TAKING ACTION ON GENDER EQUITY

in Canada's Forest Sector

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Recognizing Indigenous Lands

We recognize the treaty and unceded territories across Canada and pay our respects to the First Peoples who inhabited and maintained these lands for generations. This report was compiled on the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishnaabeg people. We pay our respects to the First Nations, Inuit and Métis.

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Executive Summary

The forest sector is an important contributor to Canada's gross domestic product (GDP) and a critical nature-based solution in mitigating the impacts of climate change; it is currently primed for growth with the emergence of innovation and employment opportunities.

Despite this, data shows that women, visible minorities, Indigenous and immigrants remain underrepresented. Of the current workforce, 17% are women, 9% are visible minorities, 7% are Indigenous and 12% are immigrants.

Women are as educated as men. It has been shown that Indigenous women are more likely to have more formal education than Indigenous men, yet most Indigenous women are typically employed as laborers with low median incomes.

17% women

A significant opportunity exists to transform the workforce to make it more diverse and inclusive for all Canadians. Given the demand for labour that exists in the forest sector, it behooves all leaders in the sector to look at the barriers that exist for underrepresented groups and find ways to overcome them. This in turn will increase the potential for attracting and retaining women and other underrepresented groups to the forest sector.

In November of 2018, the Canadian Institute of Forestry (CIF-IFC), in partnership with the Centre for Social Intelligence (CSI), united to launch the Gender Equity in Canada's Forest Sector initiative, the first public-private sector partnership in Canada's forest sector focused on addressing gender inequality. Prior to 2017, a coordinated sector-wide effort to increase gender, diversity and inclusion of underrepresented groups in Canada's forest sector did not exist. Forest organizations previously addressed this issue independently and on an ad hoc basis.

Through the initiative, a National Steering Committee, comprised of influential stakeholders in the forest sector including 16 leaders from government, industry, academia, Indigenous, and non-profit organizations, developed a new shared vision for the sector – one that provides equal opportunity for all underrepresented groups, regardless of culture, religion, race and sexual orientation. Over the three-year period of this project, the National Steering Committee has provided strategic guidance on a framework for action within three pillars (1: Building the Evidence Base; 2: Fostering an Inclusive Culture; 3: Repositioning the Sector) to address the root issues that have impeded the establishment of a gender-balanced workforce.

The initiative's mission to lead transformational change on gender equity in the forest sector, working collaboratively to engage, attract, retain, and advance women, has expanded over the three years to encompass diversity and inclusion as a whole for all underrepresented groups (such as women, Indigenous peoples, new Canadians, 2SLGBTQI+, visible minorities, and people living with disabilities).

Vision
Canada has a diverse and inclusive workforce that provides the foundation for a thriving forest sector and healthy communities.

This initiative has identified key barriers faced by underrepresented groups to entering and remaining in the forest sector such as persistent wage gaps, lack of advancement opportunities, and workplace culture. There is a strong business case and advantage for hiring a more diverse and inclusive workforce – one that ensures companies are better positioned to compete in a competitive global market and simultaneously strengthened to promote innovation and productivity through a better workplace culture.

This final report describes the outcomes and resources developed through the initiative and charts a path forward for the forest sector, becoming a leader for other sectors to follow and leading the change on gender equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Sommaire exécutif

Le secteur forestier contribue de façon importante au PIB du Canada et constitue une solution naturelle essentielle pour atténuer les effets du changement climatique ; il est prêt à croître avec l'émergence d'innovations et de possibilités d'emploi.

Malgré cela, les données montrent que les femmes, les minorités visibles, les Autochtones et les immigrants restent sous-représentés. La main-d'œuvre actuelle se compose de 17 % de femmes, de 9 % de membres de minorités visibles, de 7 % d'Autochtones et de 12 % d'immigrants.

Les femmes sont aussi instruites que les hommes. Au sein des populations autochtones, les femmes sont plus susceptibles d'avoir un niveau de scolarité plus élevé que les hommes, pourtant la plupart d'entre elles travaillent généralement comme ouvrières ou dans des emplois à faible revenu médian.
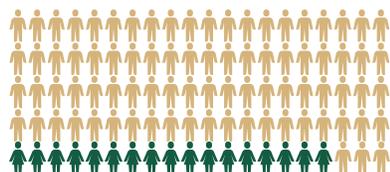
L'opportunité existe de transformer la main-d'œuvre et de la rendre plus diversifiée et inclusive pour la population canadienne. Étant donné la demande de main-d'œuvre que connait le secteur forestier, il incombe à tous les dirigeants du secteur d'examiner les obstacles qui existent en ce qui concerne les groupes sous-représentés, et de trouver des moyens de les surmonter. En retour, cela augmentera les chances d'attirer et de retenir les femmes et les autres groupes sous-représentés dans le secteur forestier.

En novembre 2018, l'Institut forestier du Canada (IFC-CIF) et le Centre for Social Intelligence (CSI) se sont unis pour lancer l'initiative sur L'équité entre les sexes au sein du secteur forestier du Canada, le premier partenariat public-privé du secteur forestier du Canada axé sur la lutte contre les inégalités entre les hommes et les femmes. Avant 2017, il n'existait pas d'effort coordonné à l'échelle du secteur pour accroître la représentation des genres, la diversité et l'inclusion des groupes sous-représentés dans le secteur forestier du Canada. Les organisations forestières abordaient auparavant cette question de manière indépendante et ponctuelle.

17% des femmes

Grâce à cette initiative, un comité directeur national composé de parties prenantes influentes du secteur forestier, dont 16 dirigeants de gouvernements, d'industries, d'universités, d'organisations autochtones et d'organisations à but non lucratif, a élaboré une nouvelle vision commune pour le secteur - une vision qui offre l'égalité des chances aux groupes sous-représentés, indépendamment de leur culture, leur religion, leur race et leur orientation sexuelle. Au cours de la période de trois ans de ce projet, le comité directeur national a fait des recommandations stratégiques sur un cadre d'action au sein de trois piliers (1 : Établir une base de données probantes ; 2 : Favoriser une culture d'inclusion ; 3 : Repositionner le secteur) pour aborder les problèmes fondamentaux qui ont entravé l'établissement d'une main-d'œuvre équilibrée assurant la parité hommes-femmes.

