

Gender Action Plan

FP309: Resilient Water Systems for All (RWS4All): Deep Adaptation Pathways for Water Infrastructure in Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan

Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan | European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) |
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5. Gender Action Plan

Climate change risks are projected to disproportionately affect women due to entrenched gender inequalities in asset ownership and in access to information, jobs, finance, and markets. To tackle these pertinent gender inequalities, EBRD proposes to integrate gender activities in the RWS4All programme.

The proposed gender activities described below, are informed by EBRD's unique private-sector approach and experience working with the GCF on previous GCF-EBRD programmes such as the Green Cities Facility (Funded Activity FP086) and the Green Economic Financing Facilities programme ("GEFF Programme", Funded Activity FP025) as well as our experience integrating gender-related objectives in water projects across the region.

In line with EBRD's Gender SMART methodology, gender activities will be integrated into investments enhancing equality of opportunity in the water sector by building institutional capacity and promoting women's representation. The main objective is to promote equitable access to water services and associated economic opportunities for women and men, ensuring that programme benefits are shared fairly and that no group is disadvantaged by project design, reforms, or investment decisions. Its purpose is to make the water sector more accessible and inclusive for women, both as users of services and as participants in sector institutions and value chains, through gender-responsive service delivery, targeted measures to address barriers to participation and employment, and clear accountability for results during implementation.

Taken together, the activities will promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, hence contributing to the achievement of SDG 5.

The EBRD's approach to promoting gender equality into the program is aligned with the strategic goals of the Green Climate Fund's updated Gender Policy and Action Plan and with the EBRD's Gender Equality and Human Capital Strategy (2026-2030), by focusing on "gender-responsive climate action programs and projects that benefit women and men." The gender activities specified under this program will be overseen and led by EBRD's dedicated expert team working on Gender & Economic Inclusion.

The following indicative Gender Action Plan summarises gender-focused activities that will be applied proportionately to participating utilities and subprojects, in line with system scale, risk profile, and implementation readiness. The actions below are applied proportionately and prioritised in water systems where the feasibility study identifies a convergence of high climate exposure, service unreliability, and social and gender vulnerability, ensuring that gender actions directly support improved service resilience and user outcomes. Activities will be implemented at the sub-project level and systematically aggregated and reported, where feasible, at the programme level to enable tracking of overall gender outcomes.

Component	Activities	Indicators and Targets	Timeline	Responsibilities	
Impact Statement: Enhance equality of opportunity in the water sector by building institutional capacity and promoting women's representation					
Outcome 1: A strengthened enabling environment of the water sector at the national level provides boundary conditions for climate resilient and gender-responsive water service provision					
<i>Output 1.1: National legal and regulatory reforms supported</i> <i>Activity 1.1.2: Mainstreaming climate adaptation and social inclusion in water services</i> Sub-activity 1.1.2.3: Review and update practices on promoting women's representation in decision-making bodies in participating water sector institutions (incl. relevant KPIs for annual monitoring and reporting)	Update practices in decision-making bodies in participating water sector institutions to promote women's representation and participation and track its progress via relevant KPIs for annual monitoring and reporting.	1.1.2.3: Updated stakeholder practices on women's representation in decision-making bodies (Baseline: No, Target: Yes) 1.1.2.3: % of women in decision-making bodies in participating water sector institutions (Baseline established during programme)	By end of 2 nd year, Q1 2029.	Relevant national counterpart (Accountable) Specialist consultant (Responsible for drafting outputs) EBRD G&EI team (technical guidance/QA)	

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		inception, year-on-year maintenance or improvement tracked and reported)			
<i>Output 1.2: Guidance and tools for water system operators on climate resilience and inclusion developed</i> <i>Activity 1.2.3: International knowledge sharing on best practices for climate resilient and inclusion water services</i> Sub-activity 1.2.3.3: Share best practices and lessons learned in form of at least one workshop and knowledge piece on mainstreaming gender equality and inclusivity in the water sector to an international audience	Organise a workshop and develop a knowledge piece to share best practices and lessons learned in both countries, bringing regional perspectives and experiences to share with an international audience, including other countries in the region and relevant stakeholders.	1.2.3.3: Number of workshop and knowledge pieces delivered (Target: 2) 1.2.3.3: % of women participating in workshop (Baseline established during programme inception, Target to be set according to baseline either maintenance or improvement)	By end of programme, Q4 2030	Relevant national counterpart (Accountable) Specialist consultant (Responsible for drafting outputs) EBRD G&EI team (technical guidance/QA)	

