



## Integrating a gender perspective into transparency and accountability initiatives: three case studies

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## Integrating a gender perspective into transparency and accountability initiatives: three case studies

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### ABSTRACT

Natural resource wealth is not shared equally by all. While elites may capture the profits disproportionately in many contexts, marginalised social groups – including women – are less likely to experience the benefits of extraction, and are affected differently by virtue of their gendered roles in the economy and society. Women also tend to be less able to participate in decision-making forums relating to extractive questions. International transparency and accountability initiatives have been seeking to improve the management of natural resources through promoting citizen involvement and information disclosure in the extractive sector. Recently, some are also trying to incorporate gender issues into their work to ensure that women’s experiences and voices are not excluded from the transparency movement. This article draws on evidence from transparency and accountability initiatives to show how they have tried to do this, in a field which has long been perceived as gender-neutral. It highlights some of the key challenges faced by these initiatives, as well as lessons they have learned in their work.

La riqueza que se genera a partir de los recursos naturales no se distribuye equitativamente. Mientras en muchos contextos las élites pueden obtener utilidades desproporcionadas, los grupos sociales marginales — incluyendo las mujeres— tienen menos probabilidad de conseguir cualquier beneficio derivado de las actividades extractivas. Por otra parte, en el caso de las mujeres éstas son afectadas de manera diferente en virtud de sus roles de género en la economía y la sociedad. Además existe la tendencia a que tengan menos oportunidades de participar en los espacios de toma de decisiones asociados a la industria extractiva. Ciertas iniciativas orientadas a mejorar la transparencia y la rendición de cuentas a nivel internacional buscan mejorar la gestión de recursos naturales promoviendo la participación ciudadana y la divulgación de información en el sector extractivo. Recientemente, otras iniciativas han intentado incorporar a su trabajo cuestiones de género, a fin de asegurar que las experiencias y las voces de las mujeres no queden excluidas del movimiento a favor de la transparencia. El presente artículo da cuenta de evidencia surgida de varias iniciativas que promueven la transparencia y la rendición de cuentas para mostrar cómo se han realizado en un ámbito que durante mucho tiempo fue percibido como neutral ante el género. Asimismo, destaca algunos de los principales retos que deben enfrentar dichas iniciativas y los aprendizajes que resultan de su implementación.

Les richesses liées aux ressources naturelles ne sont pas réparties de manière égale. Tandis que les élites accaparent les bénéfices de manière

### KEYWORDS

Gender; natural resources; transparency; governance; extractive sector

disproportionnée dans de nombreux contextes, les groupes sociaux marginalisés – y compris les femmes – ont moins de chances de profiter des avantages de l'exploitation de ces ressources, et sont touchés différemment en raison de leurs rôles sexo-spécifiques au sein de l'économie et de la société. Par ailleurs, les femmes sont généralement moins à même de prendre part aux forums de prise de décisions pour ce qui est des questions relatives à l'extraction. Il existe des initiatives internationales en matière de transparence et de redevabilité qui cherchent à améliorer la gestion des ressources naturelles en favorisant la participation des citoyens et la divulgation des informations dans le secteur de l'extraction. Depuis peu, certaines tentent aussi d'incorporer les questions relatives au genre dans leur travail pour veiller à ce que les expériences et les voix des femmes ne soient pas exclues du mouvement en faveur de la transparence. Cet article s'inspire des données factuelles provenant d'initiatives relatives à la transparence et à la redevabilité pour montrer comment elles ont tenté de faire tout cela, dans un domaine qui est perçu depuis longtemps comme neutre sur le plan du genre. Il met en relief certaines des principales difficultés rencontrées par ces initiatives, ainsi que ce qu'elles ont appris dans le cadre de leur travail.

## Introduction

Oil will bring us ruin ... it is the devil's excrement.

These now-famous words from Pérez Alfonso, former OPEC founder (Useem 2003, no page number), reflect how natural resource wealth has not only in certain cases failed to benefit citizens, but has actively made their lives worse. Sometimes this is related to extractive revenues being lost to corruption rather than spent on poverty reduction, as has been the case in Equatorial Guinea, where the president's family is said to have embezzled millions in natural resource revenues on luxury cars and Malibu mansions (Silverstein 2009, 2), while 75 per cent of the country's population live below the poverty line (African Economic Outlook 2012, 2). At other times, it is a case of indigenous peoples – from Ecuador to Siberia – being excluded from decision-making processes about extractive projects on their land, and bearing the brunt of the social and economic impacts of extraction (Peter 2016, no page number).

The 'resource curse' (NRGI 2015, 1) manifests itself in a number of ways and is caused by a range of complex factors, but one pattern that emerges is that poor natural resource management is exacerbated – and sometimes enabled – by a lack of openness and transparency, and when governments and extractive companies are not accountable to citizens (Itriago 2009). If revenue flows are kept secret, citizens – be they activists, journalists, or parliamentarians – cannot hold the government to account for how funds are managed and spent. Without the information disclosed in contracts, it is difficult for citizens to monitor whether a company is fulfilling its obligations to a community. These are just two examples of how an opaque extractive sector prevents a better management of natural resources.

