

# Gender equality and social inclusion: Perspectives in the Oil and Gas sector in Bugoma Landscape (Uganda)



## Recommendations

1. The Government of Uganda (GoU) should fast track development of a gender responsive local content policy that can provide and identify specific entry points and map Women-led SMEs and mobilise them to participate in the Oil and Gas Value chain.
2. The oil companies in their Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) should develop skills which facilitate and promote business opportunities for women. This should be prioritised so as to enhance their participation in the oil and Gas sector.
3. It is important for the government and oil companies to undertake a dedicated Gender impact assessment to understand the gender impact of the interventions and take corrective actions.
4. International Oil companies should monitor and publicly report on the effectiveness of these gender specific safeguards, with the active involvement of women leaders and other community
5. For the participation of grassroots women, special training courses should be provided in languages and places and at such times that are also appropriate for local women. In addition, special efforts should be made to reach local women and women-owned firms through languages that women know and channels that reach them, e.g. community meetings, radio among others.
6. A gender sensitive monitoring and tracking toolkit should be developed by GoU and oil companies in consultations with the civil society organisations and affected communities to track gender commitments and progress in line with global regional and national legal and policy standards and frameworks.

## Main findings

1. Many studies in the landscape have revealed that the project has had different impacts upon men and women, in a variety of ways. Opportunities also exist for local Small and Medium enterprises (SMEs) to enter Oil & Gas sector value chains even smaller firms owned by women. Women could find also waged employment with these suppliers. Available research however, doesn't reveal the extent to which women have benefited from these opportunities. This therefore needs to be further explored.

2. The project has improved access to social services, projects constructed by oil companies including health centres, schools among others. For example, the Buliisa Health Centre IV was constructed by Tullow Oil as part of CSR initiatives. These are services required by women as they are the majority care takers. However, no primary research has been undertaken to determine the usefulness of these infrastructures and the extent to which they meet the needs of the multiverse of women and other socially disadvantaged groups
3. Existing research has revealed that the introduction of the Oil and Gas project has caused a shift in gender power relations within affected communities that further strips the balance of power away from women and increases gender inequality hence poverty that ultimately undermines the development potential of the Oil and Gas sector.
4. Furthermore, research reveals that from the beginning of Oil exploration in Uganda, women, youth and other socially excluded groups like Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) have experienced several challenges. The entrance of the industry into the community created environment degradation like water contamination, thereby requiring women to travel farther to get safe water.
5. It also destabilized social relations in the community and exacerbated existing gender inequalities. Oil and gas facilities impact agricultural land and water, which in turn directly impact women's ability to grow adequate and safe food for the family. The result is food insecurity in poorer households which tend to be female-headed.
6. The injection of money and modernization into local communities has led to social impacts that negatively affect women, such as increasing incidents of domestic violence, trafficking and sexual exploitation, and aggravating gender inequities.

## Methodology

The study utilised a desk review research methodology. The report is primarily a synthesis of the most important studies on the situation of gender in the Oil & Gas sector as undertaken by an array of scholars and practitioners, many of whom have undertaken primary fieldwork in the Albertine Region and have also made recommendations for improving women's status.

The process involved gathering and analyzing national-level laws, policies, regulations, guidelines and other research and programme documents relevant to the extractive industry/Oil and Gas sector

The report findings cover the districts of Hoima, Kikuube, Masindi and Buliisa, part of the areas where oil and Gas has been explored. This desk review research was aimed to provide an overview of how business investments in the Bugoma landscape have impacted women's participation and gender equality and therefore presents evidence based information that informs programme and advocacy interventions of government, private sector and CSOs for a sustainable and inclusive Bugoma landscape.

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