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<i>Output 1.3: Water sector Climate Resilience Transition Platform(s) established</i> <i>Activity 1.3.2: Operation of Climate Resilience Transition Platforms, including gender considerations</i> Sub-activity 1.3.2.2: Develop guidance and toolkit on adopting gender and equal opportunities action plans (incl. GBVH prevention policies) at the utility-level in each country	Develop and publish a toolkit on how to develop and implement gender and equal opportunities action plans and GBVH prevention policies at the utility level for other utility companies and municipalities to replicate.	1.3.2.2: Guidance and toolkit on gender and equal opportunities action plans developed in each country (Yes/No)	By end of first year, Q1 2028	Relevant national counterpart (Accountable) Specialist consultant (Responsible for drafting outputs) EBRD G&EI team (technical guidance/QA)	
Outcome 2: Water utilities have the institutional capacity to provide resilient and inclusive water services and integrate climate risk into their strategic planning					
<i>Output 2.2: Enhanced adaptive capacity of water utilities through implementation of corporate development programmes (CDPs)</i>	For each participating water utility, undertake the following activities: Conduct gender assessment:	2.2.1.7.1: # utilities with gender assessment completed			

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Activity 2.2.1 Increase adaptive capacity of water utilities through corporate development support, including gender considerations • Sub-activity 2.2.1.7.1: Utility gender assessment completed (baseline and priorities)	- Assessment carried out during programme inception and early implementation to establish baseline gender gaps and to identify context-specific barriers and priorities for each subproject. - Carry out I subproject level baseline survey to define outcome (benefit) indicators. - Where feasible, collect data on time burdens associated with: caring for family members with water-borne diseases, collecting water or making it safe for use, disposing of wastewater, distances travelled to collect water. -	(Baseline 0; Target 8) • •	By end of programme, Q4 2030. Note implementation is sub-project dependent.	Utility/Client (Accountable) Implementation consultant (Responsible for delivery of gender assessment/action plan and integration into CDP deliverables) Utility/PIU Gender Focal Point (coordination, follow-up, reporting) EBRD G&EI and/or dedicated gender specialist consultant (technical guidance and QA).	

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<i>Output 2.2: Enhanced adaptive capacity of water utilities through implementation of corporate development programmes (CDPs)</i> Activity 2.2.1 Increase adaptive capacity of water utilities through corporate development support, including gender considerations Sub-activity 2.2.1.7.2: Develop and implement gender and equal opportunities action plans	Develop and implement gender and equal opportunities action plans: - Develop and implement gender and equal opportunities action plans for each sub-project. - Provide implementation support for sub-project GAPs, including integration into sub-project workplans/responsibilities, periodic follow-up during implementation and consolidation of implementation progress for programme reporting. - Ensure action plans incorporate GBVH prevention measurements. - Sub-project GAPs will include context-specific qualitative outcome indicators related to service experience and benefits (e.g. perceived changes in service	2.2.1.7.2: Number of gender and equal opportunities action plans developed and implemented (Baseline: 0, Target: 8)	By end of programme, Q4 2030. Note implementation is sub-project dependent.	Utility/Client (Accountable) Implementation consultant (Responsible for delivery of gender assessment/action plan and integration into CDP deliverables) Utility/PIU Gender Focal Point (coordination, follow-up, reporting) EBRD G&EI and/or dedicated gender specialist consultant (technical guidance and QA).	