In the past decade and a half, the issues of transparency and accountability have begun to be seen as important ways of addressing 'both developmental failures and

democratic deficits' (McGee and Gaventa 2010, 1). Transparency and accountability initiatives (TAIs) can support improved governance of natural resources through calling for the disclosure of information (for example on revenue flows, extractive contracts, and so on), and promoting citizen involvement in the sector. In the early 2000s, their key focus was on revenue transparency (that is, open communication about how much extractive companies were paying governments for natural resources and the right to extract, and how that money was being spent). However, in the 2010s TAIs moved towards examining the whole extractive value chain (rather than just revenue transparency), for instance working on issues such as community consent around the decision to extract or how (and to whom) extractive contracts are awarded. (In relation to the extractive industry, the 'value chain' describes each step of the process in the extraction of a natural resource [usually from the decision to extract to how revenues derived from extraction are spent].)<sup>1</sup>

This article focuses on the gender aspects of TAIs. Over the past few years, there has been an increased awareness that the question of natural resource management is not in fact gender-neutral, and that the impact of extractive industries on women and gender relations needs to be better-known and women's participation in the transparency agenda ensured. The gender bias in the distribution of risks and benefits in the extractive sector means that men are more likely to be able to profit from opportunities created by the sector (jobs, supplier contracts) while women are more vulnerable to the negative effects of extractive projects. For example, key issues include the impact on women and gender relations of environmental degradation, and loss of land (Eftimie *et al.* 2009). To make matters worse, women are often excluded from community consultation processes and decision-making forums related to the extractive sector, because of a mixture of structural barriers and gender-blind policies that do not take women's needs into account (Oxfam International 2016). (It should be noted that women will experience the sector differently from one another depending on other identifiers such as class, ethnicity, and location.)

This means that TAIs themselves have to integrate gender analysis in order to contribute to an improvement of natural resource management that benefits women as well as men. They need to make women's experiences and needs as visible as men's. They cannot execute their missions – based on a theory of change that rests heavily on citizen involvement and flow of information – if women's lack of access to information and platforms is not addressed.

This article focuses on how three international initiatives are tackling gender issues. It aims to tease out successes, challenges, and lessons learned from the work. I draw on my first-hand experience as the gender 'focal point' in one of these initiatives – Publish What You Pay (PWYP) from 2013 to the end of 2014.<sup>2</sup> The information below comes from my experience in this position, in addition to personal experience of events and conferences and interviews with a range of practitioners from all three initiatives and the wider field, conducted between 2013 and 2017. These short accounts are followed by a discussion analysing the key areas focused on in this experience of integrating gender issues into TAIs, and drawing out some of the shared challenges.

This article contributes to the wider literature which exists on integrating gender issues into development organisations, and many of the issues identified will be very familiar to gender and development policymakers and practitioners.

### **Publish What You Pay**

PWYP, launched in 2002, is a coalition of civil society organisations from around the world that campaigns for a more open and accountable extractive sector.<sup>3</sup> As well as working internationally on a united front, members in more than 40 countries have formed national-level coalitions. PWYP has a Secretariat based in London which supports the coalition and is charged with, among other things, co-ordinating global advocacy campaigns and facilitating the exchange of information and resources among the network.<sup>4</sup>

Several of PWYP's national coalitions have worked on highlighting the links between gender relations and the extractives, and making sure that women's voices are reflected in their campaigns. An example is PWYP Zimbabwe which, as part of the Platform on Gender and Extractives (a multi-stakeholder platform in Zimbabwe spearheaded by UN Women, Oxfam, and Zela that seeks to address how women are affected by the extractive sector), recently published a report compiling women's experiences of the sector.<sup>5</sup> Another is PWYP Democratic Republic of Congo, which led a campaign promoting citizen understanding of EITI data, specifically targeting women.<sup>6</sup> During PWYP's Global Conference in 2012, member organisations explicitly called for the Secretariat and international coalition to do more to incorporate gender into PWYP's campaign. This article focuses on the PWYP Secretariat rather than the gender-related work of PWYP's national coalitions, as such a scope would be too broad for this article.

Prior to 2013, the PWYP Secretariat had been trying to increase female participation in the coalition's governance structures, events, and activities. In 2012, following wide consultation and a strategic review, PWYP explicitly required that its governance bodies be gender-balanced. Regarding other programmes and activities (for example, regional conferences and training workshops), PWYP has adopted a more informal and ad hoc approach – seeking to encourage a more balanced representation through various means and incentives (sometimes requesting that a coalition submit gender-mixed participant lists for workshops, or by proposing extra funding for female participants).

In early 2013, following requests by its members (see above), the PWYP Secretariat also began to formally address the gender issues linked to its campaign, becoming the first extractives-focused TAI to do so.

The PWYP Secretariat's activities to integrate gender issues into PWYP's campaign were initially led and carried out by the International Director, the Programme Manager, and the Communications Coordinator (the author), who was assigned as gender focal point for the organisation. PWYP's East and Southern Africa Coordinator took over as gender focal point at the end of 2014.

PWYP's short to mid-term objectives were relatively clear, with PWYP seeking to raise awareness, among its national coalitions and the field in general, of the importance of integrating gender into extractives and good governance projects. It also aimed to identify

opportunities – ‘entry-points’ – for work that did this. Finally it aimed to contribute to knowledge sharing and the building of a loose community of practitioners working on this issue.

