



Promoting Gender Equality in Foreign Agricultural Investments: Lessons from voluntary sustainability standards

IISD REPORT

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January 2017

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Introduction

Foreign investment in agriculture has been on the rise for two decades, reaching a peak in 2009 in reaction to the 2008 global food price crisis.¹ As of June 2016, the NGO GRAIN (2016) had documented 491 large-scale land deals, covering over 30 million hectares of land in 78 countries, for the production of food crops.² On one hand, positive outcomes from foreign investment in land have included new employment opportunities, higher prices for farmers, improved access to local processing facilities, and programs for community and infrastructural development (Smaller & Speller, 2015). On the other hand, critics note that these investments have also been associated with large-scale human displacement, loss of autonomy over livelihoods, land conflicts, community food insecurity, and environmental destruction (see, for example, Oxfam, 2012).

This paper contributes to the emerging literature on the gendered impacts of the contemporary wave of foreign agricultural investments (Behrman, Meinzen-Dick & Quisumbing, 2012; Daley, 2011; Daley & Park, 2012; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations [FAO], 2013a–d, 2015; Doss, Summerfield, & Tsikata, 2014). The outcomes of agricultural investments for men and women often differ in rural areas of the Global South where gender inequalities are persistent. Barriers to women’s access to productive resources—production inputs, credit and training—reduce female agricultural producers’ yields by 20–30 per cent from their full potential (FAO, 2011). Further, culturally based gender discrimination often leaves women with a heavier burden for care work, diminishes their access to education, restricts their access to land and limits options for decent paid work (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development [UNCTAD], 2015). The evidence presented in this paper indicates that these inequalities are often exacerbated by foreign agricultural investments, unless investors and host country governments work to ensure that investment contracts address the needs of women farmers and agricultural workers.

Multiple voluntary initiatives to promote sustainable and responsible agricultural investment are available to help investors and policy-makers integrate gender equality concerns into their investment projects. In this paper we put these voluntary initiatives into two categories. The first category we call “Voluntary Sustainability Standards,” which include private and civil society sector initiatives to promote sustainable commodity production and trade. These are instruments that investors can adopt as part of a responsible investing strategy. The second category we call “Responsible Investment Frameworks,” which include voluntary principles and guidelines that have been developed in response to the rising rate of foreign land investments.

- (1) **Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSSs)** are private initiatives that are typically adopted by producer organizations and by companies that produce commodities for export. Their number and market reach have grown rapidly since the 1990s: 17 Voluntary Sustainability Standards initiatives have a global trade value of USD 31.6 billion, and grew at the rate of 41 per cent in 2012 alone (Potts, Lynch, Wilkings, Huppé, Cunningham, & Voora, 2014). These initiatives enable economically, environmentally and socially sustainable agricultural production practices, and, when implemented successfully, promote fairer terms of trade between commodity producers and buyers. This paper has selected five VSS organizations and their standards for review: Common Code for the Coffee Community (4Cs), Fairtrade International, International Federation for Organic Agricultural Movements (IFOAM), Rainforest Alliance (its Sustainable Agriculture Network standard), and UTZ Certified.³ Section 2.1 describes these initiatives in further detail.
- (2) **Responsible Investment Frameworks** are voluntary guidelines and principles to promote responsible investment in agriculture among government actors, private sector investors, international organizations and civil society. They emerged after the 2008 food price crisis, as policy-makers and financial actors sought to control the potentially negative impacts of rising foreign investment in land (Smaller, 2014).

¹ For analysis of the drivers of the global “land grab,” see Cotula, Vemeulen, Leonard, R., & Keeley (2009) and Zoomers (2010).

² This data includes foreign land deals involving at least 500 hectares of land since 2006 (GRAIN, 2016).

³ UTZ Certified changed its name from Utz Kapeh in 2007.



The **purposes of this paper** are three-fold. First, it seeks to analyze the gender-related content of the voluntary sustainability standards (VSSs) and the responsible investment frameworks. Second, it attempts to answer the question “Do VSSs improve gender equality?” And third, it aims to explore how the responsible investment frameworks can build on the successes and failures of the VSSs to improve gender equality in agricultural investment projects. It uses the experiences of VSSs to provide guidance for responsible investment frameworks because the latter are quite new, and only scant anecdotal evidence about their impacts is available.

The research is based on a desk review of the certification criteria and principles of five major VSS initiatives and five responsible investment frameworks, a literature review of the impacts of VSS initiatives on gender inequalities, and a close reading of policy reports and scholarly literature on the main obstacles to gender equality in agriculture, particularly in contexts of foreign direct investment.

The paper is organized as follows. Part One explains the conceptual framework for analyzing gender inequality in agriculture, with a particular focus on the impacts of foreign investment on gender inequality. Part Two assesses the integration of gender equality concerns in five VSS initiatives and five responsible investment frameworks. Part Three provides evidence on the impacts of VSS initiatives on gender equality, and briefly notes anecdotal findings regarding the relationship between responsible foreign investing and gender. Part Four makes recommendations for how this evidence guides the implementation of the responsible investment frameworks.

A woman with dark skin and short hair is standing in a field of green plants, likely tomatoes. She is wearing a bright yellow protective suit that covers her entire body, including her head and hands. She is holding a pink plastic container in her left hand. The background is filled with lush green foliage and trees. A semi-transparent blue banner is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the title text.

**Part One:
Framework for Analyzing
the Gender Impacts of
Foreign Investment in
Agriculture**



Part One: Framework for Analyzing the Gender Impacts of Foreign Investment in Agriculture

This section develops a framework for identifying how foreign investment in agriculture interacts with five main dimensions of gender inequalities: land rights, productive resources, unpaid work, employment and decision making.⁴ It also explains how these five dimensions of gender inequality interact with and shape each other. These linkages are emphasized by highlighting the interlocking dimension in the text in bold. The section also provides examples of both positive and negative impacts of foreign investment in agriculture in each of these realms. Differences in the impacts of foreign investment depend on the model of the investment project—that is, outgrower or contract farming arrangements with smallholder producers, or plantation-style investment creating waged employment in production and agro-processing.

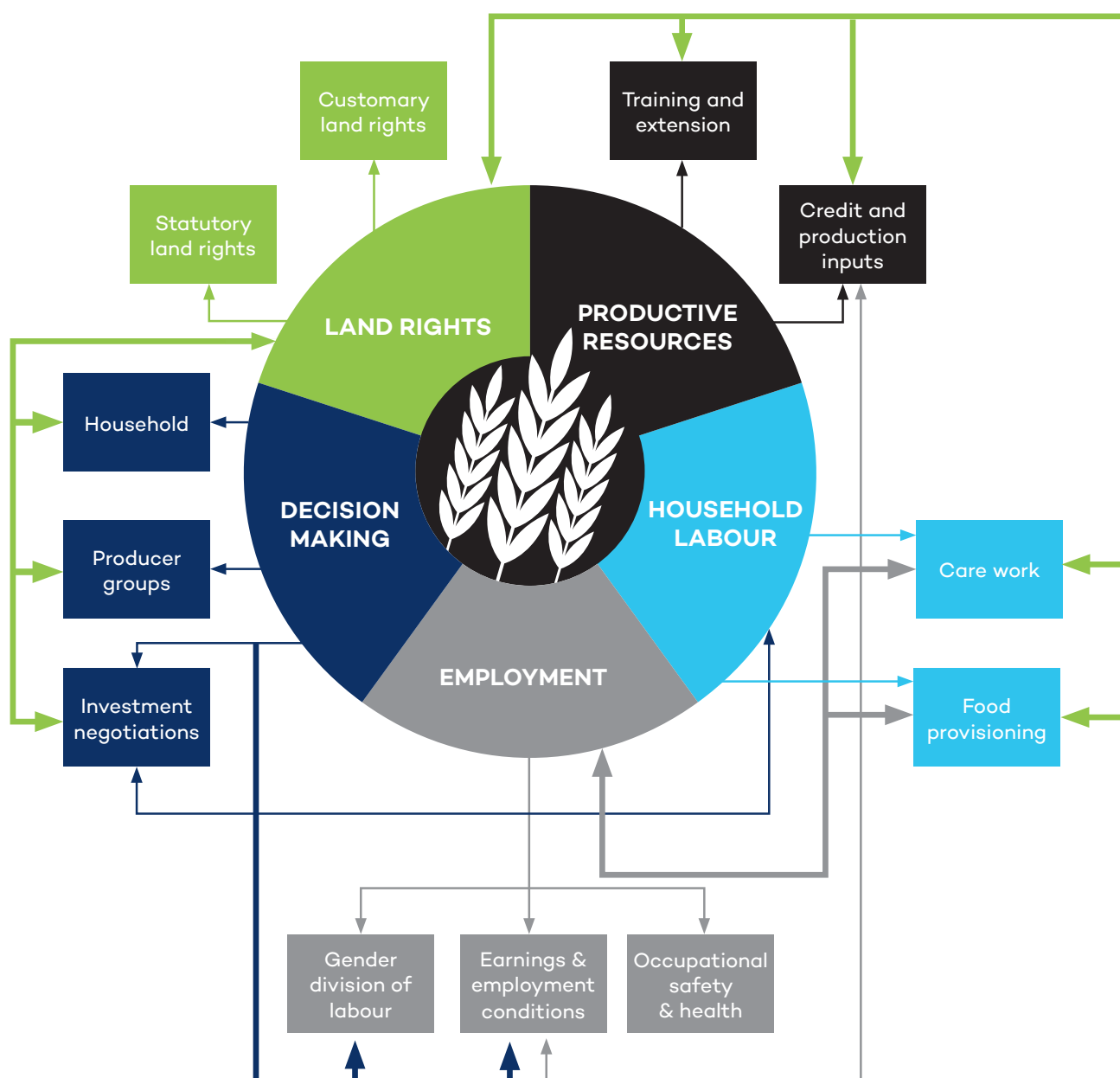


Figure 1: Five-dimensional framework for gender inequalities in agriculture

⁴ While it would also be possible to include “Land rights” as a subcategory of “Productive resources,” the framework highlights land rights as its own category given its overarching influence on access to productive resources and other dimensions of the framework. This framing also serves to highlight the role of land in responsible investment frameworks and its relative absence from consideration by VSS initiatives in Parts Two and Three.

**Box 1: Summary for Land Rights**

Statutory land rights: Women are less likely to hold formal rights to land ownership, and when they do, they own smaller areas. Large-scale investments tend to reinforce such inequality by dealing primarily with those who do have formal rights to land—men.

Customary land rights: Traditional land systems often provide women access to common lands for household needs, which have often been reduced or cut off by investments. Customary law is diverse and may bolster or undermine women's land rights under investment schemes.

1.1 LAND RIGHTS

Experts concur that there is “systemic gender discrimination in terms of [women’s] access to, ownership of and control of land and the income that arises from its productive use” in the Global South (Daley, 2011, p. 5). In sub-Saharan Africa, women represent only about 15 per cent of agricultural landholders on average (FAO, 2011), and make up about one-quarter or less of landholding farmers in Latin American countries (Deere & León, 2003). Women are not only less likely to own land, but when they do, the amount of land they own is often smaller; for example, in Northern Ghana, men’s farms are approximately four times larger than women’s [FAO, 2013b]. Both statutory and customary land rights systems shape the distribution of land between women and men.

Statutory land rights are those land rights formally protected by law. While many countries are instituting pro-gender equality land laws, they often prove difficult to implement and enforce (USAID, 2014). Customary land rights are traditional, local systems of land tenure, access and dispute resolution that often diverge from statutory land laws. Under customary law, women often use common lands to obtain key resources such as firewood, water, and medicinal plants for care work and food provisioning for their households (Behrman et al., 2012).

Statutory land rights: Gender analysts have approached the impacts of foreign investment on female smallholders with caution. In a study of 39 large-scale investment projects that covered 150,000 outgrowers, only 1.5 per cent were women (Mirza, et al., 2014). There are several reasons for their exclusion from the benefits of outgrower projects. First, privatization has historically restricted women’s land access and decision-making power in households (Behrman et al., 2012). Moreover, land titling programs are often required to determine ownership and compensation rights in investment deals, and tend to support land claims made by men (Collins, 2014; White & White, 2012). Finally, female farmers are often excluded from investment projects because they often do not have secure control over land, family labour, and other resources that investors require to guarantee delivery of a reliable flow of produce (FAO, 2011). On the other hand, in Ghana, the FAO (2013b) found that individual registration for an outgrower scheme contributed to a relatively high share of women participants compared to their representation nationally in producer groups. Therefore, when investors negotiate formal rights at the individual rather than household level, women’s formal rights to land can be protected or even improved (USAID, 2014).

Customary land rights: In many parts of Africa and Asia, patriarchal customary land rights systems prevail over statutory law, often undermining women’s rights to land (USAID, 2014). Community leaders often favour men in the allocation of land, both in terms of quantity and quality (Daley, 2011; FAO, 2011). Therefore, most women gain access to land only through their husbands or a male family member, which is often restricted (Behrman et al., 2012). On the other hand, customary law can have a number of benefits for women, including flexibility and efficiency in resolving disputes, and encouraging subsistence forms of production in which women are more often involved (Ossome, 2014). Customary land law might therefore undermine or help protect women’s land rights during investment deals, depending on its specific form.



Women's access to common lands is at particular risk under investment projects because rights are often not formally protected. Investment projects have reportedly cut off women's access to common lands, making it more time-consuming to gather firewood, water or food supplies, often without compensation (Daley & Pallas, 2014; Deninger et al., 2011; Tsikata & Yaro 2014). In other cases, access to common lands has been obstructed by new construction or changes in road access. In Ghana the loss of access to common lands following a land lease for agro-export production meant women had to walk up to 4 kilometres to gather wood and other provisions (FAO, 2013b). A scoping study by the World Bank (2011) confirmed that large-scale land acquisitions have diminished access to common lands, making it more difficult for women to perform their care work (e.g., gather water or firewood) and food provisioning. If women lose access to common lands, they may have to seek waged employment from the investor to meet household needs (White & White, 2012).

