Austrian Development Agency

International Partnerships Austria

Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management (EGSIM) Manual

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Abbreviations

ADA	Austrian Development Agency
CfP	Call for Proposals
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EGSIA	Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Assessment
EGSIM	Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management
EGS	Environmental, Gender and Social Standards
FPIC	Free Prior and Informed Consent
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GHG	Greenhouse gas
IP	Indigenous Peoples
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
PE	Private Sector Entity
EGSMP	Environmental, Gender and Social Management Plan
SEAH	Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
T&Q	Themes & Quality Unit of ADA

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose and Scope

This Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management (EGSIM) Manual defines the overarching approach, principles and standards governing the Austrian Development Agency's (ADA) environmental, gender and social impact management, as well as the processes for its application. The manual applies to all interventions funded or implemented by ADA, with a few exemptions, and provides information and guidance for ADA staff[1] and project partners alike.

Environmental and social sustainability, as well as gender equality are fundamental to the achievement of development outcomes and are therefore systematically mainstreamed into ADA programmes and projects. Proper EGSIM requires that positive social, gender and environmental opportunities and benefits are enhanced. It further ensures that environmental, gender and social risks and adverse impacts are avoided, minimized, mitigated, and managed. The promotion of environmental, gender and social standards and safeguards must be considered at the earliest stage of intervention design, systematically addressed during implementation and followed-up through monitoring and evaluation.
Environmental, gender and social standards and safeguards aim to:

- enhance the environmental and social outcomes of interventions and contribute to the achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- foster and strengthen potentials for gender equality, women's empowerment, and diversity, by requiring the application of a systematic gender-responsive, transformative and intersectional approach;
- identify, assess, and avoid the risks of sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (SEAH), address the risks by identifying and implementing appropriate SEAH risk mitigation and monitoring measures and respond to related gender-based violence (GBV) allegations;
- avoid negative impacts on people and the environment;
- minimize and mitigate negative impacts where avoidance is not possible;
- strengthen ADA and partner capacities to manage environmental, gender and social risks and adverse impacts; and
- ensure inclusive and effective stakeholder participation, including through a mechanism to respond to grievances of stakeholders affected by the respective intervention.

1.2. Overarching Policies and Principles

The policy framework for ADA's EGSIM is set in the goals and principles of the Austrian Federal Development Cooperation Act (2003) the ministerial policies for cross-cutting issues of Austrian Development Cooperation and the 3-Year Programme in Austrian Development Policy currently in force. ADA is committed to contribute to the SDGs and adheres to the principle to 'leave no one behind'. Thus, ADA explicitly endorses a policy in favour of the poorest members of the society to reduce inequalities and discrimination as well as the vulnerability to shocks and crises. The funding should primarily benefit interventions which focus on regions where the poor live and on sectors that the poor are particularly dependent on for sustaining their livelihoods. Social, economic, and political empowerment of women and of marginalized and vulnerable population groups is crucial in this respect, thus enabling them to participate in political decision-making processes and reach their full potential to contribute to sustainable development.

[1] Additional guidance for ADA staff is provided in the EGSIM Staff Guidance Note

Interventions funded by ADA must, above all, be in line with national development policies and strategies of the countries they take place in, as well as with existing local or regional development plans, if applicable. ADA further commits to a results-based approach. Programmes and projects are continuously assessed for their concrete results and effectiveness in order to verify progress and successes, identify adverse developments at an early stage and to facilitate learning.

To enhance development outcomes of interventions mainstreaming of cross-cutting themes and the application of quality standards is crucial. In this respect, ADA promotes the consideration of a set of basic principles and quality criteria in the course of the design and planning stage of an intervention.

Ownership: Ownership implies that all stakeholders can participate in the intervention depending on their respective roles and responsibilities. ADA endeavours to ensure transparent and inclusive information to all concerned and to enable inclusive participation processes. This also includes that ADA interventions must be based on national or regional development strategies as well as other relevant policies, regulations, and commitments, being elaborated in a participatory manner. If the respective framework conditions are not satisfactory, ADA should seek possibilities to address this at intervention level and in the policy dialogue respectively.

Do no harm: No unintentional negative impacts should occur due to the interventions or investments. Risks of SEAH need to be identified and addressed accordingly by identifying and implementing appropriate mitigation and monitoring measures. Existing access and user rights of livelihood resources must be taken into due account, whereby ideally everybody should have equal opportunities. A conflict-sensitive approach in programme and project planning and implementation is essential; possibly diverging or incompatible interests must be considered to avoid potential conflicts.

Equity, equality and non-discrimination: Reality shows that people are excluded and/or discriminated due to predetermined circumstances, such as gender, race, family origins or existing cultural, social and political biases. Similarly, existing power relations at household and community level hamper equal access and utilization of services and resources as well as equal distribution of benefits. Thus, interventions must be designed in such a manner that existing barriers will be reduced.

Inclusive participation and equal representation of all stakeholders: Existing cultural, social, political and economic barriers impede participation of women and men as well as vulnerable groups (such as ethnic minorities, the youth, children, people with disabilities etc.) in planning and decision-making processes. Similar to the above, these barriers must be identified in the design and planning phase and an accessible, inclusive, and gender-responsive participation mechanism established, including the strengthening of articulation capabilities of participants, amongst others.

Accountability and transparency: All actors – public and private – are responsible and answerable for their actions. Accountability mechanism and processes, including sanctions for non-accountability and non-compliance must be established at national and local levels. ADA will work with existing government systems and according to national regulations, while aiming to strengthen required capacities to apply and improve accountability. Correspondingly, ADA will support equal access to information flow for all population groups, e.g., by providing key documentation in local language, or the use of oral information.

Empowerment: Capabilities to enable autonomous and self-determined choices need to be strengthened. All stakeholders should be able to articulate their respective interests, priorities, demands etc. in planning, budgeting, and decision-making processes and to hold local/national authorities accountable. In reality, women and vulnerable groups often lack the necessary skills,

confidence and opportunities to raise their voice or are hampered, as highlighted above, by existing social, economic or political barriers to do so. Thus, supporting the gender-responsive empowerment of these groups is of crucial importance to ADA.

Sustainability: Sustainability means that capabilities and mechanisms for environmental protection, social equity and economic development are in place and that these three dimensions are equally considered in all investments. Adequate livelihood conditions, safe environment and ecosystem services and broad-based economic progress are not only important for current generations but should also be ensured for future ones. This implies amongst others that external influences and sustainability risks are assessed, and respective mitigation actions identified; capacities of all stakeholders are strengthened, and effective institutions put in place.

Apart from these general principles and quality criteria, the consideration of the environment and climate change and gender equality as cross-cutting issues, a zero tolerance for all forms of SEAH as well as a human rights-based approach and social inclusion play a central role for the purpose of the EGSIM.

Environmental Sustainability

The implications of climate change and environmental degradation do not only add a further layer of complexity and challenges to development cooperation, but they also jeopardise the achievements of earlier efforts, may lead to reversals in poverty reduction and put communities further at risk. Austria's response to these challenges is based on the specific principles set out in the Austrian Strategy for Environment and Development[2] and the commitments made under Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), in particular the Rio Conventions. The environmental and climate policies and principles that ADA commits to are as per the below:

- harnessing synergies between environmental protection, climate action and poverty reduction;
- preventing adverse and maximising beneficial environmental impacts, climate adaptation and mitigation measures;
- adopting integrated, multi-sectoral approaches, wherever possible;
- promoting local ownership and management of natural resources;
- advocating the integration of environmental protection and climate action in national development plans;
- helping raise awareness and develop capacity in environmental protection and climate action;
- promoting a holistic approach to environmental goods and equitable sharing of the benefits of environmental protection and climate action;
- engaging in international cooperation and contributing to implementing environmental and climate conventions;
- drawing on experience and know-how in Austrian society.

Gender Sensitivity, Responsiveness, and Transformation[3]

Gender Equality is a prerequisite for long-term democratic, equitable and sustainable global development. The promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are central to the work of ADA. This includes advocating for women's and girls' human rights, combating discriminatory practices, strengthening women's voices and roles in decision making; reducing gender

[2] Strategic Guideline on Environment and Development in Austrian Development Policy https://www.entwicklung.at/en/media-centre/publications/programmes

[3] For further reading refer to the Strategy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls available for download at https://www.entwicklung.at/en/media-centre/publications/strategies-programmes

inequalities in access to and control over resources, and challenging the roles and stereotypes that create inequalities and exclusion.

