

GEDSI-Lens Toolkit for Infrastructure Project Developers



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Glossary

Accessibility: The practice of making information, activities, and/or physical infrastructure and environments relevant, meaningful, and usable for as many people as possible.

Beneficiary: For some projects, the beneficiary may be the same as the end user. For other projects the end user might utilise the project deliverable to deliver improved services to a customer.

Business case: A document that provides an outline of a project and a detailed justification for it, considering the potential opportunity, benefits, risks and costs.

Capital Providers: The provider of funds/investments for a project.

Concessionaire: A private party that receives a concession (agreement) from a public sector body to provide and operate infrastructure and/or services for a period of time with certain operational rights including receiving user fees related to the operational management of the infrastructure/service.

Contractor: The party responsible for delivering the project, or part of the project. This may be a construction company or an entity that provides workforce.

Disability: Long-term mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various attitudinal, informational and environmental barriers, may hinder full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Disability inclusion: A process that actively seeks to ensure the full participation of persons with disabilities as empowered self-advocates in all development processes and emergency responses. Specifically, disability inclusion addresses barriers that hinder access to key services and employment opportunities, and highlights ways to improve health and social wellbeing outcomes.

Employer: The Employer is the party that contracts (employs) the parties that will deliver the project; i.e. they are party to the contracts with each delivery partner.

End-user: The person, people or entity that will use the infrastructure or services delivered by the project. For example, for a water project the end user may be the water utility company or one of its subsidiaries.

Gender: Socially constructed roles, attributes, opportunities and relationships that a given society considers appropriate for men and women. While many societies recognise that there are more than two genders, for the purposes of this analysis we focus on men and women. Expectations relating to gender differ from society to society and change over time.

Gender bond: Gender bonds are a type of sustainable bond specifically designed to channel financing into projects and initiatives that advance gender equality and women's empowerment, aiming to reduce gender inequalities and promote women's access to resources and opportunities.¹

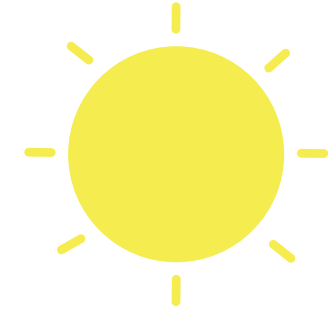
Gender equality: Women having the same opportunities in life as men, including equal access to services, equal pay for equal work, equal participation in decision-making, etc.

Intersectionality: The "interconnected nature of social categorisations as they apply to a given individual or group which overlap creating unique systems of disadvantage and discrimination".² Although "women" or "people with disabilities" sometimes refers to a single population, it is a diverse group of people with a wide range of needs and who can have different types of identifiers, disabilities or profiles, that overlap.



¹ [Gender bonds: A promising solution to accelerate SDG5](#)

² [UN INTERSECTIONALITY RESOURCE GUIDE AND TOOLKIT](#)



Local communities: The persons or groups of people living in, working in and/or with significant connections with any areas that are impacted (positively and negatively, directly and indirectly) by a project.

Operator: The party responsible for operating the item that has been delivered and handed over to the client.

Organisation of Persons with Disabilities (OPD): Organisations that are led and controlled by disabled individuals. These organisations are the authentic voice of the disability movement and play a crucial role in advocating for the rights and needs of the disabled community, and they provide valuable support and services to their members.³

Procurement: The strategic process of sourcing and acquiring the goods and services that a public or private sector organisation needs to fulfil its mandate or business objectives.

Project-affected person: Any person who, as a result of the implementation of a project, loses the right to own, use, or otherwise benefit from a built structure, land (residential, agricultural, or pasture), annual or perennial crops and trees, or any other fixed or moveable asset, either in full or in part, permanently or temporarily (*IFC Definition*).

Project Company: A project company is the entity that is the direct or indirect owner of a project.

Project Design: The comprehensive and detailed planning and design of infrastructure projects.

Project Developer: A project developer is an individual or entity responsible for planning, coordinating, and overseeing the entire lifecycle of a project.

Promoter: The public entity that initiates a project.

Senior Management: Senior management incorporates the highest levels of management in an organisation and often includes heads of various departments.

Social inclusion: The process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society – improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity.⁴ The Social inclusion pillar of the present GEDSI Criteria specifically focuses on the inclusion of members of local communities (see “Local Communities” above).

SPV: An SPV (special purpose vehicle) is a legal entity formed with the purpose of sharing risks and pooling the resources and capital for the delivery of a project.

Sponsor: The project sponsor is also the project ‘owner’ and may be an organisation, a person or group of people at senior management level who promote the project and are responsible for ensuring that a project is delivered successfully and remains aligned with intended project objectives.

Supplier: A party responsible for the provision of services or equipment.

Supply Chain: The network of suppliers involved in the design, construction and operation of an infrastructure project.

Universal Design: Seven principles that were developed by a multidisciplinary working group of architects, product designers, engineers and environmental design researchers in 1997, which sets out how design of physical infrastructure and spaces and information can be accessible to as wide a group as possible. The principles have also become relevant to digital information and tools.

³ [Disability Rights UK: Organisation of People with Disabilities.](#)

⁴ [World Bank, Social Inclusion, United Nations DESA Programme on Social Inclusion | Division for Inclusive Social Development \(DISD\)](#)

Executive Summary

As part of the FCDO-funded Green Cities and Infrastructure Programme, a capability that supports infrastructure project preparation to apply a Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI)-Lens to unlock capital has been developed. The increasing codification of this requirement in individual investor policies reflects the evolving industry recognition that GEDSI considerations in investments and projects are not only the 'right' thing to do but can also lead to strong financial and economic results – making it the 'smart' thing to do.

To respond to the findings from an initial scoping phase that mapped the approach of leading climate finance/ capital providers to GEDSI, GCIP has developed a set of GEDSI-Lens criteria and this toolkit that supports and further details the criteria, with the aim of ensuring that projects/project pipelines integrate GEDSI criteria across the infrastructure planning and development process.

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide guidance and tools to key practitioners in the infrastructure ecosystem to design and deliver projects that meet the standards and empowerment ambitions codified in the GEDSI Lens criteria. The guidance will help developers to respond to the changing investor landscape and to fill a gap by providing clear, simple and practical/user-friendly metrics to translate changing investor requirements into practical measures.

The primary target audience is project developers, mainly public sector, but it can also be relevant for private sector-entities.



Introduction

Green Cities and Infrastructure Programme (GCIP) and Investor Trends

The Green Cities and Infrastructure Programme (GCIP) is a demand-driven facility which will enable the United Kingdom's (UK) Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) to scale up and improve programming for infrastructure and cities in developing and emerging countries. The overarching objective of GCIP is to accelerate responsible, reliable, inclusive, low-carbon and climate resilient growth, and to reduce poverty. To achieve this, one of GCIP's key aims is to prepare bankable projects and develop green and inclusive project pipelines that can access climate finance and wider sustainable investment in infrastructure (including urban development).

As part of GCIP, an opportunity has been identified to develop a capability that supports infrastructure project preparation to apply a Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI)-Lens to unlock capital. In developing this capability, GCIP undertook a scoping phase where a Landscape Analysis Brief (LAB) was developed. This focused on Multilateral Development Banks, Development Financial Institutions, and Multilateral Climate Funds as key investors in the financing of infrastructure and urban development in Asia and Africa.

The LAB identified that key investors are increasingly recognising the importance of managing social risk to avoid adverse impacts in their investments and projects, with all investors embedding a requirement for investments/projects to meet a minimal standard of compliance relating to social risks. This includes identification and management of potential GEDSI related risks and adverse impacts. Furthermore, it found that many of the key investors have recently introduced additional requirements for investments/projects to identify opportunities to increase benefits and access to benefits especially for vulnerable groups (including women, people with disabilities, and people affected by the project). The increasing codification of this requirement in individual investor policies reflects the evolving industry recognition that GEDSI considerations in investments and projects are not only the 'right' thing to do but can also lead to strong financial and economic results – making it the 'smart' thing to do.

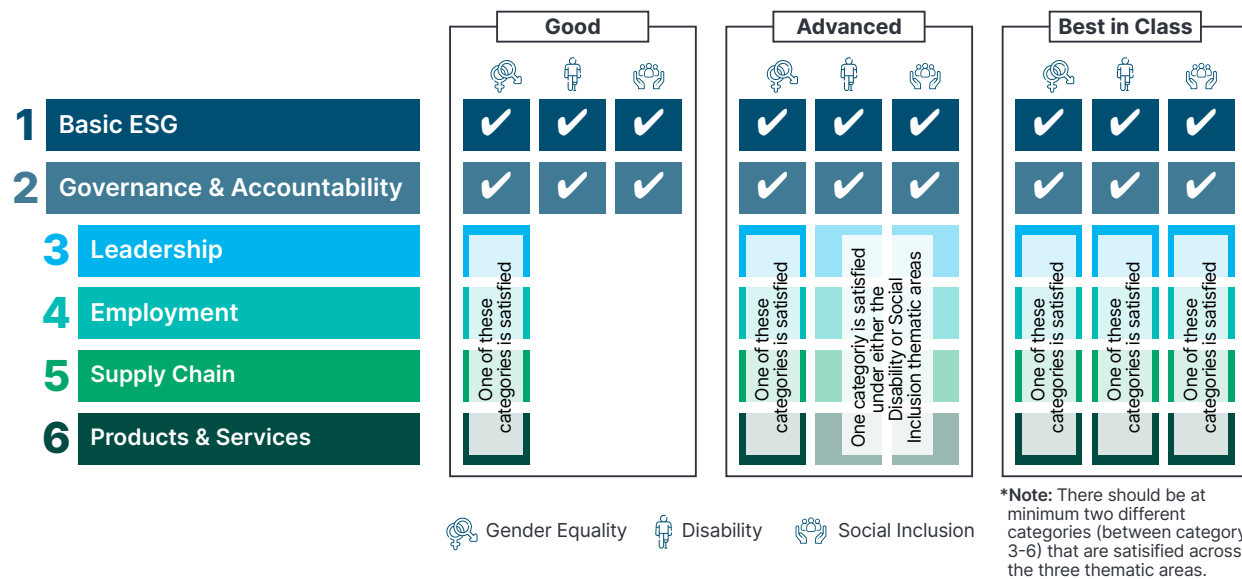
To respond to the findings from the scoping phase, GCIP has developed a set of GEDSI-Lens criteria, which built on, and extended, the 2X criteria and were peer-reviewed with the support of 2X Global⁵ by an extensive number of capital providers⁶ in the infrastructure sector and are detailed later in the document. This toolkit supports and further details the criteria, with the aim of ensuring that projects/project pipelines, that are identified, prioritised and developed with technical assistance support, integrate GEDSI criteria across the infrastructure planning and development process.

The GEDSI Lens Criteria have been developed as a way for project developers/sponsors to evidence how the project goes beyond assessing risk and intentionally incorporates benefits in Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion to maximise impact.

A tiered approach to assessing the alignment with GEDSI criteria is proposed. This approach, summarised on page 7 and that builds on the criteria described at page 10, encourages projects to move from one 'standard' or level of ambition to the next, going from good, to advanced, to best in class.

⁵ [2X Global](#) is a global membership network and field-building organisation for investors, capital providers, and intermediaries working in public and private markets, across both developed and emerging economies, that has spearhead gender-lens investing.

⁶ Peer reviewers included: Actis; Acumen Fund; ADB; AFC Capital Partner; AfDB; BII; IFC; InfraCredit and PIDG.



Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion in the infrastructure sector

Infrastructure is vital for societal development and economic progress, but benefits are often not distributed equally. Inadequate consideration of barriers related to gender, disability, and other social factors (e.g. age, race and ethnicity) can result in exclusion and disproportionate impacts on groups affected by marginalisation. Recognising the different ways in which diverse groups of people utilise infrastructure, and how wider social inclusion priorities will vary by context (e.g. in relation to ethnicity), it is crucial to explicitly incorporate their distinct needs in infrastructure projects. To foster inclusive and fair growth, it is essential to integrate Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) across the entire project cycle.^{7,8}

Approximately 15-20% of the world's population (one billion people) have some form of disability, 80% of whom live in developing countries.⁹ Persons with disabilities face a wide range of barriers to accessing

infrastructure and services, including physical, institutional and attitudinal barriers. 191 countries that have ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) are obliged to localise a wide range of provisions for equity and inclusion across a range of areas, including education and employment and accessibility.

Project developers and sponsors have, in recent years, paid increasing consideration for the needs of local communities when designing and delivering infrastructure projects. Many of them have adopted the prevention and remediation of negative project impacts on local communities as standard practice, and leading investors have taken further actions aimed at supporting social inclusion and empowerment of local communities. Adopting a social inclusion lens based on the needs of local communities can lead to smoother implementation and reduced opposition, thus lowering the risk of litigation or costly adaptation, while ensuring that the potential social development benefits of the project are fully realised.¹⁰

Over the last few years, many global organisations, think tanks and industry leaders have researched the benefits of incorporating a GEDSI-lens beyond those flowing directly to the individuals identified under the GEDSI-lens. They also consider the benefits directly to businesses, economies, societies, and the environment if a GEDSI-lens is applied.

Purpose of the toolkit & target audience

To maximise the potential impact in terms of holistically promoting gender equality, disability and social inclusion, intentionality must be built in from the outset. With the recent growth in impact investing (especially gender lens investing spearheaded by 2X

⁷ [10050-PPP-Gender-Toolkit-1.pdf](#)

⁸ [Promoting Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion Through Infrastructure?](#)

⁹ WHO and WB. (2011) [World Report on Disability](#).

¹⁰ <https://commdev.org/work/local-benefit-sharing/>

Global), the entire ecosystem needs further support and development. This means going beyond investors to project developers, entrepreneurs in the supply chain and ultimately end users.

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide guidance and tools to key players in the infrastructure ecosystem to ensure they are delivering projects that meet the minimum standards and empowerment ambitions codified in the GEDSI Lens criteria. Another key purpose of this guidance is to respond to the changing investor landscape and to fill a gap by providing clear, simple and practical/user-friendly metrics to translate changing investor requirements into practical measures.

The primary target audience is project developers, mainly public sector, who may use the criteria and the guidance outlined in this toolkit as detailed below, but it can also be relevant for private sector-entities:

- Develop projects in such a way that they integrate a GEDSI-Lens;
- Demonstrate to any donors and/or investors the management of social risks and maximisation of the social benefits of the project, making the project more 'attractive'; and
- Unlock additional funding sources that require projects to meet specific GEDSI features, e.g. international climate funds.

Business case

The innovative angle of this toolkit is the integration across the three GEDSI dimensions, with a focus on going beyond mitigating risks and looking at harnessing the opportunities. Aligning with the criteria and intentionally integrating GEDSI can lead to being able to: access additional funding sources and innovative financing mechanisms; increase financial returns; reach new customers; and lead to broader benefits in terms of climate and society. Key evidence is summarised below:

Missed funding sources

- Issuance of sustainable linked finance for infrastructure has grown rapidly – more than doubling between 2020 and 2021 – crossing \$6 trillion as of April 2023, according to the IFC.
- While bonds aligned to gender equality objectives remain a smaller portion (just 1% of all sustainability labelled debt deals)¹¹, their growth is consistent: global capital invested in “gender bonds” grew from US\$4.3 billion in 2020 to US\$14.5 billion in 2023. See examples in Box 1.¹²
- The Global Impact Investing Network estimates that 1.57 trillion USD are currently managed in impact investing assets worldwide, representing an annual growth of 21% in the impact investing market since 2019.
- The Green Climate Fund (GCF) invests in projects with positive co-benefits including those specifically related to gender empowerment and social inclusion.¹³

Improved investment terms

- An increasing number of capital providers, especially Development Finance Institutions, are setting targets linked to the rate of 2X-aligned investments they are committed to achieve, including in the infrastructure sector. These targets are, in some cases, accompanied by the availability of technical assistance support or funding.
- 2X Global, in collaboration with the Swiss Development Corporation, has just launched in Davos 2X Impact Rewards. 2X Certified companies raising investment can be rewarded for achieving specific gender outcomes. The reward can be a cash payment, an interest rate step-down, or any other type of financial incentive.
- Concessionary financing structures, like interest rate reductions or performance grants, that are associated with the achievement of gender-related performance targets are emerging. These practices are well-established in other sectors, like financial institutions, but they are starting to be adopted also in infrastructure.¹⁴ Refer to Box 2 for examples.

Box 1: Examples of gender bonds in the infrastructure sector

- **Mexico:** With a mandate to finance infrastructure and public services projects, Banobras (Banco Nacional de Obras y Servicios Públicos) is a state-owned development bank in Mexico. In 2022 the bank updated its sustainable bonds framework to incorporate best practices in climate-related, social and gender equality-focused allocation of national resources. The gender focus areas include the right to equality, affirmative actions, women as agents of change, and zero tolerance of GBV. Following the update, Banobras issued three sustainable bonds, two with allocations for women and girls in transportation services, education, maternal health, and girls' sports and recreation; the bonds raise between 98 million USD and 123 million USD. Banobras issued similar bonds again in 2023. For further details please refer to the following link.
- **Pakistan:** InfraZamin Pakistan is an initiative led by the Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG), developed by PIDG company GuarantCo, to establish a for-profit, credit enhancement facility in Pakistan. Thanks to InfraZamin's guarantee, a three year, USD 8.7 million gender bond was developed and is being used to finance women-led micro-infrastructure projects such as the expansion of schools in rural and semi-rural areas and renovation and development of climate-resilient low-income housing and development. For further details please refer to the following link.