The plan was that a significant part of this work would be realised through a collaboration between PWYP and with UN Women, made official through a Memorandum of Understanding signed in the spring of 2013. The aim of the collaboration was to combine the expertise and credibility of UN Women and PWYP in women’s rights and the extractives respectively, so as to identify how best to address gender issues related to the extractive sector and raise awareness of the issue. The collaboration was planned to last from 2013 to 2015. This was the first time that UN Women had started focusing so explicitly on extractive issues. The partnership centred around specific milestones. One was the organising of a workshop to allow for the sharing of experiences, networking among practitioners, and the identification of entry points for work. A second milestone was the creation of a gender analysis of PWYP’s value-chain,<sup>7</sup> which resulted in a toolkit, the *Extracting Equality – A Guide* (2014), that demonstrates how gender issues can be taken into account at each step of the value chain. The idea of the guide was that it would serve as a practical tool, to help PWYP coalitions and others involved in the extractive sector (companies, other NGOs, UN agencies, etc.) understand the gender issues they should address in their work.

As a co-ordinating body of a broad coalition, the PWYP Secretariat was in a good position to facilitate the exchange of information and resources on gender inequality and the extractives – something for which practitioners had voiced a need, particularly as the field was quite young. Given the relative smallness of the field, there was also a desire to identify potential allies and partners.

To this end, PWYP set up a mailing list in 2013 for the exchange of information, resources, and opportunities related to gender inequality and the extractives. The group was open to non-PWYP members, and indeed to anyone from civil society working on the issue. PWYP also created a blog, separate from its website, as a space to host news, research findings, and updates on the gendered impact of extractives. The blog and mailing list helped PWYP raise awareness of the importance of integrating gender issues into transparency and accountability work, as well as share some examples of how this was being done. PWYP also began to highlight gender-related content in its newsletter, which goes out to all its members as well as other CSOs, journalists, diplomats, company representatives, etc.

PWYP sought to publicise the issue through its partnership with UN Women, and through press coverage around the spring workshop and launch of *Extracting Equality – A Guide*.

Putting *Extracting Equality – A Guide* together was a collaborative effort between PWYP, UN Women, and others in the field. An initial session at the April 2013 workshop provided a rough outline, which was elaborated on during a live-chat and through further consultations. PWYP and UN Women commissioned Tactical Studios (a creative agency helping NGOs and campaigners to better present and package information in their advocacy),<sup>8</sup> to design a physical version of the chain, which was also made available digitally.

The whole process took from April 2013 until the chain's official launch in November 2014, although work on the chain was not continuous, due to lack of staff time on both the part of UN Women and PWYP.

PWYP continued to work with UN Women on a loose basis after their MoU expired in 2015, and contributed to the UN Women Regional Share Fair of 2015, which had as its theme *Gender Equality in the Extractives*.

Due to a lack of funding and capacity, PWYP's work on gender has slowed down since 2015. Rather than the Secretariat implementing its own gender-related activities, the East and Southern African Coordinator (also PWYP's gender focal point) has provided support to PWYP coalitions working on the issue and been involved in raising awareness of gender and the extractives in a range of forums, notably the alternative mining indabas. Meanwhile, the PWYP Secretariat is applying for funding for a range of gender-related projects that focus on getting sex-disaggregated data on the impact of mining on women and on ensuring that women's voices are heard throughout the chain. Coalitions during PWYP's recent Africa Conference (a forum where PWYP's African coalitions and members decide on strategic and governance issues) highlighted the need to address the gender-blind nature of the transparency and accountability movement, particularly with regards to participation in EITI. PWYP's current strategic review will also examine gender and where it should sit within PWYP's objectives and priorities.

### Natural Resource Governance Institute

NRGI is a large institute working in 11 priority countries (and in a more limited way in nine further countries) and has more than 80 members of staff.<sup>9</sup> It was formed in 2014, when the Revenue Watch Institute (RWI) and the Natural Resource Charter (NRC) merged. RWI had originally started as a programme of the Open Society Foundation in 2002, before spinning off in 2006. The NRC was an initiative based on a set of principles for how to 'best harness the opportunities created by extractive resources for development' (see <https://resourcegovernance.org/approach/natural-resource-charter>, last checked 4 September 2017) written by a range of natural resource governance experts including Paul Collier and Robert Conrad (Fouché 2009, no page number).

NRGI works with a range of stakeholders – including civil society, media, parliamentarians, and governments – to improve the governance of natural resources, so that these may better contribute to sustainable and inclusive development. The institute does this through producing research, advocating for transparency measures, and providing capacity building support, as well as technical and policy advice, to stakeholders. This might for example include training journalists in Tanzania on how to cover corruption in the extractive industries<sup>10</sup> or helping governments publish their extractive contracts online.<sup>11</sup>

In 2014, NRGI took the decision to consciously examine gender issues, partly due to the fact that, as a grantee of the UK Department for International Development (DfID), the institute was required to 'pay regard to gender-related differences in needs and ways in which interventions will contribute to reduced gender inequality' (NRGI 2015a, 1).

However, an internal survey revealed that some NRGi programmes (and the staff implementing them) were already partly conscious of gender differences in ways women and men experienced the impact of extractive industries on their lives and their ability to participate in NRGi's 'interventions' (for example, in a capacity building workshop).

NRGi's gender strategy is an evolving document, but its ultimate goal is to mainstream gender within NRGi's programmes (for example, on advocacy and capacity building) and processes (for example, strategy design). This involves assessing the impact of NRGi's work on women's rights and gender equality, and also ensuring that any negative effects are mitigated. NRGi seeks to do this by integrating gender-related goals and indicators in its country and project strategies, and carrying out gender-risk assessments.