La mission de l'initiative visant à susciter un changement transformationnel au niveau de l'équité entre les genres dans le secteur forestier, en travaillant en collaboration pour engager, attirer, retenir et faire progresser les femmes, s'est élargie au cours des trois années pour englober la diversité et l'inclusion dans son ensemble pour tous les groupes sous-représentés (femmes, peuples autochtones, nouveaux Canadiens, 2SLGBTQ+, minorités visibles et personnes vivant avec un handicap).

Vision

Le Canada dispose d'une main-d'œuvre diversifiée et inclusive qui constitue le fondement d'un secteur forestier prospère et de communautés saines.

Cette initiative a permis d'identifier les principaux obstacles auxquels sont confrontés les groupes sous-représentés pour entrer et rester dans le secteur forestier, tels que les écarts de salaire persistants, le manque de possibilités d'avancement, et la culture du lieu de travail. De solides arguments et avantages commerciaux justifient l'embauche d'une main-d'œuvre plus diversifiée et inclusive, permettant aux entreprises d'être mieux positionnées dans un marché mondial concurrentiel, et simultanément renforcées pour promouvoir l'innovation et la productivité grâce à une meilleure culture du lieu de travail.

Le présent rapport final décrit les résultats et les ressources élaborés dans le cadre de cette initiative et trace la voie à suivre pour le secteur forestier afin qu'il devienne un chef de file que les autres secteurs pourront suivre, et qu'il mène le changement en matière d'équité entre les genres, de diversité et d'inclusion.

Introduction
Canada's forest sector

Canada's forest sector is one of the pillars of the Canadian economy, contributing $23.7 billion to Canada's nominal GDP in 2019. [1] **From producing traditional forest products to developing new carbon-friendly technologies, and long recognized as a leader in sustainable forest management, Canada's forest sector is an important piece of our history and an integral part of our future.** [2]

This is particularly true in Indigenous and rural communities, where the forest sector is a vitally important employer. In 2018, the forest sector directly employed 204,555 people. [3]

During the mid-2010s, Canada's forest sector faced a severe labour market shortage as a result of technological advancements and global demand for wood products, coupled with the retirement of baby boomers.

Employers began to recognize that women, Indigenous peoples and new Canadians were underrepresented in many segments of the forest sector's workforce, from technical to corporate leadership positions (of which men made up 83%). Data from the 2016 Statistics Canada census showed that women accounted for only 17% of Canada's forest sector workforce. In addition, and inclusive of women, data showed only 9% were visible minorities, 7% were Indigenous and 12% were immigrants. [4]

With the exception of Indigenous peoples, representation of these groups was far lower in the forest sector compared to other employment sectors. Nonetheless, Indigenous peoples are typically underrepresented in management and decision-making roles and are also underrepresented compared to their population in forested regions.

The 2018 State of the Forests Report provides additional statistics noting that, of the 17% of workers in the industry who are women, 23% work in logging, forestry and forest support activities, while 77% work in wood product manufacturing and the pulp and paper industry. [5]

In order for the sector to remain economically competitive, there is a critical need to attract and retain talent from all underrepresented groups in Canada.

Canada's forests provide vital ecosystem services and important economic, environmental, social, cultural and health benefits to all Canadians. In the Canadian Census, the "forest sector" is composed of four sub-sectors:

- **Forestry and Logging;**
- **Support Activities for Forestry;**
- **Wood Product Manufacturing (including sawmills and engineered wood); and**
- **Paper Manufacturing (including pulp and paperboard).**

New forest-related products and materials are also being developed, including biofuels (that can replace fossil fuels as part of the transformation towards a low carbon economy) biochemicals, and new building materials.

Source: Natural Resources Canada. (2019). Statistics Canada 2016 Census Data.

Problématique

Gender equality and inclusion is almost universally seen as a women's issue. However, over the past three years, there has been increasing awareness that it affects all genders, regardless of culture, race or religion, and in all aspects of life. Whether it is the division of labour on the home front or career mobility, equitable opportunities should be available to all. The potential benefits from increased gender equality are tremendous – a stronger economy, better socio-economic outcomes, and improved health and work-life balance.

Reinforced by actions taken internationally at the United Nations[6] and the World Bank,[7] the Government of Canada made Equity, Diversity and Inclusion a top priority in 2015 by transforming Status of Women Canada to a federal government department now named Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE). [8] Industry leaders in Canada's natural resources sectors also began exploring how to advance gender equality as part of comprehensive strategies to grow a diverse and prosperous economy.

Context

The Gender Equity in Canada's Forest Sector initiative, spearheaded by the Canadian Institute of Forestry/Institut forestier du Canada (CIF-IFC) and the Centre for Social Intelligence (CSI), was the first public-private partnership of its kind in the sector, focused on addressing gender inequality.

It brought together leaders and outlined targeted actions to address systemic barriers and build an inclusive culture to promote the employment of underrepresented groups.

Since the start of the initiative in 2018, a number of industry associations and grassroot initiatives have developed online communities, campaigns, or working groups to represent the interests and experiences of women and other underrepresented groups within the forest sector.

This initiative started out with a focus on increasing the number of women in senior roles and in technical positions in the forest sector. Over the course of this three-year initiative, the scope expanded to include other equity-deserving groups including racialized groups and people from diverse ethnic origins, people who identify as 2SLGBTQI+, new Canadians, and persons living with disabilities.