¹¹ [Maximising Impact by Investing in Climate Resilience and Gender Equality: A Twofold Opportunity](#)

¹² UN Women, British International Investment, FSD Africa and FSD Network Gender Collaborative. 2024. [Gender Bonds: A Toolkit for the Design and Issuance of Gender Bonds in Africa](#)

¹³ [Investment framework | Green Climate Fund](#)

¹⁴ <https://www.idbinvest.org/en/publications/guide-promoting-gender-equality-through-performance-based-financial-incentives>

Box 2: Examples of concessional finance in the infrastructure sector

- IDB (InterAmerican Development Bank) Invest has offered interest rate reductions or performance grants, underpinned by gender-related performance milestones such as hiring requirements for women employees in construction and energy projects. In terms of segment, half of the projects belong to infrastructure and energy (52%). For further details please refer to the following [link](#).
- The European Investment Bank has a gender investing strategy that links funding to specific gender outcomes. Among its projects is the Jasmine Private Market Fund, which aims to achieve a workforce composition with over 60% female employees in the new jobs created by portfolio companies. For further details please refer to the following [link](#).

Returns on investment and revenues

- A Peterson Institute for International Economics study of 22,000 companies in 91 countries found that the difference between having no women in corporate leadership and a 30% female share is associated with a one-percentage-point increase in net margin – which translates into a 15% increase in profitability for a typical company.¹⁵
- Higher representation of women at all levels correlated with higher average returns for businesses – with a return on equity which is 2% higher than companies with low gender diversity.¹⁶
- A study by the International Labour Organization of 13,000 enterprises in 70 countries found that companies with initiatives to increase gender diversity in management reported profit increases from 5% to 20%.¹⁷

- Companies that have led on key disability inclusion criteria saw 1.6 times more revenue, 2.6 times more net income and two times more economic profit than other companies surveyed.¹⁸
- Research has found that companies that embraced best practices for employing and supporting people with disabilities achieved 28% higher revenue, double the net income and 30% higher economic profit margins over a four-year period.¹⁹
- Community engagement can increase the long-term financial return of relevant investments. Research by the World Bank suggests that the benefits of community engagement outweigh its costs, for example, by preventing negative long-term consequences.²⁰
- A US survey found local opposition to wind and solar projects to be top reasons for project cancellations and delays. In addition to the risk of cancellation, uncertainty from opposition creates delivery risk and negative financial consequences.²¹

New customers and innovation

- A study by the Centre for Talent Innovation found that companies with diversity are 70% more likely to capture new markets and 75% more likely to get innovative ideas to market.²²
- Companies that include people living with disabilities have an opportunity to understand a key demographic and unlock previously untapped potential.²³
- Companies that meaningfully engage with a wide range of stakeholders are more likely to design global climate change action that is effective, fair, and sustainable and that seeks to address rather than perpetuate existing inequalities.²⁴

GEDSI, climate and society

- A McKinsey Global Institute report estimated that if gender inequalities were eliminated, the region could add \$4.5 trillion to the regional annual gross domestic product in 2025, a 12% increase over the no-action scenario.²⁵

- A 1% increase in the share of women managers within a firm leads to a 0.5% decrease in CO2 emissions as well as a lower growth rate of emissions, 0.6% compared to 3.5% for companies with no women on their board.²⁶
- In low- and middle-income countries, a loss of 3%–7% of gross domestic product (GDP) resulting from the exclusion of people with disabilities from the labour market is estimated.²⁷
- Empowering disadvantaged groups to participate in climate projects can increase GDP. For example, the World Bank estimates losses of between 15 – 40 % in GDP due to disability reducing workforce participation in low-income countries.²⁸
- Some countries are starting to require the integration of gender, disability and/or community inclusion considerations into infrastructure projects. For example, in the US, developers applying for Department of Energy grant and loan programs are required to put forward community benefit plans.

¹⁵ <https://www.piie.com/publications/working-papers/gender-diversity-profitable-evidence-global-survey>

¹⁶ [Applying A Gender Lens To Climate Investing](#)

¹⁷ ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/@publ/documents/publication/wcms_700953.pdf

¹⁸ [The Disability Inclusion Imperative](#)

¹⁹ [Getting to Equal: The Disability Inclusion Advantage | Accenture](#)

²⁰ [Fostering Impact: An investor guide for engaging communities in place-based impact investing](#)

²¹ https://eta-publications.lbl.gov/sites/default/files/w3s_developer_survey_summary_-_011724.pdf

²² [Diversity's Positive Impact on Innovation and Outcomes](#)

²³ <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/huge-talent-pool-missed-by-failure-to-recruit-disabled-staff-r7wflrwhz>

²⁴ Unpacking inclusive climate action – Grantham Research Institute on climate change and the environment

²⁵ J. Woetzel et al. 2018, and The Power of Parity: Advancing Women's Equality in Asia Pacific. New York: McKinsey & Company.

²⁶ Landscape Analysis Brief, GCIP¹

²⁷ The price of exclusion: the economic consequences of excluding people with disabilities from the world of work

²⁸ [30302397_UK PACT GRCE GESI Learning Paper_v5_FINAL - updated.pdf](#)

Overview of GEDSI Lens Criteria and Relevance at Different Stages

The GEDSI Lens Criteria are summarised below. Further details on how to calculate them are provided in the toolkit.

Category	Sub-category	Gender Equality		Disability		Social Inclusion	
		Criteria	Threshold	Criteria	Threshold	Criteria	Threshold
Basic ESG	Due Diligence/ Assessment	Basic ESG refers to the basic assessment of an investee/project's fundamental environmental, social and governance (ESG) standards. This includes: 1. alignment with IFC Performance Standards; 2. availability of adequate safeguarding (GBVH, SEAH) systems; 3. availability of non-discrimination policies and practices; 4. confirmation that the project is not negatively affecting project-affected people.					
Governance & Accountability <i>All criteria</i>	Strategic action	Strategic action re: gender	Yes/No	Strategic action re: disability	Yes/No	Strategic action re: social inclusion	Yes/No
	Stakeholder engagement	Stakeholder engagement re: gender	Yes/No	Engaging with Organisation of People with Disabilities (OPDs)	Yes/No	Engagement with local community members	Yes/No
	Data	Gender data	Yes/No	Data re: disability provided as part of stakeholder engagement OR Disability-related data collection	Yes/No	Data re: local community provided as part of community needs assessment OR data collection on local community	Yes/No
Leadership <i>At least one criterion</i>	Board diversity	Share of women on Board of SPV/ Project Company	Varies	Representation of persons with disabilities on the Board of SPV/Project Company	Yes/No	Representation of local community on the Board of SPV/Project Company	Yes/No
	Senior management diversity	Share of women in senior management of SPV/Project Company	Varies	Representation of persons with disabilities in senior management in SPV/Project Company	Yes/No	Representation of local community in senior management of SPV/Project Company	Yes/No
Employment <i>All criteria</i>	Workforce diversity	Share of women in the workforce (SPV, Project Company and Contractors)	Varies	Share of persons with disabilities in the workforce (SPV, Project Company and Contractors)	Varies	Share of local community members in the workforce (SPV, Project Company and Contractors)	Varies
	Workforce efforts	"Quality" employment effort for women in SPV, Project Company and Contractors	Yes/No	"Quality" employment effort for persons with disabilities in SPV, Project Company and Contractors	Yes/No	"Quality" employment effort for local community members in SPV, Project Company and Contractors	Yes/No
Supply chain <i>All criteria</i>	Supply chain commitment	Commitment to women in supply chain (Suppliers, Operators, Other)	Yes/No	Commitment to persons with disabilities in the supply chain (Suppliers, Operators, Other)	Yes/No	Commitment to sourcing from local community (Suppliers, Operators, Other)	Yes/No
	Supply chain enablement	"Quality" effort to enable women participation in supply chain (Suppliers, Operators, Other)	Yes/No	"Quality" effort to enable persons with disabilities participation in supply chain (Suppliers, Operators, Other)	Yes/No	"Quality" effort to enable participation of local community members in supply chain (Suppliers, Operators, Other)	Yes/No
Product(s)/ Service(s) <i>All criteria</i>	Product/Service effects	Product(s)/Service(s) drives positive effect(s) linked to enhancing well-being of women/girls and/or drives gender equity	Yes/No	Product(s)/Service(s) drives positive effect(s) linked to enhancing well-being of persons with disabilities and/or drives disability inclusion	Yes/No	Product(s)/Service(s) drives positive effect(s) linked to enhancing wellbeing of local community and/or drives social inclusion	Yes/No
	Customer/ Beneficiary design focus	The project design has taken measures to ensure that women can both participate in and benefit from the project	Yes/No	The project design has taken measures to ensure that persons with disabilities can both participate in and benefit from the project	Yes/No	The project design has taken measures to ensure that local community members can both participate in and benefit from the project	Yes/No

The table on page 12 provides an overview of how the toolkit is structured. Through the intersection of the stages of the infrastructure project development cycle²⁹ and GEDSI-Lens Criteria, critical activities relevant to each stage have been identified. They are presented in the centre of the table and the toolkit is structured around them. This structure will guide developers through the different stages of the project cycle while also providing detailed methodologies on how to calculate the criteria.

Each activity-related chapter includes the following sections:




- Explanation of what the activity is;
- Description of why GEDSI opportunities should be maximised in the specific activity;
- How the integration of GEDSI opportunities can be achieved across the project cycle, including key messages and detailed actions presented in a table format; and
- Relevant case studies for the specific activity.



²⁹ The infrastructure project development cycle aligns with that of the Public – Private Infrastructure Advisory Facility (PPIAF), the World Bank (WB) and International Finance Corporation (IFC).

Category	Sub-category	Stage 1				Stage 2		Stage 3	
		Inception/ Concept Note	Feasibility	Strategy/Planning (Business case)	Design and Procurement	Construction	Testing and commissioning	Handover and operation	Delivering services
		This stage involves establishing the need for an infrastructure intervention. This requires an understanding of the social context within which the intervention will be designed and delivered.	This stage involves developing and defining the client's requirements and then identifying and appraising options for the development of a Business Case. This may require site investigations, collection of technical data, and understanding of beneficiary needs and should include consultation with potential beneficiaries. This stage marks the start of the ESIA and of other assessments (technical, economic, etc).	This stage involves developing the detailed Business Case (or project design) and considering the programme's governance structure, funding structure, approach to procurement, management of facilities, and risk management.	This stage involves the detailed design of the project, the drafting of the tender documents, through to award of the construction contract.	In this stage, it is important to ensure that construction is carried out in accordance with the design, specification and contract documents, that there is compliance with the contractual arrangements and that any variations under the contract are dealt with professionally and, preferably, with the avoidance of dispute.	This stage involves testing the infrastructure to ensure it is functioning as intended, before commissioning.	This stage involves the formal handover and transfer of the infrastructure by the contractor to the client. It is important to ensure that the client, or the operating entity, has the knowledge and capability to operate and maintain the facility.	The construction phase usually provides some development impact. Yet it is once the project is completed, handed over and in operation that the planned outputs and outcomes from the project should start to be realised.
Governance & Accountability	Strategic action	Strategy Development					Strategy Development		
<i>All criteria</i>	Stakeholder engagement	Stakeholder Engagement							
	Data	Data Collection and Analysis							
Leadership	Board diversity			Leadership Selection and Development		Leadership Selection and Development		Leadership Selection and Development	
<i>At least one criterion</i>	Senior management diversity								
Employment	Workforce diversity	Workforce Selection and Development							
<i>All criteria</i>	Workforce efforts								
Supply chain	Supply chain commitment	Procurement of Supply Chain Partners							
<i>All criteria</i>	Supply chain enablement								
Product(s)/ Service(s)	Product/Service effects	Inclusive Design					Inclusive design		
<i>All criteria</i>	Customer/Beneficiary design focus								

Basic ESG




Category	Sub-category	Gender Equality 		Disability 		Social Inclusion 		
		Criteria	Threshold	Criteria	Threshold	Criteria	Threshold	
Basic ESG	Due Diligence/ Assessment	Basic ESG refers to the basic assessment of an investee/project's fundamental environmental, social and governance (ESG) standards. This includes: 1. alignment with IFC Performance Standards; 2. availability of adequate safeguarding (GBVH, SEAH) systems; 3. availability of non-discrimination policies and practices; 4. confirmation that the project is not negatively affecting project-affected people.						

- The 'Basic ESG' criterion refers to the basic assessment of the Environmental and Social risks associated with a project. While the other criteria focus on opportunities, this criterion, together with the Governance criterion, represents a pre-qualification and ensures that key GEDSI-related risks have been identified and addressed.
- This assessment complements, but does not substitute, the detailed due diligence conducted by investors at the time of investment and aims to establish minimum requirements that all projects must meet.
- These requirements can be summarised as:
 - Alignment with IFC Performance Standards – as detailed in the Business Case section of this toolkit, the aim of the GEDSI criteria is to go beyond IFC Performance Standards looking at positive impacts. This criterion aims to ensure that the IFC Performance Standards are applied meaningfully.
 - Availability of adequate safeguarding (gender-based violence and harassment – GBVH, sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment – SEAH) systems – particular attention should be paid to the existence of robust systems to manage risks linked with gender-based violence and harassment. These processes are also mentioned in other sections of the toolkit as they are recognised as key risks, for example, during construction stage, but it is the 'Basic ESG' criterion that ensures that these risks are minimised.
 - Availability of non-discrimination policies and practices – similar to safeguarding systems, it is recognised that the presence of non-discrimination policies and practices is at the foundation of projects' ability to identify opportunities for GEDSI-advancement.
 - Confirmation that the project is not negatively impacting project-affected people – while this aspect is core to the meaningful application of IFC Performance Standards, this is identified as a self-standing aspect given its importance to infrastructure projects. This aspect is strongly linked with resettlement and livelihoods restoration, which are addressed also under Stakeholder Engagement.



Activity 1: Strategy Development

Criteria linked with Strategy Development

Category	Sub-category	Gender Equality 		Disability 		Social Inclusion 	
		Criteria	Threshold	Criteria	Threshold	Criteria	Threshold
Governance & Accountability	Strategic action	Strategic action re: gender	Yes/No	Strategic action re: disability	Yes/No	Strategic action re: social inclusion	Yes/No

What is Strategy Development?

Strategy Development is a crucial first activity when designing an infrastructure intervention. It helps to identify and establish the need for the intervention, and provides an understanding of why the project is being designed and delivered. **Developing a specific strategy on GEDSI inclusion or integrating GEDSI aspects into broader project strategies** for infrastructure interventions can help to identify and mitigate negative impacts and ensure that the positive benefits are realised to their full potential. It also guarantees that right structures, capacities and resources are in place to deliver on these ambitions.

For the purpose of this toolkit, this section also covers topics around the procurement of the main contractors. The approach to sub-contractors and supply chain partners is detailed in the [Procurement of Supply Chain Partners](#) section. This is further detailed in Box 3.

Box 3: Procurement

The actions needed for the development of an inclusive procurement strategy for the main/Tier 1 contractors are covered under this section. This is to reflect the fact that the identification of procurement requirements takes place at an early stage of the project cycle and also the level of control that the project developers and sponsor have on this aspect.

Sub-contractors and supply chain partners are instead covered under the Procurement of Supply Chain Partners section.

Why does it matter?

Achieving gender equality, disability and social inclusion requires purposeful and sustained interventions. Interactions between a project and women, persons with disabilities and local communities will likely take multiple forms throughout the lifecycle of a project. A strategic approach to GEDSI, embedded throughout the project, ensures that the specific needs and opportunities of target stakeholders are considered at all stages.

Historically, the perspectives and inclusion of women stakeholders, persons with disabilities and local communities in the planning, design and usage of infrastructure projects are often sorely lacking, despite the unique needs, uses and priorities and impacts related to these projects. Identifying GEDSI-specific risks and opportunities alone is not sufficient: GEDSI-specific risks and opportunities need to be considered, understood, prioritised and addressed throughout the lifecycle of an infrastructure project. See Box 4 for further details.

The integration of social inclusion at the beginning of a project plan reduces the risk of cost-overruns as a project progresses. Infrastructure projects are complex. Infrastructure projects do not work in isolation but as part of complex systems. Getting them to a bankable state (a necessary condition of private finance) is hard and requires rigorous planning and prioritisation and feasibility studies. According to the World Bank, a lack of environmental, social and governance considerations at the beginning of an infrastructure can generate cost overruns between 15 and 70%, and delays from 12 months to 13 years. Retro-engineering projects at a later stage of the project cycle, to include GEDSI issues is very expensive.

Box 4: Governance principles

It is critical that GEDSI perspectives inform project prioritisation and are integrated into a project's detailed strategy/plan, including how the project will be governed, managed, implemented and maintained, as well as the related timelines, roles and responsibilities and costs required to execute related activities. An ex-ante GEDSI inclusion strategy can provide a powerful tool for accountability to ensure the project delivers on planned GEDSI benefits and limits harms.





How is it integrated across the infrastructure project life cycle?



Key messages

- **Early start:** GEDSI-inclusive strategy development begins at the earliest stages of an infrastructure project and should be an intended outcome of an infrastructure project from the very early stages of project conceptualisation.
- **Integration into other studies:** GEDSI considerations should be integrated into any relevant assessments, including early-stage needs assessment, situation analysis and/or pre-feasibility studies, feasibility studies and ESIA/ESMPs.
- **Importance of targets:** While developing GEDSI-related strategies, either combined or self-standing, it is key to pay attention and include in such strategies targets and objectives related to the GEDSI Criteria, namely the inclusion of women, persons with disabilities and local community members in [Leadership](#), [Employment](#) and the [Supply Chain](#). The strategic focus of infrastructure project development is an excellent place to put into practice the mantra of the disability community of 'Nothing about us without us' and drive GEDSI-specific value creation, for example about procurement from women/disabled-owned businesses or businesses owned by local community members.
- **Careful selection:** Select project partners and financing mechanisms that support the objectives of proactively maximising the GEDSI outcomes in the project. An inclusive procurement strategy is key to ensure that the chosen contractors and operators are bought into maximising GEDSI opportunities, which will also be reflected into tender documents and contractual agreements.



