



Pacific handbook for gender equity and social inclusion in coastal fisheries and aquaculture



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MODULE 4

Government processes

Pacific handbook for

gender equity and social inclusion

in coastal fisheries
and aquaculture

Module 4: Government processes

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Original text: English

This publication should be cited as:

Barclay K., Leduc B., Sanders J., Kunatuba J. and Raubani J. 2019. Module 4: Government processes. In: Barclay K., Leduc B., Mangubhai S. and Donato-Hunt C. (eds.). Pacific handbook for gender equity and social inclusion in coastal fisheries and aquaculture. Pacific Community (SPC), Noumea, New Caledonia. 11 p.

Prepared for publication at SPC's Noumea headquarters, B.P. D5, 98848 Noumea Cedex, New Caledonia, 2019

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Key points:

- For sustainable and equitable development of coastal fisheries and aquaculture, fisheries agencies must ensure gender and social inclusion (GSI) is part of normal work structures and processes.
- Embedding GSI throughout government processes, structures and practices is called mainstreaming.
- Mainstreaming GSI perspectives in fisheries and aquaculture requires combining interventions at policy level, development of capacity, and establishment of systems in fisheries agencies.
- Capacity building in GSI goes beyond formal training. It requires development of knowledge and skills in identifying social inequity through GSI analysis and integrating gender and social perspectives in the design of programmes and services, planning and allocation of resources, and monitoring and evaluation of implementation.
- Staff of fisheries agencies need to be specifically tasked with applying a gender and social inclusion perspective in their work to achieve results in this area.

Mainstreaming GSI in government processes

When designing policies, strategies and programmes, or assisting in drafting legislation, fisheries agency staff must include consideration of GSI to ensure coastal fisheries and aquaculture contribute to sustainable development, including at community level. Placing coastal communities at the centre, as advocated in the FAO *Small-scale fisheries guidelines (SSF guidelines)*¹ and *A new song for coastal fisheries*,² provides an enabling environment for governments and organisations to meet national, regional and international commitments on fisheries management and environmental protection.

First we need to build more capacity for mainstreaming GSI principles in coastal fisheries and aquaculture management and development within governments. This also involves ensuring GSI activities are adequately resourced.

Mainstreaming GSI perspectives in government and organisational processes requires specific knowledge and training, including expertise in social analysis. Social scientists acquire this expertise in the same way as fisheries scientists become experts in their field – through study, research and years of practical experience. They have also developed tools to analyse the causes of social issues and the way in which these issues are reflected in practices and institutions. It is therefore important for fisheries agencies to work with social scientists who have expertise in GSI mainstreaming, as well as to consult with the communities concerned.

1 FAO. 2015. Voluntary guidelines for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries in the context of food security and poverty eradication. Rome: FAO. <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4356e.pdf>

2 SPC. 2015. A new song for coastal fisheries – pathways to change: The Noumea strategy. Noumea, New Caledonia: SPC. <http://www.spc.int/coastfish/compoent/content/article/461-a-new-song-for-coastal-fisheries.html>

Misconception: 'I'm a woman so the gender perspective is covered.'
'I'm a youth representative, so youth issues are covered.'

Women may have experience of the issues that women are facing, but this does not mean they are qualified as gender experts. Some women may be strong 'gatekeepers', who oppose women's empowerment and gender equality initiatives, just as some men do. Older women may exercise control over younger women to make sure they 'behave' properly. On the other hand, there are men who actively and consciously promote gender equality and social inclusion. You do not need to be a woman to promote gender equality and to mainstream gender.

Similarly, a young man may have a good understanding of an issue faced by young people from the same background (e.g. young, educated, urban men). This does not necessarily mean he is able to represent the concerns of young people with disabilities, those living in hardship, migrant and landless groups, or young women.

GSI capacity of Pacific governments

In Pacific Island countries and territories, gender mainstreaming is the main pathway for achieving GSI in government.