1.2 PRODUCTIVE RESOURCES

Box 2: Summary for Productive Resources

Credit and production inputs: Gender discrimination in credit markets makes it more difficult for women to acquire labour-saving and innovative production inputs. Credit and technology barriers can impede women's participation in outgrower schemes, although some investors facilitate credit access for women and men farmers.

Training and extension: Educational, cultural, and financial barriers to extension contribute to women's lower agricultural productivity. This knowledge gap means women often cannot benefit equitably from new production practices introduced under investment projects.

Citing studies from multiple African countries, the FAO argues that women have lower output levels than men as a result of unequal access to productive inputs, credit and training, not lower productivity (FAO, 2011). Therefore, closing the gender gap in access to productive resources and services could increase agricultural output substantially: 2.5 to 4 per cent on average in the developing world, with even higher gains in countries where women are more involved in agriculture and the gender gap is wider (FAO, 2011).

Credit: In agricultural activities with long turnaround periods, financial capital is required to purchase inputs such as fertilizers and improved seeds; however, women face greater obstacles than men in accessing credit (FAO, 2011). Institutional discrimination by private and public lending institutions often either ration women out of the market, or grant them smaller loans than those granted to men for similar activities (Fletschner, 2009; World Bank, FAO & IFAD, 2009). Women also generally have less control over the types of fixed assets that are usually necessary collateral for loans, including to land (UNCTAD, 2015).

Agribusiness investments may benefit workers by providing better access to credit. In the Philippines, the company Unifruitti provided workers on its plantation with interest-free loans (upon request) at much lower interest rates than local lenders (FAO 2013a, p. 40). Such loans can be used by women to purchase productive inputs, or household supplies and equipment that reduce their care work burden. On the other hand, access to credit is sometimes a prerequisite to participate in outgrower schemes, resulting in the exclusion of those with fewer financial resources, including women (e.g., FAO 2013c). Lack of credit may also impede women from participating in new land markets. A study of an outgrower scheme in Ghana found that women were unable to acquire new land to recuperate their livelihoods after the project failed, due to their lack of financial resources (Tsikata & Yoro, 2014).

Production inputs: The relative lack of credit means that women are less likely to participate in improved and innovative production practices. For example, several studies from Kenya show that female-headed households have much lower adoption rates for improved seeds and fertilizers. These differences are explained by reduced access to land and employment, lower education levels, and limited access to credit markets (Saito, Mekonnen & Spurling, 1994).



Training and extension: Agricultural extension services can lead to significant yield increases. However, a number of factors constrain women's access to training and extension. First, women are less likely to be among the wealthy farmers at whom extension services are often directed (Meinzen-Dick et al., 2010). Second, women in rural areas tend to have lower levels of formal schooling than men, which may limit their participation in training that relies on written materials (UNCTAD, 2015). Third, because women are less likely to own land, extension service agents tend to falsely assume women do not farm, and that extension advice will eventually “trickle down” from the male household head to others (FAO, 2011). Finally, the significant time requirements of their care work may hinder women from participating in extension activities (Meinzen-Dick et al., 2010; UNCTAD, 2015).

The shift to commercial production following land investment deals often makes new labour-saving production technologies available. However, for women to benefit equitably, they must have equitable access to training to use these technologies. Unfortunately, research on gender and foreign land investments shows that women are unlikely to have their specific production-related knowledge needs addressed, often because their lower levels of land ownership mean they are not recognized as farmers. For example, a multi-crop project in Lao PDR failed to include women contract growers directly in extension and training due to the false assumption they would be provided relevant information from their male partners (FAO, 2013c).

1.3 HOUSEHOLD LABOUR

Box 3: Summary for Household Labour

Care work: Investments that provide access to labour-saving technologies can reduce women contract farmers' labour burden. However, when women are hired as waged labourers in agro-processing or on plantations, long hours increase their overall workload. Women's “triple labour burden” of agricultural work, care, and community participation is improved when social development initiatives are included in investment projects. However, women have been inadequately included in the design and implementation of these projects, and their care work-related needs are too rarely addressed.

Food provisioning: Increased incomes from new employment or marketing opportunities under foreign investment can help women to ensure their household is food secure. Where production is shifted to export crops, however, subsistence production may be threatened.

In the developing world, women bear a greater share of the burden of care work, which primarily includes raising children, collecting fuel and water, household cleaning and maintenance, washing clothes and caring for the elderly or ill. They are also largely responsible for food provisioning, which includes the subsistence farming, purchasing and food preparation activities that ensure an adequate food supply for the household. Between these domestic, farming and community activities, women endure a “triple work burden” that is unremunerated and under-appreciated by others (FAO, 2015).

Care work: The evidence is mixed regarding whether investment projects improve the time burden associated with women's care work duties. In plantation projects, if employers follow employment standards that impose strict limits on the number of hours worked per day, women employees may have more time available for care work. However, if they do not follow such standards, the time available for care work is likely to decrease.

Large-scale investment projects that invest in community well-being (for example, by building schools, medical facilities, wells or other access to clean drinking water) help women to better care for their families (Behrman et al., 2012). A survey of 39 investment projects by the World Bank and UNCTAD found that 73 per cent of development initiatives undertaken by investors provided education or educational infrastructure, 70 per cent provided medical services, 65 per cent provided local housing improvements, and 57 per cent attempted to improve local water access, among other development objectives (World Bank, 2014). However, only 16 per cent of the rural development projects had explicit gender equality initiatives (World Bank, 2014). Some investors (4 of 39) did not provide any social or rural development program whatsoever, and only 40 per cent



were established through an explicit agreement with the local community (World Bank, 2014, p. 31). When women do not have opportunities to participate in negotiations with investors, it is less likely that investment projects will support their care work needs.

Food provisioning: Evidence is mixed regarding whether foreign investment in agriculture improves access to an adequate food supply at the household level. Changes in household income—and particularly women’s disposable income—are often used to improve household food security, as found among women outgrowers and banana plantation workers in the Philippines (FAO, 2013a; FAO, 2013c). On the other hand, in some arrangements outgrowers produce staple crops for export, which may put the availability of sufficient local food supplies in jeopardy (Behrman et al., 2012). Dolan (2001) argues that the growth of high-value horticulture supply chains has undermined women’s cultivation of vegetables for home consumption, and that production for sale in local markets has been appropriated by men for export purposes. Moreover, as producers become dependent on the export production, they become more vulnerable to market shocks and natural disasters (FAO, 2013a).

1.4 EMPLOYMENT

Box 4: Summary for Employment

Gender division of labour: Investment projects have tended to reproduce the gender division of labour that relegates women to temporary, insecure work. A small number of investors have introduced training and promotional programs to increase women’s representation in managerial positions.

Earnings and employment conditions: Women face discrimination in rural labour markets for paid work. Outgrower projects can raise their earnings, although women have been largely left out of these opportunities. Plantation type agro-export operations can create new paid employment opportunities, although such jobs tend to be the worst remunerated.

Occupational Health & Safety: Women’s crowding into field- and packing house-level employment implies exposure to physically arduous work as well as sexual harassment. Compliance with labour standards and certifications has improved working conditions for women on some agro-processing projects.

Across the rural sector in developing countries, women are less likely than men to work for wages, although there is significant variation between (and within) Latin American, Asian and African contexts (FAO, 2011). Agricultural labour markets are gendered and unequal with respect to earnings, the gender division of labour in paid work, and safety and health on the job. Evidence confirms that women, on average, are paid less than men for equivalent jobs and comparable levels of education and experience (Ahmed & Maitra, 2010). Having less education and experience means they may be more likely to accept low wages and irregular working conditions (Kantor, 2008). Moreover, women who work in the formal agricultural sector are often crowded into underpaid non-permanent positions performing specific tasks perceived as low-skilled (UNCTAD, 2015). In such contexts, they face occupational safety and health risks, such as exposure to hazardous substances (which can have repercussions for reproductive health), and strenuous work and long working days. Furthermore, violence and sexual abuse are exacerbated for women relegated to low-paid, low-authority positions. Given their reduced earnings capacity and the gender division of labour, as well as gendered social norms that reduce women’s ability to assert their demands, they have less opportunity than men to participate in unions or producer groups that have decision-making power.

Gender division of labour: Agribusiness ventures have mixed results for women. They often benefit women by providing paid work. Landless women are likely to benefit from new employment opportunities. However, agribusiness projects are likely to reproduce local gender norms that relegate women to lower-skilled positions. In an outgrower project for banana farming in the Philippines, women were over-represented in packing house jobs requiring “delicacy” in handling bananas, and even more isolated into fruit handling tasks in a plantation-style project (FAO, 2013a). These lower-skilled jobs often do not provide women more secure, permanent positions. In Ghana, following an agro-export investment project, women had only 3.4 per cent



of the permanent jobs in the plantation. Daley and Pallas (2011, p. 10) found that increased employment opportunities for women in a Rwandan sugarcane project provided jobs with wages “insufficient to support a family.” They point out that, even though the female casual labourers were paid the same as men, the gendering of work in the community meant that men could seek other employment options at higher rates of pay, whereas women did not have such opportunities. On the other hand, women may prefer part-time or seasonal jobs even though they are lower paid, due to significant constraints on their time (FAO, 2011).

This gender segmentation of labour can be improved when specific requirements for women’s representation in higher-skilled and higher-responsibility positions are put in place. Of the 24 investments with female employment data analyzed by the World Bank, women were almost completely absent from high-level management positions, although they comprised a majority of administrative staff (FAO, 2011). However, a follow-up study of eight projects in Cambodia, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Tanzania found that a majority of employees interviewed believe women’s employment opportunities to have increased with the investment (Dixie et al., 2016). The researchers also found that some investors were making efforts to promote women’s participation in managerial roles through training, promotions, and even lowering the required GPA to obtain employment (Dixie et al., 2016).

Earnings & employment standards: The type of investment project—large-scale plantation and agro-processing, or outgrower—strongly influences how the investment impacts women’s earnings. Large-scale agro-processing for export-oriented crops has created more and better-paying employment opportunities for women, particularly in the packing stage of non-traditional agro-export production (FAO, 2011). When such investment projects comply with social responsibility standards they are likely to raise earnings and labour standards by equalizing conditions for women and men. In a plantation scheme, for example, women employed in piece-rate production were guaranteed earnings at least at the legal minimum wage, regardless of the volume of their output (FAO, 2013a). In Lao PDR, the Lao Banana Company provided gender-equal wages by paying the same daily rate to permanent and casual employees (FAO, 2013c). Offering child care to women can also equalize their opportunities to seek paid work. For example, a plantation operator in the Philippines provided child care for women employees, although for only two hours per day (FAO, 2013a).

However, women’s relatively low participation rate in outgrower schemes reduces the potential for them to increase their earnings through this type of investment project. Among 24 investments providing female employment figures for the World Bank and UNCTAD study, only 1.5 per cent of outgrowers were women (World Bank, 2014, p. 24). A further concern can arise when investment contracts generate more labour-intensive production processes through attention to quality or sustainability practices. While the additional labour requirements can generate work opportunities for under-employed women, the heightened demand for labour can raise the local wage, negatively impacting female contract farmers with fewer resources to pay waged labour (Tsikata & Yaro, 2014).

Occupational safety and health: Given that women are concentrated in low-skilled positions that present safety hazards, agribusiness ventures that require compliance with national labour laws or international standards may offer women improved safety conditions. In the Philippines plantation-style agro-export project (FAO 2013a), company compliance with occupational safety and health rules ensured women were not exposed to dangerous chemicals, and that pregnant women were not required to perform heavy work. Also, a policy reducing the number of overtime hours is expected to improve the health of workers (FAO 2013a). Standards can play an important role in creating decent and safe conditions for women farmers and agro-processing workers.



1.5 DECISION MAKING

Box 5: Summary for decision making

Household: Where investment projects have succeeded at raising women's earning power, they have sometimes fostered empowerment in terms of shifting cultural attitudes towards women's paid employment and freedom of self-expression.

Producer groups: Investment projects have rarely improved women's under-representation among producer cooperatives and groups, including in internal decision-making and dispute-resolution bodies.

Negotiations with investors: Large-scale investment projects have a poor track record of including women's voices in negotiations, relying instead on the opinions of male elites and landowners. Gender strategies are rare.

Inequalities in **land rights** and employment **earnings**, in combination with local gender norms, mean that women are more likely to be excluded from household decision making about the expenditure of pooled resources, and from decision-making roles in commodity producers' cooperatives. When they are under-represented among household and community decision makers, they often become marginalized from participation in negotiations with investors and community discussions around investments. While male farmers also face significant power imbalances vis-à-vis other market actors and investors, women are particularly likely to lack representation and voice in any negotiations.

Household level: Changes in women's socioeconomic status through changes in their land holdings or income levels can also influence their inclusion in decision making within the household. Behrman et al. (2012) reviewed the evidence regarding gendered outcomes of outgrower schemes, and found that male predominance in the control of land and household resources may become exacerbated if land contracts fail to identify gendered differences in household decision-making. On the other hand, when contracts are designed to give women employment opportunities, to promote revenues from work that is traditionally performed by women, and/or to protect or promote their land rights, they can be empowered as decision makers and see their earnings (both absolute and relative) rise. Dixie et al. (2016) found some evidence that such improvements to women's earning power lead to positive shifts in cultural attitudes toward women's work outside the home, to their entrepreneurial aspirations and even greater freedom in lifestyle choices.