Detailed actions

Recommended actions	Stage 1				Stage 2
	Inception/Concept Note	Feasibility	Strategy/Planning (Business case)	Design and Procurement	Testing and commissioning
Criteria Sub-category: Strategic action					
Common across the three thematic areas   	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integrate preliminary GEDSI analysis into early-stage assessments, which can be a quick and desk-based analysis (by a GEDSI expert) that uses macro-level, gender-disaggregated/disability-disaggregated quantitative data (e.g., labor force participation, employment data, time use, access to training/skills development, access to financial services, leadership) and qualitative data (e.g., scan of gender policies/legal frameworks/disability-related frameworks) for a specific country/sector context. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct GEDSI gaps analysis and impact assessments, as further detailed per specific thematic areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish gender, disability and social inclusion targets for the project. - Develop an integrated GEDSI action plan that outlines GEDSI-focused goals and activities of the project including related roles and responsibilities, timelines and costs - Allocate specific resources (e.g., financial, human) to GEDSI-related activities across the full project life cycle including design, operations and maintenance. - Revise cost estimates associated with technical requirements and/or design features to appropriately address GEDSI-specific aspects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop an inclusive procurement strategy for the Tier 1 contractors (not classified as supply chain). - Provide training to procurement staff on how to integrate GEDSI into procurement processes and documents - Develop GEDSI-related qualification requirements. - Integrate GEDSI into evaluation criteria. - Establish GEDSI-specific performance requirements/clauses in contracts regarding Contractors' commitments and targets - Link payments to performance against GEDSI plans/targets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor compliance with contractual obligations, GEDSI goals and GEDSI-specific impacts. - Monitor and assess performance of infrastructure and services against GEDSI objectives. - Take remedial action if planned objectives are not on track to be met.
Specific for Gender Equality 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct a comprehensive gender gap analysis to explore gender differences in communities affected by the project, which can be integrated with an ESIA and/or preliminary gender analysis, conducted by a gender expert and involve both data collection and gender-sensitive stakeholder consultations. - Conduct a gender impact assessment that: builds on gender gap analysis and/or is part of ESIA; explores how a project may impact women and men across its full life cycle, including construction and service delivery; helps identify gender-specific risks (e.g., GBVH, job loss, resettlement) and opportunities (e.g., employment, skills development, supplier development) associated with the project; and assesses measures to manage gender-specific risks and opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a stand-alone gender strategy and/or integrate gender into the broader project strategy. - Develop a Gender Action Plan (GAP) that outlines gender-focused goals and activities of the project including related roles and responsibilities, timelines and costs. - Involve women in planning and budgeting processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take a gender-inclusive approach to the tendering process to invite more women-owned businesses in (e.g., RFIs and RFPs with less complexity, sufficient turn-around time that respects time poverty, non-cumbersome verification procedures; non-bundled contracts that limit overall contract size). - Conduct gender-inclusive outreach to identify/encourage women-owned businesses to participate in the tender including via women's networks and non-traditional media. - Develop gender-related qualification requirements (e.g., past gender experience/performance including GBVH grievances, gender pay gap transparency, recruitment of women, etc.; approach to GBVH; supplier diversity code of conduct; internal gender policies/procedures; gender-related implementation plans; collection of gender-disaggregated data). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure gender is integrated throughout the duration of the contract, including in adjustment mechanisms, dispute resolution procedures and termination provisions.

Recommended actions	Stage 1				Stage 2
	Inception/Concept Note	Feasibility	Strategy/Planning (Business case)	Design and Procurement	Testing and commissioning
Criteria Sub-category: Strategic action					
Specific for Disability 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct a comprehensive analysis to explore disability inclusion dynamics in communities affected by the project. This can be integrated with an ESIA and conducted by a GEDSI expert and should involve both data collection and disability-inclusive stakeholder consultations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a stand-alone disability strategy and/or integrate disability into the broader project strategy. - Develop a Disability Inclusion Action Plan. - Involve OPDs and/or persons with disabilities in planning and budgeting purposes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take a disability-inclusive approach to the tendering process to invite more disabled-owned businesses in (e.g., RFPs that are accessible documents and tendering processes that accommodate the needs of a range of disabilities). - Conduct disability-inclusive outreach to identify/encourage disabled-owned businesses to participate in the tender including via OPDs. - Develop disability-related qualification requirements (e.g., demonstration of ability to implement supplier diversity code of conduct, participatory planning and design processes, implementation of universal design principles, accessibility measures in the workplace, accessible recruitment practices, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take a local needs, social inclusion approach to each project's due diligence & design. - Make sure that procurement processes include local community considerations in line with the social inclusion strategy. - Ensure the tendering process does not disadvantage socially excluded groups (non-onerous RFPs with less complexity, dedicated support, non-cumbersome verification processes). - Conduct outreach that identifies/encourages participation from socially excluded groups via local networks, non-traditional media and bottom-up communications. - Develop inclusive qualification requirements, e.g. first-time bids, experience of poverty, experience of social exclusion (lack of formal education or training).
Specific for Social Inclusion 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct site investigations and data collection on community needs. - Include social inclusion considerations in key documents prepared at this stage, including the ESIA and ESMP for the project, and due diligence. - Develop an understanding of the potential and limitations for contracting suppliers based in local communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop the social inclusion strategy alongside the broader project strategy. - Identify opportunities for social inclusion using GEDSI Criteria: Leadership, Employment, Supply Chain, Products, and Services. - Align the social inclusion strategy with the project's broader design, governance, funding, procurement, and risk management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take a local needs, social inclusion approach to each project's due diligence & design. - Make sure that procurement processes include local community considerations in line with the social inclusion strategy. - Ensure the tendering process does not disadvantage socially excluded groups (non-onerous RFPs with less complexity, dedicated support, non-cumbersome verification processes). - Conduct outreach that identifies/encourages participation from socially excluded groups via local networks, non-traditional media and bottom-up communications. - Develop inclusive qualification requirements, e.g. first time bids, experience of poverty, experience of social exclusion (lack of formal education or training). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that throughout the duration of the contract, including in adjustment mechanisms, dispute resolution procedures and termination provisions, specific considerations of social inclusion are given.

Box 5: Key aspects of an inclusive procurement strategy

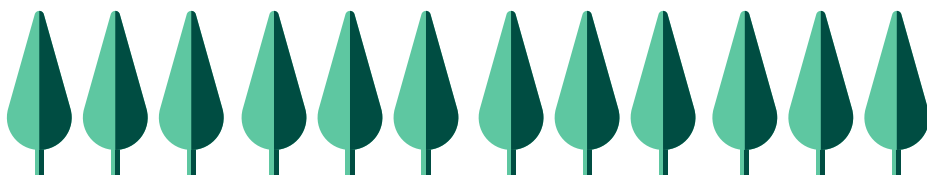
- Draws from key insights in early (e.g., pre-feasibility, needs, impact, risk) assessments in the pre-tendering stage that consider women/disabled-owned businesses or businesses owned by community members.
- Complements strategic public procurement policies, legislation and/or goals that support women/disabled/community-owned businesses, where relevant.
- Integrates a GEDSI focus that supports suppliers that are women/disabled/community-owned and/or that have explicit GEDSI goals.
- Proactively addresses common barriers faced by women/disabled/community-owned businesses.
- Is supported by inclusive practices across all stages of the procurement/tender process.

Box 6: GEDSI-requirements and clauses in contract documents

- Safe work environment (e.g., management of GBVH, inclusive grievance mechanism, adequate working conditions).
- Inclusive representation in leadership and employment (e.g., % women leaders/employees) including support for women/disabled leaders/employees (e.g., training; gender pay gap transparency; flexible work).
- Inclusive procurement (e.g., GEDSI-specific requirements for sub-contractors, supplier diversity plan, supplier code of conduct).
- Stakeholder engagement.
- Collection of GEDSI-disaggregated data.

Case studies

- [Women, energy and water in the Himalayas, Bhutan, India & Nepal](#) (pg 50): Explores the importance of understanding and incorporating the needs and roles of women in water and energy management, including detailed guidance and tools for how to carry out gender analysis and other important steps.
- [Gender Action Plan for Viet Nam's Ho Chi Minh City Metro Rail Transit Line: Building the Foundations for women's economic empowerment: An Empowerment Approach to Infrastructure Planning and Management, Vietnam](#) (pg 10): Explores key components of an effective Gender Action Plan in the context of a project that mainstreams gender from design to delivery.
- [Gender responsive procurement for Haiti's PHARES program, Haiti](#) (pg 78): Presents how developers for a mini-grid project were required to include gender-specific plans in their proposal.
- [Nam Theun 2 hydroelectric power project social development plan \(Lao PDR\), Lao](#) (pg 91): Demonstrates how to integrate gender-related obligations into a contract and are also linked to payments.
- [How to Integrate Disability Inclusion into Climate Finance](#): Approaches from FCDO and Climate Investment Funds (COSP17 Side Event).
- [Ayana Renewable Power in India](#): Showcases a strategy to integrate social inclusion throughout the project, which include community involvement in planning, local workforce empowerment, and community access to affordable clean energy.



Description of relevant criteria and methodology

Gender Equality

Criterion: Strategic action re: Gender (Yes/No)

Gender-inclusive strategy development in infrastructure projects is measured by assessing whether a project intentionally, explicitly and meaningfully demonstrates strategic action on gender. This is addressed under the Governance & Accountability category and specifically the Strategic Action sub-category within it. Approaches may vary in their depth and breadth but should consider:

- Explicit gender targets.
- Gender Action Plan.
- Resource allocation to gender-related activities.
- Stand-alone gender strategy and/or integration of gender into broader strategy/strategic plan.
- (in addition to the above) Inclusive procurement strategy/processes.

Disability

Criterion: Strategic action re: Disability (Yes/No)

For disability-inclusive strategy development in infrastructure projects, project developers should consider:

- A stand-alone Equity Plan or Disability Inclusion Plan that sets out explicit disability inclusion targets across the other criteria set out in this framework, or the integration of disability inclusion into broader strategy/strategic plan.
- Appropriate resource and budget allocation to disability inclusion activities set out in the Disability Inclusion Plan, aligned to this Framework and Toolkit.

Social Inclusion

Criterion: Strategic action re: Social inclusion (Yes/No)




For socially-inclusive strategy development in infrastructure projects, project developers should consider:

- A stand-alone social inclusion strategy that sets out explicit social inclusion targets across the other criteria set out in this framework, or the integration of social inclusion into broader strategy/strategic plan.
- Appropriate resource and budget allocation to social inclusion activities set out in the strategy, aligned to this Framework and Toolkit.



Activity 2: Stakeholder Engagement

Criteria linked with Stakeholder Engagement

Category	Sub-category	Gender Equality 		Disability 		Social Inclusion 	
		Criteria	Threshold	Criteria	Threshold	Criteria	Threshold
Governance & Accountability	Stakeholder engagement	Stakeholder engagement re: gender	Yes/No	Engaging with Organisation of People with Disabilities (OPDs)	Yes/No	Engagement with local community members	Yes/No

What is Stakeholder Engagement?

Stakeholder engagement is a key tool to help ensure that the specific needs and views of disadvantaged groups and individuals are considered throughout the lifecycle of the project, and that risks and opportunities for inclusion are identified and managed.

Stakeholder engagement goes beyond the IFC Performance Standards (PS), by recognising that the requirements with the PSs are already comprehensive but not always implemented in practice.

Stakeholder engagement and consultation can include **undertaking needs assessments to inform inclusive design**, and ensuring that women, people with disabilities and local community members are engaged during the development and review of ESIA. An **inclusive stakeholder engagement plan** (see Box 7) should be developed to ensure that key stakeholders are engaged at the right points throughout the lifecycle of the project, including construction and operation.

Box 7: Components of an inclusive stakeholder engagement plan

- Purpose/goal to understand differences among stakeholders in terms of disability, gender and vulnerability.
- Stakeholder analysis/prioritisation that integrates gender, disability and social inclusion.
- Planning and execution of communications and consultations that are accessible to women, persons with disabilities and local community members.
- Inclusive grievance mechanism.
- Tracking, assessment and management of gender/disability-specific issues raised.
- Monitoring and reporting of gender-disaggregated and disability-disaggregated data.
- Integration of GEDSI into relevant projects assessments (e.g. impact assessment, feasibility studies).



Why does it matter?

Women, persons with disabilities and local communities have traditionally had limited opportunities to participate in stakeholder engagement and consultation relating to infrastructure projects, often being brought into the process too late and/or not being able to influence key decisions and outcomes. This results in their unmet needs and persistent inequities and risk of doing harm/ negative impacts, especially in contexts where engagement is not required by law.

On the contrary, climate action and infrastructure projects that implement inclusive stakeholder engagement can:

- **Enhance understanding of the local context and community priorities:** Ensure that the unique vulnerabilities, strengths and priorities of diverse social groups (e.g. by gender, age, disability, race/ethnicity) are identified and taken into account. Transport – align more closely with daily lives and priorities (e.g. in terms of safety and accessibility), ensuring higher usage etc.

- **Building trust and reducing risks:** When stakeholders are involved at different stages of the project, they are more likely to support the project. This can lead to smoother implementation and reduced opposition (and lower the risk of litigation or costly adaptation). For example, a renewable power generation plant that sought to identify particularly sensitive elements of its footprint through local community engagement (e.g. traditional cattle grazing routes) can reduce risk of opposition from the local community. This also helps mitigate the risk of continued discrimination and inequity especially for women and people with disabilities.
- **Deepening positive impact – diverse range of people:** Invite opportunities for greater support and usage from a diverse set of people, including women. This also extends to the early identification of inclusion opportunities associated with the project, also linked with direct and indirect job creation and local climate change action. For example, when disability inclusion is mainstreamed via more accessible urban environments and transport infrastructure, it encourages a greater proportion of people, including elderly people, away from fossil-fuel intensive private transport.

How is it integrated across the infrastructure project life cycle?

Key messages

- **Early engagement:** Stakeholder engagement for women, persons with disabilities and local community is a vital part of any infrastructure project development process. The key first step is to undertake a stakeholder mapping to identify which groups are likely to be most vulnerable to project impacts and have the greatest interest. Stakeholder

engagement is particularly important at the project conceptualisation, feasibility, planning and design stages; the sooner stakeholders are engaged the more likely the project is to address their needs.

- **Intersectionality:** This is an important part of detailed stakeholder mapping, for example understanding that groups such as low-income women with visual impairments or minority ethnic groups with disabilities will have very different needs to other elderly people.
- **Need for continuous update and engagement:** Continued updates to the stakeholder mapping should be made throughout the project design and construction stages. Stakeholder engagement should be undertaken across the full infrastructure project life cycle to ensure needs, uses and priorities related to an infrastructure project (e.g., time saving gains, safety, well-being, accessibility, affordability) are appropriately identified and addressed. The engagement could be conducted by building their awareness of the project; gathering information from them to inform the project; participating in decision-making as well as monitoring and supervision of the project; being informed of project changes.
- **Strong links with other activities:** Data collection is often an important part of stakeholder mapping, helping project development teams to identify certain social categories, such as low-income areas in a city. Stakeholder engagement also feeds into, and collect data about, needs assessment; skills and capacities of the local workforce and potential project leadership participants; local supply chain; needs and parameters for products and services; and overall opportunities for participation in the project.

Who to involve

The below section details key stakeholders that should be engaged and consulted during the project. The different groups to engage should be identified based on what the developer aims to find out as well as the context, sector and type of project. The depth and intensity of engagement of stakeholders identified will depend on several factors, such as the stage of development, how large the project it is, and the impact it is likely to have.

While the definition of local community members is often based on shared ties to a location, or place, this should not be seen to diminish the importance of other key identities. At a minimum, diversity, equity and inclusion considerations should be reflected in the development and implementation of community engagement, paying specific attention to disadvantaged groups, such as women and persons with disabilities, or women with disabilities.

Whilst some stakeholders may be engaged separately, it is also important to consider providing the opportunity to everyone in a community to attend wider stakeholder engagement meetings and events, rather than having separate events for different marginalised groups, when appropriate. This requires accessibility in terms of physical access, meeting timings that suit all and provision of information.

Box 8: Advisory group: An upcoming good practice

Recent case studies and examples – some of which are also referenced below – have identified as an emerging good practice the establishment of an Advisory Group comprised of women, persons with disabilities and local community members. On some occasions, the Advisory Group can also include GEDSI experts.

This set of stakeholders should be involved throughout the project and should not only be consulted, but also involved in the decision making process. This group can vet ideas, offer guidance and provide context-sensitive information, which is vital for the project to be successful.

