

Draft for Consultation

# Summary of the Analytical Study for the Safeguard Policy Review and Update: Gender and Safeguards May 2022

## ABBREVIATIONS

AfDB	–	African Development Bank
ADB	–	Asian Development Bank
CGA	–	Country Gender Assessment
CGS	–	Country Gender Strategy
CPS	–	Country Partnership Strategy
DMC	–	Developing Member Country
EBRD	–	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EGM	–	Effective Gender Mainstreaming
FCAS	–	Fragile and Conflict Affected Situations
GBV	–	Gender-based Violence
GEN	–	Gender Equity Theme
IDB	–	Inter-American Development Bank
IED	–	Independent Evaluation Department
IFC	–	International Finance Corporation
IPSA	–	Initial Poverty and Social Assessment
ISS	–	Integrated Safeguards System
MFI	–	Multilateral Finance Institution
IP	–	Indigenous Peoples
WB	–	World Bank
WID	–	Women in Development
SDGs	–	Sustainable Development Goals
SEAH	–	Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment
SIA	–	Social Impact Assessment
SIDS	–	Small Island Developing States
SOGI	–	Sexual Orientation and Identity
SPS	–	Safeguards Policy Statement
TA	–	Technical Assistance

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is undertaking a comprehensive review and update of its Safeguard Policy Statement, 2009 (SPS).<sup>1</sup> The update process has been initiated by ADB Management following a Corporate Evaluation of the SPS by ADB's Independent Evaluation Department (IED), completed in May 2020 (IED Report).<sup>2</sup> The update will build off the findings and recommendations of the report, which ADB Management endorsed. The update will seek to modernize the policy, considering the changing development context and evolving developing member country (DMC) and client needs and capacities; as well as opportunities for greater harmonization with the policy principles and standards of other multilateral financial institutions (MFI). The update will consider the diversity of ADB lending modalities and operations, including the private sector, as well as requirements for different contexts such as fragile and conflict affected situations, small island developing states, and emergency assistance. Overall, the policy update will seek to strengthen safeguard implementation effectiveness and efficiency in ways that will enhance beneficial safeguards outcomes for the environment and affected people.
2. The revised safeguard policy is expected to be submitted for ADB Board consideration in March 2023, following a process of further review, policy development, and meaningful stakeholder engagement. To inform this process, ADB is undertaking a series of analytical studies.<sup>3</sup> The studies will benchmark ADB's current SPS against the policies of selected MFIs and briefly consider ADB's implementation experience.<sup>4</sup> The studies will inform the development of the new safeguard policy and will be provided for stakeholder review and consultations. Initial summaries will be disclosed first to gather initial stakeholder views. The analytical studies themselves will then be updated and disclosed in full. Stakeholder engagement and consultation will have three main phases: (i) preliminary information and outreach on the overall approach for the policy update and stakeholder engagement plan; (ii) consultation on the analytical studies; and (iii) consultation on the draft policy paper. There will be multiple opportunities for stakeholder engagement, including regional consultations; "deep dive" sessions with ADB developing member countries (DMCs) and civil society organizations (CSOs); focus groups on specific topics; and consultations with people affected by ADB projects.<sup>5</sup> This document provides a summary of the additional analytical study on gender and safeguards. This study is complemented by a separate study that looks more specifically at Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> ADB. 2009. Safeguard Policy Statement. Manila. <https://www.adb.org/documents/safeguard-policy-statement>

<sup>2</sup> Independent Evaluation Department. 2020. Evaluation Document: Effectiveness of the 2009 Safeguard Policy Statement. Manila. <https://www.adb.org/documents/effectiveness-2009-safeguard-policy-statement>