From 2010 to 2014, SPC worked with 15 Pacific governments to carry out 'stocktakes' of their capacity to mainstream gender in a systematic and sustainable way.³ The gender stocktakes consisted of reviewing the 'enabling environment' for gender mainstreaming, including legal and policy frameworks, political will, organisational culture, accountability mechanisms, technical capacity and allocation of resources (Box 1).

The results showed that there were some instruments in place to support the promotion of gender equality, such as the ratification of human rights instruments and the adoption of national policies for gender equality and empowerment of women. However, most Pacific Island countries and territories lacked political will for progressing gender equality, and technical capacity and resources for mainstreaming gender. Organisational cultures were also not particularly supportive of the process.

WHAT IS GENDER MAINSTREAMING?

Gender mainstreaming is '*the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated*'.⁴

3 Gender stocktakes were carried out in Cook Islands, Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Wallis and Futuna.

4 ECOSOC. 1997. Mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations System. Chapter IV, Coordination Segment. Report of the Economic and Social Council of the 1997 General Assembly, Fifty-second Session. New York: United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/docs/52/plenary/a52-3.htm>

Mainstreaming gender in fisheries agencies

The results of the gender stocktakes described above align with those of a recent study that found Pacific Island countries have not yet incorporated the gender aspects of regional and international fisheries agreements in national frameworks.⁵ The stocktake process also revealed that in most countries, fisheries agencies staff said they believed it was important or useful to include gender perspectives in their work, but they had very limited technical capacity to conduct gender analysis.⁶

'We've been supporting gender mainstreaming policies and strategies by the Ministry of Women and SPC ... Our question is how do we integrate gender into this kind of sector? At the national level, we need to have some guidelines on what the government really wants out of gender, what is our message around gender, what are the national indicators and targets we want to reach? ... It's stating a case for why considering gender is useful for the ministry to achieve its overall outcomes.' (pers. comm. Senior manager, Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology, Solomon Islands, 2017).

To support gender mainstreaming in national agencies for fisheries and aquaculture, SPC organised training for Aquaculture Extension Officers in Fiji in 2014. This was followed by the production of case studies on gender roles in aquaculture in Fiji and Samoa in 2015 and 2016, respectively, to inform programmes and practices in this sector.

SPC has also been mainstreaming gender in its own programmes, including in fisheries. Approaches to gender issues are discussed in the recruitment of all new staff for the coastal fisheries programme. The programme also includes strategic actions for mainstreaming gender in its business plan.

These examples of GSI activities taking place in the region show the linkages between information and awareness, **capability and capacity**, **commitment and leadership**, and **systems** (Fig. 4.1). All of these components are necessary to mainstream GSI.