Eventually, another objective is to integrate gender considerations into NRGi's two key tools: the Natural Resource Charter Benchmarking Framework<sup>12</sup> and the Resource Governance Index.<sup>13</sup> Throughout, NRGi will seek to increase women's participation in their interventions. The implementation of the strategy is to be supported by internal capacity building and collaboration.

NRGi's gender strategy is managed by an internal gender working group (GWG), which was set up in 2015. In 2016, apart from a Women Leaders fellowship, no specific funds or staff time were allocated to this work stream, and staff carried out gender-related tasks on top of their existing duties (personal correspondence, April 2017). However the situation is improving in 2017. Senior management have allocated a small budget for research and convening dialogue to support strategy implementation. Staff time spent on co-ordinating and implementing gender activities, though still severely constrained, is now accounted for on NRGi timesheets and new staff have been added including a Latin America regional associate and capacity development programme assistant who will be able to support gender work (interview, 28 July 2017, Skype).

NRGi's approach is non-prescriptive, and led by the GWG, which implements specific gender-related activities (e.g. co-ordinating research on gender issues) and reaches out to other programmes and country offices to give mutual support on mainstreaming gender (for instance by including gender-related indicators in country strategies). The GWG also pushes out recommendations, recently circulating guidance on how to avoid all-male panels during trainings and events. The GWG's process is incremental, basing its approach on early successes and practical guidance – according to one staff member this task represents a 'steep curve', that will take time and require significant internal capacity building (interview, 28 July 2017, Skype).

So far, the GWG's work has mainly focused around the collection of sex-disaggregated data regarding NRGi's activities. This data collection supports the wider objective of examining – and remedying – gender imbalance in terms of who benefits from or can participate in NRGi's activities. Initially, the GWG focused on NRGi's training sessions and workshops, which represent an important stream of the institute's work. The data were first collected in 2016. They were analysed and broken down per stakeholder group (for example, private sector, civil society, and so on) and per activity stream (for example, training). These data have enabled NRGi to see where the discrepancies lie, consider

why female participation might be lower in certain cases, and seek ways to safely remedy the imbalance.

Having collected data for 2016, NRGi's gender working group is currently considering measures aiming to increase female participation in NRGi's interventions. In future this exercise of collecting gender-disaggregated data on participation will be extended to NRGi's other activities, beyond training and workshops. Another important step towards increasing women's participation in NRGi and its activities has been the creation of a women's leadership group to help build the capacity of women in civil society and enable (as well as strengthen) their participation.

The GWG has recently commissioned research on the mechanisms through which macro-economic and fiscal policies in resource-rich countries affect gender relations and women's economic empowerment. The new research will focus on the gender impact in areas in which NRGi has greater expertise and will seek to contextualise gender issues into policy areas more familiar to NRGi's staff (interview, 28 July 2017, Skype).

NRGi has also implemented three pilot studies as part of their gender strategy: in Tunisia, a case study on female parliamentarians' engagement on natural resource governance;<sup>14</sup> a study on the social impact of the extractive industries in countries of the Andean region, that included gender as an indicator;<sup>15</sup> and the inclusion of questions on gender equality in the NRC benchmarking framework exercise in Myanmar.<sup>16</sup>

### The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative

The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) is a global reporting standard through which governments publish timely and accurate information about their extractive sector.<sup>17</sup> The initiative's aim is to improve transparency and accountability for a better management of natural resources. When the EITI was launched in 2003, its focus was on revenue transparency, however today the initiative has expanded to cover a broader range of issues, including beneficial ownership and commodity trading transparency. Fifty-two countries are currently implementing the EITI Standard (EITI [no date a](#)). At the country level the EITI is implemented by a national secretariat and multi-stakeholder group (comprising of representatives from governments, civil society, and extractive companies). The initiative is governed by an International Board and supported by an International Secretariat located in Oslo. It receives funding from supporting countries, the private sector (mainly extractive companies), and international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund.

The EITI Secretariat is not currently pursuing any formal strategy or policy to incorporate a gender approach into its work. The only aspect of the EITI Standard that touches on gender (and not explicitly so) is requirement 1.4 which states that, with regards to the national multi-stakeholder groups, 'each stakeholder group must have the right to appoint its own representation, bearing in mind the desirability of pluralistic and diverse representation' (EITI [no date b](#)).

However, at the national level, various countries are making some efforts to consider gender issues in their implementation of EITI. Malawi's 2015–2017 EITI work plan

includes activities which call for gender-disaggregated data (one for a report on the socio-economic impact of extraction, and the other measuring the effect of the EITI in Malawi on the level of trust in the extractives sector) (EITI no date c). Meanwhile, in Sierra Leone, the EITI Secretariat tries to ensure that women are invited and can participate in EITI-related activities such as town-hall meetings (interview, 5 April 2017, Skype). The national co-ordinator of Sierra Leone's EITI Secretariat emphasised how important it was that women be able to voice their specific concerns with the extractive sector, use the EITI platform, and contribute to policymaking (interview, 5 April 2017, Skype).

Much of the gender-related work effected by EITI countries focuses on providing women with access to EITI reports and EITI data. This work is also often led by civil society actors, who tend to be tasked with communicating the EITI reports and their contents, particularly at the community level. However, even here there will usually be some level of involvement (such as funding) from the national EITI Secretariats (interview, 5 April 2017, Skype).

In the following sections, I discuss some of the implications of the three experiences discussed here, focusing my analysis on a range of elements common to each of them.