<sup>3</sup> The planned analytical studies are: 1. Overall Policy Architecture; 2. Indigenous Peoples; 3. Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention; 4. Labor and Working Conditions; 5. Community and Occupational Health & Safety; 6. Land Acquisition, Restriction of Access and Involuntary Resettlement; 7. Biodiversity and Natural Resource Management; 8. Cultural Heritage; 9. Stakeholder Engagement, Information, and Grievance Redress Mechanisms; 10. Lessons from Accountability Mechanisms; 11. Environmental and Social Impacts and Risk Assessment; 12. Safeguards in Fragile and Conflict Affected Situations and Small Island Developing States ; 13. Country Safeguard Systems; 14. Climate Change; 15. Gender and Safeguards; 16. Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment (SEAH); 17. Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGIE); 18. Safeguards in Different Financing Modalities; 19. Safeguards in Private Sector Operations. Additional studies may also be added where needed.

<sup>4</sup> The studies are intended to complement the evaluation completed by IED in May 2020 and will not duplicate IED's work on the overall effectiveness of the SPS.

<sup>5</sup> Please refer to the ADB website and Stakeholder Engagement Plan for further details.

<https://www.adb.org/who-we-are/safeguards/safeguard-policy-review>

<sup>6</sup> [Summary of the Analytical Study for the Safeguard Policy Review and Update: Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment \(SEAH\) \(Draft for Consultation\) | Asian Development Bank \(adb.org\)](#)

## II. PURPOSE, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

3. This benchmarking study has been prepared with the objective of comparing ADB's current policies, strategies, and practices of work on gender and policies and approaches used by peer MDBs. The benchmarking exercise covers peer Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) safeguards policy frameworks, implementation structures, modalities, practices, and resources. Other aspects covered in this study include the scope and application of respective MDBs' systems with respect to "do good - aspirational development objectives" and mandatory requirements such as "do no harm measures". This involved identifying gaps, strengths, and weaknesses of current ADB approaches, significant differences with peer MDBs, lessons learned and emerging issues, as well as operational implications. This benchmarking study was undertaken as a desktop exercise and involved the review of key ADB, MDB and third-party documentation. The Study also looks at other aspects of gender related risks such as Gender Based Violence (GBV) and SEAH. The desk review was supplemented by virtual interviews with ADB operations staff and representative staff of peer MDBs. The study will be further supplemented through planned additional consultations with DMCs and CSOs.

## III. OVERVIEW OF GENDER WORK AT ADB

4. ADB's Policy on Gender and Development<sup>7</sup> (1998) adopted mainstreaming as a key strategy in promoting gender equity. The Policy combines operational approaches such as the inclusion of gender considerations in ADB's macroeconomic work and actively promoting gender in ADB's loan and Technical Assistance (TA) operations, with institutional mechanisms such as increased in-house gender and development capacity and enhancing gender capacity of executing agencies in selected DMCs.
5. ADB is viewed as a pioneer amongst MDBs in the gender space, with well-regarded project gender mainstreaming approaches and a technically sound and rigorous project gender categorization system, and project Gender Action Plans (GAP) used as a tool of gender mainstreaming and results monitoring. ADB also has an in-house check-and-balance system for quality assurance on gender mainstreaming at project entry and exit. In addition, ADB provides strategic operational support for gender mainstreaming, in the shape of a variety of guidelines for different stages of the project cycle and sector-specific toolkits. This is combined with an emphasis on building DMCs sector ministries' gender capacity.
6. Operational Plan for Priority 2: Accelerating Progress in Gender Equality<sup>8</sup> (OP2) is one of seven of ADB's operational priorities under ADB's Strategy 2030<sup>9</sup> (S2030). Within S2030 OP2, ADB is committed to contribute to the efforts of accelerating gender equality outcomes in the Asia and the Pacific region and to support gender equality through gender-inclusive project designs in at least 75% of its sovereign and non-sovereign operations by 2030.<sup>10</sup> In addition, in the context of OP2, ADB is committed to go beyond standard gender mainstreaming and integrates a more transformative agenda.<sup>11</sup> These transformative areas are strongly interlinked with the achievement of

