in the country issued an opinion on Islamic Law (*fatwa*) forbidding FGM. At the local level, the government continues to work with international organisations and local NGOs to conduct awareness and outreach campaigns to shift cultural attitudes surrounding the practice. However, authorities seldom apply the laws pertaining to FGM, and there has been no progress on the approval of the draft bill criminalising FGM. FGM remains widely practiced in Mauritania, where it is prevalent among all ethnic groups to some degree and performed on young girls, sometimes as early as a week after birth. The practice is deeply rooted in cultural tradition where it is seen as a rite of passage or religious requirement, providing social acceptance or higher social recognition of the girl and her family, and reducing female sexual desire⁴³.

³⁶ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, *Concluding observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of Mauritania*, 2014

³⁷ United States Department of State, *2016 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - Mauritania*, 2017.

³⁸ United States Department of State, *2016 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - Mauritania*, 2017.

³⁹ Government of Mauritania. 2001. Penal Code. Available at:

<file:///C:/Users/mccon/Downloads/Mauritania%20Penal%20Code%201983.pdf>

⁴⁰ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, *Concluding observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of Mauritania*, 2014

⁴¹ Government of Mauritania. 2001. Juvenile Justice Code. Available at: <https://features.hrw.org/features/african-union/files/Mauritania%20-%20Ordonnance%20n%202005-015%20portant%20protection%20pe%CC%81nale%20de%20l%E2%80%99enfant.pdf>

⁴² Government of Mauritania. 2001. Penal Code. Available at:

<file:///C:/Users/mccon/Downloads/Mauritania%20Penal%20Code%201983.pdf>

⁴³ Ouldzeidoune, Nacerdine, Keating, Joseph, Bertrand, Jane, Rice, Janet, *A Description of Female Genital Mutilation and Force-Feeding Practices in Mauritania: Implications for the Protection of Child Rights and Health*, 2013.

1.13. Gender and Minorities

Minority groups in Mauritania include sub-Saharan ethnic groups such as Peulh and Toucouleur, Soninké, and Wolof, which together make up 25% of the population, and Haratine who constitute 45% of the population. It is difficult to provide transparent data on the ethnic composition of the population since the Mauritanian government systematically refuses to disaggregate the data in terms of ethnicity. In addition, the government considers that Haratines are part of the wider Moorish society, forming part of the majority (Haratines and Beydans share the same language and cultural practices, although it is the result of decades of enslavement and assimilation). The Haratine are an ethnic minority found in Mauritania, whose population is essentially composed of Moors (or Beidanes) who live in the northern part of the country. The term Haratine refers to slaves (freed slaves) and persons of slave descent. Haratine are descendants of Black ethnic groups that were captured by the majority white Maures or Berber-Arabs and have been discriminated against and have lived under slavery for years. Slavery, and in particular slavery of Haratine women, underpinned by deep-seated discrimination as well as marginalisation, remains a common practice in Mauritania regardless of its prohibition under the law. Mauritanian adults and children continue to be sold and bought as slaves, children are enslaved by their parents' masters, and women often do not choose their marital partners. Some Haratine are also dispossessed of their ancestral property by their masters or masters of their parents upon their parents' deaths.⁴⁴

Although Arabic is the official language, some minorities speak Hassaniyya – a dialect of Arabic (83%), Peulh or Pulaar and Toucouleur (5 %), Soninké (1%), and Wolof (0.3%). All minority groups in Mauritania share the same religion, Sunni Islam.

2. Part 2: Gender and Social Inclusion Action Plan

The following Gender Action Plan has been developed on the basis of consultations led and is in line with the GCF Updated Gender Policy and Gender Action Plan 2020–2023 (GCF/B.24/15).

2.1. Project Management

Project Management Unit (PMU) staff will be required to take the UN course on gender and environment⁴⁵ and the UN Women course on introduction to gender found in the UN Women training Centre portal⁴⁶. Participation in the Introduction to Gender course will be mandatory for all PMU staff as part of their onboarding and capacity-building process. In addition to this mandatory course, staff will be strongly encouraged to enrol in at least one other relevant course offered through the portal to further enhance their understanding of gender, sex, and gender-mainstreaming.

To ensure compliance, completion of the mandatory courses will be monitored and documented as part of the staff performance and development plan. Certificates of completion will be required for inclusion in individual performance reviews. As an additional incentive, participation in supplementary courses will be factored into professional development assessments and opportunities for recognition or career advancement within the project.

The outcomes of this training will be measured through ongoing monitoring and evaluation (M&E) processes. PMU staff will be expected to demonstrate an applied understanding of gender mainstreaming, which will be reflected in project activities, reports, and decision-making processes. Progress will be assessed using gender statistics and qualitative analysis, beyond just gender-disaggregated indicators, and these metrics will be integrated into the project's logical framework for regular tracking and evaluation.

Throughout the project, members of the PMU will regularly engage with the project Gender Specialist — an expert with extensive experience in gender mainstreaming — to ensure compliance with gender-mainstreaming requirements. Women-based organisations with appropriate mandates and capacities will be carefully selected and engaged in project implementation to facilitate greater women engagement in consultation processes. The project will engage both men and women proportionally while being cautious not to increase their workloads unequally (as women typically also carry household

⁴⁴ <https://minorityrights.org/law-and-legal-cases/mauritania-challenging-slavery-of-haratine-women/>

⁴⁵ <https://www.unclearn.org/courses/open-online-course-on-gender-and-environment/>

⁴⁶ <https://portal.trainingcentre.unwomen.org/unw-catalog-mobile/>

responsibilities that may not be easily handed over to men). In addition, care will be taken to respond to the fact that men and women may have different educational levels and interests.

The project will promote the quality of participation and the actual impact of women on decision-making processes. The project will ensure that participation moves beyond nominal membership and provides women access to decision-making spaces and processes alongside men, but also the ability to actively influence and lead those processes. This will be done through trainings for both women and men on women leadership and the importance of their participation, in order to help advocate for the inclusion and participation of women in decision-making platforms of the community.

2.2. *Project Monitoring*

Monitoring and evaluation methods have been designed to be participatory, and to engage with women in the process. Gender-response data collection will enable the progress measurement, gender issues assessment, and making appropriate adjustments where needed, constituting gender statistics. This data will be shared with project teams and communities in a timely and understandable manner.