Box 9: Stakeholder engagement and resettlement

A project involving displacement and resettlement should require more intensive community engagement, including to develop a resettlement action plan (RAP). In this case, an approach that is gender-sensitive and gives particular consideration to vulnerable groups, as defined below, should be implemented, including the following guidance:

1. Resettlement planners must give particular attention to vulnerable groups living in the project area, including households headed by women or children and persons with disabilities;
2. The census and socioeconomic baseline needs to ensure that gender-disaggregated data are captured, also reflecting the role of women within the households and legal use and ownership of land and property;
3. The eligibility criteria and compensation framework should not disadvantage women, for example because of lower and less stable income;
4. The needs of women and vulnerable groups should be taken into account while planning and implementing a RAP or a livelihood restoration plan (e.g. decisions on location and design of housing; access to benefits and compensation);
5. The registration of new titles should make special provision for women and other vulnerable groups in circumstances where local law or customary law does not fully recognise their rights;
6. Assistance during the relocation should be provided to women and vulnerable groups and a gender-sensitive grievance mechanism should be put in place.

For further guidance refer to: [World Bank, Handbook for Preparing a Resettlement Action Plan, Gender-sensitive resettlement process and Gender-responsive livelihoods restoration.](#)





Box 10: The characteristics of meaningful local community engagement



While there is no “one-size-fits-all” approach that will guarantee effective community engagement in all situations, there are a number of characteristics that are often cited in the literature and by practitioners as conducive to meaningful community engagement. To the extent possible, project developers should seek to implement community engagement in a way that achieves these characteristics.

- **Appropriateness:** The chosen community engagement approach should be appropriate for the specific project. There should be appropriate resourcing and guardrails to mitigate circumstances, internal or external, that might be detrimental to community engagement in the long-term.
- **Continuity:** To reap its full benefits, community engagement should be seen as an ongoing process throughout different stages of the investment cycle, rather than as a one-off or series of engagement events. Successful community engagement often builds on continued interaction, particularly for projects that have a longer time horizon.
- **Additionality:** Prior to conducting community engagement, developers should familiarise themselves with what is already known about a place and the needs and preferences of local communities. Where possible, developers should avoid repeating engagement efforts with a community, unless there are compelling reasons to do so. Developers should avoid doing community engagement when there is no clear identified purpose or outcome, to avoid contributing to consultation fatigue.
- **Collaboration:** Developers should collaborate not only with communities themselves but also with relevant local actors, including local authorities and community organisations. Where possible, developers should collaborate with any peers who invested in local places to avoid duplication and maximise community outcomes.
- **Inclusion:** Developers should be inclusive when engaging with communities, by taking steps to effectively identify and involve a diversity of local people and perspectives. Developers should take particular care to identify barriers to engagement and ensure that they have implemented mechanisms to remedy them, increase accessibility and engage a diverse and representative set of voices.
- **Reciprocity:** Developers should see community engagement as a two-way process, which provides the opportunity to build mutually beneficial relationships. Developers should build and maintain effective feedback loops with communities. Where appropriate, developers should also empower communities over time, for example by helping to build local capacity and providing opportunities for communities to have a greater say on decisions that will affect them.
- **Transparency:** Developers should, to the extent possible, be transparent about their activities that might impact a community, in particular around the terms of their engagement, for example what can and what cannot be changed as a result of engagement.
- **Accountability:** Developers should put in place appropriate accountability mechanisms to ensure they deliver on their commitments. Developers should also embed community engagement into their processes, for example regarding environmental, social and governance (ESG) integration and impact management, monitoring and reporting (IMMR). Developers doing community engagement should remain open to being challenged on any aspect of their activities that affect the community.



Detailed actions

Recommended actions	Stage 1				Stage 2		Stage 3	
	Inception/Concept Note	Feasibility	Strategy/ Planning (Business case)	Design and Procurement	Construction	Testing and commissioning	Handover and operation	Delivering services
Criteria Sub-category: Stakeholder Engagement								
Common across the three thematic areas   	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appoint/hire GEDSI expert(s) to plan/execute inclusive stakeholder engagement. - Conduct a stakeholder mapping to identify GEDSI stakeholders (see <i>themes for details</i>). - Develop a high-level inclusive stakeholder engagement plan. - Establish an inclusive grievance mechanism before consultations begin. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to update the stakeholder mapping of women, OPDs and other disability community related stakeholders. - Share the stakeholder mapping and relevant data with new partners as required, for example service providers working on Feasibility Studies. - Develop a detailed and inclusive stakeholder engagement plan (see <i>text for further details</i>). - Integrate GEDSI considerations in other feasibility studies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share the stakeholder mapping and relevant data with new partners as required, for example service providers working on detailed design. - Integrate commitments to inclusive stakeholder engagement into contracts with implementing partners. - Set up an advisory group to empower women, OPDs and community members to more systematically review and feed into the design process (see <i>dedicated box</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to facilitate the advisory group to empower women, OPDs and community members to more systematically review and feed into the construction process, including on opportunities for employment and construction of accessible infrastructure in practice. - Design and implement an inclusive grievance mechanism and investigation/response procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to facilitate the advisory group to empower women, OPDs and community members to more systematically review and feed into the construction process, including on testing and resolving issues related to accessibility, employment and operations related opportunities for women, persons with disabilities and local community members. - Continue to operate an inclusive grievance mechanism and investigation/response procedures for operations and maintenance related issues. 			
Specific for Gender Equality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct a stakeholder mapping to identify stakeholders that help capture a gender perspective. - Conduct early-stage gender-sensitive stakeholder consultations to inform project prioritisation and feasibility studies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct gender-sensitive stakeholder consultations (that consider common barriers women face and that create a safe space for expression that avoids GBVH risks) that help understand gender differences in needs, uses, priorities and potential risks/benefits to inform project feasibility studies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leverage insights from gender-inclusive stakeholder engagement to inform Gender Action Plan (GAP). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integrate commitments to gender-inclusive stakeholder engagement into contracts with implementing partners to ensure continued engagement throughout construction and beyond. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide gender-sensitive training to staff (especially men) involved in project implementation which also addresses GBVH. - Ensure women stakeholders participate in decision making, monitoring and supervision of the project and are informed of project changes. - Include gender-sensitive consultations in ex-post evaluations to fully assess a project's impacts. - Where relevant, utilise a gender-sensitive approach to resettlement processes and/or livelihoods restoration. 			

Recommended actions	Stage 1				Stage 2		Stage 3	
	Inception/Concept Note	Feasibility	Strategy/ Planning (Business case)	Design and Procurement	Construction	Testing and commissioning	Handover and operation	Delivering services
Criteria Sub-category: Stakeholder Engagement								
Specific for Disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify relevant OPDs in the country, or in a sub-national context. - Make sure that an appropriate range of different types of OPDs and disabilities are identified. - Draw on or collect data (for larger scale projects) that is disaggregated by the Washington Group questions. - Engage with OPDs via one-on-one meetings or one or more wider workshops, to understand current barriers to accessing relevant infrastructure or services, and suggestions on how to overcome this. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draw on or collect additional data (for larger scale projects) that is disaggregated by the Washington Group questions. - Engage with OPDs via one-on-one meetings or one or more wider workshops, to inform potential disability inclusion measures for more detailed infrastructure concepts or plans. - Consult a selection of relevant OPDs stakeholders on the proposed options outlined by the Feasibility stage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage with OPDs via one-on-one meetings or one or more wider workshops, to inform potential disability inclusion measures for the detailed design of infrastructure projects - Consult a selection of relevant OPDs on the proposed options outlined by the detailed design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share the stakeholder mapping and relevant data with new partners as required, for example with supply chain service providers. <p>Stakeholder engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage with OPDs via one-on-one meetings or one or more wider workshops, to inform potential disability inclusion measures for the detailed design of infrastructure projects. - Consult a selection of relevant OPDs on the proposed options outlined by the detailed design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arrange for accessibility audits to be conducted on relevant aspects of the new infrastructure, to test and resolve any accessibility issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage with OPDs to inform ex-post evaluations. 		
Specific for Social Inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct a local needs assessment to develop a strong understanding of local context and community characteristics. - Ensure community engagement informs project priorities based on local preferences and needs. - Identify positive benefits and effective mitigation of negative impacts identified through community engagement. - Collect data to inform specific project objectives and social inclusion strategy, based on community needs assessment: e.g. related to local workforce development, supply chain development, and product and service benefits. - Establish engagement methods to be used throughout project (e.g. focus groups, pop-up stalls, participatory decision-making, advisory groups, Community Liaison Officers). 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify opportunities to improve well-being of local communities through project design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain local community engagement to identify any unforeseen negative impacts during construction, and to provide input into testing and commissioning processes. - Ensure planned community benefits are materializing as planned and take any needed remedial action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use local community engagement to measure and review project performance and monitor that expected benefits are being delivered. 			

Gender Equality



- The following types of stakeholders, including those in/directly affected by the project, should be engaged to help capture a gender perspective: women that are heads/part of households of varied income levels; women community leaders/ members; women that represent other marginalised communities (e.g., racial/ethnic groups, persons with disabilities, most marginalised local communities); women business owners; women's groups/ associations/organisations.

Disability



- The most practical way to engage with persons with disabilities is via Organisation of People with Disabilities (OPDs) which are generally numerous in every country and city. OPDs can provide robust and authentic representation of persons with disabilities.
- OPDs often focus on a particular disability or broader category of disability, for example involving people with visual impairments, with physical impairments or neurodiverse individuals, to name a few examples.

Social Inclusion



- It is good practice from an inclusion perspective to consider ways to enable participation from a wide range of community members. Collaboration with trusted grassroots organisations and community leaders for outreach can be a very effective means of delivering community engagement. The formation of a formal community panel or contact group can also be an efficient means of engaging with local communities.

Case studies

- **Advisory Group for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design (pg 64)**, Global: Suggests an intersectional approach to ensuring inclusive urban planning and design where an Advisory Group representing marginalised groups provides guidance and oversight throughout the project.
- **Gender-Sensitive Stakeholder Engagement in the Trung Son Hydropower Project, Vietnam (pg 33)**: Explores a hydropower project that made extra efforts to include women community members in stakeholder consultations, including addressing their common barriers to participation.
- **DART Bus Rapid Transit design in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania**: A civil society group called the Comprehensive Community Based Rehabilitation in Tanzania (CCBRT) Advocacy Unit was engaged to understand the detailed needs of passengers with disabilities.
- **TransMilenio Bus Rapid Transit, Bogota, Colombia**: Regular disaggregated data collection helped to identify vulnerable stakeholder groups and monitor project implementation as it relates to disability groups. There was a dedicated stakeholder communications team and an innovative program to empower persons with disabilities to confidently use the BRT system.
- **Vila 20 slum upgrading in Buenos Aires, Argentina**: This slum upgrading project involved a participatory approach to local urban development that involved the participation of local community members at all stages of the planning, development and construction of this rehabilitation project.
- **Warwick Junction Urban Renewal project, Durban, South Africa**: This project to redevelop a busy market and intersection involved market traders, market users, residents and other local community members in the planning of redesigning the sensitive site, through a variety of engagement methods including large group gatherings and one-on-one meetings, as well as contact groups for specific groups of stakeholders.
- **Power Africa projects in Kenya**: Power Africa is a USAID-backed facility to add at least 30,000 MW of cleaner and more reliable electricity generation capacity and 60 million connections by 2030. In Kenya, where the acquisition of land for projects is often a complex undertaking, Power Africa has adopted comprehensive mechanisms for engaging with local communities and securing their consent throughout the project lifecycle.
- **ADB Guidance on participatory approaches to cities and infrastructure**: In 2016 ADB published a Tool Kit for Inclusive Urban Development, which addresses the consideration of socially excluded people, including people with disabilities.

Description of relevant criteria and methodology

Gender Equality



Criterion: Stakeholder engagement re: gender (Yes/No)

Gender-inclusive stakeholder engagement in infrastructure projects is measured by assessing whether a project intentionally, explicitly and meaningfully considers gender in its external stakeholder engagement. This is addressed under the Governance & Accountability category and specifically the Stakeholder engagement sub-category within it. Approaches may vary in their depth and breadth but should consider:

- Analyses and impact assessments that capture gender-specific differences.
- Gender-inclusive stakeholder consultations.
- Quality, quantity, timing and frequency of the engagement.
- Meaningfulness of the engagement (including awareness building, information gathering and decision making).

Disability



Criterion: Engaging with Disabled Persons Organisation (Yes/No)

Project developers should take action to meaningfully engage with a broad range of OPDs in line with the guidance above. Approaches may vary in their depth and breadth but should consider:

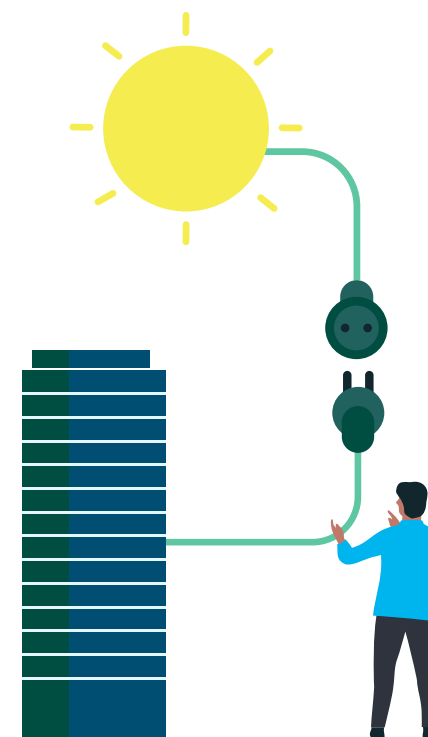
- Stakeholder mapping and analyses and impact assessments that capture disability-specific differences.
- Proactive engagement with OPDs.
- Enabling the inclusion of persons with disabilities in broader stakeholder consultations.
- Quality, quantity, timing and frequency of the engagement.
- Meaningfulness of the engagement (including awareness building, information gathering and decision making).

Social Inclusion






Criterion: Engagement with local community members (Yes/No)

Project developers should be able to demonstrate that engagement with local community members has been undertaken throughout the project lifecycle, in line with good practice regarding meaningful community engagement (see Box 10), as applicable to the local circumstances of the project.



Activity 3: Data Collection and Analysis

Criteria linked with Data Collection and Analysis

Category	Sub-category	Gender Equality 		Disability 		Social Inclusion 	
		Criteria	Threshold	Criteria	Threshold	Criteria	Threshold
Governance & Accountability	Data	Gender data	Yes/No	Data re: disability provided as part of stakeholder engagement OR Disability-related data collection	Yes/No	Data re: local community provided as part of community needs assessment OR data collection on local community	Yes/No

What is Data Collection and Analysis?

Data collection and analysis is an ongoing activity throughout the project lifecycle of an infrastructure intervention. It provides essential insights into the characteristics and needs of women, persons with disabilities and local community members, ensuring that the GEDSI strategy is well-informed and tailored to the specific context of the project, and that its implementation is successful.

In the early stages of a project, steps to be taken include **establishing the GEDSI-specific data that needs to be collected and considering the data collection methods required**; these data will be included in Environmental and Social Impact Assessments or other types of impact assessments, as further detailed in the 'Detailed Actions' section. A **Monitoring and Evaluation plan and/or a standalone GEDSI action plan** should be developed which includes GEDSI objectives and GEDSI-disaggregated data indicators that can be monitored and evaluated through the infrastructure project. As the intervention

progresses, ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the intervention is required, including during both construction and operation/maintenance. A **GEDSI impact assessment or evaluation** should also be conducted, either during or after construction, to assess how the project has delivered against the identified indicators and whether it has been successful in achieving its GEDSI objectives and goals.

Why does it matter?

It is important to monitor and measure how effective and equitable GEDSI processes are in practice during the course of infrastructure project development. Regular data-led monitoring can allow for this assessment of progress against the project's GEDSI objectives, and supports the identification of any needed adjustments during the design and delivery to ensure that these objectives are met effectively throughout the project lifecycle.

There is a broad lack of reliable GEDSI-disaggregated data, including regarding basic infrastructure and

use, resulting in a limited GEDSI lens in infrastructure planning and delivery. However, the regular collection and analysis of GEDSI-disaggregated data offers many important benefits and insights to an infrastructure project including how it:

- Informs the contextual understanding in which an infrastructure project is designed.
- Helps drive an evidence-based approach to an infrastructure project which is necessary for the mainstreaming of GEDSI considerations in strategic planning, implementation and delivery.
- Tracks performance metrics and encourages progress against performance targets.
- Assesses (in)direct impacts related to the project in the short-, medium- and long-term.
- Identifies and monitors both potential harms and benefits of the project and can facilitate proactive risk management and maximisation of positive outcomes.

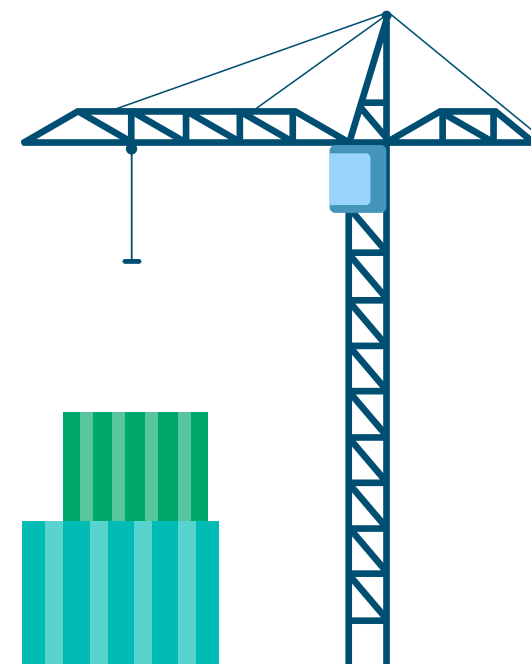
How is it integrated across the infrastructure project life cycle?