## **Integrating gender issues into TAIs: lessons and future directions**

### **Participation**

The participation of women in activities and programmes – be it in training sessions, thematic workshops, regional or international conferences, or governance bodies – is one of the first aspects that TAIs tackle when trying to integrate gender into their approach. For example, as stated earlier, one of NRGi's first steps was to collect sex-disaggregated data about participation in its training and workshops while PWYP's work on participation predates its formal efforts to adopt a gender lens in its campaign.

While representation of women (especially if it is tokenistic) will not automatically translate into better outcomes for women, their specific needs and concerns will not be voiced or addressed unless they can participate in these forums. Regional and international level events represent an important opportunity for ensuring that the debate on natural resource management evolves to take gender equality into account. Furthermore, they represent important opportunities for women participants in terms of capacity building and networking. Participation in the actual institutions of TAIs is also critical for similar reasons – they provide a platform for women to contribute to the direction of TAIs' work on extractive issues and are an opportunity to develop leadership skills and presence.

At the local levels (for instance in community consultations when local communities voice their needs and grievances regarding a specific extractive project) women's participation is essential, so that their concerns – which may often be different to men's – are addressed (Rooke 2009).

A significant challenge is pushing increased female participation beyond regional and international levels to the community level, where TAI control over the event may

diminish, where the barriers to women's participation may be higher, and where they need to be highly cognisant of the local context.

Another challenge is that there exists resistance at all levels to taking proactive measures to increase female participation and representation, with some feeling that such measures could undermine the quality of participants. Care must also be taken that increased female participation translates into stronger female voices – this will not be the case if participation is limited to one or a few women and/or if they are not given the opportunity to speak freely. Finally, any attempts to remedy gender imbalance must be made with great care and awareness of local context so that they do not endanger women nor place an extra burden on them.

### *Putting gender on the agenda*

Most of the interviewees noted that over the last few years, they have seen an increased awareness in their field of how gender differences affect the issue of transparency and the extractives. Two factors that contributed to this raised awareness included a growing evidence base on the impacts of extraction on gender equality and the confirmation in the Sustainable Development Goals of gender equality as being essential to sustainable development (Oxfam International 2016). All of this has been underpinned by a growing awareness more generally between women's lack of participation in governance, and inequality and poverty.

Awareness-raising about gender inequality is important among stakeholders (be they civil society organisations, governments, or extractive companies) because addressing gender equality can be unpopular and requires challenging entrenched power structures. In several cases it may require change from those that benefit from these structures (especially as they are likely to be decision-makers).

For a couple of the interviewees, PWYP's work on raising awareness had been particularly successful. PWYP did this chiefly through its partnership with UN Women and the activities they organised together. The two key moments of heightened awareness were their joint workshop in April 2013, and the launch of *Extracting Equality – A Guide* in November 2014. These events led to press coverage in the East African Thomson Reuters and Miners Weekly, but also to recognition by actors in the development field, such as the Hewlett Foundation (Levine 2014), GIZ (which included the collaboration in its encyclopaedia on mining and gender [Scott and Kaiser 2014, 28]), and the SADC Gender Protocol 2015 Barometer (Lowe Morna *et al.* 2015, 166).

In my view as PWYP's gender focal point at that time, success in raising awareness was due to two factors – one was the name recognition and press power of UN Women, which PWYP did not have. The other was the fact that this collaboration was innovative and broke new ground: as stated earlier, this was the first time that UN Women had started focusing so explicitly on extractive issues, and PWYP was the first TAI working on extractives to examine gender issues. Both organisations enjoyed credibility in their respective fields, and when an organisation such as UN Women announces that an issue is important to women's rights, people tend to sit up and take notice. The fact that the collaboration was

time-bound and focused around specific milestones also helped in that it gave a high profile and lent impetus to the initiative.

In terms of communications and awareness-raising, it is now important for TAIs to move beyond sporadic coverage of gender issues (often revolving around International Women's Day) to a deeper and more sustained debate about how addressing gender issues will help TAIs better realise their missions. An ultimate challenge (and goal) is also to translate this heightened awareness into long-term changed beliefs and attitudes.

### *The importance of a guide to examine gender issues*

Integrating gender issues into organisations' campaigns often involves developing analytical tools tailored to the needs of staff and partners. For one PWYP member of staff, the creation of *Extracting Equality – A Guide* (2014) has been the most successful element of PWYP's work on gender issues. The guide has helped to drive work forward, and provided an important starting point for discussion for PWYP's national coalitions wishing to examine gender issues. It fulfils specific needs: it is practical and tangible, and the analysis it provides of gender issues in extractive industries suggests starting points for people wanting to work on the issue. Each step of the value chain contains questions to consider with regards to women's needs and participation, for example: do women have a platform to engage in the national debate on natural resource management? Are there barriers preventing women from accessing compensation for lost land? The guide was also based on the experiences of a wide range of stakeholders who work on gender and the extractives.

*Extracting Equality* has also been used by other TAIs – reflecting the fact that PWYP was a pioneer in integrating gender issues into its work. NRGi used the value chain as a basis for integrating questions on gender equality into the Natural Resource Charter benchmarking research in Myanmar, mentioned earlier. NRGi intends to continue to use the guide in other contexts. While no formal efforts have been made to track the guide's use so far, a quick Internet search shows it turning up in a range of places, from being hosted on wikigender to presented at the American Bar Association International Africa Forum (June 2015). It is also being used by researchers, for example it is cited in an article on gender issues in Arctic communities (Kohut and Prior 2015, no page number).