Gender indicators highlight differences and inequalities in all aspects of the lives of women and men⁴⁷. By revealing the gender equalities and gender gaps in key areas, gender inequalities are made visible, which can in turn inform policy-making to address identified gender gaps. The indicators help identify data that is relevant to women's and men's lives and to key areas of policy-making. The project will generate a gender-sensitive database on socio-economic characteristics to monitor gender advancement throughout the project.

It is important to distinguish between sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics. While sex-disaggregated data is separated by sex, gender statistics considers broader gender inequalities and bias in data collection methods and tools. In addition, gender statistics have the potential to reflect different groups of women and men, taking into consideration that gender intersects with age, education, family composition and parenthood, country of birth and disability. This means that gender statistics can reflect a deeper understanding of women's situations and needs, and thereby support the analysis of intersecting inequalities.

For indicators to be gender-sensitive, they must encompass the following characteristics:

- data are collected and presented in disaggregated form by sex as a primary and overall classification;
- data reflect gender issues;
- data adequately reflect the diversity of women and men and capture all aspects of their lives; and
- data-collection methods consider stereotypes and socio-economic and cultural factors that may induce gender biases.

Two data collection methods will be used for gender statistics and indicators. Quantitative methods provide quantifiable results focusing on countable issues such as percentages of women and men in the labour market, male and female wage rates, or school enrolment rates for girls and boys. These statistics are relevant to the project as they are important for assessing capacity needs for women wanting to take up sustainable, alternative livelihoods. These statistics are relevant to the project as they are important for assessing capacity needs for women wanting to take up sustainable, alternative livelihoods. Quantitative data can also show the magnitude of changes in gender equality over time — for example, the percentage of women married before the age of 15 or the gender pay gap over time. Qualitative methods capture people's experiences, opinions, attitudes, and feelings — for example, women's experiences the constraints or advantages of working in the informal sector, or men's and women's views on the causes and consequences of underrepresentation of women in senior positions in the economy or in politics. This data will inform the development of guidelines and policies for the membership structure of coordination committees established under the proposed project — for example, commune-level coordination and technical committees (Activity 1.1.1) and water user groups (Activity 2.2.2). Additionally, gathering information about women's experiences in the informal sector will inform the design of training workshops focused on the uptake of alternative livelihoods in the target region. Participatory methods, such as focus group discussions and social mapping tools, are often

⁴⁷ United Nations, Integrating a gender perspective into statistics, New York, 2006, cited in United Nations Statistical Division. 2016, p. 1. <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/Standards-and-Methods/files/Handbooks/gender/Integrating-a-Gender-Perspective-into-Statistics-E.pdf>

used for qualitative indicators. Qualitative data can also be collected through in-depth surveys measuring perceptions and opinions.

2.3. Gender considerations in the project design

2.3.1. Approach and problem analysis

If the project is not adequately informed on the specific roles, responsibilities, and opportunities assigned to men and women in Mauritania, it may inadvertently exacerbate ‘time poverty’ among women. ‘Time poverty’ refers to the unpaid household and care duties that women perform instead of engaging in economically lucrative activities. Mauritanian women are responsible for a considerable amount of household work, including agricultural production, post-harvest activities, collecting fuelwood and water, food preparation and childcare — both productive and reproductive in nature. By incorporating climate-smart agricultural practices, sustainable livelihoods and water management techniques into the project, women could modify and even increase their use of time.

Evaluating the gender barriers prevalent across the project's four hubs in Mauritania and considering gender-specific concerns in agriculture, land, and natural resource use helps identify the primary issues tied to gender. Table 22 provides a problem analysis of the main gender challenges and the subsequent sections describe how these are mainstreamed into the project design.

Table 22. Project-related gender challenges in Mauritania.

| Main gender challenges | Limited property rights and access to land ownership | Gender-blind policies and non-inclusive social and cultural norms related to land and natural resource use | Gender gaps in education and skills; limited access to information and knowledge | Access to finance and labour force participation |
|--------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| Causes | Women's access to land is limited, particularly in rural areas as governance structures are generally weaker. Customary law reinforces this limitation | Limited representation of women in decision-making processes related to land, agriculture and water. | Women's limited literacy rates result in their exclusion from awareness-raising campaigns and information dissemination from knowledge management platforms. This limits their ability to make climate-smart decisions. | Restricted participation in certain economic activities and greater demand on their time to undertake time-consuming and non-remunerating household work (travelling long distances to collect firewood and water) |
| Immediate effects | Land degradation and compromised agricultural yield | Limited entitlements to assets outside of those related to their household work | Limited adaptive capacity | Women have limited time to engage in income generating activities and diversify their livelihoods |
| Effects | Reduced productivity and income generated from natural resources | Limited access to resources reduces their coping capacity in the face of climate change | Individual and household resilience to climate change is reduced | Women have less opportunity to earn an income, are economically disadvantaged and subsequently have limited resilience and adaptive capacity to extreme climatic events |

Climate change affects men and women differently, with cultural practices making women more vulnerable than men. Mainstreaming gender into the ‘Strengthening the resilience of ecosystems and populations’ project design – including conceptualisation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation –

is therefore necessary to build the adaptive capacity of households and communities in the four hubs of northern Mauritania. The results from this gender assessment will guide the design of project activities, ensuring that women, the youth, elderly and other vulnerable groups are not only included in the project, but that the relationships between the cultural roles of men and women are considered. The proposed project interventions will, therefore, address gender equality through several pathways, including:

- incorporating a gender action plan into the development of the development plans and community climate action plans, based on the specific gaps identified within each community (see **Error! Reference source not found.**);
- integrating women into the project specific institutional structures and involving them in the project's decision-making process;
- ensuring women's participation in all climate change adaptation training;
- ensuring equal opportunity and access to women farmers for on-the-ground adaptation interventions;
- targeting women for specific adaptation interventions, with a particular focus on climate-resilient additional livelihoods;
- raising awareness of the importance of equal opportunity for all people and the role women play in climate change adaptation across a community;
- establishing long-term monitoring and evaluation programmes to assess the effectiveness of interventions for achieving gender equality; and
- sharing lessons learned through project interventions to help create a paradigm shift in the approach to gender equality in climate change adaptation projects.