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<sup>7</sup> [Policy on Gender and Development | Asian Development Bank \(adb.org\)](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Operational Priority 2: Accelerating Progress in Gender Equality \(adb.org\)](#)

<sup>9</sup> [ADB Strategy 2030: Achieving a Prosperous, Inclusive, Resilient, and Sustainable Asia and the Pacific](#)

<sup>10</sup> Footnote 8, p.vi

<sup>11</sup> Footnote 7, page 17.

other SDGs, such as poverty reduction (SDG 1), health (SDG 3), education (SDG 4), decent work (SDG 8), and climate change (SDG 13).

#### IV. OVERVIEW OF GENDER CONSIDERATIONS IN THE SAFEGUARD POLICY STATEMENT (SPS)

7. The SPS, approved in 2009, recognized the changing context of safeguards in the Asia Pacific Region and that gender equity was one of five drivers of change in ADB's long-term strategic framework for 2008–2020 (Strategy 2020).<sup>12</sup> Under Key Policy Issues and Considerations, the document makes two important points on Gender and Development (GAD). The first concerns the juxtaposition of safeguards to aspirational development aspects. Here the document states "The SPS's specific focus on safeguards, and not broader aspirational objectives, is therefore considered appropriate".<sup>13</sup>
8. The second considers whether Gender and Core Labor Standards should be integrated in the Policy Statement or not. It states that "Core labor standards and broader social protection issues are already included in ADB's Social Protection Strategy (2001). Social dimensions are also handled through the Operations Manual (OM) section on incorporation of social dimensions into ADB operations (under OM Section C3). GAD issues already receive specific and focused attention in ADB operations through the implementation of ADB's Policy on Gender and Development (1998) and the accompanying OM C2/BP<sup>14</sup> section on gender and development.
9. The SPS provides policy implementation requirements, while OM section F1 provides further guidance and details on the procedures for screening and categorization of safeguards. Social and gender dimensions are also screened separately from safeguards. OM C2/BP on gender and development requires screening for potential gender-related benefits and risks and assigning a gender categorization.
10. The SPS sets out policy objectives, scope and triggers, and principles for three key safeguard areas: (i) environmental safeguards (ii) involuntary resettlement safeguards, and (iii) indigenous peoples safeguards. It specifically clarifies the definition of meaningful consultation, including that it is gender inclusive and responsive and tailored to the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.
11. Under the Environmental Safeguards Policy Principles, the SPS requires that environmental assessments should consider gender issues, project alternatives should consider environmental and social impacts and meaningful consultations should also ensure women's participation.
12. Under the Involuntary Resettlement Policy Principles, the SPS requires the resettlement surveys to include gender analysis to determine the scope of resettlement planning and its impacts and risks on both men and women. Impact mitigation measures should pay particular attention to the needs of affected women and improve their living standards. Safeguards Requirements (SR2) requires gender-disaggregated data to be maintained, for relocation plans to be gender-sensitive, and for income restoration to consider gender differences.

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<sup>12</sup> SPS, Section II Changing Context, p. 4 para 12(iii)

<sup>13</sup> ADB Safeguard Policy Statement, June 2009

<sup>14</sup> OM C2/BP Gender and Development in ADB Operations (2010)

<https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/31483/om-c2.pdf>

13. Under the Indigenous Peoples (IP) Policy Principles, the SPS requires that a culturally appropriate and gender-sensitive social impact assessment is undertaken, ensuring that social and economic project benefits are gender-appropriate, and that a gender-inclusive grievance mechanism be established.
14. The SPS also has a section (SR4) on safeguard requirements for different financing modalities including financial intermediaries (FIs). There is no mention of gender specific elements in this section, but SR1, 2 and 3 apply equally to sovereign and non-sovereign loans, and gender-related safeguards requirements as outlined above therefore apply.
15. The SPS glossary makes no reference to terms of interest to more contemporary gender analysis such as GBV, Sexual Harassment (SH), Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI), etc. Nor is there mention of the particular gender implications for projects implemented in FCAS and/or in SIDS.
16. Issues critical to any safeguards policy update reflecting gender-responsive project design cover: (i) GBV; (ii) SH; and (iii) SOGI. These topics are absent from the SPS policy, as are gendered aspects of other important areas such as climate change and labor. It is recognized that gender considerations need to be reflected more clearly in the SPS to mitigate gender-specific safeguard risks and enhance gender inclusion.

