



LIFT GENDER STRATEGY

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

FMO	Fund Management Office
FB	Fund Board
GES	Gender Equality Strategy
GAP	Gender Action Plan
LIFT	Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund
MEAL	Monitoring and Evaluation for Accountability and Learning Framework
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NSPAW	National Plan for the Advancement of Women
IP	Implementing Partner
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
VDP	Village Development Plan

Overview

The Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT) published its first gender strategy in 2012. In early 2016, LIFT conducted a review to determine how the strategy was being implemented. The review found that from 2012 to 2015 LIFT was increasingly mainstreaming gender into its programmes and monitoring and evaluation systems. However, it also found that without a clear gender implementation plan it was difficult to track LIFT's progress. This also made it challenging to identify gaps and opportunities for achieving greater gender equality and women's empowerment through LIFT's work.

The gender strategy has therefore been revised and updated in line with LIFT's new strategy (2015-18). This gender strategy lays out LIFT's objectives with regard to gender equality and women's empowerment and presents its Theory of Change (ToC) and associated interventions and areas of activity.

Section I of this strategy provides the context and LIFT's approach and purpose with regard to gender equality and women's empowerment.

Section II puts forward the ToC that explains how LIFT's work will lead to the realisation of its purpose level outcomes of greater gender equality and women's empowerment.

Section III details the areas of activity and interventions that will enable the implementation of this strategy and the realisation of its outcomes.

Section I

Vision

1. Context

Gender equality and women's empowerment remains a key developmental issue for Myanmar. Myanmar ranks 80 out of 148 countries in the 2012 Gender Inequality Index (GII) and women's participation in decision making is limited at all levels.¹ Only 4.4 per cent of seats in the National Parliament are held by women. A study by the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) found that there are few women administrators across the country's 330 townships, and that in 2015 only 0.001 per cent of village tract administrators were women.²

According to a study by Gender Equality Network (GEN), work and livelihoods opportunities for women and men in Myanmar are strongly linked to gendered norms and patriarchal cultural values.³ As a result women are routinely paid significantly less than men, despite that the 2008 constitution guarantees equal pay for equal work. Indeed, research by the United Nations Development Programme found that both the unskilled agricultural and off-farm daily wages for women were 20 to 30 per cent lower than that of men in rural Myanmar.⁴ Furthermore, women are reported to have less access to government services such as training and bank loans compared to men, limiting their livelihood opportunities and potential. Women remain, however, an important part of Myanmar's rural economy with 48.3 per cent of employed agricultural workers being women.⁵

Since 2010 LIFT has sought to address the challenges women face in Myanmar through its livelihoods and food security programmes. This gender strategy builds on LIFT's experience and achievements and, in alignment with LIFT's new strategy (2015) and the National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (2013-2022), provides a road map for scaling up LIFT's impact.⁶

2. Approach

LIFT adopts a gender mainstreaming approach for promoting greater gender equality and women's empowerment in Myanmar.

LIFT defines gender mainstreaming according to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Agreed Conclusions, 1997/2:

"The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes in any area 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,

¹ UNWOMEN, *CEDAW and Women Human Rights, Asia & the Pacific, Myanmar*, available at: <http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/focus-areas/cedaw-human-rights/myanmar> [accessed on: 02/11/2016].

² FAO and Myanmar Ministry of Agriculture Livestock and Irrigation, 'Formulation and Operationalization of National Action Plan for Poverty Alleviation and Rural Development through Agriculture (NAPA)', in *Social Inclusion and Gender, Working Paper – 12*, June 2016, available at: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-bl834e.pdf> [accessed on 18/11/2016], pp. 6, 8

³ Gender Equality Network (GEN), *Raising the curtain: Cultural Norms and Social Practices and Gender Equality*, May 2014, available at: <http://www.genmyanmar.org/publications/GEN%20Raising%20the%20Curtain%20Full%20Eng.pdf> [accessed on 18/11/2016], p. 8

⁴ JICA, *Country Gender Profile, Myanmar, Final Report*, December 2013, available at: http://open_jicareport.jica.go.jp/pdf/12153441.pdf [accessed on 18/11/2016], p. 20

⁵ JICA, p. 20

⁶ See priority areas of the National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (2013-2022). In NSPAW, women and livelihoods are the first of twelve priority areas.

