GENDER AND ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE: OVERLOOKED AND UNDERESTIMATED
INTEGRATING GENDER INTO IWT THINKING AND RESPONSES
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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I am deeply grateful to the reviewers who took considerable time and care in giving feedback and guidance on the draft of this document. Their professional comments and suggestions, their advice and information given generously and enthusiastically by many colleagues. I formally interviewed most of the individuals below, and with whose beneficial and informative conversations I share my thanks to them all.

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**KEY TERMINOLOGY**

**GENDER LENS**
A gender lens connotes intentional looking for and ‘seeing’ the ways in which men and women (as well as others outside this binary) are differently positioned in society and in relation to specific activities. A gender lens brings into focus the patterns of power relations in structures, institutions, policies and processes.

**GENDER ANALYSIS**
Gender analysis is the systematic examination of the differences in gender roles, activities, needs, opportunities and rights/entitlements — querying how those differences are created and sustained, and for what purposes. Gender analysis unpacks how those differences affect outcomes in daily life, or in specific activities and projects. Gender analyses examine the relationships between women and men, their access to and control of resources, and the constraints they face relative to each other.

**GENDER INTEGRATION**
Gender integration (mainstreaming) is a process that operationalizes the awareness brought by a gender lens and gender analysis into all areas of activity of an organization or project. It is a strategy for integrating women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes — so that both women and men benefit, and inequality is not perpetuated. Gender mainstreaming makes visible the implications for women and men of any planned action, policy or programme.

**GENDER INCLUSIVENESS**
Gender inclusiveness is a process of including women and men as equally valued players in initiatives. Gender-inclusive projects, programmes, political processes and services are those that have protocols in place to ensure women and men (and boys and girls, where appropriate) are included and have their voices heard and opinions equally valued.

**GENDER RESPONSIVENESS**
Gender responsiveness refers to outcomes that reflect a comprehensive understanding of gender roles and inequalities and that make an effort to encourage equal participation and equal and fair distribution of benefits. Gender responsiveness is accomplished through gender analysis and gender inclusiveness.

**GENDER BLINDNESS**
Gender blindness refers to the failure to recognize the gender-based roles and responsibilities of men/boys and women/girls that are assigned to them in specific social, cultural, economic, and political contexts. Projects, programmes, policies and attitudes that are gender blind don’t take into account these different roles and diverse needs. Gender blindness maintains the status quo and won’t help transform the unequal structure of gender relations; it may even exacerbate inequalities.

**SEX AND GENDER**

**SEX**
Biological characteristics of being male or female. This identity is usually seen to be immutable, but nonbinary sex identities such as ‘intersex’ are increasingly acknowledged; people who identify with nonbinary gender identities, such as ‘trans’ or ‘gender fluid’, are increasingly visible and those identities also determine social relations. Non-heterosexual identities also bring particular social positions, opportunities, constraints and discrimination.

**GENDER**
The social meaning attached to sex. Presumptions, attitudes and norms define what are the most appropriate roles, activities and social positions for men or women to undertake. Gender identity is the outcome of culturally designated characteristics of being masculine or feminine. Gender ‘norms’ produce and define ‘roles’.

**Sex-based functions**
Universal, gender-based roles are not.

Everywhere in the world, women are the ones who give birth. Gender roles are often shared widely across cultures and places and can appear to be nearly universal: for example, in pretty much all resource-dependent communities around the world, it is men who hunt, and women who process the food. But gender norms and roles are also locally defined and enacted. Notions of appropriate femininities/masculinities vary across age, culture, place, ethnicity, class and religion.

Gender roles are firmly embedded and stubborn. They are difficult to change. Challenging what men/women ‘should’ do and how they ‘should’ behave often provokes tremendous social resistance. In part this is because gender roles and norms are deeply consequential. Social and economic power flows through gender roles.

But although stubborn, gender roles are also ‘made up’. They can and do change from time to time and place to place. ‘They’re not, in fact, fixed, universal or ‘natural’.

The plasticity of gender norms brings opportunity for gender equality. Changes in gender roles seldom happen intrinsically. More typically, gender roles/norms are changed in response to advocacy and social mobilization, which in turn are then translated into rules, laws or designed practices that are put in place with the specific intent of changing gender norms.
GENDER EQUALITY, EQUITY, INTERSECTIONALITY

GENDER EQUALITY
Is achieved when women and men, girls and boys, have equal rights, life prospects and opportunities, and the power to shape their own lives and contribute to society. Equality between the sexes is a question of a fair and equitable distribution of power, influence and resources in everyday life and in society as a whole.

A gender-equal society safeguards and makes use of every individual’s experiences, skills and competence (Sida, 2015). Equality doesn’t mean that women and men will become the same but that rights, responsibilities and opportunities won’t depend on whether people are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women’s issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women (UN Women). Men benefit as much as women from living in a gender-equal society.

A gender equal society will also be equitable. Equity refers mainly to fairness and the need for differential treatment in order to achieve a fair outcome in an unequal society. Equity is typically considered to be a means, where equality is the end.

INTERSECTIONALITY
No one is defined solely by their sex or gender identity. Gender analysis is a powerful tool, but alone may not explain particular social or economic patterns and structures.

We all carry with us multiple social identities – age, religion, race/ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, caste, marital status, among others. These social categories are interconnected and interact synergistically to mark our ‘place’ and to define, at least partially, our pathways in society. Power, privilege, opportunity, access and discrimination flow through and reflect these multiple identities. Gender-based power skews mean that intersectional identities don’t play out in the same ways in men’s and women’s lives. For example, being married is much more of a delimiter for (most) women than for (most) men; men living in poverty, despite their deprivation and marginalization, typically have more livelihood options than their female counterparts who are also living in poverty.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

PART ONE
At a glance
This section explains the overarching goals of this report. It also provides a quick overview of the key findings of the report, in a short summary form.

PART TWO
Current state of knowledge of gender and IWT
This section provides a wide-ranging synthesis and assessment of the core literature, field evidence, and conceptual basis of the emerging field of gender and IWT. It assesses the evidence base of existing IWT gender-informed work, including examples of interventions. These existing research findings and programmes provide models – and field-based information – for future efforts.

The synthesis is organized around the four pillars of the WWF-TRAFFIC Wildlife Crime Initiative:
- Stop the poaching
- Stop the trafficking
- Stop the buying
- International governance and policy

The opening page in each part – poaching, trafficking, consumption, policy – provides an ‘at a glance’ summary of the findings.

PART THREE
Practitioner guide
This section provides practical guidance on gender integration in IWT. It details the rationale and benefits of gender integration, and provides a step-by-step approach to conduct and integrate gender analysis into IWT work. The conceptual – and applied – basis for gender analysis is the Actor-Driver-Impact-Response framework.

PART FOUR
Research needs and recommendations
The final section identifies recommendations and research needs at levels from local to global.
The overarching conceptual goals of this report are to:

1. Develop a new discourse and thinking around gender and IWT.
2. Provide the basis for transforming the IWT ‘space’ into a gender-responsive domain.
3. Provide the conceptual basis to connect gender analyses of IWT to the broader conceptual and action frameworks of ‘gender and environment’ that have emerged over the past two decades.

The specific operational goals are to:

1. Provide a synthesis of available knowledge about gender in IWT and to identify lessons learned about the efficacy of gender analysis.
2. Provide an approach that enables systematic approaches to integrate gender analysis into anti-IWT work to improve its effectiveness.
3. Develop a guide for use by practitioners to integrate gender into their project and programme work.
4. Identify holistic gender-responsive approaches to programme and policy development at local, national and global scales.

This report provides the first synthesis and assessment of the gendered dynamics of the global illegal wildlife trade (IWT). Building on this evidence base, it further provides a roadmap for systematically bringing gender analysis into programmes, policies and interventions to end IWT.
Part One: At a Glance

1. Mounting evidence reveals that gender equality is causally linked with social and environmental wellbeing. When gender inequality is high, typically so is environmental degradation. The reverse dynamic might also be true, but is much less studied.

2. Engaging women in conservation is a win-win of gender equality and environmental sustainability. This is not due to essentialist tropes about women being ‘nurturers’ or closer to nature, or men being essentially destructive. Rather, the social and economic structures that promote gender equality – inclusive decision-making and participation, acknowledgement of the positive effects of diversity, engaged and empowered citizenry, acknowledgement of universal human rights – are also prerequisites for environmental sustainability. Gender-integrated conservation amplifies effectiveness.

3. Systematic, strong and consequential gender dynamics infuse illegal wildlife trade and efforts to curb it. Some gender norms are drivers of IWT along the entire value chain; other gender norms constrain IWT or could be amplified to curb it. Because notions of femininity and masculinity are culturally shaped and reshaped – they are neither natural nor universal – they can be held up to close scrutiny and change.

4. Men and women interact with their environment, biodiversity and natural resources differently. Women and men typically have different environmental knowledge and experience; this shapes knowledge about scarcity, pressures and best management practices for resources, including wildlife. Gathering information only about men or men’s activities, or only women’s, produces unhelpfully skewed knowledge. To date, IWT knowledge is either gender-blind or heavily gender-skewed, without that skew being much recognized.

5. Women and men participate differently in all domains of IWT, from poaching through to consumption, and in policymaking. The costs and benefits of poaching, trafficking and consuming wildlife are different for men and women, as are the costs and benefits of curtailing or ending IWT. Access to resources, control over those resources, attitudes about them, and decisions about what resources to use are different for men and for women. Men and women typically hold different attitudes about animals, human-wildlife conflict, the value of protected areas, and commitments to conservation. The extent to which this ‘matters’ in terms of IWT involvement needs serious investigation.

6. Sexual violence and gender inequality are facilitators of IWT along the value chain. Sexual exploitation, prostitution of women and sex trafficking facilitate personal and commercial IWT transactions on local to global scales. Making visible the ways that gender-based violence is deployed in IWT opens pathways for challenging and changing these dynamics.

7. ‘Economic need’, so often identified as a driver of IWT, itself is gendered – men and women often have different views of economic needs, and different means to meet those needs. Poaching is driven by economic inequalities that play out differently in men’s and women’s lives; the role of land tenure and ownership is one key dimension. Women and men face different constraints and options for non-IWT livelihoods. Providing alternative livelihoods for women as well as men that are sustainable, diverse and collaboratively developed is critical for curbing IWT.

8. Women and men express different levels of fear about reporting poaching, and exhibit different ‘rules compliance’ behaviour. The impacts of poaching – and anti-poaching programmes – produce gender-differentiated livelihood instability, and can deepen women’s economic dependence on men. It is not uncommon for men to be bullied into poaching – by women or older men – by masculinity-shaming.

9. Available evidence suggests that women play roles as traffickers – and marketers – primarily at local and ‘lightly commercialized’ levels; transnational and syndicate-based trafficking is almost entirely led by men (to the extent that syndicates are known). Exceptions, such as Yang Fenglan, the ‘Ivory Queen’ of Tanzania, tend to attract considerable attention.

10. Enforcement actors (law enforcement, rangers, transnational crime-fighting entities) are predominantly men, and in some regions of Africa field enforcement is becoming notably hyper-masculinized and militarized. The assumption that men are best suited for highly armed ranger work puts them at considerable risk. Highly masculinized enforcement can sour relationships with community members who might otherwise be allies; it also heightens the risk of enforcement through violent means, potentially extending to criminal acts involving sexual abuse. Unless such risks are identified and addressed, as armaments become routine tools of poaching and anti-poaching, a violence spiral is likely to spill over into everyday life and communities – with significant gender-differentiated effects.
11. There is growing recognition that inclusive ranger work and enforcement is generally more effective. Integrating women into law enforcement and ranger activities is considered to be a potential game-changer – there is strong evidence that female enforcement actors have comparative advantages through their application of relatively non-violent and negotiation-based approaches to resolving conflict. Excluding women from enforcement opportunities excludes them from gaining access to often rare income and prestige opportunities.

12. Gender equality agendas are increasingly prominent in global high-level policy commitments, including robust commitments embedded across the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The primary entities in the lead of IWT work are substantially out of this loop. Few conservation organizations are integrating gender into their work. There is no international policy output in the IWT arena – from CITES to state-led processes such as the London, Kasane and Hanoi Declarations – that calls for or brings in a gender lens.

13. Men dominate in most of the major organizations that play key roles in international IWT policy: governments, NGOs, research institutions and academic sectors. The dominance of men and exclusion of women is a self-reinforcing system; but it can also be reversed, and the inclusion of women at ‘critical mass’ levels can create a virtuous cycle of further inclusion. The effect of the absence of women in decision-making about IWT and anti-IWT efforts is hard to measure, although there are sweeping assertions that “women raise issues that others overlook, support ideas that others oppose, and seek an end to abuses that others accept” (Madeleine Albright, former US Secretary of State).

14. In commercial consumer markets, use of illegal wildlife products is highly gendered and driven often by identity norms – for example, products for men to enhance their virility or advance their social status, products for women to enhance their beauty and fertility. Local/subsistence IWT consumption patterns often also reflect gender norms, including food taboos for women, but the patterns are highly localized.

15. Targeted gender-specific behaviour-change messaging against IWT consumption appears to be showing early success, although outcomes are not always clear. Men and women access and respond to different media; anti-IWT behaviour-change or educational campaigns will be most effective when those gender differences are used to shape messaging and mediums.

16. Without a gender analysis firmly in hand (accompanied by gender-responsive project planning and implementation), actions and programmes to end or curb IWT can entrench gender differences and inequalities, to the detriment both of women and conservation. Conversely, policies and programmes might be mobilized towards simultaneously reducing IWT and enhancing gender equality.

17. Most of the tools and techniques of IWT analysis (data collection, surveys, transects, consumer analysis) are already at hand. They just need to be ‘gendered’ by investigating and making visible the relative ‘locations’ (sometimes literal) of women and men in relation to the activities and processes.
PART TWO

CURRENT STATE OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT GENDER AND IWT

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SYNERGIES AND SYSTEMS OF GENDER DIFFERENCES IN IWT

Sex roles, gender norms and gender violence infuse IWT. While those strands are examined separately throughout this document, gender relationships within IWT are synergistically linked. Societal roles, cultural factors, resources and laws, regulations and institutional practices work together to create and reinforce gender limitations and inequalities.

A few examples of the interdependence of gender inequalities and gender norms set the stage for thinking systematically about gender and IWT.

1. CONTEXTS AND DRIVERS

IWT expert Dr Greta Iori recently illustrated synergistic relationships among some of the contextual conditions and forces (drivers) that shape women’s engagement with IWT (Iori 2020):

Some of these drivers at first glance seem as though they would be the same for men and women. But socially structured inequalities usually leave women with different (and fewer) livelihood options and fewer pathways to autonomy and agency than their male counterparts.

Lack of education, for example, might frustrate non-IWT ambitions for both men and women, but in most parts of Africa, even in overall education-constrained settings, women/girls typically have still lower levels of education than men/boys.

This is not unrelated to child marriage, which is wildly more significant for girls than boys. An estimated 85% of global child marriages are girl-child marriages. In South Asia as well as in Latin America and the Caribbean, 25-30% of girls are married or in permanent union before age 18, 5-8% are below age 15.

Lack of power over family planning and birth control, similarly, is a female-specific factor. Game Rangers International noted, for example, that in one of its Lusaka-based Conservation Clubs, 14 out of 30 primary-school girls dropped out of school because they became pregnant.

Both child marriage and pregnancy remove girls from school and from engaging in formal economic activities. This deepens women’s economic dependence on men, which can produce a starburst of IWT-related consequences: a woman may engage in IWT herself because of limited legal and formal job options; she may be particularly eager to encourage her male partner to engage in IWT because his money-earning capacity has to compensate for her limited income-earning capacity.
2. INCENTIVES TO ENGAGE IN IWT

Similarly, the below infographic on ‘why women engage with crime’ identifies forces that operate differently in women’s and men’s lives to make wildlife crime appealing – or the path of least resistance (Iori 2020):

At the same time, it is important to highlight that women’s engagement in IWT is not only as contributors to wildlife crime: women, including indigenous women, also play important roles in environmental conservation.

Poverty and limited livelihood options are often identified as primary drivers that push men into poaching. Gender norms are also powerful drivers.

Hunting activities are highly gendered and driven by the interplay between male and female roles (Lowassa et al. 2012). Several people interviewed for this report observed that men often feel compelled to be involved in poaching to fulfil their gender-norm role as family providers. As poaching and anti-poaching in some regions in Africa become increasingly armed and dangerous, the pressure on men to be manly may be accelerating. Men who don’t embrace these norms may be at double risk: from not being adequate economic providers, and from stepping outside hetero-masculine norms.

Women can raise the manliness stakes by challenging men to provide for their families, and criticizing them if they don’t provide at what women define as adequate levels.

3. MASCULINITIES AND MEN AT RISK

In a focus group discussion in the western Serengeti (Tanzania), participants described some of the ways that women pressure men to hunt (Lowassa et al. 2012):

Women encourage men to hunt both verbally and through their behaviour:

It happens when somebody brings meat and you ask for the price and so you start telling yourself if my husband had gone, he would have brought it for me as well. So, I go and convince my husband.

I tell my husband “what kind of a man are you? Other men are out there poaching”

“If you don’t bring bushmeat I won’t cook....”

Men observed that women like men with money:

That is everywhere, not just in Serengeti even in town a man who does not have money is not loved.

If a certain man goes for poaching but I don’t go, my wife might even start loving that man.

Women like money ... can’t wait for cultivation; with poaching you can get money quickly.