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	reliability, water quality, health risks and time burdens for women), defined and assessed through consultations, surveys or user feedback tools.				
<i>Output 2.2: Enhanced adaptive capacity of water utilities through implementation of corporate development programmes (CDPs)</i> Activity 2.2.1 Increase adaptive capacity of water utilities through corporate development support, including gender considerations Sub-activity 2.2.1.7.3: Gender-responsive community engagement	As part of Gender Action Plan include provisions to: - Engage women as community-level change agents in demand-side water management, such as: promoting water conservation behaviours, encouraging timely leak reporting and supporting inclusive feedback mechanisms). - Apply gender-sensitive and inclusive community engagement approaches that promote equitable sharing of household water management responsibilities and engage different groups, (e.g., men, community	2.2.1.7.3: Number of sub-projects implementing gender-responsive community engagement activities (Baseline: 0, Target: 8)	By end of programme, Q4 2030. Note implementation is sub-project dependent.	Utility/Client (Accountable) Implementation consultant (Responsible for delivery of gender assessment/action plan and integration into CDP deliverables) Utility/PIU Gender Focal Point (coordination, follow-up, reporting) EBRD G&EI and/or dedicated gender specialist consultant (technical guidance and QA).	

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	leaders, women-led organisations etc.)				
<i>Output 2.2: Enhanced adaptive capacity of water utilities through implementation of corporate development programmes (CDPs)</i> Activity 2.2.1 Increase adaptive capacity of water utilities through corporate development support, including gender considerations • Sub-activity 2.2.1.7.4: Utility sex-disaggregated data and monitoring	Strengthen utility level data and monitoring systems: - Ensure data collection, monitoring and evaluation practices are updated at the utility level to feature sex-disaggregated data. - Update monitoring and evaluation practices of utilities to track: beneficiaries by sex, service-experience and access. - Introduce programme-level aggregation of sub-projects, where feasible	• 2.2.1.7.4: Number of utilities with updated data systems capturing sex-disaggregated data (Baseline: 0, Target: 8)	By end of programme, Q4 2030. Note implementation is sub-project	Utility/Client (Accountable) Implementation consultant (Responsible for delivery of gender assessment/action plan and integration into CDP deliverables) Utility/PIU Gender Focal Point (coordination, follow-up, reporting) EBRD G&EI and/or dedicated gender specialist consultant (technical guidance and QA).	
<i>Output 2.2: Enhanced adaptive capacity of water utilities through implementation of corporate development programmes (CDPs)</i>	Enable-data-driven and gender responsive investment planning: - Use sex-disaggregated data to inform planning of	• 2.2.1.7.5: Sub-project level analysis conducted to establish	By end of programme, Q4 2030. Note implementation is sub-project	Utility/Client (Accountable) Implementation consultant (Responsible for	

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Activity 2.2.1 Increase adaptive capacity of water utilities through corporate development support, including gender considerations Sub-activity 2.2.1.7.5: Enable data-driven and gender responsive investment planning	capital investments in the water sector - Ensure data supports equitable measurement of benefits under Component 3 (water security investments) once sub-projects are identified through feasibility studies - Support equitable distribution of services through improved digitalisation and automation systems. - Prioritise these actions in systems where there is convergence of high climate exposure and service unreliability (as identified in Chapter), and significant social and gender vulnerability (as assessed in Chapter 7)	gender-related outcome (benefit) indicators (Baseline: No, Target Yes)		delivery of gender assessment/action plan and integration into CDP deliverables) Utility/PIU Gender Focal Point (coordination, follow-up, reporting) EBRD G&EI and/or dedicated gender specialist consultant (technical guidance and QA).	
<i>Output 2.2: Enhanced adaptive capacity of water utilities through implementation of corporate development programmes (CDPs)</i>	Establish a programme-level approach to aggregate gender-related outputs/outcomes reported by sub-projects by:	2.2.1.8: Annual programme-level consolidated	By end of Year 1: reporting fields/templates established	Programme PIU / Programme M&E Lead (Accountable) Implementation consultant / M&E	

