

# Report

## **Analysis of gender in the Honduran forest sector – Summary Report**

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# 1. Introduction to the situation analysis framework

In 2020 the EU FLEGT Facility developed an analytical framework to provide for a situation analysis of gender rights and gender dimensions in relation to three forest sector themes from a governance perspective, also described below:

1. Forest resource tenure and forest utilisation rights and practices
2. Economic opportunities and employment in forestry production and industries
3. Social welfare, human resources, and participation in forestry institutions.

The analytical framework has been applied in three countries with active Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) processes in order to better understand gender rights and gender dimensions of the forest sector and the VPA. Its application also served to identify priorities and opportunities for the forest sector and the VPA.

## **Theme One: Forest resource tenure and forest utilisation rights and practices**

This theme relates to the origins and sources of timber and other forest products. It includes gender dimensions in the ownership of forest land and resources and associated utilisation rights and practices. Depending on the country context, this may be in relation to the rights of indigenous forest peoples, forest dependent communities, farm households or other forest user groups, and in relation to plantation forestry, forest concessions, farm forestry or collaborative forest management etc.

## **Theme Two: Economic opportunities and employment in forest production and industries**

This theme looks at economic and employment rights and the income earning opportunities for women and men in forest production and related industries. Topics under this theme may include the employment characteristics of different segments of the forest industries and in the formal and informal economy; gender roles and occupational characteristics in the workplace; wage and income equality and differentials; the creation of business opportunities; and the fulfilment of employment rights and obligations by employers.

## **Theme Three: Social welfare, human resources, and participation in forestry institutions**

This is a cross-cutting theme. Social welfare provisions include occupational health and safety, social insurance and other such legal requirements and benefits for workers. Human resources includes the professional and technical capacities of the workforce, and the extent to which men and women have access to and participate in education and training. This theme also covers gender in relation to the rights of association and representation in the workplace and in forest sector institutions; leadership in the business community and in the state forest sector; as well as gender participation in forest sector processes and mechanisms.

Further details and a schematic overview of the situation analysis framework are given in the Annex. The full report of the situation analysis is available on request<sup>1</sup>.

## 2. Overview of the Honduras situational analysis

This report presents the situational analysis of gender dimensions in the forest sector in Honduras – in the context of Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT). The report makes use of a number of gender assessments and studies on forest governance. It also draws from broad sex disaggregated statistical data available through the Honduran National Statistic Institute. Specific disaggregated data for the forest sector have been found to be very limited and subsumed in broader agriculture sector statistics, thus limiting the depth of the analysis. This is true for national-level statistics and for those produced by the Honduran forest authority (hereafter ICF, after its Spanish acronym).

Gender refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationship between women and men and girls and boys. It is socially constructed and learned through socialisation processes. Gender is context and time specific, and therefore an evolving concept. It entails understanding the social norms, attitudes and practices which underlie gender roles and relations. Such an understanding is essential to promote changes in attitudes and in people's behaviour towards gender equity and equality.

An analysis of gender roles is a prerequisite for understanding gender differences, opportunities and patterns of decision making, as well as access to resources and services within the forest sector. It is critical to examine and understand how laws, norms, customs and practices shape and influence the use and management of forests by women and men. This is key to enhance sustainable forest management. It is also imperative given the importance of the forest sector to the Honduran economy and, in particular, its role in climate change adaptation and mitigation as Honduras is one of the world's most vulnerable countries to climate change.

### Country context

The total population in Honduras is about 9.5 million, of which 4.6 million are men and 4.9 million are women. The country ranks 100 out of 162 in the Gender Inequality Index. According to the latest UNDP Human Development Reports, Honduras is also one of Latin America's poorest countries, at 132 out of 189 countries assessed. Out of the 60% of the Honduran population that live in rural areas, over half live in forest areas. Rural poverty in Honduras is characterised by the use of forest lands for agricultural purposes. Productivity in those lands is low as there is limited access to technology.

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<sup>1</sup> Full report "Rodríguez, G. Situation analysis of gender in the context of VPA-FLEGT in Honduras. 2021". This report includes references to source information relevant to this summary report.

According to the 2020 Honduras forest cover map produced by the ICF, an estimated 6.3 million hectares are forests (56.1% of the country's land), of which, 68% are broadleaf forests, 30.9% are coniferous forests and 0.8% are mangroves.

Land ownership for private lands in Honduras is structured in two ways: communal lands that belong to native peoples, including indigenous and afrodescendant peoples; and traditional large estates and smallholders, which have been the subject of two agrarian reforms in the past century (1962-1963 and 1972-1979). Families of small-scale farmers who lived on lands belonging to the state, over which they had no rights, were the main beneficiaries of both reforms.