Gender roles compelled women to support and maintain hunting activities due to:

- Lack of alternative income sources for them (reliance on men to provide)
- Unwillingness to wait for harvest – which is perceived to be slow and uncertain.
A Mozambique field study revealed that other men, especially older and more established poachers, also often encourage young men into hunting:

“...some young men enter the rhino trade out of economic intimidation and mockery by established poachers and at times family members.

As a regional leader explained, “The young guys entering the bush are being trapped because they sit unoccupied in the villages. Established poachers attract them by teasing them, saying that they are still poor because they are lazy and afraid, they are not true men. And these words are also repeated by their wives or relatives encouraging them to join a poaching network.”

(Lanstrum and Givá 2020).

These gender-norm pressures put men at extraordinary risk of injury, death and imprisonment. Poaching can be inherently dangerous – long periods outdoors, sometimes in dangerous terrain, in close proximity to what can be dangerous wildlife. In the arms race of poaching in Africa it is increasingly deadly.

Data on deaths of poachers is unreliable and spotty, but snippets of evidence provide a glimpse of the toll: 476 Mozambican poachers killed by South African rangers between 2010 and 2013, and 190-200 poachers killed in Kruger Park; 22 poachers killed in 2015 in Zimbabwe, another 900 arrested! (The sex of the poachers was not identified in any of these reports, but the implication is that they were all men.) The ripple effects of the loss of men through death or imprisonment in sometimes small communities produces social destabilization, and catalyses a further crisis for women who suddenly become sole providers for households; some observers refer to the poaching-related ‘crisis of widows’ (Mase et al. 2018). One of the key confounding problems is that poaching for subsistence, poaching for local commerce and poaching for transnational commercial interests are often intertwined (Overton et al. 2017) and almost impossible to distinguish in on-the-ground encounters.

The associated toll on (mostly male) rangers and the damage inflicted by them in terms of violence, much of it sexual, is addressed in later sections.

Indeed, it is plausible that IWT is even more saturated with coercive and violent sex and gender relations: it is an enterprise largely predicated on activating male violence in the killing and maiming of animals, involving a chain of activities that are mostly criminal and secretive.

The sexual-exploitation political economy of IWT is understudied, but some available evidence paints the contours. The most comprehensive assessment of gender-based violence (GBV) in conservation is IUCN’s 2020 report on GBV and environment – a report that brings to the foreground the understanding that gender-based violence is both a symptom of gender inequality and a tool to reinforce it; GBV is often deployed to maintain male control over natural resources, further entrenching gender inequality in a cyclical manner (Castañeda Camey et al. 2020).

GBV is not just an individualized or singular experience that happens ‘sometimes to some women in some IWT settings’. Rather, interconnected webs of power, gender inequality and sexual violence – some of which is organized by formal networks – converge in certain IWT sites and settings.

a) Rape, prostitution and STDs: Illegal logging in Madagascar

Illegal logging of rare timber in Madagascar accelerated catastrophically after 2009. Commercial-scale illegal logging, unlike animal poaching, is usually characterized by an influx of large numbers of temporary male workers, who establish medium-to-long-term encampments in the forests or swell the population of previously small, isolated villages and towns.

This TRAFFIC investigation revealed the staggering gendered social costs of the incursions of large numbers of mostly young men: rape, prostitution, sexually transmitted diseases and, no doubt, unwanted pregnancies. (Abortion is illegal in Madagascar, and harshly punished.)

Between October 2013 and January 2014, the illegal harvest in the Massola Park and a section of the Makira Park was accompanied by the arrival of thousands of migrants arriving from all over Madagascar into the municipalities of Ambolitraranana and Ampanasara in particular. The same scenario recurred between June and September 2014. These temporary migrations (of men) increased the level of insecurity and criminal activity directed against the local populations, e.g. increased drug and/or alcohol consumption among boys, rape of girls or increase in prostitution. For example, between 40% and 50% of girls over 12 years of age dropped out of school to engage in prostitution …. In the commune of Ambolitraranana, about one third (3 out of 10) of the girls aged over 14 engaged in prostitution during the periods of heightened timber exploitation (Ratsimbazafy et al. 2016).

This TRAFFIC study is one of the only IWT-sector reports to directly document the sexual political economy of IWT. Reports of sexual exploitation of women and minors associated with illegal logging come additionally from Peru and South Sudan (Castañeda Camey et al. 2020). The convergence of (typically) limited governance, a male labourer influx setting up durable if impermanent camps and gender inequality set the stage for sex trafficking, labour trafficking and sexual exploitation and violence integral to the IWT activities.
b) Seasonal transactional sex in the poaching economy of Kafue National Park

A seasonal poaching pattern around the Kafue National Park in Zambia is predicated on a complex sexual political economy. Single female heads of households, including widows, amongst the most economically precarious, tend to live on the outskirts of villages, near the park but in somewhat remote settings. The male poachers, some subsistence, some commercialized, strike up agreements to rent rooms from these women during their temporary poaching visits. Providing housing is one of the only sources of income for marginalized women in the region. The men pay rent in money or meat; in return, they get housing and expect to have sex with their host.

Women are incentivized to keep this arrangement secret because of the fear and shame of being labelled as prostitutes – and, no doubt, also the fear of losing the income should it become publicly known. The collusion in secrecy between male poachers and female hosts protects the male poacher. It also prevents scrutiny of the levels of coercion and violence that might attend some of the ‘plus-sex’ housing expectations. Game Rangers International staff who have informal knowledge of this system report that the poaching regions have high rates of HIV/AIDS, STDs and unwanted pregnancies.10

Women’s efforts to organize their own fishing schemes to avoid involvement in the institutionalized fish-for-sex relationship.

d) Hotspot for prostitution + wildlife trade in Myanmar

“You go out gambling, in the evening you get yourself a prostitute, and then you eat the stuff you can’t eat at home,” he said. “It’s the whole package that makes it attractive.”11 Although the speaker is unidentified, it is clear that this is a ‘whole package’ for men.

Mong La is a small border town in a semi-autonomous region of eastern Myanmar that has emerged as a key hub of IWT (Shepherd and Nijman 2007). But its real draw appears to be its reputation as a centre of gambling, sex and illegal wildlife consumption for mostly male tourists. According to news reports, it is the armed militia (all male) that controls, creates and protects this profit-churning model.12

It is only the somewhat salacious news reporting that links the combined ‘allure’ for male indulgence of the wildlife trade with the sex trade. Academic and investigatory accounts of the prostitution/sex-trafficking industry in the Mong La region (e.g. Breyer 2001) and of the wildlife trafficking industry (e.g. Shepherd and Nijman 2007; Nijman et al. 2016) miss the opportunity to explore linkages.

In this case, while there are conceptual linkages between the two illicit trades — and in the ways in which the doubling of forbidden activity intensifies each — it seems likely that there are also overlapping logistical and actor networks that build both industries by leveraging normative notions of (heterosexual) male pleasure. Only one study noted, in passing, a spatial and functional linkage between certain wildlife products heavily marketed as male aphrodisiacs with the brothels that are situated in a corner of the wildlife market (Rippa et al. 2016).

c) Sex, IWT and TCM in Uganda

Chinese direct investment in Africa has escalated stratospherically since the early 2000s. Much of this investment involves construction of large-scale infrastructure projects – dams, railways, ports.2 The favoured model relies on importing Chinese labourers, mostly male, to build the infrastructure. This reflects what one development agency reports, it is the armed militia (all male) that controls, creates and protects this profit-churning model.

Game Rangers International has opened a maternity hospital to serve women in the region. They also started alternative-livelihood programmes for women across the Greater Kafue Ecosystem, including training as bakers, tailoring, sewing feminine hygiene kits, and, in the current crisis, making masks.

e) Sex for fish

Although the speaker is unidentified, it is clear that this is a ‘whole package’ for men.

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f) Interconnected trafficking networks

There is very little field evidence about whether trafficking networks are intertwined. Several people interviewed for this report said that the actors in, for example, sex and wildlife trafficking were most likely quite separate. But one interviewer said that in her experience in anti-poaching work in southern Africa there were some opportunistic overlaps if not structurally intertwined networks: “on more than one occasion, when investigators stopped a car [suspected of IWT], they would pop the trunk and find a young girl there.”

There is emerging evidence, although mostly through press reports, that transnational drug cartels may be expanding into convergent trafficking of drugs, women and wildlife.

Available evidence suggests that “narco” networks have been relatively minor – but not inconsequential – players in IWT to date.

However, drug cartels in Latin America and Mexico are increasingly combining their businesses of drugs trafficking with sex trafficking and wildlife trafficking. This emerging business symbiosis is deeply steeped in a commitment to male-identified ‘pleasure’ – and, conversely, the exploitation of both women and animals.

Drug cartel bosses have long burnished their masculinist reputations by building private collections of illegally trafficked animals – especially apex predators – as a display of their status and virility. Pablo Escobar famously created a zoo of elephants, lions and rhino, along with dozens of other illegally trafficked animals. (His hippo, left behind when enforcement agents closed his ranch, now number almost a hundred and are creating ecological chaos in Colombia.)
Across the board, gender norms shape the spaces and places women and men can inhabit, and the conservation-related activities they can undertake (Lau 2020; UNEP 2016).

The gender division of labour in the poaching and trafficking components of IWT is deceptively easy to map. Greta Iori offers a brief summation:

- Women are found LESS in hunting/capture of wildlife; at higher levels of criminal syndicates.
- Women are found MORE in transit, smuggling and sales roles; functional roles including trap setters; mediators between rival gangs.

This actor-activity profile in poaching is a product of notions of appropriate masculinity and femininity, the skew in decision-making control over resource harvesting/extracting, and generalized patterns of women’s inequality.

‘Communities’ are important actors in IWT, but there is no such thing as a unitary ‘community’: women and men have different roles, opportunities, priorities; other social disaggregations (e.g., ‘youth’) are also key.

Poaching is driven by economic inequalities that play out differently in men’s and women’s lives; the role of land ownership is one key dimension.

Men are known to be bullied into poaching by masculinity-shaming.

Men and women typically hold different attitudes about animals, human-wildlife conflict, the value of protected areas, commitments to conservation.

Women and men express different levels of fear about reporting poaching, and exhibit different ‘rules compliance’ behaviour.

Impacts of poaching produce gender-differentiated livelihood instability, deepening economic dependence of women on men, and a violence spiral if armaments become routine tools of poaching.

Some effective interventions include providing non-IWT-related livelihood diversification; land rights protection; broadening the constituency for conservation through behaviour change encouragement; radio programming.
Hunting comprises the foundation of fauna-based IWT, whether for local or global circuits. In much of the world, poaching means hunting. Everywhere that IWT is based on hunting or capturing animals, the actors who do so are mostly men – a consequence of cultural notions of masculinity and femininity and the gendered division of labour that ensues.

**Women don’t (‘shouldn’t’) hunt**

In some places, women are forbidden by cultural taboos from hunting or even touching hunting equipment (McElwee 2012); in others, it is taboo for pregnant or menstruating women to collect certain species (Colding and Folke 2001). Even in the absence or loosening of such taboos, hunting is cross-culturally almost universally considered appropriate for men and inappropriate for women. Hunting is so dissonant with femininity norms that commercial women hunters, especially trophy hunters, face particular vitriol (Kwong 2014). The association of hunting with masculinity is fairly well studied, including its role as a rite of passage for boys into manhood; there are few studies that examine these cultural linkages in relationship to IWT activities (Sollund 2020).

![Image of a woman with a hunting rifle]

Women’s poaching/collection might take the form of small-animal trap capture, and limited observational reports from Southeast Asia suggest they are involved in setting snares. But there’s very little evidence about women’s participation at these levels. There’s even less evidence about the gender division of labour in the illegal plant trade, although most assumptions are that men are the field collectors, especially of highly valuable globally traded plant species such as cycads.

Quantitative demographic data on poachers is limited. A few local case studies provide glimpses that add detail to the profile of male IWT hunters:

- In one region in Peru, illegal hunters of wildlife were identified as men aged 33-54 (Flores 2017).
- In Mozambique, all hunters were young men (Lunstrum and Givá 2020).
- 86% of male hunters in one study in Cameroon were married (Marie Michèle 2015).
- An assessment in Ghana identified both commercial hunters and farmer hunters involved in IWT, all of whom were men based in local rural areas (Mendelson et al. 2003).
- A recent study in Southern Africa found that young men are more likely to poach than older men, while women and particularly older women exhibit pro-conservation behaviour (Ntuli et al. 2019).

But overall the best data source on who is poaching – where available at all – may be hidden in the records of interdiction, judicial action and arrest. Although most of these records don’t disaggregate gender, it is possible to extract that data. In support of this project, TRAFFIC’s East Africa office developed the following dataset:

**Seizure and enforcement actions in Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya: 2015 - 2020**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MALE SUSPECTS</th>
<th>FEMALE SUSPECTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Charges Against Men</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway: 90%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Africa: 96%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bush Meat 38%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other 20%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leopard 2%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cheetah 3%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pangolin 2%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elephant Ivory 42%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other 4%</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lion 4%</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ostrich 3%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Python 2%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rhino Horn 1%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Crocodile 1%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hippo 6%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wild Dog 3%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pangolin 1%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leopard 2%</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Elephant Ivory 47%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*By species involvement. Total suspects involved: 950: of whom, male: 911 (96%); female: 39 (4%)*

Even allowing for enforcement bias – women may not be stopped by enforcement officials because of gendered assumptions about their lack of importance or agency – it is clear that poaching animals is a predominantly male activity. These charts on seizures raise several points for further consideration: the relative sameness of women and men involved in elephant ivory trade; bushmeat as a much larger share of men’s contraband than women’s; the relatively larger share of pangolin in women’s contraband.

A similar study of interdiction records in Norway revealed approximately the same gender profile: 90% of wildlife trafficking charges were against men (Sollund 2020).
Fear of reporting poaching

One study in Southern Africa showed very small or no overall gender differences in willingness to help surveillance and monitoring of poaching, but there were income/gender differences: women from the poorest households were less willing to report than men, which the authors concluded might “have to do with aspects of risks and perceptions of security” (Sundstrom et al. 2019).

In Zambia, on the other hand, there were significant overall gender differences in willingness to report (GRI/IFAW 2017): 60% of women and 47% of men said they were afraid to report poaching activities to authorities.

Rules compliance

Curbing poaching depends in part on the willingness of people to ‘follow rules’ — i.e., to not engage in illegal activity. At the broadest sweep of social observation, women are assumed to be more ‘pro-social’ and rules-compliant than men (Espinosa 2015). Recent analyses of compliance with coronavirus public health measures, such as mask-wearing, have reinforced this general observation (for example, Okten 2020; Perrotta 2020; New York University 2020).

There is very little IWT literature on rules-following differences, although there are hints of its importance:

A study of forest-dependent households in northern India suggests that violations of forest regulations were more common among women, responsible for firewood collection (Agarwal 2001); this possibly reflects the understanding that conservation rules may disproportionately burden women if harvesting is restricted (Sundstrom et al. 2019).

A finding from Uganda on ‘species deception’ revealed that a majority of hunters (men) “usually” disguised primate meat as some other kind of meat, whereas the majority of cooks (female) believed this almost never happened. Moreover, most cooks (female) believed that baboons, monkeys, chimpanzees and bats are “never” available in markets to purchase (Dell et al. 2020).
Roles of Communities in Poaching

Communities are often described as actors in the new framework of participatory conservation – often as ‘agents of change,’ as primary stakeholders, or as the ‘first line of defence’ (Cooney 2016).

But ‘communities’ don’t exist as an actor separate from the people who comprise that community.

At the same time, communities are not a homogeneous group: they are all different from one another, and can play very different roles in relation to conservation, poaching, and IWT more broadly. Indigenous and local communities for example have played, and continue to play, very important roles protecting the natural resources they depend on.

Gender dynamics in many communities may exclude women:

- NGOs may inadvertently double down on the culture of male privilege when they engage community spokespeople or partners. NGOs often struggle with concerns about not disrupting traditional cultures – and thus they ‘respect’ the tradition of seeking guidance and consultation with male elders only. Several conservation experts say this is misguided: cultures are always dynamic and in states of change; enabling gender changes sometimes just seems scarier (especially to men) than other changes.
- Women are prohibited or discouraged from speaking at public meetings; they face particular opprobrium if they contradict or disagree publicly with men (Niskanen et al. 2020; Seager 2020).
- If there are formally constituted community conservation committees, women are at best minority office holders – they are often not included in ‘community discussions’ on conservation futures and plans, and may be intentionally excluded from meta-dominant loops of information circulating in communities.

As a cautionary note, however, it is important not to assume that the inclusion of women will automatically bring instrumental benefits into wildlife and natural resources management (Sundström et al. 2019).

Women, including women belonging to indigenous peoples and local communities, have often played significant roles in nature conservation – but women are not always pro-conservation, nor environmentally enlightened, nor wise resource managers.

Stereotypes about women being ‘natural environmentalists’ are themselves gender-delimiting. Nonetheless, it is a strategic mistake to exclude half the community from engagement and intentionally excluding stakeholders (such as young men and women) from conservation planning can lead to “devastating and irreversible impacts for wildlife and people” (Gore 2012).
RESOURCE ACCESS, CONTROL AND PERCEPTIONS

Poverty and resource scarcity are often the primary drivers of participation in IWT. The experience of poverty in relation to resources, and in coping mechanisms such as access to resources and alternative livelihoods, are different for men and women.