## V. IED FINDINGS ON GENDER IN THE SAFEGUARDS POLICY

17. The IED Report noted that, the SPS specifically addresses gender in three general compliance areas: (i) consideration of females as a vulnerable group in social impact assessments; (ii) gender sensitive consultations, and (iii) gender-responsive grievance redress mechanisms. Gender aspects of project health and safety provisions typically consider equal pay for equal work, separate facilities for men and women, and gender targets for civil works employment. The IED Report further noted that the SPS and related portions of the ADB Operations Manual Section F1 for the SPS (OM/F1) have not evolved sufficiently to provide the necessary operational guidance on emerging issues. In particular, the report noted the lack of specific support on emerging issues such as SEAH at the work site and project impacts on communities that were not displaced, as well as other persistent concerns (e.g., stakeholder engagement).
18. The IED Report further notes the need to expand the coverage of the SPS to clarify and integrate the safeguard aspects of crosscutting social dimensions including labor and working conditions, community health and safety, gender, labour influx and migrant workers, stakeholder engagement, some of which are currently addressed by other ADB strategies and policies.<sup>15 16</sup> It further concluded that emerging gender risks at project work sites cut across environmental safeguards, health and safety, gender, and social protection, and may require a more integrated approach. Integrated analysis by safeguards and gender team members would enhance synergies and reduce duplication of efforts and responses in gender action plans and safeguard plans. The report further stressed the importance of the provision of sufficient operational guidance through the OM/F1, good practice notes, as well as results-oriented (as opposed to compliance-driven) training to ADB staff and clients.

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<sup>15</sup> Footnote 6

<sup>16</sup> ADB Social Protection Strategy (2001). <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/32100/social-protection.pdf>



## VI. BENCHMARKING EXERCISE: GENDER IN SAFEGUARDS OF OTHER MFIs

19. Most MFI safeguard frameworks follow either a Performance Based Model or Principle-Based Model with a majority having moved towards Performance Standards. The Principle Based Model is followed by ADB, AIIB and AfDB.<sup>17</sup> It is composed of one umbrella safeguard policy statement which sets out the scope and objectives of the policy. The policy then provides principles and requirements across three or more separate safeguard areas, covering at a minimum Environment, Involuntary Resettlement, and Indigenous Peoples. The Performance Standards Model is followed by EBRD, IDB, IFC and WB, as well as a range of other financial institutions following the Equator Principles. The structure includes: (i) a stand-alone institutional commitment/policy statement on environmental and social sustainability; and (ii) eight to ten separate standards, which set out requirements that apply to borrowers and clients. These standards define client responsibilities and provide direction for managing environmental and social risks in projects.
20. This section examines how gender is handled in the safeguards policies of six peer MFIs. The benchmarking study examines the gender equality related statements in the MFI safeguard policy documents, gender-specific provisions in various policy standards/requirements and guidance materials available for implementation support. The review covers: African Development Bank (AfDB), Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), International Finance Corporation (IFC), and the World Bank (WB). Apart from the AIIB, all these institutions also have broader Gender Policies/Strategies; and AfDB, EBRD, IDB and WB also have gender marker/tagging systems, which are separate from safeguards.