Key messages





- **As early as possible:** Data collection of GEDSI data should start at the beginning of the project. It should be conducted and used to inform the contextual understanding in which a project is being designed, including for example the demographics and related aspects on disability trends of local populations, and to establish a clear baseline, including for instance gender-disaggregated data on access to infrastructure and services, and needs and preferences.
- **Conducted regularly:** Data collection and analysis of GEDSI data should be regularly conducted during most stages of the project cycle and should be integrated into a variety of activities including stakeholder engagement, gender/disability analyses, ESIA's, Monitoring and Evaluation plans, audits, ex-post impact assessments and evaluations.
- **Inclusive teams:** Data collection should be driven by teams (e.g., audit team, MEL team, etc.) that are gender-diverse and include GEDSI expertise.



Box 11: Key resource: The Washington group short set of questions

Should be used in the design of appropriately designed survey questions to enable disaggregation from a disability standpoint. This method of adding six short questions to the start of any questionnaire or survey, enables the data analyst to capture disability insights.



Detailed actions

Recommended actions	Stage 1				Stage 2		Stage 3	
	Inception/Concept Note	Feasibility	Strategy/Planning (Business case)	Design and Procurement	Construction	Testing and commissioning	Handover and operation	Delivering services
Criteria Sub-category: Data								
Common across the three thematic areas   	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure data team(s) include(s) gender diversity and GEDSI expertise. - Adapt data collection methods to the specific needs of the project (e.g., surveys, focus group discussions, interviews). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collect and analyse data to inform a project's more detailed requirements including, among others: socioeconomic and health data; control of assets; affordability; accessibility, likely impacts, employability; intersectional aspects of identity (e.g., race/ethnicity, disability, urban/rural); demand forecasts. - Assess existing data availability, quality and level of disaggregation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify and include (quantitative and/or qualitative) GEDSI-disaggregated data indicators to be monitored and evaluated throughout the infrastructure project in a Monitoring & Evaluation Plan and/or GEDSI Action Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inform the design of an infrastructure project by leveraging GEDSI data regarding access to infrastructure and related uses, needs and preferences, including of women, people with disabilities and local community members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain continuous data monitoring depending on the identified GEDSI objectives, e.g. by tracking workforce composition statistics to ensure that workforce-related GEDSI targets are met. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct ex-post GEDSI impact assessments/evaluations during and/or after a contract period to assess GEDSI-related outputs, impacts and outcomes; how efficient the project has been in achieving its GEDSI goals and any lessons learnt. - Document and share lessons learned to inform future projects. 		
Specific for Gender Equality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where relevant, ensure governance framework re: transparency and accountability captures the need for gender-disaggregated data. - Ensure gender-inclusive stakeholder engagement captures gender-disaggregated data. - Collect existing, sector-/country-specific, macro-level data (as part of a preliminary gender analysis) on gender in society (e.g., labor force participation, employment data, time use, access to training/skills development, access to financial services, leadership) and in infrastructure (e.g., sector-specific gender risks, existing gender gaps in areas that can be addressed by infrastructure interventions) to understand context and perhaps inform which project(s) to prioritise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collect and analyse gender-disaggregated data (as part of a comprehensive gender gap analysis, gender impact assessment and/or ESIA). - Review GBVH data to understand its prevalence, surrounding local gender dynamics, most vulnerable/at-risk groups, and related potential project impacts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include a baseline assessment of gender indicators at the start of the project that allows for comparative analysis once the project is fully operational. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Track the extent to which an infrastructure project procures from women-owned/-led businesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct gender/social audits to help ensure that an infrastructure project is on track to achieve its gender-specific ambitions and/or whether contractors and/or suppliers are compliant with established gender-specific processes and requirements. - Conduct ex-post gender impact assessments/evaluations during and/or after a contract period to assess: gender-related (intended and unintended) outputs, impacts and/or outcomes; how efficient and/or effective an infrastructure project has been in achieving its gender-specific goals; lessons learned regarding the gender-responsiveness of the project. 			

Recommended actions	Stage 1				Stage 2		Stage 3	
	Inception/Concept Note	Feasibility	Strategy/ Planning (Business case)	Design and Procurement	Construction	Testing and commissioning	Handover and operation	Delivering services
Criteria Sub-category: Data								
Specific for Disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make Use of existing data, ideally disaggregated by the Washington Group Short Set of questions, to understand barriers faced by persons with disabilities to relevant infrastructure and services, as well as contextual aspects such as access to education and employment. - Additional primary data collection could be undertaken, if required to enhance this understanding. Again, use the Washington Group Short Set of questions at the start of surveys, to disaggregate by aspects relevant to disability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collect and analyse data disaggregated by disability related aspects, using the Washington Group questions (as part of a comprehensive ESIA). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include a baseline assessment of disability inclusion related indicators at the start of the project that allows for comparative analysis once the project is fully operational. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional data collection may be required for specific aspects. If so, surveys should include the Washington Group Short Set of questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collect data on the number of persons with disabilities involved in the construction workforce of the project. Ideally compare this to wider statistics on disability and employment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use data collection to monitor the use of infrastructure or service by persons with disabilities. Aim to respond to low usage with proactive engagement to raise awareness of accessible design of infrastructure. 		
Specific for Social Inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gather baseline information about the local community: demographics, socio-economic conditions, local needs, existing capabilities. - Ensure stakeholder engagement across a broad range of actors and voices ensuring disaggregated data for different demographics, socio-economic conditions and underlying inequalities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collect and analyse more detailed information about the local community that can form part of an ESIA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify social inclusion objectives and targets based on the information collected, which can also inform the project's social inclusion strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collect additional data, as required, re procurement from local community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use regular site visits, surveys, audits, and community feedback mechanisms to monitor compliance with social inclusion objectives. - Identify any emerging issues requiring remedial action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collect and analyse data to monitor ongoing impacts on the local community linked to the SI strategy. For example, monitor employment of local workforce to assess effectiveness of ongoing skill development programs, or uptake of local services. - Use surveys, interviews, and performance metrics to assess project outcomes and benefits. - Conduct a final round of data collection and analysis towards the end of the project's lifecycle to evaluate overall success. - Assess whether initial objectives were achieved and identify lasting impacts on the community. 		

Case studies:

- **Gender-disaggregated data in transport in Chile, Chile (pg 23):** Explores the importance of understanding gender-specific infrastructure needs and uses using data from varied sources.
- **Water, Women and Disability Study, Vanuatu:** With support from the Australian Government's Water for Women Fund, the study used three of the Washington Group questions for identification, together with qualitative methods to find out more about access to WASH, the situation of persons with disabilities within households compared with those without disabilities was compared. This information led to the finding that persons with disabilities were more likely to experience barriers in seven out of the eight indicators used, as well as mitigating actions that could be taken for infrastructure design.
- **DESI Power, India:** DESI Power conducts extensive village-level market surveys to identify optimal mini-grid locations and assess potential customer bases before implementation. The organization's analysis of community data enables them to develop targeted strategies for building sustained electricity demand, including identifying opportunities for agricultural services, micro-enterprises, and commercial activities alongside residential connections.

Description of relevant criteria and methodology

Gender Equality

Criterion: Gender data (Yes/No)

Gender data in infrastructure projects is measured by assessing whether a project regularly collects and analyses data that is disaggregated by gender/sex. This is addressed under the Governance & Accountability category and specifically the Data sub-category within it. Approaches may vary in their depth and breadth but should consider:

- Robustness of gender data collected and analysed, including reliability of source(s).
- Timing and frequency of gender data collection and analysis.
- Format of gender data collection and analysis, including integration into related processes.
- Reporting and disclosure of gender data.

Disability

Criterion: Data re: disability provided as part of stakeholder engagement OR Disability-related data collection (Yes/No)

Where possible, existing data on persons with disabilities in relation to relevant aspects of project context can be used, if original data collection is within a reasonable timeframe, such as 5 years.

If required, disability-related data collection should be achieved with the use of the Washington Group Short Set of questions, as per the guidance above. Relevant questions from the set of six can be added to the start of any questionnaire or survey being designed and implemented as part of data collection on any phase of the project.

Social Inclusion

Criterion: Data re: local community provided as part of community needs assessment OR data collection on local community (Yes/No)




The depth and breadth of data collected and analysed should be adapted to the specific context of the project but should, at a minimum, include:

- Demographics, paying particular attention to community members that are typically marginalised in the local context.
- Socio-economic composition such as household income and expenditure and economic activity and employment.
- Assessment of community needs that are relevant to the project.
- Assessment of local skills and capabilities.

Community data should be collected and analysed at a regular interval (at least yearly) to ensure up-to-date understanding of the project context and progress against social inclusion objectives.

Activity 4: Leadership Selection and Development

Criteria linked with Leadership Selection

Category	Sub-category	Gender Equality 		Disability 		Social Inclusion 	
		Criteria	Threshold	Criteria	Threshold	Criteria	Threshold
Leadership <i>At least one criterion</i>	Board diversity	Share of women on Board of SPV/Project Company	Varies	Representation of persons with disabilities on the Board of SPV/Project Company	Yes/No	Representation of local community on the Board of SPV/Project Company	Yes/No
	Senior management diversity	Share of women in senior management of SPV/Project Company	Varies	Representation of persons with disabilities in senior management in SPV/Project Company	Yes/No	Representation of local community in senior management of SPV/Project Company	Yes/No

What is Leadership Selection?

When creating and managing the teams that will plan, execute and maintain an infrastructure project, it is important to **consider the extent to which these teams include women, people with disabilities and local community members in decision-making roles and leadership positions** across the infrastructure project life cycle.

Throughout the project life cycle leadership selection focuses on different entities, summarised below for a 'standard' infrastructure project.

Project Stage	Board	Senior management
1	Project Steering Committee, Executive Steering Group, Project (Governance) Board; Board of SPV	Risk Management Board/ Committee/Team, Finance Committee, Project Manager, Core Leadership Team
2	Board of Developer; Board of Contractor; Change Control Board	Senior Management of Contractor; Senior Management of Developer; Operational Leadership Team; Performance Review Team
3	Board of Operator	Senior Management of Operator; Lessons Learned Committee; Operational/ Service Delivery Team.

Why does it matter?

To date, there are few women, people with disabilities and local community members in infrastructure, especially at senior-most levels of leadership (e.g., [public service leadership](#); [infrastructure pipeline](#)). This is driven by a variety of external and internal factors, such as social norms, unconscious bias, wage disparities, fewer promotions, lack of professional development opportunities, lack of support for caring responsibilities or for different needs. This results in persistent GEDSI-specific risks and unmet needs and/or untapped value creation opportunities.

For instance, growing evidence shows that gender-diverse leadership leads to [lower prevalence](#) of GBVH and improved business performance ([McKinsey](#)); it also improves long-term impact of projects, notably by ensuring that infrastructure interventions leverage local knowledge, remain sensitive to the needs and priorities of local communities and by heightening a sense of

local ownership throughout their lifecycle. Inclusion of community members in senior leadership, while still a recent development, might derive from an overall agreement governing community relations between the project and the local community (for example, through a Benefit Agreement or local equivalent) or as a separate arrangement. Refer to Box 12 for further details.

How is it integrated across the infrastructure project life cycle?

Key messages

- **As early as possible:** It is important to consider GEDSI-diverse leadership teams sooner than later, especially during Strategy/Planning. Leadership selection and development should be considered during Stage 1 when analyses are being conducted to determine the need, feasibility and/or impact(s) of a project. Approaches should be based on data collected and needs identified and should be informed by data regarding Board and/or senior management diversity and inclusivity in a specific country-/sector-context as well as relevant local initiatives to improve these.
- **Focus on Board and Senior management:** While GEDSI inclusion is relevant at all levels, as a start it is good to focus on Board and Senior Management levels. It is well-documented that having diverse and inclusive boards and senior management teams allows for principles of inclusivity to 'filter down'.
- **Invest in advancement:** While it is important to focus on a project's performance regarding GEDSI diversity and inclusivity in leadership, projects are also encouraged to implement actions that help improve this performance over time and that support career advancement for women, persons with disabilities and local community members. Examples are provided under the Detailed Actions.

- **Consider an intersectional perspective where possible:** Intersectional aspects of identity can also be considered in this context, for example by considering which other marginalised groups the women in leadership represent (e.g., persons with disabilities, local community members).

Box 12: Benefit-sharing agreements and community ownership schemes

Benefit-sharing agreements (BSAs) and community ownership schemes create mechanisms for local communities to gain lasting value from infrastructure projects in their area, with a social inclusion perspective.³⁰ These arrangements go beyond one-time compensation to establish ongoing returns through revenue sharing, equity stakes, or direct ownership models.

Examples of such mechanisms include:

- Revenue-sharing where communities receive a percentage of project earnings.
- Community equity ownership through shares or stakes in the project.
- Joint venture partnerships between developers and community entities.
- Local employment and procurement requirement.
- Community development funds financed by project revenues.
- Preferential access to infrastructure services.

Successful schemes typically require:

- Early community engagement in project planning.
- Clear legal frameworks³¹ and governance structures.
- Transparent financial management.
- Equitable distribution of benefits within communities.
- Long-term capacity building for community management.

When well-designed, these arrangements can build local support, ensure a fairer distribution of project benefits, and create sustainable development

opportunities. However, they require careful structuring to balance commercial viability with community interests and avoid elite capture. The scale and structure of benefit-sharing should be proportional to project impacts and aligned with community needs and capacities. Regular monitoring and adjustment mechanisms help ensure arrangements remain effective over time.

For example, the Dogger Bank Wind Farm in the UK established a £1 million Community Fund, strategically divided between construction support (£540,000), operational grants (£100,000), and STEM education scholarships (£325,000). The fund was established early in project development and employs a stakeholder-driven approach in its management. The initiative has supported 62 STEM scholarships while delivering targeted community benefits across its impact areas.³²

In Canada, the Nigig Power Corporation, wholly owned by Henvey Inlet First Nation, partnered with Pattern Energy in a 50/50 ownership structure to develop a 300MW wind farm in Ontario – Canada's largest First Nations wind partnership. The project, completed in 2019, provides long-term revenue to the community through both equity ownership and lease payments over a 20-year power purchase term.³³







³⁰ See <https://commdev.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/publications/Community-Benefits-in-Offshore-Wind-Development-Report-v5.pdf> for an overview of such schemes.

³¹ [2024_Africa_benefit-sharing_legislation_briefing_EN.pdf](https://commdev.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/publications/2024_Africa_benefit-sharing_legislation_briefing_EN.pdf)

³² <https://commdev.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/publications/Community-Benefits-in-Offshore-Wind-Development-Report-v5.pdf>

³³ <https://patternenergy.com/projects/henvey-inlet-wind/>

Detailed actions

Recommended actions	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
	Strategy/Planning (Business case)	Construction	Handover and operation
Criteria Sub-category: Board diversity Senior management diversity			
Common across the three thematic areas   	<p>Explore, track and set targets about diverse leadership</p>	<p>Recruitment practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · In job adverts, actively encourage candidates who are women, people with disabilities or from the local communities to apply for the role. · When writing the job criteria, aim to focus on the skills the senior management team would benefit from, rather than specific educational qualifications. · Be prepared to respond to queries and make adjustments to the application format based on the needs of candidates. Ensure there is a contact person and contact details. · Be prepared to have frank and open conversations during interviews about what is required to accommodate the candidate if they are successful. <p>Targets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Develop and measure against a series of KPIs, such as no. of women, persons with disabilities and community members in the senior management team, accessibility of facilities, etc. <p>Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Put gender equality, disability and social inclusion on the agenda of senior leadership meetings, including items such as how to improve inclusion of women, persons with disabilities and community members in leadership team and in the general workforce. <p>Progressing talent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Implement effective mentoring for high-potential women, persons with disabilities and community members, ideally pairing them with a member of the senior leadership team. · Implement dedicated training and sponsorship. · Encourage and facilitate peer-to-peer networks to enable mutual communication and support for disabled employees. · Ensure transparent promotion processes and criteria. 	
Specific for Gender Equality 	<p>Explore current state of the gender diversity of leadership in a specific country/sector context, including relevant local/national/regional initiatives, policy goals and/or legislation to inform approach</p>	<p>Supportive work environment:</p> <p>Ensure a supportive work environment that also considers women leaders' unpaid care responsibilities (e.g., inclusive workplace cultures; family-friendly policies).</p>	
Specific for Disability 	<p>Assess current state of disability inclusion in employment and leadership in the country or sub-national context to inform criteria/GEDSI Plan targets</p>	<p>Recruitment practices: Make sure application processes are accessible (web portal vs simple CV and covering letter etc.) Provide documentation in a range of alternative formats, such as word, large print, easy read, braille, International Sign Language and audio.</p> <p>Technological solutions: Allocate resources for accessibility initiatives: invest in tools, technologies and training to create an accessible workplace.</p> <p>Accessible workplace: Budget for reasonable adjustments to ensure that any staff with disabilities can carry out their role on an equal basis with others.</p>	
Specific for Social Inclusion 	<p>Assess senior leadership suitability as part of community assessment</p>	<p>Community engagement: Where appropriate, integrate awareness raising of job opportunities in regular local community outreach.</p> <p>Local context: Maintain awareness of local context, including barriers and opportunities for recruitment, retention and progression, of local community members, and adapt local recruitment strategy accordingly.</p>	

Case Studies

- **Women's Leadership in the Banda Golra Water Supply Scheme, Pakistan** (pg 15): Features how women's leadership in managing a water supply project helped drive improvements in both local water and sanitation as well as women's decision-making and empowerment.
- **Incorporating women in water and sanitation management in rural Peru, Peru** (pg 40): Explores a project with a clear aim to include women in the management and operations of rural water and sanitation programs.