2.3.2. Gender mainstreaming in the project design

Gender mainstreaming ensures visibility and support for the participation and benefit of both women and men, with the main objective of achieving gender equality. Considering gender challenges in this project is necessary given the distinct roles men and women hold within a community, their differing access to and control over natural resources, and their unique needs. It is important to consider gender-specific challenges when designing ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) approaches for sustainable natural resource management and strengthening ecosystem and community resilience to climate change impacts while enhancing ecosystem service provision. To ensure that the project employs a gender-response approach — such that men and women are given equal opportunities for capacity-building, improved access to finance and strengthened climate resilience — the specific adaptation needs of men and women, and the roles they might play in implementing EbA interventions, have been carefully considered in the project development process.

It is also essential to avoid exposing women to greater risks of sexual exploitation and harassment (SEAH), GBV and intimate partner violence as a result of their empowerment through project activities that increase their income accessibility. Project interventions should be sensitive to these dynamics, ensuring that women can exercise their agency and empowerment, while also engaging male community members in women empowerment.

The gender assessment and problem analysis identified gaps in access and control over resources and opportunities. Mainstreaming gender in the project design is achieved by using sex-disaggregated data, facilitating awareness raising on grievance redress mechanisms (GRM) for sexual exploitation and harassment (SEAH) and gender-based violence (GBV), developing strategies and actions to close those gaps, allocating resources and expertise for implementing equality strategies, and monitoring results using gender-sensitive indicators.

Project component description

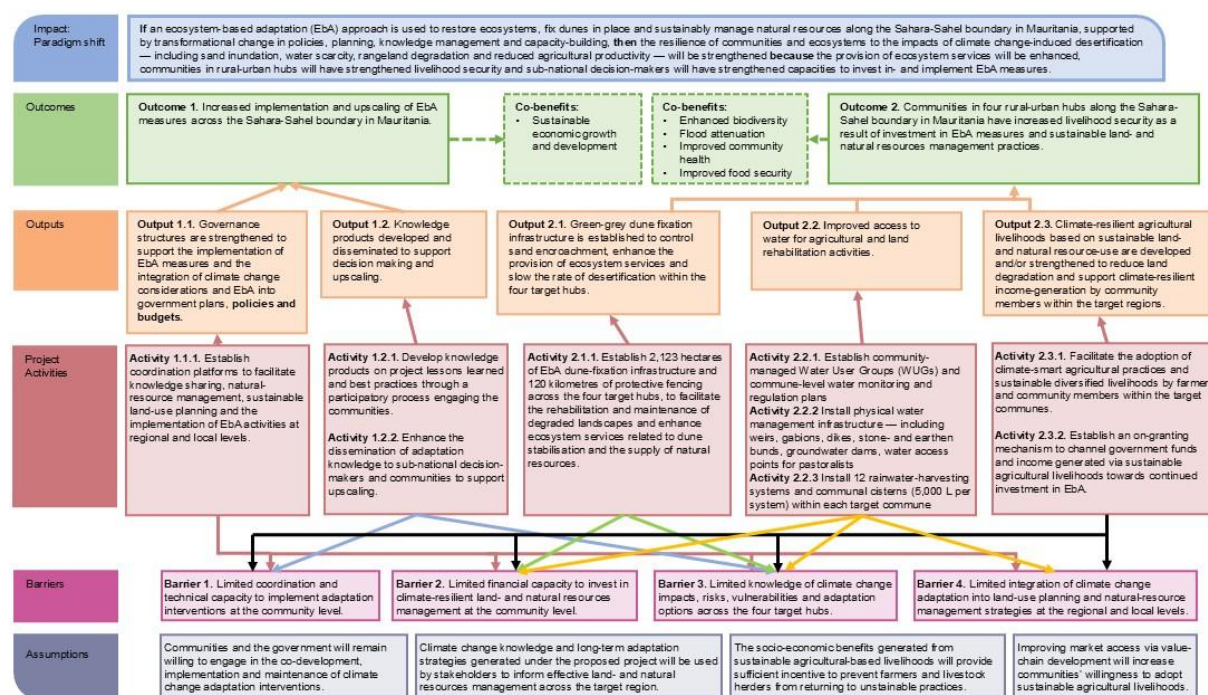


Figure 1: A diagram of the Theory of Change detailing expected Outcomes, Outputs and Activities.

Activities under Output 1.1 (Figure 1) will be participatory, ensuring that while strengthening governance structures, women's inclusion in decision-making processes and their placement in positions of authority will allow them to participate in sustainable land and natural resource management. Mainstreaming gender considerations in land and natural resource use activities can be done by integrating gender-responsiveness into various legislative documents. Under Output 1.1, Activity 1.1.1 involves reviewing existing plans, policies and budgets at the *wilayah*-, *moughataa*- and commune-level (Figure 1), thereafter, having policy briefs prepared for the integration of gender-responsiveness into these various documents. These policy briefs will also be presented at a workshop with relevant government ministry and department representatives. Additionally, Output 1.1 ensures that staff who provide training workshops, such as extension and technical staff, also receive gender training, to avoid following and reinforcing socio-cultural norms that could negatively impact women's participation in the project activities. Moreover, Output 1.1 will make sure that the training workshops carried out under Activity 1.1.1 will include modules on gender roles and mainstreaming gender in sustainable natural resource management and strategic land-use planning. Under Activity 1.2.2, gender-responsive best practices will be captured in the knowledge products generated and disseminated by the project. In addition,

Gender mainstreaming will consider capacity-building activities provided under Output 2.1, Output 2.2 and Output 2.3, including involving women in identifying degraded zones for rehabilitation and ensuring that this process is sensitive to women's rights to land. This will also include integrating women's perspectives into land tenure security policies to ensure equitable access to rehabilitated land. Capacity-building activities proposed by the project will also increase women's access to inputs and resources delivered under the project — for example, by increasing access to agricultural inputs and improved agricultural technologies, including drip irrigation kits, integrated pest management strategies, solar-powered pumps and tools and training for the establishment of half-moons and zai pits. Specific targets for improved access to inputs and resources for women are detailed in Sub-section 2.3.3. In addition, specific targets for women's participation in training and technology adoption will be incorporated to track gender-responsive outcomes.