### A. Mention of Gender Equality in the MFI Safeguard Policy

21. The IDB (2020) includes a strong commitment to fostering gender equality in its Policy Statement of its Environmental and Social Policy Framework (ESPF). It is the only MFI which has a stand-alone standard on gender. It is committed to promoting gender equality and gender empowerment, recognizing that gender equality contributes to poverty reduction and results in higher levels of human capital. This stand-alone standard aims at identifying and mitigating potential gender-based risks and impacts; promotes non-discrimination and inclusion of vulnerable groups with characteristics such as disability, state of health, indigenous status, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, race, color, ethnicity, age, language, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, economic disadvantage, or social condition.<sup>18</sup>
22. The World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) (2017) makes no specific mention of gender or gender equality outside of its Environmental and Social Standards (ESS). It does state however, that it is embracing action to remove barriers against those who are often excluded from the development process such as women, children, persons with disabilities, youth and minorities.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Note, AIIB updated its policy in 2021 and has retained the current principle-based model, while AfDB is updating its policy in 2022 and is considering a shift to a model more closely aligned with the performance standard model.

<sup>18</sup> IDB Environmental and Social Policy Framework 2020, p.2

<sup>19</sup> WB Environmental and Social Framework 2017, p.3

23. Gender equality figures among the EBRD's main commitments in its Environmental and Social Policy (ESP) where it states that gender is a fundamental aspect of a modern, well-functioning market economy and democratic society, and that EBRD is committed to preventing gender discrimination and to promoting gender equality within its mandate.<sup>20</sup>
24. AIIB's updated Environmental and Social Framework (ESF, May 2021) states that gender equality is necessary for sustainable economic development and improvement of lives. It seeks to support projects that make infrastructure equally accessible to all people and provide equal opportunities for socioeconomic development. AIIB supports its clients to identify potential gender-specific opportunities as well as gender-specific risks and impacts under their projects, and to develop mitigation measures to avoid or reduce them including, as appropriate, measures to identify and address the risks of GBV.<sup>21</sup>

## B. Gender-specific provisions in Performance Standards/Requirements

25. MFIs vary in the extent to which they incorporate gender provisions into the different performance standards or requirements. Across the MFI safeguard standards, gender specific provisions are generally covered under five specific areas, namely assessment and management of social and environmental impacts and risks, labor and working conditions, involuntary resettlement, indigenous peoples, and stakeholder engagement.
26. The **IDB** updated its Environmental and Social Safeguards in 2020 and included a stand-alone standard on gender. It ensures the stakeholder consultation process captures the views of people of all genders and reflects their concerns and priorities about impacts, mitigation mechanisms, and benefits, where appropriate. ESPS 2 on Labor includes provisions related to protection of workers, including workers in vulnerable situations, such as women and people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. It states the policy implementation should consider requirements related to gender equality by including measures such as: training on gender non-discrimination and sensitivity for project staff; and collecting gender-disaggregated employment data to ensure non-discriminatory hiring practices. It also requires borrowers to take necessary steps to prevent and address violence, harassment, intimidation, and/or exploitation, especially regarding women, people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. The ESPS 3 on Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention, recognizes the disproportionate impact of pollution on women. ESPS 4 on Community Health and Safety, recognizes that certain risks could result in adverse effects on the health, safety, and well-being of people with sensitivities such as age, gender, disability, or short or long-term health conditions. Implementation of the ESPS 5 on Land Acquisition and Involuntary Resettlement is detailed regarding gender, including for example, requirements for women's participation in all aspects of resettlement planning and implementation, addressing differentiated livelihood impacts on women, and protection of women with respect to land ownership or occupancy and compensation arrangements. ESPS 7 on Indigenous peoples, stipulates that the assessment of land and natural resource use should be gender inclusive and specifically consider women's role in the management and use of these resources. ESPS 9 on Gender Equality pays close attention to how gender inequalities interact with other inequalities, and how this intersectionality may exacerbate barriers to accessing project benefits, limit the ability to deal with negative project impacts, and

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<sup>20</sup> EBRD Environmental & Social Policy 2019, p.5, para 2.5

<sup>21</sup> AIIB Environmental and Social Framework, May 2021, p.6, para 19



create other vulnerabilities. It recognizes that diverse sexual orientations and gender identities may have the effect of excluding people making them more vulnerable to negative project impacts. ESPS 6 on Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources and ESPS 7 on Cultural Heritage do not mention gender issues.