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. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality”⁷

LIFT defines women’s empowerment in line with UN guidelines on women’s empowerment:

“Women's empowerment has five components: 1) women's sense of self-worth; 2) their right to have and to determine choices; 3) their right to have access to opportunities and resources; 4) their right to have the power to control their own lives, both within and outside the home; and 5) their ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally.”⁸

2.1 A Twin-Track Approach:

LIFT’s gender strategy places particular emphasis on LIFT’s key focus areas. These are: 1) nutrition, 2) social protection, 3) financial inclusion, 4) inclusive value chains, 5) migration and 6) policy advocacy. Section III of the strategy details ongoing and future gender interventions under each of these areas.

However, no area of LIFT is left out of this strategy. The minimum standards for mainstreaming gender across all of LIFT’s work are detailed in a checklist tool that can be found in Annex 1. This checklist should be used in the design and implementation of projects. It should also be used as an evaluation tool and incorporated into the mid and end term evaluations. Furthermore, LIFT encourages and supports interventions and opportunities outside of these targeted areas or beyond these minimum standards. LIFT will work to respond to the initiatives of implementing partners to upscale their impact on gender equality and women’s empowerment and, where possible, reallocate budgets or resources.

2.2 A “Do No Harm” Approach:

External assistance can disrupt relationships within households and communities, and promoting gender equality is both political and sensitive. When women become empowered or start to earn additional income there is a risk that they can suffer a backlash from family or community members which may reinforce the very inequalities the intervention was seeking to address.

LIFT will ensure that its gender mainstreaming activities do no harm. Specific attention will be paid to how programmes may unintentionally create or exacerbate gender inequalities. Risks will also be mitigated by maintaining a flexible approach and by ensuring the provision of gender expertise to implementing partners (IPs).

3. Purpose

The **purpose** of LIFT’s gender strategy is to upscale LIFT’s work towards women’s empowerment and gender equality through its livelihood and food security programmes.

The **objective** of the gender strategy is to support the further mainstreaming of gender into LIFT structures and projects.

The **interventions** for gender mainstreaming within this strategy will be further unpacked and assigned targets, activities and indicators in an associated Gender Action Plan (GAP).

⁷ United Nations Economic and Social Council, *ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions*, 1997/2, available at: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/pdf/ECOSOCAC1997.2.PDF> [accessed on 18/11/2016]

⁸ United Nations, *Guidelines on Women’s Empowerment*, available at: <http://www.un.org/popin/unfpa/taskforce/guide/iatfwemp.gdl.html> [accessed on 18/11/2016]