In addition to increasing women's access to and use of improved agricultural technologies (stated under Output 2.3), project agricultural support will prioritise climate-resilient crop agriculture and will focus on increasing their productivity to enhance sustainable agricultural livelihoods. Women will actively participate in the sub-activity interventions listed under Activity 2.3.1, namely: i) active and ongoing participation in the establishment of nurseries and seed banks in the target communes; ii) assist in the collection and creation of stock material for these nurseries and seed banks; and iii) engage in

sustainable livelihood practices, such as market-gardening, apiculture, poultry farming, livestock feed production and collecting and selling non-timber products.

Moreover, under Activity 2.2.1, it is necessary to include women in the Water User Groups (WUGs) of each target commune so that they are involved in all water resource management sub-activities. During the identification of sites for water management infrastructure and rainwater-harvesting systems, women will provide input and guidance given their local knowledge and experience having to access water sources. This will ensure that the identified sites will also be appropriately situated according to women's views and needs — addressing the long distances women and women children typically travel to access water.

Project interventions will include raising awareness and developing skills for extension officers to advocate for gender equality in all aspects of training and agricultural support activities. Both men and women extension officers will be equipped with participatory tools and skills to manage a variety of cultural settings and power relations. The project recognises the intersectional systems of advantage and accessibility in the target locations, which could result in women's exclusion from advisory and decision-making processes and spaces. Women's needs, concerns, and expertise frequently become marginalised during the planning and execution of adaptation interventions. To address this inequality, the project will actively involve women in activities, ensuring that their needs, insights, and interests are represented, while creating gender-sensitive communication materials in terms of content, design, and dissemination.

2.3.3. Project expected benefits promoting gender equality

The project will provide tangible benefits for women and promote a shift in gender dynamics by adopting a gender-sensitive and responsive strategy. Involving women in various decision-making processes is necessary for ensuring that they benefit from the project. The gender action plan outlines the specific steps and activities to ensure women's participation in decision-making processes and project activities. By building their capacity, skills, knowledge, and access to resources, they will be better equipped to make decisions at both household and community levels. This impact is anticipated to continue beyond the project's timeline.

Women depend on natural resources to fulfil their numerous economic and domestic responsibilities. Both men and women engage in agricultural activities; by ensuring women have access to agricultural training, resources, climate-smart crops and water-efficient irrigation investments, their resilience to present and future climate change impacts will be strengthened. Moreover, by targeting 30%–50% of women in the project's alternative livelihoods activities and enabling their full participation, their economic empowerment and adaptive capacity will be enhanced. Land use planning in the target hub communities and climate-resilient agriculture related interventions are expected to lead to better-managed natural resources which will substantially reduce women's work burden as less time will be spent to collect these resources. Additionally, for women in the four hubs, improved environmental management — including water source conservation and the establishment of water management infrastructure at strategic sites within target communes, to ensure water is stored closer to the household (Activity 2.2.2) — will improve access to water for domestic and productive purposes, easing the load on women responsible for fetching water. The exposure to the threat of GBV or other forms of violence will also be reduced as they will no longer be compelled to travel far from their households in search of natural resources such as water and wood.

| Project activities | Gender action | Baseline, indicators and targets | Timeline | Responsible entity | Budget |
|--|---------------------------|----------------------------------|----------|--------------------|--------|
| <p>Impact Statement: If an ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) approach is used to restore ecosystems, fix dunes in place and sustainably manage natural resources along the Sahara-Sahel boundary in Mauritania, supported by transformational change in policies, planning, knowledge management and capacity-building, then the resilience of communities and ecosystems to the impacts of climate change-induced desertification — including sand inundation, water scarcity, rangeland degradation and reduced agricultural productivity — will be strengthened because the provision of ecosystem services will be enhanced, communities in rural-urban hubs will have strengthened livelihood security and sub-national decision-makers will have strengthened capacities to invest in- and implement EbA measures.</p> <p>Research and anecdotal evidence indicate that women, children and youth are among the groups most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. In addition, a large number of vulnerable people in communities that are highly dependent on local natural resources for their survival are women and children. Therefore, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania (GoM) has established that gender-responsive planning, resource-allocation and implementation in the context of this proposed project will be a priority. Supporting transformational change both in the lives of women beneficiaries and in prompting gender mainstreaming in national climate change policy-making and implementation was therefore seen as a priority in stakeholder consultations.</p> <p>Expected total numbers of direct and indirect beneficiaries (reduced vulnerability or increased resilience) are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 85,229 people directly benefit from project interventions (40,877 men and 44,352 women); and • 145,008 people indirectly benefit from the project interventions (66,519 men and 78,489 women). <p>The project will also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that all reviewed policies, recommended policy revisions, and economic development planning frameworks and guidelines promote gender inclusion and responsiveness.; • ensure sustainability and long-term impact of gender-responsive outcomes, outputs and actions; • build capacity for government institutions, traditional authorities and faith-based institutions in acknowledging gender differentials in responding to climate risks; • ensure that women and youth take leadership with regards to project components related to them, however, without the marginalisation of men with the intent to avoid their resistance and negative influence; and • increase social accountability. | | | | | |
| | Project Management | | | | |

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| | 1. Ensure a gender balance in establishing the Project Management Unit and in managing its human resources. | <p><u>Baseline:</u> No PMU established</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> Documentation of contracting process (vacancy announcements, shortlisting, interview notes) + proportion of women employed in unskilled / technical / management / supervisory roles</p> <p><u>Target:</u> Demonstrable efforts to recruit at least 50% women, including in positions with project responsibilities</p> | Year 1 | UNEP task manager | / |
| | 2. Recruit a gender officer ⁴⁸ in the Project Management Unit to support and monitor the effective implementation of the Gender Action Plan (50%) and oversee any grievances related to gender-based violence (GBV) or sexual exploitation and harassment (SEAH). | <p><u>Baseline:</u> No TORs</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> TORs to recruit for this position</p> <p><u>Target:</u> Fifty percent of his/her time is dedicated to support the gender-integrated implementation of the project. 15% of his/her time is allocated to support grievances for SEAH or GBV.</p> | Year 1 | UNEP task manager | / |

⁴⁸ This gender officer will have decision-making power in relation to the implementation of the GAP. The gender officer will be accountable for ensuring consistent and timeous implementation of the GAP activities and report to the Project Coordinator.