According to the Honduras Central Bank, the forest sector is reflected in the country's GDP in the primary sector (forestry) and the secondary sector (timber production and the making of timber products). The overall contribution of the forest sector to the GDP has decreased gradually, from 2.12% in 2000 to 0.71% in 2020. The forest sector is considered less critical and financially viable than the agriculture sector, which makes it hard to access loans to invest in forest lands.

## Policy and legislative context

The most recent reform of the Honduras constitution in 1982 incorporates the principle of gender equality and non-discrimination. In 2002, the country approved a national policy for women, and in 2010 included gender equality as a cross-cutting issue in the 2010-2038 country vision. Honduras has signed many regional and international treaties that seek to achieve gender equality, including the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

The Second Plan for Gender Equality and Equity, covering the period 2010-2022, is particularly relevant to the forest sector. It includes issues pertaining to social and political participation of women, the protection of their rights and the inclusion of a gender perspective in policies, programmes, plans, projects and budgets that relate to the sustainable management of all types of forests (national, private, ejidales<sup>2</sup>, tribal and communal). The Plan also promotes the establishment of rural organisations that enable active women's participation, including in decision making.

In the forest sector, the National Forests, Protected Areas and Wildlife Policy, for the period 2013-2022, has equity and social inclusion among its key principles, and specifically alludes to the principle of non-discrimination. In 2019, the ICF approved an Institutional Gender Policy that aspires to cutting across all internal and external actions that the ICF undertakes. Even prior to that, Honduras's 2014 Climate Change Strategy had already identified women and youth as strategic social groups.

The timing of this report coincides with the start of a new political cycle in Honduras, following the general elections of 28 November 2021. A plan outlined by the new government devotes a specific chapter to the issue of gender. It includes, among other

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<sup>2</sup> Municipally-owned areas assigned to communities or individuals through a management contract. The contract can be short-, medium- or long-term.

things, proposals to encourage the inclusion and participation of women in the country's economy. The plan includes guaranteeing equal access to land for women and men among the suggested measures for the farming sector.

## Gender in the VPA

Honduras is the first country that explicitly includes gender in the VPA text. More specifically, it commits to ensuring stakeholder involvement in its implementation irrespective of gender. This represents significant progress after a negotiation process that presented opportunities for women to participate and build technical and organisational capacities. This was achieved although the National Women's Institute, in charge of inter-institutional coordination for all gender-related matters, was not involved in VPA negotiations.

## 3. Main findings

### Theme 1: Forest resource tenure and forest utilisation rights and practices

Theme One – selected statistical indicators			
Total population (1) and human settlements (2) in forest areas	2021	<b>Forests</b> (1) 1,536,342 (2) 7,046 <b>Non forests</b> (1) 7,915,015 (2) 10,572	[a]
Land titles allocated	2011-2020	78, 975 ♀ 63% ♂ 37%	[b]
Land titles allocated	2019-2021	<b>2019</b> ♀ 1,527 ♂ 855 <b>2020</b> ♀ 969 ♂ 574 <b>2021</b> ♀ 1,170 ♂ 649	[b]
Number of beneficiaries of forest lands under forest community management	2019-2020	<b>2019</b> ♀ 5,732	[c]

		♂ 3,224 <b>2020</b> ♀ 4,946 ♂ 3,491	
<p>[a] Unidad de monitoreo del centro de información y patrimonio forestal del ICF (2021)</p> <p>[b] IAIP- INA. Registro Agrario Nacional 2019-2021</p> <p>[c] Departamento de Desarrollo Forestal Comunitario ICF. 2019/2020</p>			