It's important to note too that the language used for this initiative has evolved from "gender equity" to diversity and inclusion, so as to include all underrepresented groups. This topic in general is moving very quickly, and the terminology used continues to evolve at a rapid rate. Terms such as EDI – or Equity, Diversity and Inclusion – are now used interchangeably with diversity and inclusion. Whatever the term used, its meaning remains consistent – these terms refer to creating a level playing field for all Canadians to fulfill whatever career aspirations they may have.

Project Vision/Mission
National Steering Committee

Together, CIF-IFC and CSI recruited a multi-stakeholder National Steering Committee comprised of 16 key leaders with a range of skills/expertise and backgrounds across the forest sector to become gender champions for the initiative. Committee members represented government, industry, academia, Indigenous, and non-profit organizations.

The National Steering Committee collaboratively developed a shared vision for the sector that "Canada has a diverse and inclusive workforce that provides the foundation for a thriving forest sector and healthy communities" and provided strategic guidance on the development of a framework for action. From the National Steering Committee, three Sub-committees were formed.

National Steering Committee

Sub-Committee Members

How did we get here?

In 2017, CIF-IFC and the CSI developed a partnership to pursue gender equity in Canada's forest sector, with the idea of increasing the number of women in technical positions and senior executive roles.

The first National Steering Committee meeting took place in November of 2018 at the Canadian Museum of Nature in a boardroom overlooking the museum's theatre. The same theatre had historically housed the House of Commons and Senate for four years after the fires that consumed Canada's Parliament buildings in 1916. Important legislation was passed at that time, including an Act in 1918 which recognized the right of many Canadian women to vote in national elections. [9]

Objectives

The purpose of the project was to create gender equality in the sector by:

- **Increasing the number of women in senior executive roles and technical woodland positions;**
- **Explaining the benefits to men of having women in the sector;**
- **Creating gender champions across the forest sector; and**
- **Improving the economic competitiveness of the forest sector.**

The initiative's original mission was to lead transformational change aimed at fostering gender equity in the forest sector, working collaboratively to engage, attract, retain and advance women in senior executive roles and technical positions. This mission has since expanded to encompass diversity and inclusion of all underrepresented groups (women, Indigenous peoples, new Canadians, visible minorities, 2SLGBTQI+, and people living with disabilities) and at all levels.

SO WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?
Huge labour market demand; low statistics on underrepresented groups; women leaving the sector within first 5 years

BARRIERS
- Persistant wage gaps
- Low retention rates
- Lack of advancement opportunities, mentors, sponsors, networks
- Workplace culture (e.g. male-dominated leadership, harassment, work-life balance)

BUSINESS CASE
- A powerful engine for economic growth
- A competitive advantage for companies
- More innovative and agile decision-making
- Better business outcomes
- Benefits for men and boys (health, work-life balance)
- Reduced turnover risk
- Increased company performance

ACTIONS
- **Build the evidence base** through better data
- **Foster an inclusive culture** by creating pathways for recruitment, retention and advancement of women and underrepresented groups
- **Reposition the sector** by advocating, measuring, and reporting on progress

The Business Advantage

Gender equality is good for the bottom line. Here's why:

Corporate leaders pursue gender equality for many reasons: as part of a commitment to corporate social responsibility, in response to legislative or regulatory requirements (such as those now in place in Norway, Finland, Iceland and Japan), or to demonstrate public leadership on an issue that is increasingly "top of mind" for investors and shareholders alike.

The benefits of a diverse and inclusive workplace include: exceeding financial targets and creating a powerful engine for economic growth; enhanced performance and profitability; increased innovation and agility; and better business outcomes.

In addition to providing a competitive advantage in an increasingly growing global market, gender equality also provides benefits to men and to society as a whole.

Powerful engine for economic growth

Having a more diverse workforce and inclusive culture from the boardroom to corporate leadership positions to the mill floor can be a powerful engine of economic growth in Canada and around the world.

A 2017 report by McKinsey found that gender equality in Canada could add $150 billion to Canada's GDP by 2026 – 6% higher than business-as-usual scenarios. [10] Even more compelling evidence points to opportunities for global economic growth. In 2017, the World Economic Forum suggested that closing the global gender gap in labour market participation by 25% could add an additional US$5.3 trillion to GDP globally by 2025. [11]

This is a powerful incentive for governments and companies to accelerate efforts to achieve gender equality and inclusion, both in the forest sector and across the entire economy.

A 2019 International Labour Organization survey of 13,000 companies found that as a result of efforts to achieve gender diversity:

60% reported increased profits and productivity;

57% reported an increased ability to attract and retain talent;

54% reported greater creativity, innovation and openness;

54% reported enhanced company reputation; and

36% reported a better ability to gauge consumer interest and demand.

Enhanced performance and profitability

Companies with more women in leadership positions also outperform their competitors on a number of key financial measures, including share performance, stock price growth, return on sales, return on equity, and return on capital.[12]

The numbers tell a compelling story – gender equality can help position companies for greater success in the markets of today and tomorrow.

Increased innovation and agile decision-making

Greater diversity in the workplace means a broader range of leadership styles, experiences, and approaches to problem solving and collaboration. It also provides an increased ability to gauge consumer interest and demand. Ultimately, this can result in enhanced team performance and greater innovation at all levels.[13]

For example, more diverse boards typically reflect a more fulsome range of skills and experience, which can lead to greater accountability, enhanced governance practices, and improved collaboration. This in turn can help increase investor interest and confidence.[14]

A 2019 report from the International Labour Organization found that nearly three of four companies surveyed cited an improved bottom line from gender equality measures and indicated a profit increase of between 5 and 20%.

Source: International Labour Organization. (2019). Women in Business and Management: The Business Case for Change.
https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_700953.pdf

In addition, studies suggest that women in the workplace employ a broader range of leadership behaviours that improve organizational performance, an approach that can be critical to a company's ability to tackle new kinds of challenges. For instance, women tend to employ more participative decision-making while also emphasizing the importance of developing people and serving as role models to others within their organizations.[15]

Attracting the best and brightest in the country to the forest sector requires effective recruitment strategies that respond to the needs of underrepresented groups so they can see a career path through all of life's major milestone events (such as childbirth and care for elderly parents, partners, or children).