In this respect, ADA interventions:

- do not discriminate against women or girls and do not reinforce gender-based discrimination and inequalities;
- are based on the principle of equal opportunity and fair treatment;
- strive for gender-transformative change;
- integrate women's/girls' and men's/boys' voices and opinions equally into risk assessments, planning, implementation and evaluation;
- aim to systematically involve and support local women's (rights) organisations fully integrate gender in its reviews and evaluations and report on gender-related impacts in the areas they are reviewing.

Zero-Tolerance of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Sexual Harassment (SEAH)
Development interventions can increase the risk of GBV, particularly SEAH. GBV is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person´s will and that is based on socially ascribed gender differences. This includes acts that inflict physical, mental, sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, and coercion and other deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.

The risk of SEAH is based on unequal relations and power dynamics resulting in a culture of discrimination and privilege.

ADA adheres to a zero-tolerance policy to all forms of and non-action against SEAH. ADA addresses SEAH by:

- emphasizing prevention through identifying key risks of SEAH and undertaking measures to prevent or minimize harm;
- establishing an accessible (community-based), survivor-centred and gender-responsive complaint mechanism, including confidential reporting and ethical documentation of SEAH acts, indicating when and where to report incidents and what follow-up actions will be taken;
- building on existing local knowledge by engaging with community partners for support throughout the project cycle;
- building on global research evidence and knowledge on how to address GBV effectively;
- adjusting prevention and mitigation measures to respond to given settings in an adaptive way;
- minimizing harm to women and girls by training of staff including on how to preserve safety;
- enabling continuous monitoring and learning by integrating regular monitoring and feedback on the effectiveness of SEAH mitigation measures in its operations;

Human Rights and Social Inclusion
Human rights are indivisible, universal, and interdependent. Austria recognizes the centrality of human rights to sustainable development, and principles and standards derived from international human rights treaties. ADA consequently applies a human rights-based approach to development cooperation.[4] This implies that:

- all interventions of ADA should promote the realization of human rights.

[4] For more details see ADA's Human Rights Policy and Human Rights Manual https://www.entwicklung.at/en/media-centre/publications/strategies-programmes

- human rights standards and principles guide ADA in all phases of the programming process and in all sectors.
- ADA contributes to the development of the capacities of 'duty-bearers' to meet their obligations and of 'rights-holders' to claim their rights.

All people in a society should have the rights, skills, and opportunities to participate fully in society on an equal and self-determined basis. As outlined above, various barriers or biases might impede participation of marginalized or vulnerable groups in planning, budgeting and decision-making processes or hamper equal access and benefits. ADA is committed to social inclusion, particularly inclusion of people with disabilities, reduction of existing barriers and biases, promotion of non-discrimination and equal treatment in all its interventions. Basic infrastructure, services and information must be available, accessible, affordable, and acceptable to all people – both in terms of quality and culturally.

2. Project-level standards

To underpin the commitment to mainstream environmental, gender and social sustainability ADA defines a set of project-level standards. They serve as an integrated framework to reach a consistent level of quality of ADA implemented or funded interventions and are aligned to the performance standards of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the World Bank and several UN agencies, such as UNDP.

2.1. Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Natural Resource Management

Introduction

This standard reflects the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity[5] and recognizes that conserving biodiversity,[6] maintaining ecosystem services, and sustainably managing natural resources are fundamental to sustainable development and strengthen the resilience to environmental and social changes and shocks, including climate change impacts and disaster risks. ADA seeks to maintain and enhance the goods and services provided by biodiversity and ecosystems[7] to secure livelihoods, food, water, and health, enhance resilience, conserve threatened species and their habitats, and increase carbon storage and sequestration.

ADA is committed to mainstream biodiversity and ecosystem management into its interventions, to strengthen protected area systems, and to manage and rehabilitate ecosystems for adaptation to and mitigation of climate change. ADA seeks to strengthen effective governance and decision-making processes concerning biodiversity and ecosystems, including strengthening the rights of affected populations, in particular women, indigenous peoples or other vulnerable groups. ADA also recognizes the potential positive role of local communities in biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of natural resources.

[5] The objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity are "the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the use of genetic resources."

[6] The CBD defines biological diversity as "the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part: this includes diversity within species, between species, and of ecosystems."

[7] Ecosystem services are the benefits that people derive from ecosystems. Ecosystem services include the following: provisioning services, which are the goods people obtain from ecosystems (i.e. food, freshwater, timber, fibres, medicinal plants); regulating services, which are the benefits people obtain from the regulation of ecosystem processes (e.g. surface water purification, carbon storage and sequestration, climate regulation protection from natural hazards); cultural services, which are the nonmaterial benefits people obtain from ecosystems (e.g. sacred sites, areas of importance for recreation and aesthetic enjoyment); and supporting services, which are the natural processes that maintain the other services (e.g. soil formation, nutrient cycling, primary production).

Objectives:
This standard aims to:

- protect and conserve biodiversity and habitats;
- maintain and enhance the benefits of ecosystem services;
- promote the sustainable management and use of living natural resources;
- support the livelihoods of local communities, particularly vulnerable groups, and inclusive economic development, through the adoption of practices that integrate conservation needs and development priorities.

Requirements
The standard considers all relevant threats to biodiversity and sustainable ecosystem services like habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation of ecosystems, invasive alien species, overexploitation, hydrological changes, eutrophication of water bodies and pollution. It will consider the differing values attached to biodiversity and its associated ecosystem services by potentially affected communities.

As project activities and local land use choices interact and impact upon biodiversity and ecosystem services, ADA adopts an ecosystem approach to ensure that off-site and upstream – downstream impacts are identified, planned, managed, and monitored.

Risk reduction measures under this standard follow a mitigation hierarchy that favours avoidance of potential negative impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services over minimization, mitigation, and restoration[8]. Mitigation and restoration activities should be designed to achieve at least no net loss of biodiversity. In this context, ADA refrains from any ecosystem and biodiversity offsetting mechanisms and explicitly excludes them from its mitigation hierarchy.

ADA seeks to ensure that project activities have no adverse effects on critical habitats[9]. No activities will be implemented in areas of critical habitat unless no other viable alternative exists. Even in these exceptional cases, no adverse impacts on the criteria or biodiversity values for which the critical habitat was designated, and no reduction of any recognized endangered, vulnerable, or critically endangered species should occur. Any lesser impact must be mitigated, and a Biodiversity Action Plan needs to be put in place.
In addition, if projects activities are located within a protected area, ADA requires that all interventions are consistent with the respective protected area management plan. Protected area authorities, local communities and other key stakeholders must be consulted, and the conservation aims and effective management of the area supported by the intervention.

As far as possible, ADA will give preference to siting of interventions, particularly when physical infrastructure is involved, on lands where natural habitats have been converted already for other uses.
ADA requires that under no circumstances invasive alien species will be introduced into new environments. Other alien species, of which their invasive potential is not yet known, will not be intentionally introduced, unless being subject to a prior risk assessment in accordance with relevant regulatory frameworks if these exist. Generally, ADA will strive to support the use of native species,

[8] Cf. also section 3.2.

[9] Critical habitat is defined as areas with high biodiversity importance or value, including (i) habitat of significant importance to critically endangered or endangered species, as listed in the IUCN Red List of threatened species or equivalent national approaches, (ii) habitat of significant importance to endemic or restricted-range species, (iii) habitat supporting globally or nationally significant concentrations of migratory or congregatory species, (iv) highly threatened or unique ecosystems, or (v) ecological functions or characteristics that are needed to maintain viability of the biodiversity values described in (i) to (iv).

local crop varieties or breeds wherever feasible. ADA does not support any project activities that involve the introduction or promotion of genetically modified organisms (GMOs)[10].

Living natural resources must be managed in a sustainable manner, that enables people and communities to meet their livelihood requirements while also sustaining the potential for those resources to meet the needs of future generations. ADA strongly encourages the application of appropriate sector specific best management practices, certification against ecological and social standards and the promotion of animal welfare.

For interventions that involve the utilization of genetic resources, ADA will ensure that the collection of such resources is conducted in a sustainable manner and that benefits derived from their utilization are shared in a fair and equitable manner, consistent with the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing and the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources.

2.2. Climate Action and Disaster Risk Reduction

Introduction
Climate change and disaster risks pose a fundamental threat to sustainable development and the fight against poverty. They have the potential to block and even reverse human development through their impacts on key development sectors and activities, including agriculture and food production, ecosystems, water and other natural resources, and health.

ADA contributes towards driving the paradigm shift to net-zero, risk informed and climate resilient development pathways by supporting its partner countries in achieving their plans, goals and strategies regarding climate change adaptation and mitigation, disaster risk reduction (DRR), and to implement measures to reduce exposure and vulnerability and increase adaptive capacity and resilience. ADA mainstreams climate action into interventions through horizontal and vertical integration, supporting an enabling regulatory and policy framework that improves the capacities for climate and disaster responsive planning at all levels and provides incentives to the private sector to invest in net zero and climate-resilient technologies.