Producer organizations: Producer groups formed through investments have in some cases contributed to greater representation of women in decision-making bodies. However, in the Philippines case studies of outgrower cooperatives, women were mainly involved in part-time administrative work with very low inclusion (in some cases only one woman) on cooperative boards of directors (FAO, 2013a). Also, a dispute resolution committee created in the plantation scheme was composed predominantly of men, leading women to feel uncomfortable and fear reprisals if they raise complaints (FAO, 2013a).


Investment negotiations: Negotiations from the local community receiving the investment may be led by national governments, local elites, agricultural producer groups, or individual farm owners with private title to land. These different forms of negotiation have implications for women's participation (Behrman et al., 2012). When investments are negotiated at the group level, outcomes are not likely to be positive for women, considering that local governments, chiefs, and leadership among producer groups are more likely to be male, and gender inequalities may thus become further entrenched (Behrman et al., 2012). The fact of their more restricted land rights, coupled with the assumption by investors that women do not hold land at all, leads to women's exclusion from negotiations in land deals (Deninger et al., 2011). The FAO (2013a) found that women made up only 5 to 15 per cent of the members of three cooperatives involved in agribusiness deals with foreign investors, because they were not included equitably in a prior national agrarian reform program. Hence their participation in group decision making around the deal itself was limited. When women are inadequately included in negotiations, gender-specific concerns are less likely to be heard and addressed. This appears to be the trend, considering that among the 39 projects reviewed by the World Bank and UNCTAD, only three had



explicit gender policies (World Bank, 2014, pp. 24–5). They observed a “striking” absence of women’s concerns in the design and implementation of investment projects (World Bank, 2014, p. 25).

The type of contract also influences the degree to which women are included equitably in negotiations. Behrman et al. (2012) observe that land concessions, production-sharing agreements, and joint ventures tend to vary in terms of transparency and direct community involvement in the negotiations process; however, there is no evidence that any of these models particularly improves women’s participation. In Ghana, the negotiation of a land lease for a nucleus estate for agro-export production largely excluded women, and they did not receive any direct compensation payments (FAO, 2013b). Women’s participation was also limited in the negotiation of contract farming in Lao PDR (FAO, 2013c).



A woman wearing traditional silver jewelry and a blue shirt is harvesting coffee beans in a basket. The background is a lush green coffee plantation. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent blue rectangle.

Part Two: Gender Analysis of the Certification Criteria of Voluntary Sustainability Standards and Responsible Investment Frameworks



Part Two: Gender Analysis of the Certification Criteria of Voluntary Sustainability Standards and Responsible Investment Frameworks

This section analyzes the gender-related content of five voluntary sustainability standards (VSS) initiatives and five responsible investment frameworks. The purpose is to demonstrate how, and to what extent, these initiatives include criteria and principles that acknowledge the need for women and men to enjoy equal rights and benefits in agriculture. A comparison of outcomes for the VSS and the responsible investment frameworks is included as “lessons learned” in Section 2.4. Part Three analyzes the impact of the VSS on gender equality in the field. Part Four recommends how to improve the gender outcomes of the responsible investment frameworks.

The five VSS initiatives (see Table 1) were selected for this analysis because they have extensive market coverage (particularly 4Cs); they have recently focused on further developing the gender content of their certification criteria (particularly Fairtrade and UTZ Certified); and because of their longer history and thus longer time for gender impacts to develop (that is, their formation precedes the rapid proliferation of new VSS initiatives in the early 2000s). The five responsible investment frameworks were selected because of their broad recognition as creating the normative framework for responsible investment (see Table 2).

Table 1. Overview of Five Voluntary Sustainability Standards⁵

INITIATIVE	AGRICULTURAL SECTORS	KEY DEVELOPMENT THEMES
Common Code for the Coffee Community (4Cs)	Coffee	Economic; Social; Environmental
Fairtrade International*	Bananas, cocoa, coffee, cotton, flowers, sugar, tea, fresh fruit, gold, honey, juices, rice, spice and herbs, wine	Social; Labour Conditions; Environmental; Trade
International Federation for Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM)	Crop agriculture (broad), animal husbandry, apiculture, aquaculture, seeds and plant breeding	Social; Ecological; Economic; Cultural; Accountability
Rainforest Alliance (Sustainable Agriculture Standard)	Over 100 crops	Social and Environmental Management; Ecosystem Conservation; Wildlife Protection; Water Conservation; Fair Treatment and Good Working Conditions; Occupational Health and Safety; Community Relations; Integrated Crop Management; Soil Management and Conservation; Integrated Waste Management
UTZ Certified	Coffee, tea, cocoa, hazelnut	Farm Management; Farming Practices; Working Conditions; Environment

* In this paper we refer to “Fair Trade” as a broad movement of alternative traders and producers, and to “Fairtrade” as the certification and labelling system institutionalized under Fairtrade International.

⁵ Adapted or reproduced from most recent version of each standard. For a comprehensive overview of the market coverage and structure of VSS initiatives, see Potts et al. (2014).



Table 2: Overview of Five Responsible Investment Frameworks⁶

INITIATIVE	ORGANIZATION/S	KEY PRINCIPLES
Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGT), 2012	Committee on World Food Security (CFS) of the UN	Improvements to tenure governance; Policy, legal and organizational frameworks; Transparency and functioning of tenure systems; and the Capacities and operations of implementing agencies.
Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investments (PRAI), 2009	World Bank, UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), FAO, & International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD)	Respect rights to land and natural resources; Strengthen food security; Transparency and accountability; Consultation; Viability; Desirable social impacts; Environmental sustainability.
Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems (CFS-RAI)	Committee on World Food Security (CFS) of the UN	National food security and human rights; Sustainable and inclusive economic development; Gender equality and women's empowerment; Engage and empower youth; Safety and health; Abide by law and transparency; Assess and address economic, social, environmental, and cultural impacts.
Guiding Principles on Large-Scale Land-Based Investments (LSLBIs) in Africa (AU Guiding Principles on LSBIs), 2014	African Union, UN Economic Commission for Africa and African Development Bank	Human rights, responsible land governance, and rule of law; Strategic, sustainable agricultural development; Good governance; Respect land rights of women; Independent, holistic cost-benefit analysis; Cooperation, collaboration and mutual accountability.
International Finance Corporation (IFC) Performance Standards (IFC Performance Standards)	International Finance Corporation of the World Bank	Environmental and social performance management; Economic growth with protection of workers' rights; Resource efficiency and pollution prevention; Community health, safety and security; Avoid or minimize impacts of involuntary resettlement; Sustainability of biodiversity and ecosystem services; Benefits for Indigenous Peoples.

⁶ For more detail on the responsible investing frameworks described in this table see Smaller (2014).



2.1 GENDER ANALYSIS OF VOLUNTARY SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS

To analyze the quality of the gender-related content of the VSS, we apply the gender framework developed in Part One of the paper (namely, land rights, productive resources, household labour, employment and decision making). Appendix 2 provides the indicators and criteria, which are included in the publicly available codes for certification, to enable a comparison among and between standards. The findings show the gender-related content of VSSs is generally disappointing.

No reference to gender inequality in access to land

VSS initiatives do not explicitly address gender concerns around land rights. In fact, none of these standards made any specific mention of women's land rights, access to common lands, or gender-sensitive mechanisms for negotiations and resolutions procedures for potential land conflicts. The three standards (4Cs, Fairtrade for Hired Labour, and IFOAM) that mention the need to respect customary land rights do not mention how conflicts between customary law and women's land rights should be resolved. However, one VSS, Fairtrade for Hired Labour, requires "alignment" with the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure, which is a gender-mainstreamed document that thoroughly covers gender and land rights (see Section 2.3).

A few references to improve women's access to productive resources

The VSS initiatives examined made few gender-specific references relating to access to productive resources, including credit, production inputs and training and extension. Both the 4C Code of Conduct and the Fairtrade Standard for Hired Labour make explicit mention of gender concerns in training; the former notes the importance of "same opportunities" for women and men, while the latter goes further by noting the need for "special attention to the empowerment of women" through means that include training. Gender discrimination in access to credit and to production inputs is nowhere addressed.

No reference to women's domestic labour burden

None of the VSSs include any criteria explicitly intended to reduce women's onerous domestic labour burden. Given that the division of responsibilities for care work and food provisioning is determined by local social norms, this area has proven particularly challenging for developing and implementing evaluable certification criteria.

Strong guidance on gender equality related to earnings and employment

The VSS initiatives pay close attention to employment concerns of irregular agricultural jobs in which women are concentrated. However, they do not make explicit reference to the gender concerns related to irregular work. In general, requirements for written terms of employment, limits on working hours, compliance with minimum wage laws, and a weekly day of rest, are mentioned by all the VSS initiatives, except those that apply to smallholders. These regulations would not apply to unpaid family labourers, who may suffer discrimination from a lack of labour protections. Two of the standards do not require equitable terms of employment for temporary workers, potentially resulting in de facto discrimination against women, who are more likely to be temporary employees. Also, only two VSS initiatives (both Fairtrade standards and IFOAM) protect the right to special leave for reasons such as sickness, marriage, etc. Arguably, women are more likely to face the necessity to take up such forms of special leave, given they tend to have more responsibility for care work.

In relation to women's workplace needs, Fairtrade and UTZ Certified make explicit mention of women's workplace needs, including maternity leave policies, breaks for nursing mothers (their Hired Labour standards, in both cases). UTZ Certified for Hired Labour goes further by mentioning access to child care for working mothers. With respect to reproductive health concerns, UTZ Certified for Hired Labour is the only standard to name maternal health care as a need employers' must provide for. The gendered dimensions of sanitation and housing facilities are again mentioned by UTZ Certified only. UTZ requires separate on-site sanitation facilities under group certification, and divided living quarters for women and men hired workers under individual certification.



All standards have policies against sexual harassment. VSSs universally include the requirement to eradicate the worst forms of child labour on certified farms, which disproportionately affects girls in places where girls' education is seen as an unworthy investment.

Occupational safety and health criteria are well-developed for women. Both Rainforest Alliance and UTZ restrict women's use of hazardous chemicals, with the latter disallowing pregnant or breastfeeding women from handling pesticides, and the former barring their use of agrochemicals altogether. Fairtrade requires that pregnant or nursing women do not participate in any hazardous work. It is not clear whether the standards ensure pregnant and nursing women are provided compensatory paid work in other tasks, to ensure this certification requirement does not become a de facto mechanism for gender discrimination in hiring practices. Moreover, both Fairtrade and UTZ (for hired labour) require separate sanitation facilities for women and men. Fairtrade for Hired Labour further requires gender separation of rest areas, which improves their sense of safety and might reduce incidents of sexual harassment and violence. Finally, Fairtrade for Hired Labour requires women's equitable representation on the workers' Health and Safety Committee, which helps ensure their workplace safety and health concerns are met.

No mention of gender-equitable representation in decision making

None of the VSSs refer specifically to the need to include women in decision making; however, all of the initiatives have either a gender non-discrimination policy, or a non-discrimination policy that mentions gender as a potential axis of marginalization. Several standards also promote equal opportunities for women's advancement in the workplace: Fairtrade (for Hired Labour), IFOAM and UTZ Certified. Moreover, Fairtrade directly refers to the importance of women's workplace "equity" (Hired Labour), and to the need to encourage women's "active participation" in the organization (Small Producers).

2.2 GENDER ANALYSIS OF RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT FRAMEWORKS

To analyze the quality of the gender-related content of the responsible investment frameworks, we apply the gender framework developed in Part One of the paper (namely, land rights, productive resources, household labour, employment and decision making). Appendix 3 provides the indicators and criteria—which are included in the publicly available codes for certification—to enable a comparison among and between the frameworks. The findings show that the gender-related content is significantly stronger than the VSS, but there are still significant gaps and weaknesses.

Extremely strong gender dimension in relation to land rights

The responsible investment frameworks contain the most gender-related detail in the area of land rights. The five frameworks include specific measures for promoting women's statutory land rights, although the strength of the language varies. The two documents of the UN Committee on World Food Security (CFS), the *Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGT)* and the *Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems (CFS-RAI)*, state the importance of "women's equal tenure rights" (p. 7). However, it is unclear how equal rights could be guaranteed for women in contexts where customary systems do not also provide them. The CFS-RAI call for "special attention to women's rights," the AU *Guiding Principles on LSLBI* to "respect the land rights of women" (p. 6), and the IFC *Performance Standards* speak of "the objective to achieve equity with men" (p. 34).

In their discussions of customary rights, these frameworks make careful references to the importance of protecting women's informal and subsidiary land rights. Although not specifically mentioned by the CFS-RAI, customary land rights and gender equality are among their cross-cutting concerns. Both the VGGT and the AU *Guiding Principles on LSLBI*, take gender concerns further by including the need to recognize gender equality in the official state land tenure framework, and to guarantee women's rights to enter into land contracts. It should be noted, however, that none of the frameworks make mention of the need to ensure women have equal access to high quality lands.



Gender sensitivity in implementation of land policies

The VGGT go into more detail than the other documents about processes for ensuring gender-sensitive implementation of land laws. They include provisions for women’s inclusion in participatory processes for state policy-making; gender sensitivity in the implementation of land laws and of the VGGT themselves; communicating about reallocation procedures; documenting tenure rights (also required under the *IFC Performance Standards*); and for maintaining records of equal land rights. In the context of gendered differences in literacy rates, a gender-sensitive process of communication and documentation (for example, allowing oral methods of data collection) is likely to make a significant difference in the degree to which women can stay informed and participate in policy. Finally, three of the frameworks mention the need for gender disaggregation when collecting data on the outcomes of land deals.