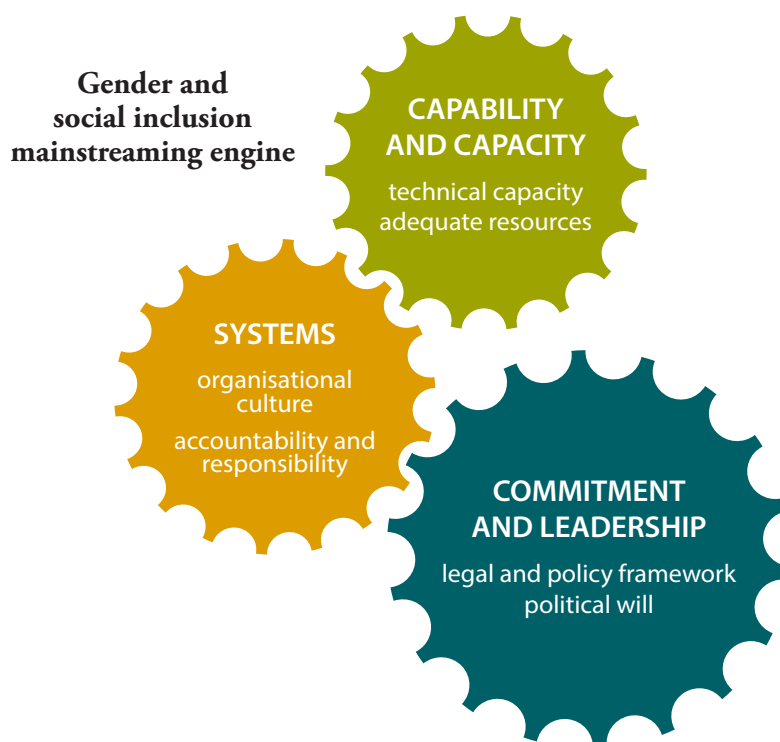


Figure 4.1. Gender and social inclusion mainstreaming 'engine'. Source: Social Development Programme, SPC.

5 Song, A. M., Cohen, P. J., Hanich, Q., Morrison, H. and Andrew, N. 2019. Multi-scale policy diffusion and translation in Pacific Island coastal fisheries. *Ocean & Coastal Management*, 168. 139–149. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ocecoaman.2018.11.005>

6 Reports on the gender stocktakes are available on SPC's website: <https://www.spc.int/sdp/publications>

Commitment and leadership

Mainstreaming GSI needs both commitment and strong leadership in an organisation. Stakeholders must recognise the value of the contributions of different segments of their communities to the development of fisheries and aquaculture. For this to happen, we must ensure equal opportunity for everyone at all levels, including senior management. In the workplace, this might require implementing flexible working practices for staff with carer responsibilities, and strategies to prevent discrimination. Commitment is shown by including funding for GSI analysis, training, and other necessary activities in operational budgets.

Capability and capacity

Fisheries agencies need to develop their capacity to mainstream GSI. That means learning to identify gender and social issues in coastal fisheries and aquaculture activities and designing programmes and services that promote development for all groups within communities.

Sector-specific awareness of the problems caused by gender inequality and social exclusion, and the benefits for the sector of mainstreaming GSI, should be part of the training of government personnel, including those working in coastal fisheries and aquaculture, such as extension officers. Capacity development can include producing sex-disaggregated data and using it in analysis (see Module 2: GSI analysis), and integrating a gender perspective in policy development, planning and budgeting, delivery of services, and monitoring, evaluation and learning (see Module 3: Monitoring, evaluation and learning).

The government agency in charge of women's affairs is a good source of information on gender issues and organising awareness raising. However, women's affairs agencies cannot implement fisheries programmes 'for women' – this remains the role of the agencies responsible for fisheries, including coastal fisheries and aquaculture.

Besides national fisheries agencies, several other institutions play a role in coastal fisheries and aquaculture. They include provincial governing bodies, who may be in charge of licensing, extension services and data collection; island councils and town councils; fishers' associations and other civil society organisations; and the private sector. These institutions also need to be made aware of GSI issues so they can develop their capabilities and capacity to address them within their mandates. Table 4.1 describes the relevant institutions in Vanuatu as an example.



Table 4.1. Institutional stakeholders in Vanuatu fisheries and aquaculture.

Stakeholder	Fisheries and aquaculture responsibilities	GSI perspective
Government		
Vanuatu Fisheries Department	Governance and regulatory	Mainstream GSI into fisheries and aquaculture policy Promote gender balance in recruitment
Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation	Governance and regulatory	Mainstream GSI into environmental policies
Department of Local Authorities	Administration and implementation of the Decentralisation Act	Mainstream GSI into key local government policies and by-laws
Biosecurity	Governance and regulatory	Mainstream GSI into biosecurity policies Promote gender balance in staff recruitment
Vanuatu Investment Promotion Authority	Promotion of foreign investment	Evaluate investments to ensure equal opportunities for employment
Vanuatu Kaljoral Senta	Documentation, protection and practice of culture	Identify traditional roles of men and women in fisheries resource management
NGOs		
Wan Smolbag Theatre	Education/awareness relating to resource management, gender, crime and other social issues through theatre and film	Promote GSI awareness/materials
Live & Learn	Environmental education	Promote GSI in educational materials
Vanuatu Environmental Science Society	Coastal resource management and environmental protection and development	Mainstream and promote GSI in its work programme
WorldFish	Research into harnessing fisheries and aquaculture resources to reduce hunger and poverty	Design research to promote GSI
Others		
Donor partners	Financial support for fisheries and aquaculture management, research and development	Include requirement for GSI in terms and conditions for accessing funding
Regional and international organisations (FFA, FAO, SPC, SPREP) ⁷	Technical support and services for sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture	Mainstream GSI into technical support services Ensure GSI policies are in place
Private sector	Fisheries and aquaculture development	Promote GSI and gender equal rights in employment Ensure workplace health and safety policies and practices are GSI sensitive