One key driver of employee attraction is the extent to which companies provide a diverse and inclusive workplace.[16] Examples include consideration of flexible work arrangements, community childcare partnerships, and sponsorship and mentoring programs throughout the organization.

56% increase in job performance

50% drop in turnover

74% reduction in sick days

Source: Carr, Evan W., Gabriella Rosen Kellerman and Alexi Robichaux. (2019). Employee Retention. The Value of Belonging at Work. P. 12

14.

Companies that have the highest amount of gender diversity on their executive teams were 21% more likely to experience higher than average profitability.

Research shows that organizations with an inclusive culture are:

2x
as likely to exceed financial targets

3x
as likely to be high-performing

6x
as likely to be innovative and agile

8x
as likely to achieve better business outcomes

Source: Juliet Bourke. (2016). Which Two Heads Are Better Than One? How Diverse Teams Create Breakthrough Ideas and Make Smarter Decisions (Australian Institute of Company Directors, 2016) Deloitte Insights. Doerr, P. (2018). "The Business Case for Gender Parity."

Better business outcomes

Business outcomes are defined as improvements to employee health and safety and less risk-taking behaviour, leading to overall improvements in employees and their well-being. A gender diverse workforce is also linked to improved health and safety performance. [17]

More than 97% of all reported workplace fatalities in Canada between 1993 and 1995 were men. Workplace injuries are also predominantly male and can result in significant costs: almost $10 billion in Canada for the direct costs (including workers' compensation, health care and rehabilitation) associated with occupational injuries in 2008 alone. [18]

In part, this reflects the preponderance of men in higher risk industries; however, it also reflects gendered expectations and attitudes that can influence both men's willingness to engage in risky activities as well as their reluctance to seek help.[19]

Benefits for men

The discussion of gender equality permeates across all forms of media and has heightened attention and pressure on men's behaviour with notable movements, such as the "Me Too" and "Time's Up", swinging the pendulum to a point where many men seem uncertain about what to say or do.

"Soft" skills, such as greater responsibility for personal behaviours and those of the people around them, greater empathy and understanding, and better impulse control, are what are now seen as the qualities that make up the "leader of tomorrow". These skills help leaders navigate the appropriate code of conduct in the workplace.

Engaging men about how the workplace should be equal for all allows them to reflect on their own situation and seek ways to improve it. There are benefits for men by creating a more respectful workplace, including financial benefits. These benefits were noted by the International Monetary Fund, with greater inclusion of underrepresented groups in the labour force, men's wages also go up, due to broader increases in productivity.[20]

Greater gender equality in the workplace also supports healthier relationships and stronger families. For example, a company that recognizes flexible working arrangements means men are allowed the same flexibility without fear that their upward career mobility will be curtailed. Furthermore, countries where both parents are involved in childcare report happier children and less divorce.[21]

Creating a gender-balanced workforce also has significant health benefits for men. Men are part of the solution, not the problem. They can be critical allies in supporting greater equality from the beginning of their academic life to the technical or executive positions they aspire to and realize. Each step of their careers offers an opportunity to be a gender champion and to advocate for a respectful workplace that benefits everyone.

Men can also be powerful allies in overcoming resistance (or backlash) to measures designed to advance gender equality, by stepping up as champions and partners in creating new, more diverse workplaces.[22]

Key Barriers to Attracting and Retaining Underrepresented Groups

Multiple barriers exist to attracting and retaining underrepresented groups. Some of these key barriers include persistent wage gaps and low retention rates, a lack of advancement opportunities, and an unsupportive workplace culture. Indigenous women face an additional suite of barriers centred on their underrepresentation in the sector, particularly in positions that reflect their higher education rates.

Persistent wage gaps and low retention rates

Wage gaps refer to the overall differences in men's and women's median earnings across society, pay differences between men and women occupying the same job or field, and job categories that are paid differently and often gendered (i.e. jobs that are disproportionately occupied by women or men).

Despite gains over the last decade, Canada continues to have an overall gender wage gap, and there continues to be clear wage gaps between men and women in the forest sector. This, in part, reflects the fact that women disproportionately occupy lower-paid positions in the forest sector (such as administrative roles) rather than more technical or leadership roles.

There is evidence of a gender wage inequality in the natural resources sectors. In a survey of 500 women working in arboriculture and the forest sector in the US and Canada, 60% reported earning less than their male counterparts.[23] When looking at retention in the sector, a report that examined barriers and opportunities for women's employment in natural resources sectors in Canada reported that female employees left within the first five years of employment.[24]

Effective recruitment policies and practices, along with shifts in workplace culture, are critical to ensure companies can attract and retain talented women, Indigenous peoples and new Canadians to fill key skills shortages and labour market gaps.

A 2019 study by the International Labour Organization found evidence of a persistent 'leaky pipeline'; in other words, the more senior the position within a given company, the fewer women were found. They also highlighted what they called 'glass walls', referring to the occupational segregation of women in certain roles such as human resources, finance and administration, which are not as likely to serve as springboards to upward advancement.

Source: International Labour Organization. (2019). Women in Business and Management: The Business Case for Change. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_700953.pdf

Lack of advancement opportunities

Linked in part to low retention levels is the persistent challenge underrepresented groups have in advancing their careers within the forest sector.

This may reflect the lack of personal and professional networks for underrepresented groups in the sector. The development of effective networks has been identified as a critical factor in professional advancement.[25]

Workplace culture

Workplace culture is different for all organizations. It is dictated by the top leadership of any organization and can foster an inclusive culture or have people seeking their next career move quickly.

Forest sector leaders have been working to create change in their workplace to a more gender-balanced workforce. This means addressing harassment issues, hazing rituals, unwanted name calling, or sexual advancements faced by underrepresented groups as well as men.