Inclusion of land dispute resolution procedures

All five frameworks require fair judicial mechanisms for resolving land disputes, with the CFS-RAI specifically noting the importance of “gender-sensitive” means of dispute resolution (p. 18). Four of the responsible investment frameworks include gender-specific clauses in the area of land restitution. For example, the *AU Guiding Principles on LSLBIs* refer to non-discrimination in employment opportunities that may be offered as restitution, and the *IFC Performance Standards* suggest more specific measures to ensure that efforts to promote skills development and other livelihood-improvement options are adapted to women’s needs.

Caution on using customary mechanisms for land disputes

Three of the frameworks (VGGT, CFS-RAI and the *AU Guiding Principles on LSLBIs*) recommend utilizing customary mechanisms for the resolution of land disputes. This approach to community empowerment may lie in conflict with gender equality goals, to the extent that customary land dispute resolutions systems are often patriarchal (Collins, 2014). Of these three frameworks, only the VGGT explicitly acknowledge the potential conflict between women’s rights and customary dispute resolution systems. They do so by recommending the establishment of mechanisms to resolve such conflicts. This approach demonstrates careful consideration of the degree to which gender inequalities are embedded in customary land systems. However, vague wording leaves governments with little direction for resolving the tension between community empowerment and women’s rights in practice (Collins, 2014).

Scattered references to access to productive resources

The five frameworks are similar in their coverage of access to productive resources for women. The CFS-RAI and the *IFC Performance Standards* are the only two standards that refer specifically to women’s access to credit, production inputs, and training and extension. However, the *IFC Performance Standards* only mention such provisions in the context of resettlement assistance, while the VGGT recommend such support in the broader context of advancing women’s tenure rights. Furthermore, only the CFS-RAI and VGGT make specific note of the importance of promoting equal opportunities for marginalized groups to participate in land markets. Neither of these documents makes explicit mention of women, although women do belong to the category of “marginalized groups.”

Some aspects of women’s domestic labour burden are covered

The five frameworks cover aspects of women’s domestic burden concerns, although not using gender-specific language. Household food security is covered by all but the *IFC Performance Standards*. Social well-being concerns, including educational opportunities for adults, improved local transportation, and health care, are each covered by three of the responsible investment frameworks (CFS-RAI, PRAIC and the *AU Guiding Principles on LSLBIs*). The *AU Guiding Principles on LSLBIs* address gender and household well-being concerns most directly, including references to women’s particular needs. It is the only document to include a specific criterion that investments “should not exacerbate women’s burden of care” (p. 18).



Inadequate attention to employment, particularly the gender division of labour

The five frameworks all provide a recommendation related to gender equality in the generation of paid employment through the investment project. The AU *Guiding Principles* on LSLBIs and the IFC *Performance Standards* go further than other documents on gender equality by making specific mention of generating paid work for women. However, the documents do not robustly address the common tendency for projects to exacerbate an existing gender division of labour that relegates women to lower-skilled, lower-paid tasks. Only the AU *Guiding Principles* on LSLBIs include a requirement for equal opportunities for occupational advancement between women and men. In fact, the document gets to the heart of the problem by recommending equality in promotion “rather than stereotypes about male and female jobs.”

Labour rights are only covered to the extent that compliance with international conventions on labour is required. A few exceptions include the AU *Guiding Principles* on LSLBIs, which require, more specifically, “equal labour rights” for women and girls, and also mention the importance of access to child care for women workers. Both the AU *Guiding Principles* on LSLBIs and the IFC *Performance Standards* mention women’s specific concerns with respect to occupational safety and health. The *Performance Standards* also make specific note of the particular vulnerability of women and children as potential trafficking victims.

Strong and detailed guidance on the involvement of women in decision making, including during the consultation and negotiation phases of investments

Women’s inclusion in investment negotiations is a strong current across these five frameworks: all specifically address the need for women’s perspectives to be directly and effectively addressed in negotiations. However, the PRAI have been critiqued for prioritizing the “speed of implementation” of investments, which may constrain women’s opportunities to participate equally in negotiations (Collins, 2014, p. 197). On the other hand, the corollary requirement—that women enjoy equal benefits from land investments—is stipulated by only three of the responsible investment frameworks (CFS-RAI and the *Performance Standards*). Finally, only one responsible investment framework, the CFS-RAI, addresses gender equality in decision making in producer groups formed after the negotiations, by specifically addressing the importance of “women’s meaningful participation in partnerships, decision making, leadership roles, and the equitable sharing of benefits” (p. 7). Decision making at the household level is not covered.



2.3 KEY LESSONS FROM THE GENDER ANALYSIS

Box 6: Lessons from analysis of the gender content of VSSs and Responsible Investment Frameworks

- There is significant variability among the five VSS initiatives in terms of how they incorporate gender into certification criteria. Fairtrade and UTZ Certified provide the most complete coverage of gender issues, particularly in terms of women's employment needs.
- There is also significant variability among the five responsible investment frameworks. The VGGT and the AU *Guiding Principles on LSLBIs* provide more coverage of gender, particularly in terms of gender mainstreaming of land rights and employment conditions, respectively.
- Overall, gender is inadequately addressed by VSSs. For the VSS initiatives, the gaps are prevalent on land rights, productive resources and household labour. This finding is consistent with the State of Sustainability Initiatives Review 2014, which analyzed 16 of the top standards in 10 key commodity sectors and found that gender receives “significantly lower than average coverage” from standards in comparison to other key areas of sustainable development (Potts et al., 2014, p. 72).
- The responsible investment frameworks are stronger than the VSS on gender, but important gaps remain. Deficiencies in gender coverage are notable in employment and working conditions, land dispute resolution, land policy development and monitoring, women's care work and opportunities for learning and advancement in producer groups and enterprises. (At the time of writing, there are no comprehensive studies of the gender content of the responsible investment frameworks against which to compare this paper's findings).
- The absence of women's land rights in VSS certification criteria is a lacuna in their gender coverage. Because gender inequalities in land rights affect access to productive resources, household labour burden and household and group-level decision making, these areas are also not well covered by these standards.
- For the responsible investment frameworks, the relative lack of attention to women's employment concerns is a major gap in their gender coverage. Given the impacts of investments on women's employment opportunities and conditions, it is of concern that the frameworks do not give more attention to labour conditions that affect women, including temporary employment, occupational safety and health and maternity needs.
- Examined collectively, VSS initiatives and the responsible investment frameworks have different areas of strength on gender. VSS initiatives pay closer attention to gender concerns in employment conditions, while the responsible investment frameworks focus more attention toward instilling equality in land rights. That said, VSS initiatives should focus more on the gendered concerns around temporary hired labour, and the responsible investment frameworks require more thorough consideration of gender concerns at all stages of the investment process (from negotiations through dispute resolution).
- A shared area of concern for VSSs and the responsible investment frameworks is women's representation in decision making, in terms of producer or worker associations for VSSs and negotiations with investors for the responsible investment frameworks.
- Social norms that determine gender inequalities create significant obstacles for VSS initiatives and the responsible investment frameworks. For example, social norms often dictate that women are responsible for care work and restrict their land rights under customary law. Responsible investment frameworks, particularly the VGGT and AU *Guiding Principles on LSLBI*, acknowledge these cultural barriers more clearly in reference to gender discrimination in customary land rights, the latter being the only instrument to make concrete reference to the importance of reducing women's care burden.
- It is essential to keep in mind that it is not just—or even necessarily—the written text of certification criteria and responsibility principles that dictates gender outcomes on the ground. Rather, they way they are implemented, and by whom, must be considered for a complete understanding of the gender outcomes of these initiatives. Part Three makes this connection by analyzing the literature on VSS initiatives and gender.

A woman is walking on a dirt path in a rural, terraced landscape. She is carrying a large, green, woven basket on her head. She is wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt and a long, striped skirt. The background shows terraced fields and a dirt path. The text is overlaid on a blue semi-transparent box on the left side of the image.

**Part Three:
Do Voluntary
Sustainability
Standards Improve
Gender Equality?**



Part Three: Do Voluntary Sustainability Standards Improve Gender Equality?

This section reviews the on-the-ground evidence of the relationship between gender and the VSS initiatives. The majority of findings on VSS initiatives relate to Fairtrade, due to the disproportionate attention in the literature on this particular standard; however, comparisons between Fairtrade and other initiatives are made wherever possible. Key findings are summarized at the end of each section, and lessons are outlined in the concluding section. The findings are organized according to the five-dimensional framework developed in Part One, and applied in Part Two, to facilitate cross-referencing between the sections of this paper, and to support the development of clear recommendations in Part Four.

The responsible investment frameworks are relatively new. Implementation of the frameworks by investors, host country governments, civil society organizations and local communities is ongoing. As such, it is too early to draw concrete lessons on the gender impact of their implementation. Moreover, adherence to the responsible investment frameworks is of a more general and aspirational nature, as opposed to the certification and auditing processes used by VSSs. Responsible investment frameworks are a set of overarching principles, while VSSs include concrete indicators for immediate on-the-ground assessment of agricultural and social activities. The VSS initiatives studied in this paper operate at a lesser degree of abstraction than the responsible investment frameworks and therefore provide clear and targeted criteria for operationalizing gender principles on the ground.

3.1 IMPACTS ON LAND RIGHTS

Box 7: Key findings on gender and land rights

Statutory land rights: Meta-studies of the impacts of Fairtrade reveal it has not improved women's access to land rights. In Mexico and Central America, organic certification has improved women's statutory land rights indirectly. That is, certification has resulted in more women gaining land titles for agricultural production in places with high rates of male out-migration. However, voluntary standards have no "substantive rules" in place to help resolve women's marginalization from land ownership on a more permanent basis. Women might remain subordinate to male family members in decision making regarding land use, and as a result of their greater responsibilities for agricultural activities, face greater burdens on their time.

Customary land rights: Certification can be detrimental to women's customary land rights when it entails registration, a form of land privatization. This can undermine women's access to communal land for household provisions, including food.

Only indirect contributions to statutory land rights

Overall, evidence suggests that, even in certified operations, women have lower rates of land ownership than men, and that the farmland they work is less productive (Committee on Sustainability Assessment [COSA], 2014). A review of 129 studies of the social impacts of Fair Trade found that land tenure is crucial for gaining access to its benefits, in terms of both income and decision-making power with cooperatives and families, thus excluding many women (Hanson et al., 2012, p. 174).

Kasente (2012) shows that Ugandan women belonging to a coffee cooperative with Fairtrade and organic certification are less interested in coffee production than men because they do not own land. Women in Burkina Faso depend on their husbands for access to more land to produce organic cotton, but are often reluctant to approach them (Bassett, 2009). Bacon (2010) similarly shows that women's empowerment through Fairtrade is constrained by their lack of land titles. Section 3.5 further explains the linkages between women's marginalization from land rights and constraints on their ability to participate in decision-making roles in producer groups.



However, sustainability certification has elsewhere had a positive impact on women's ownership of land. Certification has a direct impact on women's access to land when combined with independent standards that have an explicit gender focus, like the "Manos de Mujer" cooperative in Guatemala, which requires that women own or manage the land under certification (KIT, Agri-ProFocus, & IIRR, 2012, p. 257). Certification standards also have an indirect impact on women's land ownership to the extent that they typically require compliance with ISO standards, which require the farm owner to be present during an audit (Lyon et al., 2010). Thus, absentee male farm operators sometime transfer land ownership to their wives in order to retain certification (Lyon et al., 2010). In Oaxaca, Mexico—where the first labelled Fair Trade sale was made in the 1980s—the proportion of women coffee producers rose from 10 per cent in 1999 to 35 per cent in 2005 due to the out-migration of men (Lewis & Runsten, 2008).

It should be noted, however, that the Mexican case study is the only instance reported in the academic literature that could be found for this paper of Fairtrade certification leading to greater land ownership for women (Verstappen, Hanson, & McLaughlin, 2012, p. 29). In this case it was the "procedural" aspects of the organic certification that contributed to female farm ownership in the above context, as opposed to any substantive certification rules (Lyon, 2010). Moreover, the study does not provide evidence that new female landowners have longer-term decision-making power over the returns from their production activities.

Privatization could be detrimental to customary land rights

Discussions of linkages between certification and customary land rights, including access to communal lands, were not identified in the literature review. However, one study noted that certification is a form of land privatization when plots must be registered with certifiers, as in organic certification. Privatization may be detrimental to women's interests if it affects the collective land that women rely on for food production and other household provisioning activities (Lyon et al., 2010). Moreover, if the value of land rises with certification, the privatization trend could be exacerbated.

3.2 IMPACTS ON PRODUCTIVE RESOURCES

Box 8: Key findings on gender and productive resources

Credit and production inputs: Overall, programs for enhancing women producer's access to credit and inputs under certification remain a significant area of need. Fairtrade has improved women's access to credit and production inputs in some cases, through its provision of pre-harvest financing, and the use of the Fairtrade premium for micro-scale credit and savings initiatives.

Training and extension: Women are often excluded from agricultural trainings when they are not the principal farm operators. Standards organizations and traders sometimes wrongly assume knowledge will "trickle down" from men to their wives, and do not put training activities specifically for women in place. However, recognizing this problem, in some cases standards have made efforts to register more women producers with the intention of improving their access to training and extension.

Increased access to credit and production inputs in some cases

Certification has in some instances helped women gain access to credit and production inputs. Female farmers in the Fairtrade system benefit from its pre-financing requirement, by which producers gain access to a portion of the payment for their product prior to the harvest. A survey of Nicaraguan coffee cooperatives found that women involved in Fair Trade were more likely to claim they had access to credit than the national average for rural women (that is, 47 per cent of the 37 survey respondents, vs. 14 per cent of rural women nationally) (Bacon et al., 2008, p. 266). They have also benefited from the Fairtrade premium, an extra payment that can be used for the purposes of social, environmental or economic development. The Nicaraguan coffee cooperative CECOCAFEN has operated a credit and savings program since 2001 that supports over 500 women in a range of non-coffee production-related activities (Hoskyns, 2006).