Systems

It is good practice to embed a GSI perspective throughout policy and programme cycles and to build the capacity of institutions to effectively mainstream GSI in their day-to-day work. However, when a department, agency or institution has no mechanism in place for mainstreaming GSI as part of its core business, efforts tend to be made only occasionally and are not sustainable in the long-term. Setting indicators to be reported against provides a driver for action on GSI issues.

GSI MUST BE:

- part of an institution's culture
- visible in its mandate and job descriptions
- monitored and reported on as part of the standard work of the organisation.

An important part of systemic support for GSI is collaboration between the different sections of fisheries agencies, and also between agencies and partner organisations and stakeholder groups. For example, fisheries agencies could link with the agency responsible for international reporting on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) for reporting on the fisheries and aquaculture sectors.

⁷ FFA – Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency; FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; SPC – Pacific Community; SPREP – Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme.

Accountability of senior management

For GSI to become a reality in the work of governments, it must be the responsibility of senior managers. The 'gender focal point' in a government department should be in a senior organisational position, such as a Director with managerial authority and oversight of all work in a ministry. The Permanent Secretary, Managing Director, Secretary, Cabinet Secretary or CEO should be accountable for GSI, and relevant key performance indicators (KPIs) should be part of their annual performance evaluation.

Often, women in middle or lower-level positions in organisations have been expected to take on the role of gender focal point on top of their normal workload. Experience in the Pacific shows that this does not lead to transformation. Unless specific responsibility is allocated, gender focal points lack the time to follow through on GSI initiatives, and middle-level staff do not have enough authority to direct organisation-wide integration.



Case study: Building gender equality in the Solomon Islands Public Service

Solomon Islands' national policy on gender equality and women's development includes a specific outcome related to gender mainstreaming across government policies and programmes. However, until recently, progress was slow.

In 2013, following a review of the Public Service, the Permanent Secretaries of all ministries were made accountable to the Public Service Commissioner for mainstreaming gender in their ministry. Their contracts have a specific key result area on gender mainstreaming and performance indicators including:

- production of sex-disaggregated data
- demonstration of striving for gender-balanced staffing at all levels
- inclusion of a gender strategy in the ministry's business plan
- implementation of measures against sexual harassment
- reporting on efforts and results of mainstreaming gender
- establishment of a gender focal point.

An orientation session was held to increase the Permanent Secretaries' understanding of gender mainstreaming. One of the first measures taken by most ministries was to appoint a gender focal point. Many ministries, including the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, have initiated a process for building the capacity of their staff to mainstream gender. Some ministries (e.g. the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology) have also adopted, or started a process to develop a gender policy for their sector.



Box 1: What does it take to create an enabling environment for gender mainstreaming?

POLITICAL WILL: Demonstrated political will means that action is taken on stated gender equality commitments and action is formalised within systems and mechanisms to ensure that mainstreaming is sustainable.

ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE: The extent to which the attitudes of staff and institutional systems, policies and structures support or marginalise gender equality as an issue.

LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK: The extent to which gender equality and mainstreaming commitments are in place because governments have ratified relevant international human rights treaties, and constitutional and legislative provisions, and government policy mandates have been established.

