

Spotlight on success

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GREEN CITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMME

Global capital providers back GCIP GEDSI criteria for inclusive and accessible infrastructure projects

- GCIP’s GEDSI Capability Team has designed criteria to integrate GEDSI into infrastructure project development – helping to create opportunities for women, disabled people and project-affected people to act as entrepreneurs, leaders, employees and end-users.
- The criteria were received positively by key capital providers in the infrastructure sector, including the Asian Development Bank, FCDO and the World Bank.
- The GEDSI criteria will be piloted in Mozambique and Ghana and made available for public use.



The creation of opportunities related to gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI) has long been held as the right thing to do in infrastructure project development and investment. From public transport routes that bypass schools to energy projects that do not benefit local communities, infrastructure projects that fail to consider GEDSI can have unintended negative consequences for the independence and safety of women, disabled people and local communities – missing an important opportunity to benefit these groups.

In recent years, however, there has been growing evidence that the creation of GEDSI-related opportunities is also the smart thing to do commercially. A [study of 13,000 enterprises in 70 countries](#) by the International Labour Organization found that companies with initiatives to increase gender diversity in management reported profit increases from 5 percent to 20 percent. Additional research has found that companies that embraced

best practices for employing and supporting people with disabilities achieved [28 percent higher revenue](#).

In light of findings such as these – and in accordance with GCIP’s mission to leverage UK expertise in gender, disability and social inclusion in its work – GCIP’s GEDSI Capability Team has designed a set of criteria to integrate GEDSI into infrastructure project development.

The development of the criteria was informed by a landscape analysis, conducted earlier in 2024, which found that a wide range of infrastructure investors are proactively identifying, assessing and managing social risks as part of their project and investment proposal development. However, it also revealed that many investors have only recently begun to identify and realise GEDSI-related benefits, and these are mostly limited to those related to gender.

Following the two-month design process, GCIP subjected the criteria to two peer review briefings in

August 2024. The briefings were facilitated 2X Global, a global network specialising in promoting gender-smart investing. They were attended by key capital providers in the infrastructure sector, including Acumen, Actis, African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, British International Investment, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, FCDO, Infracredit Africa, International Finance Corporation, Private Infrastructure Development Group and the World Bank. There was unanimous acknowledgement among the reviewers that the proposed GEDSI criteria will help infrastructure project developers and sponsors create inclusive, accessible infrastructure.

Following the peer review, the GEDSI criteria will be piloted in Mozambique and Ghana, two of GCIP’s Deep Offer Countries, and made available for public use. A dedicated toolkit will also be developed to support the adoption and implementation of the GEDSI criteria across GCIP’s projects and beyond.