On the other hand, the COSA (2013) study of multiple certifications finds that women producers have less access to financing than men. It concludes that programs to include women in credit, land, and training are all deeply needed but often overlooked (COSA, 2013).

With regards to production inputs, price premiums and direct trader support may also improve access to production-enhancing technologies, such as wet mills for processing freshly picked coffee (Lyon et al., 2010). This is particularly important in contexts such as Central American coffee production where women are more likely to participate in coffee production with lower levels of capitalization (Lyon et al., 2010). On the other hand, certified production has quality and environmental criteria necessitating new or additional tools, which the poorest of farmers, often women, are unlikely to be able to purchase (see Farnworth & Hutchings, 2009).

Increased opportunities for training and extension not always extended to women

Certified producer groups typically participate in production and marketing training activities. Evidence suggests that certified producers receive more training than non-certified producers (COSA, 2013). However, because this training is typically imparted to the landowner, women are frequently excluded. As noted above, VSS organizations and traders sometimes assume information is passed from men to wives, while, in practice, knowledge transfer depends on whether husbands decide to share the message (Bolwig & Odeke, 2007, p. 22; Farnworth & Goodman, 2006). A study of organic coffee farmers found that women only attended trainings when men were not at home (Bolwig & Odeke, 2007).

Gender discrimination in access to information has predictably resulted in women having less knowledge about key production and certification concepts. A number of studies observe a gender imbalance in knowledge about sustainability standards among certified producers (Blowfield & Dolan, 2010, p. 156; Hoskyns, 2006; KIT et al., 2012). Women farmers in a Bolivian fair trade study were less informed than men with respect to product pricing, agricultural techniques, peasant organizations, and how to access credit (Charlier, Yopez del Castillo & Andia, 2000, p. 59). KIT et al. (2012, p. 248) cite a situation in which only 34 per cent of women, vs. 64 per cent of male farmers, even knew about the certified coffee sales. Hanson et al (2012, p. 171) note that women in a Nicaraguan Fairtrade-certified cooperative were unable to explain the concept behind the certification.

On the other hand, certification promotes women's access to training when it helps them to become registered as farmers, whether individually or jointly with husbands. In the Export Promotion of Organic Products from Africa (EPOPA) project, once it was identified that the majority (77 per cent) of training participants were men, efforts were taken to register more women as farmers and thus extension beneficiaries (KIT et al., 2012, p. 240). Among pineapple farmers working with the organically certified Biofresh pineapple export operation, women were invited to and did attend group training sessions—even when they held little responsibility for farm management (Bolwig & Odeke, 2007). Female farmers in UTZ and Fairtrade coffee cooperatives in Uganda reported better access to agronomic training following certification (Riisgaard, Michuki, Gibbon, & Bolwig, 2009).



3.3 IMPACTS ON HOUSEHOLD LABOUR

Box 9: Key findings on gender and household labour

Care work: Certification often entails small-scale diversification that can provide additional household income, which men and women have sometimes put to use to reduce women's overall burden of productive and household labour. Funds made available for collective development projects have been used in similar ways. However, the impacts of certification on women's care work burden depend on other contextual factors, such as access to training to translate such project funding into new income-generating and labour-saving activities.

Certification helps prevent child labour, although this may increase labour burdens on those women producers or hired workers without access to childcare who have brought their children to the fields.

Food provisioning: Certification can contribute to the production of additional crops for subsistence or small-scale commercialization, when intercropping or other environmental criteria are entailed. Improvements in the security and nutritional quality of the food supply under multiple certifications have been documented. However, if there is larger-scale conversion to cash from subsistence cropping, there are detrimental impacts on women's abilities to provide an adequate food supply for their household.

Mixed evidence for the impact on care work

Findings related to the impacts of certification on the responsibilities women are often assigned for care work are mixed. Case studies of Fair Trade producers found that they show higher expenditures for both basic items and long-term investments, including household durables, infrastructural improvements, and education (Dilley, 2011). In this sense, certification can help to fund purchases that reduce women's productive and household labour burdens.

The premium received by Fairtrade producers has provided a significant source of development funding, which has in some cases been dedicated to projects that ease the difficulties and time required for care work. A Fairtrade Foundation (2015, p. 9) report notes that both those projects targeted at meeting women's needs (for example, acquiring corn processing equipment for a community), and those that help them more indirectly (such as a village electrification project that made maize processing facilities easier to access), lessen the time burden of their care work, and make it possible for them to become more active in income-generating and producer cooperative activities. Further examples include a weaving project in a Guatemalan cooperative (Lyon, 2008), and bread shops and corn flour mills for women in Chiapas, Mexico (Sexsmith, 2008).

However, the potential to harness these positive impacts for reducing women's household labour burden depends on other contextual factors. In the latter example, the project's success was limited by the lack of business training for women. Research with Fairtrade coffee producers in Nicaragua found that women's domestic labour burden often prevented them from participating in the Fairtrade cooperative, and that the certification had not eased that burden (Hanson et al., 2012). In a Ugandan cooperative, women resorted to selling unprocessed coffee without their husbands' permission to obtain money for domestic needs, when faced with additional duties in coffee production that detracted from other income-generating activities (Kasente, 2012). This "earned them the undignified description of being thieves of their own produce" (Kasente, 2012, pp. 119-120).

As explained in Part Two, all voluntary sustainability standards have regulations against the employment of children under 15 years of age, and bar their participation in hazardous employment in both paid or family labour situations. However, women often have to bring their children with them to work if there is no child care at home, or their older children participate in paid labour markets to earn extra income for the family. For example, a Fairtrade audit of a Tanzanian tea estate led to the firing of a 14-year old girl, whose waged employment was well within local cultural norms (Loconto, 2015, pp. 201-2). Thus, standards' prohibitions on



child employment sometimes exacerbate women's care work duties, when alternative child care arrangements are not available.

Often improves food and nutrition security

Certification creates new agricultural production opportunities when it requires cultivating new crops for biodiversity protection or shade cover, or intercropping for pest control. This can provide new sources of subsistence crops for the household. Moreover, with higher income, the “hunger period” for organic coffee farmers (June–July, when households experience food scarcity) was reduced or eliminated (Gibbon, Bolwig, & Odeke, 2008). A survey of Uganda coffee farmers found that Fairtrade, Organic and UTZ certifications contributed to improvements in both the security and nutritional quality of household food supplies (specifically in terms of consumption of calories, iron, and zinc) through both higher household incomes and a more equitable role for women in decisions about household expenditures (Chiputwa & Qaim, 2014).

On the other hand, on smaller farms, certification has created an incentive to redirect land and productive resources to the production of the certified cash crop. For example, an organic coffee certification program implemented by the Export Promotion of Organic Products from Africa (EPOPA) project reduced women's access to land for food production (KIT et al., 2012, p. 238). This redirection of efforts to the certified crop reflects women's lack of household decision-making power and how this can negatively impact their ability to provide for basic needs.

3.4 IMPACTS ON EMPLOYMENT

Box 10: Key findings on gender and employment

Gender division of labour: There is a tendency for certification to further embed rather than create alternative models to the gender division of labour. In smallholder production, women farmers often work with subsistence crops and may be excluded from the benefits of certification of cash crops. Moreover, manual labour requirements under organic and environmentally sustainable certification schemes created new work for women. As hired and family labourers, women often experience an increased workload in feminized tasks during and after certification.

However, targeted efforts to include women in downstream marketing and processing have often proven successful with sufficient guidance and support from standards bodies.

Earnings and employment conditions: Among smallholders, women farmers may benefit from increased yields and earnings, as do men. However, if additional labour or inputs are required to improved production quality or environmental practices, women farmers are less likely to have access to finances to acquire them. In plantation agriculture, certification has been observed to raise standards for employee treatment. However, little is known about pay and employment conditions for women in jobs that are casual rather than permanent.

Occupational safety and health: Certification often creates access to safety and health training programs, improves compliance with regulations, and reduces exposure to hazardous chemicals through labour standards and environmental sustainability criteria. The reduced reliance on chemicals particularly benefits women, whose reproductive health can be affected by exposure.

Some evidence of more equitable gender division of labour in smallholder farming

Whether a farm is male- or female-owned, in general the literature finds that Fairtrade certification generates new labour requirements related to quality and environmental management that are often transferred to women (Verstappen et al., 2012, p. 29). A survey of Nicaraguan coffee cooperatives found that under Fair Trade, women worked 77 days per year in coffee, compared to only 33 days when producing for conventional markets (Bacon et al., 2008, p. 266). A study of the impacts of organic agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa found that women supplied the majority of extra labour to meet production and quality requirements during and after conversion, although it should be noted the women found the added income made the extra labour worthwhile (Gibbon et al., 2008).



Certification has been demonstrated to affect the distribution and intensity of work among smallholder farmers in several case studies. A study of smallholder contract farming in organic coffee and pineapple plantations in Uganda confirms that the division of labour remains strongly gendered (Bolwig, 2012). Gibbon et al. (2008) observe that women provided the increased labour inputs required under organic certification, increasing their overall labour burden and reducing their time available for other income-generating activities (see also van Druten-Vos, n.d.). Women reported in focus groups that men's labour time had not increased (Bolwig & Odeke, 2007, p. 24). Gibbon et al. (2008, p. 6) argue that in the coffee-producing community, "the role of women in cash crop production resembled that of hired labourers."

In Costa Rica, Fairtrade-certified production increased women's labour burden since they are typically responsible for such quality-enhancing tasks as washing, drying and selection, but they are managed by men who consider them "helpers" (Luetchford, 2008). Kasente (2012) similarly found that in a Fairtrade- and organic-certified coffee-producing household in Uganda, women expressed frustration about an increase in their workload in order to meet the standards' requirements, and that this prevented them from participating in commercialization activities. A woman participating in her focus group research said that women and children perform this unpaid labour for their husbands nonetheless "for fear of domestic violence" (Kasente, 2012, p. 118). The cooperative was undertaking a household-level outreach strategy to promote equal roles for women and men in decision making, and Kasente (2012) reports anecdotal positive outcomes.

Limited impact on gender division of labour in plantation agriculture

Fairtrade seems to have a more limited impact on the gender division of work in plantation than in smallholder production (Smith, 2013). A global study of Fairtrade banana plantations found that the few women employees remained concentrated in processing and administrative positions despite the certification (Smith, 2010). Loconto (2015) found that certified tea plantations in Tanzania sought to mechanize agriculture in order to create skilled jobs at higher wages, yet these requirements for technical skills discriminated against women who have less access to education. It is troubling that, in the banana sector, gendered assumptions about women's skills seem to have been "internalized" by men and women alike, regardless of Fairtrade certification (Smith, 2010, p. 136).

On the other hand, certification improves women's participation in downstream value chain activities when efforts are taken to include them in processing and marketing processes. In Kenya, a Fairtrade audit helped stimulate women's participation in more stages of the coffee value chain, from farmers to service providers and buyers (KIT et al., 2012).

Improved earnings and employment conditions for smallholder farmers

Certified producers have on average 14 per cent higher yields and 7 per cent higher net income than uncertified producers (COSA, 2013). Although most farmers are men, this improvement in earnings applies to women farmers too. On the other hand, certified production tends to generate extra expenses that are not always covered by the certified product's price premium. That is, organic and some other certification processes generate additional labour requirements by requiring that chemical productive-enhancing techniques be replaced with manual labour (Jaffee, 2014). Women farmers are less likely to be able to pay for these extra inputs, with negative financial implications.

Improvements in earnings and employment conditions for women in waged labour

Standards with strong employment requirements for equal employment opportunities and conditions can improve employment conditions for female waged agricultural labourers. For example, a Rainforest Alliance/SAN inspection on a farm in south-central Brazil discovered wage discrimination against women employees, which had to be remedied in order to retain certification (HIVOS, 2014, p. 177). However, attention to the conditions of women's work under certification, particularly for temporary and irregular hired workers, is relatively absent in the literature. This may reflect the omission of women's role in temporary work in the certification criteria as pointed out in Part Two.



Better compliance on occupational safety and health, leading to benefits for women

Certified farms demonstrate distinctly better compliance with occupational safety and health regulations. Some studies have shown that workplace safety and health conditions on Fairtrade plantations are also significantly better than on non-Fairtrade-certified farms due to worker safety policies and education programs (Center for Evaluation, 2012). The first COSA survey (COSA, 2008) found that certified farms are four times more likely to have occupational safety and health policies than non-certified farms. Standards like Rainforest Alliance, UTZ, Fairtrade and organic have training programs on safety and health and the correct use of chemicals, resulting in improved conditions for men and women alike. For example, Rainforest Alliance- and Fairtrade-certified tea producers receive quarterly training courses on health issues (Center for Evaluation, 2012).

The evidence is mixed with regards to the impact of certification on the exposure of pregnant women to harmful chemicals during the production process. A synthesis report of the impacts of UTZ certification found that UTZ-Certified farms are “significantly more likely” than non-certified farms to prevent pregnant women from having to use agro-chemicals (UTZ Certified, 2014). However, the COSA report, which compares multiple certifications, found that non-certified farms were only slightly more likely to have controls for the application of agrochemicals by pregnant women (COSA, 2013).

Organic schemes have inherent health benefits because they eliminate the use of chemicals altogether. This is of particular benefit to women, who are more likely to be involved in work entailing exposure to pesticides and other hazardous substances (such as picking and sorting coffee beans). Such chemicals can have negative impacts on women’s reproductive health.