Objectives
This standard aims to:

- ensure that ADA interventions are sensitive to climate change risks in order to strengthen resilience and achieve sustainable development outcomes;
- reduce project-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and intensity;
- ensure that DRR management measures are addressed.

Requirements
ADA seeks the adoption of technically and financially feasible and cost-effective alternatives to reduce project-related greenhouse gas emissions and intensity. Alternative options could include alternative project locations, adoption of low-carbon energy sources (like hydropower, wind, or solar energy), cleaner production and resource efficiency measures or sustainable agriculture, forestry, or livestock management practices. ADA does not support interventions that are expected to or currently produce more than 20,000 tons of CO_2-equivalents annually and does not provide support to fossil fuels (neither upstream, midstream, or downstream).

[10] Cf. Annex 1 Exclusion List

As an integral part of the EGSIM appraisal process, ADA will screen planned interventions for climate and disaster related risks, vulnerabilities and impacts to project activities and outputs. ADA also recognizes the possibility that project activities could increase exposure to such risks. This includes the identification of the status and adequacy of relevant down-scaled information on climate impacts and data on regional and local climate and weather scenarios. If significant potential risks are identified, a climate vulnerability and capacity analyses will further assess the potential impacts and risks, exposure and vulnerability to climate change as well as the adaptive capacity and propose appropriate adaptation measures including the consideration of alternatives and risks of maladaptation. The analysis will further examine potential disaster related impacts and suggest suitable disaster risk reduction measures embracing a build back better approach to increase the resilience of communities.

2.3. Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention Management

Introduction
Increased industrial activity, urbanization, and intensification of agriculture often generate increased levels of pollution to air, water, and land, and consume limited resources in a manner that may threaten people and the environment at the local, regional, and global level. Currently the world population consumes more resources than the ecosystems can make available. The aim is to attain a decoupling of economic growth and environmental pollution[11].

This standard outlines a project-level approach to resource efficiency and pollution prevention and control. The reduction of greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change is addressed in the standard Climate Action.

Objectives
This standard aims to:

- foster resource efficiency and a circular economy and to contribute to sustainable production and consumption patterns;
- avoid or minimize adverse impacts on human health and the environment by avoiding or minimizing pollution from project activities;
- ensure safe handling, trade and disposal of chemicals;
- foster sustainable waste management and to reduce the losses from food waste;
- minimize and manage the risks and impacts associated with pesticide use.

Requirements
ADA requires the implementation of technically and financially feasible measures for improving the efficient consumption of energy, water, and raw materials, as well as other resources. Such measures will integrate the principles of cleaner production into product design and production processes to conserve raw materials, energy, and water, as well as other resources. Where benchmarking data is available, a comparison to establish the relative level of efficiency is encouraged.

ADA requires that interventions avoid the release of pollutants or, when avoidance is not feasible, minimize and control the concentration and mass flow of their release. This applies to the release of pollutants to air, water, and land due to routine, nonroutine, and accidental circumstances, and

[11] For the purposes of this Standard, the term "pollution" refers to both hazardous and non-hazardous pollutants in the solid, liquid, or gaseous phases, and includes other components such as pests, pathogens, thermal discharge to water, GHG emissions, nuisance odours, noise, vibration, radiation, electromagnetic energy, and the creation of potential visual impacts including light.

with the potential for local, regional, and transboundary impacts. ADA requires that potential health risks, including potential differentiated effects on men, women and children will be addressed.

ADA prohibits the use of chemicals and hazardous materials subject to international bans or phase-outs due to their high toxicity on living organisms, environmental persistence, potential for bioaccumulation, or potential for depletion of the ozone layer (details are provided in the exclusion list).[12] When the use of chemicals or hazardous materials is foreseen in a planned intervention, ADA will assess potential risks along the life cycle, from production, transportation, handling, storage, use to disposal and will request the use of less hazardous substitutes for such chemicals or materials.

ADA will take steps to avoid the generation of hazardous and non-hazardous waste in all activities it supports. When the generation of waste cannot be avoided, waste reduction measures will be incorporated, and the recovering and re-use of waste will be given priority over treatment and disposal.

If the generated waste is considered hazardous, reasonable alternatives for its environmentally sound disposal will be applied, while adhering to the limitations applicable to its transboundary movement. In interventions where considerable amounts of waste or hazardous waste will be generated, the inclusion of a waste management strategy or action plan is mandatory. ADA requires that all waste is handled in a way that is safe for human health and the environment and includes appropriate control of emissions and residues resulting from the handling and processing of the waste.

ADA promotes an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach, which entails the careful consideration of pest and environmental information along with all available pest control techniques, including cultural practices, biological, genetic and as a last resort chemical and synthetic means to prevent unacceptable levels of pest damage. When IPM includes the use of pesticides, pesticides that are low in human toxicity, known to be effective against the target species and have minimal effects on non-target species and the environment, will be selected. In order to minimize related health and environmental risks, extension services, information and capacity development regarding the safe handling, use and disposal of pesticides will be included. National and local institutions will be supported to be able to regulate and monitor the distribution and use of pesticides and to support the application of IPM and good agricultural practices such as organic and/or conservation agriculture.

ADA does not allow the use of pesticides that fall in WHO Recommended Classification of Pesticides by Hazard Class Ia (extremely hazardous) or Ib (highly hazardous). Pesticides that fall under WHO Hazard class II can only be provided if less hazardous alternatives are not available and it can be demonstrated that users adhere to the necessary precautionary measures.

2.4. Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

Introduction

Given the indispensability of gender equality for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world, ADA is dedicated to consider and change gender-based discriminatory social norms and practices and promote the equal participation of women and men in both political and public life at national and local level, especially in conflict affected areas.

This entails supporting equal access for women and men to education and resources such as land, income, and capital. Further key factors in achieving the goal of gender equality and empowerment of women and girls are the eradication of sexual and gender-based violence as well as the promotion of reproductive and sexual health and rights. The active involvement of men and boys is essential in all efforts to achieve sustainable and effective gender equality results.

[12] Cf. Annex 1 Exclusion List

Objectives
This standard aims to

- anticipate, avoid and mitigate negative impacts that may reinforce discriminatory gender roles and inequalities;
- assess and take into account the differences in the conditions, needs, access to resources and services, control of assets, participation and decision-making powers between women and men in their assigned gender roles within the project context;
- support interventions to have a positive impact on advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, reducing gender discrimination or inequalities, or meeting gender-specific needs.

Requirements
Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is recognised as a crosscutting issue in all interventions of ADA and is defined as focus area of engagement of the Austrian Development Cooperation. ADA will ensure that gender expertise is made available and consulted in project cycle management.

Any intervention supported or implemented by ADA requires a gender analysis. This will ensure that gender inequalities, discriminatory social norms, practices, and risks, including risks related to SEAH, are identified as part of the intervention context, and informs the results-based design and management of the intervention.

ADA requires all interventions to include a gender-sensitive description of the composition of the target group(s) in terms of sex disaggregation and promotes putting in place steering measures to ensure that both men and women equally benefit of the results of the interventions. The evaluation and monitoring of any interventions must assess progress of implementation and keep track of outcomes and impacts for all parts of the target group(s). This calls for gender-responsive results and indicators and sex-disaggregated data collection and analysis throughout the project cycle. The indicators of the current EU Gender Action Plan shall be adapted to the specific context and integrated in performance monitoring frameworks.

2.5. Community Health, Safety and Working Conditions

Introduction

ADA recognizes that project activities, equipment, and infrastructure can increase community exposure to risks and adverse impacts. Therefore, this standard focuses on the need to prevent or mitigate the risks and impacts to the health and safety of affected communities that can potentially arise from project-related activities.

A healthy and save work force is fundamental for sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction. Therefore, through this standard, ADA respects and promotes the rights of workers such as the right to decent work, fair treatment, non-discrimination, protection against SEAH, and equal opportunity. ADA will not fund interventions that use forced and child labour[13].

Objectives
This standard aims to:

[13] As defined in the ILO Minimum Age Convention C138, Art. 2 and 3, unless local legislation specifies a higher age, the completion of compulsory school attendance, but not less than 15 years, is regarded as the minimum age for working. If the type of employment or work by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out is likely to jeopardise the health, safety or morals of young persons, the minimum age for admission is not less than 18 years.