Land

**WHAT WE KNOW:**

Even if women wanted to play a more assertive role in IWT decisions, they typically have limited control over resource use, 'extraction' and management. In much of the world, and especially in the major IWT source regions, women own or control only a tiny share of land. Land ownership is often the prerequisite for decision-making authority about the use of resources (Agarwal 1994; Chigbu et al. 2019; Deere et al. 2012; Doss et al. 2017; Kieran et al. 2015).

Women typically extract land-based resources from communal or community land. Communal land tenure systems have been shown to make effective positive contributions to wildlife conservation, and promote community participation in wildlife management/conservation (Opara et al. 2003; IUCN et al. 2017). But women’s disenfranchisement from land-based decisions sits on top of their exclusion from household and community decision-making – so even when IWT extraction is from common lands, which women may manage, they may not have much decision-making clout.

**WHAT WE DON'T KNOW:**

There is no available analysis of the nexus of land ownership, gender and IWT extraction activities. We should be cautious of but attentive to the assumption that women would be better stewards of animal and plant resources if they had the opportunity to make IWT-related decisions, but this is untested.

Conservation and environmental assessments have long established that women and men are differently ‘positioned’ – often literally – in relation to the environment. In resource-dependent and agricultural settings, women and men pull resources from different parts of environments (UNEP 2016; Mwangi et al. 2011; Rocheleau et al. 2001). For example, in fishing communities, women fish on the shoreline and in the shallows, men in open water; beekeeping is in some places solely a men’s activity, in other places solely a women’s activity; men are typically responsible for ‘four-leg’ animals (goats, cattle), women for two-legs (chickens).

For example: “men and women have different perceptions and knowledge of mango scarcity in Sarawak, of walrus habitat patterns in the Canadian Arctic, of bird species present in the Serengeti.” (Mmaasy 2013; Martinez-Levasseur 2017; Muhammad et al. 2017).

All of which means that men and women typically have different understandings of environmental problems and priorities, of resource scarcity, of human-nature relationships. (This also means that advancing conservation, or conservation planning, is best served when both men’s and women’s knowledge is tapped.)

...the key links between gender and sustainability are tied to production, social reproduction, and consumption patterns, which in turn are linked to access and control of resources (McElvee 2012).

Whether involved directly in resource extraction or not, men and women also have differences, sometimes dramatic, in various attitudes and perceptions:

**Attitudes towards animals**

- Rural women near a tiger reserve in India tended to be more supportive of wildlife and forest conservation than men because they felt that the tiger had a right to live (Arjunan et al. 2006).
- Attitudinal studies in the US and Australia, starting as early as the 1980s, reveal that women generally view animals through humanistic and rights-based lenses, whereas men see animals more instrumentally and have less emotional resonance with them, leading some researchers to conclude that “gender is the most important demographic factor in attitudes to animals” (Kellert and Berry 1987; Miller and McGee 2000).
- In Zambia, near Kafue National Park, a recent study revealed that 56% of men but only 39% of women ‘strongly agreed’ that elephants were an important part of their environment; in the same study, a majority of both men and women said it was not acceptable to kill elephants that threatened crops or family safety (GRI/IFAW 2017).
- In Namibia and India, men reaped greater economic benefits from conservation projects, while women’s livelihoods, such as wood collecting and harvesting plants, were more constrained (Ogra 2008; Sundstrom et al. 2019). Women in poorer households were less likely to identify problems and benefits associated with the reserve (Allendorf and Yang 2017).

**Perceptions of the benefits/costs of protected areas and wildlife**

- In recent studies in Namibia and India, men and women expressed different views on the severity and risks of human-wildlife conflict – and, consequently, on best wildlife management strategies. Men’s and women’s knowledge and attitudes lead to different strategies for accommodating wildlife. Gendered differences in risk perceptions may signal different priorities or incentives to participate in efforts to resolve risks related to human-wildlife conflict, and it is not always obvious that management goals are shared between men and women (Gore and Kahler 2012; MFF 2018; Ogra 2008).

The key link between gender and sustainability are tied to production, social reproduction, and consumption patterns, which in turn are linked to access and control of resources (McElvee 2012).
Human-wildlife conflict, which may be either exacerbated or reduced by poaching, affects men’s and women’s livelihoods differently – and thus may be perceived differently.

Not taking into account these differences often results in inadequate support interventions and may undermine support for anti-poaching measures. For example, in Namibia, where offset payments for elephant crop damage are available to farmers, only farmed plots larger than 1 hectare are eligible. A disproportionately high number of women farm on plots smaller than 1 hectare, depriving them of compensation (Seager 2020).

Poaching can destabilize the integrity of ecosystems and degrade environments. These effects ripple through men’s and women’s lives differently, in part because of the different environmental ‘positionality’ discussed above. Prevailing gender norms mean that women in resource-dependent communities typically have fewer options for livelihood substitution to cope with environmental change – they can’t suddenly take up fishing if they are culturally prohibited from boats, or they can’t out-migrate for work if they have dependent children.

Successful efforts to curb or end poaching also have differential gendered effects. For example, CITES notes the impacts of two programmes:

- Cape Aloe, South Africa: “In one community, 21/22 harvester households were headed by a woman, with an average of 2.8 dependents at home. Few (2/22) had other work. A temporary ban [on Cape Aloe harvesting] in 2009 led to financial hardship in this community.”
- Crocodile egg harvesting, Australia: Aboriginal women are the main egg collectors. Even though some of this is sustainable harvest, it is very difficult to distinguish from illegal activity. Curbing the trade leaves Aboriginal women with no livelihood alternatives.

The ‘arms race’ in poaching, particularly notable in Africa, increases the dangers to men and accelerates social instability in local communities in ways discussed above. One dimension of this instability is the increased availability of small arms to local male poachers. There is no study of the gender effects of the increasing circulation of armaments in communities, but domestic violence studies uniformly show that male ownership of or access to armaments rapidly accelerates the likelihood of violence in households.

The impacts of IWT on communities are varied and serious, and can include:

1. Decreased availability of species for subsistence and cultural use, and corresponding loss of traditional knowledge and management practices;
2. Decreased availability of species important or local income generation;
3. Increased levels of human-wildlife conflict, resulting from decreased levels of predators, with corresponding increases in species that damage crops (such as wild pigs);
4. Increased habitat degradation due to burning practices associated with IWT, with knock-on impacts e.g. soil fertility;
5. Social breakdown, as behaviour changes from communally-minded (where everything is shared) to individually-minded (where individual benefit maximisation becomes the prerogative). This shift is likely to take place as a community becomes more integrated into the market economy;
6. Decreased local security as a result of influx of arms;
7. Social and health problems resulting from associated trade in and use of narcotics.

(IUCN 2017)

ALL OF THESE IMPACTS ARE GENDERED

"If perceptions of nature and types of relationships with the biosphere reserve and its resources differ by gender, different strategies will be needed to engage men and women, and develop effective management relationships. Understanding of gender differences in conservation projects is not a new topic ... this is far from the norm in the field of biosphere reserve management."

(Martino 2008)
The creation of diversified alternative non-IWT livelihood projects can reduce women’s economic dependence on men, reduce their dependence on men’s poaching, and expand the range of non-IWT related options for women and men.

WWF-Madagascar has supported several communities in the northwest to allow women to join mangrove planting teams – previously not considered appropriate women’s work. Community leaders (male) report several successful outcomes of this programme: involving women in mangrove planting is easing conservation work (“double the hands makes work lighter”); involving women in mangrove management broadened the base of support for and engagement with conservation across the community; mangrove protection and planting rates have concomitantly improved, with reports of a 15% improvement in mangrove restoration since women’s involvement began.

Women report that a pathway to greater gender equity goes through the mangroves: they take pride in their mangrove planting and say that now that they are doing what was previously ‘men’s work’ they get more respect (Seager 2020).

**Protecting land rights**

Several transnational projects are addressing the foundational issue of women’s land rights. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has established a “Gender and Land Rights Database” to set baseline indicators and assess the scope of the problem. Project-specific activities include a Uganda land-rights project funded by the RISE Challenge (Resilient, Inclusive, and Sustainable Environments) – an IUCN-USAID collaboration:

> In eastern Uganda, approximately 80 percent of women report experiencing physical and psychological violence when claiming their land rights, and only eight percent of men believe it is wrong to commit violence against women. With RISE funding, the partners are integrating JASAU, a proven methodology that addresses power imbalances between men and women to prevent and respond to GBV, while improving land tenure and property rights in Uganda. They are training faith-based leaders and partner staff to promote positive social norms that support women’s rights to access and control land and to live free from GBV. The partners are also helping women better document their land rights by developing and training traditional leaders to use an alternative dispute resolution mechanism that takes into consideration the rights of women.7

**Engaging youth**

CONNECT (Conserving Natural Capital and Enhancing Collaborative Management of Transboundary Resources) is a new programme developed collaboratively among a network of IWT-related NGOs in East Africa. It aims to increase engagement with conservation and commitment to wildlife across diverse constituencies, specifically including a focus on women and youth.

A concerted effort to understand and engage young Kenyans in conservation has been particularly sophisticated in its approach to deconstructing the multifaceted demographic of ‘youth’ – making the point that ‘not all youth are the same’ (see above) and that diverse approaches will be needed to engage them with conservation. Unfortunately the sophisticated understanding that ‘not all youth are the same’ doesn’t yet appear in this programme to extend to gender differentiation.

**Media**

IWT NGOs are exploring the power of radio programming – especially to reach women – in low-media rural settings. Game Rangers International’s ‘behavioural change’ communications in Zambia identified radio as the most effective technology to reach wide audiences (GRI/IFAW 2017).

In Madagascar, WWF supports organized women’s ‘radio listeners groups’; members listen to regularly scheduled conservation programmes and then hold small meetings or neighbourhood gatherings to talk with other women about what they have learned.

In the community study in Zambia, 348 out of 517 people surveyed relied primarily on radio news and programmes for information about elephants (GRI/IFAW 2017).
Women play roles as traffickers – and marketers – primarily at local and ‘lightly commercialized’ levels; transnational and syndicate-based trafficking is almost entirely led by men (where women are involved, they tend to be of the most elite and wealthy class).

Enforcement actors (law enforcement, rangers, transnational crime-fighting entities) are almost all men. Much enforcement activity is becoming more highly militarized (especially in some regions in Africa) in response to more violent poaching; this doubles down on its masculine identity.

Networks of male power facilitate, protect and drive transnational trafficking.

Corruption is integral to networks of trafficking; women do participate in corruption, but are widely considered to be less involved.

Trafficking – and militarized enforcement – deepens economic inequality gaps between women and men.

Excluding women from enforcement opportunities excludes them from gaining access to often rare income and prestige opportunities; the assumption that men are best suited for highly armed ranger work puts them at considerable risk.

Highly masculinized enforcement often sours relationships with community members who might otherwise be allies; it also heightens the likelihood that enforcement will be violent, which could also involve sexual abuse.

Health impacts from IWT, in terms of zoonotic diseases, almost always have gender-differentiated effects: for example, more men than women have died from COVID; women have suffered the burden of unpaid household care and unemployment more than men.

Integrating women into law enforcement and ranger activities holds potential to be a game-changer.

Men’s violence reduction programmes can engage men directly in addressing GBV.
WHO IS TRAFFICKING AND WHY?

In the four-pillar schema, trafficking is roughly the phase in the IWT chain where wildlife and wildlife products are moved from the site of capture/killing through various transport and marketing stages towards the end consumer/buyer. Transit-towards-markets happens on wide-ranging scales: from ‘lightly commercialized’ local transit to local market vending, to transnational, high-tech, syndicate-based flows. Overall, studies of the gendered nature of transport and marketing chains are few and far between (Agu and Gore 2020).

The overarching understanding of gendered positions in trafficking, as Greta Iori says, is essentially one of scale: women may play prominent roles in ‘local’ trafficking sales, transit and smuggling; much less so in syndicate and global trafficking.

Local/’light commercialization’ traffickers and marketers:

Despite the dearth of study, some general observations provide a starting framework for understanding the gender dynamics of ‘local’ trafficking:

• At the local scale, trafficking is often a kinship activity, in which men hunt and women relatives prepare, transport and market the wildlife/products.
• Sexual coercion may define some women’s roles in moving wildlife goods, as in the examples of fish-for-sex schemes or the housing-sex-poaching dynamics found in the Kafue region in Zambia.

A few studies in West Africa reveal gender-specific patterns:

• Some media reports from the African Wildlife Foundation noted that women are involved in the use and sale of wild bushmeat and wildlife products in local markets (Wairima 2016; Agu and Gore 2020).
• Women may serve as intermediaries in moving illegally hunted wildlife away from remote rural areas and into larger cities.
• Mbete et al. (2011) estimated that women comprised more than half of all traffickers moving endangered species such as great apes from protected areas to cities for bushmeat consumption in Congo Brazzaville.
• One of the very few ethnographically detailed studies, from Ghana, reveals layering of women’s and men’s activities (Mendelson et al. 2003):

“... Hunters make significant profits, indicating that the bushmeat trade has the potential to make a substantial economic contribution to rural households. In contrast, urban actors appear to make relatively small profits. Comparison with the existing literature suggests that the structure and operation of the bushmeat trade in Takoradi is typical of the trade in many other parts of West Africa.”

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Transnational and syndicate traffickers

High-end and transnational trafficking is skewed highly towards men. Women are not entirely absent. One study found women aiding transport of live animals, sometimes in partnership with their husbands (e.g., live chimpanzees from Cameroon to Egypt to United Arab Emirates) (Cooney et al. 2017, cited in Agu and Gore 2020).

Women are found in positions of power in transnational IWT crime networks, but their prominence is due to their exceptionalism; where women are involved, they tend to be of the most elite and wealthy class, such as Yang Fenglan, the ‘Ivory Queen’ of Tanzania.31 There is evidence that some women enter the ‘workforce’ of organized crime through a relationship with a man who is actively involved such as a father, husband, brother, partner or friend. Women may step up into roles of power in transnational crime networks if a male partner/family member has to flee, is imprisoned or dies (Hübschle 2014).

Female ‘inheritance’ of power in transnational IWT networks may mirror a pattern found occasionally in Italian Mafia networks – described by one author as “functional familial networks.” (McElwee 2012). Women are found in positions of power in transnational IWT crime networks, but their prominence is due to their exceptionalism; where women are involved, they tend to be of the most elite and wealthy class, such as Yang Fenglan, the ‘Ivory Queen’ of Tanzania.31 There is evidence that some women enter the ‘workforce’ of organized crime through a relationship with a man who is actively involved such as a father, husband, brother, partner or friend. Women may step up into roles of power in transnational crime networks if a male partner/family member has to flee, is imprisoned or dies (Hübschle 2014).

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Symbiotic networks of male power:

Networks of male power facilitate, protect and drive transnational trafficking. The interconnection and symbiosis of male individual actors and collective networks greases the wheels of IWT, especially at the higher end: government officials, bankers, diplomats, transportation logistics specialists, border officials, customs officials, pilots, cargo handlers, truck drivers, rangers, police officials, guards. While high-end and large-scale trafficking can produce substantial profit, it also takes substantial capital – which men are more likely to have or be able to acquire.

One observer notes that “the higher end of the transportation chain involves men particularly in the cross-border and international trade due to the potential for danger and the need to use bribes and/or aggression with interdiction agents. As most government customs, police and forest rangers are men, the traders who have to deal with them are men as well” (McElwee 2012).

Corruption

Corruption is integral to the networks of trafficking – from local to global. The ease of men in separate networks dealing with one another through corrupt practices is essential to trafficking. This is not to say that women don’t participate in corruption, bribery or coercion. They do. But they do so in different ways and, the research suggests, at lower rates.

Corruption is one of the few topics within IWT that has some depth of gender-informed research.

A recent overview of gender and corruption by WWF and other IWT partners offers these key takeaways (Kramer et al. 2020):

- Corruption undermines legal and sustainable natural resource management and conservation, gives power to parties with money and influence, and is often used as strategy for maintaining that power. Corruption can further marginalize women and other groups who already face power inequity and who rely on environmental resources for livelihoods and well-being.

- Evidence shows that women and men can have different interests in and relationships to natural resources. It also suggests that women and men experience, participate in, profit and lose from corruption differently.

- Anti-corruption strategies aimed at improving natural resource management and conservation outcomes should be informed by a strong understanding of these differences; otherwise, they may miss critical opportunities and constraints.

Gender-informed anti-corruption strategies are still relatively new, so collecting data to further inform this work is especially important.

Much of the gender-informed corruption literature, however, is not IWT focused. It may have bearing on IWT, but the evidence hasn’t yet been developed (Eden et al. 2020; UNODC 2020).

The notion that women are less corruptible than men has gained currency as a narrative about national elected women leaders, women in judiciaries, in financial industries – and in IWT. The fact that this seems to be simultaneously a (sexist) stereotype and also an evidence-based reality means that it needs careful situation-specific scrutiny to be operationalized in IWT.

Structural factors are more likely to explain why women are less involved in bribery and corruption: at both the high and low end, women don’t give bribes because generally they have fewer material and monetary resources; especially at local levels, women generally aren’t in positions of power over resources to be on the receiving end of bribes; social systems and governments with more women in leadership positions are likely to also be more democratic and transparent, important inhibitors of corruption.33

Bribes demanded from women are likely to take the form of sexual exploitation – as in the fish-for-sex scheme, for example. The 2019 Transparency International Global Corruption Barometer for the first time included sexual exploitation as part of its assessment of corrupt practices. This revealed that in Latin America one in five people had either experienced ‘sexortion’ (the abuse of power to obtain a sexual benefit or advantage) or knew someone who had (Pring and Vrushi 2019; Eden et al. 2020); while the workable assumption is that most of these one-in-five people are women, the study didn’t disaggregate the data further to establish this.