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| | 3. Gender Training for the PMU. Training materials will include topics of, <i>inter alia</i> : i) SEAH and GBV; understanding how to analyse the differential impacts of projects on men and women; iii) strategies to promote equitable access to project benefits for all social groups; and iv) familiarisation with national, regional and international gender policies and conventions. | <p><u>Baseline</u>: No training; limited gender expertise available among PMU staff (level to be assessed at start of training)</p> <p><u>Indicator</u>: Online and in-situ training provided to team members (certificates, modules), knowledge assessed through interviews</p> <p><u>Target</u>: PMU team members are knowledgeable on gender challenges and able to report on gender-responsive indicators of the project such as certificates, modules and knowledge assessments.</p> | Year 1 | PMU gender officer | / |
| | 4. Facilitate participation of women in project monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) activities. | <p><u>Baseline</u>: No MEL system in plan</p> <p><u>Indicator</u>: Number and % of men and women actively participating in the MEL process</p> <p><u>Target</u>: Each MEL activity includes at least 40% women</p> | Year 1–6 | PMU gender officer | / |
| | 5. Enable women to actively participate in decision-making processes affecting their lands, resources, activities, families, and livelihoods, and to overcome access | <p><u>Baseline</u>: No qualitative measures to ensure gender-mainstreaming</p> <p><u>Indicator</u>: Level of engagement of women in project consultation (% of women participating in discussions⁴⁹ disaggregated by ethnic group, age, and marital status +</p> | Year 1–6 | PMU gender officer | / |

⁴⁹ Participation of sub-groups to be measured from onset; decrease may indicate an issue related to limited interest in the project and should trigger further consultations.

| | constraints to natural resources. | <p>opinions expressed + decisions impacted)</p> <p><u>Target:</u> Women are actively participating in project consultation, accounting for 50% of representatives, including representatives of different communities, women of all ages, and marital status; women express their opinions, and these are taken into account in influencing each decision-making process related to the project</p> | | | |
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| Outcome 1 Statement: Increased implementation and upscaling of EbA measures across the Sahara-Sahel boundary in Mauritania. | | | | | |
| Project activities | Gender action | Baseline, indicators and targets | Responsible entity | Timeline | Budget |
| Activity 1.1.1. Establish coordination platforms to facilitate knowledge-sharing, natural resource management, sustainable land-use planning and the implementation of EbA activities at the regional and local levels. | 6. Ensure at least 30% female representation in coordination and technical committees (CTCs). | <p><u>Baseline:</u> Limited representation of women in local and regional governance structures (CTCs).</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> % of women in CTCs.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> At least 30% of CTC members are women.</p> | <p>PMU:</p> <p>Gender Officer ensures gender considerations are integrated</p> <p>Monitoring & Evaluations (M&E) Officer tracks recruitment metrics</p> | Year 1 | The cost of implementing the gender activities for Activity 1.1.1 will be covered by the PMU Gender Officer's salary. |
| | 7. Ensure training materials include gender-responsive approaches to land-use and natural resource management. The module should also include information on GBV and | <p><u>Baseline:</u> No training provided yet under 1.1.1.2 and 1.1.1.3.</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> % of training modules that incorporate gender-responsive adaptation strategies.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> 100% of training sessions integrate gender considerations. One module in</p> | <p>PMU:</p> <p>Gender Officer leads training development and delivery.</p> <p>Chief Technical Advisor supports integration with project goals.</p> <p>Regional Project Coordinators ensures training is regionally contextual</p> | Years 1–2 | |

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| | <p>grievance redress mechanisms (GRM).</p> <p>8. Ensure trainings and conferences take place in the mornings on weekdays to account for women's household responsibilities.</p> | <p>each training is also specifically on GBV grievance mechanisms, gender roles and gender mainstreaming options in sustainable natural resource management and strategic land-use planning.</p> | | | |
| | <p>9. Build women's leadership capacity through trainings for both men and women. Ensuring mixed-gender group discussions encourages inclusivity and knowledge-sharing.</p> <p>10. Ensure trainings and conferences take place in the mornings on weekdays to account for women's household responsibilities.</p> | <p><u>Baseline:</u> No structured training provided yet under 1.1.1.2 and 1.1.1.3.</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> % of persons who receive trainings, by type of training, disaggregated by gender.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> At least 30% of training and skill building activities participants are women.</p> | <p>PMU:</p> <p>Gender Officer leads training development and delivery.</p> <p>Chief Technical Advisor supports integration with project goals.</p> <p>Regional Project Coordinators ensures training is regionally contextual</p> | Years 1–2 | |

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| | <p>11. National policies, plans and strategies on natural resource management and land-use planning are gender-responsive. These policies should also promote awareness raising on SEAH and GBV.</p> <p>12. Consult with gender experts, relevant policy makers and women's groups on how to incorporate actionable gender activities into the national policies.</p> | <p><u>Baseline:</u> No policy brief written.</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> Number of gender-responsive measures proposed.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> Each policy briefs is gender-responsive and one is focused on gender in natural resource management and land-use planning.</p> | <p>PMU facilitates overall governance structure</p> <p>Gender Officer ensures gender considerations are integrated</p> <p>MEDD & Local Governments lead policy integration.</p> | <p>Years 2–4 (policy development)</p> <p>Years 5–6 (Evaluations and reinforcement)</p> | |
| Activity 1.2.1: Develop knowledge products on project lessons learned and best practices through a participatory process engaging the communities. | 13. Ensure all knowledge products collect and incorporate gender-disaggregated data. | <p><u>Baseline:</u> No gender-specific knowledge products exist.</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> % of knowledge products with gender-disaggregated data.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> 100% of knowledge products include gender-disaggregated data.</p> | <p>PMU:</p> <p>M&E Officer leads documentation and knowledge-sharing efforts.</p> <p>Gender Officer ensures gender considerations are integrated</p> | Years 1–3 | The cost of implementing the gender activities for Activity 1.2.1 will be covered by the PMU Gender Officer's salary. |