- anticipate, avoid and mitigate negative impacts on the safety and health of communities affected and ecosystem services, on which communities depend on;
- respect and strengthen workers' rights and promote fair treatment, non-discrimination and equal opportunity;
- provide workers throughout the entire supply chain with safe and healthy working conditions and decrease the risk of accidents, injuries, SEAH and disease.

Requirements

ADA will ensure that the risks and potential impacts concerning the safety of affected communities and the ecosystem services they rely on will be assessed. It will take all necessary steps to protect communities from hazards caused and/or exacerbated by project activities. Attention is paid to establishing preventive measures. In this respect, ADA will ensure that infrastructure will be designed and constructed by certified professionals and approved by the respective authorities; periodic safety inspections will be carried out. It will further ensure that interventions are gender-sensitive and consider how women's safety could be specifically at risk, with a special focus on SEAH. Additionally, possible safety risks for children will receive particular attention. Wherever feasible, the ADA will ensure that the concept of universal access is applied in the design of services and construction of facilities.

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ADA takes steps to ascertain that interventions avoid or minimize the potential for communities being exposed to diseases resulting from activities of the intervention, taking into consideration the differentiated exposure to and higher sensitivity of children as well as marginalized or vulnerable groups.

ADA respects and promotes the right to decent work and will take effort to ascertain compliance with national labour, occupational health and safety laws and with the principles and standards as in the International Labour Organization (ILO) fundamental conventions. It will ensure that harassment, intimidation and/or exploitation, especially regarding women, are prevented and a grievance mechanism for workers to raise workplace concerns are established. ADA will take effort to ascertain that labour rights and the protection of workers from occupational health and safety including SEAH, are complied with throughout the entire supply/value chain, where appropriate.

Occupational health and safety refer to protecting workers from accident, injury or illness associated with exposure to hazards encountered in the workplace. ADA will ensure that workers are provided with a safe and healthy working environment and that preventative and protective measures to guard workers from accident, injury, or disease due to project activities are undertaken. This also includes that workers are sufficiently trained on health and safety guidelines, and on SEAH regulations.

Where ADA interventions involve engagement of security personnel to protect facilities and personal property, security arrangements should be provided in a manner that does not violate human rights or jeopardize the community's safety and security. Therefore, potential risks posed by security arrangements must be assessed and those providing security appropriately vetted and trained.

2.6. Cultural Heritage

Introduction

According to UNECSO definition „cultural heritage is the legacy of physical artefacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations". Tangible cultural heritage includes buildings

and historic places, monuments, artefacts etc., which have archaeological, historical, cultural, artistic and religious value and are thus considered worthy for preservation. Tangible heritages encompass also natural features or tangible objects that embody cultural values, such as sacred groves, rocks, lakes, waterfalls etc. as well as intangible forms of culture that are proposed to be used for commercial purposes, such as cultural knowledge, innovations, and traditional practices of communities.

ADA recognises the importance of cultural heritage and seeks to ensure that cultural heritage is protected for current and future generations. ADA seeks to ensure inclusive participation, equal access to as well as benefits of cultural heritages for all local people, with special emphasis on the respective rights of women and vulnerable groups. ADA interventions must comply with the respective national respectively local cultural heritage regulations and/or protected area management plans.

Objectives
This standard aims to:

- protect and manage cultural heritage;
- conserve cultural heritage and avoid its transformation, damage or removal;
- promote equitable access to cultural heritage for the local population and sharing of benefits from the use of cultural heritage.

Requirements
ADA will avoid interventions that may have adverse impacts on or limit access to cultural heritages, respectively results in commercial exploitation of cultural knowledge, innovations, or traditional practices. ADA will not finance interventions resulting in the removal or damage of cultural heritage.[14]
ADA will avoid significant adverse impacts to cultural heritage through alternative design and location of the intervention. Where potential negative impacts are unavoidable, appropriate mitigation measures will be identified and integrated into the assessment process and ensuing risk management.

Any assessment and consequent intervention measure must ensure involvement of affected communities in decision-making processes. Affected individuals and communities will be informed about their rights, the scope and nature of the proposed development and its potential consequences. In terms of commercialisation of cultural knowledge, innovations and traditional practices of communities, the intervention must ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits, consistent with the affected communities' customs and traditions.

2.7. Displacement and Resettlement

Introduction
Access to natural resources, especially land and water, is crucial for securing livelihoods of local populations, food security at local and national level and maintaining human rights. Activities which involve physical and economic displacement – through land acquisition or restrictions on land use or access to resources – may result in severe economic, social, and environmental risks. Potential negative impacts may be loss of assets or access to productive resources, loss of income sources and other means of livelihoods, food insecurity, homelessness, increased risk of GBV, weakening of cultural identity and the potential for mutual help.

[14] Cf. Annex 1 Exclusion List

ADA respects and promotes the protection of all tenure rights, including informal and customary rights as well as common property. When ADA implements projects supporting land rights or measures addressing access to land, a detailed analysis of the traditional and current situation in terms of different values related to land, diverse interests in the use of land as well as potential conflicts in land utilisation must be foreseen. ADA will apply a broad-based participatory approach in policy making as well as in planning, implementation and monitoring of land programmes; ensure wide-spread dissemination of information on the scope, content and benefits of the intervention, emphasize equal access to and use of land and thus take the rights of women, minorities, and indigenous peoples into account.

Objectives

This standard aims to:

- respect the prohibition on forced evictions;
- avoid adverse social and economic impacts from land or resource acquisition respectively restrictions on land or resource use;
- minimize adverse social and economic impacts, e.g. through compensation, if avoidance is not possible;
- enhance or at least restore the livelihoods of all displaced persons, improve the living standards of poor and vulnerable population groups through improving and restoring their productive assets, access to services and security of tenure;
- ensure that resettlement measures are planned with meaningful consultation and informed participation of affected population groups;
- ensure that the risk of an increase of GBV is considered and mitigated.

Requirements

ADA will thus not fund any intervention supporting large-scale acquisition of land or measures leading to forced eviction of people (individuals, households, or communities) from land or common property resources.[15] Moreover, ADA will seek to avoid physical or economic displacement in its interventions.

In exceptional cases, when involuntary resettlements cannot be avoided, mitigation measures respectively targeted assistance for displaced people must be foreseen.[16]

Interventions that may result in physical or economic displacement will be classified as high risks and will be subject to an environmental, gender and social impact assessment (EGSIA). In the framework of this assessment, the potential impacts of the foreseen measures will be analysed, and avoidance measures identified. The assessment will include a survey of potentially affected individuals, households, and communities as well as an analysis of their relationship and interests to land and natural resources, their rights, and potential conflicts in land use, as well as the potential of an increased risk of GBV.

In the framework of the EGSIA and the subsequent intervention, ADA will seek to ensure:

- free, effective, meaningful and informed participation of all affected individuals and groups in decision-making processes;
- based on free, prior and informed consent;
- fair, prompt and adequate compensation respectively other benefit-sharing mechanism;
- non-discriminatory, effective, accessible, affordable, timely and transparent processes; as well as

[15] Cf. Annex 1 Exclusion List

[16] ADA adheres to the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (http://www.fao.org/cfs/home/activities/vggt/en/).

- a grievance and dispute mechanism, including, if appropriate, a community-based grievance mechanism regarding SEAH.

In cases, where physical or economic displacement is unavoidable, a resettlement or livelihood action plan (RAP or LAP) will be developed in full consultation with and agreement of the affected individuals and groups as well as in accordance with international best practices. Project stakeholders and affected individuals and groups will be informed about their rights, consulted throughout the planning and implementation process, and provided with technically and economically feasible alternatives and assistance. The plan will identify needs and priorities of potential affected individuals, households, and communities and how these could be addressed as well as mitigation measures, ensure fair and just compensation prior to displacement amongst others. These plans will aim to improve and at least restore the living conditions of all affected people. ADA will give special attention to the specific problems of poor and vulnerable population groups in this respect, and will support efforts to restore their productive assets, access to services and basic infrastructure as well as security of tenure. The resettlement or livelihood action plans will be monitored throughout the implementation of the intervention and will be subject of the evaluation.

2.8. Indigenous Peoples

Introduction

Indigenous Peoples[17] (IP) are entitled to enjoy and exercise their human rights without discrimination, but usually among the most marginalized and vulnerable. IP are often tied to their lands and related natural resources and traditional livelihoods, and therefore also often strongly affected by adverse impacts associated with development interventions.

This standard ensures that the rights of are necessary are protected and throughout the entire project cycle and their voices are respected in decisions that affect their lives. This standard is closely linked to the standards on Cultural Heritage and on Resettlement.