A synthesis of the literature on transnational trafficking summarizes the importance of male interconnectivity:

“For example, cross-border posts and wildlife trafficking network nodes involving international trade are typically dominated by men, perhaps due to the potential for physical danger and the common practice of using bribes and/or aggression with border officials (Hübschle, 2014; Epano et al., 2019). Most government customs, police, and forest rangers are men and the illegal traders who interact with them at border crossings are also usually men. Male-male interactions may be borne out of cultural stereotypes that men relate better to each other in criminal contexts because crime, and policing, are perceived as male dominated and led. Houston investigated gendered patterns of corruption and access to multiple types of illicit networks among female cross-border traders near the Senegambia border.” (Houston 2012; Agu and Gore 2020).
ENFORCEMENT: TYPES AND IMPACTS

“The problem [of IWT] is so urgent that from 2010 to 2016, foreign governments and NGOs donated over US$1.3 billion toward anti-poaching measures across Africa and Asia” (World Bank Group, 2016).

Anti-IWT support has largely gone toward law enforcement that targets poachers, smugglers and dealers (Challender et al. 2015; Holden et al. 2019).

Non-enforcement activities in IWT – such as efforts to reduce consumer demand (see next section) – remain poorly funded, with only 6% of the funds committed globally going to reducing demand (World Bank Group 2016).

Antipoaching enforcement actors, from local to global, are mostly male:

**Rangers:** on global average, women comprise 3-11% of the ranger workforce (Seager et al. 2021; Belecky et al. 2019). Parallel general analyses of staffing of protected areas point to similar gender dynamics (Hill Rojas et al. 2001; Aguilar et al. 2004; Gonzales 2007; Badola et al. 2014; CPAM 2020).

**Police officers:** typically deployed at municipal or regional levels, police are mostly not involved in IWT activities, although they may provide back-up for enforcement efforts. There is no meaningful global average of women in police departments, but a recent Interpol report (2020) provides ranges from 6-10% women in police forces (India, Indonesia, Cambodia) to mid-30% (Sweden and Eastern Europe).

Compared to national policing, a higher number of women are involved in international police organisations, notably Interpol. In 2014, 44% of Interpol officers were women. This may be because officers deployed to Interpol don’t have enforcement powers; it is not seen as a ‘dangerous place’ and working there doesn’t include operational tasks.

Despite recent efforts to bring women into enforcement agencies, the imagery of frontline officers – especially rangers – is implacably male. (For further discussion of the gender dynamics in ranger workforces, see Jones and Solomon 2019, Seager et al. 2021).

It is intriguingly plausible (although mostly unexamined) that the predilection for ‘enforcement’ in IWT is itself an artifact of the gendered nature of IWT organizations and the paradigm bias established by the field and wildlife biology origins of the key actors in the anti-trafficking universe (discussed further in the ‘policy’ section).
The militarization of enforcement and of trafficking/poaching operations (which is alarmingly accelerating across some parts of Africa) is both a driver and an effect of the embedded maleness of trafficking and enforcement networks. The representation of IWT as a war accelerates this dynamic. In the representation above, this war is also infused with and driven by nationalist/race-based tropes.

Highly armed ranger work doubles down on stereotypes that men are ‘naturally suited’ to put up with hardship and danger. Male-dominant (or exclusive) enforcement disadvantages women, while creating gaps for traffickers to exploit, in turn undermining enforcement.

Highly armed enforcement:

- Draws on, privileges, and reinforces a macho stereotype of being a ranger (which in itself is an unhealthy stereotype for men) that excludes women at the same time as it puts men in considerable danger.
- Reinforces cultural attitudes about women – that they are unsuited for work that involves heavy arms, which is almost everywhere seen to contravene gender norms of femininity.
- Escalates the potential for violence between different ranger teams (e.g., community patrol teams and ranger patrol teams) as well as between rangers and communities.
- Can lead to less effective conservation, alienating communities from ranger teams (which then makes it even harder to recruit women) (Duffy 2014, 2019). Male-dominant enforcement actors, particularly at the ranger-community level, are less likely to have the full confidence of female community members (Belecky et al. 2019, Scager et al. 2021).
- Can create a trafficking loophole: Women are known to have been used to smuggle wildlife because enforcement units were all men; men wouldn’t have licence to search the women. Thus gender bias/skew among enforcement officials ironically facilitates crime.
- Is likely to lead to escalation in the lethality of ‘domestic’ violence as more guns circulate in communities and are kept in households (Braga et al. 2021; Zeoli 2018). Most of the evidence of the correlation of gun availability with escalated violence against women comes from the US, where this relationship is unmistakable – as one study concludes, “readily available firearms place women at particularly high risk of homicide at the hands of a spouse” (Bailey et al. 1997).

Male-dominant enforcement actors are demonstrably more likely than mixed sex or women-only enforcers to resort to use of violence against community members and individual poachers, and in often widespread and unpredictable ways. IUCN’s groundbreaking assessment of gender-based violence in environmental sectors reveals evidence of both systematic and random violence of sometimes epidemic proportions (Castañeda Camey et al. 2020). The Independent Panel of Experts’ report Embedding human rights in nature conservation: from intent to action examined reports of widespread human rights violations in the context of WWF’s work, including allegations of harassment and sexual assault including rape of minors and group rape by some (male) government rangers. The more armed and militarized the enforcement teams are, the more extreme the risk of violence can be.

Enforcement protocols, reinforced by policy, seldom distinguish between poaching for subsistence or for trade. As a result, enforcement often targets the local actor, not the higher-up-the-chain traders. This may affect women more as they are more likely to be hunting/extracting for subsistence than for trade, but this remains unexplored). This aggravates distancing and distrust between enforcement personnel, especially locally sited rangers, and local people — at the same time, rangers can be demoralized and demotivated because they feel distrusted by communities (Cooney 2016).

ECONOMIC AND HEALTH IMPACTS OF TRAFFICKING

Women generally reap a very small share of the overall profits spun from IWT. This may have multiple consequences, almost none of which have been examined closely: it could arguably lessen – or enhance – women’s commitment to conservation or, conversely, to poaching and trafficking; it may be a factor in the ongoing dependency cycle of women on men for their economic wellbeing; it reinforces the notion that women are not ‘serious’ actors in powerful economic systems.

The overwhelming representation of ranger and related enforcement as male activities gives men an advantage on what might be very limited occupational opportunity ladders.

There is widespread evidence of a general pattern that when women earn money, they put a higher share of their earnings into family and household wellbeing, compared with men who put a larger share of earnings into personal spending. The inclusion of women in income-earning opportunities, especially in opportunity-constrained settings, can have wide-scale household-lifting effects. One of the only studies of this effect within IWT revealed the general pattern: men spent their hunting income on personal items such as tobacco and alcohol, whereas women spent their share on food for the household (Coad et al. 2010).

IWT is associated with global and local spread of a wide array of zoonotic diseases (Kareem et al. 2003). From Ebola to COVID-19, all of the social and many of the health impacts of zoonotic disease epidemics are gender-differentiated. Global data on COVID reveals that more men than women have died from COVID-19 as of early 2021; the economic impacts in terms of unemployment and the burden of unpaid household care activity have fallen more heavily on women.

One of the earliest documented cases of wildlife trade-related gender-differentiated health impacts was the outbreak of "parrot fever" – psittacosis – across Europe in 1929-30. The epidemics originated in Argentina through shipments of pet birds. In the Faroe Islands 174 cases of human psittacosis were reported from 1930 to 1938; the human death rate was 20% overall, but it was especially high (80%) in pregnant women (Hermann et al. 2006).
RESPONSES TO TRAFFICKING

Inclusive ranger work and enforcement: There is not much research on gender in enforcement activities specific to IWT or conservation, but using civilian police force evidence as roughly comparable (UNODC 2020, Roman 2020), the findings point clearly to the importance of inclusive enforcement.

In IWT, as elsewhere, inclusion of women in enforcement might be expected to de-escalate – and perhaps demilitarize – activities (Strobl 2019). On a practical note, having women on enforcement teams means they are available to search and question female suspects – a task that men are culturally prohibited from doing, and shouldn’t be doing anyway.

The Uganda Revenue Authority, one of the few known to integrate an explicit gender lens in its law enforcement functions, reports that having female enforcement officers has increased its capacity to undertake covert intelligence missions where the suspects are female, and then to conduct searches of those suspects.

A broader outcome of having more women rangers is that it might encourage women’s participation in conservation/natural resource management more widely. This possible dynamic deserves closer examination (Seager et al. 2021).

The Chitwan Declaration (World Ranger Congress 2019) commits to broad gender-related goals: gender-equal opportunities in hiring, pay, and promotion in the ranger workforce, as well as appropriate measures to provide safety and support for female rangers. The Universal Ranger Support Alliance (URSA) has committed to a deep analysis of the obstacles and possible pathways to a more inclusive ranger workforce.

In the meantime, several initiatives, many private, have been undertaken to develop women-only anti-poaching ranger teams. The best known of these include the Black Mambas (South Africa), Team Lioness (Kenya), the Seed Women (a mostly indigenous women’s team of rangers in Western Forests, China), an all-women team within the Dongning Forestry Bureau (China), and the Akashinga in Zimbabwe. Most of the all-women teams deploy non-militaristic approaches, but a few – the Akashinga particularly – train women to be as militarized as men; this is a controversial approach, but the Akashinga rangers point to an impressive track record of IWT enforcement success (although less evidence is available on their conservation successes).

Including women in enforcement activities increases effectiveness and decreases violence; women are more effective community liaisons than male peers in enforcement domains and produce enforcement outcomes with less force:

“Women are consistently rated as trusted by their communities and, importantly, are motivated to serve communities in an era of decreased police legitimacy. Women have high levels of interpersonal communication skills, which translates into more effective practices in the field. Women are found to have a calming effect on male partners in high-stress and dangerous assignments, resulting in fewer police deaths. Higher levels of female representation are associated with organizations that emphasize community policing. Female police officers have a positive influence on the perceived job performance, trustworthiness, and fairness of a police agency, perhaps increasing the public’s willingness to cooperate in the production of positive public safety outcomes. Female officers are less likely to use force, use excessive force, or be named in a lawsuit than male officers. Research has found that male officers were more likely than female officers to be aggressive as a result of some quality of the encountered member of the public, such as race or socioeconomic class. Even though studies show that subjects use the same amount of force against female officers as against male officers, and in some cases, more force, female officers are more successful in defusing violent or aggressive behavior.”

(Roman 2020)
Focusing on consumer behaviour represents a relatively recent paradigm shift within IWT work.

From micro to macro levels, consumption reflects behaviours, norms and systems that are thoroughly gendered.

- ‘Consumers’ are gendered actors; men and women purchase and consume different wildlife products, for different purposes.

- Overall, men consume wild animal products more frequently than women; more women than men use wildlife-based traditional Asian/Chinese medicine, but they use different products for different purposes.

- Consumption of wildlife products as food reflects both income and gender gradients.

- Increasing affluence, especially in emerging economies, is identified as one of the major drivers of IWT; ‘affluence’ is gendered, and data on both income and wealth shows a large – and in many cases, growing – gender gap.

- Much wildlife consumption is directly driven by gender norms and ‘performance’ of expected masculine and feminine roles.

Women’s traditional roles as provisioners of households and carers of families shape much of their wildlife consumption behaviours.

- Men use wildlife consumption as a currency for cementing male business relationships.

- Many demand-reduction/behaviour change campaigns don’t yet have robust findings that establish their efficacy – but some do.

- The largest share of consumer research has focused on Asian consumers – reinforcing a geographic and racist bias about the ‘super-consumer’ stereotype.

- ‘Influencers’ – from teachers to celebrities – can play significant roles in stimulating behaviour; men and women may respond to influencers differently.

- Understanding the scope, scale, and demographics of wildlife consumption is now powering much of the IWT agenda. Understanding and influencing consumption has become a matter of considerable urgency and attention (Veríssimo et al. 2020; Burgess and Zain 2018; Kennaugh 2015; TRAFFIC 2008; USAID 2017).

The consumption focus expands IWT paradigms, bringing attention to human behaviour and drawing on the expertise not only of conservation biologists but social scientists and human behaviourists. From micro to macro levels, consumption reflects behaviours, norms and systems that are thoroughly gendered.

“In the past, efforts to address wildlife trade have been primarily focused on law enforcement to prevent the poaching and illegal harvest of animals and plants, and trafficking of their parts, products and derivatives along trade routes. However, a complementary effort is also required to address demand amongst consumers. This need has been recognised by governments, international organisations, NGOs and others, through several high-level declarations and commitments to action. Stakeholders now have an imperative to understand and apply the most effective and efficient strategic approaches through which to change consumer choice, and shift purchasing preference and buyer behaviour away from illegal wildlife products.” (Burgess and Zain 2018)
WHO IS CONSUMING WHAT, AND WHY?

At granular levels, most research on consumption is just now underway. Research on gender and consumption is barely emergent.

Local bushmeat consumption

A study in northern Uganda found that men and women have different practices and preferences for eating bushmeat or domestic animals:

“the cooks (all women) said they preferred the taste of domestic meats (eg chicken, goat), male hunters said they preferred bushmeat... our findings indicate that male preference for wild animal meat may play a role in bushmeat utilization, consistent with similar studies, as four of the five top preferred meats by hunters were wild animals rather than domestic choices... This finding is not mirrored by the reported preferences of cooks, who generally preferred domestic meat choices to be more nutritious than bushmeat, which may indicate that male household members may have more influence over household food choices.” (Dell et al. 2020)

There are intriguing intersectional findings that would be enriched by gender assessment. For example, a study of bushmeat consumption in Republic of the Congo (which did not disaggregate for gender) found a strong positive relationship between the income of the household head (presumably male) and bushmeat consumption (Mbete et al. 2011). Another study (also not gender-disaggregated) found that the relationship of bushmeat consumption to income was a U-shaped curve: “As price conscious poor households get wealthier they can afford to eat more meat so bushmeat consumption rises initially with income. When households reach a certain income threshold they switch to eating the typically more preferred and expensive meat from domesticated live-stock, and bushmeat consumption falls.” (Wilkie and Wieland 2015).

A study in Viet Nam found that small-scale collection of non-timber forest products for commercial sale was more important in the economy of poor households and households more dependent on women’s labour, especially those households without any available male labour (Quang 2006).

Medicinal uses

In Viet Nam, friends are a more significant source of health products for female purchasers than for males. More males seek out professional wild animal traders for health products (Venkataraman 2007).

In China, both men and women bought tiger-bone wine, typically older and wealthier consumers (USAID 2017). Post-menopausal women in China use tiger bone for rheumatoid arthritis and osteoporosis. In Viet Nam, women constitute a significant number of those purchasing rhino horn for the perceived general health or medicinal needs of their families while pangolin scales are consumed by lactating mothers, supposedly to enhance breast milk (USAID 2017).

28% of men and 25% of women in a Chinese survey said they would choose rhino horn as a medicine; 18% of men and 14% of women said they would purchase it as a luxury good (Kennough 2015).

A recent study in Singapore (Doughty et al. 2019) revealed that women preferred the more traditional saiga shavings, while men preferred the more modern form, saiga cooling water.

Two studies in Taiwan corroborated the prevailing understanding that a higher proportion of women than men use TCM. One study found that the one-year prevalence of TCM use for women was 31.8%, for men 22.4%, a gap that persists across age, class, education, and religious affiliations (Shih et al. 2012); another cohort study between 2000-2010 established that 30% of women were TCM users, compared with 23% of men (Yeh et al. 2016).
A 2008 study TRAFFIC conducted in Southeast Asia (the first of its kind to look at broad-spectrum social and economic drivers) concluded that:

"Wealth appears to be a stronger driver of illegal and unsustainable wildlife trade in south-east Asia than poverty – interventions to reduce poverty alone are unlikely to be effective in reducing illegal and unsustainable wildlife trade. There is a critical need to ensure that interventions are better targeted to, and more cognizant of, the dynamics of increasing affluence and wealth, rising aspirations and demands, and wider processes of economic growth in the region. Particular efforts need to be made to target interventions to urban consumers, and to richer and more powerful groups... Both experts and literature consulted for this study considered raising affluence and increasing disposable income in consumer countries was a major driver of demand for wildlife in the [SE Asia] region."

(TAFFIC 2008)

This IWT analysis is congruent with an emerging understanding that affluence is a major driver of environmental damage and biodiversity pressure – and, further, that the demands of the extremely affluent drive environmental pressures (Wiedman et al. 2020; UNEP 2016).

In emerging economies, new consumer demand for IWT products reflects new affluence and a rise in income across a wider social band (Druy 2009). A recent study of the pet trade identified increasing affluence in Latin America and East Asia as spiking demand for exotic pets (Smith et al. 2017).

Both affluence and income are gendered. The rising economic global tide has not lifted all boats, and women’s share of the new income as well as new wealth is much smaller than men’s. Whether this is reflected through the ‘billionaire lists’ or in formal employment receipts, women are a very small minority of the super-wealthy and earn much smaller incomes.48

More ‘development’ does not necessarily close this gap; gender earnings inequality in China has increased in recent years with marketization (He et al. 2018; Qin 2016), as it has in Viet Nam, Cambodia and Laos (Chowdhury et al. 2018; Robertson et al. 2020).