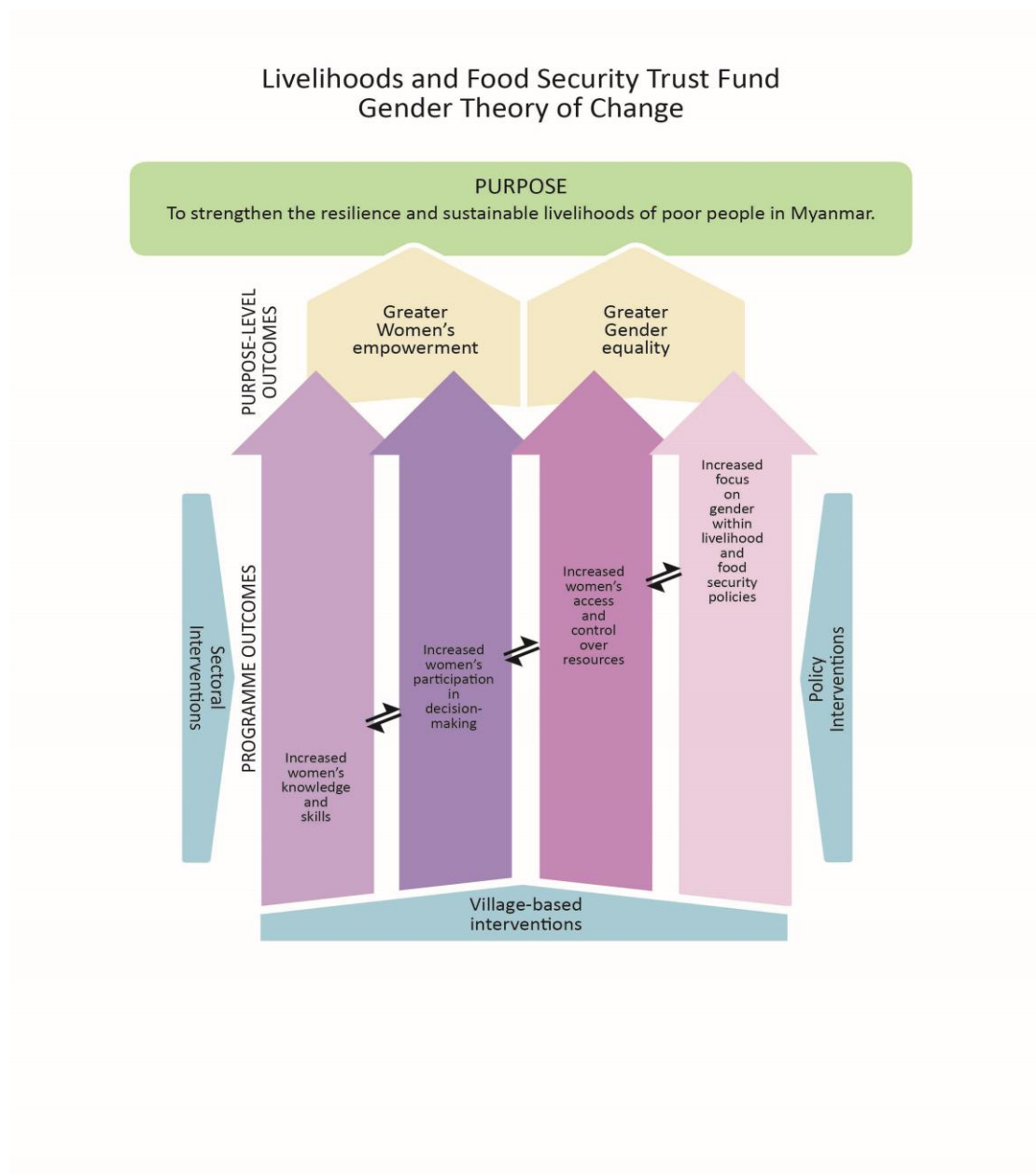
Section II

LIFT's Gender Theory of Change

This gender strategy is aligned with LIFT's overall ToC and Monitoring and Evaluation for Accountability and Learning (MEAL) framework, and underscores the importance of greater women's empowerment and gender equality for strengthening the resilience and sustainable livelihoods of poor people in Myanmar.

This ToC is a working document and will be reviewed by the LIFT fund management office (FMO) as one of the first activities on the gender action plan. This review will look into the relevance and logic of the gender ToC in relation to ongoing programmes and the overall LIFT ToC. It will also seek to further unpack the assumptions within.

1. LIFT Gender-Mainstreaming Theory of Change



2. Narrative explanation of LIFT's Gender ToC:

LIFT's gender strategy review highlighted that, despite improvements, inequalities between men and women have put women at a disadvantage when it comes to participating in and benefiting from Myanmar's rural transformation. Achieving LIFT's overall purpose of strengthening the resilience and sustainable livelihoods of poor people in Myanmar requires LIFT to address this and work towards increased women empowerment and gender equality. The purpose level outcomes of LIFT's work on gender can be described as:

- Greater gender equality
- Greater women's empowerment

In order to achieve these purpose level outcomes LIFT focuses on improving women's access, influence and capacity, and the consideration of the different needs of men and women within livelihood and food security policies. This can be summarised in four outcome statements:

- Increased women's access and control over resources
- Increased women's participation in decision-making
- Increased women's knowledge and skills
- Improved focus on gender within livelihood and food security policies

These outcomes will be achieved through mainstreaming gender into LIFT's existing sectoral, village-based and policy interventions. This involves tweaking existing work and complementing it with additional activities.