Objectives

This standard aims to:

- foster full respect for Indigenous Peoples' human rights and respect for the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
- fully respect and preserve the rights, lands, natural resources, territories, livelihoods, knowledge, practices, social fabric, traditions, governance systems of IP;
- assure that the principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) is applied and full and active participation, control and management by IP over developments affecting them is ensured;
- augment benefits of development process for IP and avoid or mitigate adverse impacts on communities of IP.

[17] The term indigenous peoples is used in a generic sense to refer exclusively to a distinct social and cultural group possessing the following characteristics in varying degrees: (a) self-identification as members of a distinct indigenous social and cultural group and recognition of this identity by others; and (b) collective attachment to geographically distinct habitats, ancestral territories, or areas of seasonal use or occupation, as well as to the natural resources in these areas; and (c) customary cultural, economic, social, or political institutions that are distinct or separate from those of the mainstream society or culture; and (d) a distinct language or dialect, often different from the official language or languages of the country or region in which they reside. ADA recognizes that these groups may be named differently in different countries, such as indigenous ethnic minorities, aboriginals, hill tribes, vulnerable and marginalized groups, tribal groups, pastoralists etc.

Requirements
ADA ensures that a meaningful, effective, and informed participation of Indigenous Peoples on all matters is guaranteed. Negative impacts will be avoided; if not possible then minimized, and restoration or compensation for the impact in a culturally appropriate manner foreseen.

For all development interventions that may impact the rights, lands, resources, and territories of Indigenous Peoples a prior review and/or assessment of potential impacts and benefits must be conducted. High risk projects will be subject to an EGSIA.

Following this assessment, an Indigenous People's Plan will be developed in full consultations with the affected communities. The plan guarantees that adverse effects are avoided, minimized, mitigated, or compensated for. Avoidance is the main priority.

ADA will ensure that before adopting and commencing development interventions the consent by the IP is guaranteed. ADA will safeguard that a process of FPIC is obeyed to, and complete information provided to the Indigenous Communities in such a timely manner that they can carry out internal deliberations. In all cases, consent must be obtained prior to undertaking any activities.
Indigenous Peoples are entitled to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess due to traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those that they have otherwise acquired.[18] ADA ensures that interventions will not lead to forced relocation of Indigenous Peoples and will support activities that aim to delimit, demarcate and title such lands, resources and territories respecting customs, traditions and land tenure systems of indigenous peoples concerned.

Particular attention will be given to the rights of women and girls as well as of vulnerable and marginalized IP, children, or persons with disabilities to ensure that they can equally participate in decision making concerning the intervention as well as benefit from its results.

3. Standards Delivery Process

ADA is committed to adhere to the overarching policies, principles, and standards in the sections above; and adherence to these is crucial for any organization to receive funding from ADA. They must accordingly be taken into account from the start of an intervention, i.e., during the planning and design stage. This helps to ensure that potential environmental, gender and social risks, impacts and opportunities of supported activities are systematically identified and assessed in an integrated manner.
To deliver on the standards, ADA applies differentiated EGS assessment procedures proportionate to the level of risks, size, and type of interventions.

3.1. Exempted from EGSIM

Certain modalities and types of interventions are completely **exempted from EGSIM**. These are the following:

- Small project funds of ADA Coordination Offices
- Technical assistance[19]
- Consultancy services

[18] Article 26(1) of the UNDRIP

[19] OECD/DAC cooperation modalities D01 and D02 or financing of interventions of equivalent nature

- Humanitarian aid / emergency response[20]
- Promotion of development awareness[21]
- EU co-financing projects submitted by Austrian Non-Governmental-Organisations
- Third-party funds administered by ADA with no or limited operational implementation responsibility
- Projects with no or very marginal development country level activities only[22]

3.2. Applicable Processes per Size, Modality and Type

3.2.1. Overview

The following table provides a synopsis of the applicable EGS assessment process per size, modality and type of intervention. Detailed information on the procedures and steps involved are presented in the subsequent sections.

EGS assessment process	Type of Financing concerned
Interventions below € 1.000.000 - No screening and EGS risk categorisation. Quality of interventions regarding adequate consideration of EGS is assured in the design and review process - Monitoring through review of project progress reports and project visits	- Applicable for all interventions of / below the threshold of €1,000,000 Projects funded under Country and Regional Strategies / Programmes - Co-funded projects of Austrian civil society organisations (CSO) - Business Partnerships with private sector entities (PE) - Third-party funded projects implemented by ADA
Interventions above € 1,000,000: **(Unless prior EGS risk categorisation and assessment equivalent to ADA EGSIM system has been undertaken and documentation / proof thereof is available)** 1. Screening and risk-categorisation at the earliest stage of the intervention design 2. Depending on risk categorisation: Interventions with low risks - EGS appraisal by T&Q based on the documentation of the intervention and EGS Checklist - Monitoring of recommendations in the appraisal report, if applicable, through review of project progress reports and project visits	- Applicable for all interventions above the threshold of € 1,000,000 - Projects funded under Country and Regional Strategies / Programmes - Co-funded projects and framework programmes of Austrian CSOs - Business Partnerships with PEs - Third-party funded projects implemented by ADA

[20] Includes funding under the Austrian Emergency Fund and projects with OECD/DAC purpose codes 520, 720 and 730
[21] OECD/DAC cooperation modality H01, purpose code 99820
[22] E.g. support to conferences, development policy research, etc.

<u>Interventions with moderate-low risks</u> - EGS appraisal by T&Q based on the documentation of the intervention and EGS Checklist - As specified in the EGS appraisal report, limited assessment of risks and impacts, e.g., as part of baseline or other studies, during inception phase / project onset - Monitoring of recommendations and risk mitigation measures through review of project progress reports and project visits - <u>Interventions with moderate risks</u> - Mandatory (limited) EGSIA, confined to a desk study as appropriate, plus integrated or separate EGSMP depending on the specific context - EGS appraisal report by T&Q (highlighting essential findings of EGSIA and/or recommendations for monitoring and reporting) - Monitoring of implementation of risk mitigation measures through review of project progress reports and progress reports on EGSMP implementation; special monitoring missions by T&Q <u>Interventions with high risks</u> - Mandatory (comprehensive) EGSIA plus separate EGSMP - EGS appraisal report by T&Q (highlighting essential findings of EGSIA and/or recommendations for monitoring and reporting) - Monitoring of implementation of risk mitigation measures through review of EGSMP implementation reports; special monitoring missions by T&Q; external independent EGSMP implementation reviews	
Strategic Partnerships and Accreditation Applications for Humanitarian Aid: - Assessment of the EGS management systems of the organization based on pertinent documentation provided and Strategic Appraisal Form	Applicable for: - Strategic partnerships with PEs - Strategic partnerships and framework programmes with Austrian CSOs - Accreditation applications of Austrian CSOs for humanitarian and emergency aid

- Strategic appraisal by T&Q - Monitoring implementation of recommendation and performance of organization in the framework of annual appraisal meetings	
Sector Finance and Multi-Donor-Programmes: - EGS assessment carried out jointly with other co-financing partners; or alignment to existing assessments conducted by a partner with equivalent EGSIM system - Joint monitoring of risk mitigation measures/EGSMPs	Applicable for: - Sector financing/Sector Budget Support - Contributions to pooled / joint funding arrangements - Contributions to multi-donor initiatives, trust funds

3.2.2. Interventions below € 1,000,000

For interventions of or below the threshold of € 1,000,000 compliance with the EGSIM principles and standards are assessed as part of the general quality assurance process as per ADA guidelines. The documents describing the intervention such as the project document, theory of change, logical framework, budget and time plan, and including, if applicable, the filled-in ADA Environmental, Gender and Social Standards (EGS) Checklist[23], are reviewed and the project implementer[24] is requested to integrate any relevant environmental, gender or social considerations resulting from the review.

3.2.3. Interventions above € 1,000,000

Interventions of a total volume[25] above a threshold of € 1,000,000 are subject to a two-stage process.

Stage 1
The first stage includes the in-depth screening and categorisation of potential environmental, gender and social risks, including the risk of SEAH, by the EGSIM experts of ADA's Themes and Quality Unit (T&Q). Four risk categories of projects are differentiated:

- low
- moderate-low
- moderate
- and high[26]

ADA will carry out the screening and categorisation of risks at the earliest stage of intervention design when sufficient information is available for this purpose. This entails the screening of a Grant

[23] The EGS Checklist is published for download on ADA's website (https://www.entwicklung.at/en/media-centre/downloads)
[24] Project implementer refers to the organization or entity of primary responsibility for planning and implementation. This may be the organization applying for funding, but also ADA's own units developing, e.g., third-party funded projects.
[25] I.e., the total cost of a project, including co-funding of the project partner and third parties.
[26] These risk levels are equivalent to the internationally widely used categorization of risk levels in C (low/moderate-low), B (moderate) and A (high).