TECHNICAL CAPACITY: The extent of skills and experience that organisations can draw on to support gender and human rights mainstreaming initiatives across and within their operations and programmes.

ADEQUATE RESOURCES: The allocation and application of sufficient human and financial resources to match the scope of the task of mainstreaming.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY: The ways in which action on commitments to gender mainstreaming can be traced and monitored within organisations, and the mechanisms through which individuals at different levels demonstrate results relating to gender equality.



Strategic documents

The work of government is in many ways driven by strategic documents, which include: significant pieces of legislation; national sustainable development strategies; fisheries and aquaculture policies, and plans for management, development and implementation. Public servants are tasked with implementing the activities outlined in these documents, and they report progress towards the goals against the indicators specified. Embedding GSI considerations in key government documents is an effective way of supporting mainstreaming (Table 4.2).

There is considerable overlap between mainstreaming GSI in strategic documents and in the policy cycle (as shown in Table 4.2 below and also in Module 5: The policy cycle).

Table 4.2. Inclusion of GSI in strategic documents.

Components	Key considerations	Recommendations
Introduction, country context, background	<p>What are the major social inequality issues in the country? How are these linked to coastal resource management and development?</p> <p>What are the needs and capacities of different segments of the population?</p>	<p>Provide an overview of the GSI situation in the country and status of women relevant to coastal resource use and management.</p> <p>Recognise differences in needs and capacities.</p>
Principles	<p>Do the guiding principles for the document include GSI?</p>	<p>Ensure that gender equality is included as an overarching principle across all areas.</p>
Summary of existing plans and policies for fisheries and aquaculture	<p>What are the key GSI priorities for the country? Are they recognised in fisheries and aquaculture policies?</p> <p>How are different fisheries and aquaculture needs identified and addressed by policies? Are these needs analysed by age and gender?</p>	<p>Ensure the national gender policy and other policies addressing social exclusion (e.g. youth or disability policies) articulate links with coastal resource management and development.</p> <p>Acknowledge regional and international GSI commitments, such as CEDAW, the <i>New song for coastal fisheries</i>, and the <i>Small-scale fisheries guidelines</i>.</p>
Fisheries and aquaculture assessments	<p>Does the framing of issues take into account social issues?</p> <p>How will the main issues affect different segments of the population?</p> <p>Which cultural and social factors make some people more vulnerable to these issues than others?</p>	<p>Ensure issues are framed to consider social as well as biophysical impacts.</p> <p>Frame issues based on the GSI analysis in the strategic document.</p>
Identification and ranking of priority needs	<p>Are the priorities of different segments of the community considered?</p>	<p>Ensure that different segments of the population who take part in coastal fisheries and aquaculture, including women or civil societies representing women and other disadvantaged people, are involved in the prioritising process.</p> <p>Ensure priorities align with GSI outcomes.</p>

Steering committees

It can be challenging for agencies whose core business is coastal fisheries and aquaculture to adequately cover GSI considerations. GSI requires input from the social sciences. It is rare for people trained and experienced in biological sciences relating to coastal fisheries or aquaculture to also have social science expertise. Seeking advice from GSI experts is one way to address this problem. Another way is to include staff from agencies whose core business is GSI (e.g. Ministry of Women's Affairs) on steering committees. These may be project-level steering committees, senior management committees or national advisory bodies, such as a task force (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3. GSI expertise on steering committees.