Box 11: Key findings on gender and decision making

Households: There is evidence that suggests that participation in VSSs can improve gender power inequalities in the household. For example, when certification involves women more in the production and marketing aspects of commodity production and sales, gender power inequalities within households decrease. However, these effects are unintended; certification may not be an appropriate tool for addressing household relations.

Producer groups: There exists strong male bias in decision-making positions within cooperatives, but also important signs of improvement. Some evidence suggests that women are only a minority fraction of certified cooperatives’ total membership, and female members of these cooperatives are “members on paper only.” Several efforts to mainstream gender and promote women’s participation in commercial decisions have been successful at promoting women’s participation in cooperatives as members and, to a more limited extent, in decision-making roles. External actors, including certifiers and NGOs, have a significant positive influence on encouraging women and men to accept and promote women’s greater roles in authority positions within producer and worker groups.

3.5 IMPACTS ON DECISION MAKING

Mixed evidence on improvement in women’s roles in household decision making

The evidence is mixed regarding whether certification improves women’s status within the household. In organic coffee production, joint decision making became more common within households as women became more involved in the production process (Ruben, 2008). In a women’s coffee project called Café Feminino, men passed land ownership on to women to improve the economic position of the family. This led to a reduction of domestic violence, and in men making greater contributions to household chores so that women could fulfill their coffee production activities (Hoskyns, 2006). In the same project, men began to spend coffee earnings on their families and community development, rather than more selfish endeavours (such as buying alcohol) (McMurtry, 2009). Bacon’s (2010) research in Nicaragua also found that household gender relations improved in a Fairtrade organic cooperative, with women leaving their houses to participate in activities in the community more often, and that the male spouses of a women-only cooperative supported their wives’ right to organize.



Dilley (2011) also found that participation in a Fairtrade cooperative led to improvements in the balance of household work between women and men, although not to equality in domestic tasks.

However, the cases studied by Ruben (2008) show that under Fairtrade banana production there was a reinforcement of male control over several areas of household decision making. Ruben and Zúñiga (2011, p. 107) found that, despite several programs focus on improving women's participation among Fairtrade producers in Northern Nicaragua, women's participation in household and community decision making did not much improve. A study of Fairtrade and conventional coffee cooperatives in Nicaragua found that only 45 per cent of men shared coffee sales revenues with their wives in both types of cooperatives (Bacon et al., 2008, p. 266). Among Fairtrade organic cotton producers in Mali, Senegal and Cameroon, some women reported that with their increased participation in cotton production, they had more of a role in household decision making, but others reported little change in male authority patterns (Nelson & Smith, 2011). In fact, some men even responded negatively to women's increased economic autonomy by "withdrawing financial support" or even "taking on new wives" (Nelson & Smith, 2011, p. 72).

It deserves to be noted that these impacts on household relations are the unintended results of certification. VSS initiatives are not an adequate mechanism for addressing patriarchal social norms in families and communities, although the evidence suggests that they can help to shift norms over time by challenging accepted, discriminatory attitudes.

Increased membership in producer groups

Certification has in many cases contributed to women's increased participation as members in producer cooperatives, although their participation remains low overall. Globally, women are only 22 per cent of the members of Fairtrade-certified Small Producer Organizations (cited in Fairtrade Foundation, 2015). Among cotton cooperatives in Mali, Senegal and Cameroon, Fairtrade certification helped women increase their membership rates and to earn their own revenues from cotton farming (Nelson & Smith, 2011). The authors explain that Fairtrade required women farmers to receive their cotton payments directly, that organic certification made the labour process more attractive to women and that Fairtrade "raised awareness of women's right to belong" (Nelson & Smith, 2011, p. 74). It should be noted that Fairtrade's product-specific standard for cotton includes a requirement that women be paid directly for their cotton, which does not apply to other products. This illustrates that the content certification protocol can and does have meaningful impacts on the ground.⁷

Others have argued that women's participation in agricultural cooperatives does not show much improvement as a result of participation in Fair Trade (Utting-Chamorro, 2005; Lyon, 2008; Lyon et al., 2010; Ronchi, 2002; Ruben, 2008; Shreck, 2002). A comparative study of Rainforest Alliance/SAN-certified farms and non-certified farms in Colombia found that differences in women's participation (the percentage of female producers in producer groups) were not statistically significant, and in one region were non-existent (Hughell & Newsom, 2013). In over 20 cooperatives surveyed by Ruben (2008), cooperative membership was "strongly male-biased." This bias creates a "vicious circle" by which women are further discouraged from participating in the cooperative, given their limited time for organizational commitments (Smith, 2013, pp. 110–111).

Gender bias in land ownership rights is a significant factor in women's exclusion from membership in producers' cooperatives and, therefore, leadership roles, even among Fairtrade cooperatives (Fairtrade Foundation, 2015). In Kenyan tea production, constraints on women's access to land, despite legal rights to do so, impede their ability to receive payment for tea sales and from participating in cooperative decision-making bodies (Blowfield & Dolan, 2010, p. 156).

⁷ The author thanks Sally Smith for highlighting this point.



Mixed evidence on the impact of women's decision-making roles in producer groups

A meta-review of 129 Fair Trade studies found that the evidence with respect to women's involvement in decision-making positions within producer groups is mixed (Verstappen et al., 2012). Ronchi (2002) reports that, as an average of the nine primary cooperatives forming the Costa Rican producers' organization Coocafé, women are only 20 per cent of the total membership; furthermore, they are "members on paper only" to secure credit or voting rights. In one cooperative, where 20 per cent of voting members were women, a cooperative decision not to allow families to attend General Assemblies has meant that women are unable to actually exercise their right to vote (Ronchi, 2002). In another, significant efforts to nominate women to decision-making roles had failed due to women's consistent refusal to accept (Ronchi, 2002). Sometimes, men will not allow their wives to participate (Lyon et al., 2010). Time constraints due to their heavy labour burden in the fields and in the home constrain women from participating in meetings and committees in a Kenyan Fairtrade tea cooperative (Blowfield & Dolan, 2010, p. 156).

Also, cultural factors, such as assumptions that women are ill-suited for decision-making roles, are a significant barrier to their fuller participation in Fairtrade cooperatives (Fairtrade Foundation, 2015). In Costa Rica, men in a Fairtrade coffee cooperative supported a greater role for women simply to please an NGO (Luetchford, 2008). Nelson & Pound (2009) remind us that higher numbers of women's involvement in producer group decision making do not necessarily mean full, meaningful participation.

Yet, there is nothing inherent about women's unwillingness to serve in these roles (Ronchi, 2002), and certification has in many instances promoted women's increased participation. Farnworth & Hutchings (2009) argue that organic certification boosts women's confidence through the increased knowledge they obtain, which makes them feel empowered to participate in producer group decision making. With regards to UTZ, some research has shown that women in certified cooperatives "attended more meetings," were "more likely to participate in discussions, and "participated [more] on farmer committees and councils" than in non-certified cooperatives (UTZ Certified, 2014, p. 30). As a result of gender equality training imparted to an UTZ-Certified cooperative in Kenya, women were able to participate more in decision making and sales activities (Riisgaard et al., 2009, p. 25).

A literature review found that Fairtrade has generally helped increase women's representation in workers' organizations on large farms, although they often feel they are unable to participate equally to men (or are impeded from doing so) (Smith, 2013; see also Smith, 2010, section 6.2.8). Successful outcomes with respect to women's empowerment also rely on grassroots leadership and commitment to the cause (Dilley, 2011). And even if women's participation remains low, they might still perceive a shift in the level of "machismo" in decision making, as observed in the Nicaraguan Fairtrade organic cooperative CECOCAFEN (Bacon, 2010, p. 59).

External actors can help promote gender-equitable outcomes

External actors that become engaged with producers through certification can also influence women's opportunities to participate in leadership roles. Certification stimulates change when auditors encourage women's participation in decision making, as when a Fairtrade auditor successfully encouraged greater participation by women in a Kenyan coffee cooperative's management and staff (KIT et al., 2012, p. 246). In fact, external actors involved in the Fair Trade system have great capacity to help instill positive changes, but have rarely taken the initiative to do so (Fairtrade Foundation, 2015, p. 27). In organic farming, opportunities for external actors such as NGOs to engage directly with women (thus helping them achieve empowerment at the community level) have been impeded by cultural practices that designate men as interlocutors and decision makers (Farnworth & Hutchings, 2009). As a cautionary note, Smith (2013) reminds us that various studies have found that such changes, however positive, are often the result of "outside intervention" by auditors, importers, and NGOs and thus might not reflect lasting structural change in gender relations.

Certification can contribute to women's empowerment in producer groups through development projects that enhance their knowledge and control of the commercialization process. Several cooperatives in Nicaragua



(Hoskyns, 2006), and in Guatemala and Peru (KIT et al., 2012) have marketed “women’s coffee,” meaning coffee that is grown by women on their own land and marketed by them (Hoskyns, 2006). Such initiatives have the further benefit of increasing women’s confidence, management skills, and active participation in cooperative meetings (Utting-Chamorro, 2005). Their improved economic position has been shown in some Fairtrade contexts to translate into an improvement in political power within producer cooperatives (Nelson & Pound, 2009).

However, evidence suggests that most women’s projects have been dedicated to women-specific issues, like health or subsistence farming (Lyon, 2008; Murray, Raynolds, & Taylor, 2008). In Fairtrade, they have rarely been directly related to the certified product (Verstappen et al., 2012, p. 27; Nelson & Pound, 2009). Perhaps one reason for this is that Fairtrade and organic standards require farm operators to be present during the sale of coffee. However, due to barriers in transport and to social norms that do not allow women to carry money, women cannot always be included in commercialization (Lyon et al., 2010). This further marginalizes women from economic decision making.

3.6 GENDER IMPACTS OF RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT FRAMEWORKS

As stated above, it is too early to assess the gender impacts of the responsible investment frameworks. Nevertheless, there is anecdotal evidence to suggest that actions taken and policies employed that are consistent with the contents of the responsible investment frameworks can and do lead to better gender outcomes. Recent research by UNCTAD and the World Bank (2014; Wisborg, Barley, K., & Kondoh, forthcoming) provides several examples:

- An investor in Ethiopia applied preferential hiring policies through acceptance of lower entry requirements (e.g., a GPA of 3 for men, but only 2.75 for women). An investor in Mozambique provided assistance to overcome bureaucratic barriers to female employment. The investor has assisted women with the paperwork to get issuance of the ID cards required for employment.
- An investor set up a community liaison committee and insisted that youth and women be represented on the committee, to help ensure sufficient voice for women.
- One oil palm company established a Gender Committee, composed largely of female employees representing all sections of the operation, including the administrative staff. A key role of the Gender Committee was to raise the awareness of female staff regarding their right to equal pay and reproductive rights. The committee also provided a conduit for women to report on violation of these rights and has made much progress in raising awareness of gender-related rights.
- At one investment, a comprehensive grievance process has been put in place to handle gender-related complaints and it has been documented in the company’s standard operating procedures.
- Some investors have set explicit targets for female employment.
- An investor developed a market facility to encourage women to produce food crops and sell them at a more formalized market.

This evidence is encouraging for the possible gender impacts of the responsible investment frameworks once they have been implemented and examined at the level of actual investments.





Part Four:
Lessons for Responsible
Investment Frameworks
and Recommendations



Part Four: Lessons for Responsible Investment Frameworks and Recommendations

Responsible investment frameworks have only begun to be implemented by investors, host country governments and communities. The impacts of the VSS on gender equality therefore hold salient lessons as these responsible investment frameworks are being implemented.

4.1 GENERAL LESSONS

1. **Focus on implementation and practice.** Thoughtfully written criteria and principles are essential for guiding and prioritizing gender considerations in agricultural investments, but they are not enough. Even the most well-developed principles must be accompanied by theories of change and capacity-development activities to help enable compliance. They must also be able to adapt if unintended consequences arise during implementation. For example, environmental and quality criteria for coffee certification can create significant new unpaid labour burdens that are passed along to women, diminishing time available for household work and participation in community groups. Such outcomes cannot be controlled through certification principles and criteria, but require on-the-ground engagement.
2. **Adopt a gender-equality approach.** VSS initiatives leave multiple areas of gender inequalities un- or under-addressed. A primary example is land rights; without adequate attention to women's unequal ownership of land, VSS initiatives have been unable to deliver on their related needs for access to credit and production inputs, training and greater inclusion in decision making at the household and producer group levels. Improving gender equality should be considered as part of the “social contract” associated with foreign investments in agriculture—much in the same way as recognition of existing land rights and community participation are now broadly accepted as key principles for fair and equitable investments.
3. **Engage women as partners in developing and implementing principles.** It was only after criticisms emerged that VSS initiatives were not reaching women that more targeted efforts to include gender in their criteria and to target women's needs were made (see e.g., UTZ Certified & Solidaridad, 2009). From the outset, the responsible investment frameworks should identify women as key stakeholders in their outcomes, and include them in efforts to implement and monitor their impacts at every stage. Conceptualizing the responsible investment frameworks as being implemented with, rather than on behalf of women, will help avoid the need for a remedial phase, as VSS initiatives experienced.
4. **Account for localized gender norms.** Gender inequalities vary across regions and communities in the developing (and developed) world, with implications for the outcomes of VSS initiatives for women. In worst-case scenarios, interventions that alter the division of labour or aim to empower women generate domestic violence (Kasente, 2012). However, in the best cases, they have contributed to changes in the attitudes and traditions that subjugate women, for example by demonstrating their capacity to generate household income through livelihood diversification strategies to men. Implementation strategies for the responsible investment frameworks should be developed with local women and researchers to ensure they are well-grounded in the local context, mitigating potentially negative unintended consequences.