Component	Activities	Indicators and Targets	Timeline	Responsibilities	
Activity 2.2.1 Increase adaptive capacity of water utilities through corporate development support, including gender considerations • Sub-activity 2.2.1.8: Programme-level aggregation and reporting of gender-related results	- Defining a small core set of gender-related outcome/output fields to be reported consistently by all sub-projects (using sex-disaggregated data requirements already set out in the Annex), - Consolidating sub-project reporting into an annual programme-level summary for reporting and learning, programme-level aggregation and synthesis of gender results will be coordinated with the Climate Resilience Transition Platform (Component 1, Activity 1.3.2) and used to inform programme-level learning and reporting. - Qualitative findings from sub-project GAPs (e.g. on health, service delivery and time poverty) will be synthesised thematically at programme level and reported alongside quantitative results.	gender results summary produced using aggregated sub-project reporting (Baseline: 0; Target: 1 annually from Year 2 to programme end)	Annually from Year 2 to programme end	specialist (Responsible for consolidation) Utility/PIU Gender Focal Points (Provide sub-project inputs) EBRD G&EI team (Technical guidance/QA)	

Component	Activities	Indicators and Targets	Timeline	Responsibilities	
<i>Output 2.2: Enhanced adaptive capacity of water utilities through implementation of corporate development programmes (CDPs)</i> Activity 2.2.1 Increase adaptive capacity of water utilities through corporate development support, including gender considerations Sub-activity 2.2.1.9: Training conducted to relevant personnel to build capacity to enhance understanding and implementation of the action plans and how to deliver inclusive and gender-responsive water services	Develop and deliver capacity building and training: - Develop training material and organise training of trainers (TOT) programmes for o relevant personnel (e.g., HR and managers) - Build capacity to support effective implementation of equal opportunities and gender and delivery of inclusive and gender-responsive water services. - Include practical guidance on gender-responsive demand-side engagement, including approaches to engage women as community-level change agents to improve water efficiency. - Provide guidance on gender-transformative community engagement	2.2.1.9: Tailored training/ capacity building programme to enhance understanding and implementation of the action plans and how to deliver inclusive and gender-responsive water services developed and implemented (Baseline: No, Target: Yes) 2.2.1.9: Number of capacity building initiatives completed at	By end of programme, Q4 2030. Note implementation is sub-project dependent	Utility/PIU (Accountable) Training provider/implementation consultant (Responsible for delivery) Utility/PIU Gender Focal Point (participant mobilisation and follow-up) EBRD G&EI and/or dedicated gender specialist consultant (review of training content, delivery approach, and quality assurance).	

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	including: addressing restrictive norms around household water responsibilities, and engaging men and community leaders where appropriate - Reinforce GBVH/SEAH prevention expectations and reporting pathways . In line with Annex 6.	water utility level (Baseline: 0, Target: 8) • 2.2.1.9: Number of individuals enhancing their skills as a result of training (improved understanding of gender-responsive service delivery and/or GBVH-related obligations based on pre/post training assessment or short learning check) • 2.2.1.9: % of women participating in capacity building initiatives for water utilities			

Component	Activities	Indicators and Targets	Timeline	Responsibilities	
		(Baseline established during programme inception, Target to be set according to baseline either maintenance or improvement)			

6. Gender-Responsive Monitoring, Reporting and Learning

Despite the availability of national and sectoral data, significant gaps remain at sub-national and system levels, particularly in relation to service continuity, affordability, disability-inclusive access, and gender-disaggregated use of service experience and customer engagement outcomes. To ensure systematic integration of sex-disaggregated data across the programme, the minimum disaggregation requirement for all gender-relevant indicators and monitoring will be: (i) sex and location; and (ii) age where feasible. These requirements will be applied across all programme components, including utility baselining and corporate development activities, participation in community engagement and consultations, tracking of service experience and monitoring of economic inclusion outcomes (e.g., employment and training participation). Data collection tools, templates and reporting requirements will be updated accordingly so that disaggregated results can be routinely analysed and used to inform adaptive management and reporting. Monitoring of grievances and SEAH/GBV-related reporting channels and response performance is addressed under Annex 6 (ESMF) and reported through the E&S monitoring framework, with Annex 8 tracking gender equality and economic inclusion indicators that relate to participation, employment, and equitable access. These gaps will be addressed during implementation through targeted primary data collection and participatory monitoring, with gender indicators integrated into the programme monitoring and evaluation framework. Gender-related indicators will be integrated into the programme results framework and EBRD reporting cycles, ensuring consistency with Environmental and Social Policy requirements and GCF gender monitoring standards as well as EBRD's gender smart process.