The Gulf States, a major demand region for IWT, are among the most gender-unequal in the world.49 A significant gender gap in both earnings and wealth also characterizes the older centres of wealth, particularly Europe and North America, although the floor may be high enough that both male and female consumers can afford to participate in ‘ordinary’ IWT, including pet owning, while super-charged IWT events (including clandestine hunting tours) remain mostly male prerogatives.

IWT is enmeshed in and driven by complex dynamics of inequality at the macro level – between ‘supply’ regions and demand regions, and as a result of regional-level development and development strategies including infrastructure expansion and urbanization. Such inequalities of poverty and wealth play out at micro levels too, between individuals, and within and between households.

Gender equality and gender relations are similarly enmeshed and driven by inequalities from macro to micro. There are robust feminist analyses of the gendered processes of development, urbanism and both emergent and established economic inequalities.

However, these two domains of analysis – of the ways in which IWT is enmeshed in economic inequalities, and of the extent to which economic inequalities are gendered – are not in conversation with one another. Serious research is needed to explore the intersection of analyses of affluence/poverty as a driver of IWT and analyses that the creation of both wealth and income are gender-differentiated processes.
GENDER NORMS,
MASCULINITIES AND FEMININITIES

Consumer demand for IWT products is infused throughout with gender roles and ‘performance’ of masculinities and femininities. This is under-studied, but some research gives glimpses of the importance of these dynamics.

Proving manhood

Trophy hunting sits in a particularly complicated relationship to IWT. Much trophy hunting is legal, and many conservationists and conservation organizations assert that controlled trophy hunting can be an effective conservation tool that also provides benefits to local communities. Understanding what drives trophy hunting in particular and killing for sport in general can inform thinking and responses.

Most of the world’s sports and trophy hunters are men. Trophy-hunting has been documented as a core for IWT. In 2011, in a particularly convoluted scheme, criminal networks recruited pseudo-hunters including female Thai sex workers and male proxy hunters from the Czech Republic and Poland to obtain rhino horns in South Africa on the pretence of trophy hunts – thus circumventing laws regulating the number of horns that could be taken out as trophies (Hubschle 2013; Milliken and Shaw 2012; Rademeyer 2012).

Race is also entangled with trophy hunting, particularly in the African context, where the history of parks is one of legitimizing privileged white sport hunters while labelling the hunting practices of local people ‘poaching’ (McCubbin and Van Patter 2020). A startling study of the near-extinction of the wolf at the hands of male European settlers in the USA peels back the layers of what we would now call ‘toxic masculinity’: the author argues that the brutality inflicted on wolves drew from the same layers of what we would now call ‘toxic masculinity’: the author argues that the brutality inflicted on wolves drew from the same

Women as family carers and household managers

In most of the world, women perform roles as primary household managers, and thus in non-subsistence settings they are the primary purchasers of goods for households. There are a few studies that reveal that women’s purchases of certain IWT products reflect not necessarily their own personal consumption preferences, but their efforts to fulfill their roles as ‘good’ household provisioners.

In one of the few gender-differentiated studies of IWT flora, the prevailing explanation for the increased consumption of illegally harvested succulents in the South Korean and East Asian markets is that ‘housewives’ are driving the trade in their effort to accentuate their home management credentials (Margulies 2020a).

One study of rhino horn consumption in China found that women were the primary purchasers of TCM, including rhino horn, for the home, but that a slightly smaller proportion of women (25%) than men (28%) said they would choose rhino horn for medicine (Kennaugh 2015). Medicinal-driven buyers of rhino horn — middle-aged women — were also status-driven. They were generally affluent women in their 50s who purchased rhino horn for their families. While their main reason for purchasing rhino horn was to affirm their social status, they also believed in its health benefits (as a detoxification for the body and cure for hangover and serious illnesses). They felt that keeping rhino horn at home ensured the well-being of their families (USAID 2017). In their role as home-provisioners, a study in Singapore established that women were the primary purchasers but not the primary users of Saiga horn; this repeated the findings of an earlier Singapore study that women were more likely to buy traditional wildlife-derived medicinals for others (Doughty et al. 2019). Whether women use more TCM products, or buy more in performing their roles as household purchasers, it is clear that behavioural-change initiatives need to focus differentially on women and men consumers.

Beauty and status

Many studies reveal gender-differentiated motivations for purchasing IWT products. In snapshot, one of the primary driver differences is that women purchase IWT to enhance their beauty, men to enhance their status and to consolidate business and prestige relationships with other men (Burgess and Zain 2018). The beauty factor is the primary driver of women’s demand for the dried fish maw (swim bladder) of totoaba fish, believed to improve skin tone and complexion — demand is so high that it is driving the totoaba, found only in the Gulf of California in Mexico, into extinction (Margulies et al. 2019).

The profit margins of this trade are so high that the totoaba is often referred to as ‘aquatic cocaine’ (Mongabay.com 2018; Pasha-Robinson 2016). Analyses of rhino horn and of ivory purchased as a luxury good in China, on the other hand, concluded that the main profile of buyers was ‘young, well-educated males’ and that the main motivations were prestige-display and business gift-giving (Kennaugh 2013; USAID 2017).

A recent Defra/TRAFFIC study represents the intersectionality of gender, sex and class graphically, (Burgess and Zain 2018):
Male transactional relationships

Male networks of business relationships are often consolidated through proffers of rare, luxury, ‘exotic’ experiences and gifts (McElwee 2012, Duffy et al. 2009, Shairp et al. 2016). One interview-based study in Viet Nam (see below) revealed that wildmeat is a medium for men to signal their status to one another and to build business allegiances (Drury 2009). Although the language of the interviewees refers to ‘people’, it is clear that these are male-bonding experiences:

Another study found that wildmeat is seldom eaten alone – it is almost entirely a social bonding practice, more often used by men than women (McElwee 2012). Mirroring the business exchange of wildlife products, women too are often used by men as business currency. It is not uncommon for businessmen to provide sex workers to one another as a currency of mutual male regard and to consolidate business relationships (Osburg 2013, 2018; Uretsky 2016).

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INTERVIEWER: Did you buy?

WM16: No, no, no! I went for business [...] Vietnamese people, while doing business with their partners, often invite their partners to a very solemn place, and they also want to treat their partners with some specialties which they don’t often eat. I think they want to tell their partners that their companies are doing well, and they want to show their respect and devotion. (Male professional and wild meat consumer aged 24).

INTERVIEWER: When your uncle eats special dishes, is it just for fun?

WM17: He is a state official going on business to southern Vietnam, so he is invited. So he goes to restaurant for business [...] He goes to inspect the performances by local officials, so he is invited by the local officials [...] They think meat is rare and precious [...] People consider wild meat dishes something precious to serve distinguished guests. (Male skilled worker and wild meat consumer aged 25).

INTERVIEWER: On what kind of occasions do people go to eat special dishes?

WM25: When [...] someone wants to invite other people out to ask them for a big favour then people choose something very special or expensive to invite each other to eat [...] Sometimes people buy it for work, as a form of bribery. (Businessman and wild meat consumer aged 56).

IMPACTS OF CONSUMPTION

Coming at the end of the IWT chain, wildlife consumption accumulates the entire chain of impacts.

At unsustainable rates, trade in wildlife can produce species extinction or near-extinction, ecosystem devastation, ‘biodiversity apocalypse’, and the consequent imperilment of human livelihoods, development and health – many of which affect women more than men, and all of which have gender-differentiated effects.

STopping consumption

The relatively new focus on IWT consumption has propelled a burgeoning field in ‘demand reduction’ through behaviour change. Influencing consumers to stop or reduce their consumption of illegal wildlife products could be very significant in reducing IWT impacts (Burgess 2016; Kennaugh 2015).

Conservation-related consumer demand reduction draws its strength from classic marketing models that “demand is determined not only by the attributes of the goods or services (e.g. price, availability, provenance) that a consumer may seek, but also by the consumers’ self-identity and economic constraints (e.g. ethnicity, religion, income) as well as the sociocultural context in which purchase and consumption takes place” (Verissimo et al. 2010). Bringing gender into this matrix will be key to durable success.

IWT demand reduction/behavioural change campaigns have proliferated. A TRAFFIC survey identified more than 85 demand reduction campaigns between 2005 and 2015. Many do not yet have robust mechanisms to measure effectiveness and outcomes, but the most successful behavioural change media campaigns emulated marketing and consumer engagement strategies used in luxury brand sectors. Building on these models of consumer engagement, awareness of different gender roles in wildlife consumption is being integrated into some of these campaigns. Most demand reduction campaigns have focused on ‘the Chinese’ or ‘Asians’ as a ‘super-consumer’ stereotype, disregarding cultural and social demographic nuance, reinforcing racist caricatures and a colonialistic narrative (Mazgalies et al. 2010).

Mass media campaigns are deploying social media, television, and print messaging. Most also use ‘influencers’ – often celebrities, but also trusted messengers such as teachers, religious leaders or affinity networks. There is little investigation into whether men and women listen to and trust the same messengers. In some campaigns, notably against rhino horn use in Viet Nam, women’s unions were used to influence their members. There have been claims of considerable success in this campaign, but verification remains uncertain.
The ‘Beautiful Without Ivory’ campaign, targeted at women, was launched in Thailand in 2019, using stereotypes of women’s concerns with appearance. It uses socially prominent female influencers, including models and TV personalities, to persuade women that beauty is not achieved with elephant ivory jewellery. USAID reports that the video, launched in September 2019 reached more than 100,000 people.

66% of Thais who own ivory jewellery are women. Are men buying for women as a marker of ‘conspicuous consumption’? Are women the main buyers?

TRAFFIC social marketing campaign launched in 2020 aimed at wealthy Vietnamese businessmen, the major consumer group of rhino horn, with the message that the use of rhino horn is not a mark of success. The main protagonist in the video, a male architect, has a vision for the future based on harmony with nature, not its exploitation.

The female companion’s role appears to be primarily to reinforce the notion that modern and attractive manly success is eco-conscious.
Men dominate in most of the major organizations that play key roles in international IWT policy: governments, NGOs, research institutions and academic sectors.

The dominance of men and exclusion of women is a self-reinforcing system; but it can also be reversed, and the inclusion of women at ‘critical mass’ levels can create a virtuous cycle of further inclusion.

Sexual violence, harassment and discrimination is common in all of these major player organizations; it is largely ignored or protected.

The effect of the lack of women in policy circles is hard to measure, although there are sweeping assertions that women are more likely to “raise issues that others overlook, to support ideas that others oppose, and to seek an end to abuses that others accept” (Madeleine Albright, former US Secretary of State).

There is evidence that governments with higher proportions of women produce more gender-equality legislation and more ‘environment-friendly’ legislation.

Remedies can include quotas, targeted leadership training programmes, organization-wide gender equality policy mandates; donor demands and funding mandates are highly influential.
Government & IWT INGOS

Information on the leadership profile of IWT-specific organizations is scarce, but the overall portrait is of an NGO sector just in the early stages of taking on diversity commitments.

Green 2.0, an independent advocacy campaign to increase racial and ethnic diversity within the mainstream environment movement, has collected diversity data from some of the most influential NGOs and foundations in the environmental sector. Its latest report, issued in 2020, provides a useful overview on the number of women and people of colour on the organizations’ full-time staffs, senior staffs, and boards. While women account for more than half of the senior workforce within several influential NGOs, gender disparity remains strong at the board level of most of the organizations listed by the report.

WWF International’s most recent key statistics at its network level, looking at 7,830 staff, highlighted that at staff and management level, WWF is well gender balanced, but that gender disparity is strong at the country leadership level.

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Researchers

IWT policy is based on robust research. As IWT paradigms shift towards including more social analysis, the profile of ‘core research’ – and thus the expert structure – will expand. But at this moment of transition, the research fields still most central to IWT work are the origin disciplines – such as forestry, wildlife biology, ecosystem sciences.

All of these fields are highly male-skewed, although representational shifts are clearly underway.

Research forestry (USA, 2016): women = 19% of university faculty, 26% of US Forest Service’s R&D.

Natural sciences researchers at Natural Resources Canada, 2014: women = 19%.

Governments

Women represent, globally, 26% of legislators in national governments. National representation ranges from 61% in Rwanda to more than a dozen countries with less than 10% women (a cohort that includes Japan, Eswatini, Nigeria, Iran and Solomon Islands, among others).

Multilateral entities

Influential multilateral entities in IWT include the CITES Secretariat, Interpol, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat, and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

- CITES: Secretary-General is female; overall staffing profile is not available
- IPBES Secretariat in Geneva: Executive Secretary is female; Geneva staff is majority female (15 women, 4 men, as represented on the website).
- Interpol: women comprise 44% of Interpol officers
- World Customs Organization: on global average, women comprise 38% of the workforce, with lower representation at leadership levels
- CBD: Executive Secretary is female; overall staffing profile is not available

Top to bottom: African Union Heads of State 2020; ASEAN Heads of State 2019; G20 summit 2019

Global conservation & IWT INGOS

Researchers

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WHO’S MAKING POLICY?
WHERE ARE THE WOMEN

The exclusion of women from the cohorts of leadership in high-level policy organizations is self-reinforcing.

The fewer women there are in any setting, the more uncomfortable it is for the first/only/few women – and the less likely that observers/other participants think women ‘should’ be there. These feedback effects have been most studied in formal government representation.

Gender equality commitments (and requirements) from donors – or the absence of them – can have tremendous influence on the pathways available for gender analysis and diversity inside conservation programmes and organizations.

In IWT, the primary focus of donors, until recently, has been on anti-poaching enforcement. (The Swedish development agency, Sida, is an exception, being one of the earliest advocates for bringing gender to the fore in its IWT funding programmes.) The intellectual proclivity in IWT towards physical sciences frameworks of analysis and explanation has left little space for support of social dynamics within IWT spaces.

Experiences of harassment and assault not only have substantial impact on the individual professionally and personally, they can also influence the entire scientific community.

The lack of diverse backgrounds and perspectives may well constrain the range of research topics being addressed, slowing advances and achievements in science.

(Clancy et al. 2014)

Harassment, exclusion and impunity

WildAct, a conservation NGO in Viet Nam, recently conducted a survey of the workplace climate in the conservation sector in the country – the first of its kind. Among its key findings (WildAct 2020):

- The overtly male-dominated environment of biodiversity conservation fieldwork can present safety issues for both women and men who do not conform to normative forms of masculinity, which in turn may expose them to harassment and violence.
- 82.5% of the survey participants (n = 94), both men and women, experienced sexual harassment in some form in the previous two years: four in every seven men, and six in every seven women.
- Almost 5% of respondents said they had experienced rape or attempted rape in their workplace.
- Sexual remarks and ‘jokes’ were commonplace in the workplace, 88% of which were directed to women.
- Disciplinary action against perpetrators of harassment ranged mostly from light to none.

These findings mirror the few other available assessments of fieldwork science, which points to a constant background drumbeat of harassment and attacks – especially directed against young women, but affecting men too (Clancy et al. 2014). In the 2014 study, 70% of women field scientists and 40% of men experienced some form of sexual harassment; for men, it was mostly from peers, for women mostly from superiors. The authors were cognizant of the likely effects on scientists of colour, or gay, lesbian and gender nonconforming scientists, but the survey was too small to produce data on these groups.

Women are often ‘socially policed’ away from participation in high-level policymaking by a hostile work climate, including, in many cases, widespread sexual harassment. In a recent public opinion survey on gender equality across 17 countries, “preventing violence and sexual harassment in the workplace” was identified as the second most pressing action governments should take to improve women’s broader economic opportunities and decision-making powers (the first was equal pay) (WellDeliver 2021).

WHAT’S MISSING WHEN THE WOMEN ARE MISSING?

The effects of the minority status of women in conservation biology is under-documented; but overall, without women, conservation programmes and policies are missing critical voices that are accountable for reducing problems and promoting solutions (Agu and Gore 2020).

Madeleine Albright, the former US Secretary of State, sweepingly asserts that “women [in organizations] can be counted on to raise issues that others overlook, to support ideas that others oppose, and to seek an end to abuses that others accept.”

There’s almost no way to test the Albright hypothesis – if women are missing, we don’t know what contributions they might have brought with them. The COVID-19 pandemic offers some evidence of different and more effective leadership from women in times of crisis, however; one assessment found that “COVID outcomes are systematically and significantly better in countries led by women and, to some extent, this may be explained by the proactive policy responses they adopted... Even accounting for institutional context and other controls, being female-led has provided countries with an advantage in the current crisis.”

Greta Iori, a wildlife and anti-poaching expert, spoke recently about her personal struggles: “As a woman working in wildlife crime in a very male-dominated arena, it hasn’t been easy... any woman working in wildlife conservation, we know it’s not easy to get decision-makers to listen to us... Conservation of wildlife is often considered either a man’s role through scouts and rangers programs or just something a woman shouldn’t be involved in...” (Iori 2020).

A Nigerian female field conservationist, Rachel Asgehofo Ikemeh, echoed these remarks: “The challenges of being a female conservationist and researcher in Nigeria often depends on the task at hand, but can range from being treated with contempt to not being taken seriously to, sometimes, being on the receiving end of [unwanted] admiration. It is, however, predominantly a case of not being taken seriously. If conducting field research, such as leading a field team, traversing vast areas of wild lands, applying unconventional techniques or initiating new methods, it can often be demoralizing and counterproductive to be a female. I have found that being dogged and highly focused helps to overcome these challenges. And, thankfully, the passion for what I do is what drives me.”