There have been challenges along the way for each of the organisations covered in this article. Some of them are discussed below. Omitted from this discussion are the broader external challenges related to campaigning on this issue, such as the structural barriers faced by women with regards to participating in governance (including lack of mobility, lower literacy levels, and entrenched patriarchal cultural norms).

## **Reflecting on challenges**

### *Lack of sustained resources to realise a wide strategy*

Both PWYP and NRGi cited a lack of resources (in terms of specific funding, but also staff time) as a significant challenge that impeded the implementation of gender-related

activities. In PWYP, this made it difficult to implement the organisation's gender strategy in a sustained manner and contributed to some missed opportunities. It also made it difficult to fully capitalise on the momentum created by the key milestones discussed earlier, because staff had to resume their other duties.

For example, there was little follow-up to the launch of the *Extracting Equality* guide, which led to a significant delay in the translation of the guide into other languages;<sup>18</sup> as a result, it was perhaps not disseminated as far as it could have been. A donor approached PWYP shortly after the launch of the guide to fund a project to test it in-country, but unfortunately PWYP did not have the capacity to take that project on (interview, 24 March 2017, Skype).

Similarly, there were plans with UN Women to pitch for International Women's Day to have extractives or natural resources as a theme, but this was never pursued. PWYP Nigeria's former co-ordinator stated that PWYP had done important work on gender, but should have capitalised on the momentum and their relationship with UN Women to push the issue even further.

NRGI's experience of resource constraints highlights fewer specific missed opportunities, but here a lack of resources has challenged the implementation of the institute's gender strategy in a more general way. The staff charged with advancing the gender strategy struggle to fit it in time-wise among their other duties. The time constraints also manifest themselves with the wider staff members who did not have the time to do the extra work necessary to start incorporating gender into their approach – often because gender would slip down their list of priorities (interview, 22 March 2017).

The iterative relationship between programme planning, finding funding, and staff capacity to raise funds, formulate projects, and actually deliver the work is complex and challenging. Both PWYP and NRGI set out certain objectives and activities without necessarily matching those with additional resources, especially in terms of staff time.

### *Gender inequality as a 'side issue'*

Almost every interviewee stated that gender inequality is still, by and large, treated as a 'side-issue' within the governance and extractives community. One interviewee stated that prioritising gender issues in this field was 'not uncontroversial' (interview, 28 July 2017, Skype) while another noted that mainstream actors remained reluctant to take the gender dimension seriously. This has an impact on the culture within an organisation and how likely it is to be successful in integrating gender issues, but also with regards to the field as a whole.

More than one interviewee I spoke to in the course of researching for this article said that gender issues had ended up on the back-burner for staff, because there were so many other issues to contend with first. The fact that gender issues might not be conceived of as an integral part of transparency and accountability contributes to this problem.

This has specifically been an issue for NRGI. A staff member interviewed there related that one challenge lay in communicating gender considerations as something useful to

address, rather than as another to-do on a long list. What made it particularly difficult for NNGI was the size of the institute, and the fact that staff are experts in very specific areas of natural resource governance (for example tax regimes or national oil companies) and it may be difficult to see how gender affects their particular issue. Internal capacity building and awareness-raising on the relationship of gender with good governance and the extractives is going to be essential in order to implement NNGI's gender strategy (interview, 28 July 2017).

Taking into account the impact that their work has on women, and ensuring that women can be involved in their interventions, requires a serious commitment from TAIs. It means finding funding, extra capacity, and new expertise. Unlike some topics (say EITI or mandatory disclosures) which can be executed by specific and largely self-contained programmes, incorporating gender issues requires action and buy-in from every member of staff. Furthermore, successfully addressing this extra work (and not letting it lapse or slip down the priority list) requires placing it in the central strategy, something which is not likely if gender inequality or women's participation is seen as a side issue.

The extractives and governance field is highly connected and interdependent (for example a certain project might involve NNGI training national level CSOs, who are members of PWYP, on how to interpret data disclosed through the EITI). As a result, it is hard for TAIs to apply a gender lens to their projects if the field as a whole is not convinced of the importance of gender equality and women's rights.

### *Moving from commitment to practice*

Once the need to address gender issues has been fully internalised and accepted by staff in TAIs, they still need to figure out how to do this in practice. NNGI staff raised this as a significant challenge for them. They highlighted that the institute's technocratic nature and strong focus on fiscal issues made it more challenging to see how to integrate gender issues and talk about questions like gender power relations.

In an internal survey conducted by NNGI, many staff asked for training on the impact of gender relations for their work and on how they could make their work sensitive to gender realities. A staff member said that one of the next priorities she saw for NNGI was developing practical guidance as to how to integrate gender. A member of the EITI Secretariat described how the issue of gender was often raised at regional forums, and some ideas for how to take gender into account would be suggested, but there was rarely any practical follow-up or clear method proposed to put these ideas into practice.

NNGI staff also mentioned the usefulness of case studies as a way of seeing what (and how) gender issues could be addressed. This call for case studies was echoed by a national EITI co-ordinator, who mentioned how useful it was when the EITI Secretariat shared examples of innovative EITI implementation from other countries, and that it would be great to also see examples related to increasing women's participation in EITI and ensuring that the initiative met their needs.