The findings of this annex directly inform the GAAP, which translates identified risks and opportunities into concrete actions, indicators, and responsibilities to ensure gender and social considerations are systematically embedded in project design, implementation, and monitoring. The GAAP will also be operationalised through a structured learning agenda under the Climate Resilience Transition Plan (CRTP), generating evidence on what works in demand-side engagement programmes, affordability and social support instruments, and governance and reform measures (including performance-based arrangements), and using this learning to iteratively refine actions and targets over the course of implementation.

7. Budget and resourcing

The activities under the GAAP, over the course of the entire programme across both target countries, are based on an indicative budget allocation EUR 330,000 (USD 390,000), subject to the availability of GCF funding and additional donor co-financing, as specified in the Programme funding proposal. This allocation will provide minimum, fit-for-purpose resourcing to integrate gender requirements into core delivery activities, including specialist consultants, updates to practices and tools for sex-disaggregated data collection, stakeholder engagement and routine monitoring and evaluation, as well as targeted capacity building (including training-of-trainers) and structured knowledge exchange through programme coordination platforms (including GWOPA-style peer learning where feasible), among others.

Note: USD equivalents at EUR 1 = USD 1.180638 are rounded to the nearest thousand for presentation; EUR values remain as per the TA budget and will be refined during implementation.

8. Implementation Arrangements

Implementation of the GAP will be embedded and reported in overall programme governance, with defined roles:

- The EBRD's gender and economic inclusion team will provide strategic oversight in coordination with EBRD's banking team, manage the technical assistance with consultants and provide technical guidance to ensure alignment with EBRD and GCF requirements and verify progress through periodic reviews;
- Utilities will lead service delivery actions and updates to internal practices (e.g., data collection);
- Municipalities will support community outreach and inclusion of vulnerable groups;
- Accountability will be maintained through designated gender focal points at PIU/client level (and, where appropriate, within utilities/municipalities).

GAP progress will be reported through specific project timelines, with an annual consolidated review aligned to work planning and results reporting cycles. Results will also be reported and collected at the programme level, where feasible. Delivery will be closely coordinated with the RPS team and framework consultants so that gender requirements are integrated consistently across baselining, CDPs, demand-side engagement, reform and performance-based arrangements (including climate KPIs and social support standards), and the design and supervision of capital investments, with gender-responsive deliverables embedded in terms of reference and reviewed through joint planning and implementation check-ins.

This means that social and gender considerations influencing system prioritisation at feasibility stage is systematically carried through into project design, implementation, and supervision

To ensure effective implementation of the GAAP and reduce the risk of gender actions being deprioritised, dedicated gender expertise will be embedded in programme delivery arrangements. This will include (i) oversight by EBRD's Gender and Economic Inclusion (G&EI) specialists on water infrastructure and (ii) assignment of dedicated gender expertise at project/sub-project level (either through a designated gender expert within the PIU/PMU structure or through specialist consultant support) to provide hands-on technical guidance, review and quality assurance of gender-related deliverables, and support implementation by utilities and municipalities.

Gender focal points and accountability: Each participating utility/PIU will designate a gender focal point to coordinate day-to-day delivery of GAAP actions and serve as the interface with the programme gender expert(s). The gender expert(s) will support the focal points and ensure that gender requirements are integrated into workplans, stakeholder engagement activities, capacity building and monitoring (including sex-disaggregated data requirements), and that progress is reported through routine and at the programme level.

These approaches will be implemented through gender-responsive stakeholder engagement modalities (SEP) at sub-project level, while GBVH/SEAH risk management and reporting provisions are set out in Annex 6. In line with Annex 6, sub-project client grievance mechanisms will be gender inclusive and responsive, with tailored arrangements for vulnerable people and dedicated GBVH/SEAH reporting channels, including confidential reporting, safe and ethical documentation and follow-up actions. These provisions will be communicated through stakeholder engagement activities to ensure women are aware of and able to use the grievance channels.