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| | 14. Demonstrate gender-responsive best practices in adaptation planning. Women often use different adaptation strategies such as water conservation techniques and drought-resistant farming methods. Capturing these practices enhances inclusivity. | <u>Baseline:</u> Gender-specific adaptation strategies are not systematically documented. <u>Indicator:</u> % of knowledge products featuring gender-sensitive adaptation strategies. <u>Target:</u> At least one gender-sensitive case study per knowledge product. | PMU: Gender Officer ensures gender considerations are integrated | Years 1–3 | |
| | 15. Document case studies featuring women's leadership in EbA interventions. | <u>Baseline:</u> Women's perspectives are underrepresented in community engagement activities. <u>Indicator:</u> % of women participating in knowledge-gathering consultations. <u>Target:</u> At least 30% of participants in consultations are women. | | Years 1–3 | |

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| | <p>16. Identify barriers to women's participation in EbA interventions and propose solutions. Women may face challenges such as land tenure restrictions, exclusion from decision-making, or time constraints. These barriers should be identified and addressed in policy recommendations.</p> | <p><u>Baseline:</u> Barriers to women's participation in EbA activities are not well-documented.</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> Existence of a gender barrier analysis in knowledge products.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> At least one policy recommendation per product addressing gender barriers.</p> | | Years 1–3 | |
| | <p>17. Develop gender-sensitive communication formats for knowledge products. Women may have lower literacy rates or limited access to digital information sources. Using visual storytelling, radio broadcasts, or local women's networks ensures inclusive dissemination.</p> | <p><u>Baseline:</u> Knowledge dissemination is not always accessible to women due to literacy and technology gaps.</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> % of knowledge products available in gender-inclusive formats such as radio and visual content.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> At least one alternative dissemination format per product.</p> | | Years 1–3 | 5,000 |

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| Activity 1.2.2: Enhance the dissemination of adaptation knowledge to sub-national decision-makers and communities to support upscaling. | 18. Ensure gender-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive content are included in all disseminated knowledge products. | <p><u>Baseline:</u> Knowledge products do not consistently integrate gender-disaggregated data or gender-sensitive insights.</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> % of disseminated knowledge products with gender-disaggregated data.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> 100% of knowledge products include gender-disaggregated data.</p> | | Years 3–6 | The cost of implementing the gender activities for Activity 1.2.2 will be covered by the PMU Gender Officer's salary. |
| | 19. Knowledge dissemination must reflect how climate change impacts women and men differently and highlight gender-responsive adaptation approaches. | | | Years 3–6 | |
| | 20. Use gender-inclusive dissemination formats such as radio broadcasts, visual materials and local women's networks. | <p><u>Baseline:</u> Women have less access to formal knowledge-sharing platforms than men.</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> % of knowledge-sharing events with at least 30% female participants.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> At least 30% of participants in knowledge-sharing events are women.</p> | | Years 3–6 | |
| | 21. Ensure women's organisations, gender focal points and female leaders are engaged in dissemination efforts. | <p><u>Baseline:</u> Knowledge dissemination is not always accessible to women due to literacy and technology gaps.</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> % of knowledge products available in gender-inclusive formats such as radio and visual content.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> At least one alternative dissemination format per product.</p> | | Years 3–6 | |
| | 22. Women's networks can help amplify knowledge products, ensuring that women benefit from and apply the shared information. | | | | |

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| | 23. Include case studies or policy briefs focusing on gender-specific climate adaptation challenges. | <u>Baseline:</u> Women's perspectives are not systematically integrated into international platforms. <u>Indicator:</u> % of international knowledge-sharing events featuring gender-sensitive discussions or case studies. <u>Target:</u> At least one gender-focused discussion or case study in every international dissemination event. | | Years 3–6 | |
| Outcome 2 Statement: Communities in four rural-urban hubs along the Sahara-Sahel boundary in Mauritania have increased livelihood security as a result of investment in EbA measures and sustainable land- and natural resources management practices. | | | | | |

| Project activities | Gender action | Baseline, indicators and targets | Responsible entity | Timeline | Budget |
|---|--|---|---|-----------|---|
| Activity 2.1.1. Establish 2,123 hectares of EbA dune-fixation infrastructure and 120 kilometres of protective fencing across the four target hubs, to facilitate the rehabilitation and maintenance of degraded landscapes and enhance ecosystem services related to dune stabilisation and the supply of natural resources. | 24. Include women in processes related to the identification of sites for: i) restoration of degraded land ; and ii) managed aquifer recharge infrastructure within key recharge areas. This will ensure that women's adaptation needs — and the distance women may be expected to travel when accessing natural resources — are considered when identifying target sites. Additionally, this will ensure that women are given equal opportunities to men when accessing communal land/acquiring land for project interventions. | <p><u>Baseline:</u> Areas dedicated to women's activities have not been identified nor assessed (Activity 2.2.1)</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> ha of lands available for women's activities and location information (distance from the village, type of terrain)</p> <p><u>Target:</u> The rehabilitated lands do not encroach women's activities and allows for appropriate areas to be preserved for women's activities</p> | <p>PMU:</p> <p>Regional Project Coordinators identify target areas.</p> <p>Gender Officer ensures gender balance.</p> | Years 1–3 | The cost of implementing the gender activities for Activity 2.1.1 will be covered by the PMU Gender Officer's salary. |
| | 25. Guarantee at least 30% female employment in dune fixation and fencing projects. | <p><u>Baseline:</u> Dune fixation and fencing projects are typically male-dominated.</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> % of women employed in dune fixation and fencing works.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> At least 30% of employees in these projects are women.</p> | <p>PMU:</p> <p>Regional Project Coordinators identify target areas.</p> <p>Gender Officer ensures gender balance.</p> | Years 1–3 | |