27. The **EBRD** updated the Environment and Social Policy in 2019. Under performance requirement (PR) 1, it requires the environmental and social assessment process to include gender-disaggregated data. Furthermore, it requires the gender aspects and risks caused by climate change to the project to be considered throughout the assessment process. PR2 on Labor and Working Conditions states that employment decisions are not to be made based on personal characteristics unrelated to inherent job requirements, such as gender, race, etc. and sexual orientation or gender identity. Also, that clients and borrowers should take measures to prevent and address any form of violence and harassment, bullying, intimidation, and/or exploitation, including any form of GBV. Furthermore, a Grievance Mechanism needs to be established and include provisions for confidential complaints, and those requiring special protection measures such as reports of GBV. PR 5 on Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement integrates gender aspects in several ways starting with socio-economic surveys that need to be undertaken up to, consultations, impact assessments, mitigation, and monitoring. PR 7 on Indigenous Peoples requires the Indigenous Peoples Development Plan to systematically assess differentiated impacts of a project with respect to gender and different generations and include actions to address these impacts. The section on Information Disclosure and Stakeholder Engagement, mentions that the Stakeholder Engagement Plan will be tailored to consider the main characteristics (including gender) and interests of the project-affected parties and other interested parties and distinguish between the different levels and methods of engagement that might be appropriate for each group. The remaining PRs do not have any specific provisions for gender-differentiated impacts.
28. The **WB** does not have a standalone standard on gender. ESS provisions address gender inequality largely by identifying and addressing risks and impacts (a 'do no harm' approach). ESS 1 on "Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts", has no explicit mention on gender but has a wider coverage of specific individuals or groups as disadvantaged and/or vulnerable. Gender issues and provisions are more explicitly mentioned under ESS 2 on "Labor and Working Conditions" but do not cover sexual harassment in work contexts. Under ESS 5 on "Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land use and Involuntary resettlement" there is explicit mention of gender considerations for planning feasible project design options. It also requires the borrower to pay attention to gender in cases of physical and economic displacement and improving the living conditions of the "poor and vulnerable". ESS 7 on "Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities" recognizes the differential roles of men and women in indigenous cultures and that women and children have been frequently marginalized. The meaningful consultation process for IPs specifies gender inclusion. ESS 10 on "Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure", does not explicitly refer to gender in the objective or the scope of application or in the section on meaningful consultation. The other ESS standards do not have specific provisions for gender differentiated impacts. The Bank Directive on Addressing Risks and Impacts on Disadvantaged or Vulnerable Individuals or Groups<sup>22</sup> does however provide further requirements for WB staff regarding due diligence obligations relating to the identification of, and mitigation of risks and impacts on, individuals or groups who,

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<sup>22</sup> World Bank, 2021. [Bank Directive on Addressing Risks and Impacts on Disadvantaged or Vulnerable Individuals or Groups](#).

because of their circumstances, may be disadvantaged or vulnerable. The definition of disadvantaged or vulnerable individuals or groups includes, among others, gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