3. Assumptions within the gender ToC:

The ToC relies on a number of assumptions. The first assumption is that mainstreaming gender across LIFT and supporting increased gender equality and women's empowerment will lead to the increased resilience of women and men in Myanmar. Whilst received wisdom suggests this is the case, LIFT will also investigate this assumption by considering gender within its in-depth impact evaluation studies.

The second assumption is that those that work in LIFT across all levels understand why striving towards greater gender equality and women empowerment is integral to their work. Linked to this is that they have, or will develop, the skills to effectively mainstream gender into their work. Furthermore it assumes that they recognise their individual responsibility and feel accountable for delivering on the interventions within this strategy. To help ensure that this assumption is fully realised section III of this strategy also addresses governance and capacity in LIFT. Additionally, the associated GAP designates responsibilities for gender-mainstreaming activities to individuals or teams, sets targets and defines indicators.

A further assumption is that LIFT has reliable data regarding the impact of programmes and projects on gender equality and women's empowerment. The improvements made to the MEAL framework since 2014 have meant that going forward LIFT's capacity to capture and analyse the impact of programmes and projects on gender equality has been significantly improved. Further efforts will be made to ensure that gender is also mainstreamed across evaluations and reports. This is again highlighted in section III.

Finally there is the assumption that there is a willingness at the policy level in Myanmar and among external stakeholders to address gender inequalities. LIFT will work with these stakeholders where possible to ensure that there is buy in on gender equality at these levels.

Section III

LIFT's Gender Interventions and Areas of Activity

To support gender mainstreaming across LIFT this strategy identifies four areas of activity to be undertaken at the LIFT Fund Management Office (FMO) and implementing partner (IP) levels:

1. Mainstreaming gender into LIFT's programmes and projects
2. Improving and expanding of LIFT's knowledge management and advocacy work regarding gender equality
3. Focusing on leadership and governance structures within LIFT
4. Strengthening Fund Board (FB), FMO and IP capacity and accountability for mainstreaming gender into LIFT's programmes and processes

This section unpacks these four areas of activity in broad terms and provides strategic guidelines. However the specific activities to be undertaken and their associated indicators are determined within the Gender Action Plan (GAP). The GAP is a separate document but is a direct result of this gender strategy and further supports its implementation.

The first area of activity provides a framework for systematically mainstreaming gender in LIFT projects and gives specific background and guidance on LIFT's priority areas: nutrition, social protection, financial inclusion, inclusive value chains and migration. The second and third areas of activity focus on governance structures, and accountability and capacity building, respectively. Finally, the fourth area focuses on policy, advocacy and knowledge management and how LIFT can contribute to the creation and communication of reliable information on gender in order to inform policies.

1. Mainstreaming gender across LIFT's programmes and projects

Mainstreaming gender across LIFT's programmes and projects is predominantly concerned with how LIFT's village based interventions are carried out. However the areas of activity in this section related to financial inclusion also refer to LIFT's sectoral interventions and ensures that women are targeted and benefit from the expansion of affordable and adequate rural finance provided by LIFT.

It is also important to note that LIFT encourages and supports additional interventions by IPs or programmes that contribute to increased gender equality and women's empowerment but that may not be specifically referred to in this section.

1.1 All of LIFT's programmes and projects

Achieving women empowerment and greater gender equality is highly complex and involves a commitment from all sectors of development. This strategy addresses all areas of LIFT and ensures that no project or programme is forgotten by:

- Ensuring all projects comply with the minimum requirements of gender mainstreaming listed in Annex 1
- Ensuring that a gender expert advises IPs and FMO on the design and implementation of project and programme activities. This strategy recognises that most projects are no longer in the design stage and support predominantly refers to advising on the implementation and assessment of projects and programmes.