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| | 26. Provide gender-sensitive technical training on dune fixation techniques. Women may not traditionally engage in land rehabilitation work, but training enables equal participation in implementation and future maintenance. | <p><u>Baseline:</u> Women often lack technical skills for dune fixation and land restoration.</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> % of women trained in dune fixation techniques.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> At least 30% of training participants are women.</p> | <p>PMU:</p> <p>Gender Officer ensures gender-sensitive training.</p> | Years 1–3 | US\$ 4,000.00 ⁵⁰ |
| | 27. Implement safety measures to prevent GBV risks in project sites. Women working in outdoor environments may face harassment or exploitation. GBV protocols help create a safe and inclusive work environment. | <p><u>Baseline:</u> No standardised GBV safety measures in outdoor work environments.</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> Existence of GBV prevention protocols in project sites.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> GBV prevention measures implemented at all project sites.</p> | <p>PMU:</p> <p>Gender Officer ensures gender considerations are integrated</p> | Continuous for the duration of the project | The cost of implementing the gender activities for Activity 2.1.1 will be covered by the PMU Gender Officer's salary. |
| | 28. Conduct assessments to identify the concerns, adaptation needs, and roles of women in target communities and incorporate findings into the design of awareness-raising campaigns focused on climate change, enhanced resilience | <p><u>Baseline:</u> gender-responsive awareness campaigns have not been designed</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> Messages tailored for women included in the campaign (ToRs, comms material)</p> <p><u>Target:</u> Each campaign includes women protagonists, tackles a subject related to women's activities, includes</p> | <p>PMU</p> <p>extension offices of relevant ministries located within the urban areas in the four target hubs</p> | Continuous for the duration of the project | |

⁵⁰ Cost of procuring a national consultant or NGO (environmental management consultant) to prepare standardised training material for annual one-day workshops on: i) EbA solutions and physical measures for dune fixation and rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems; ii) climate-smart agricultural and livestock practices; iii) diversified and natural resource-based livelihoods; iv) climate-resilient water resource management; and v) channelling funds generated from sustainable livelihoods and ecosystem services towards reinvestment in the operation, maintenance and upscaling of successful project interventions. National Consultant is to spend 10 days at US\$400,00 per day developing training material remotely. Training material will be passed on to the PMU and extension officers from the MEDD, for use in training CTC members on an annual basis.

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| | to desertification and SEAH and GBV GRMs. | awareness raising campaigns on GBV and SEAH and includes at least one message regarding women's rights | | | |
| Activity 2.2.1. Establish community-managed Water User Groups (WUGs) and commune-level water monitoring and regulation plans | 29. Ensure at least 30% female representation in Water User Groups (WUGs). Women are primary water users for domestic and agricultural purposes but are often excluded from formal water governance structures. Ensuring representation enhances decision-making inclusivity. | <u>Baseline:</u> No women in Water User Groups (WUGs). <u>Indicator:</u> % of WUG members who are women. <u>Target:</u> At least 30% of WUG members are women. | PMU: Regional Project Coordinators identify target areas. Gender Officer ensures gender balance. | Years 1–3 | The cost of implementing the gender activities for Activity 2.2.1 will be covered by the PMU Gender Officer's salary. |
| | 30. Provide targeted training for women on water governance, monitoring, and technical aspects of water management. Women's participation is often limited by lack of technical knowledge. Training ensures they can effectively engage in WUGs and water resource decision-making. | <u>Baseline:</u> Women's participation in water governance training is limited. <u>Indicator:</u> % of training participants who are women. <u>Target:</u> At least 30% of training participants are women. | PMU: Gender Officer ensures gender balance. | Years 1–3 | US\$ 4,000.00 ⁵¹ |

51 Cost of procuring a national consultant or NGO (environmental management consultant) to prepare standardised training material for annual one-day workshops on: i) EbA solutions and physical measures for dune fixation and rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems; ii) climate-smart agricultural and livestock practices; iii) diversified and natural resource-based livelihoods; iv) climate-resilient water resource management; and v) channelling funds generated from sustainable livelihoods and ecosystem services towards reinvestment in the operation, maintenance and upscaling of successful project interventions. National Consultant is to spend 10 days at US\$400,00 per day developing training material remotely. Training material will be passed on to the PMU and extension officers from the MEDD, for use in training CTC members on an annual basis.

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| | 31. Ensure women's access to leadership roles within WUGs. Women in WUGs often hold lower-status roles. Encouraging leadership strengthens gender-responsive water governance. | <p><u>Baseline:</u> Women hold few leadership roles in WUGs.</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> Number of WUG leadership positions held by women.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> At least 1 WUG leadership positions are held by a woman.</p> | | | The cost of implementing the gender activities for Activity 2.2.1 will be covered by the PMU Gender Officer's salary. |
| | 32. Develop gender-sensitive water regulation plans that consider women's water needs for domestic and agricultural use. Women often prioritise household water use, while men may focus on agricultural or livestock needs. Integrating women's perspectives ensures balanced water allocation. | <p><u>Baseline:</u> Water regulation plans do not consider gendered water needs.</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> % of water regulation plans that include gender-responsive considerations.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> 100% of water regulation plans integrate gender-specific needs.</p> | <p>MEDD ensures alignment with national frameworks.</p> <p>Water Ministry leads technical development.</p> <p>PMU:</p> <p>Gender officer ensures gender considerations are considered.</p> | Years 1–3 | The cost of implementing the gender activities for Activity 2.2.1 will be covered by the PMU Gender Officer's salary. |
| Activity 2.2.2: Install physical water management infrastructure — including weirs, gabions, dikes, stone- and earthen bunds, groundwater dams, water access points for pastoralists. | 33. Ensure women's participation in site selection for water infrastructure. Women and men use water differently (e.g., domestic use vs. agriculture/livestock). Ensuring women's voices in site selection prevents | <p><u>Baseline:</u> Women's voices are not systematically included in site selection for water infrastructure.</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> % of site selection consultations that include women.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> At least 30% of site selection participants are women.</p> | <p>PMU:</p> <p>Regional Project Coordinators identify target sites.</p> <p>Gender Officer ensures gender balance.</p> | Years 1–3 | The cost of implementing the gender activities for Activity 2.2.2 will be covered by the PMU Gender Officer's salary. |