29. **IFC performance standards (PS)** does not have a standalone gender standard, however several cross-cutting topics including gender, climate change, human rights are addressed across multiple performance standards. Under PS 1 on “Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts”, it requires the client to consider factors such as gender, age, ethnicity, culture, literacy, sickness, physical or mental disability, poverty or economic disadvantage, and dependence on unique natural resources. On consultation, it requires the process to capture both men and women’s views, and reflect their different concerns and priorities about impacts, mitigation mechanisms, and benefits, where appropriate. Under PS 2: Labor and Working Conditions, there is a mention of vulnerable workers, however women workers and their special conditions are not mentioned. Under non-discrimination and equal opportunity, it requires the client to take measures to prevent and address harassment, intimidation, and/or exploitation, especially in regard to women. PS 5 on Land Acquisition and Involuntary Resettlement makes more pointed references to gender and women, specifically, in the consultation process to ensure that women’s perspectives are obtained, in addition to the documentation of ownership. PS 7 on Indigenous Peoples requires the assessment of land and natural resource use to be gender inclusive and specifically consider women’s role in the management and use of these resources. The remaining performance standards do not have specific provisions for gender differentiated impacts.
30. The **AfDB’s Integrated Safeguards System (ISS)** was adopted in 2013. The Operational Safeguard (OS) 1, on Environmental and Social Assessment requires the identification and assessment of environmental and social impacts and risks—including those related to gender, climate change and vulnerability; the baseline survey to include gender and age-disaggregated information pertaining to the economic, social and cultural conditions of the affected population. It also requires the borrower or client to give special attention to consultations that involve vulnerable groups. In the context of gender vulnerability, the borrower is required to give careful consideration to actively facilitating consultation with, and participation by, both women and men in ways that are sensitive to the social and political constraints and barriers that women and men may face. With respect to gender vulnerability in resettlement, the provisions for resettlement planning are very detailed with specific measures targeted to women, for example quality and quantity of land allocated to women, livelihood restoration measures, land titles at the resettlement site in the name of both spouses and others. Using a gender mainstreaming approach, the AfDB also carries out an assessment of gender issues for every project and uses the findings to enhance project design measures and compensation plans.
31. **AIIB** revised its Environmental and Social Policy (ESP) in May 2021. Under this revision, a key change has been an emphasis on gender equality included in the vision of the ESP. AIIB bases its categorization of the project on a combined review of both environmental and social risks and impacts, paying special attention to disproportionate gender impacts and the vulnerability of various types of potentially affected people. An environmental and social assessment is conducted to identify risks including gender risks. The Environmental and Social Plan includes the proposed performance indicators, including as appropriate, disaggregation by gender. The ESP requires the project-level grievance redress mechanisms, to be scaled to the risks and impacts of the project and designed to address affected people’s concerns and complaints promptly, including gender-related concerns and complaints relating to GBV. It also has provisions to prevent any form of GBV and harassment, bullying,

intimidation, and/or exploitation under the project, and adopt specific measures to avoid or mitigate these risks, including providing for confidential, culturally appropriate channels for reporting incidents and providing support to GBV survivors. Regarding Indigenous Peoples safeguards, gender considerations are considered with respect to land ownership and customary rights to natural resources. Involuntary Resettlement safeguards also require understanding and addressing gender-related risks and differential impacts of involuntary resettlement.

32. The study concluded that amongst all MFIs, IDB has the most comprehensive coverage with explicit mention of gender considerations across various standards in addition to a standalone standard on gender. Although, EBRD does not have a standalone standard on gender, it has a strong commitment to gender equality in the policy statement and gender considerations are integrated across the different standards, in particular in labor and working conditions, land acquisition and resettlement, indigenous peoples and stakeholder engagement. To a considerable extent, both IFC, WB, AIIB and AfDB have also integrated explicit gender considerations across the different standards.

### C. Guidance Materials for Implementation Support

33. WB has developed three gender-relevant Good Practice Notes (GPN) to support the implementation of ESF. The assessment and mitigation of the risks of SEAH in projects are covered in a specific GPN, as is discrimination based on a person's real or perceived SOGI. IFC has also prepared a set of Guidance Notes, corresponding to the Performance Standards. Unlike the WB, the IFC does not have a standalone Keynote Paper on Gender supporting the Performance Standards. However, IFC produced numerous resources pertaining to gender-related themes that can assist in undertaking gender proactive measures in the design and implementation of its projects. Examples include: "How to Support Your Company to Write and Implement an Employee Code of Conduct for Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. It may be noted that these GPNs or resource materials are produced to help staff in providing implementation support to Borrowers in meeting the policy requirements. They are advisory in nature and are not a policy nor are they mandatory.