Application[27] or equivalent if the submission of such document is required as a first step in the application procedure. In case the application procedure directly starts with the submission of the full project proposal, e.g., in responding to a Call for Proposals (CfP), the screening will be based on the full proposal.

The Grant Application or full proposal are supplemented, as applicable, by the EGS Checklist. Furthermore, CfP or tender documents may outline specific environmental, gender and social impact management requirements, e.g., the inclusion of a more profound analysis of the potential risks and negative impacts, and the identification of mitigation measures and safeguards in, or annexed to the submitted proposal. The EGS Checklist and the potentially specific guidance in CfP or tender documents provide guidance for ADA and project implementers to design interventions according to ADA standards.

Stage 2
The second stage depends on the risk categorisation and can contain:

- the requirement of an externally commissioned, independent Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Assessment (EGSIA)[28] and an Environmental, Gender and Social Management Plan (EGSMP). This applies to high-risk interventions.
- a limited EGSIA in the case of interventions of moderate potential risks. The EGSIA will vary in scope and depth depending on the magnitude of the potential impacts associated with the interventions, the specific location and design. It may be confined to a desk analysis or conducted as an externally commissioned study. Similar to high-risk interventions mitigation measures and safeguards are presented in an EGSMP.
- a succinct, focused analysis of specific aspects of potential EGS effects, e.g., integrated in baseline studies, value chain analysis or other assessments during the inception phase/onset of the project. This is the case if moderate-low risks have been identified. In line with the outcome of the analysis, the implementation planning, including workplans and budgets, may need to be revised to accommodate mitigation measures and safeguards; or
- a simple EGS appraisal confined to recommendations to strengthen the environmental, gender and social sustainability in the case of those interventions that fall into the low-risk category. The appraisal is based on the documentation of the intervention including the EGS Checklist, findings are summarised in a report.

To note:

The EGS appraisal always marks the conclusion of an EGSIM assessment process, also for interventions of higher than low risk categories. The EGS appraisal certifies the final valuation of the assessed intervention and compliance with ADA's environmental, gender and social standards. Apart from recommendations to promote the environmental, gender or social sustainability of interventions that qualify as low risk, the appraisal may further contain essential information and highlight specifically important results of EGSIAs if any have been carried out or provide recommendations for monitoring and reporting. Depending on the content and to whom recommendations are addressed, the appraisal document becomes an integral part of the financing agreement and plays a key role in ADA's internal EGSIM documentation as well as for EGSIM related monitoring, evaluation, and learning.

To avoid the duplication of efforts and unnecessary transaction costs as much as possible ADA accepts the risk categorisation, EGSIAs or EGSMPs that others have already undertaken according to

[27] A format for Grant Applications is published on ADA's website (https://www.entwicklung.at/en/media-centre/downloads#c2052)
[28] Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Assessment or EGSIA is used in a generic sense for assessments both on a strategic or programme level (Strategic Impact Assessments) and project level. Whether a strategic assessment applies depends on the context and scope of the respective intervention.

their respective standards and procedures, including by the project implementer himself/herself, if these are equivalent to ADA's EGSIM and cover the interventions that ADA provides funding for, and if documents of evidence of the procedure is made available to ADA. This applies specifically for interventions of GCF-accredited entities, or of bilateral donors and multi-lateral organizations that have equivalent EGS management systems that ADA supports financially or delegates the implementation of funding to.

The table below contains a detailed definition of the risk categories and an overview of the related follow-up steps.

RISK LEVEL	RISK CLASSIFICATION	FOLLOW-UP STEPS
LOW RISKS	- The intervention has no or minimal potential negative environmental, gender or social impacts. - Risks are known and readily available good practices can be used to address them.	T&Q conducts appraisal to further explore and address environmental, gender and social risks if necessary. Recommended mitigation and monitoring action, if any, as presented in the EGS appraisal report should be considered in the further planning and implementation of the intervention.
MODERATE-LOW RISKS	- The intervention has potential modest adverse environmental, gender or social risks and impacts. - Risks are limited in scale and duration, and likely to occur only for specific activities. Recognised practices to address them are available.	Will require a limited, concise analysis of environmental, gender and social risks and impacts for specific project activities, during the project inception phase/onset. Recommended mitigation and monitoring action to be accounted for in implementation planning.
MODERATE RISKS	- The intervention has potential adverse environmental, gender or social risks and impacts. - Risks are limited in scale and duration, cannot all be easily identified with a reasonable degree of certainty, and cannot all be easily addressed through application of recognised practices, mitigation measures and stakeholder engagement.	Will require a separate limited EGSIA to identify possible avoidance, minimization or mitigation measures. May be confined to a desk analysis or conducted by ways of an externally commissioned EGSIA with an integrated or separately drawn up EGSMP.
HIGH RISKS	- The intervention has potential significant, irreversible and/or cumulative negative	A comprehensive EGSIA is mandatory. Based on the EGSIA a EGSMP must be developed.

	environmental, gender or social risks and impacts. - Potential adverse impacts are unprecedented in the project area. - High risk activities may involve significant impacts on physical, biological, socioeconomic, or cultural resources.	

3.2.4 Strategic Partnerships and Accreditation Applications for Humanitarian Aid

For Austrian PEs and CSOs ADA may offer the possibility to cooperate under a strategic partnership agreement or, for CSOs only, the accreditation for the implementation of Austrian humanitarian and emergency aid funding. Whether or not a PE/CSO qualifies for a strategic partnership/accreditation depends, among others, on their performance track record and proven capacities regarding project implementation and accountability as well as the PE/CSO's EGSIM system. The respective PE/CSO must demonstrate that it has institutional-level safeguards in place which ensures that environmental, gender and social standards will be adhered to, including SEAH prevention and response. It must submit relevant documentation including a Strategic Appraisal Form[29] as well as a description of its standards, principles, and quality criteria at an early stage in the application process. ADA will judge whether the PE/CSO's institutional-level safeguards meet ADA's EGSIM standards and provides technical advice if desired.

3.2.5 Sector Finance and Multi-Donor-Programmes

In the case ADA provides sector support, contributes to pooled or joint funding arrangements, or (co-)finances larger multi-donor initiatives or components thereof, EGS assessment and risk management in coordination with other funding partners or the national bodies mandated to perform EGS assessments in a partner country are pursued. If the risk categorisation, EGSIA or EGSMPs, as applicable, follow procedures of partners or have already been undertaken by partners of such interventions according to standards that are equivalent to ADA's EGSIM, ADA will rely on those.

3.3. Assessment and Management of Environmental, Gender and Social Risks and Impacts

The assessment and management of environmental, gender and social risks and impacts by ADA is based on two pillars: the precautionary approach and the application of a mitigation hierarchy.

The precautionary approach refers to all project-level standards. It implies that preventive measures must be foreseen despite of lacking certainty of environmental, gender or social impacts, particularly if serious or irreversible damage cannot be excluded. For instance, this is specifically important for interventions that involve land use changes or changes in land ownership or user rights. They can have significant adverse effects on biodiversity and local livelihoods because of often uncertain, potentially negative trade-offs. If land redistribution occurs, women may be extremely vulnerable to GBV, particularly in countries where the legal system precludes women from holding land titles.

[29] The Strategic Appraisal Form is available on ADA's website (https://www.entwicklung.at/mediathek/downloads#c2038)

The identification, analysis and management of risks considers a mitigation hierarchy as follows:

1. anticipate and avoid adverse risks and impacts;
2. where avoidance is not possible, minimize or reduce adverse risks and impacts;
3. mitigate where adverse risks and impacts remain, apply offset and compensation measures where technically and financially feasible.

While offsetting and compensation are last resort options to respond to the standards defined in sections 2.2. to 2.7., ADA explicitly excludes offsetting mechanisms as being part of its mitigation hierarchy related to ecosystem and biodiversity risks and impacts (section 2.1.)
As described in section 3.1. an EGSIA is mandatory for projects with moderate or high risks. The EGSIA will assess, in an integrated manner, all relevant direct, indirect, cumulative, and induced[30] environmental, gender, and social risks and impacts throughout the project life cycle. The EGSIA must also include a climate risk as well as a SEAH risk analysis.