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| | marginalisation of their needs. | | | | |
| | 34. Ensure water infrastructure is designed with gender-sensitive considerations (e.g., safety, proximity, and accessibility for women and children). Water points located far from homes increase women's workloads and expose them to safety risks (e.g., GBV while collecting water). Locating infrastructure closer to communities reduces burdens. | <p><u>Baseline:</u> Water points are not always safely or conveniently located for women.</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> % of newly installed water points located based on gender-sensitive considerations.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> 100% of new water infrastructure incorporates gender-sensitive site selection.</p> | <p>PMU:</p> <p>Gender officer ensures gender considerations are considered.</p> | Years 1–3 | |
| Activity 2.2.3 Install 12 rainwater-harvesting systems and communal cisterns (5,000 L per system) within each target commune | 35. Ensure women's participation in selecting locations for rainwater-harvesting systems and communal cisterns. Women are often responsible for collecting water, and improper site selection could increase their workload or limit accessibility. | <p><u>Baseline:</u> Women's voices are not systematically included in selecting rainwater-harvesting sites.</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> % of site selection consultations that include women.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> At least 30% of site selection participants are women.</p> | <p>PMU:</p> <p>Regional Project Coordinators identify target sites.</p> <p>Gender Officer ensures gender balance.</p> | Years 1–3 | The cost of implementing the gender activities for Activity 2.2.3 will be covered by the PMU Gender Officer's salary. |
| | 36. Prioritise access to harvested rainwater for women-led smallholder farms and household use. Women often | <u>Baseline:</u> Women's water needs are not explicitly prioritised in allocation. | | | |

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| | manage household gardens and small-scale agriculture, which require reliable water access. | <p><u>Indicator:</u> % of water allocation plans that include gender-responsive provisions.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> 100% of allocation plans consider women's household and agricultural needs.</p> | | | |
| Activity 2.3.1. Facilitate the adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices and sustainable diversified livelihoods by farmers and community members within the target communes. | 37. Capture local knowledge of men and women within the target region and facilitate knowledge-sharing via information platforms hosted by the Government of Mauritania. Using this existing knowledge, together with training material developed under Activity 1.1.1proposed project, train both women and men in climate smart crop agriculture, nurseries and sustainable livestock management practices. | <p><u>Baseline:</u> No training / skill-building activities have taken place</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> % of persons who receive trainings, by type of training, disaggregated by gender, ethnic group, age, and marital status</p> <p><u>Target:</u> At least 50% of training and skill building activities target women + exclusive modules for women are developed</p> | PMU: Gender officer ensures gender considerations are considered. | Continuous for the duration of the project | The cost of implementing the gender activities for Activity 2.3.1 will be covered by the PMU Gender Officer's salary. |
| | 38. Enable women to actively participate in decision-making processes affecting their lands, resources, activities, families, and livelihoods, and to overcome access | <u>Baseline:</u> Existing community-level decision-making groups in the target communes (within the four hubs) targeted by the project demonstrate little quantitative gender parity and no qualitative measures to ensure gender-mainstreaming; community-level water-user | PMU: Gender officer ensures gender considerations are considered. | Continuous for the duration of the project | The cost of implementing the gender activities for Activity 2.3.1 will be covered by the PMU Gender Officer's salary. |

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| | constraints to natural resources. | <p>groups (WUGs) have not been set up yet.</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> Level of engagement of women structures (% of women participating in discussions⁵² disaggregated by ethnic group, age, and marital status + opinions expressed + decisions impacted).</p> <p><u>Target:</u> Women are actively participating in local governance structures, accounting for 50% of the members, including representatives of all communities, women of all ages, and marital status; women express their opinions, and these are taken into account in influencing each decision-making process related to the project</p> | | | |
| | 39. Ensure all women, including indigenous and other marginalised women, are equitably consulted and participate in the development of the livelihood activities and value chains to be supported by the project. | <p><u>Baseline:</u> No consultations.</p> <p><u>Indicator:</u> Number of awareness activities providing targeted information to women on potential micro-credits for livelihood alternatives.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> 50% of the livelihood activities supported by the project specifically target women.</p> | <p>PMU:</p> <p>Gender officer ensures gender considerations are considered</p> | Continuous for the duration of the project | The cost of implementing the gender activities for Activity 2.3.1 will be covered by the PMU Gender Officer's salary. |
| Activity 2.3.2. Establish an on-granting mechanism | 40. Ensure at least 40% of grants are awarded to women- | <u>Baseline:</u> Women receive limited access to climate adaptation financing. | PMU: | Continuous for the duration of the project | The cost of implementing the gender activities for |

⁵² Participation of sub-groups to be measured from onset; decrease may indicate an issue related to limited interest in the project and should trigger further consultations.

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| to channel government funds and income generated via sustainable agricultural livelihoods towards continued investment in EbA. | led agricultural initiatives. Women often face barriers to accessing financing, limiting their ability to scale up climate-resilient farming. | <u>Indicator:</u> % of on-granting funds awarded to women-led agricultural initiatives. <u>Target:</u> At least 40% of grants are allocated to women-led initiatives. | Gender officer ensures gender considerations are considered Financial & Administrative Officer manages grant allocations. | | Activity 2.3.2 will be covered by the PMU Gender Officer's salary. |
| | 41. Develop tailored financial literacy training for women and men in rural areas. Many rural farmers lack experience with formal banking and financial management, limiting their ability to effectively utilise grants. | <u>Baseline:</u> Women lack financial literacy training tailored to their needs. <u>Indicator:</u> Number of training initiatives per target commune. <u>Target:</u> At least one training initiative per target commune with at least 30% financial literacy trainees being women | PMU: Gender officer ensures gender considerations are considered | Years 2–3 | US\$ 400.00 ⁵³ |
| | 42. Encourage collective women-led cooperatives to access financing as groups. Women often lack collateral for individual loans but can access financing through group-based funding models. | <u>Baseline:</u> Women farmers have limited access to peer support and mentoring. <u>Indicator:</u> % of trained female farmers participating in peer mentoring networks. <u>Target:</u> At least one mentoring programme per target commune. | PMU: Gender officer ensures gender considerations are considered | Continuous for the duration of the project | The cost of implementing the gender activities for Activity 2.3.2 will be covered by the PMU Gender Officer's salary. |
| | Total: USD 338,400 | | | | |

⁵³ Cost for a contracted financial expert or NGO to design an on-granting facility with revolving fund mechanism, performance-based milestones, repayment schemes and sub-project selection criteria at US\$400.00 per day.