- Historically, data related to land tenure and land use in forest areas have not been disaggregated by gender. Only over the last couple of years has the ICF started to gather disaggregated data. Thus, much remains to be learned and understood about this subject.
- Land tenure in Honduras is mostly viewed from an agriculture perspective. There is still little understanding of the challenges women face when it comes to accessing and regularising forest lands (which includes clarifying land tenure).
- In the 1960s and the 1970s, the Honduran state allocated 400,000 hectares of land to families of small-scale farmers through two agrarian reform processes. Women were virtually absent (or made invisible) from both, as lands were allocated to the head of each household, who was typically a man.
- The 1992 Law for the Modernisation and Development of the Agricultural Sector grants women rights over lands “as long as they apply for them”. This caveat is a *de facto* deterrent for women. Separately, the law also recognises the rights to land of widows and women with disabled partners.
- The 2000 Law for Equal Opportunities for Women makes it compulsory for a man who acquires land and other goods to include his partner or spouse in the official documents granting the allocation of such land. It also grants women the same benefits men enjoy under the current Law for the Agrarian Reform.
- Recent law amendments of the Law for Equal Opportunities have enabled women and indigenous peoples in Honduras to have rights over the use of (forest) land. Such changes are pursuant to the country’s international commitments and the demands of feminists’ organisations. However, there remain great challenges to make these changes work in practice.
- The current Forest Law gives equal rights over land to men and women. However, in practice women face discrimination in the forest sector since, as mentioned above, land tenure and rights over the use of forest lands are regulated in favour of the head of household.
- Enforcement of all the aforementioned laws encounters great challenges in practice. These have to do with the political will of state institutions, the ability to fully understand gender issues and the level of awareness of civil servants in charge of allocating lands.
- Lands suitable for forestry are different from agricultural lands in that people can have usufruct of the land, but not full owners. This lack of legal certainty acts as a disincentive to responsible forest management and obstructs access to loans to invest in the land.

- Women have a limited knowledge of the laws that uphold their rights over land tenure. Even those who are aware rarely apply for land to be titled in their name. This is because the predominant culture in Honduras dictates that, even when a woman holds a land title, ultimately it is the man who makes decisions over it.
- Poor rural women have historically been the most excluded from land tenure rights. Yet, such rights are fundamental to those women, as they are intimately related to their wellbeing and empowerment. Holding such rights could strengthen their negotiating power both at home and in their community.
- Indigenous women don't normally make decisions over lands their communities' own, as they tend to live in areas that have been allocated to communities where decision making structures are dominated by men

## Theme 2: Economic opportunities and employment in forest production and industries

Theme two: selected statistical indicators			
Proportion of working age population, and proportion of men and women who are employed	2020	59.4% ♀ 73% ♂ 25%	[a]
Proportion of women in urban (1) and rural (2) areas	2019	(1) 57% (2) 43%	[b]
Proportion of working women who are self-employed (5), in payroll (6) and unpaid (7)	2019	(5) 43% (6) 44% (7) 13%	[b]
Proportion of women in forestry, primary and secondary processing, and timber trade	2017	16%	[c]
Proportion of women in agroforestry organisations	2017	25%	[c]
[a] INE, Encuesta telefónica de hogares para medir empleo, 2020			
[b] Encuesta permanente de hogares de propósitos múltiples, junio de 2019			
[c] FAO, 2017			

- Women work in almost all stages along the timber supply chain in different proportions, and this provides them and their husbands with monetary and non-monetary benefits. This includes working on activities related to nurseries, planting, forest protection, secondary processing and trade. The only area where they are virtually absent is timber extraction.
- Women who do work in timber extraction usually perform administrative or organisational roles.
- The degree of women's participation in the forest sector is determined by the norms and values associated with gender (in particular, the reproductive role ascribed to women), and by the nature of the activities they undertake, which normally are those

considered more apt for women, such as trade, administration, cleaning, concierge or storage.

- Forest-related activities provide women with a subsistence income. Most women work in the informal part of the sector, as they are generally the ones who collect non-timber forest products, which are largely classified as secondary products and are not part of the timber trade channels.
- Women who work in the formal timber sector have a salary but face two working days in one as they must take care of their homes and families once they finish their day jobs.
- Small forest owners rely on hiring people to extract and transport timber from the areas their own. They see these jobs as requiring physical strength, and therefore mainly hire men.
- Forests are often considered more insecure for women than for men, and this is particularly due to the risk of women being subject to sexual violence.
- The Cooperatives Law and its regulations build on the Law for Equal Opportunities for Women, which establishes participation quotas for women. Women must make up at least 30% of cooperative senior management positions. However, in practice these quotas are still not observed.
- Women have less experience working in activities traditionally assigned to men, and less time available to train or work in such activities. Childcare, cleaning chores, supporting schoolwork and other similar activities are still the sole responsibility of women. These also mean that women often have to miss work or request leave when they are needed at home.
- The situations described above weaken women’s economic empowerment – it is hard for women to get an income that enables them to provide for their basic needs and those of their families. This is however critical: currently women are the head of household in about one third of all Honduran homes.