Description of relevant criteria and methodology

A. Gender-diverse leadership in infrastructure projects



Gender-diverse leadership in infrastructure projects is measured in two key ways:

1. **Board gender diversity:** Board gender diversity explores the proportion of women on a project's highest level governance body. Broadly speaking, this is often referred to as a Board; however, in the context of infrastructure projects, governance structures can vary. They can include, for example, a Project Steering Committee, Executive Steering Group or Project (Governance) Board. Board gender diversity in infrastructure projects is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Number of women on Board (or equivalent)}}{\text{Number of people on Board (or equivalent)}} \times 100$$

This percentage should be compared to the context-specific threshold for Board gender diversity in the relevant country and sector. At minimum, this threshold should slightly surpass the current average for Board gender diversity in the specific country and sector, based on "reliable" evidence, rounded up to the nearest 5-percentage-point range. The only exception is in cases where this average already demonstrates gender balance (i.e., 40-60% women), in which case the threshold should be based on the minimum of this gender balance range (i.e., 40%).

2. Senior management gender diversity: Senior management gender diversity explores the proportion of women at CEO (e.g., Project Sponsor/ Director, Program Director), Senior executive (e.g., Finance Director, Chief Engineer, Procurement Director, Senior Risk Officer, HR Director) and Senior management (e.g., reports into Senior executive) levels across the infrastructure project. As the team structures of infrastructure projects can vary, this may include the Core Leadership Team and/or the leadership of relevant functions/committees (e.g., Risk Management, Finance, Project Management, Procurement, Operational, Performance Review, Lessons Learned, Service Delivery). Senior management gender diversity in infrastructure projects is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Number of women in Senior management}}{\text{Number of people in Senior management}} \times 100$$

This percentage should be compared to the context-specific threshold for Senior management gender diversity in a specific country and sector, as with Board gender diversity (above).

It is important to note that it is challenging to draw from a singular source of data at the intersection of leadership, gender, sector and country to inform the thresholds noted above. ILOSTAT data may provide a starting point where data may be available based on the ISIC categorisation of sectors.³⁴ If such data do not exist, data from reliable local, national and/or regional sources should be used. If this is also not available, the best available data addressing part(s) of the desired data should be used (e.g., women in leadership in a closely related sector or across all sectors in the country).

³⁴The following ISIC categories are suggested for the key sectors identified:

- Energy: (D) Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply
- Transport: (H) Transportation and Storage
- Urban development: (C) Construction
- WASH: (E) Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities.

Example of a leadership diversity thresholds: Urban development project in Accra, Ghana	
Approach	Worked Example
1. Look at ILOSTAT database for data re: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> women in leadership ("occupation") in <sector> ("Economic activity") in <country> 	No data for women leaders in Construction in Ghana
2. If no (recent) ILO data is available, look for other reliable local, national and/or regional sources	No data for gender diversity in leadership in Construction in Accra, Ghana or Western Africa
3. If no such data exists, use best available data addressing part(s) of the desired data	<p>Board diversity: A report by The Boardroom Africa indicates women make up 24.8% of Ghana's listed boards and 0% of "Manufacturing & Industrial Goods" companies had 30% or more women Board directors.</p> <p>Senior management diversity: ILO data available for women managers across all levels/sectors in Ghana:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of women in managerial position (% , annual, 2022): 44.3%. Proportion of women in senior and middle management positions (% , annual, 2017): 26.6%.
4. Determine thresholds based on data used	<p>Board diversity: Threshold = 25%. Rounded up from Boardroom Africa data.</p> <p>Senior management diversity: Threshold = 40%. As 44% is in the range of "gender balance" (i.e., 40-60%), the minimum of this gender balance range can be used.</p>

B and C. Representation of Persons with Disability and/or Local Community Members in Infrastructure Projects



Representation of People with Disability and/or Local community members is measured in two key ways:

1. Representation of Persons with Disabilities and/or local community on the Board of SPV/Project Company

A "yes/no" threshold is applied for this criterion, in recognition that models of direct community representation at board-level is an emerging practice; similarly the presence of people with disabilities on Board of SPVs/Project Companies is not yet well- established. While it may not be appropriate in every context – in light of factors such as the nature of the project, its governance structure and its local context, users are encouraged to explore the feasibility of community board representation or representation from Disabled People Organisations, through the board appointment of one or more community representative or leaders of Disabled People Organisations. If direct board representation is not viable, alternative modes of meaningful representation of the local community should be prioritised – see section *Governance and Accountability Section*.




2. Representation of Persons with Disabilities and/or local community in senior management of SPV/Project Company

A "yes/no" threshold is similarly applied for this criterion. Where possible, the inclusion and promotion of qualified local community members and persons with disabilities to senior leadership positions should be encouraged. In line with the broader principles for workforce development, SPV/companies are encouraged to implement specific programmes and interventions, including community outreach, appropriate incentives and capacity building, to support the appointment and advancement of community members to these positions.



Activity 5: Workforce Selection and Development

Criteria linked with Workforce Selection and Development

Category	Sub-category	Gender Equality 		Disability 		Social Inclusion 	
		Criteria	Threshold	Criteria	Threshold	Criteria	Threshold
Employment <i>All criteria</i>	Workforce diversity	Share of women in the workforce (SPV, Project Company and Contractors)	Varies	Share of persons with disabilities in the workforce (SPV, Project Company and Contractors)	Varies	Share of local community members in the workforce (SPV, Project Company and Contractors)	Varies
	Workforce efforts	"Quality" employment effort for women in SPV, Project Company and Contractors	Yes/No	"Quality" employment effort for persons with disabilities in SPV, Project Company and Contractors	Yes/No	"Quality" employment effort for local community members in SPV, Project Company and Contractors	Yes/No

What is Workforce Selection and Development?

The creation of employment opportunities for local community members, including women and persons with disabilities, is one of the key potential benefits of infrastructure project development.

Similarly to Leadership Selection, it is important to **consider the diversity of the workforce**, that will support the design and delivery of the infrastructure intervention. Doing so can enable projects to meet their GEDSI objectives and provide quality employment opportunities including for youth.

As detailed below, the **identification of gaps in the skills that are available in the local community, and even more among women and persons with disabilities**, can help implement capacity building and skills development programmes to increase employability.

Box 13: Main contractors

The approach to workforce selection and development of main contractors is covered under this section. This is to reflect the considerable influence and leverage that project developers have on main contractors, as compared to sub-contractors and supply chain partners.

Why does it matter?

When women, persons with disabilities and local community members actively participate in the design, construction and operations of infrastructure projects, there are many possible benefits, including:

- Increased economic empowerment, building long-term skills within the community and fostering and improving support, trust and collaboration.

- Improved business and sustainability performance.
 - Studies have found that there are significant economic losses due to exclusion of persons with disabilities in the jobs market.³⁵ Further, as a result of persons with disabilities entering employment, economic benefits accrue from the recovery of productive time spent by their caregivers, who no longer need to spend as much time accompanying disabled family members in more inclusive and accessible society and urban environments.

³⁵ Buckup, S. (2009) [The Price of Exclusion: The Socio Economic Consequences of Excluding People with Disabilities from the World of Work.](#)

- Providing valuable insights into the local area
 - Persons with disabilities possess a diverse range of skills, knowledge, and expertise that can contribute to the success of the green economy. Their unique perspectives and problem-solving abilities can lead to innovative and sustainable solutions.³⁶
 - Evidence from initiatives such as the [International Labour Organization's Employment Intensive Investment Programme](#), which has been active in more than 70 countries, suggests that the employment of local community members in infrastructure projects is a major means of achieving to social inclusion goals such as poverty reduction, skills development and community cohesion.

The share of women, persons with disabilities and local community members in the infrastructure workforce can be low. Attitudinal barriers are one of the biggest barriers to the inclusion and employment of these groups, including as part of teams working on the planning, design, construction and operations of infrastructure projects. This is manifested in many ways, from failing to recognise the skills or value that those groups could bring to a company or team, to actively restricting employment opportunities.

There are other factors which also drive this low share in the workforce:

- Deeply rooted gender and social norms and other barriers such as limited opportunities for inclusion in school and universities, to poor transport and accessibility to places of work.
- Discriminatory practices against women, persons with disabilities and local community members in recruiting and hiring.
- Work environments that don't consider the needs of all employees.
- Unpaid caring responsibilities that can limit women and others' ability to fully participate in employment.
- Limited opportunities for skills development.

How is it integrated across the infrastructure project life cycle?





Key messages



- **Based on needs assessment and data collection:** workforce selection and development should be based on the data collected during the inception phase of the project, especially linked to gaps in skills available in the local community and among women and persons with disabilities. Ideally, any workforce selection and development programme should be kicked off in the planning stage of the programme, as the development of needed skills in the local community can take time.
- **Leverage of intersectional aspects:** Intersectional aspects of identity can also be considered in this context, in particular by making an effort to provide employment opportunities for local community members who are women with disabilities.
- **Key during construction and operation but planning must start earlier:** There are many opportunities for project developers and related delivery partners to include women, persons with disabilities and local community members in the workforce during both the construction and during operation and delivery. This conscious effort should however start at the planning and design stage of a project, for example by establishing recruitment targets.

- **Important for project evaluation:** Efforts to drive GEDSI inclusion and support in the workforce should be monitored and evaluated through the regular collection and analysis of data disaggregated by gender and disability. Throughout the project, the effectiveness of workforce programmes should also be monitored, including through tracking workforce statistics to ensure local workforce participation targets are being met. Community feedback mechanisms can also help monitor compliance with employment objectives and identify any barriers to further local employment.

³⁶ [ILO \(2019\) Persons with disabilities in a just transition to a low-carbon economy.](#)

Detailed actions

Recommended actions	Stage 1		Stage 2		Stage 3	
	Strategy/Planning (Business case)	Design and Procurement	Construction	Testing and commissioning	Handover and operation	Delivering services
Criteria Sub-category: Workforce diversity/workforce efforts						
Common across the three thematic areas   	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leverage assessments to identify GEDSI opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set explicit targets on the GEDSI diversity of the workforce - Include targets for GEDSI diversity in the workforce in contract documents (<i>see also Strategy Development</i>) - Include women and persons with disabilities within skill development programmes designed to increase the employability of local community members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement equal opportunity policies that promote inclusion, ensuring that women, persons with disabilities and local community members have a fair chance to apply for positions. <p>Recruitment practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In job adverts, actively encourage candidates who are women, people with disabilities or from the local communities to apply for the role. - When writing the job criteria, aim to focus on the skills the team would benefit from, rather than specific educational qualifications. - Be prepared to respond to queries and make adjustments to the application format based on the needs of candidates. Ensure there is a contact person and contact details. - Be prepared to have frank and open conversations during interviews about what is required to accommodate the candidate if they are successful. <p>Workplace management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that workplaces address the specific needs of women, people with disabilities and local community members in terms of health and safety and labour and working conditions (<i>see details per theme</i>) 			
Specific for Gender Equality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leverage the gender gap analysis (or other pre/feasibility stage assessments) to identify opportunities to positively impact women's employment through the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set explicit targets on the gender diversity of the workforce - Establish accountability mechanisms that help ensure workforce gender diversity is achieved (e.g., workforce gender diversity on senior leadership agenda) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create incentives to attract and retain women employees - Create job adverts that use gender-inclusive language and that encourage women to apply - Create internship opportunities for women where there may not be enough able to take up new employment opportunities - Encourage Contractors to hire women for both skilled and unskilled labour - Create and communicate a policy re: zero tolerance of GBVH - Address GBVH through contractual provisions and/or workers' code of conduct - Provide GBVH training to staff - Implement adequate safety and security measures (e.g., sufficient lighting, security services especially outside of daylight hours, transport to/from work site) - Ensure work sites address gender-specific occupational health and safety needs (e.g., separate changing/sanitary/lactation facilities) - Implement gender policies that support women employees (e.g., non-discrimination policy; equal pay practices) and their unpaid care (e.g., flexible work, childcare support) and gender-specific health needs (e.g., employer-sponsored health insurance for gender-specific health services) - Provide unconscious bias training to leadership and staff - Implement workforce development programmes (e.g., skills training, apprenticeships, mentorship) that target women employees - Establish a gender-sensitive grievance mechanism that invites women employees to safely report grievances - Regularly collect and analyse gender-disaggregated data related to workforce gender diversity (e.g., % women in workforce; employee satisfaction by gender; grievances reported by gender) 			

Recommended actions	Stage 1		Stage 2		Stage 3	
	Strategy/Planning (Business case)	Design and Procurement	Construction	Testing and commissioning	Handover and operation	Delivering services
Criteria Sub-category: Workforce diversity/workforce efforts						
Specific for Disability 	Use stakeholder engagement findings and data collection during initial engagement, to identify likely job opportunities, barriers to employment for persons with disabilities and likely strategies to overcome those barriers.	Include persons with disabilities as part of the teams involved in designing the infrastructure and related services and tools.	- Implement equal opportunity policies that promote inclusion, ensuring that women, persons with disabilities and local community members have a fair chance to apply for positions.			
Specific for Social Inclusion 	Use community needs assessment and/or community data collected, to identify gaps in local community member skills and capacities to support their employment.	Design and start skill development programmes among local community members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advertise available jobs and/or training programme through channels that are accessible to local community members - Collaborate with local organisations to reach a wider pool of local candidates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop skill building interventions, where used, including vocational training courses, apprenticeship, mentorship, partnerships with local educational etc. - Offer continuous skill development programs to help local employees advance in their careers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to monitor effectiveness of workforce programmes should be including through tracking workforce statistics - Maintain community feedback mechanisms related to employment 	

Case studies

- **EBRD and Public Sector Partnership – Supporting Women’s Employment in the Passenger and Transport Sector, Kazakhstan:** (pg 12) Explores a comprehensive approach to women’s employment in transport that includes recruitment practices, company policies/ procedures, facility features and capacity building.
- **Lekala Power, pan-African:** Actis implemented a \$2.3 million education and skills development programme for the local community in building a wind farm in Senegal, for example awarding more than 140 young people bursaries for further education. In its site in Egypt, Lekala invested across a variety of local entrepreneurship initiatives, including running female apprenticeship programmes.
- **ADB – How a Mongolian Company is Providing Jobs and Hope for People with Disabilities:** ADB provided a \$18 million (USD) loan to the Tavan Bogd COVID-19 Food Security and Inclusive Job Creation Project in Mongolia in 2022. Through the project, Tavan Bogd Goods saw a 68% increase in the recruitment of people with disabilities who represent 6.6% of the total company’s workforce.

Description of relevant criteria and methodology

Gender Equality

Gender-diverse employment in infrastructure projects is measured in two key ways under the Employment category:

1. Workforce gender diversity: Workforce gender diversity explores the proportion of women in the workforce of a project across all relevant levels/ types of employment and project entities. Broadly speaking, this includes both the direct workforce (employees directly employed on a full-time, part-time, permanent and/or temporary basis as part of the core project entities – e.g., SPV, Project Company) and the contracted workforce (workers employed by Contractors to perform work related to the project), calculated on a full-time equivalent (FTE) basis. Workforce gender diversity in infrastructure projects is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Number of women in the (direct and contracted) workforce, in FTEs}}{\text{Number of people in the (direct and contracted) workforce, in FTEs}} \times 100$$

This percentage should be compared to the context-specific threshold for workforce gender diversity in a specific country and sector. At minimum, this threshold should slightly surpass the current average for workforce gender diversity in a specific country/ sector, based on “reliable” evidence, rounded up to the nearest 5-percentage-point range. The only exception is in cases where this average already demonstrates gender balance (i.e., 40-60% women), in which case the threshold should be based on the minimum of this gender balance range (i.e., 40%).

It is important to note that it is challenging to draw from a singular source of data at the intersection of workforce, gender, sector and country to inform the thresholds noted above. [ILOSTAT](#) data may provide a starting point where data may be available based on the ISIC categorisation of sectors. If such data do not exist, data from reliable local, national and/ or regional sources should be used. If this is also not available, the best available data addressing part(s) of the desired data should be used (e.g., employment by sex in a closely related sector or across all sectors in the country).

Example of a leadership diversity thresholds: Urban development project in Accra, Ghana	
Approach	Worked Example
<p>1. Look at ILOSTAT database for data re:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> women in the workforce ("employment by sex") in <sector> ("Economic activity") in <country> 	<p>ILO data for women in Construction in Ghana exists as follows: Employment by sex and economic activity (thousands, annual, 2022)/Ghana/Aggregate: Construction = 2.1%</p>
<p>2. If no (recent) ILO data is available, look for other reliable local, national and/or regional sources</p>	N/A
<p>3. If no such data exists, use best available data addressing part(s) of the desired data</p>	N/A
<p>4. Determine thresholds based on data used</p>	<p>Workforce gender diversity threshold = 5%. Rounded up from ILO data (i.e., 2.1%).</p>

- 2. "Quality" effort(s) to drive workforce gender diversity:** Workforce gender efforts explore the efforts in place at relevant project entities (e.g., SPV, Project Company, Contractors) to support women employees and/or drive further workforce gender diversity. Efforts may vary in their depth and breadth but should include some form(s) of the following:
- a. Diversity efforts to increase workforce gender diversity (e.g., targets, accountability mechanisms, recruitment & hiring practices, workforce development.)
 - b. Efforts to create a gender-inclusive workplace/ culture (e.g., unconscious bias training, non-discrimination policy, equal pay efforts, care support, support for gender-specific health needs).
 - c. Efforts to create a safe and healthy workplace (e.g., zero-tolerance policy, GBVH training, gender-sensitive facilities, efforts to address gender-specific occupational health & safety needs, gender-sensitive grievance mechanism).