ADA will ensure that the assessment adequately comprises or reflects the following measures:[31]

- collection of relevant socio-economic, institutional and ecological baseline data for the characterization and identification of risks and impacts as well as mitigation measures;
- consideration of all relevant issues related to the project, including the country`s development policy framework, national laws and regulations, institutional capabilities related to environment, gender and social issues, environmental, gender and social studies, national environmental, gender and human rights action plans, obligations of the country to relevant international treaties and agreements;
- evaluation of the potential environmental, gender and social risks and impacts of the project, addressing all issues identified in the framework of overarching policies and principles (section 1.2.) as well as project-level standards (section 2). This includes the consideration of the risk the intervention might have related to SEAH and identification and implementation of prevention and mitigation measures to address those risks;
- examination of alternatives, identification of possibilities for improving project location, planning, design and implementation and to seek opportunities to enhance positive impacts;
- examination whether particular individuals or groups may be differentially or disproportionally affected by the potential adverse impacts of the project because of their disadvantaged or marginalized status (due to race, ethnicity, gender, age, language, disability, sexual orientation, national or social or geographical origin, property etc.) and recommendation of targeted and differentiated measures to ensure that they will not be affected disproportionally by adverse impacts;
- assessment of the feasibility of mitigating adverse risks and impacts, required investments and recurrent costs, their suitability under local conditions, and the institutional, training and monitoring requirements associated with them.

Based on the EGSIA, an EGSMP, taking SEAH risks into consideration as well, will be developed that includes the proposed measures for mitigation, monitoring, institutional capacity development and required training, an implementation schedule, and cost estimates. The cost estimation should be based on a cost-benefit analysis, which also lists the recommended mitigation measures in terms of

[30] Direct impacts occur contemporaneously in the project location and related facilities. Indirect impacts are caused by the project but later or farther away from the project site; cumulative impacts on areas and resources that result from the project in addition to impacts from other past, present or foreseen developments; induced impacts on areas and communities from unplanned but predictable developments or activities induced by the project, which might occur later or at a different location.
[31] While comprehensive EGSIAs of high-risk projects should comprise the full scope of listed measures, EGSIAs of moderate-risk interventions may focus on a limited selection of elements only.

priority, including accompanying explanations of economic, social, and ecological consequences, if measures could not be implemented.

An EGSIA must be undertaken as early as possible, and ADA will not implement any project activities that may cause adverse impacts until completion of the EGSIA.

4. Stakeholder Engagement and Response Mechanism

As outlined in Section 1, ADA endeavours to ensure meaningful, effective, and informed participation of all concerned stakeholders in the formulation and implementation, monitoring and evaluation of interventions. This also involves early, iterative, and meaningful engagement and informed participation in relation to EGSIAs and EGSMPs. Stakeholder analyses and participatory processes will be conducted in a gender-responsive, non-discriminatory and inclusive manner. Planning and decision-making will be tailored to language preferences and specific requirements of participants (e.g., for people with disabilities), as much as possible. ADA will ensure that accessible, understandable, and adequate information will be shared in due time.

ADA seeks to empower all stakeholders, particularly marginalized and vulnerable groups, to articulate their specific interests and priorities and to ensure their incorporation in the design of the intervention, mitigation measures, sharing of benefits etc. Thus, equal participation of women as well as marginalized and vulnerable population groups will be especially emphasized, including identification of appropriate measures to reduce existing social, economic, or cultural barriers hampering participation and engagement. Identification of stakeholders' priorities, specific interests and demands must be an integral part in planning and decision-making processes.

To ensure effective participation and engagement throughout the processes, ADA will seek to strengthen capacities of the different stakeholders, depending on the specific requirements and demands. Such capacity development could be necessary for the follow-up of EGSMPs for example, where stakeholders need trainings or coaching on environmental, gender or social recommendations.
ADA understands stakeholder engagement as an on-going process that should build and maintain a constructive relationship with all stakeholders, with the purpose of avoiding or mitigating any potential risk in a timely manner. The scale and frequency of stakeholder engagement depends on the specific requirements of the respective intervention, it's scope and complexity, the magnitudes of potential risks and adverse impacts, as well as concerns raised by affected communities.

5. Disclosure and Grievance Mechanism

As defined in ADA's Public Disclosure Policy, all EGSIAs and EGSMPs are publicly accessible on the ADA website in English and in the official local language as applicable prior to project approval. ADA further publicly discloses any EGSIA and EGSMP implementation progress and monitoring reports according to the respective reporting schedules as well as final reports and evaluations upon completion of the project. In the spirit of transparency, EGS risks and impacts related assessments for moderate-low risk projects, or the studies that integrate such assessments respectively, are also published.

To ensure adequate time for public consultation and offer the opportunity to state potential grievances EGSIAs and EGSMPs for projects with moderate and high risks are published as follows:

Project Risk Classification	Number of days publicly accessible prior to approval
High Risk	120 days
Moderate Risk	30 days

In addition to the publication on ADA's website, EGSIAs and EGSMPs are made available in a timely manner and in an accessible place[32] to affected communities and other stakeholders where the project is located. If the project is implemented by a third party, the third party is tasked by agreement to ensure the disclosure of the documents as outlined above in line with ADA's policy.

For grievances and complaints, concerned stakeholders or affected individuals, communities, groups, and organizations should notify in writing the ADA by e-mail to egsim@ada.gv.at or by letter to Zelinkagasse 2, 1010 Vienna, Austria, Att. Head of Unit Themes & Quality. Alternatively, the ADA Coordination Office may also be contacted by e-mail or letter[33].

The ADA grievances and complaints mechanism is performed by the Head of Unit Themes & Quality at ADA Head Office as the responsible officer and shall give individuals, communities, groups, and organisations (as well as their representatives) the opportunity to address and resolve issues and concerns related to adverse impacts of interventions funded by or implemented by the ADA, irrespective whether these adverse impacts have already materialised or not.

Grievances and complaints may refer, but are not limited to the following issues:

- adverse environmental, social, gender or governance impacts;
- actual or potential conflict of interest situations;
- violation of human rights, including SEAH[34];
- non-compliance with applicable (local or international) laws, rules, regulations and standards.

Grievances and complaints can be submitted in writing in any language (but preferably in English language) and should include the following information:

- description of the adverse impact(s) that have already occurred or may occur, including the location(s);
- title of the project and to which the adverse impact is related to;
- ideally, the contact details (name, address, telephone number and e-mail) of the person submitting the complaint[35];
- copies of additional information relevant for the complaint (if available);
- if applicable, name of ADA employee(s) already contacted in the past regarding the same issue(s).

All submissions will be treated confidentially, and personal data will be treated in accordance with the Austrian data protection act.

[32] The documentation will be accessible in print at ADA coordination or project offices and additionally, if feasible and deemed useful, at publicly accessible places like parish or municipal administrations.

[33] For contact details see https://www.entwicklung.at/en/ada/ada-team#c2219

[34] For SEAH related complaints additional entry points are available for reporting, among others the Head of Unit Human Resources and Organisational Management at ADA Head Office or the SEAH Safeguarding focal point at ADA Coordination Offices in partner countries. Furthermore, project-specific, accessible (community-based) and gender-responsive grievance mechanisms can be used if these have been set up in line with the SEAH risks, safeguards and mitigation measures identified.

[35] Grievances and complaints can also be submitted anonymously. In such case, however, ADA has not the possibility to ask for clarification or additional information.

After ADA has received a grievance or complaint, it will acknowledge the receipt without delay, at the latest within seven working days in writing. Grievances and complaints submitted in another language than English may require additional time for translation. ADA will then assess whether the grievance or complaint is concrete, relevant, directly or indirectly related to an intervention supported or implemented by ADA and therefore admissible. Only admissible grievances and complaints will be further reviewed. If contact details were submitted, ADA will inform within 1 month of acknowledgement of receipt whether a complaint will be further assessed or not.
Admissible grievances and complaints will be investigated by the responsible officer case-by-case, if necessary, supported by internal ADA staff or external advisors. This may include direct contacts with the individuals, communities, groups, and organisations, and, where necessary, with central, regional, or local government representatives or other relevant stakeholders. If needed, ADA will request further information from the person that submitted the grievance and complaint. If the grievance and complaint is related to a project funded by a third party, ADA will cooperate and consult with the grievance and redress mechanism of that third party as necessary[36]. At the end of the review phase, ADA will prepare an internal and confidential report, including key findings and recommendations for suitable non-judicial corrective action and response measure. All measures are followed-up in a systematic way.

Suspected cases of serious legal violations and criminal offences such as, for example, corruption, misuse of funds, unlawful acts in the context of grants and services or cases of SEAH can directly be reported to the ADA whistleblowing system, see https://www.entwicklung.at/en/ada/integrity for further information.