1.2 Priority areas:

1.2.1 Nutrition

Myanmar is one of the world's 36 high-burden countries for chronic malnutrition.⁹ The rate of child stunting among the poorest quintile of the population is nearly 50 per cent.¹⁰ Micronutrient deficiencies are also common among infants, young children and pregnant women with more than 80 per cent of children six to 23 months of age and 70 per cent of pregnant women reported to be anaemic.¹¹ This evidence underscores the fact that robust maternal nutrition actions are needed to improve the nutritional status of women and children in Myanmar.

Data on the link between nutritional status and gender equality and women's empowerment is limited in Myanmar. Globally, however, research shows a strong correlation between these.¹²

Improved nutrition of women and children is one of LIFT's four overall purpose level outcomes and LIFT delivers large scale and evidence-based maternal and child cash transfer (MCCT) programmes. Through these programmes, women receive a monthly stipend to buy nutritious food and gain access to nutrition education over the first thousand days of their pregnancy and their child's life. Men also gain access to nutrition education. These programmes improve women's access and control over their own food consumption and that of their children, as well as work to build their access to information and knowledge.

LIFT's nutrition related interventions which will contribute to LIFT's gender ToC and support greater gender equality and women empowerment in Myanmar, include but are not limited to:

- Ensuring training and behaviour change communication materials related to nutrition are gender sensitive
- Ensuring men, as well as women, are targeted as a responsible party in nutrition programmes and projects
- Ensuring MCCT projects also provide training and build the knowledge and skills of men and women
- Providing gender sensitive nutrition training and technical support to the LIFT FMO and relevant IPs working on nutrition
- Carrying out an in-depth outcome study on nutrition which will include an investigation on the link between nutrition and gender equality and women's empowerment

1.2.2 Social Protection

Social protection is recognised to be an integral tool and policy instrument for development and reducing poverty and inequality.¹³ However the coverage and spending on social protection by the

⁹ Save the Children, *Global stunting reduction target: focus on the poorest or leave millions behind*, May 2012, available at:

<http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/sites/default/files/documents/6086.pdf> [accessed on 18/11/2016], p. 7

¹⁰ UNICEF, *Myanmar Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2009-2010*, October 2011, available at: https://www.unicef.org/myanmar/MICS_Myanmar_Report_2009-10.pdf [accessed on 18/11/2016]

¹¹ LEARN report, *Undernutrition in Myanmar: A critical Review of Literature*, March, 2016, p. 6.

¹² Scaling Up Nutrition, *Empowering Women and Girls to Improve Nutrition: Building a Sisterhood of Success*, May 2016, available at: <https://scalingupnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/IN-PRACTICE-BRIEF-6-EMPOWERING-WOMEN-AND-GIRLS-TO-IMPROVE-NUTITION-BUILDING-A-SISTERHOOD-OF-SUCCESS.pdf> [accessed on: 18/11/2016]

¹³ UNICEF, *Social Protection in Myanmar: The impact of innovative policies on poverty*, 2016, available at: [http://www.unicef.org/myanmar/Social_impact_study_version_2_\(Fianl_Draft\).pdf](http://www.unicef.org/myanmar/Social_impact_study_version_2_(Fianl_Draft).pdf) [accessed on: 02/11/2016], p.

Myanmar government has been historically low and interventions have been fragmented and minimal.¹⁴

LIFT has engaged in significant social protection programmes both at the service delivery level and the policy-making level. 21 current or past projects have a stated social protection objective and each of the four regional programmes has social protection initiatives.¹⁵ LIFT endorses a two-fold understanding of social protection:

- Social protection is “[a set of] initiatives that provide income or consumption transfers to the poor, protect the vulnerable against livelihood risks, and enhance the social status and rights of the marginalised, with the overall objective of reducing the economic and social vulnerability of poor, vulnerable and marginalised groups.”
- Social protection “ensures that consideration is given to the likely positive and negative outcomes of any given activity on vulnerable or excluded groups, and paying particular attention to facilitating inclusion and equitable access to people who may be excluded.”¹⁶

Working towards gender equality is an integral part of LIFT’s social protection agenda and its attention to marginalised, vulnerable and excluded groups.