### **Strategic clarity on end goals**

PWYP's focus on short to mid-term goals in its gender strategy enabled it to realise initial tangible results relatively quickly, and these were judged to be successes. However PWYP lacked a clear vision of the end goal of focusing on gender issues, or of how they would integrate gender considerations into their mission and overall strategy. This paved the way for future difficulties, since it made progress beyond those initial objectives tricky (particularly as there was not the time or resources to properly revisit and update the strategy). It also made it difficult for PWYP to fully capitalise on those early successes.

The clearest manifestation of this concerns PWYP's *Extracting Equality – A Guide*. PWYP had not considered whether this new gender-sensitive value chain would replace its original value chain and become a core strategic document for the organisation, or whether it would instead sit parallel to the original chain. This tension was never resolved, which perhaps contributed to the guide not being disseminated that widely by PWYP, and not reaching all of PWYP's members. It also potentially created confusion – one staff member described how when talking about PWYP's strategy, it felt odd to say, 'Here is our key strategic document, our chain for change. But we also have another version!' (interview, 17 March 2017, Skype).

As a co-ordinating body of a coalition, the PWYP Secretariat had to be careful and could not simply take the decision to make the whole coalition's strategy gender-sensitive (particularly given that PWYP had only recently [September 2012] adopted a new strategy based on a year-long consultation with its members). However, PWYP possibly took its gender-related activities less far than it could have done had it confronted the issue of where gender sat head-on and considered long-term objectives.

### **The importance of collaboration**

Both PWYP and NRGi staff cited collaboration as an important method for realising work on gender. However, several interviewees also stated that collaborating effectively in this field presented difficulties.

Part of the reason for these difficulties may be that this field is deceptively diverse. Not only do organisations working on gender and the extractives cover a large range of issues (for example, women's involvement in artisanal mining, the impact of environmental degradation on women, and others) but they operate from different philosophies. For instance, a fair part of the focus from the World Bank or UN Women is on increasing the involvement of women in the extractive sector itself – for example as miners. On the other end of the spectrum, organisations like Womin<sup>19</sup> work from a 'post-extractivist' political vantage point, which seeks alternatives to the current development model with its reliance on extraction. Organisations also differ in their understandings of women's rights and use of feminist language. All of these differences – in political aims, analysis, and specific area of focus (artisanal mining, women's health, governance, etc.) – make it challenging to find organisations to partner, and define projects where collaboration makes sense.

This is all the more true as only a minority of organisations are examining gender and the extractives from a transparency and accountability perspective. Even then, a difference in rhetoric and outlook can slow progress. Furthermore, there also exists a lack of clarity of what organisations mean when they say they work on ‘gender and the extractives’ (interview, 27 March 2017), which makes clear communication difficult.

In my personal experience at PWYP, it was so exciting in 2013–2014 to find others working on the emerging issue of gender and extractives (emerging for TAIs), that less attention was paid to the diversity of the field. The hunger to collaborate tended to overshadow the fact that what one organisation had in mind when they said they wanted to work on ‘gender and the extractives’ was quite different from another. In my mind this contributed to some instances of reinvention of the wheel – at one stage there were three different mailing lists with similar purposes (co-ordinated by PWYP, Action Aid Netherlands, and UN Women respectively) for practitioners in the field. Partly, this was due to the difference in actors and who their allies were (for example, UN Women were keen to have government and company representatives on their lists, while PWYP was more focused towards civil society) (personal experience 2014), but it may have also been due to an uncertainty over how to collaborate around gender (and a mailing list often seems like a good place to start).

Collaboration will most likely be successful when actors have clearly articulated what their objectives are and within which framework they operate, and partner with organisations with similar goals. As a staff member of PWYP pointed out, this is why it is so important for TAIs to clarify what their goals and philosophies are regarding gender before they seek partners, or they run the risk of seeing their mission diluted. However, a looser collaboration, for example in the form of knowledge exchange, is relatively straightforward even in a diverse and diverging community.

## Conclusion

The gender-related work being realised by TAIs is still in its early days, and while it has been possible to examine some of the advances made as well as what has helped or stymied progress, it is too soon to start looking at the ultimate impact of this work. In some cases we can for instance tell whether women’s participation in TAI interventions has been increased, but not yet what impact this has had on women’s lives and their relationship to the extractive sector. Nevertheless, the fact that organisations like PWYP and NRGi have decided to incorporate gender into their approach is promising, even if more remains to be done in order for gender to be accepted by the broader field as an integral part of the transparency and accountability question.

Interestingly, when explaining their decision to start examining gender issues and working to address them, staff in both PWYP and NRGi focused on the fact that women are affected differently from men by the activities of the extractive sector. Indeed, much of the conversation seems to revolve around this point.

But what if there was another way of looking at the issue? What if TAIs were to approach gender issues from the starting point that gender roles and relations affect

women's and men's consumption of information, which is a key resource for empowered and effective participation in advocacy and campaigning? That women may have different questions about the extractive sector than men, and need extra support in accessing platforms to lobby for change? While it is critical not to generalise, there is an emerging literature testing the hypothesis that women tend to have less access to information than men. Several studies highlight that gendered patterns of access to technologies mean women in developing countries are likely to have even less access than men to important communication tools such as the Internet (ICU 2016, 3), radio (International Alert 2014, 25), and mobile phones (GMSA 2014).

Given that the effectiveness of T&A interventions is based on citizens being able to access, consume, and act on extractives-related data, it is crucial to consider how gender differences may affect women's and men's ability to participate in governance, and in particular in TAIs. While TAIs are aware of this reality in the sense of focusing on women's participation in decision-making forums, there has not been enough focus on the fact that accountability systems themselves often replicate gender biases (Neuman 2016). Instead of focusing on the extractive value chain, it would be useful to also consider what might be termed the 'governance chain' and how women might be excluded from its processes.