To note
Specific reporting and investigation procedures apply to alleged or actual cases of SEAH. These are outlined in ADA's Safeguarding Policy for the Prevention of SEAH and related procedural guidelines. A survivor-centred approach is pursued, which means that the needs and wishes of SEAH survivors' guide ADA's response, that survivors are treated with dignity and respect, and their rights to privacy and support are prioritized.

6. Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

ADA will monitor and evaluate the performance of the EGSIM-System in coherence with the standards set in ADA's M&E system. This includes, that monitoring, reporting and evaluation of a given intervention should contain disaggregated data and information of potential beneficiary and affected population groups - in terms of sex, age, ethnicity, place of residence, disability status etc.

If ADA is providing funding to project implementers, M&E of the interventions, including adherence to the obligations and recommendations derived from an EGSIM appraisal process becomes a shared responsibility. The role and level of responsibilities of ADA and the project implementer is different from each other, however. The extent of EGS M&E related activities is further aligned to the potential risks and adverse impacts of an intervention.

The project implementers provide supervision and everyday monitoring of the implementation of the intervention and the environmental, gender and social risk mitigation measures. They are requested to engage with all relevant stakeholders to gather and validate necessary information, track and adapt measures if necessary, and must submit a report on project progress on contractually

[36] E.g., the Independent Grievance and Redress Mechanism of the GCF if ADA is, as Accredited Entity, implementing or co-financing a GCF funded project.

agreed intervals[37]. The reporting templates include a specific section where information concerning compliance with the risk mitigation measures identified in the EGS appraisal reports should be provided.

ADA supports the implementation of the obligations and recommendations derived from the EGS appraisal by reviewing the project progress reports and through field-visits. ADA staff conducting field visits is obliged to include an assessment of the implementation progress of the EGS risk mitigation measures in their back-to-office-reports. In addition, the ADA Coordination Offices must submit semi-annual reports on country programme implementation to ADA Head Office that must contain an overview of the status of risk mitigation measures from the EGS appraisals for each project in the country portfolio.

The above description of the process and roles particularly applies to the monitoring of projects of low or moderate-low risk categories.

In case of projects with moderate or high risks, reporting and monitoring is further based on the EGSMP, as applicable, and findings from monitoring missions undertaken by T&Q and independent from project management. As a rule, external specialised experts will additionally be commissioned to track and appraise EGSMP implementation progress, especially in the case of high-risk projects. Monitoring EGSMP implementation must consider the full scope of the EGSMP including planned SEAH prevention and response measures and should always include an assessment of participatory stakeholder consultation levels and follow-up of response measures to potential grievances of affected persons or local communities. ADA will further ensure that periodic reports are provided to the affected communities that describe progress of the implementation of the EGSMP; any changes or additions to the mitigation measures will be communicated to affected communities.

If ADA is implementing third-party funded projects, ADA is fully in charge of M&E, i.e., the tasks and obligations described above pertaining to the project implementers receiving funding from ADA need to be performed and adhered to by the management of the third-party funded project.

A project will not be considered complete until the EGSMP has been accomplished and/or the respective recommendations and obligations elaborated in the EGS appraisal have satisfactorily been addressed.
The following metrics for monitoring will be considered:

- general status of progress of implementation (completed, on track, ahead of schedule, slightly delayed, delayed);
- degree of progress of implementation of recommended actions or obligations, overall and individual;
- details of incidents or obstacles that affected the implementation of recommended action or obligation;
- grievances, status of response and corrective measures respectively;
- suggested adjustments to the measures planned and identified opportunities for further improvement concerning environmental, gender and social standards and safeguards.

All interventions implemented by ADA with third-party funding from the EU or the GCF are evaluated. ADA further aims to evaluate 30 to 50 percent of its funded projects at end-term, especially

[37] As a rule, funding recipients are required to report semi-annually on activities and implementation progress according to ADA's standard terms and conditions for grant agreements.

those of larger size and strategic relevance where strong interests for learning prevail.[38] The evaluations are based on specific criteria, guided by strategic decision-making, and generally follow the internationally recognised OECD DAC principles.

In case of projects with low and moderate-low risks an evaluation should – whenever feasible and considering the general scope and objectives of the evaluation – address compliance with the recommendations and obligations elaborated in the EGS appraisals.

For projects with moderate and high risks an examination of the mitigation measures identified and implemented in the framework of the EGSIA and EGSMP must be a standard element of any evaluation[39]. Depending on the context, attention will further be given to the organisational safeguards and processes of the project implementers: are they commensurate and have they been applied or not?

7. Evaluation of the EGSIM

Evaluations are a valuable instrument for learning and improving processes and systems at ADA, including the standards delivery system, as well as the partner's processes and systems.

The performance of EGSIM will therefore be subject to annual internal reviews, providing a synoptic analysis of environmental, gender and social risks and impact management across funding modalities, budget-lines, and sectors. The reviews help to identify potential institutional and programmatic weaknesses and immediate remedial action. Every five to seven years an external strategic evaluation of the EGSIM system will be conducted, focusing on the efficiency, appropriateness and effectiveness of the process, structure, and impact of the EGSIM. Like for all strategic evaluations the final reports will be published.

[38] See: Guidelines for programme and project evaluations (https://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Evaluierung/Evaluierungs_Leitfaeden/Guidelines_for_Programme_and_Project_Evaluations_ADA_2020.pdf)

[39] In case a project with moderate or high risks is not subject to an evaluation per se, a separate evaluation of the EGSMP shall be envisaged.

Annexes:

Annex 1 Exclusion list

The ADA Exclusion List[40] defines the types of interventions that ADA does not implement or finance. This pertains to any intervention that includes an activity, production, use, distribution, business, or trade involving the following:

1. Forced labour[41] or child labour[42];
2. Pornography and/or prostitution;
3. Racist, sexist and/or anti-democratic media;
4. Production, trade or distribution of weapons and munition;
5. Removal and/or damage of cultural heritage;
6. Forced evictions and/or displacement of peoples (i.e. families, households, communities);
7. Large-scale acquisition of land (land grabbing);
8. Production, manufacture, activities and materials deemed illegal under host country law or regulation or international conventions and agreements, or subject to international phase-outs or bans due to their high toxicity to living organism, environmental persistence, potential for bioaccumulation, or potential for the depletion of the ozone layer, such as:

    - ozone depleting substances, PCBs (Polychlorinated Biphenyls) and other specific, hazardous chemicals, pesticides that fall in WHO Recommended Classification of Pesticides[43] by Hazard Class Ia (extremely hazardous) or Ib (highly hazardous);
    - any kind of asbestos fibres;
    - all chemicals listed in Annex A or B of the Stockholm Convention on POPs (Persistent Organic Pollutants);
    - items containing lead (with exception of car batteries and nuclear medicine), cadmium, arsenic (with exception of medical drugs) or mercury;
    - radioactive material (with exception of nuclear medicine);

9. Cross-border trade in waste and waste products, unless compliant with the Basel Convention and the underlying regulations;
10. Damage to ecosystems and biodiversity, such as
    - destruction[44] of High Conservation Value[45] areas;
    - wildlife or products regulated under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species or Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES); or
    - unsustainable fishing methods (e.g., blast fishing and drift net fishing in the marine environment using nets in excess of 2.5 km in length).

    In this context, ADA refrains from any ecosystem or biodiversity offsetting mechanism.

[40] The ADA Exclusion List is based on the Harmonized EDFI Exclusion List and the IFC project exclusion list.

[41] Forced labour refers to situations in which persons are coerced to work through the use of violence or intimidation or by more subtle means such as accumulated debt, retention of identity papers or threats of denunciation to immigration authorities (ILO definition).

[42] Persons may only be employed if they are at least 14 years old, as defined in the ILO Fundamental Human Rights Conventions (Minimum Age Convention C138, Art. 2), unless local legislation specifies compulsory school attendance or the minimum age for working. In such cases the higher age shall apply. (EDFI definition)

[43] WHO recommended classification of pesticides https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/332193/9789240005662-eng.pdf

[44] Destruction means the (1) elimination or severe diminution of the integrity of an area caused by a major, long-term change in land or water use or (2) modification of a habitat in such a way that the area's ability to maintain its role is lost.

[45] HCVs are biological, ecological, social or cultural values which are considered outstandingly significant or critically important, at the national, regional or global level (Source: High Conservation Values Resource Network (https://www.hcvnetwork.org/hcv-approach)

11. Introduction or promotion of genetically modified organisms (GMO); invasive alien species as well as systems and/or devices in the spectrum of synthetic biology;

12. Environment and/or climate-damaging activities
    - that are expected to or currently produce more than 20,000 tons of CO^2-equivalents annually;
    - that support the extraction or use of fossil fuels at all levels (upstream, midstream, downstream).