LIFT interventions, related to social protection which will contribute to LIFT’s ToC and support greater gender equality and empowerment in Myanmar, include but are not limited to:

- Conducting gender sensitive vulnerability assessments in LIFT’s social protection interventions and integration of the assessment’s findings into project implementation
- Investigating how state and regional social protection plans include women’s protection. These reviews will inform the LIFT policy work on the National Social Protection Strategic Plan (NSPSP)
- Working with government on the implementation of the Government’s NSPSP and ensuring that gender differences are considered

1.2.3 Financial Inclusion

Research has found that women’s access to finance and their say in financial decisions is limited in rural Myanmar and that there are gender inequalities related to financial resources.¹⁷ Worldwide research highlights that providing women access to financial resources and financial literacy training can help to address these gender inequalities and enhance women’s financial decision making power. Evidence also suggests that finances can empower women in other areas of their lives and enable them to become more confident and take more prominent roles in community decision-making.¹⁸ However, the supply

¹⁴ The World Bank, *Building Resilience, Equity and Opportunity in Myanmar: The Role of Social Protection. Inventory of social protection programs in Myanmar*, 2015, available at:

<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/197761468191350441/Inventory-of-social-protection-programs-in-Myanmar> [accessed on: 02/11/2016]

¹⁵ LIFT, *Social Protection Guidelines*, 2016, available at: <http://www.lift-fund.org/sites/lift-fund.org/files/publication/Social%20Protection%20Guidelines.pdf> [accessed on: 02/11/2016], pp. 23-24

¹⁶ Devereux, S., Sabates-Wheeler, R., ‘Transformative Social Protection’, in *IDS Working Paper 232*, 2004, available at: https://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Transformative_Social_Protection.pdf [accessed on: 02/11/2016], p. iii

¹⁷ Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), *Women and the economy in Myanmar: An assessment of DFAT’s private sector development programs*, January 2016, available at: <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/women-and-the-economy-in-myanmar-assessment-dfat-private-sect-dev-prog-jan-16.pdf> [accessed on 18/11/2016]

¹⁸ FAO and Myanmar Ministry of Agriculture Livestock and Irrigation, ‘Formulation and Operationalization of National Action Plan for Poverty Alleviation and Rural Development through Agriculture (NAPA)’, in *Social Inclusion and Gender, Working Paper – 12*, June 2016, available at: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-bl834e.pdf> [accessed on 18/11/2016], p. 15

and access to financial services remains a major development challenge for Myanmar.

LIFT's financial inclusion programme empowers women and works towards greater gender equality through its focus on providing financial services, including loans and financial literacy training, specifically to women in rural Myanmar. 92 per cent of LIFT's financial inclusion clients are women.

LIFT interventions, related to financial inclusion, that will contribute to LIFT's ToC and support increased gender equality and women's empowerment in Myanmar include, but are not limited to:

- Conducting a gender impact assessment to analyse the financial inclusion programme's impact on women's empowerment to date and to guide the ongoing and future implementation of the programme. The findings will be also shared with relevant stakeholders.
- Tailoring financial literacy training to both women and men and adapted to their different needs
- Providing opportunities to women in the off farm economy through greater access to nonfarm loans

1.2.4 Inclusive Value Chains

Whilst further research is needed, there are a number of known barriers that women face to accessing the opportunities offered by the agricultural value chains in rural Myanmar. Women often face difficulties accessing finance, market information, extension services and entering higher growth markets. The ownership and control of land and property is also a challenge for women in rural areas.¹⁹

LIFT's work on inclusive value chains focuses on private sector partnerships that stimulate direct and indirect investments in smallholder agriculture. This is done mainly through contract farming models that give smallholder farmers access to quality agricultural inputs, efficient and competitively driven financial services, reliable markets, and extension services that increase farmer knowledge. LIFT works to ensure that women access the benefits of these partnerships with the private sector and can take advantage of the opportunities that they offer.