4.2 SPECIFIC DIMENSIONS OF GENDER INEQUALITIES IN AGRICULTURE

1. **Lessons on land rights:** Land rights are the foundation for women to access productive resources, improve the division of household labour and participate in decision making at the household and group levels. Investment planning that pays adequate attention to these interlinkages can have a decisive and positive outcome for gender equality. In the context of high rates of male out-migration, and if investment requires land to be registered, the experiences of VSS initiatives suggest that ownership may become transferred to women. In such cases, mechanisms to mitigate an increase in women's overall labour burden should be put in place.



2. **Lessons on access to productive resources:** Improving women farmers' access to land will have little benefit on their productivity and earnings if there is not also greater attention to the economic and social constraints on their access to credit, productive inputs, and training and extension. VSS initiatives have sometimes wrongly assumed such productive resources are available to women equally as to men, or will be passed along to them by husbands and families. Investors in outgrower schemes should collaborate with women to identify barriers to their access to productive resources, and should develop programming with civil society partner, to ameliorate any obstacles found to exist.
3. **Lessons on household labour:** Reducing the time requirements of those responsibilities often imposed on women for care work and food provisioning requires access to labour-saving technologies. VSS initiatives have helped women gain access to such technologies by supporting income-generating activities, particularly businesses implemented through projects with other women. Investors, in consultation with local civil society groups, should support women in the creation of entrepreneurial groups where they develop strategies for alleviating their heavy burden of productive and household work.
4. **Lessons on employment:** In the absence of well-planned strategies for training women for higher-skilled work in both smallholder and plantation farming, local gender norms that often relegate women to low-skilled, insecure and underpaid employment are likely to be reproduced. Investors must become familiar with the gender division of labour in the local context and investigate women's training needs, to develop strategies for a more equitable gender division of labour. Strict adherence to national and voluntary criteria for conditions of pay and work (or surpassing them) is essential for raising employment standards.
5. **Lessons on decision making:** Voluntary frameworks are relatively silent about gendered social norms on authority in the household, but have significant impacts on informal decision-making structures through the unintended consequences of shifts in economic activities performed by women and men. At the producer group level, requirements for greater women's membership and participation may not be realized without a corresponding means of alleviating competing pressures on women's time in agricultural production and household labour. Investment projects must develop strategies to promote women's status to more authoritative roles in producer groups and negotiations with investors, and consider means of putting alternative care and labour arrangements in place to allow them to participate in decision making in an active and meaningful way.

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STAKEHOLDERS

4.3.1 Investors

- Develop and adopt an explicit gender strategy for the empowerment of women within the company and externally through suppliers, customers and business partners along the value chain.
- Entrench explicit gender commitments in contracts with host government, customers and suppliers.
- Monitor gender impacts on an ongoing basis. Adapt business models and plans as required to be more inclusive and gender-sensitive, and report on progress on an annual basis.
- Promote equal employment opportunities, and develop practices that support women's participation (for instance by providing childcare support, or flexible working hours). Carefully examine the gender division of labour and include provisions that provide, and improve, women's labour market opportunities. In addition to equal pay for equal work—including between seasonal and permanent employees—investors should pay attention to the quality (decency) of working conditions for women, such as creating a safe, healthy, respectful working environment.
- Develop policies to facilitate rural women's access to financial resources and services and to markets.
- Establish a dedicated Gender Committee to raise awareness of women's rights, identify violations and provide a forum for grievances.



- Partner with civil society organizations, farmers' groups and/or women's organizations with a view to supporting women's economic empowerment in the communities where the business operates.
- Develop strategies to promote inclusion of women in outgrower and contract farming schemes.
- Ensure female participation in community consultations (equal to men, if possible), community liaison committees, internal staff committees, farmers' groups and other stakeholder groups with which the investor engages. Conduct additional women-only consultations to identify opportunities that can reinforce women's economic status, and to ensure any changes in land use do not negatively impact their access to communal lands.
- Identify and seek to redress specific impediments to gender equality in local and national environments, such as illiteracy, unequal access to land titles or finance.
- Include gender-sensitive elements in community development agreements and social development programs. Pay particular attention to potential differences in men's and women's stated infrastructural development needs, for example with relation to improving both market access and social well-being (e.g., education, health, etc.).
- Ensure participation of women in local farmer or employee training programs; do not assume the knowledge is passed from participant men to non-participant women.

4.3.2 Host Governments

- Prioritize inclusive and gender-sensitive outcomes in rural and/or agricultural development strategies.
- Consider the likely gender impact of investments as part of the process of screening prospective investors. Request a gender statement from investors, which should include an explanation of how the project will generate opportunities for women.
- Work with investors and independent researchers to devise a gender impact assessment study, or a broader social impact assessment that includes particular attention to gender equality.
- Gather gender-disaggregated data before, during and after the implementation of the investment project. Include both independent researchers and women in the design, implementation and analysis of the research. This data can be used to monitor and enforce gender-equal outcomes from the project.
- Enshrine commitments for positive gender outcomes in contracts with investors.
- Monitor gender impacts of investments on an ongoing basis and hold investors accountable for adherence to gender commitments made.
- Consider developing model indicators based on lessons learned from VSS initiatives, as described in Parts Two and Three.
- Identify and seek to address gender inequalities embedded in and reproduced by the legal systems governing the ownership, use and arbitration of agricultural ventures and land disputes.
- Develop non-discriminatory land dispute resolution procedures, for example by involving women in the development and implementation of judicial alternatives to customary mechanisms if they so choose.

4.3.3 Local Communities and Civil Society Organizations

- Develop partnerships with investors to identify and redress specific barriers to gender equality in local and national contexts.
- Ensure community development agreements are inclusive and gender-sensitive.
- Work with investors to ensure adequate female participation in community consultations and local community forums.
- Assist investors and host country governments in gathering gender-disaggregated data before, during, and after the implementation of the investment project, and in monitoring the impacts of the investment project.



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Appendix 1: Methodology

The identification and analysis of gender content required multiple steps. First, a side-by-side comparison of each Voluntary Sustainability Standard (VSS) was generated using the International Trade Centre’s “Standards Map” online tool.⁸ This tool allows comparison across principles and indicators for multiple standards, organized in terms of environment, social, management, quality and ethical principles. The standards were examined for both explicit mentions of gender equality and women’s concerns, and for implicit ways of addressing these concerns by including criteria that touch on key issues with potential gendered impacts (as described in Section 2 above). Next, the individual standards documents were read closely to verify and complete the analysis begun with the Standards Map. The main documents of the Responsible Investment Frameworks were read closely for the same gender and gender-related criteria. The information is summarized in Appendices 2 and 3. Appendix 4 provides the source at the level of the criteria, principle or performance standard where reference to the gender concern, when a direct reference was made in the source document text. The source documents are publicly available online and listed in the tables for ease of reference.

⁸ The Standards Map can be accessed at: www.standardsmap.org



Appendix 2: Gender Analysis of Certification Criteria for Five VSS Initiatives

Table A1. Gender Analysis of Certification Criteria of Five Voluntary Sustainability Standards

VSS Name	4Cs	Fairtrade International, Small Producers	Fairtrade International, Hired Labour	IFOAM	Rainforest Alliance	UTZ Certified, Group Certification	UTZ Certified, Individual Certification
Document title	4C Code of Conduct	Fairtrade Standard for Small Producer Organizations	Fairtrade Standard for Hired Labour	IFOAM Standard & Best Practice Guideline for Agriculture and Value Chains	Sustainable Agriculture Standard	Core Code of Conduct for Group and Multi-purpose Certification	Core Code of Conduct for Individual Certification
Year and version of standard	Version 2.0 (12/2014)	Version 01.05.2011_v1.3 (01/2011)	Version 15.01.2014_v1.1 (01/2014)	Version 1.0 (12/2013) (Guideline)	Version 3 (07/2010)	Version 1.1 (2015)	Version 1.1 (2015)

✓ Standard makes direct reference to gender equality or women's concerns (Text annotated in Appendix 4).

• No direct reference to gender equality or women's concerns in the text, but is gender-related content.

X No reference to gender equality or women's concerns.

** Must align with CFS Voluntary Guidelines & ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention

I. Land

Protection of agricultural producers' human rights	•	•	•	•	•	X	X
Respect customary land rights	•	X	•	•	X	X	X
Protection against forcible eviction for indigenous people	•	X	•	•	X	X	X
Adequate restitution to communities affected by land deals	•	X	•	X	X	X	•
Free and informed consent of community to commercial deal	•	X	•	•	•	X	•
Gender equality in land rights	X	X		X	X	X	X
Gender sensitivity in implementation of land policies	X	X	**	X	X	X	X
Land dispute resolution procedures	X	X	**	X	X	X	X

II. Productive Resources

Access to credit	•	•	•	X	X	X	X
Access to production inputs	•	X	X	X	X	•	X
Promote equal opportunities for marginalized groups to participate in land markets	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Access to capacity-building production training and extension	✓ ⁱ	•	✓ ⁱⁱ	•	•	•	•



VSS Name	4Cs	Fairtrade International, Small Producers	Fairtrade International, Hired Labour	IFOAM	Rainforest Alliance	UTZ Certified, Group Certification	UTZ Certified, Individual Certification
Document title	4C Code of Conduct	Fairtrade Standard for Small Producer Organizations	Fairtrade Standard for Hired Labour	IFOAM Standard & Best Practice Guideline for Agriculture and Value Chains	Sustainable Agriculture Standard	Core Code of Conduct for Group and Multi-purpose Certification	Core Code of Conduct for Individual Certification
Year and version of standard	Version 2.0 (12/2014)	Version 01.05.2011_v1.3 (01/2011)	Version 15.01.2014_v1.1 (01/2014)	Version 1.0 (12/2013) (Guideline)	Version 3 (07/2010)	Version 1.1 (2015)	Version 1.1 (2015)

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Educational opportunities for adults	X	•	✓ ⁱⁱⁱ	•	•	•	•
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III. Household Labour

Household food security	X	X	X	•	X	X	X
Living wage requirement distinct from legal minimum wage	•	•	•	•	X	X	•
Improved local transportation infrastructure	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Access to health care	X	X	•	X	•	•	✓ ^{iv}
Non-exacerbation of women's burden of care work	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

IV. Employment

General principles of workplace safety

Protective measures for handling hazardous chemicals	•	•	•	N/A	✓ ^v	✓ ^{vi}	✓ ^{vii}
Prohibition on pregnant and nursing women's participation in hazardous work	X	✓ ^{viii}	✓ ^{ix}	X	X	X	X
Access to sanitary facilities at workplace/ Sanitary working environment	X	•	•	•	•	X	X
Decent housing provided when required by work/ resettlement	•	X	•	X	X	✓ ^x	✓ ^{xi}
Separation of worksite sanitation facilities for women and men	X	✓ ^{xii}	✓ ^{xiii}	X	X	X	✓ ^x
Provision of separate rest areas for women and men	X	X	✓ ^{xv}	X	X	X	X
Equitable representation of women on health and safety committee	X	X	✓ ^{xvi}	X	X	X	X



VSS Name	4Cs	Fairtrade International, Small Producers	Fairtrade International, Hired Labour	IFOAM	Rainforest Alliance	UTZ Certified, Group Certification	UTZ Certified, Individual Certification
Document title	4C Code of Conduct	Fairtrade Standard for Small Producer Organizations	Fairtrade Standard for Hired Labour	IFOAM Standard & Best Practice Guideline for Agriculture and Value Chains	Sustainable Agriculture Standard	Core Code of Conduct for Group and Multi-purpose Certification	Core Code of Conduct for Individual Certification
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✓ Standard makes direct reference to gender equality or women's concerns (Text annotated in Appendix 4).