Gender equality agendas are increasingly prominent in global high-level policy commitments, including robust commitments embedded across the SDGs. The UN and all its constituent bodies are operating under gender equality mandates. The secretariats of most of the multilateral environmental agreements have robust gender equality goals and policies.

The primary entities in the lead of IWT work are substantially out of this loop. Few conservation organizations are integrating gender into their work. There is no international policy output in the IWT arena – from CITES to the state-led processes such as the London, Kasane or Hanoi Declarations – that calls for or brings in a gender lens.
BRINGING MORE WOMEN TO THE TABLE

Leadership training

Interpol has launched several initiatives to develop inclusive leadership in police forces.\(^{56}\) WWF’s Education for Nature programme similarly is committed to cultivating diverse ‘pipelines’ for career development. The World Customs Organization, which among other functions works closely with CITES enforcement, in 2013 developed a “Gender Equality Organizational Assessment Tool”\(^{57}\) as a self-diagnostic tool to create a more inclusive workforce.

Quotas

Gender equality quotas that mandate a percentage of women are now widespread in governments and corporate boards. They are controversial, but have demonstrable effect. One of the effects is to create a virtuous circle of representation: once women are seen to be holding positions of policy importance, their presence becomes normalized, opening a pathway for yet more women. In addition, there is some evidence that governments with higher proportions of women produce more gender-equality legislation, such as maternity and paternity policies, equal wage laws or anti-violence legislation (Wängnerud and Sundell 2012; Alexander 2012). There is further evidence, although less complete, that governments with higher proportions of women produce more ‘environment-friendly’ legislation (UNEP 2016; WRI 2016).\(^{58}\) Presence alone has almost no effect; there must be mechanisms for participation of women once they are in the room (see Part 3).

Donor commitments/expectations

Donors to projects and entities increasingly expect and, in some cases, require gender to be mainstreamed in the policies and programmes they are funding. An increasing number of governments are adopting explicit feminist-informed development and aid policies that mandate gender integration:\(^{59}\) Sweden, Norway, New Zealand, UK, Mexico, Canada, Iceland and France, among others, now have either fully fledged feminist-informed development aid policies, or express priority consideration for gender mainstreaming in the allocation of their funding.

Sida’s model for gender mainstreaming includes a mandatory gender analysis, which it describes in these terms: “The gender analysis should lead to three approaches which can be used separately or combined according to context:

- Targeted interventions in order to strengthen specific groups or issues.
- Integration of gender equality into programmes and projects.
- Dialogue on gender equality.”\(^{60}\)

The Global Environment Facility (GEF), the major funding source for global environmental projects, implemented a gender policy in 2011 which required, among other expectations, that “In order to be eligible to receive GEF financing for GEF projects, all GEF Partner Agencies will be required to have established either (a) policies, (b) strategies, or (c) action plans that promote gender equality.” GEF is the largest funding mechanism for protected areas worldwide, and combating IWT is a high priority.

The CBD and the UNFCCC have fully formed gender action plans and gender focal point staff to implement them. CITES does not.

The IUCN-USAID RISE partnership to address GBV in conservation\(^{61}\) awarded funding to WildAct Vietnam for a project to address the systemic harassment in the conservation sector its 2020 report uncovered. This is the first RISE project to address harassment within the conservation sector itself.

Women’s self organizing

Increasingly, women and diverse minorities are joining together to create solidarity in wildlife conservation, and to support women and minorities to succeed in the education pipeline in fields related to conservation. These initiatives jump-start and contribute to conversations in scientific communities about increasing diversity and recognizing intersectionality (Seager 2020). Many of these groups focus on topics and issues that relate to IWT, but explicit linkages have yet to be developed.

Some of these networks are now well established; some are under the aegis of an NGO; most are independent scholar and practitioner networks. Many are fledgling and under-resourced, such as the ad hoc Women for Conservation network in Namibia, a 2018 initiative of women, mostly single mothers, from six conservancies; their vision is to become a national force for conservation in Namibia (Seager 2020).

Some examples include:

- Women for Environment/Africa
  womenforenvironment.org
- Women in Ocean Science:
  womeninoceanscience.com
- Young Women in Conservation Biology in Africa
  conhio.org/groups/sections/afica/ywcb
- Black Science Network:
  blacksciencenetwork.com
- Women for Wildlife
  womenforwildlife.com
- Women in Antarctic Research
  www.sear.org/antarctic-women
- Women for Biodiversity
  www.women4biodiversity.org
PART THREE

PRACTITIONER GUIDE
WE’RE BUSY!

WHY BOTHER WITH GENDER?

WHY TACKLE WILDLIFE CRIME WITH “ONE HAND TIED BEHIND OUR BACK”? 

The importance of integrating gender into conservation is increasingly acknowledged, although there are still significant gaps in knowledge, policy and practice.

This seems to be particularly true in the context of illegal wildlife trade where, despite anecdotal evidence that the roles of actors in the trade are highly gender differentiated, there appears to be very little attention paid to gender in research, policy and programming...

Gender-blind IWT interventions can result in a bias in favour of existing gender relations and may even reinforce rigid gender roles and stereotypes and marginalise women further.

Helen Anthem, 2018, FFI
Because IWT takes place in a world that is thoroughly defined by gender differentiation, the actors, practices, impacts, pressures and outcomes of IWT – as well as efforts to curb or eradicate it – too are ‘gendered’.

Gender-blind approaches to IWT result in huge gaps in understanding real-world IWT activities, processes and opportunities for intervention.

It is “tackling wildlife crime with one hand tied behind our back.” On the other hand, exploring those gender dynamics and developing interventions/engagement accordingly is an effectiveness amplifier.

The patterns of power and differentiation that come into view through a gender lens also pertain, in varying degrees and manifestations, to other and intersectional identities – of race/ethnicity, class, religion, etc. There is almost no analysis of those dynamics in relation to IWT.

Amongst the corpus of literature on wildlife trafficking in Africa, the role of women is rarely explored. Women comprise approximately half of the earth’s population and thus have the potential to be at least half of the problem causing, and solutions resolving, wildlife trafficking risks. The role of African women in wildlife trafficking remains mostly unknown and under addressed by conservation science and policy.

(Agu and Gore 2020)

Resources are defined and influenced by the social markers of our lives – race, gender, ethnicity, class, wealth and power… Women’s involvement in IWT is one of our major blind spots … the fact that we’re overlooking women’s roles in wildlife crime and trafficking means that … we’re not creating interventions that can have real impact.

The interventions we’re developing to try to end the wildlife trade need to take into consideration … the social structures and the hierarchies and the communities and societies that women belong to and how that might impact the way they engage with wildlife crime and also we … need to broaden our minds, we need to consider transgender, cisgender and intersex perspectives on wildlife crime.

(Greta Iori, August 2020; www.youtube.com/atch?v=NgPzDjuhrQe&feature=youtu.be)

THE BIG ARGUMENT FOR GENDER INTEGRATION: IT MATTERS

Men and women interact with their environment, biodiversity and natural resources differently: in natural resource-dependent communities, they use different resources, have different priorities for conservation or resource management, have different knowledge about the status of environmental resources, and may have different conservation and environmental priorities (Westerman 2017; UNEP 2016).
AND FIVE MORE ARGUMENTS FOR CARING ABOUT GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT IN IWT WORK:

1. It’s right(s)

One of the hallmarks of the modern world is the ideal that all people have intrinsic and universal human rights, no matter who they are, where they live or the conditions under which they live. It should be apparent, but is worth underlining, that women must be included in that expectation of human rights – by virtue of their shared humanity, women and men should have equal access to resources, privilege, authority, autonomy and opportunities to advance their own interests. The 1995 Beijing declaration on women’s rights establishes the baseline on gender equality: “The human rights of women and of the girlchild are inalienable, integral and indivisible parts of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.”

Ensuring gender-equitable participation is an ethical imperative – a cornerstone for respecting, protecting and promoting human rights and for not disadvantaging anyone in the process of conservation and IWT work (Lau 2020). As one interviewee for this project remarked when explaining why his conservation organization had enacted specific policies to provide opportunities to women as well as men: “It’s just right.”

2. It’s the law (or at least the policy)

Gender equality is increasingly mandated in national laws. A total of 189 national governments are signatories to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) – considered to be the women’s human rights treaty. And 184 countries have some form of women’s equality guarantees in their constitutions or national laws. Gender equality is a foundational principle of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); Goal 5 identifies “Gender equality [as] not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world.”

As conservation and wildlife organizations have shifted from ‘fortress conservation’ to ‘community engagement’ models, they have undertaken commitments and policies to embed human rights in their principles, policies and operations. Under the umbrella of human rights commitments, NGOs (including WWF and TRAFFIC) and environmental multilateral entities have made specific commitments to ensuring women’s rights are intrinsic – or should be. Increasingly, they are mandated. Donors in the conservation realm, whether private or state-based, increasing expect – and many now require – gender-informed approaches and workplans and gender-balanced inclusion.

The next – critical – steps are to ensure that these commitments are matched by implementation and accountability.

Eight international conservation groups, several of which work on IWT, are charter members of the Conservation Initiative on Human Rights. A core commitment of members is to “integrate human rights principles into conservation policy and practice.”

WWF commits to “respecting and promoting human rights in all our conservation work,” and further to “address conservation-human rights links in the design, implementation and monitoring of our programmes.”

Further, WWF has a gender policy, but not yet a gender plan of action.

TRAFFIC’s safeguarding policy affirms that staff and partners will “protect the health, welfare, and human rights of individuals.”
3. Gender equality makes the work of organizations smarter and more effective; diversity and gender-balanced inclusion improves organizational thinking, planning and outcomes

Including diversity in all forms, including gender, in organizations is an effectiveness amplifier – in project planning, programme development and execution, priority-setting, decision-making groups.

One of the foundational arguments for gender inclusion in IWT work (or, in fact, pretty much anything) is that bringing women to the table doubles the available human capacity. Opportunities for better decision-making are amplified when representatives of the whole – not just half – of the population have the opportunity to be involved. There is extensive evidence that diverse policy, decision-making and leadership groups produce better plans, decisions and outcomes. Much of the evidence of this comes from the corporate world, where decision-making diversity has been proven to yield better tangible outcomes.

Dozens of studies, mostly of US firms, establish that greater opportunities for better decision-making are amplified when representatives of the whole – not just half – of the population have the opportunity to be involved. There is extensive evidence that diverse policy, decision-making and leadership groups produce better plans, decisions and outcomes. Much of the evidence of this comes from the corporate world, where decision-making diversity has been proven to yield better tangible outcomes.

The rhetoric around the essential role of gender equality in producing sustainable environmental outcomes sometimes runs ahead of the evidence base, but there is growing acknowledgment in environment, development and conservation fields that unsustainable social systems and unsustainable environmental systems mutually reproduce one another (Díaz et al. 2009, UNEP 2016). Gender equality is demonstrably environmentally beneficial (and vice versa). Gender-balanced inclusion and women’s empowerment can directly produce better resource and conservation outcomes:

- In fieldwork in India and Nepal, pioneering political ecologist Bina Agarwal found that forest management committees with a high proportion of women in their executive committee – the principal decision-making body – showed significantly greater improvements in forest condition in both regions (2000, 2009). Moreover, groups with all-women executive committees in the Nepal sample had better forest regeneration and canopy growth than other groups, despite receiving much smaller and more degraded forests. Older executive committee members, especially older women, made a particular difference. Women’s specific and distinctive knowledge of plant species and methods of product extraction was one of the keys to this success.

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- A later meta-analysis of research reinforced and extended Agarwal’s findings, concluding that for India and Nepal there was “strong and clear evidence of the importance of including women in forest management groups for better resource governance and conservation outcomes” (Leisher et al. 2016). Simulation exercises of forest management in Indonesia, Peru and Tanzania (Cook et al. 2019) showed that groups with gender quotas conserved more trees and distributed the benefits more equally.

- More research on the conservation effects of gender inclusion in conservation projects is needed (Al-Azzawi 2013), but several resource management projects at community levels, from octopus fishery management in Madagascar (Westermann 2017) to wildlife conflict management in Uganda (Blair 2014), also show signs of the ‘effectiveness amplification’ of gender-balanced or women-centric conservation. Some research suggests that protected area projects that have incorporated gender equity principles and promoted women’s participation are more effective and balanced (Biermayr-Jenzano 2003).

4. Women’s empowerment is key to sustainability; gender integration produces direct improvements in resource management and conservation outcomes

Women’s empowerment by itself won’t ‘save the world’, but sustainable environmental outcomes are impossible without it:14

“Gender equity is key to mangrove restoration.”
IUCN

“Gender inequality, climate vulnerability, and state fragility are strongly interlinked.”
UNEP

“[Women’s] full participation is essential to achieve sustainable development.”
Principle 20, Rio Declaration

“A truly transformative global environmental agenda requires gender equality.
Global Gender Environment Outlook, UNEP

“Women’s empowerment by itself won’t ‘save the world’, but sustainable environmental outcomes are impossible without it.”

“For the Paris Agreement to succeed, women and girls must be fully involved in climate policy. When we include women in climate solutions, we see enhanced economic growth and the outcomes are more sustainable.”
UN Climate Change Exec Secretary

“Without the participation of women and the realization of their full creative and productive potential, it will not be possible to attain the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including those related to environmental protection.”
Convention on Biological Diversity

Dealing with the enormity of the problem requires far-reaching changes to global capitalism, education and equality, the paper says. These include abolishing the idea of perpetual economic growth, properly pricing environmental externalities, stopping the use of fossil fuels, reining in corporate lobbying, and empowering women, the researchers argue.

Top scientists warn of ‘ghastly future of mass extinction’ and climate disruption.
5. IWT and conservation organizations have the opportunity to be leaders in making positive gender change

Gender norms are neither ‘natural’ nor unchangeable. Rather, they are made up and remade in everyday contexts. To the extent that IWT and conservation organizations demonstrate commitments to women’s empowerment and to gender inclusivity within their own organizations and, importantly, through projects and programmes, they can be powerful influencers in changing disempowering norms – norms that are damaging for men as well as for women.

The foundational question of gender curiosity is: ‘Where are the women and men?’ (literally and metaphorically). More specific questions follow: Do men and women play the same roles/do the same things/have the same responsibility? Do they face the same pressures, and could they be motivated by the same incentives? Do they have different attitudes towards the issue/situation/problem/solution?

Gender analysis lifts the bar higher by raising systematic questions about the power/privilege/discriminatory processes and flows that create that landscape – the rivers of power that produce and perpetuate it. This requires questions such as: why don’t women have the same land rights as men? What does that land tenure imbalance mean for resource management? Are notions of manliness wielded to shame men into undertaking ever-riskier poaching modes? Do norms of masculinity and femininity drive the trafficking and consumption of particular animal products? Does it matter that women are largely absent from the ranks of policy decision-makers, whether at community or national levels?

Intersectionality is key here: wealthy or race-majority women will have different roles, opportunities and constraints than poor, minority-ethnicity women.

The overarching goal in IWT is to produce change – to curb, if not entirely eliminate, the unsustainable commercialized poaching, trading and consumption of wild flora and fauna that is devastating wildlife, ecosystems and communities. To this end, the purpose of gender integration in IWT is to improve outcomes and interventions.

Especially in poor and rural areas, projects initiated by conservation groups might be one of the few sources of livelihood improvement, employment and income. To the extent that such tangible benefits are distributed in ways that support gender equality and women’s empowerment, this is a win-win – improving conservation outcomes, as discussed above, and at the same time ‘leaning into’ social progress. The double-bottom-line effect of women-centred conservation projects can be particularly impressive. The case for this is already being made across a wide domain of conservation projects, and on a much more limited scale in IWT work.

Findings from a WWF ‘Gender Learning Review’ in Namibia and Madagascar reflect the wider social importance of conservation groups bringing women into projects that they may be funding or initiating:

Most women said that being involved in conservation activities gave them a sense of empowerment, contribution, ‘counting.’ In women-only interview settings, women were even more passionate about saying that through conservation activities women gain broader social connections and exposure to new ideas. In Madagascar, for example, the women in the mangrove communities said that bringing women into mangrove conservation work (planting) enhances their own sense of making significant contributions to the local economy, and does seem to garner more overall respect from their male counterparts. The ‘greater respect’ narrative was repeated several times, and in both men-and-only and women-only meetings participants said that having women more involved in conservation activities meant that men overall respect women and women’s opinions more.

Women also said that being involved in ‘outside’ conservation activities gets them away from being ‘stuck’ at home where outlets for their ideas and energy are limited. Many women said that they find personal growth through community activities and contributing to conservation. One woman in the #Khoao//Hoas Conservancy (Namibia) made an impassioned observation that ‘when a woman just stays at home, she doesn’t know her own potential.’

A woman from Anabeb Conservancy (Namibia) echoed this, saying that because of traditional attitudes women were ‘left to just sit, and we get used to just sitting’ (Seager 2020).
In 2014, TRAFFIC and WWF collaboratively developed a four-pillar conceptual model for efforts to curb IWT:

- **Stop the poaching**: increasing wildlife stewardship e.g. by local communities and strengthening field protection.
- **Stop the trafficking**: promoting action to expose and suppress trafficking.
- **Stop the buying**: encouraging initiatives to reduce consumer demand.
- **International policy**: mobilizing policy response at the international level to ensure that an enabling environment is created to facilitate and sustain the fight against wildlife crime.

This A-D-I-R framework sets the terms of understanding poaching/trafficking/demand and policy through the lens of curiosity about men and women:

Each of the four pillars—poaching, trafficking, consumption and policy—involve actors, drivers, impacts and responses. A gender lens sheds light on these patterns, which then informs analysis, which in turn facilitates gender-informed interventions and outcomes.

