



MICRONESIA CONSERVATION TRUST (MCT)  
GENDER POLICY

Draft Gender v.2

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## **Background**

Under its 2016 Strategic Plan, the Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT) is working towards its vision to build enduring partnerships that conserve land and sea to improve quality of life for communities across Micronesia. In doing this, MCT will be strengthening its role as an effective bridge between the international conservation community, development partners, and Micronesian communities and governments. To do this effectively, it is important that MCT involves both women and men equally in the planning and management of biodiversity, conservation, and related sustainable development for the people of Micronesia.

Effective management and conservation of natural resources and biodiversity is only attainable when the needs and interests of both women and men are fully recognized in the planning and implementation of activities and interventions. In any conservation activity the likelihood of success is enhanced if the needs and roles of both women and men are taken into account. The unique roles men and women play in their communities leads to different bodies of knowledge about the environments around them. Women's and men's roles, responsibilities and opportunities affect how they use and manage natural resources and gender relations influence how households, communities and institutions are organized, how decisions are made, and how resources are used, accessed and controlled. Because of the nature of their work, many women are also affected differently and more strongly by environmental degradation. The recognition of the different impact of development on women and men, and the realization that not all women and men are affected equally is a crucial concept in sustainable development. Increasing women and other marginalized group's participation in decision-making will ensure greater success and sustainability of projects while properly safeguarding natural resources and enhancing the shared benefits of their careful use.

MCT's Gender Policy establishes a commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women, establishes a policy framework and operating principles, and outlines priority areas of action for the institution.

## **Policy Framework**

Ensuring gender equality is central to MCT's mission to "build partnerships, raise and manage funds, make grants, influence policy, and provide conservation and financing expertise" and therefore linked to the achievement of MCT's Strategic Objectives outlined in the 2016 Strategic Plan. The current gender policy builds on MCT's operating principles (2012), and is guided by MCT's Strategic Plan (2016), which emphasizes MCT's role in "enhancing livelihoods, quality of life, and the environmental integrity of Micronesia for the benefit of present and future generations." MCT will continue to seek opportunities to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women to fulfil its mandate.

The ultimate outcome of MCT's gender policy and operating procedures will be an improvement in the effectiveness and sustainability of MCT's activities, grants, projects

and programs. This requires a gender perspective to be mainstreamed into MCT and its partner's operations. This will be achieved by ensuring that:

- Gender policies, operating procedures and grievance mechanisms are developed, implemented and supported.
- MCT staff and partners have the knowledge and skills to address gender in their operational areas.
- Gender analysis is included in all project proposals and MCT activities.
- Gender is integrated into MCT's Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) Framework.
- Gender perspective learning is used to improve future activities, projects and outcomes.

Targeted actions and gender mainstreaming will be applied to achieve the expected outcomes (see logic model Annex 1). A glossary of key terms related to gender mainstreaming is included in Annex 2.

## **Overarching Principles**

The following principles underpin MCT's commitment to empowerment, protection, and participation of females and males in their communities:

**Pursue an inclusive approach to foster equality:** While MCT will be sensitive to and respectful of local polices and norms, this policy is inclusive of all women and men, girls and boys, regardless of age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability status, religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, geographic area, or migratory status. MCT will also be aware of the diversity of households and family structures, which require particular attention to domestic partners, child-headed households, single-person households formed by older adults, and the presence of secondary families formed by single parents within extended households. This inclusive focus will ensure that key gender gaps are reduced in ways that benefit all citizens, not just those who are the most visible, or vocal.

**Ensure accountability:** Promoting gender equality is a shared responsibility and depends on the contribution and collective commitment of all staff. MCT will hold its self accountable for implementing this policy by defining concrete quantitative and qualitative results

**Build partnerships:** MCT will work with their partners to ensure that efforts to mainstream gender into MCT's operations are coordinated and non-duplicative.

## **Policy Outcomes**

- (i) **Mainstream and integrate gender into MCT’s work:** This policy will be implemented by integrating approaches and actions to advance gender equality and female empowerment through MCT’s grant cycle as well as throughout project design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and learning.
- (ii) **Gender analysis:** The identification of specific gender mainstreaming results to be achieved will be based on the findings of gender analyses, which shall be undertaken for MCT grants, projects, and programs (see Box 1), and by other relevant analyses that may be used in the context of strategic planning and programming.

**Box 1: Gender Analysis**

Gender analysis is a process of examining the roles, knowledge, capacity and assets of women and men, as the first step in planning efficient activities, projects, programs, and strategies that address both men’s and women’s needs, and reduce the inequalities that exist between them. Gender analysis is used to design, implement, monitor and evaluate program interventions and policy decisions to make sure the diverse needs of women and men are addressed, that gender inequality is tackled, and that programs do not exacerbate gender inequality.

A gender analysis contributes to the identification of the diverse capacities and knowledge within communities and households that can be tapped to help develop activities, projects, programs, and strategies that are more responsive to the capacities, needs and priorities of the local people.