It is also crucial to remember that gender is not the only identifier that would affect a person's ability to participate in transparency and accountability processes. Other aspects of identity are also powerful determinants of whether they are able to join in. Women experience the impact of extractives differently from each other, according to where they are located and the differences that exist between them by race and class, as well as other aspects of identity. Still, a gender analysis is a starting point to focus on the global issue of gender inequality and the need to ensure women have equal rights with men.

Changing the focus – or at least putting more emphasis on the angle of women as users of data – could help integrate gender issues more centrally within TAI frameworks as it relates explicitly to the effectiveness of their interventions and their theory of change. This could help ensure that a tight focus remains on gender and the extractives through a transparency and accountability lens, and maybe help bring gender in from the sidelines. It might also help identify a new set of entry points for gender-related work and mitigate the risk of mission creep. Finally, it opens up a new range of possibilities for potential collaborators: for example those within the open data<sup>20</sup> or open government movements<sup>21</sup> that are working to ensure that gender differences be taken into account there. This issue – of integrating gender into transparency and accountability approaches regarding the extractive sector – presents a steep learning curve, but one filled with exciting opportunities.

## Notes

1. For more information, please visit <https://resourcegovernance.org/analysis-tools/publications/value-chain> (last checked 31 August 2017).
2. My role as a gender focal point at PWYP involved creating and managing the Extracting Equality mailing list, sourcing and writing articles on extractive and gender issues, and working with UN Women on putting together the *Extracting Equality – A Guide*.

3. For more information on Publish What You Pay please visit [www.publishwhatyoupay.org](http://www.publishwhatyoupay.org) (last checked 31 August 2017).
4. For more information on the Publish What You Pay Secretariat please visit [www.publishwhatyoupay.org/the-secretariat/](http://www.publishwhatyoupay.org/the-secretariat/) (last checked 31 August 2017).
5. For the report *Gender and the Extractives in Zimbabwe: A Collection of Stories of Women and Their Experiences*, see <http://www.zela.org/docs/gender/genderExtractives.pdf> (last checked 9 October 2017).
6. For more about PWYP DRC's campaign please visit <http://www.publishwhatyoupay.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Transparence-en-RDC-la-mobilisation-de-tous-1.pdf> (last checked 9 October 2017).
7. To access *Extracting Equality – A Guide* please visit <http://www.publishwhatyoupay.org/pwyp-resources/extracting-equality-a-guide/> (last checked 31 August 2017).
8. Tactical Studios was Tactical Tech's creative agency and ran from 2010 to 2015. Tactical Tech is a non-profit based in Berlin that helps rights activists use digital technology in their campaigns, as well as supporting them in being aware of their digital security concerns. For more on Tactical Tech please visit <https://tacticaltech.org/> (last checked 31 August 2017).
9. For more information on the Natural Resource Governance Institute please visit [www.resourcegovernance.org](http://www.resourcegovernance.org) (last checked 31 August 2017).
10. For more on NRGi's work with Tanzanian journalists please visit <https://resourcegovernance.org/events/journalist-deep-dive-corruption-tanzania-extractives-sector> (last checked 31 August 2017).
11. For more on NRGi's work on contract transparency please visit <https://resourcegovernance.org/blog/resourcecontractsorg-returns-new-features-and-more-contracts> (last checked 31 August 2017).
12. The Natural Resource Charter Benchmarking Framework is a tool that assess a government's management of its oil, gas, and mining frameworks against a set of best practices. For more please visit <https://resourcegovernance.org/analysis-tools/tools/natural-resource-charter-benchmarking-framework> (last checked 9 October 2017).
13. The Resource Governance Index measures the quality of resource governance in 81 countries and is produced by NRGi. For the 2017 edition please visit <http://resourcegovernanceindex.org/> (last checked 31 August 2017).
14. NRGi's case study on the participation of Tunisia's female parliamentarians in the country's natural resource management is not yet publicly available.
15. *Comparative and Descriptive Analysis of the Effects of the Extractive Industry Boom on Social Indicators – Andean Countries* is available here: <https://resourcegovernance.org/analysis-tools/publications/comparative-and-descriptive-analysis-effects-extractive-industry-boom> (last checked 31 August 2017).
16. The Myanmar benchmarking exercise is an internal document.
17. For more information on the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative please visit [www.eiti.org](http://www.eiti.org) (last checked 31 August 2017).
18. The *Extracting Equality* guide is also available in French at <http://www.publishwhatyoupay.org/fr/pwyp-resources/extraire-legalite-un-guide/> (last checked 9 October 2017).
19. Womin is an African women-led women's rights alliance focusing on gender and the extractives. An article from them is included in this issue of *Gender & Development*. For more information please visit <http://womin.org.za/> (last checked 31 August 2017).
20. The Open Data field encompasses those working on the divulgation, promotion, and use of Open Data (data 'can be freely accessed, used, modified and shared by anyone for any purpose – subject only, at most, to requirements to provide attribution and/or share-alike'); for more on Open Data please visit <http://opendatahandbook.org/> (last checked 31 August 2017).

21. The Open Government movement consists of those working towards making governments open, transparent, and responsive to citizens, usually via a process including increased citizen participation and the release by governments of data in an open format. For an example of an Open Government initiative please visit <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/> (last checked 31 August 2017).

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