Systematically examining actors, drivers, impacts and responses provides a disciplined framework for gender inquiry. The A-D-I-R approach, developed for this project from previous methodological work in gender and environment (Seager 2014; UNEP 2016), is flexible enough to be applied across different scales and across particular issues/topics/approaches. It could further contribute to the WWF Gender Policy and to the Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework (ESSF).

The A-D-I-R approach is intended to be deployed flexibly and often partially—there may not be distinct actors and drivers and impacts and responses in all settings.

### Actors

Gender differentiation is most immediately obvious when examining the actors in IWT—men and women play different roles as offenders, protectors, enforcers, informers, influencers, facilitators, bystanders, consumers. Men and women are positioned differently as actors in relationship to the environment, to conservation, to wildlife. Gender inquiry is the most straightforward to bring to bear on actors: Who’s doing what? Who plays what roles? Do women and men occupy different spaces in those roles?

### Drivers

The drivers are the forces, incentives and circumstances that propel IWT activities, from poaching to policymaking. The most established understanding in the IWT space is that drivers slide between ‘need and greed’. These economic underpinnings are themselves gendered. Moreover, as the evidence presented in the previous sections reveals, expectations of ‘performing’ gender norms and roles of masculinity and femininity are operationalized as drivers of the trade—and in some ways they predetermine both need and desire. Sexual violence and gender inequality are evident as facilitating forces of IWT along the entire value chain.

### Impacts

Because of the differentiated ‘positionality’ of men and women in relation to conservation and environment, and to IWT itself, the impacts of the trade and of curbing it are seldom the same for women and men. If most enforcement actors are male, this has impact on the effectiveness of that enforcement; if men and women use resources and species differently, the impacts of putting them off-limits in protected areas, or of IWT-related ecosystem degradation, will be gender-differentiated.

### Responses

Current programmes and policies developed to mitigate the effects of IWT or to stop it entirely are mostly gender-blind—and in some measure because of that, they often exacerbate gender inequalities. The presumptions and knowledge that inform programmes and policies flow from gendered—or not gendered—understanding. What are the gendered presumptions embedded in enforcement, control and programmatic responses to IWT? To what extent do responses challenge or deepen gender inequalities?
INTEGRATING GENDER INTO PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES:STEP-BY-STEP

PRELIMINARY FAMILIARIZATION
Read this report
Programmatic staff should review, even briefly, the ‘state of the field’ IWT-gender findings in Part 2 of this report. This will ground efforts with a sense of what gender forces, dynamic and outcomes might be anticipated.

STEP 1
Use A-D-I-R scaffolding to get your gender bearings and to identify key questions to develop situational awareness

STEP 2
Checklist of core principles

STEP 3
Take GBV into account

STEP 4
Identify tools and techniques needed

STEP 5
Checklist for best practices for community meetings, interviews and surveys
**STEP 1 USE A-D-I-R TO GET YOUR GENDER BEARINGS: KEY ANALYTICAL QUESTIONS NEEDED TO DEVELOP SITUATIONAL AWARENESS**

The first step in enacting a field-based project is to put a systematic frame around gender-lens curiosity by following the A-D-I-R thread.

The goal is to build an analysis of the local context and to develop a gender-aware ‘situational awareness.’ This shouldn’t be an add-on or a box-ticking exercise: it’s a fundamental part of robust, effective project design and development.

**ACTORS AND DRIVERS:**
- Who – specifically – is poaching and trafficking?
  - Men or women? Young men? Older women?
- Who’s getting the material benefits from the IWT? Who’s getting the status benefits? Who are the decision-makers about what animals to poach, how frequently, how much?
  - Who’s marketing/processing? Men or women? Young men? Older women?
- What’s driving the activity? Is there any evidence of coercion – sexual, gender-norm shaming or otherwise? If so, who’s coerced and who’s coercing?
  - Is poaching/trafficking a standalone activity? Could it be linked with other illegal trafficking activities, such as drugs or sex trafficking? In which case, which are the primary and which are the secondary trafficking flows?
  - Are there gendered geographies that warrant attention? (In the example of Kafue National Park, Zambia, single/elderly women in greatest economic need lived on the outskirts of town; out of sight, out of mind, they were most vulnerable to being exploited by poachers, and at the same time had the greatest insight into poaching activities).
- In natural resource-dependent communities, do men and women make their livelihoods in different parts (literally) of the environment? Who are the reliable narrators about what parts of the environment?
  - Does the (gendered) nature of enforcement enable gendered types of poaching and trafficking in this area? For example, women may be more ‘successful’ traffickers if the enforcement teams are all men and unable to search women.
- Is local consumption (and by whom?) intertwined with commercialized trafficking? Who’s doing each?
  - Is external consumer demand driving the poaching/trafficking? Who are the consumers, and what’s driving their taste/desire for the wildlife or wildlife-derived products? In the commodity chain of IWT, what actors are involved in/ drivers of/ decision-makers in making the links between poaching/trafficking-consuming?

**IMPACTS:**
- What would be the economic/environmental/social impacts of stopping or curbing poaching/trafficking? Would the impacts be the same for women and men?
- What are the effects of different types of responses (and enforcement)?
- Is ecosystem degradation changing IWT practices? How do environmental changes affect women and men differently?

**RESPONDING/INTERVENING:**
- Who in the field staff is best positioned to talk with/gain the confidence of which community members? Who in the community is being brought into confidence and consultation? Is it only village elders, who are usually all men?
- Do different people in the community – women/men/young/old/insiders/ outsiders – have different attitudes towards wildlife, towards conservation, towards IWT? What would be the best way to find out?
  - If economic need is driving the activity, what does ‘need’ look like in this setting? Who has access to resources? Who controls resources? Do men and women equally own land? Do men and women equally have options for alternative livelihoods?
  - How is enforcement structured in the local area? Who are the ‘enforcers’ and what (gendered) means do they use for enforcement?
- Who might be best-placed community influencers or intervention actors? Teachers? Religious leaders? Parents? Are men and women equally swayed by/ reached by such influencers?
- What might persuade or dissuade people from being attentive observers, even informers? Do women and men equally fear/resist cooperating with/reporting to authorities? Can you determine if gender-based violence plays any role in these decisions?

Not all of these questions can be asked and answered all at once. Some will be more pertinent than others. Programme initiators or managers might need further inquiry. But developing a systematic gender-informed actor-driver-impact ‘map’ is the starting point.
A checklist for field-based programme development would look something like this:

**CORE PRINCIPLES:**
- Projects should ideally benefit gender equality – or at least not harm it! Consult a wide group of people, and be sure to include people who are most likely to benefit or be negatively affected by any projects/plans.
- Any specific project should be based on a gender-informed situational analysis, discussed above. All available evidence tells us that women and men use, know about and have access to resources in different ways and have different attitudes towards environmental resources. Projects shouldn’t assume a unified ‘community’, nor unitary access to resources.
- Projects need to be based on the understanding that different members of the community will feel the benefits and costs of any project differently – and projects at their inception need to anticipate outcomes that will be different for different people involved.
- Use specific language to describe who is involved in the project. If the project is for men only or women only – or turns out to only involve one group or the other – don’t use generic language such as ‘people’.

**PROJECT DESIGN/ PLANNING:**
- Does the office/project team, especially those who will be in direct contact with community members, need gender training? Does the project timeline and budget accommodate this possibility?
- Are there community groups – especially women’s groups – with whom we might partner on this project?
- What local or even national gender resources are available to support this project?
- Do project objectives explicitly refer to women and men as distinct stakeholders?
- Does the situational analysis (above) provide adequate information on who has access to and control over key natural resources that may be affected by the project? Does the project plan include capacity to collect – systematically – such data?
- Does the project build on/include/enhance women’s and men’s knowledge, skills about natural resources and their use?
- If the project aims to specifically protect or preserve particular ecosystems/species/resources, is it clear who uses and benefits from those resources/ecosystems/species?
- Are practical needs of men/women being addressed by the project? Who/what is the project intended to support/help? Is the project designed to improve the daily lives of men or women?
- Will all data collected be disaggregated by sex? Have gender-sensitive indicators been identified?

**INCLUSION/ STAKEHOLDERS:**
- Are women and men being invited to join in project planning discussions? Which stakeholders/community members have been involved in project design?
- Have the distinct constraints to women’s and men’s participation in project activities been identified and have strategies been developed to overcome these constraints? For example, women are often less mobile because of household responsibilities: where, literally, will any project meetings be held? Are those venues accessible to women as well as men? Is it possible to provide childcare during meetings?
- Will any separate or additional activities be needed for women to ensure that they can participate?
- How will project updates and information be communicated, and are those communication vehicles ones that both men and women use? How do men and women use communication media?

**PROJECT BENEFITS, COSTS AND OUTCOMES:**
- How dependent are women/men on the resources/species that have been targeted by the project?
- Are there likely to be adverse effects on women’s or men’s capacity to continue to provide for basic daily needs or to earn income from natural resources?
- Will women or men have reduced access to or control over resources as a result of project activities?
- Has the project identified opportunities for increasing women’s access to and control over resources?
- Will community groups or representatives be involved in project monitoring, including women’s groups?
- Will women be trained and supported to engage in project monitoring, research and documentation?
- Will both women and men be involved in the interpretation and/or analysis of data?
- By what metrics will the success of the project be measured? Will those metrics capture the successes or failures as experienced by both men and women?
5. Consider including activities in your programme planning.

3. Engage the community and partner organizations in programme planning.

Think of ways to include the tracking of GBV-related incidents or norms within the programme’s overall M&E plan.

Create or find a referral list of community resources and services for people experiencing GBV. Camey et al. (2020) would be a good place to start.

Learn about GBV norms and prevalence as part of the already planned gender analysis process for the programme. The IUCN GBV report (Castañeda-Camey et al. 2020) would be a good place to start.

1. Create or find a referral list of community resources and services for people experiencing GBV.

2. Think of ways to include the tracking of GBV-related incidents or norms within the programme.

3. Consider including activities in your programme that have the potential to prevent GBV.

4. Allocate resources in the programme budget for GBV-specific inquiries and trainings.

**DESIGN PHASE: BEFORE A PROGRAMME STARTS**

**IMPLEMENTATION**

1. **Staff training**

   - 1. Build into your M&E activities ways to observe and investigate GBV-related reactions to the project within the community.
   - 2. Put a protocol in place pertaining to what actions should take place when and if incidents of GBV occur during programme implementation. Will all data collected be disaggregated by sex? Have gender-sensitive indicators been identified?

**A checklist for field-based programme development would look something like this**

A dozen or more tools with well-developed methodologies are available to support gender analysis, including tracking daily time budgets for women and men; tracking ratios of income-earning activities to subsistence/unpaid (including housework); seasonal calendars of actors’ activities; mental mapping (knowledge of geographies from very local to distant); spatial tracking of women and men/girls and boys; social-network mapping; measuring gender-differentiated assets (both quantitative and qualitative). Three key tools and techniques are pulled out here for closer examination.

**PART ONE: PROTOCOLS**

1. **SEX-DISAGGREGATED DATA/INFORMATION:**

   - The importance of anchoring analysis with data – both qualitative and quantitative – goes beyond any specific project. Policy follows data. What is counted is assumed to count; what’s not counted doesn’t ‘count’.

   - There is virtually no gender-related environmental publication that doesn’t include a plea for more information, more data, more systematic and sustained efforts to assemble gender-informed environmental information and evidence. Some significant large-scale efforts are under way to collect and analyse environment-related gender-disaggregated data, among them by the World Bank, the FAO and the World Health Organization (WHO).

   - But it is the accumulation of locally specific information that creates the big-picture mosaic of gender and environment relationships. Projects need to ensure to complement sex-disaggregated quantitative data with qualitative investigation and information on processes behind the data. Project-specific information and data are often generated through surveys and interviews. See below for best practices.

2. **MAPPING:**

   - Although mapping can be an enormously sophisticated and technology-driven undertaking, some of the most compelling mapping is done by hand and by amateurs. Participants in projects might be asked to make ‘mental maps’ – sketches of the parts of the environment they know best. Men and women/boys and girls are always found to know different parts of their local setting; they have different activity zones and pathways through their local setting. Most gender-sensitive mental mapping has been carried out in urban areas (for example, Huyh et al. 2010; Ranade 2007).

   - But intriguing insights have been revealed through gendered resource mapping (Cultural Survival 1994; Rocheleau et al. 1994, 1997). This technique has not yet been adopted in IWT, but could become a valuable tool to give insight into who uses/owns what resources for what purposes. One of the most cited efforts to explore gendered resource mapping shows the parts of the environment in a district in Kenya that men and women variously own or control, including down to the scale of single plants (Rocheleau and Edmund 1997), see pages 94 and 95.

3. **SURVEYS AND INTERVIEWS:**

   - **Surveys** are usually written forms, filled out either by the questioner after asking participants each question, or given to participants to fill out themselves. If participants will be asked to fill out the forms themselves, everyone in the cohort needs to be literate/numerate in the language of the survey. Literacy, numeracy and language facility often vary considerably between men and women. Participants may feel more comfortable revealing confidential or compromising information if they are allowed to fill out the survey forms themselves, and are assured that the surveys are anonymous.

   - Similarly, the design of **interviews** predisposes the likelihood of uncovering difficult information. One-on-one, same-sex interviews are more likely than group interviews to elicit confidential information, but group interviews can spark very revealing exchanges, and participants might find courage in a shared conversation.

   - Only the most formal interviews follow a rigid script. Field interviews are typically fluid and often held under challenging circumstances – which means that a formal interview script isn’t useful. Under these circumstances, most projects use a semi-structured interview – which means that a script of talking points is prepared in advance in order to derive somewhat comparable information from interviews, but the flow of conversation typically is more of a discussion.
Men and women often control, own or use different resources, often literally down to the level of trees and crops. Gender resource mapping from a study in Kenya.

COMMUNITY MEETINGS (to discuss plans, projects, priorities):

- The only way to get ‘buy-in’ to projects and plans is to substantively engage the community. Remember that no single voice represents the community. Diverse and cross-sectional participation is essential.
- Be aware that men/women have different daily schedules and commitments. Plan meetings at times and locations that are accessible to both men and women.
- If there are incentives provided to attend/participate in meetings or for filling out surveys, make sure those incentives are offered equally to women and men (and are appropriate for both men and women to receive). Even just the opportunity to get out of the community/house to participate in an important meeting can be a real boost for people. It can also be a burden. Be aware of both.
- If community meetings are held that will end up in tangible decisions, then the meeting should be held in a group setting, with both men and women (in roughly equal numbers). Especially if decisions could be unpopular or controversial, it is important to ensure that both women and men have heard the arguments and contributed to the conversation.
- Women tend to speak less in public than their male counterparts; in many cultures, there are strong sanctions against them doing so. If it’s going to be a ‘formal’ meeting, then ask the attendees how they establish rules that allow everyone to speak. If the attendees don’t have any suggestions, then set rules, such as the ‘zebra protocols’ used in some communities in Namibia (which means alternating men/women turn-taking for elections, for speaking in meetings, etc.). The moderator should enforce whatever protocols the meeting adopts. Don’t be afraid to be explicit that you want both men and women to speak. This is where having female staff included in the meetings is particularly helpful.
- Women’s presence should not be confused with participation. Bina Agarwal’s six-point typology (2001) is helpful in assessing meaningful participation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form/Level of participation</th>
<th>Characteristic features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominal participation</td>
<td>Membership in the group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive participation</td>
<td>Being informed of decisions ex post facto; or attending meetings and listening in on decision-making, without speaking up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultative participation</td>
<td>Being asked an opinion in specific matters without guarantee of influencing decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity-specific participation</td>
<td>Being asked to (or volunteering to) undertake specific tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active participation</td>
<td>Expressing opinions, whether or not solicited, or taking initiatives of other sorts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive (empowering) participation</td>
<td>Having a voice and influence on the group’s decisions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Women’s presence should not be confused with participation. Bina Agarwal’s six-point typology (2001) is helpful in assessing meaningful participation:

- Active participation

Be clear about why you are conducting the survey, and how you will use the information you collect. If possible, share results from the survey with the people who provided the information.
- To the extent possible, develop a demographically diverse (class/ethnicity/age) sample of interviewees.
- Be particularly attentive to include female-headed households – but also be mindful that these women tend to be uniquely time-poor and often have the least livelihood flexibility.
- Do make note of the gender of participants you interviewed/surveyed (≥5 men/18 women). But don’t stop there. To the extent possible, then follow through by sex-disaggregating all subsequent information when you synthesize the survey outcomes:
  - Don’t just report: ‘93% of the participants said they regularly listen to radio programmes on conservation’; go further to say ‘87% of men are regular listeners, 95% of women.’
  - If you collect sex-disaggregated information, but then don’t analyse it, or you ‘hide’ it by not including it in your report-back or analysis, you’re undermining your own hard work and preventing others from fully appreciating your findings.
  - For individual interviews and discussions, interviewers and interviewees should be same-sex paired: men interviewing men, women interviewing women. Same with one-sex group meetings: if it’s all female, then the surveyor/NGO rep/interviewer should be female.
  - For mixed-sex group meetings it is important to have both female and male interviewers. Holding discussions with women-only groups and men-only groups often creates comfortable settings for interviewees.
  - Don’t ask one person to represent ‘the household’. ‘Head of household’ is not a useful survey category; there are better ways to capture diverse positionalities of adults in the same household, including simply asking about the roles of adults in the household, and the specific roles of the specific adult you are interviewing.
  - Be wary of collecting aggregated ‘household’ information. There is no ‘household’ food security, income, literacy, views of wildlife, use of resources. All available evidence makes clear that within a household, resources use, priorities, and decisions are negotiated (or imposed) across gender divides. ‘Household’-based environmentally relevant decisions and behaviours are negotiated, often unequally, between men and women inside households – whether on matters such as water use, divisions of labour, energy-source choices, or financial allocations for agricultural adaptation.
  - Intra-household dynamics are critically important in terms of resources, resources use, conservation, consumption, and the ways in which men and women (may) act as agents of change. All environmentally consequential decisions that are made within households are filtered through gender norms and roles.