Disability 

Criterion: *Share of persons with disabilities in the workforce (SPV, Project Company and Contractors).*

Workforce diversity also refers to the fair representation of persons with disabilities in employment. As for gender, this includes both the direct workforce (employees directly employed on a full-time, part-time, permanent and/ or temporary basis as part of the core project entities – e.g., SPV, Project Company) and the contracted workforce (workers employed by Contractors to perform work related to the project), calculated on a full-time equivalent (FTE) basis. Disability inclusion in the workforce in infrastructure projects is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Number of persons with disabilities in the (direct and contracted) workforce in FTE}}{\text{Number of people in the (direct and contracted) workforce in FTE}} \times 100$$

This percentage should be compared to the context-specific threshold for workforce diversity in terms of disability inclusion in a specific country and sector. At minimum, this threshold should slightly surpass the current average for disability inclusion in the workforce in a specific country/sector, based on "reliable" evidence. Finding accurate data to ascertain a country specific threshold is challenging, but there are a number of likely data sources:

- [ILO data on disability inclusion in national workforce.](#)
- National census data, although this is very likely to under-represent the number of persons with disabilities in the population and that are in work.
- If no data can be found, a threshold of 5% should be adopted, to reflect an ambitious, yet achievable target in a context where 15% of the population are likely to have a disability, in line with the global average.

Criterion: “Quality” employment effort for persons with disabilities in SPV, Project Company and Contractors (Yes/No)

For the second criterion for disability inclusion in the workforce, SPV, Project Company and Contractors are to achieve this by implementing appropriate conditions in the workplace, in alignment with the guidance above. This includes but should not be limited to:

- Proactively inclusive job adverts and descriptions.
- Accessible application documentation and processes.
- Reasonable accommodation of the needs of persons with disabilities for interview and subsequent employment.
- Accessible offices, workspaces and facilities.
- Flexible working hours to accommodate the reasonable requirements of persons with disabilities.

Social Inclusion



Criterion: Share of local community members in the workforce (SPV, Project Company and Contractors). The threshold is set as variable.

As for gender and disability, representation of the local community includes both the direct workforce (employees directly employed on a full-time, part-time, permanent and/or temporary basis as part of the core project entities – e.g., SPV, Project Company) and the contracted workforce (workers employed by Contractors to perform work related to the project), calculated on a full-time equivalent (FTE) basis. Community inclusion in the workforce in infrastructure projects is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Number of local community members in the workforce}}{\text{Number of people in the workforce}} \times 100$$

This percentage should be compared to the context-specific threshold in terms of community inclusion in a specific country and sector. At a minimum, this threshold should slightly surpass the typical average for local community inclusion in the workforce in a specific country/sector. However, finding accurate data on employment of local community members at the country- or -local level is likely to be challenging in most countries. Below are some possible benchmarks that consider such limitations:

- **Industry standards or best practices:** There may be established legislative requirements, guidelines or benchmarks used in the project’s industry and/or country for the expected percentage of local hires on infrastructure projects. Different stakeholders such as associations, government agencies, or academic studies may publish such information.
- **Comparison to past projects:** If this is not the first infrastructure project in the local area, the local workforce composition from similar projects (where available) can be used as a baseline to exceed.
- **Stakeholder input:** Engagement with local community leaders, elected officials, and other stakeholders can help understand local expectations and perspectives on an appropriate level of local hiring and help set a meaningful benchmark.
- **Local demographics:** Should no other data be available, based on the community analysis undertaken as part of data collection, a default benchmark could be aiming for the project workforce to match or exceed the proportion of working-age adults in the local population.

Criterion: “Quality” employment effort for local community members in SPV, Project Company and Contractors (Yes/No)



SPV, Project Company and Contractors are to achieve this by implementing appropriate measures, in alignment with the guidance above, including but not limited to:

- Proactive efforts to reach out to local community members as part of the workforce selection and recruitment process.
- Documented programmes to develop relevant skills among local community members.
- Development programmes for local community members already in the workforce.



Activity 6: Procurement of Supply Chain Partners

Criteria linked with Procurement of Supply Chain Partners

Category	Sub-category	Gender Equality 		Disability 		Social Inclusion 	
		Criteria	Threshold	Criteria	Threshold	Criteria	Threshold
Supply chain <i>All criteria</i>	Supply chain commitment	Commitment to women in supply chain (Suppliers, Operators, Other)	Yes/No	Commitment to persons with disabilities in the supply chain (Suppliers, Operators, Other)	Yes/No	Commitment to sourcing from local community (Suppliers, Operators, Other)	Yes/No
	Supply chain enablement	"Quality" effort to enable women participation in supply chain (Suppliers, Operators, Other)	Yes/No	"Quality" effort to enable persons with disabilities participation in supply chain (Suppliers, Operators, Other)	Yes/No	"Quality" effort to enable participation of local community members in supply chain (Suppliers, Operators, Other)	Yes/No

What is Procurement of Supply Chain Partners?

For the purpose of the toolkit, the procurement of the main contractors has been covered under the [Strategy Development](#) section. This section focuses instead on the procurement of sub-contractors and supply chain partners, which provide services and equipment to the infrastructure project. In this chapter 'supply chain' refers to both sub-contractors and suppliers.

Inclusive procurement practices ensure that women, persons with disabilities and local community members are included within and/or benefit from the supply chain. Similarly to employment opportunities, this aspect represents one of the key additional positive impacts that infrastructure projects can generate for local businesses. This could start from the developer making **public commitments to**

prioritise the supply of services and equipment from businesses owned by women, persons with disabilities and/or local community members, but could extend to **assessing and influencing the practices that the suppliers adopt in terms of GEDSI inclusivity**, such as the presence of a supplier diversity or inclusion codes of conduct.

Why does it matter?

The procurement process is an important aspect of delivering accessible infrastructure and is fundamental to realising inclusive infrastructure projects. This topic is relevant for procuring services across all stages of the project, from initial planning and feasibility, to more detailed design, construction and operation.

Procurement from businesses in the supply chain owned and operated by women, persons with disabilities and local community members

Women-owned businesses introduce an opportunity to drive further value. There are many proven benefits of procuring from women-owned businesses, including positive impacts associated with a more resilient supply chain, access to new suppliers, understanding of women's market, profitability, return on investment and return on cost of procurement, among others.

Similarly, supply chain partners owned by, or employing a notable number of, people with disabilities can improve innovation because they understand the needs of people with disabilities, and also provide a link to a multi-billion dollar market. Leveraging the supply chain in this manner also turns suppliers into external champions of disability inclusion. In turn they can exert influence on communities in which they operate.

Through local procurement, infrastructure projects can inject capital directly into the local community, helping to boost local businesses and creating jobs for local residents beyond immediate employment in the project. Local sourcing and procurement can improve the environmental credentials of projects, by supporting shorter and more circular supply chains.

Influencing the practices of these businesses

Engagement with suppliers and businesses across the supply chain offers an entry point to support their adoption of more sustainable and inclusive practices. Procurement is an excellent entry point for gender equality, disability and social inclusion, as a number of relevant GEDSI inclusion conditions and terms can be set in the contracts between the project developer and the supply chain. These conditions can include commitment to fair employment practices and diversity in the supplier's workforce, reducing gender inequities, encouraging skills development and improving safeguarding practices.

Gender-inclusive practices such as equitable pay, support with care responsibilities, protection from GBVH, and support for unique health needs can help drive gender equity in the workforce and further value. Procurement is the entry point to specify accessibility requirements for the design of physical infrastructure, goods and services (see activity on [Inclusive Design](#)). Engaging with local suppliers can help provide them with opportunities to enhance capabilities, thereby improving the overall skill level within the community and supporting long-term economic development.








How is it integrated across the infrastructure project life cycle?

Key messages

- **Early mapping:** Project developers should set a clear strategy for mapping the supply chain and assessing the ability of companies owned by women, persons with disabilities and community members to provide goods and services for infrastructure projects. As part of the early stages of the project, efforts should seek developing an understanding of the potential and limitations for contracting suppliers based in local communities, for example as part of the data collection undertaken in early stages of the project (see [Data section](#)).
- **Going beyond the Main Contractors:** In addition to utilising a GEDSI-inclusive approach to a project's procurement strategy and related processes with lead Contractors (see "[Strategy Development](#)" section for more), it is also important to implement gender-inclusive procurement practices with supply chain partners (i.e., Tier 2 and beyond). This helps extend further support to, and foster stronger relationships with, businesses owned by women, persons with disabilities and local community members and/or businesses committed to driving GEDSI-inclusion.
- **Opportunity for Supply Chain Development Programmes:** Depending on the context, particularly in instances where there are not appropriate local capabilities to service the supply chain, programmes to support local supply chain development – such as skills or entrepreneurship programmes – might also be developed. In these cases particular attention should be paid to businesses owned by women and persons with disabilities.

- **Procurement requirements are key:** Supplier contracts can be used as an opportunity to influence their own practices in relation to GEDSI inclusion. This could be manifested in terms of their employment practices, for example requiring suppliers to have policies for equal pay for equal work, non-discrimination, inclusion of local community members in the workforce and protection from sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. It is also important to monitor performance through procurement. The procuring authority needs to ensure that the contract requirements are being met, that problems arising are discovered and dealt with in proper time before they become too difficult to modify and that appropriate solutions are agreed as they arise.

Detailed actions

Recommended actions	Stage 1	Stage 2		Stage 3	
	Design and Procurement	Construction	Testing and commissioning	Handover and operation	Delivering services
	Criteria Sub-category: Supply chain commitment Supply chain enablement				
Common across the three thematic areas    	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Map the supply chain and assessing the ability of women/people with disabilities/local community-owned companies to provide goods and services for infrastructure projects (see also <i>Stakeholder Engagement</i>). - Impose preferences or set targets for procurement from women/persons with disabilities/local community-owned supply chain partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish GEDSI-specific performance requirements in supply chain partner contracts (<i>see details per theme</i>). - Link supply chain partner payments to performance against GEDSI plans/targets. - Monitor supply chain partners' compliance with contractual obligations and GEDSI plans/targets. - Ensure GEDSI procurement commitments with supply chain partners are maintained after handover. 			
Specific for Gender Equality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrate a clear commitment to women in the supply chain by developing a gender-inclusive procurement strategy, supplier diversity plan or other gender-inclusive plan for supply chain partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take a gender-inclusive approach to the tendering process with supply chain partners. - Conduct outreach to identify/encourage women-owned businesses to participate in the tender. - Develop gender-related qualification requirements for supply chain partners. - Integrate gender into evaluation criteria for supply chain partners. - Establish gender-specific performance requirements in supply chain partner contracts (e.g., safe/private toilet facilities; adequate lighting; safety during service delivery; training/professional development for supply chain workers). - Consider gender in adjustment mechanisms, dispute resolution procedures and termination provisions with supply chain partners. - Invest in supplier development efforts with women-owned supply chain partners (e.g., skills training; access to finance; mentorship). - Implement favorable and timely payment terms with supply chain partners. - Ensure effective management of GBVH at supply chain partner level. - Encourage and/or provide support to supply chain partners re: gender-inclusive policies and practices (e.g., non-discriminatory hiring practices; payment of living wage; family-friendly practices; support for gender-specific health and well-being needs.) - Ensure a gender-sensitive grievance mechanism is in place that is accessible across the supply chain. - Provide supply chain partners with gender-sensitive training to ensure gender aspects are well-managed and embedded in contracts. 			
Specific for Disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish an Inclusion Strategy or an Equity Plan to ensure that minority-owned (including persons with disabilities) businesses have the chance to bid for design and construction contracts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include requirements for universal design and demonstrated competency in engaging with persons with disabilities and applying universal design in practice, as prominent aspects of the procurement of goods and services as part of infrastructure project development. - Establish disability inclusion performance requirements in supply chain partner contracts (e.g., participatory stakeholder engagement processes where relevant, accessible office or workspaces, toilet facilities; training/professional development for all supply chain workers). - Include contractual requirements on data collection to monitor and report on relevant metrics, such as number of persons with disabilities employed on teams related to the infrastructure development or operations. - Ensure an accessible grievance mechanism is in place across the supply chain, which is accessible to persons with disabilities across the full range of roles. 			
Specific for Social Inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reach out to potential local suppliers. Depending on the context, give preference to local suppliers, and/or suppliers with a commitment to support local sourcing and employment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider local community inclusion when tendering procurement contracts, understanding where local social and economic factors create a lack of pipeline. - Clearly communicate expectations to prospective suppliers, and monitor as part of supply chain oversight. - In instances where there are not appropriate local capabilities to service the supply chain, consider interventions to support local supply chain development through e.g. investment. - Conduct outreach and capacity building within the community to encourage underrepresented community members to tender. 			

Case studies:

- **Delhi Metro Rail Corporation, India:** International inclusive standards as part of procurement processes. A pre-condition to partial funding provided by Japan Bank of International Cooperation (JICA) was that the entire metro system development should be inclusive from inception onwards.
- **Construction of the US Bank Stadium, Minnesota, USA:** The process included the establishment of an Equity Plan to ensure that persons with disabilities were integrated into the workforce, that minority-owned businesses had the chance to bid for design and construction contracts on a major public project.
- **Promoting entrepreneurship and empowerment of women through access to water and sanitation, Panama** (p 48): Presents an entrepreneurship program created to boost women's involvement in a water and sanitation project.
- **Mwanza housing project, Tanzania** (page 18): Exemplifies successful local procurement practices, which was achieved through a number of means such as breaking down contracts into smaller lots, applying a 7.5% preference for local firms, mandating locally-produced materials, and providing local contractor-friendly payment terms. Despite a foreign contractor's bulk discount offer, the project maintained its focus on local participation, resulting in upgraded capabilities for local contractors and involvement of local institutions throughout the project delivery chain.

Description of relevant criteria and methodology

Gender Equality

Gender-inclusive procurement of supply chain partners in infrastructure projects is measured by assessing the extent to which a project's Contractors support women-owned supply chain partners, supply chain partners committed to driving gender equality and/or women supply chain workers employed by supply chain partners. Approaches may vary in their depth and breadth but should include both:

1. **Commitment to women in the supply chain,** as demonstrated through a gender-inclusive procurement strategy, supplier diversity plan or other gender-inclusive plan for supply chain partners

Criterion: Commitment to women in supply chain (Suppliers, Operators, Other) (Yes/No)

2. **"Quality" effort(s) to enable women's participation in the supply chain** as business owners and/or employees of supply chain partners which can include the following

Criterion: "Quality" effort to enable women participation in supply chain (Suppliers, Operators, Other)

- a. Gender-inclusive procurement practices in the tendering and/or contract development/management processes.
- b. Provision of support to women-owned supply chain partners.
- c. Provision of encouragement and/or support to supply chain partners to implement gender policies and/or practices that support women workers' quality employment (e.g., non-discrimination, fair representation, equal pay, unpaid care support, health & well-being).

Disability

Criterion: Commitment to persons with disabilities in the supply chain (Suppliers, Operators, Other) (Yes/No)

SPV, Project Company and Contractors are to achieve this by implementing appropriate terms and conditions that encourage diversity and inclusion in the workforce of suppliers, as part of the procurement process, in alignment with the guidance above.

Criterion: "Quality" effort to enable persons with disabilities participation in supply chain (Suppliers, Operators, Other) (Yes/No)

SPV, Project Company and Contractors are to achieve this by implementing appropriate initiatives and processes to increase the opportunities of minority-owned businesses to bid for contracts in the supply chain, in alignment with the guidance above.

Social Inclusion

Criterion: Commitment to sourcing from local community (Suppliers, Operators, Other) (Yes/No)




SPV, Project Company and Contractors can achieve this by implementing appropriate terms and conditions that encourage sourcing from local community, as part of the procurement process, in alignment with the guidance above.

Criterion: "Quality" effort to enable participation of local community members in supply chain (Suppliers, Operators, Other) (Yes/No)

SPV, Project Company and Contractors can achieve this by implementing appropriate initiatives and processes to increase the opportunities of local businesses to bid for contracts in the supply chain, in alignment with the guidance above.

Activity 7: Inclusive Design

Criteria linked with Inclusive Design

Category	Sub-category	Gender Equality 		Disability 		Social Inclusion 	
		Criteria	Threshold	Criteria	Threshold	Criteria	Threshold
Product(s)/Service(s) <i>All criteria</i>	Product/Service effects	Product(s)/Service(s) drives positive effect(s) linked to enhancing well-being of women/girls and/or drives gender equity	Yes/No	Product(s)/Service(s) drives positive effect(s) linked to enhancing well-being of persons with disabilities and/or drives disability inclusion	Yes/No	Product(s)/Service(s) drives positive effect(s) linked to enhancing wellbeing of local community and/or drives social inclusion	Yes/No
	Customer/Beneficiary design focus	The project design has taken measures to ensure that women can both participate in and benefit from the project	Yes/No	The project design has taken measures to ensure that persons with disabilities can both participate in and benefit from the project	Yes/No	The project design has taken measures to ensure that local community members can both participate in and benefit from the project	Yes/No

What is Inclusive Design?

With infrastructure projects, inclusive design considers the **extent to which the perspectives of all types of people, especially including those from marginalised groups (e.g., women, persons with disabilities, local community members) are considered and intentionally integrated into the (physical and service) design of the project**, where key design features (regarding access, safety, affordability, etc.) address their unique needs and help drive positive effects.

Box 14: What does socially inclusive design mean?