## VII. CONCLUSIONS AND KEY ISSUES FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

34. The Benchmarking exercise highlighted several gaps in ADB policies, practices and resources when compared to those used by peer MFIs with regards to gender in the context of safeguards. The following key issues are proposed for further consideration and consultation:
  - (i) **Providing a Strong Gender Equality Commitment in the Safeguard Policy Statement/Vision:** This serves to set an appropriate tone in emphasizing the integration of gender considerations in safeguards while ensuring clear distinction between compliance and aspirational goals of the policy.
  - (ii) **Moving towards Integrated Social and Environmental Risk Assessments:** This is the trend in most MFIs at present, and such an approach would cover a wide range of risks that are also gender-related, including SEAH, human rights, discrimination related to gender identity etc. This will help in understanding the synergies between environmental and social issues including gender and intersectionality in a more comprehensive manner, thus bringing the treatment of the issues more in line with the aspirational aspects of Strategy 2030 Operational Plan for Priority Two on Accelerating Gender Equality.

- (iii) **Integrating gender-specific provisions in the Performance Standards/Requirements and/or having a stand-alone gender standard:** Following good practice examples from IDB and EBRD regarding coverage and level of details of gender-related provisions across different standards, further discussion will be required on specific provisions and requirements for gender-related risks to be included in the updated standards. Further review is needed on the possible scope of other related issues such as SEAH in the new standards, based on the implementation experience and lessons learned from comparator MFIs, borrowers and clients. A separate study has been prepared on this. If gender-specific provisions are well integrated into the different standards, the value addition of a stand-alone gender standard needs to be further considered.
- (iv) **Provide Operational Support Tools:** In line with both ADB's own and other MFIs experience it is important to develop operational support tools on practical application of gender and intersectionality across different standards. Operational tools, such as toolkits, good practice notes, and guideline documents should address specific gaps for different groups of stakeholders including ADB staff, staff of EAs/IAs and borrowers, as well as consultants and contractors. These operational tools should be more specific relating to "how to" questions, presenting good practice examples and recommendations. Additional technical assistance and support to some borrowers and clients will also need to be targeted.
- (v) **Increased coordination and synergy between gender and safeguard teams:** It is noticed in several of the institutions benchmarked that the work of the safeguard and gender teams is not well coordinated. It should be recognized that each has a distinct and important role, and a clearer division of roles and responsibilities between gender and safeguard teams is being called for. It is clear that "do no harm" and "do good" are two sides of the same coin and both approaches should be coordinated and work in synergy with the aim of simplifying procedures for both ADB staff and DMC borrowers/clients.
- (vi) **Renewed Emphasis on Learning and Capacity Building:** Continuous training and building capacities and skills both for ADB staff and DMC borrowers/clients will be necessary to ensure that all stakeholders of the safeguard implementation process are kept up to speed with proposed changes.
- (vii) **Glossary and Environmental and Social Exclusion Lists:** Most safeguard documents have a glossary, but not all include gender-relevant terminology, and the example of AIIB can be noted here as good practice. Exclusion lists are an additional tool and can include specific references to female trafficking, female child labor etc. as exclusions.

## VIII. NEXT STEPS

35. This Summary is prepared as background material for the ongoing stakeholder consultations. It provides stakeholders with concise information on the MFI benchmarking on Gender and Safeguards. External stakeholders can use the information provided here to comment and provide meaningful recommendations to

make the updated policy substantive and implementable. Recommendations and feedback received from external stakeholder consultations will be used to update and finalize the Analytical Study. Once prepared, the detailed Analytical Study will be published in draft form and will be disclosed on ADB's website for public consultation, review, and comments.