According to a 2019 McKinsey report on women in work in Canada, almost 60% reported experiencing some level of microaggression at work. Women vice presidents reported being five times more likely than men to have to prove their competence, three times more likely to be addressed in a less than professional manner, and three times more likely to hear demeaning remarks than the men they worked with.[26] Another workplace culture barrier for women is what has been referred to as 'widespread, ingrained gender bias', particularly in skilled trades, which can affect everything from recruiting and hiring to professional development and advancement.[27]

Workplace culture also includes work-life balance, and as the pressures of the home front have traditionally been on the woman's shoulders, there has been a greater need for flexibility in hours worked by women. Newly-minted parents are now both seeking balance in their lives with men increasingly wanting flexible work arrangements so as to participate more fully with their family responsibilities.

Both sponsorship and mentorship have key roles to play in helping women advance in the workplace. Mentors are advisors and can be anyone in a position to provide experience, advice and support. A sponsor, on the other hand, tends to be a senior staff person in the same organization who is invested in a protégé's success and who can serve as their advocate internally.

Source: McKinsey & Company. (2019). The present and future of women at work in Canada. https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/gender-equality/the-present-and-future-of-women-at-work-in-canada

Additional barriers for Indigenous women

Intersectionality can be considered a lens to understand how people's experiences of multiple and overlapping identities and systems of oppression or privilege impact their life experiences and opportunities. For example, Indigenous women cannot separate out their experiences of gender from their experiences of being Indigenous.

Awareness of these interconnected dimensions and efforts to address them are key for any organization to maximize the potential of all employees.

Most Indigenous communities are located in or near the proximity of forested lands; over 70% of Indigenous involvement in the forest sector can therefore make a powerful contribution to the economic livelihoods of Indigenous families and communities, and beyond.[28]

According to Canada's 2016 Census, approximately 12,000 Indigenous people were employed in the forest sector, representing approximately 7% of its labour force.[29]

Indigenous workers are typically concentrated in in-forest activities (forest management, logging) and wood product manufacturing, which are often lower-paid than other roles.[30]

Indigenous women often attain higher levels of education than Indigenous men, but face greater challenges and barriers than other women in the forest sector, due to the additional impacts of racism and colonialism.

Twice as many Indigenous women hold university degrees compared to their male counterparts, although similar percentages of Indigenous women and men hold trade school certificates or college diplomas.[31]

Intersectionality
The interacting "influences of multiple identities in a given person as they interact with marginalizing or empowering structures, norms and narratives".

Source: Colfer CJP, Basnett BS and Ihalainen M. (2018). Making sense of 'intersectionality': A manual for lovers of people and forests. Occasional Paper 184. Bogor, Indonesia: CIFOR

Indigenous women are nevertheless typically underemployed in positions that do not make use of their knowledge or professional skills. Despite their education levels and skills training, they are often even excluded from female-dominated occupations such as clerical and secretarial services (which are mostly dominated by white women).[32] They are more likely than men to be found working in forest nurseries or gathering forest products and, consequently, have the lowest median incomes in the forest sector. Women living on reserve make even less than those who live off reserve.[33]

Raising men's awareness about the barriers faced by women and creating greater awareness on how to address these barriers will ultimately improve the workplace culture, stimulate new codes of behavioural conduct, and benefit everyone.

Framework for Action

The National Steering Committee (see Annex A for list of members) from across Canada identified three areas for concerted action to address gender inequality in the forest sector. Committee members rolled up their sleeves and participated in three Sub-committees, along with other experts in forestry, to develop a framework for action and identify specific deliverables to be completed over the three-year period. The pillars included:

Building the Evidence Base

Collect and analyze data to advance equity in the forest sector
- **Identify and collect baseline data on women in forestry in Canada**
- **Identify gaps in data**
- **Develop gender equity principles for the forest sector**

Fostering an Inclusive Culture

Create pathways for the recruitment, retention and advancement of underrepresented groups in the forest sector
- **Develop new resources for the sector including:**
  - **Resistance Plan**
  - **Inclusive Leadership Report**
  - **Allies Toolkit - Leveraging Power and Privilege**

Repositioning the Sector

Advocate, promote, measure and report on progress towards equity
- **Reposition the sector image to attract women and underrepresented groups**
- **Develop a communications plan and outreach to the sector**
- **Measure progress**

Key Outcomes
Building the evidence base

The first pillar of the framework focused on collecting and analyzing baseline data by gender and then expanding the data collection to include all other underrepresented groups in the forest sector – an effort which had not been completed on a sector-wide basis previously. Actions undertaken by the Building the Evidence Base Sub-committee have contributed to furthering research on underrepresented groups; however, additional work is needed to understand diversity challenges including the 'how' and 'why' questions beyond the current labour force numbers, salaries, job categories, and responsibility levels.

Currently, more data are needed on the effects of work-life challenges or on career advancement. Qualitative data about job experiences, training and professional development, satisfaction, time taken for family responsibilities, willingness to change employment, deliberate discrimination or unconscious bias, personal characteristics, and other factors across different population groups can help to develop practices and inform policies to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Research questions pursued

Building the evidence base research posed the following questions:

- What are the proportions of women and men in forest sector occupation categories; how have these changed over time?
- What is the salary and benefits gap between women and men?
- Do women and men have equal opportunities for progressing in their careers?
- What is the effect of child-rearing on women's and men's employment?
- What is the experience and contribution of Indigenous female leaders in the forest sector?
- What are the challenges and barriers women experience in the field?
- What factors and forces help women navigate these barriers?
- What advice is there for young women seeking entry into the field?
- What is it about the forest sector that attracts women?

> For an organization looking to achieve gender equality – it all starts with tracking the workforce composition. Through data collection, gaps can be identified and equity measures developed to address those gaps.

What has been achieved?
While the initiative's focus expanded from gender equity to consideration of equity for women across a range of identities (e.g., Indigenous peoples, new Canadians, visible minorities, 2SLGBTQI+, and people living with disabilities), the research shows that the availability of disaggregated data by gender is very limited, and data for people in these additional categories is not available.