[Adapted from PACC Gender Toolkit \(Module 2\)](#)

- (iii) **MCT staff and partners have the knowledge and skills to address gender in their operational areas:** MCT will support staff through training to address gender in operational areas as well as assist partners to incorporate gender perspectives into projects and programs.
- (iv) **Integrate Gender into MCT’s Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) Framework:** MCT will measure performance by

through its MERI framework which will include indicators to measure progress toward gender equality (see Box 2).

**Box 2: Gender disaggregated indicators**

Developing gender disaggregated indicators for individual projects is essential for achieving gender equity and gender mainstreaming goals. To be effective, these indicators for gender need to be integrated into all stages of the project cycle. Additionally, indicators are most effective when they are clearly linked with the specific objectives, context, activities and outcomes of a project. It is therefore crucial to identify gender-related components, outcomes, outputs and indicators of a project at the onset of the project.

Every project can adopt a few common gender indicators such as “Number of men and women participating (genuinely) in consultations/decision making processes” and “Number of responses obtained from men and women during consultations,” but each project should then develop indicators specific to the project area and focus. A set of sample indicators is listed in Annex 2.

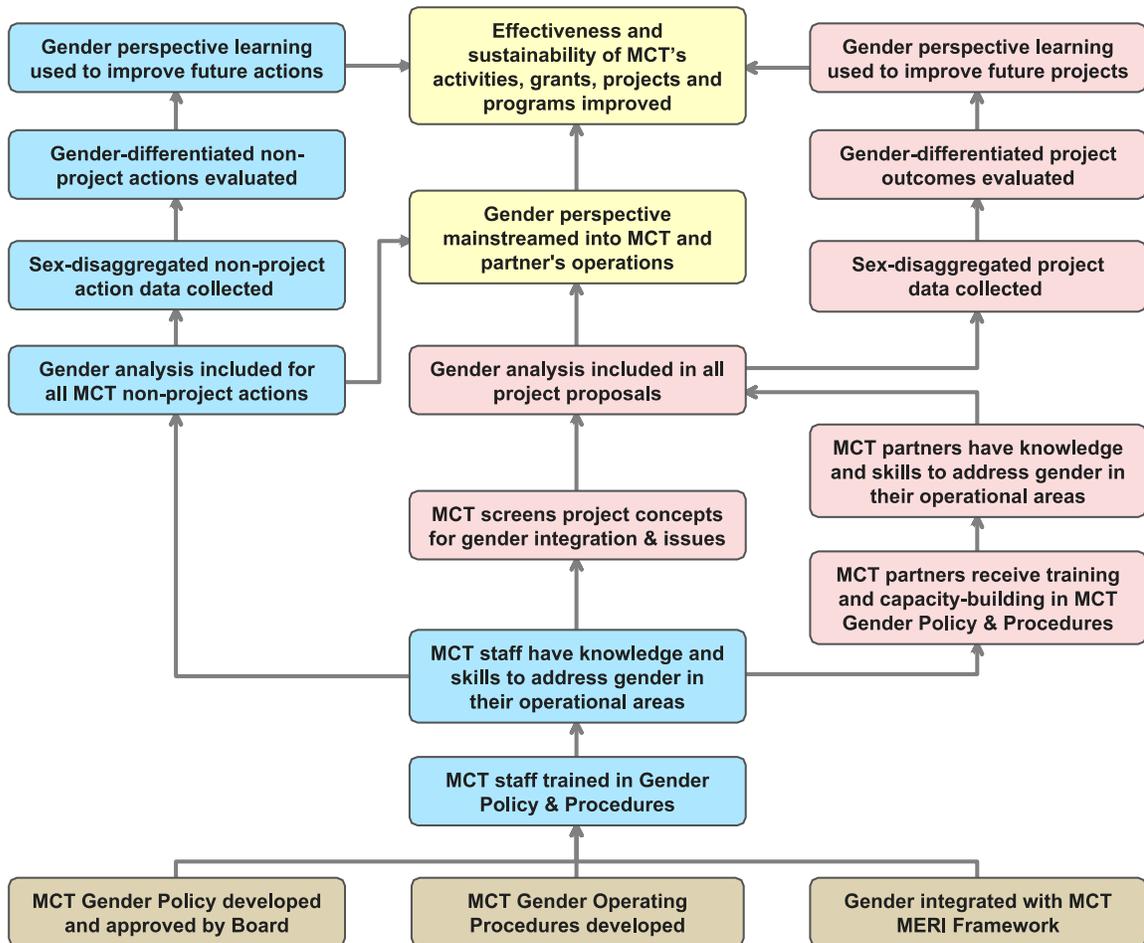
- (v) **Gender perspective learning is used to improve future activities, projects and outcomes:** Encourage continuing effort to expand MCT’s knowledge and commitment to gender equity, through documentation and sharing of lesson.

## **Policy Implications**

This gender policy is consistent with MCT’s Mission and Code of Ethics. It is envisaged that the implementation of this policy will be executed in coordination with the MCT’s Environmental and Social Safeguards.

MCT understands that full implementation of this policy will require involvement and commitment of all staff, especially senior management across the organization who has the ultimate responsibility for implementing this policy and adapting it to local contexts and cultures. We understand that this will require knowledge, reflection, and firm commitment among all staff and will be a long-term undertaking which will require strong internal leadership, systematic monitoring and periodic review of progress.