### **Theme 3: Social welfare, human resources and participation in forest institutions**

<b>Theme Three – selected statistical indicators</b>			
Proportion of female heads of household in Honduras as a whole (1) and in poor households (2)	2017	(1) 32% (2) 55%	[a]
Average number of years women study, including in urban (3) and rural (4) areas	2019	7.3 years (3) 8.3 (4) 5.7	[a]
Proportion of women who become mothers aged 15-19	2019	16%	[b]



Proportion of permanent female staff at ICF overall (5), in local prefectures (6), at departmental level (7), at regional level (8) and in senior management roles (9)	2021	(5) 51% (6) 33% (7) 56% (8) 25% (9) 0%	[c]
Proportion of women participation in FLEGT project events funded by the FAO EU FLEGT Programme (73 events over 11 projects)	2021	30%	[d]
Proportion of women in the VPA Technical Committee	2021	38%	[e]
Proportion of women in agroforestry organisations and proportion in management roles within those organisations	2019	28% 4%	[f]
Number of women's groups established within the CLIFOR programme (10) and total number of women in them (11)	2019	(10) 32 (11) 457	[f]

[a] INE. 2017. Encuesta Permanente de Hogares y Propósitos Múltiples

[b] Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y la Secretaria de Salud de Honduras. (2021). Encuesta Nacional de Demografía y Salud / Encuesta de Indicadores Múltiples por Conglomerados. Honduras 2019. Tegucigalpa

[c] ICF 2019. Política Institucional de Género

[d] EU FAO FLEGT Programme (2021)

[e] Interview with Technical Committee member; Departamento de Desarrollo Forestal Comunitario/ICF 2018

[f] Programa adaptación al cambio climático en el sector forestal - CLIFOR

- Honduras's National Employment Policy defines what constitutes dignified work. This includes, among others, a fair salary, certain working conditions or benefits such as access to social security. The forest sector is often informal in that some jobs do not comply with these requisites. This situation has a particularly negative impact on women, as many work in the informal sector.
- Despite the existence of legislation that regulates women's participation in decision-making within power structures, in practice numerous reasons impede the implementation of such legislation. These include the lack of inter-institutional coordination, the weak government institutional capacity (with limited human and economic resources), the dominant patriarchy and macho culture, the multiple ways in which women suffer poverty (educational and as victims of stereotypes), the lack of acknowledgement in the sector and the gender gaps that still prevail in the cooperative movement.
- The issue of women's participation is typically seen in studies and reports in terms of political participation of women in the public sphere.
- Women undertake support tasks but don't lead in decision-making processes.

- Over the last few years, international donors have implemented projects that have enabled women to get organized and set up agroforestry groups. They have also received training in productive, organisational, administrative and gender issues.
- The ICF Gender Policy recognises the need to approve a human resources manual that sets out how jobs and salaries are allocated. It also commits to proposing a protocol for sexual harassment incidents and other discriminations at work, including how women can better balance work and home responsibilities.
- Machismo culture generates violence against women who have public roles. It undermines their ability and desire to devote themselves to such jobs. In addition, women are subject to much more rigorous demands than men. For instance, they need to prove, more than men do, that they are able to do physically demanding jobs or undertake leadership roles. They also have to hold their ground when coming up against sexist demoting comments.
- Women with public roles are also limited by their traditional sociocultural role, the lack of control over their lives and their lack of economic autonomy. This is even worse for women in rural areas, and especially for indigenous and afro-descendant women.
- Women in rural areas experience a much stronger level of machismo. Their role as mothers and wives is extremely limiting, and they often don't have their own sources of income, so they rely entirely on their husbands.
- Women working in the forest sector are generally not registered for social security. Employers see affiliation of their employees as an additional cost that negatively impacts their profitability. They also don't see the benefit of covering social security costs, because the two public hospitals that exist are in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula. Workers must therefore travel from the forest to town and miss a day of work.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has undermined women's ability to work even further, as they have had to focus even more on childcare and taking care of the sick. This has resulted in a setback in women's empowerment and autonomy, especially when they have lost jobs and therefore their own sources of income.

## 4. Priorities and opportunities

### Priorities and opportunities for the forest sector

**Strengthen the enforcement of laws, and implement programmes and policies that promote gender inclusion in the forest sector:** There is a need to make sure that gender doesn't remain a theoretical concept or an "add-on" to regulations and initiatives in the forest sector. In particular, women need to be given real options to lead on and participate in each of the supply chain activities. Stakeholder will is essential to achieve this, and the forest authority can take the initiative by designing a truly gender-inclusive institution and requesting that others do the same.

**Include a gender perspective in land regularisation:** The ongoing process of land regularisation in Honduras needs to include a gender perspective to make the allocation of forest lands more equitable and transparent. This could also serve to strengthen women's participation in agroforestry groups, which play a key role in land and forest management.