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** Must align with CFS Voluntary Guidelines & ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention

General principles for protection of labour rights

Eliminate worst forms of child labour	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
No tolerance for forced labour	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

Employment generation

Creation of paid employment opportunities in agriculture	X	X	X	•	•	X	X
High-skilled employment opportunities in agriculture created	X	X	X	•	X	X	X
Attempts to create permanent or regularize temporary work	X	•	•	•	X	X	X
Opportunities to diversify livelihoods created	X	X	X	•	X	•	•

Treatment of non-permanent workers

Requirement for written terms of employment to temporary employees	•	X	•	•	•	X	X
Equitable terms of employment for temporary workers	•	•	•	X	X	•	•

Wages and work schedules

Requirement for written terms of employment to permanent employees	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Maximum 48 working hours per week	•	X	•	X	•	•	•
Right to refuse overtime	•	X	•	X	•	•	•
Mandatory premium pay rate for overtime hours, beyond national law	X	X	•	X	•	X	X
Compliance with minimum wage laws	•	•	•	X	•	•	•
Payment of minimum wage equivalent for piecework	•	•	•	X	•	•	•



VSS Name	4Cs	Fairtrade International, Small Producers	Fairtrade International, Hired Labour	IFOAM	Rainforest Alliance	UTZ Certified, Group Certification	UTZ Certified, Individual Certification
Document title	4C Code of Conduct	Fairtrade Standard for Small Producer Organizations	Fairtrade Standard for Hired Labour	IFOAM Standard & Best Practice Guideline for Agriculture and Value Chains	Sustainable Agriculture Standard	Core Code of Conduct for Group and Multi-purpose Certification	Core Code of Conduct for Individual Certification
Year and version of standard	Version 2.0 (12/2014)	Version 01.05.2011_v1.3 (01/2011)	Version 15.01.2014_v1.1 (01/2014)	Version 1.0 (12/2013) (Guideline)	Version 3 (07/2010)	Version 1.1 (2015)	Version 1.1 (2015)

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** Must align with CFS Voluntary Guidelines & ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention

Policy for minimum one rest day off in seven-day period	•	X	•	X	•	•	•
Special leave (sickness, marriage, family leave)	X	•	•	•	X	X	X

Employment conditions specific to women's needs

Maternity/ paternity leave policies	X	✓ ^{xvii}	✓ ^{xviii}	X	X	✓ ^{xix}	✓ ^{xx}
Breaks for nursing mothers	X	X	✓ ^{xxi}	X	X	X	✓ ^{xxii, xxiii}
No tolerance for sexual harassment	✓ ^{xxiv}	✓ ^{xxv}	✓ ^{xxvi}	X	✓ ^{xxvii}	✓ ^{xxviii}	✓ ^{xxix}
Access to child care for women workers	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓ ^{xxx}

V. Decision Making

Community participation in consultations or negotiations	X	X	**	X	X	X	X
Capacity training for participation in trade or investment consultations or negotiations	X	X	**	X	X	X	X
Equitable participation of marginal groups in community consultations or negotiations	X	X	**	X	X	X	X
Gender non-discrimination policy	✓ ^{xxx}	✓ ^{xxxii}	✓ ^{xxxiii}	✓ ^{xxxiv}	✓ ^{xxxv}	✓ ^{xxxvi, xxxvii}	✓ ^{xxxviii, xxxix}
Gender-sensitive procedures for including women in negotiations	X	X	**	X	X	X	X
Women's inclusion in decision-making roles in commercial enterprises	• ^{xl}	✓ ^{xli}	✓ ^{xlii}	X	X	X	X
Equal opportunities for workplace advancement and training, distinct from non-discrimination policy	X	X	✓ ^{xliii}	✓ ^{xliv}	X	✓ ^{xlv}	✓ ^{xlvi}



Appendix 3: Gender Analysis of Five Responsible Investment Frameworks

TABLE A2. GENDER ANALYSIS OF RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT FRAMEWORKS

	Voluntary Guidelines	PRAI	PRI in Ag & Food Systems	Guiding Principles on LSLAA	IFC Performance Standards
<i>Organizing body</i>	<i>Committee on Food Security, FAO</i>	<i>FAO, IFAD, UNCTAD & World Bank</i>	<i>Committee on Food Security, FAO</i>	<i>African Union, African Development Bank & UN Economic Commission for Africa</i>	<i>International Finance Corporation, World Bank Group</i>
Year of publication					
<p>✓ Standard makes direct reference to gender equality or women's concerns. (Text annotated in Appendix 4).</p> <p>• No direct reference to gender equality or women's concerns in the text, but is gender-related content.</p> <p>X No reference to gender equality or women's concerns.</p>					
I. Land Rights					
Protection of agricultural producers' human rights	•	•	•	•	•
Respect customary land rights	•	•	•	•	•
Protection against forcible eviction for indigenous people	•	•	•	•	•
Adequate restitution to communities affected by land deals	✓ ^{xlvi, xlviii}	✓ ^{xlvx}	•	✓ ^l	✓ ^{li}
Free and informed consent of community to commercial deal	•	X	•	•	•
Women's tenure rights	✓ ^{lii}	✓ ^{liii}	✓ ^{liv}	✓ ^{lv}	✓ ^{lvi}
Protection of women's informal/ subsidiary land use rights	✓ ^{lvii}	✓ ^{lviii}	X	✓ ^{lix}	✓
Recognition of gender equality in official state land tenure framework	✓ ^{lx}	X	X	✓ ^{lxi}	X
Guarantee of women's equal rights to enter into land contracts	✓ ^{lxii}	X	X	✓ ^{lxiii}	X
Equal access for women and men to high quality lands	X	X	X	X	X
Women's inclusion in participatory processes for state policy-making	✓ ^{lxiv}	X	X	X	X
Gender sensitivity training for implementation of land laws	✓ ^{lxv}	X	X	X	X
Gender-sensitive process for implementing guidelines/ principles	✓ ^{lxvi}	X	X	X	X
Gender-sensitive communication about reallocation processes for public lands	✓ ^{lxvii}	X	X	X	X
Gender-sensitive process for documenting tenure rights	✓ ^{lxviii}	X	X	X	✓ ^{lxix}
Maintenance of official records of equal land rights for women and men	✓ ^{lxx}	X	X	X	X



	Voluntary Guidelines	PRAI	PRI in Ag & Food Systems	Guiding Principles on LSLAA	IFC Performance Standards
Organizing body	Committee on Food Security, FAO	FAO, IFAD, UNCTAD & World Bank	Committee on Food Security, FAO	African Union, African Development Bank & UN Economic Commission for Africa	International Finance Corporation, World Bank Group
Year of publication					
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Gathering gender-disaggregated data on outcomes of land deals	✓ ^{lxxi}	X	✓ ^{lxxii}	X	X
Accessibility and support from land administration agencies	•	X	•	•	X
Access to appropriate and impartial judicial procedures for resolving land disputes	•	•	•	•	•
Utilize customary mechanisms for resolving land disputes	✓ ^{lxxiii}	•	X	•	X
Access to alternative lands for resettled persons, with special attention to marginal groups	✓ ^{lxxiv}	X	X	X	•
Establish mechanism to resolve potential conflicts between women's rights to land and customary systems	✓ ^{lxxv}	X	X	X	X
Establish gender-sensitive mechanism to resolve conflicts between informal and formal tenure	✓ ^{lxxvi}	X	X	X	X
II. Productive Resources					
Access to credit	X	X	✓ ^{lxxvii}	X	✓ ^{lxxviii}
Access to production inputs	•	•	✓ ^{lxxix}	•	•
Promote equal opportunities for marginalized groups to participate in land markets	•	X	•	X	X
Access to capacity-building production training and extension	•	X	✓ ^{lxxx}	•	✓ ^{lxxxii}
Educational opportunities for adults	X	•	•	✓ ^{lxxxii}	X
III. Household Labour					
Household food security	•	•	•	•	X
Living wage requirement distinct from legal minimum wage	X	X	X	X	X
Improved local transportation infrastructure	X	•	•	✓ ^{lxxxiii}	X
Access to health care	X	•	•	✓ ^{lxxxiv}	X
Non-exacerbation of women's burden of care work	X	X	X	✓ ^{lxxxv}	X



	Voluntary Guidelines	PRAI	PRI in Ag & Food Systems	Guiding Principles on LSLAA	IFC Performance Standards
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IV. Employment

General principles for protection of labour rights

Eliminate worst forms of child labour	X	•	•	X	•
No tolerance for forced labor	✓ ^{lxxxvi}	•	•	X	✓ ^{lxxxvii}
General principles for protection of labour rights	✓ ^{lxxxviii}	•	•	✓ ^{lxxxix}	•

General principles of workplace safety

General principles of workplace safety	✓ ^{xc}	•	•	✓ ^{xcii}	✓ ^{xcii}
Decent housing provided when required by work/ resettlement	•	X	X	X	•

Employment Generation

Creation of paid employment opportunities in agriculture	•	•	•	✓ ^{xciii}	✓ ^{xciv}
High-skilled employment opportunities in agriculture created	X	X	•	X	X
Attempts to create permanent or regularize temporary work	X	X	•	X	X
Opportunities to diversify livelihoods created	•	•	X	X	✓ ^{xcv}

Wages and work schedules

General principles for fair wage and scheduling conditions	•	•	•	✓ ^{xcvi}	•
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Treatment of non-permanent workers

General Principles for fair treatment of non-permanent workers	•	•	•	✓ ^{xcvii}	•
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Employment conditions specific to women's needs

Maternity/ paternity leave policies	•	•	•	✓ ^{xcviii}	•
Breaks for nursing mothers	•	•	•	✓ ^{xcix}	•
No tolerance for sexual harassment	•	•	•	✓ ^c	✓ ^{ci}
Access to child care for women workers	X	X	X	✓ ^{cii}	X

V. Decision Making

Community participation in consultations or negotiations	•	•	•	•	•
Capacity training for participation in trade or investment consultations or negotiations	•	X	•	✓ ^{ciii}	X



	Voluntary Guidelines	PRAI	PRI in Ag & Food Systems	Guiding Principles on LSLAA	IFC Performance Standards
<i>Organizing body</i>	<i>Committee on Food Security, FAO</i>	<i>FAO, IFAD, UNCTAD & World Bank</i>	<i>Committee on Food Security, FAO</i>	<i>African Union, African Development Bank & UN Economic Commission for Africa</i>	<i>International Finance Corporation, World Bank Group</i>

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Equitable participation of marginal groups in community consultations or negotiations	•	•	•	X	•
Gender non-discrimination policy	✓ ^{civ}	✓ ^{cv}	✓ ^{cvi}	✓ ^{cvii}	✓ ^{cviii}
Gender-sensitive procedures for including women in negotiations	✓ ^{cix}	✓ ^{cx}	✓ ^{cxii}	✓ ^{cxiii}	✓ ^{cxiiii}
Women's inclusion in decision-making roles in commercial enterprises	X	X	✓ ^{cxiv}	X	X
Equal opportunities for workplace advancement and training, distinct from non-discrimination policy	X	X	X	✓ ^{cxv}	X
Equal distribution of benefits from trade/ investment deal for women and men, distinct from non-discrimination policy	X	X	✓ ^{cxvi}	✓ ^{cxvii}	✓ ^{cxviii}



Appendix 4: Gender References in Criteria and Principles of Voluntary Sustainability Standards and Responsible Investment Frameworks

VOLUNTARY SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS

- ⁱ Principle 1.2.
- ⁱⁱ Principle 2.2.5 & 2.1.10 Guidance & 3.1.1 Guidance
- ⁱⁱⁱ Principle 2.2.7
- ^{iv} I.C. 96
- ^v 6.5
- ^{vi} G.C.99
- ^{vii} I.C.103
- ^{viii} 3.3.28
- ^{ix} 3.3.28
- ^x 5.14.h.
- ^{xi} I.C.108.
- ^{xii} 3.3.31
- ^{xiii} 3.6.9
- ^{xiv} I.C.103
- ^{xv} 3.5.28. Guidance & 3.6.10 Guidance
- ^{xvi} 3.6.3 Guidance
- ^{xvii} 3.3.20
- ^{xviii} 3.5.16 & 3.5.17
- ^{xix} G.C.93
- ^{xx} I.C.93
- ^{xxi} 3.5.18
- ^{xxii} I.C.82
- ^{xxiii} I.C.94
- ^{xxiv} 2.1
- ^{xxv} 3.3.4
- ^{xxvi} 3.1.6
- ^{xxvii} Critical criterion 5.10
- ^{xxviii} G.C.92
- ^{xxix} I.C.90
- ^{xxx} I.C.94
- ^{xxxi} Principle 2.1
- ^{xxxii} 3.3.1 & 4.3.4 Guidance
- ^{xxxiii} 3,1
- ^{xxxiv} Best practices A.1



xxxv	5.2
xxxvi	G.C.91
xxxvii	G.C.88
xxxviii	G.C.98
xxxix	I.C.89
xl	2.1
xli	4.3.4 Guidance
xlii	2.2.7
xliii	2.2.7
xliv	Principle 1, Practice Example
xlv	G.A.21
xlvi	I.A.15
xlvii	Principle 14.4
xlviii	Principle 25.5.
xlix	Principle 1 & 6
¹	Principle 2 supporting text
li	Performance standard 5
lii	Principles 3B, 4 & 4.6 & 7.1
liii	Principle 1
liv	Principle 3 iii
lv	Guiding Principle & Principle 14.4
lvi	Performance standard 5
lvii	Principle 7.1
lviii	Principle 3, para 23, iii
lix	Principle 12 explanatory text
lx	Principle 5.3
lxi	Principle 11
lxii	Principle 5.4
lxiii	Principle 12
lxiv	Principle 5.5
lxv	Principle 6.1
lxvi	Principle 26.2
lxvii	Principle 8.9
lxviii	Principle 25.4
lxix	Performance standard 7
lxx	Principle 7.4
lxxi	Principles 8.11 & 4.7
lxxii	Principle 10 & Stakeholder responsibility #58
lxxiii	Principle 25.3
lxxiv	Principle 25.6
lxxv	Principle 12
lxxvi	Principle 10.1



- lxxvii Principle 3 iii
- lxxviii Performance Standard 5, Para 12, fn 17
- lxxix Principle 3 iii
- lxxx Principle 3 iii
- lxxxi Performance Standard 5, Para 12, fn 17
- lxxxii Explanatory text
- lxxxiii Principle 12
- lxxxiv Principle 12
- lxxxv Principle 12.4
- lxxxvi Principle 12.4
- lxxxvii Performance standard 2
- lxxxviii Principle 12.4
- lxxxix Principle 5
- xc Principle 12.4
- xcii Principle 13
- xciii Performance standard 2
- xciv Principles 2, 12 & 13
- xcv Performance Standard #5
- xcvi Principle #12
- xcvii Principle #12
- xcviii Principle #12
- xcix Principle #12
- c Principle #12
- ci Performance standard 2
- cii Principle #12
- ciii Principle 10
- civ Cross-cutting
- cv Principle 6
- cvi Principle 3 ii
- cvi Covered in detailed in individual principles
- cviii Performance standard 2
- cix Principle 12.11
- cx Principle #4 explanatory text
- cxii Principle 3 iv
- cxiii Principles 10 & 12
- cxiii Performance standards 5 & 1
- cxiv Principle 3 iv
- cxv Principle #13
- cxvi Principle 3 iv, Stakeholder responsibility 37 & Stakeholder responsibility 60
- cxvii Principle 12
- cxviii Performance standard 1



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