Several reports (listed on the right) that analyzed both quantitative and qualitative data were completed during the three-year initiative.

These reports help describe the status of diversity in Canada's forest sector and have also identified gaps where additional data is needed to explain the barriers and challenges faced by underrepresented groups.

- Evidence on Diversity in Canada's Forest Sector Report
- Indigenous Women's Leadership in the Forest Sector Report
- Qualitative Interviews with Women in the Forest Sector Report
- Crowd-source survey
- Gender Equity Principles

Evidence on Diversity in Canada's Forest Sector Report

This research report examines data related to women and underrepresented groups in Canada in order to show past progress and better understand the current situation and challenges. Outlined below are highlights from the main themes in the report.

To read the full report, visit: www.freetogrowinforestry.ca/resources

The big picture:

Overall, the rate of female labour force participation has increased marginally from 14% in 1996 to 17% in 2016, and progress towards gender equality and inclusion in the forest sector is slow. Similarly, the rate of participation for immigrants was 12% and for Indigenous people at 7%. Different parts of the country reported higher or lower proportions of women and underrepresented groups. [34]

Diversity in specific jobs and across regions:

The province of Ontario reported the highest female forestry labour force participation at 21% followed closely by the Prairie provinces at 19%, Alberta at 18%, Quebec at 16% and British Columbia at 15%.[35]

Female forestry labour force participation
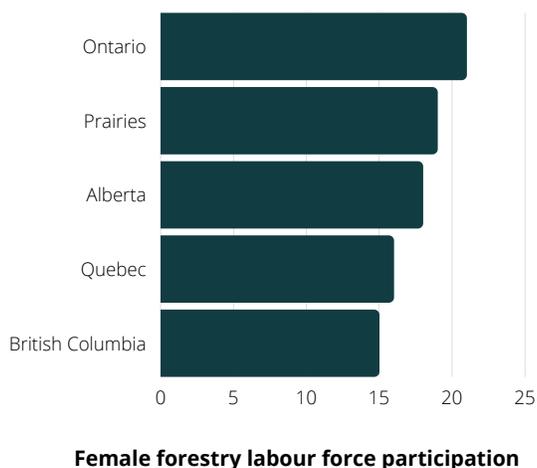
The report presents participation rates in 20 of the most common jobs in the forest sector for all workers, women and immigrants and shows that this is highly variable. For instance, the proportion of women was only 1% for Transport Truck Drivers to 31% for Processing Labourers and 98% of Administrative Assistants. Looking at trends in 16 specific jobs since 1991, we find that the proportion of women has generally increased in 15 of these. The most consistent improvement has been among Forestry Technologists and Technicians where the representation of women has increased from 15% in 1991 to 21% in 2016.

The wage gap:

The report assessed four different income indicators and the evidence shows a significant wage gap between men and women. A total of 13 jobs were identified where women earned less than 75% of men. Changes in incomes in six occupations were tracked from 1990 – 2015 and results showed the rate of improvement varies between jobs, but the wage gap persists.[36]

Workforce activity and mobility:

Although there are many factors that can influence how much time employees work and where they move, the data shows different patterns between sub-sectors and groups. Depending on the sub-sector, between 3–9% of women were engaged in full-year, part-time work, compared to only 1% of men. Indigenous people, immigrants and women are all more likely to have moved in the five years before the 2016 Census than non-Indigenous people, non-immigrants or men.[37]

Comparing the forest sector to other sectors:

Canada's forest sector has higher proportions of Indigenous people but lower proportions of women and immigrants than the Agricultural and Manufacturing sectors. A wage gap also exists between women and men in all three sectors. [38]

Training of forestry professionals:

The proportion of women graduating from professional forestry programs has increased from a low of 31% in 2015 to 48% in 2020 and is now close to parity with men. Despite this, the proportion of women graduating from technical forestry programs has remained steady between 31% and 34% (except in 2017 when it was 39%). Women continue to remain underrepresented in graduation rates from technical forestry programs. [39]

While this report helped shed light on the state of diversity in Canada's forest sector it serves as a launching pad for future recommended actions to: [40]

Identify specific questions and issues for targeted research including exploring the link between employment practices and conditions with recruitment, retention, and workforce satisfaction;

Determine priorities for collecting additional data on Indigenous people, immigrants and other diversity groups;

Develop reliable sources for more frequent monitoring of indicators (with shorter interval times than the censuses, and by forest sector level); and

Develop a framework and tools for organizations within the forest sector to collect valuable data.

Indigenous Women's Leadership in the Forest Sector Report

Using a qualitative methodology, this report profiles the accomplishments of Indigenous women in the forest sector, through interviews, aiming to shed a different light and appreciation for their contributions. Qualitative research helps us understand how and why patterns emerge. Outlined below are a few highlights.

To read the full report, visit:
www.freetogrowinforestry.ca/resources

This report helps to raise awareness of Indigenous women's leadership in the forest sector and reframes the perception of Indigenous women as victims. Traditional Knowledge and connection to the Land provide added value to the forest sector.

Fifteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with Indigenous women between the ages of 22-58 at various career stages and working in different disciplines across the forest sector. [40]

The results were analyzed according to the following common themes:
1) sector experience and work; 2) inspirations; 3) opportunities/contributions; 4) incorporations of Traditional Knowledge; 5) family and relationships; 6) challenges; and 7) advice and recommendations.

What was heard

- Indigenous women found it was their affinity for nature and connection with the Land that drew them to the forest sector.
- Rewarding work experience involved contributions to their communities, such as advocating or designing programs for participation in forestry activities and building local capacity through training or youth mentorship.
- Regarding challenges and barriers, the experience of Indigenous women was much like that of all women – there is a constant need to prove oneself among male co-workers and feeling like they work in an "old boys' club."