**Strengthen the inclusion of a gender perspective in generating employment:** One of the priorities in the forest sector lies in implementing the 2nd Gender Equality and Equity Plan. It is also important to include a territorial approach, so the specific needs and challenges women face in the different regions of Honduras are understood and addressed. This includes issues such as their ethnicity, their background or the lives they live from a sociocultural, economic, political and geographical point of view.

**Increase women's technical capacity building:** The VPA has provided women who own forests with an opportunity to participate more actively in the forest sector. It is crucial to build their capacity in areas such as negotiation, finances administration. It is also essential to promote women's leadership and encourage more women to join the sector.

**Increase women's participation in the forest sector:** There is a need to facilitate and strengthen organisations and women's leadership by, for instance, promoting women's participation in forest consultative councils at all levels, as well as in grassroot organisations, thereby ensuring that women can express their opinions and contribute their knowledge to the debate and to decision making.

**Improve information on and understanding of gender issues in the forest sector:** There is a need to carry out quantitative and qualitative analyses to better understand the current situation women face in the forest sector, including the critical issue of land tenure. This should also include establishing clear indicators that enable the measurement and monitoring of progress.

## **Priorities and opportunities for VPA or FLEGT**

- Gender must be made visible in the implementation of the VPA. In particular, agreeing on indicators and how to monitor women's rights will help uphold them. This will provide valuable information about the real level of women's participation in the sector.
- Over the last decades, women have become more present in the forest sector, but much remains to be done. The VPA process presents opportunities to grant women the possibility to lead in transformative ways, and to inspire additional women to participate in the sector.
- The National Women's Institute could actively participate in the interinstitutional secretariat for the Implementation of the VPA (SIIAVA, after its Spanish acronym). This would help ensure a stronger understanding of gender matters so that gender is effectively included in the implementation of the VPA in a way that is also coherent with national and international gender laws. This could also help address opportunities that may have been missed as the National Women's Institute was not involved in VPA negotiations.

## Annex 1. Overview of the Situation Analysis Framework

The Situation Analysis Framework provides for making a situation analysis of gender rights and gender dimensions in relation to three forest sector themes (see first column of Figure 1) from a governance perspective. The purpose of the situation analysis is fourfold:

- To provide an overview of the available information on gender in the context of three forest sector themes, including the legal setting of gender rights, the available sources of statistical data and other research and secondary information sources.
- To make an analysis of significant issues and trends concerning gender in the forest sector and to highlight any critical gaps in information and understanding.
- To broadly assess gender issues in society and the economy in relation to forestry production and industries.
- To identify future priorities and opportunities for the forest sector.

It is generally intended and anticipated that the analysis can be completed on the basis of a desk review of existing secondary information sources and statistics. The framework is also designed to be simple and adaptable, so that it can be flexibly applied to different country and forest sector contexts, while at the same time using a common structure and headings so that the information and analysis can be broadly compared.

**Figure 1 Overview of the Situation Analysis Framework**

Thematic Contents	Analytical Contents			
	Legal framework	Indicators and statistical data	Key findings, issues and trends	Priorities and opportunities
<p><b>Theme One:</b> Forest resource tenure and forest utilisation rights and practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does the legal framework of the country say about gender equality and equity with respect to this thematic area?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What indicators can be used to analyse gender dimensions in this thematic area?</li> <li>• Such indicators may vary from country to country depending on the socio-economic context and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the key findings and significant issues and trends in this thematic area?</li> <li>• These may be specific issues pertaining to the forest sector, broader gender issues in society and the economy that are reflected in</li> </ul>	<p><i>For example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priorities for developing gender sensitive policies in the forest sector</li> <li>• Actions to enhance compliance with labour rights and social safeguards</li> <li>• Critical gender issues to address policy and legislative reform processes</li> </ul>
<p><b>Theme Two:</b> Economic opportunities and employment in forestry production and industries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are such gender rights enshrined in law?</li> </ul>			

<p><b>Theme</b> <b>Three:</b> Social welfare, human resources, and participation in forestry institutions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What policies, strategies and regulations are in place to realise these intentions?</li> <li>● How and to what extent are these legal provisions reflected and mainstreamed in the forest sector</li> </ul>	<p>characteristics of the forest sector.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What statistical information is available on these indicators?</li> <li>● What does the available evidence tell us about the current situation regarding the fulfilment of gender related rights in the forest sector?</li> </ul>	<p>forestry, or factors influencing the realisation of laws and policies on gender equality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What initiatives are underway to address such issues and how effective are they?</li> <li>● What are the main gaps in information and understanding?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recommendations for further research and data collection systems, as well as for monitoring and evaluation</li> <li>● Suggestions for the activities of development cooperation projects and partners</li> </ul>
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