## Annex 1: MCT's Gender Logic Model



## Annex 2: Glossary of Key Terms

(Section adapted from Pacific Gender and Climate Change Toolkit: Tools for Practitioners)

**Approaches to gender and development-** The Women in Development approach (WID) appeared in the 1970s, and aimed at promoting women's participation in development. It did this by addressing obstacles to their participation, for example, improving education for girls and women, women's reproductive health, access to drinking water and sanitation, and the development of income-generating activities for women. The Gender and Development approach (GAD) is a more recent approach that aims to go further by addressing the root causes of gender inequalities through empowering women. In this approach, interventions are based on an analysis of men's and women's roles and needs (gender analysis), in an effort to empower women to improve their position.

**Equality and inequality-** Equality means that all people – whatever their sex, caste, ethnicity, religion, age, marital status, physical condition, or lifestyle – receive the same treatment, the same opportunities, the same recognition, the same respect, and have the same rights and the same status. In most societies, gender relations are unequal. Women and men have different rights, different access to resources and information, and different decision-making powers. Women are often subordinated to men and have fewer of these rights. As a result women are usually more vulnerable to poverty, exploitation, oppression, violence – and to climate change.

**Gender-** Gender refers to the socially constructed roles and responsibilities of women and men. The concept of gender also includes the expectations held about the characteristics, aptitudes, and behavior of both women and men; it refers to what people believe about femininity and masculinity. These roles and expectations are learned, and are different in different cultures. They are influenced over time by, for example, changes in economics, politics, technology, education, environment, the influence of other cultures and the media, mass advocacy, crisis, and conflict.

**Gender analysis-** Gender analysis is a process of examining the roles, knowledge, capacity and assets of women and men, as the first step in planning efficient development strategies, programs and projects that address both men's and women's needs, and reduce existing gender and other social inequalities. Gender analysis contributes to a better understanding of the social dimension of climate change impacts, focusing on the differences and similarities in the experience and capacities of women and men. It also helps identify assets and capacities of women and men, which will help them to cope with environmental stresses; and the gaps, needs and priorities for adapting to climate change.

**Gender blind-** Where a project or programs is related to human activities but does not include a gender dimension, it is described as gender blind.

**Gender mainstreaming-** Gender mainstreaming means that the needs and interests of both women and men are taken into account systematically across all programs and projects and in an organisation's structure and management. It means that women as well as men participate in defining objectives and planning so that development actions satisfy the

priorities and needs of both women and men. Mainstreaming gender is a long-term process involving both technical and ‘political’ dimensions of organisational change.

**Gender neutral-** Where a project or programs is not concerned with human activities and has no effect on people, this is considered gender neutral. Examples are monitoring changes in the weather or sea level rise.

**Gender sensitive-** A gender-sensitive policy or programs recognises gender inequalities as an obstacle that may deprive women of the same opportunities as men and prevent them from getting equal benefits from development programs. Thus it proposes measures to reduce gender inequalities and provides resources and services to address both men’s and women’s needs.

**Gender stereotypes-** These are prejudices about the roles of men and women, how they should behave, and the type of relationships between them. These ideas often lead to the exclusion of women from activities related to community development and the concealment of women’s contributions. Examples of gender stereotyping include ideas that women should be seen and not heard, women belong at home, and only women can be caregivers.

**Sex-** Sex refers to biological differences between women and men. These characteristics exist for reproduction purposes and are essentially fixed.

**Sex-disaggregated data-** Data that separate out men’s and women’s activities and perspectives, i.e. collecting separate data on men and women. Data can also be disaggregated by age, location, ethnic group, etc. to help understand the different experiences of different groups and target solutions effectively.

## **Annex 3: Sample Output Indicators on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**

(Indicators adapted from Pacific Gender and Climate Change Toolkit Tools for Practitioners, Gender and Wildlife and Biodiversity Projects, Gender and Environment)

The following lists provide sample indicators for MCT Impact Areas.

### **Ecosystem and Biodiversity Conservation**

- Number of women and men practicing improved wildlife and ecosystem conservation practices
- Number of alternative livelihood options being implemented in the communities by women and men
- Number of men and women aware and practicing sustainable land use management practices.
- Number of women and men effectively advocating for the implementation of policies on ecosystem and biodiversity conservation

### **Sustainable Livelihoods**

- Number of men and women taking part in agricultural activities (subsistence and commercial including production and value-addition)
- Crop yields and income generated by men and women
- Volume of fish catch and time spent fishing by men and women
- Number of men and women aware and practicing sustainable land use management practices

### **Climate Resilience**

- Change in resource access (water, firewood, etc.) or change in time spent collecting resources as a result of adaptation activities
- Number of men and women involved in site planning and preparation for adaptation
- Number of men and women impacted by vulnerability reduction measures
- Level of awareness of women and men on the links between climate change and their specific vulnerabilities and implications for human health and livelihoods

## **Annex 4: Reference Documents**

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