LIFT interventions, related to inclusive value chains, which will contribute to LIFT's gender ToC and support greater gender equality and empowerment in Myanmar include, but are not limited to:

- Promoting "equal pay for equal work" in employment created through LIFT's projects and programmes
- Ensuring that all trainings related to access and involvement in the agriculture value chain are gender sensitive
- Identifying the main constraints to women's access to different parts of the agricultural value chains and, where possible, setting out steps as to how to address these constraints

1.2.5 Migration

Globally and in Myanmar, women are increasingly migrating in an effort to enhance their economic opportunities. More than half of global migrants are women and trends in Asia indicate the numbers of women migrating is increasing.²⁰ The 2014 Myanmar Population and Housing Census confirms this

¹⁹ Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), *Women and the economy in Myanmar: An assessment of DFAT's private sector development programs*, January 2016, available at: <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/women-and-the-economy-in-myanmar-assessment-dfat-private-sect-dev-prog-jan-16.pdf> [accessed on 18/11/2016]

²⁰ BRIDGE at the Institute of Development Studies. *Gender and Migration. Overview Report*. 2005, available at: <http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/sites/bridge.ids.ac.uk/files/reports/CEP-Mig-OR.pdf> [accessed on 18/11/2016], p. 1

trend for Myanmar. Of the more than nine million internal migrants, more than half are women.²¹ It is believed that their main reason for their migration is to follow their families, but that 34 per cent move for economic reasons.²² The LIFT-funded 2016 'On The Move' migration survey records that the vast majority of female labour migrants favor long-term domestic migration to urban areas of Yangon and Mandalay.²³

Labour migration can empower women by providing them with more autonomy and opportunities to build self-esteem and capacities. Research has found that when women return to their home village they often use their new skills and expertise and venture into small businesses.²⁴ These trends underline the need for targeted attention to better understand the nature and dynamics of female migration and to design tailored support mechanisms that upscale the opportunities available to women and minimise the risks.

LIFT interventions, related to migration, that will contribute to LIFT's gender ToC and support gender equality and empowerment in Myanmar include, but are not limited to:

- Supporting the ratification of the Convention 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers in Myanmar through its projects and work with the Ministry of Labour Immigration and Population
- Conducting research on women and men's experience of labour migration. Research will investigate how specific migration vulnerabilities differ between women and men, and how policies and practices to support migrants, families of migrants and communities impact gender equality and the empowerment of women
- Supporting the protection and empowerment of women who have migrated to urban centres through targeted project(s)

2. Knowledge management, policy and advocacy

This section on knowledge management, policy and advocacy is predominantly concerned with how LIFT's policy interventions are carried out. This also relates back to purpose level outcome four: increased focus on gender within livelihood and food security policies.

LIFT generates evidence that informs policy making on rural development and has also funded research on gender inequalities in Myanmar through its IPs and LIFT funded networks.

Research and policy advocacy efforts will continue to encourage gender-sensitive policy making in the rural development sector at the national and regional level. This work aims to encourage a shift in norms, legal frameworks and policies towards greater acceptance of gender equality to give women more equal control over their resources, assets, lives and futures.

Interventions that will work towards an increased focus on gender within livelihood and food security policies include, but are not limited to:

²¹ The Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Department of Population, Ministry of Immigration and Population, *The 2014 Myanmar Population and Housing Census. The Union Report. Census Report Volume 2*, May 2015, available at: http://www.dop.gov.mm/moip/index.php?route=product/product&path=54_52&product_id=95 [accessed on 18/11/2016], pp. 123-124

²² The Republic of the Union of Myanmar. Department of Population, Ministry of Immigration and Population, pp. 123-124

²³ The World Bank, *A Country on the Move: Domestic Migration in Two Regions of Myanmar*, 2016, available at: <http://www.lift-fund.org/sites/lift-fund.org/files/publication/Internal%20Migration%20FINAL%20ENG.pdf> [accessed on 18/11/2016], p. 7

²⁴ BRIDGE at the Institute of Development Studies. "Gender and Migration. Overview Report". University of Sussex: Brighton. 2005

- Initiating policy dialogue on gender inequality and women's empowerment through LIFT projects and partnerships
- Ensuring that LIFT FMO policy and advocacy work is gender sensitive
- Mainstreaming gender into LIFT-funded evaluative research and learning events. This does not include technical scientific research

3. Leadership and Governance Structures

This section details the leadership and governance structures that will better enable LIFT to ensure the interventions in section 1 are effectively implemented and that gender is mainstreamed across its village based, sectoral and policy interventions.