- In addition to the private sector, faculty in forestry schools and men within their own communities were also identified as having exhibited misogynist behaviour. There is a need to address racism and misogyny, wage gaps, and to foster opportunities in career advancement and skilled trades in order to create a safe and more nurturing workplace.
- The women identified potential solutions to tackle these issues, including establishing a support network and being able to access mentorship from other Indigenous women in the sector.
- Indigenous women also want to facilitate a greater understanding of the nuances of Indigenous culture and knowledge in the workplace, but not have this understanding be used in a token way.

The report also noted several issues that warrant further action including:

The report revealed the need for a workshop, with follow-ups, that brings together Indigenous women, other women, and men from different disciplines in the forest sector to focus on some of the critical outstanding questions regarding diversity and inclusion.[42]

- How do we nurture Indigenous women's leadership in the forest sector?
- How can Traditional Knowledge be respectfully and successfully applied to promote Indigenous communities and improve forestry practices?
- What actions are needed to remove systemic barriers to Indigenous women's participation in the sector?
- What recommendations can be directed at the different actors in the sector, from academics in forestry programs to decision makers in government, industry and non-governmental organizations?
- What are the best practices for mentorship and role models?
- How can we carry forward and expand on what we have learned in this first phase of developing a National Action Plan for Gender Equity in Canada's Forest Sector?
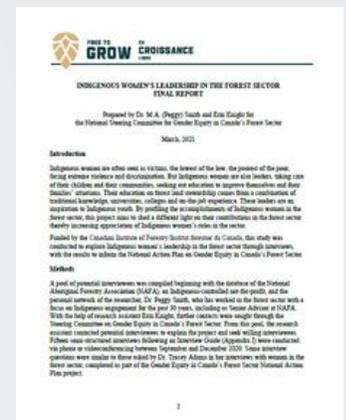
Qualitative Interviews with Women in the Forest Sector Report

This report highlights, through interviews with 25 women from various stages in their careers and across many subsectors, women's experiences and what drew them to the forest sector.

To read the full report, visit:
www.freetogrowinforestry.ca/resources
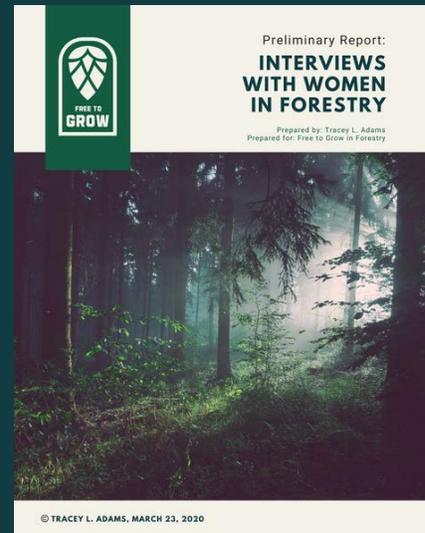
The interview findings focused on five areas: (1) identifying challenges and barriers women experience in the field; (2) factors and forces helping women navigate these barriers; (3) advice to young women seeking entry into the field; (4) what women love about their work; and (5) advice for the gender equity action plan.[43]

Several challenges and barriers were identified that hindered a women's ability to have a successful career in the forest sector.[44]

- Lack of opportunities for (informal) mentoring and training: many women mentioned having to fight for opportunities to learn and acquire more advanced training.
- Stereotyping that cast women as not tough or competent enough – women reported experiencing sexism on the job.
- The need to fight for every opportunity to be heard and respected becomes tiring.
- Some men colleagues and bosses are not supportive and, at times, are downright hostile. Some women reported experiencing sexual harassment on the job.
- The difficulty of combining work in remote locations with family life.
- Having children: women working in the public sector reported good work-life balance, but it was not uncommon for women working in the private sector to report challenges with combining work in the forestry sector with child-bearing and child-rearing.

What factors and forces help women navigate these barriers?[45]

- Mentors (men and women) providing opportunities for work, learning, and growth;
- Other women – to provide support and improve the quality of work life;
- Workshops and networks bringing women together; and
- A willingness to move to gain experience.

What advice is there for young women seeking entry into the field?[46]

- Some women interviewed advocated perseverance in the face of obstacles and hostility. Many advised women to build relationships, find mentors, and seek advice. Other advice included seeking out opportunities, skills training, and experiences for career advancement.

What is it about the forest sector that attracts women?[47]

- Ability to make a difference in their communities and society;
- Contribution to conservation and sustainability;
- Opportunities to learn;
- Working outside and being in the forest; and
- Great colleagues.

10 Principles for Gender Equity

Through the initiative, a set of 10 guiding principles were developed to provide guidance to organizations in the forest sector seeking gender equity.

1. Ensure that there are high-level corporate leaders for gender equality who develop a framework of effective policies focused on recruitment and retention.
2. Treat all women and men fairly in the hiring process and at work – respect and support human rights and non-discrimination.
3. Demonstrate that there is equal pay for equivalent work irrespective of gender.
4. Promote gender balance at all levels of the organization.
5. Ensure the health, safety and well-being of all workers.
6. Promote education, training, professional development and mentoring for women to support their career advancement.
7. Promote women's leadership and engagement in decision making.
8. Implement enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices that empower women.
9. Promote equality through public outreach, community initiatives and positive role models.
10. Measure and publicly report periodically on progress to achieve gender equality to demonstrate improvements over time.

Principles based on: Women's Empowerment Principles weps.org and EDGE a "leading global assessment and business certification for gender equity" edge-cert.org

Prepared by:
Dr. M.A. (Peggy) Smith, RPF (Ret), Professor Emerita, Lakehead University

Crowd-source survey

A crowdsourcing survey was developed that builds on earlier research conducted by the "Building the Evidence-Base" Sub-committee. The survey collected information on three main issues, including:

- Work-life challenges and the impacts on career advancement;
- Workplace culture and its effect on attracting diversity to the sector; and
- Data on type of work, working conditions, opportunities for training and advancement.