CONDUCTING SURVEYS, INTERVIEWS:

PRO TIPS

If you hold a meeting for ‘everyone’ and only men or only women attend, you need to re-evaluate your situational awareness, community relations and meeting planning. Something’s gone wrong.

There is considerable value in having back-to-back all-men and all-women meetings. Ask the same questions, and compare answers!

- Don’t ask one person to represent ‘the household’. ‘Head of household’ is not a useful survey category; there are better ways to capture diverse positionalities of adults in the same household, including simply asking about the roles of adults in the household, and the specific roles of the specific adult you are interviewing.
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PRO TIP

Ask specifically about the intra-household gender relations such as the above. Go ahead! Ask – specifically – what women and men/adults and children do, and what decision-making looks like inside households.
STEP 6 CHECKLIST FOR ORGANIZATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Gender-responsive organizations need to ‘walk the walk’. This means that:

- Their operations and staffing should be gender-inclusive.
- Gender transformation of organizations takes time and resources; they won’t become gender-inclusive overnight. There are often important intermediate steps available, some particularly pertinent for local offices: do all drivers hired for projects have to be men? Do all secretaries have to be women?
- Field staff need to be conversant with — even if not expert in — gender analysis, and familiar with the broad evidence base of real-world gendered dynamics of IWT.
- All staff should be able to explain — to themselves, to each other and to community members — what gender equality is, why it’s important, and why efforts to curb or end IWT will be enhanced by gender integration.
- All staff should be able to explain — to themselves, to each other and to community members — what GBV or sexual harassment is and the ways in which it undermines anti-IWT effectiveness.
- Women tend to speak less in public than their male counterparts; in many cultures, there are strong sanctions against them doing so. If it’s going to be a ‘formal’ meeting, then ask the attendees how they establish rules that allow everyone to speak. If the attendees don’t have any suggestions, then set rules, such as the ‘zebra protocols’ used in some communities in Namibia (which means alternating men/women turn-taking for elections, for speaking in meetings, etc.). The moderator should enforce whatever protocols the meeting adopts. Don’t be afraid to be explicit that you want both men and women to speak. This is where having female staff included in the meetings is particularly helpful.

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PART FOUR

RESEARCH NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
It is no exaggeration to say that much more research is needed on every aspect of the gendered nature of the illegal wildlife trade and efforts to curb it.

PART FOUR: RESEARCH NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RESEARCH

It is easier to say what is reasonably well researched than the opposite. Most IWT work is not gender-aware, but thanks to the work of diligent researchers we now know the most about:

1. Some dimensions of relationships between gender and corruption in natural resources (see WWF and IWT partners, Kramer et al. 2020) – but little of this research is specific to IWT. Much of it is environment-related generally; most of the work that is IWT-specific is not gender-aware.

   Further research is needed on: Close analysis of the ground-truthed circumstances that deter women and men from engaging in corrupt practices and from reporting on corruption; developing evidence of anti-corruption efforts that may be differently effective for women and men; the nature and extent of sexual coercion/violence that facilitates corruption or blocks whistleblowing on it.

2. Gender-differentiated consumption of IWT products, especially in Asia (albeit this focus tends to reinforce a geographical and often racist bias – see Marguiles et al. 2019 on the ‘super-consumer’ stereotype).

   Further research is needed on: Gender and consumption in regions other than Asia, and particularly regarding regions known to be super-consumers – the US and the EU (Collard 2020; Engler and Parry-Jones 2007; Marguiles et al. 2019).

   For all regions of the world, more research is needed on the gendered consumer market and behavioural change pathways, with follow-through analysis on the effectiveness of gender-targeted behaviour-change campaigns.

EXISTING RESEARCH STRENGTHS

1. A generalized understanding of the most-likely gendered effects of militarized poaching and intervention, mostly drawn from Africa examples.

   Further research is needed on: Specific gendered effects of militarization, such as effects on ‘ordinary’ domestic violence of the proliferation of guns; regionally specific state and trends in the use of armaments in poaching and enforcement interventions, especially for regions outside Africa.

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3. New IUCN initiatives around environment and gender-based violence establish a strong foundational base for this issue (Castañeda Camey et al. 2020).

   Further research is needed to:
   • Explore whether there are embedded, tangential or opportunistic interlinkages among different trafficking networks and actors (especially whether there are systemic linkages between sex trafficking and IWT).
   • Understand the extent of IWT-related sexual violence against men and nonbinary people/sexual minorities.
   • Examine the effectiveness of anti-GBV awareness programmes, and especially programmes that encourage men to re-examine their own ‘performance’ of masculinities (such as the MenENGAGE programme and the Responsible Men’s Club in Viet Nam).
   • Provide an IWT-specific empirical basis for the conventional wisdom that enhancing diversity in enforcement, and especially bringing women into enforcement teams, reduces enforcement-related violence.
   • Investigate the extent to which militarized IWT enforcement fuels a violence cycle in local communities and homes, linked to the increasing circulation of small arms.

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NEW, EMERGING AND NEEDED RESEARCH

Moving into less-charted territory, ‘everything’ needs research, but specific research priorities include:

1. Evidence-based scrutiny of the high-level assertion that gender equality and environmental sustainability are mutually catalysing. Moreover, the existing research on this topic mostly refers with a broad brush to ‘environmental’ sustainability. IWT-specific research is needed.

2. Ecosystem-centred, species-specific (or product-specific) full-chain case study analyses of men’s and women’s roles from poaching through to consumption: case studies on the gender relationships all along the ivory… or orchid… or pangolin trail would be extremely valuable. In such case-study approaches, the ecosystem-wide ripple effects (many gendered) of removing or reducing a single species should be examined.

3. Assessments of the gender-differentiated economic, social and cultural impacts of closing down illegal wildlife trade, or closing related wildlife farming practices.

4. Economic inequalities: Two domains of analysis – of the enmeshment of IWT in economic inequalities, and of the economic enmeshment of gender inequalities – are not in conversation with one another. Serious research is needed to explore the intersection of analyses of affluence as a driver of IWT and analyses that the creation of both wealth and income are gender-differentiated processes.

Beyond these high-level needs, the ‘laundry list’ of research needs is almost inexhaustible. Particularly, more granular and specific studies are needed on:

- Gender-differentiated attitudes towards different types of poaching (such as hunting, live-capture, collecting) and to different wildlife poached.
- Gender analysis within the pet trade – from the very thin literature available, men and women appear to be distinctively positioned (Collard 2020; Drews 2002; Menacho-Odio 2013), but there is almost no gender analysis of this trade.
- Relationships between gender-differentiated attitudes and perceptions of animals (and nature) and actual behaviours in relation to IWT.
- The role of women’s unpaid work in the value chains of IWT; attention usually ‘follows the money’, but all economies are predicated on unpaid, and usually uncounted, labour.
- What incentives/programmes have been most effective in moving people out of poaching and trafficking, and whether those successful – and failed – programmes work differently or more or less effectively for women and men.
- Follow-through analysis specifically on whether alternative-livelihood and land-tenure-reform programmes are effective in curbing IWT, and whether they are differently effective for women and men.
- Empirical evidence of the effects of inclusion of women in male-dominated structures, such as in enforcement and in high-level policymaking (and the tipping point, if any, for such effects to be evidenced).
- Empirical evidence of the effectiveness of diversity in enforcement teams and programmes.
- Profiles of gender dynamics within conservation NGOs, and the effects (if any) of changes (if any) in the gender balance of these organizations.
- Comparative conservation-effectiveness evidence where women/men are or are not included in local-level project planning and decision-making, and do or do not participate.
- Locally informed analyses of the gender-differentiated costs and benefits of protected areas.

For all research, two crosscuts are high priority:

- Research that unpacks locally and context-specific manifestations of gendered violence, corruption, consumption and militarized poaching.
- Differences in any of these topics by intersectional demographics and/or specifically for LGBTQI and nonbinary people. There is virtually no topic in IWT that adequately covers race, class, or sexual identity.

As research and data accumulate, much of it will get overlooked or lost.

The ‘reinventing the wheel’ problem plagues all sectors. Developing and maintaining a comprehensive knowledge database (of both quantitative and qualitative information) would be a significant contribution that would also streamline resource allocations (see ‘recommendations’ on the next page).

To date, there are only two meta-analyses of gender and IWT research: a 2020 synthesis by Agu and Gore of literature on women and IWT in Africa; and this report itself.
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. In developing projects and programmes, never presume that issues are gender-neutral; always perform gender analysis to ascertain the relevance of gender differentiation and dynamics.

2. Enhanced support and training is needed for local-level gender-informed outreach and programming on:
   - Developing diversified sustainable non-IWT livelihoods for men and women.
   - Raising GBV awareness and developing interventions, including working with men on their roles in perpetuating GBV.
   - Providing conservation education for all members of local communities.
   - Measuring the effectiveness of these initiatives.

3. Gender capacity and familiarization training programmes should be developed and available to all staff. Not everyone needs to be a gender expert, but some familiarity is important.

   When there are staff expansion opportunities, a priority should be to bring on staff with gender expertise as part of their portfolio.

   Further, placing staff women in field-based projects will play an important role in community inclusion in those projects, and will provide conservation role models for local women and girls.

4. All organizations (from global to local) need to develop zero-tolerance policies on sexual harassment and GBV, and establish mechanisms of accountability and follow-up.

5. Encourage, mandate and provide capacity support for gender-disaggregated data collection and analysis as integral to all locally managed projects and programmes.

6. To the extent possible, partner with or support local women’s groups engaged in livelihood diversification or resource conservation. If women’s groups don’t exist, probe for any interest in forming groups.

   Similarly, explore possibilities for partnering with men’s and youth groups, and with any visible LGBTQI groups.

7. Locally enacted projects can support empowerment through leadership by supporting nonbinary people, sexual minorities and other marginalized groups by explicitly including representatives (to the extent they’re able to be visible) in IWT and resource projects.

LOCAL OFFICES AND PROGRAMMES RELATED TO IWT
Make unequivocal commitments to gender integration throughout the IWT space. Organizational leaders should be visible and active advocates for this commitment.

To the extent that resource and capacity decisions are made at central levels, provide support and resources for the locally enacted activities identified above – to develop gender-informed projects, and to enhance gender analytical capacity.

Creating and maintaining a centralized gender and IWT knowledge database, as described above, would make a significant contribution to the field. To ensure that the database doesn’t languish in a backwater, the database manager should be tasked with promulgating – widely – a regular (annual?) analytical update of new findings.

Include, mandate and provide capacity support for high-level gender data collection and analysis integral to all centrally managed projects and programmes. See above list of research priorities.

Bringing gender analysis fully into the work of IWT organizations requires expanding the expertise base from the original field-sciences fields of IWT work to include social science expertise. Making room at the table for the social sciences – and thus, social scientists – will also expand inclusive representation.

Organizational capacities and commitments:

1. The profile of most IWT-centric conservation organizations is of limited – in some cases, very limited – inclusion of diversities and capacities. Changing this profile takes time, enlightened leadership and firm commitments that are understood and shared across the organization. At all levels from country offices to international hubs, activities that can jump-start this transformation include:
   - Conducting a rigorous top-to-bottom ‘organizational situational awareness’ gender audit of programmes, priorities, policies and staffing.
   - Developing and enacting a gender equality policy.
   - Developing and enacting specific anti-harassment policies. Organizational policies should have buy-in at all levels to provide explicit support and response for survivors of gender-based violence, whether the violence perpetrated was outside or within the organization. Explicitly commit to zero tolerance for sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse within the workplace (Bloom et al. 2014).
   - Committing to ongoing gender accountability audits on a regular basis (every four years?).
   - Making explicit commitments including timeline benchmarks towards inclusive, participatory and representative governance and staffing.
   - Committing to gender training of staff; as above, not everyone needs to be a gender expert, but some familiarity among all members of the staff is important. And when there are staff expansion opportunities, a priority should be to bring on staff with gender expertise as part of their portfolio.

Conservation and IWT NGOs have an unparalleled opportunity to demonstrate leadership by supporting nonbinary people, sexual minorities and other marginalized groups by explicitly including them in their staff, and by including representatives of these groups (to the extent they’re able to be visible) in IWT and resource projects.

2. Establish a high-level IWT gender advisory group, which could perhaps advise across a coalition of the main IWT NGOs, including TRAFFIC and WWF.

3. Establish a gender programme office or high-level staff position (‘gender focal point’) to move forward inclusion of gender analysis across IWT activities.

4. Establish/expand/support mechanisms for developing a diverse ‘upstream’ research pipeline in conservation-relevant professions. Training programmes, fellowships, internships and awards for under-represented groups can be critically important mechanisms for bringing diversity and inclusion into IWT work. (The WWF “Education for Nature” programme might provide a model for scaling up).

5. Similarly, mechanisms for expanding staff and internal leadership diversity, from quotas to leadership-mentoring programmes, should be strategically discussed and enacted.
PART FOUR: RESEARCH NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Policymaking and partnering:

1. Partner with CITES to bring gender mainstreaming into the CITES Convention. CITES is notably gender-unaware. Pressure and encouragement should be brought to bear to remedy this.

   The CBD has a robust ‘Gender Plan of Action’ that guides gender mainstreaming across the Convention and Parties to “support the gender-responsive implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.” Partnering with the CBD on developing a gender plan for CITES might accelerate the work required to do so; the CBD gender focal point might be tapped to provide guidance.

2. Leverage national commitments to gender equality. Most national governments have some version of gender equality mandates. Often tokenistic, these laws – and, in some cases, treaty commitments – can nonetheless be invoked and used instrumentally when partnering with governments on IWT-related activities and goals. IWT NGOs can strategically invoke national commitments to leverage support for gendered awareness and activity in their partnerships with governments.

3. Develop IWT policies that specifically address women’s empowerment, gender equality and gender-informed activities and programmes. It is inadequate to only ‘add women and stir’ in existing workplans, perspectives and policies.

4. Make strategic gender partnerships. IWT NGOs are not expected to suddenly become experts in girls’ education, women’s land rights or GBV programming as part of their work to curb IWT (although it is incumbent on IWT organizations to recognize that these issues are integral to their core work).

   There are organizations that are experts in these domains. Transnational high-level women’s entities usually not brought into the IWT space, including UN Women, might be tapped to provide capacity and to navigate unfamiliar terrain with high-level policymakers. Strategic partners can be brought into conversations and initiatives around capacity-building in girls’ education (UNESCO, for example); on sex trafficking and transnational GBV (including Interpol, which is fast-tracking its gender capacities); on land tenure (FAO and the Voluntary Guidelines on Land Tenure).

   IWT organizations don’t need to reinvent the wheel when strategic partnerships can multiply resources to address cross-cutting issues that bear directly on IWT.

5. Partner with and support ranger organizations to bring gender equality into park and protected area ranger workforces. Establish targeted funding streams for these efforts.

6. Highlight gender-based violence and sextortion in anti-corruption policies and priorities.

7. Provide adequate resources to support these recommendations.

ENDNOTES

PART 1


5. Personal communication with Game Rangers International representative.


9. Personal communication with Game Rangers International representative.


17. Personal communication with investigator.
While opposed to any hunting that threatens species survival, WWF respects and supports the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities to choose how best to live alongside and use natural resources in ways that advance wildlife conservation and their own sustainable development, as provided in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), including indigenous peoples’ and local communities’ customary rights to engage in subsistence hunting. The ICESCR provides, in its article 1, that “all peoples may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources without prejudice to any obligations arising out of international economic co-operation, based upon the principle of mutual benefit, and international law. In no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence.”


In no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence.”


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PART 3

114 GENDER AND ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE: OVERLOOKED AND UNDERESTIMATED


80 wwf.panda.org/discover/our_focus/wildlife_practice/wildlife_trade/wildlife_crime_initiative


82 Based on Bloom et al. 2014


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WEBINARS/ PRESENTATIONS

Pathways Kenya 2020 – Panel Discussion
“Diverse Perspectives from Successful Conservation Leaders.”
www.youtube.com/watch?v=k8BohAnWfEI&feature=youtu.be

All-Women Panel: Krithi Karanth – Executive Director, Centre for Wildlife Studies
Bangalore, India; Musonda Mumba – Chief, Terrestrial Ecosystems Unit Chair,
Global Partnership for Forest and Landscape Restoration, UN Environment;
Leela Hazzah – Co-Founder and Executive Director, Lion Guardians
Co-Founder, Pride Lion Conservation Alliance; Alice Rubweza – Africa Lead, WWF International;
Musimbi Kanyoro – Board Chair, United World Colleges & Women’s Learning Partnerships

Fauna & Flora International:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=NMVSmrMmzAk
Interviews three young conservationists from Vietnam, Mozambique and the UK.
OUR MISSION IS TO CONSERVE NATURE AND REDUCE THE MOST PRESSING THREATS TO THE DIVERSITY OF LIFE ON EARTH.