The Gender Review of LIFT programmes conducted in 2016 highlighted the need to strengthen the governance structures and reporting mechanisms with regards to the implementation of the gender strategy. Based on those findings, this gender strategy ensures that progress is tracked, reviewed and reported upon.

Interventions that will ensure that progress on gender is tracked, reviewed and reported on include but are not limited to:

- Ensuring there is LIFT senior management support and that they are accountable for implementing of the gender strategy and action plan. This should be ensured by designating a senior manager within the LIFT Fund Management Office who, supported by a LIFT working group and programme managers, will:
 - Track progress against the GAP
 - Assess the need for technical support from a gender specialist
 - Ensure that all ToRs for project and programme evaluations are gender sensitive
 - Share good practices
 - Report to the Fund Board on gender progress
 - Track and manage risks associated with the effective implementation of the gender strategy
- Including gender in LIFT's internal policies and procedures with specific attention to calls for proposals, proposal assessments, field visit reports, publications, operational guidelines, communication products and reporting templates
- Facilitating a gender balance in senior positions in LIFT by targeting women in the recruitment process
- Ensuring input and buy-in from across LIFT FMO into the implementation of the LIFT gender strategy and LIFT gender ToC

4. Capacity and Accountability in Mainstreaming Gender

Related to section 2 above, this section details how LIFT's capacity and accountability for mainstreaming gender across its village based, sectoral and policy interventions will be enhanced.

The Gender Review found that the FMO and IPs did not have sufficient guidance or information on specific tools and best practices and that they required additional guidance and clarity to implement LIFT's gender strategy.

To address this gap LIFT will:

- Ensuring the GAP with specific activities, targets, indicators and defined roles and responsibilities is implemented

- Establishing a gender working group
- Contracting a gender consultant to support the implementation of the gender strategy and GAP
- Developing and disseminating gender checklists for programme implementation that can be adapted to different priority or thematic areas in LIFT that include good practices on gender programming
- Conducting capacity development on effective gender programming within LIFT FMO. This should include how to target and build the knowledge and skills of women as well as men, increase the equal participation of women and men, increase the equal access to resources for women and men, and enable policies that are adapted to the needs of both women and men
- Ensuring that FB members are accountable for including a review of the GAP in FB meeting agendas

Annex 1. Checklist: mainstreaming gender into the project cycle in rural development projects²⁵

This checklist should be used in the design and implementation of projects and should be incorporated into mid and end of term evaluations.

Project Cycle	Criteria / activity	Relevant to ongoing projects	Relevant to new projects
Formulation/ Design	Ensure that the project target group is disaggregated by sex	Yes	Yes
	Carry out a gender analysis	Yes - if a gender analysis has not been previously carried out the project should endeavour to reallocate resources for this analysis to inform the remainder of the project. Depending on the resources available and the project this analysis may be best incorporated into routine project M&E as supposed to carrying out a separate analysis.	Yes
	Put in place strategies for mainstreaming gender throughout the project / or ensuring that the project is gender sensitive	Yes – if not already considered this can be done retrospectively and by incorporating gender targets and indicators into the on-going work plan and routine M&E activities.	Yes
	Baseline studies are gender sensitive	No	Yes
Implementation	Ensure a gender balance team composition and as part of the staff selection criteria where possible	No	Yes
	Ensure male and female participation in project activities and on decision making committees	Yes	Yes
M&E	Ensure gender-sensitive monitoring data collection system and reporting	Yes for future M&E data collection rounds	Yes
	Conduct a gender impact assessment as part of planned project assessments or as a separate assessment	Yes – the budget should be reviewed and reallocations sought. At a minimum gender should be incorporated into any planned mid and end term evaluations.	Yes

²⁵Checklist adapted from ifad gender strategy in Central America

Annex 2. Bibliography

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