

Gender, environment and development



SEI Asia fact sheet
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The SEI Gender, Environment and Development (GED) work theme features a team of researchers who apply a gender and social equality perspective to environment and development issues for transformative social change. We conduct research on key drivers of these forms of inequality in the environment and development fields, building partnerships to complement and enhance the capacities of development practitioners and civil society groups for effective gender and social analyses. We engage with policymakers, advocates and other knowledge producers to ensure inequalities are addressed in decision-making processes in ways that will advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

Areas of work

GED uses critical gender analyses that focus on unequal power relations – based on gender, class, ethnicity, age, (dis)ability and religion – and how these influence governance and policy action. Our work explores the following thematic areas:

- The drivers of inequality that shape disasters, exacerbate vulnerability and result in the impacts of associated disaster risk reduction (DRR) measures being unevenly distributed. This includes an examination of how power is embedded in socio-economic and political systems, and social relations at multiple scales.
- Gender and natural resource management: We explore the dynamics of gender and social equality – including decision-making power and participation – in the use of land, water, forests, and marine and coastal resources to understand the complex and intertwined issues of food and livelihood insecurity.
- Gender and energy transitions: We work to understand inequalities in the transition from fossil fuel dependence to low-carbon energy sources. We explore ways to promote social sustainability in green economies.
- Gender, human rights and environmental justice: Using gender and rights-based approaches, we examine barriers to and opportunities for advocating and protecting the environment, while addressing the risks and insecurities faced by environmental defenders, especially women and Indigenous peoples.
- Gender, migration and displacement: We investigate the gendered causes and impacts of migration in the context of climate and environmental change, using an intersectional approach.

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Stockholm Environment Institute is an international non-profit research and policy organisation that tackles environment and development challenges.

We connect science and decision-making to develop solutions for a sustainable future for all.

Our approach is highly collaborative: stakeholder involvement is at the heart of our efforts to build capacity, strengthen institutions, and equip partners for the long term.

Our work spans climate, water, air, and land-use issues, and integrates evidence and perspectives on governance, the economy, gender and human health.

Across our eight centres in Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas, we engage with policy processes, development action and business practice throughout the world.

Selected projects

Gender, Social Equality and Poverty at SEI: GED co-leads the SEI Initiative on Gender Equality, Social Equity and Poverty (GESEP), which seeks to understand the inter-connections between gender, equity, poverty, and sustainability through the lens of power, to inform and advance transformative and sustainable development. The initiative brings together experts from across SEI to undertake cutting-edge research on GESEP issues in the fields of environment and development. The programme also aims to integrate GESEP issues into SEI projects.

Disasters and climate change: GED co-implements the programme “Building resilience through inclusive and climate-adaptive disaster risk reduction” by incorporating gender and rights-based approaches into disaster risk assessment, land-use planning, and emergency preparedness and response. Additionally, one work package in this programme focuses on supporting women environmental human rights defenders for transformative resilience through research, advocacy, and partnerships with civil society, academics and decision-makers. GED has also led several regional assessments on gender equality, social equity and human rights aspects in climate change and DRR.

Geospatial technologies: GED supports the USAID-funded SERVIR-Mekong project to integrate gender into the deployment of geospatial technologies for environmental management in the Lower Mekong Countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam).

Natural resource management: GED supported a regional study on improving the understanding of structural challenges that prevent equitable opportunities in coastal and marine resource management. We have also assessed gender in relation to water insecurity and supported research on gender in agriculture. We investigated women’s public participation in environmental impact assessment processes in Viet Nam, Cambodia and Myanmar as part of the USAID Mekong Partnership for the Environment.

Energy transitions: GED undertook gender assessments of the renewable energy sector in the Lower Mekong Region, which informed the gender plans of both USAID’s Clean Power Asia programme and the private sector’s hydropower operation in Myanmar. We are currently investigating the structural causes of air pollution from a political economy perspective, as well as how the development and implementation of air pollution policies and technologies have reproduced gender subjectivities and inequalities. This research will inform IDRC’s research agenda on air pollution and labour in the East and Southeast Asia region. We are also developing a framework for incorporating social dimensions of sustainability into the bioeconomy.

Migration and Displacement: GED leads the work package on gender and social equity for a major EU Horizon 2020 project, HABITABLE, and has conducted research on human mobility and desertification. We also work on the links between environmental change, Covid-19 and immobility through research in Samut Sakhon (Thailand).