Promoting women's rights through extractive industries revenue accountability

As with all government revenues, Oxfam believes that the way revenue from oil, gas and mining is managed and used has very significant implications for poverty and inequality, including gender inequality and the realization of the rights of women and girls. To that end, Oxfam works to increase transparency and social accountability around the collection, payment and use of extractive industry (EI) revenues, arguing for the protection of the human rights of women and men in EI-affected communities and the investment of EI revenues into programmes and services that address poverty and promote gender justice.

'Social accountability initiatives must go hand in hand with efforts to affirm women's rights and empower women to seek accountability and justice.'[1] This means that women (jointly with men) should define and shape the policies, structures, and decisions around EI revenues. Indeed, it has been argued that only when 'gender issues are identified as core priorities and women's groups are directly involved in designing and implementing initiatives do real benefits become discernible in terms of respect for women's rights and improvements in women's livelihoods.'[2] However, the reality is that gender biases in EI social accountability initiatives inadvertently create new, or exacerbate existing, gender inequalities by excluding or limiting women's involvement, thus silencing their agendas, perspective and interests.

In order to support women's inclusion in EI social accountability efforts, Oxfam is currently undertaking an initiative in the Dominican Republic and Zambia with the following components:

> *Research*: building on a previously published [Oxfam Research Backgrounder](), the [current study]() examines the interplay of women's rights, social accountability and the EI sector. It identifies barriers to the participation of women and women's rights organizations in social accountability efforts related to EI revenue transparency, [providing recommendations on how such initiatives could better incorporate women's rights agendas]()

> *Strengthening organizational gender capacity and fostering cross-fertilization between the advocacy agendas of women's rights organizations and EI revenue transparency organizations:* the project brings women's rights organizations together with those focused on EI revenue transparency in a Gender Action Learning process (GAL).[3] A GAL process facilitates a reflective, peer-learning space where participating organizations are supported to select the changes they would like to make in their own organizations and programmes, to make them more gender equitable (through identifying 'Change Projects'). Both participatory and empowering, GAL processes aim to drive transformational change relating to gender norms at the individual and institutional levels. The initiative leverages this process as a way to foster increased collaboration between participating organizations and to create enabling environments for women's rights organizations to drive advocacy agendas related to EI revenue transparency.

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[1] McNeil, Mary, and Malena, Carmen (2010). Social Accountability in Africa: An Analysis. *Demanding Good Governance*. The World Bank: 193.
[2] Ibid. p 214.
[3] Developed and facilitated by our partner, [Gender@Work](), Gender Action Learning is a change process aimed at transforming unequal power dynamics, organizational culture and processes to advance gender equality.