Components	Key considerations	Recommendations
Committee composition and selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a gender balance on the committee? Are representatives of women practising coastal fisheries or aquaculture involved in the committee? Are staff from the agency responsible for women's affairs or civil society organisations representing women on the committee? Is someone on the committee championing GSI considerations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure there are women and men on the committee, especially people who practise coastal fisheries and/or aquaculture. If relevant, the committee should also include representatives of disadvantaged people Include staff from the agency responsible for women and civil society organisations representing women Identify committee members who can advocate for GSI considerations and support action
Committee capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do committee members understand and value GSI approaches in this sector? Are links between GSI and coastal resources recognised by committee members? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build the GSI capacity of all members of the committee Develop specific GSI guidelines to support the governance of the committee
Committee decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are decisions made? Are there dominant voices within the committee? Are representatives of women and disadvantaged groups able to express their views and influence decisions? Do members have equal decision-making powers? Do members receive enough information to make meaningful contributions? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop guidelines to ensure decisions are made in an equitable manner Ensure members receive appropriate information in a timely manner Ensure equal participation of the whole committee in decision-making processes, including by inviting all members to express their concerns and views
Committee accountability and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who chairs the committee? Who does the committee report to? How will the performance of the committee be assessed, especially in relation to GSI? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the committee is held accountable and reports regularly on progress, including in addressing GSI issues

Fisheries negotiations

We often focus on GSI at the community level but it is important at all levels, including the international level, e.g. Pacific Heads of Fisheries meetings, regional technical meetings on coastal fisheries, and biosecurity meetings for aquaculture. The decisions made at these regional or international meetings have impacts on policy in national jurisdictions.

To improve GSI nationally, it is necessary to ensure the effects of decisions on different social groups are also considered at the international level (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4. Negotiations at international level.

Components of national delegations to international meetings	Key considerations	Recommendations
Develop opening statement	Sharing relevant documentation	Ensure that a gender expert reviews the documentation
Country consultations	Stakeholder consultations to discuss the issues being covered in the negotiations	Ensure effective participation from all relevant segments of the population involved in coastal fisheries and aquaculture
Delegation composition and selection	Is there a gender balance in the national delegation? Does the delegation include representatives from the private sector and civil society? If there is not enough funding to include representatives from all stakeholder groups, is there some other way to make sure GSI perspectives are covered?	Ensure the delegation is reasonably gender balanced Include representatives from civil society and the private sector in delegations When there is not enough funding to include a full complement for the delegation, have an internal cross-ministerial meeting/consultation (fall-back position)
Delegation capacity	Do delegates understand GSI approaches in the sector? When the delegation does not include enough GSI capacity, can the delegation use communications technology to link with government staff with GSI capacity at home?	Provide briefs on GSI considerations in coastal fisheries and aquaculture to support delegates in the negotiations Build the capacity of delegates to promote gender equity and social inclusion and make gender-responsive, socially inclusive recommendations during the negotiations Enable key individuals who cannot attend to link with the team during negotiations (e.g. via Skype or similar apps)
Negotiation and decision-making	Which delegation member/s will advocate for GSI issues in negotiations? Are there specific sectoral issues affecting women or other disadvantaged groups that should be tabled and discussed at the meeting?	Identify GSI champions in the delegation and provide technical support to them before and during the negotiations
Delegation accountability and reporting	How will the delegation report the outcomes of the negotiations?	Ensure there is clear agreement on the negotiation outcomes sought, including on GSI within the sector Share negotiation outcomes with stakeholders



This module contributes to the following outcomes of *A new song for coastal fisheries*⁸ and the *Small-scale fisheries (SSF) guidelines*⁹

- SSF 10 – Policy coherence, institutional coordination and collaboration
- SSF 12 – Capacity development
- SSF 13 – Implementation support and monitoring
- *A new song* Outcome 3 – Recognition of, and strong political commitment and support for, coastal fisheries management on a national and sub-national scale
- *A new song* Outcome 4 – Re-focused fisheries agencies that are transparent, accountable and adequately resourced, supporting coastal fisheries management and sustainable development underpinned by a community-based ecosystem approach to fisheries management (CEAFM)
- *A new song* Outcome 5 – Strong and up-to-date management policy, legislation and planning
- *A new song* Outcome 6 – Effective collaboration and coordination among stakeholders and key sectors of influence

8 FAO. 2015. Voluntary guidelines for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries in the context of food security and poverty eradication. Rome: FAO.

9 SPC. 2015. A new song for coastal fisheries – Pathways to change: The Noumea Strategy. Noumea: SPC.