In the context of many infrastructure projects, local community members are either the primary, or among the primary, beneficiaries of the project. A typical example of this would be an urban regeneration project that improves housing conditions for local residents. For other projects, local community members are not the primary intended beneficiaries of the project. This could for example be the case of a renewable energy facility aimed at powering the national grid, where local community do not themselves have household grid connections. It is important to note that many projects are likely to combine elements of both situations.

When seeking to implement an inclusive design approach in projects where local community members are primary beneficiaries, the onus should be on ensuring a good understanding of the context so that the project responds to their specific needs in order to maximise benefits. In the urban regeneration example, local community needs and preferences on the type of dwellings developed and amenities provided should be taken into account.

In projects where local community members are not the primary beneficiaries, inclusive design should focus on identifying and delivering additional benefits for the local community of the project. For example, the agreement for the delivery of the renewable energy plant could include a contribution from the developer to linking the local community to the grid.

Why does it matter?

A significant proportion of the population continues to experience significant barriers in cities and infrastructure, with the benefits of infrastructure projects not distributed equally among the population.

For women, there can be gender norms that hinder their ability to enjoy the advantages of infrastructure projects, or gender-specific needs of people (in) directly affected by infrastructure projects that are often not considered (e.g. risk of gender-based violence and harassment). For persons with disabilities, there are often physical barriers, such as steps, fragmented and uneven surfaces, and a lack of measures that can help persons with vision disabilities, as well as other barriers to less obvious forms of disability, such as a lack of audible announcements on public transport.

There is an underrepresentation of women, persons with disabilities and local community members in the teams that are involved in the design, implementation and maintenance of infrastructure projects (see also [Leadership Selection and Development](#), and [Workforce Selection and Development](#)). Continuing to design and deliver infrastructure projects that are not inclusive will lead to continued negative consequences (e.g., inequity, limited business performance). Conversely, infrastructure projects that address the needs/preferences of women, persons with disabilities and local community members have many potential consequences, including:

- Increased use of the infrastructure by women, persons with disabilities and local community members.
- Improved project performance (e.g. increased revenue from broader user base; cost reductions).
- Improved quality/innovation of the infrastructure.

In addition, evidence shows that utilising Universal Design (see Box 15) to provide fully accessible infrastructure increases building costs by as little as 0.5% to 1% if planned, designed and implemented from the outset.³⁷ In contrast, retrofitting facilities to make them fully accessible after they have been constructed can be very expensive to achieve.

³⁷ Metts, R. L. (2000) [Disability Issues, Trends and Recommendations for the World Bank](#).

Box 15: The seven principles of universal design

The seven principles of universal design are an effective and proven way of mitigating typical barriers to infrastructure and information. While Universal Design has emerged primarily with people with disabilities in mind, Universal Design includes consideration of other vulnerable categories (e.g. the elderly, pregnant women and parents with young children).

No	Principle	Description
1	Equitable use	Design that is useful and marketable to persons with diverse abilities.
2	Flexibility in use	Design that accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.
3	Simple and intuitive use	Design that is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills or concentration level.
4	Perceptible information	Design that communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.
5	Tolerance for error	Design that minimises hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.
6	Low physical effort	Design that can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.
7	Size and space for approach and use	Design that provides appropriate size and space – for approach, reach, manipulation, and use, regardless of the user's body size, posture or mobility.

Source: Irish Centre for Excellence in Universal Design

Box 16: Examples of gender-inclusive design in different infrastructure sectors

Transport: Transport options that are safe (e.g., well-lit, security cameras, information boards), convenient (e.g., located near key services like schools or commercial centers; offering separate sanitary facilities), and affordable draw in more women customers as their mobility is improved.

Urban development: Secure and affordable housing can help support women as home-based workers, home owners and/or business owners.

Energy: Women-owned businesses can help reach more users (especially in last-mile markets) in the supply chain of off-grid solutions; conversely, they can be supported with subsidies for initial grid connection charges.



Water, sanitation and solid waste: Water connections installed directly or in close proximity to women-led households, with intermittent water supply timings and/or with a wider range of water tariff/payment options offer increased access to WASH services for women that are also better aligned to their needs.



How is it integrated across the infrastructure project life cycle?

Key messages

- **Meaningful stakeholder engagement is key to inclusive design:** Stakeholder engagement is an integral part of designing products and services that are accessible for women, persons with disabilities and local community members. This leads to understanding GEDSI-specific needs and preferences but also at identifying and prioritising the positive effects that the project will drive. The scope and nature of this engagement should be adapted to the nature of the project, and on whether local communities are primary or 'additional' beneficiaries.
- **GEDSI participation in decision-making:** To support GEDSI-inclusive design, it is important to ensure that women, persons with disabilities and local community members actively participate in decision-making regarding the project's design as part of leadership teams and/or through stakeholder engagement (e.g., Advisory Group)
- **Importance of the evaluation process:** women stakeholders, representatives of OPDs and community members should be actively involved in monitoring and evaluation to assess that the benefits from the project are manifesting as planned and that the specific needs have been effectively addressed. For instance, accessibility audits, which include the participation of representatives from OPDs, are an effective way of testing piloted or recently constructed infrastructure.
- **Accessibility as a long chain:** It is important to think about accessibility to infrastructure from an individual's home to the point of service (rather than just at the point of use). This aims to enable accessibility through all of the points of access, for example, enabling accessible integration of first-mile mobility with a public transport station.

Detailed actions

Recommended actions	Stage 1				Stage 2
	Inception/Concept Note	Feasibility	Strategy/Planning (Business case)	Design and Procurement	Testing and commissioning
	Criteria Sub-category: Product/Services effects Customary/Beneficiary design focus				
Common across the three thematic areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use GEDSI data to inform the concept for the infrastructure or specific product in terms of needs, preferences, impacts and outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that inclusive design principles and related costs and benefits are incorporated into project strategy, plans and business case (<i>see details per theme</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that inclusive design principles are incorporated into detailed designed and informed by GEDSI data (<i>see details per theme</i>). - Continue to conduct inclusive stakeholder engagement to inform the detailed design and include women, persons with disabilities and local community members in decision making related to infrastructure design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regularly engage with the advisory group to collect feedback and communicate about project progress/updates (<i>see activity – Stakeholder Engagement</i>). - Conduct monitoring and evaluation activities/audits to measure the impacts of project design and construction from a GEDSI perspective. 	
Specific for Gender Equality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collect and analyse gender-disaggregated data (as part of a gender gap analysis) regarding the unique needs, preferences, potential impacts and desired outcomes related to the project (e.g., socioeconomic/health data, control of assets, affordability, employability, access, GBVH data) for (women) users, leaders, employees and/or business owners. - Conduct gender-inclusive stakeholder engagement (as part of a gender gap analysis) to help understand gender differences in needs, uses, priorities and potential risks/benefits to inform project identification and feasibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure women are involved in key strategic decision-making regarding the project's design. - Identify and prioritise positive effects the project will drive for women users, leaders, employees and/or business owners. - Ensure detailed project strategy/plans addresses gender-inclusive design (e.g., explicit budget for design/delivery of gender-specific design features). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use gender-disaggregated data regarding the gender-specific needs, preferences, potential impacts and desired outcomes related to the project to inform the design of the project. - Conduct gender-inclusive stakeholder engagement to establish a more detailed understanding of gender-specific demand, design preferences, potential impacts and desired outcomes (e.g., access, affordability, safety, time poverty, mobility, economic opportunities). - Integrate gender-inclusive design features (e.g., that address safety, access, affordability) into detailed project physical and/or service design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct monitoring & evaluation of the (un/intended) impacts of the project's design (e.g., through gender/social audits and/or ex-post gender impact assessments/evaluations). 	

Recommended actions	Stage 1				Stage 2
	Inception/Concept Note	Feasibility	Strategy/Planning (Business case)	Design and Procurement	Testing and commissioning
Criteria Sub-category: Product/Services effects Customary/Beneficiary design focus					
Specific for Disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use stakeholder engagement findings and data disaggregated by disability related aspects, ideally using the Washington Group questions, to inform the initial concept for the infrastructure or specific product. - Integrate the universal design principles into initial concepts for concept, plans and business case. - Integrate costs and benefits of universal design and full accessibility, including likely higher usage figures, into the business case. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that stakeholder engagement with OPDs informs the planning and design of infrastructure. - Specify the selected national or international design standards and codes, including those related to accessibility and other aspects of disability inclusion, which will need to be followed during the project's design and construction. - Apply the universal design principles to all planning and design of infrastructure and services, as well as supporting information, communications and digital tools. - Operation and maintenance costs of physical infrastructure, rolling stock, vehicles and so on, should be considered, in order to enable continued accessibility. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct accessibility audits as an effective way of testing piloted or recently constructed infrastructure. Address any accessibility challenges that are identified. Representatives from OPDs are best-placed to provide this service, which should be remunerated as part of the design and construction process.
Specific for Social Inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage with community members to understand needs and how they could benefit from the project, and to gather input on design preferences, potential impacts, and desired outcomes. - Disaggregate findings along separate groups (socio-economic status, access to work, care needs, race, education, access to services). - Conduct community outreach that engages a broad range of voices to help understand local needs, uses, priorities and potential risks/benefits to inform project identification and feasibility. - Identify key local needs the project will positively affect. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure project strategy/plans address socially inclusive design (e.g., explicit budget for design/delivery of design features that support locally, disadvantaged groups). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that community voice remains throughout in key strategic decision-making regarding the project's design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate community-led monitoring and evaluation to assess that the community continues to benefit from the products and services associated with the project.

Case studies

- **[A network of cities committed with gender equality in the transportation sector, Multiple countries in Latin America \(pg 46\)](#)**: Multi-country/-city programme that effectively identified and addressed gender-specific transport needs while also addressing occupational segregation in the implementation of projects. Also presents the “[Transport GenderLab](#),” a helpful platform to share relevant resources.
- **[World Bank, 2023, Japan and the World Bank: Advancing universal design in urban planning](#)**. This overview includes an introduction to the Quality Infrastructure Investment (QII) Partnership, jointly initiated by the Government of Japan and the World Bank, which provides guidance on socially inclusive infrastructure investments and design. This has been applied in Mozambique by the World Bank, on the Maputo Urban Mobility Project.
- **[AT2030, 2023, Inclusive design and accessibility of the built environment in Medellín](#)** – an inclusive infrastructure case study from Colombia.
- **[AT2030, 2023, Inclusive design and accessibility of the built environment in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia](#)**
- **[The Solar Nigeria Programme](#)**, a £27 million UK Aid-funded initiative, empowered local consumers by embedding affordability of solar power into product design. Solar Nigeria’s Consumer Programme offered financial grants to companies that provide solar products, services and/or financing to consumers, to help rapidly expand their capacity to up-scale the market. It also enabled consumer costs to be broken down instead of large upfront payments. This approach enabled over 5 million Nigerians to access reliable solar power, while also powering schools, health facilities and small businesses.

Description of relevant criteria and methodology

Gender Equality

Gender-inclusive design is measured by assessing the extent to which a project understands gender-specific needs and preferences, identifies and prioritises positive effects it (aims to) drive for women and clearly links these to specific design features implemented in the project. This is addressed under the Product(s)/Service(s) category. Approaches may vary in their depth and breadth but should include both:

1. Product(s)/Service(s) effects, as demonstrated through whether or not the project drives positive effect(s) linked to enhancing well-being of women/girls and/or driving gender equity. These effects should be linked to gender-specific needs/preferences identified through a gender gap analysis using primary evidence or relevant secondary evidence. Depending on the stage of the project, these positive effects may be intended or observed.

Criterion: Product(s)/Service(s) drives positive effect(s) linked to enhancing well-being of women/girls and/or drives gender equity. (Yes/No)

2. Customer/Beneficiary design focus, as demonstrated through whether or not the project design has taken measures to ensure that women can both participate in and benefit from the project. Here, specific design features should be linked to gender-specific needs/preferences that were identified and to the positive effects they hope to drive.

Criterion: The project design has taken measures to ensure women can both participate in and benefit from the project. (Yes/No)

Disability

Criterion: Product(s)/Service(s) drives positive effect(s) linked to enhancing well-being of persons with disabilities and/or drives disability inclusion. (Yes/No)

Criterion: The project design has taken measures to ensure that persons with disabilities can both participate in and benefit from the project. (Yes/No)

For both criteria, the SPV, Project Company and Contractors are to achieve this by aligning with the guidance above, including but not limited to:

- Implementing a participatory approach in the development of the product or service, based on meaningful engagement with OPDs, to both inform the design and provide feedback on the finished product.
- Implementing the seven principles of universal design.
- Ensuring that accessibility is set as one of the design requirements, in terms of physical infrastructure and assets as well as digital solutions and a range of communications and information dissemination.

Social Inclusion

Criterion: Product(s)/Service(s) drives positive effect(s) linked to enhancing wellbeing of local community and/or drives social inclusion (Yes/No)

The SPV, Project Company and Contractors can achieve this by demonstrating that the product or service is linked to a material benefit for local community members.

Criterion: The project design has taken measures to ensure that local community members can both participate in and benefit from the project (Yes/No)

The SPV, Project Company and Contractors can achieve this by aligning with the guidance above, including by implementing a participatory approach in the development of the product or service, based on meaningful engagement with local communities, to inform the design and provide feedback on the project.

Additional Case Studies per Sector

Energy

- [Electricity and entrepreneurship of men and women, Surinam](#) (pg 50)
- [Energy: A virtuous circle of Inclusion, Ecuador](#) (p 58)
- [Integrating a gender approach in the energy sector, Bolivia](#) (pg 42)
- [Reducing Resettlement Burdens for Nam Theun 2 Hydropower Project, Laos](#) (pg 16)

Transport

- [Gender concerns to design in Metro Manila BRT Line 1, Philippines](#) (pg 70)
- [GreenCell Electric Bus Financing Project, India](#) (pg 20)
- [Increasing female participation in the road sector value chain, Honduras, Nicaragua and Paraguay](#) (pg 38-39)
- [Moving women up the employment ladder in urban transport, Vietnam](#) (pg 31)
- [Road infrastructure as a vehicle to generate economic opportunities in local populations, Costa Rica](#) (pg 54)
- [Secure mobility for everyone, Argentina](#) (pg 60)
- [Women in Decentralized Rural Road Project, Peru](#) (pg 19)
- [Women Road Maintenance Workers, Cambodia](#) (pg 64)

Urban planning

- [Livable Cities Investment Project for Balanced Development, Georgia](#) (pg 62+)
- [Jiangxi Fuzhou Urban Integrated Infrastructure Improvement Project, China](#) (pg 89)

WASH

- [Promising approaches to address the barriers to advancing women in water utilities, multiple countries](#) (pg 47-51)
- [Incorporating gender KPIs and targets for women's employment in the water/sewage sector, Turkey](#) (pg 18)
- [The more access to water and sanitation, the better quality of life, Paraguay](#) (pg 56)



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[Guide on Integrating Gender throughout Infrastructure Project Phases in Asia and the Pacific](#)

[How to Integrate a Gender Approach in the Infrastructure Sector?](#)

[ICED SEAH Infra tool](#)

[IFC Gender and Infrastructure Toolkit](#)

[Mainstreaming Gender in Infrastructure: Desk Review](#)

[PPP Gender Toolkit](#)

[Toolkit for Business: Investing in Women's Economic Empowerment to Strengthen Supply Chain Resilience](#)

[Toolkit on Gender Equality Results & Indicators](#)

[Women in infrastructure: Selected stocktaking of good practices for inclusion of women in infrastructure](#)

[Stakeholder Engagement: A Good Practice Handbook for Companies Doing Business in Emerging Markets](#)

[UNCTAD-World Bank Community Engagement Strategies Action Note](#)

References by thematic area and activity

Activity-specific gender resources:



Data Collection and Analysis

Macro-level gender data sources: [Country gender landscapes](#) and/or [ILOSTAT sex-disaggregated data re: economic activity](#) (in specific country/region contexts)

Leadership Selection and Development

[Empowering talent: Women in energy, resources, and infrastructure](#)

[Times Up: Does Female Leadership Reduce Workplace Sexual Harassment?](#)

[Diversity wins: How inclusion matters](#)

Procurement of Supply Chain Partners

[The Power of Procurement: How to Source From Women-owned Businesses](#)

Activity-specific disability resources:



Strategy Development

[FCDO, 2022, FCDO Disability Inclusion and Rights Strategy 2022 to 2030](#)

[World Bank, 2022, Disability Inclusion and Accountability Framework](#)

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[UK Government. Accessibility and assisted digital: Getting an accessibility audit.](#)

Activity-specific social inclusion resources:



Strategy Development

[World Bank Public-Private Infrastructure Advisory Facility \(PPIAF\). Reference Tool on Inclusive Infrastructure and Social Equity](#)

Stakeholder Engagement

[Impact Investing Institute \(2023\): Fostering Impact: An investor guide for engaging communities in place-based impact investing](#)

[Participedia](#) for a full list of stakeholder engagement methods and examples of global applications

[UNCTAD-World Bank \(2018\): Community Engagement Strategies in RAI Knowledge Into Action Notes](#)

See [World Bank, Social inclusion Assessment Toolkit](#) for a step-by-step approach to identifying drivers of social exclusion and inclusion of specific groups.

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[Promoting Women's empowerment through energy](#)

[C40, 2024, Policy paper: Mainstreaming disability inclusion through energy transition in cities.](#)

Transport

[IFC Gender and Infrastructure Toolkit/Business Case: Transport](#)

[Reducing violence against women and girls in transport](#)

[Transport: A Game Changer for Women's Economic Empowerment](#)

[Transport Gender Lab](#)

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