Forest sector workers aged 15 and over who reside in Canada's provinces and territories and work in the forest sector were targeted for this survey. Data were collected through an online survey platform, Survey Monkey, from March 15 to April 19, 2021.

A total of 521 respondents completed the survey and the analysis will be used to inform next research questions and steps, as well as determine a representative sample of the forest sector for future survey work.

Developed new resources for the sector:

The second pillar of the framework focused on creating new tools for the forest sector to use to help foster an inclusive workplace culture, including:

✓ **Gender Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace – A Plan to Eliminate Resistance**

✓ **Inclusive Leadership – Creating a Culture of Empowerment, Accountability and Belonging**

✓ **Getting into Team – Leveraging Power and Privilege – An Allies Toolkit**

Gender Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace – A Plan to Eliminate Resistance

This plan is designed for organizational leaders/change agents seeking to advance gender diversity and inclusion in the workplace by outlining what resistance looks like, reasons for resistance, and strategies to overcome it.

Outlined below are a few highlights. To read the full report, visit: www.freetogrowinforestry.ca/resources

The forest sector economy depends on engaging all facets of the current workforce in order to fulfill current labour market shortages and to be in tune with consumer market needs. Now is the time for organizations to make gender, diversity and inclusion a priority. Backed by well-documented statistics, there is a strong business case for organizations that have diverse and inclusive cultures.[48]

GENDER DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE

RESISTANCE

A PLAN TO ELIMINATE RESISTANCE
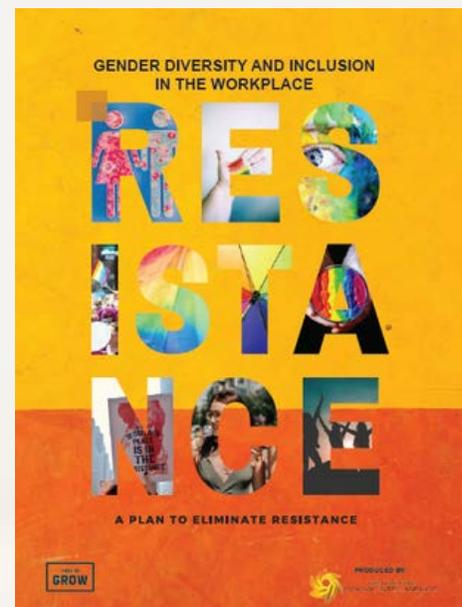
What does resistance look like?

Active Resistance:

Hostility, sexist humor, devaluation and disparaging women's accomplishments or professional commitment, interrupting, denial of access to resources, "what's in it for men?"

Passive Resistance:

Negative body language, foot dragging, inertia, chilly climate, making the procedures more difficult, giving less attention, uncomfortable social atmosphere, giving less access to institutional resources, discomfort, inappropriate treatment.

The first step is to identify resistance and its various forms in the workplace, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the root concerns from employees at all levels. Knowing the reasons for resistance (whether due to "change fatigue", a lack of awareness, or fear of their job being jeopardized) is critical in setting a course for the gender, diversity and inclusion plan and effectively engaging employees. [49]

Resistance to GDI 5 step process:

1. Identify the root cause of resistance (see resistance to GDI assessment).

2. Address the root cause of this resistance through personal coaching.

3. Provide ongoing coaching opportunities and gather feedback from the employee or manager over a defined period of time.

4. Communicate the consequences for not supporting the change.

5. Implement the consequences for not supporting the change.

Note: Usually steps 1-3 only are required

Centre for Social Intelligence. (2021). Gender Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace – A Plan to Eliminate Resistance. Produced for Free to Grow in Forestry.

Common Forms of Resistance

FORMS OF RESISTANCE	OFTEN SAID	EXPLANATION
Denial	There is no problem here	Denial of the problem or the credibility of the case for change; often blame the victims
Refusal of responsibility	Its not my job to do something about it	Refusal to recognize responsibility
Inaction	Its not a priority right now	Refusal to implement a change initiative

FORMS OF RESISTANCE	OFTEN SAID	EXPLANATION
Placate	Yes, yes. We must do something one day	Efforts to appease or pacify those advocating for change in order to limit its impact
Diminishing	Of course, we'd appoint more women, if only they were more experienced	Simulating change while covertly undermining it
Shifter	What about men's rights "Men are victims too, you know"	Shifting progressive frame-works and goals to meet another groups agenda
Reversal	We tried that once and women didn't want to take up the promotion/training opportunity	Reversing or dismantling a change initiative
Extreme	These feminists deserve to have push back, don't they see it's been like this forever?	Aggressive, attacking response
Separateness	I don't want to be involved in this because my credibility will be questioned	Women that want to separate from CD&I to protect themselves from missing out on future opportunities
Competitive	There are only so few positions at the top and if anyone is going to fill that senior job, it's me	Women sharpening their elbows and competing for positions and not supporting one another

Action on gender, diversity and inclusion must come from leadership working closely with their human resources and communications teams. A leadership strategy, sponsored by the most senior executive within an organization, can significantly reduce resistance and ensure a smooth transition. A human resources strategy involving mid-level management and employees on gender, diversity and inclusion through training and education opportunities is also needed to increase acceptance of change. Coaching all employees towards acceptance, as well as providing avenues for individuals to voice concerns can all contribute to a smoother transition.

Companies must also create communications strategies to raise awareness of and strengthen commitment to gender, diversity and inclusion across the organization. [50]

Resistance can come at a high cost to an organization in the form of absenteeism of those who do not wish to be engaged, to outcomes being delayed or not realized. A structured process needs to be implemented that provides the tools for employees to be led from the current state to a more diverse and inclusive culture. A diverse and inclusive workforce is the future of the forest sector – one where the benefits of multiculturalism are embraced. [51]

Inclusive Leadership – Creating a Culture of Empowerment, Accountability and Belonging

This report highlights best practices from 12 leading international companies certified in gender equality in the workplace by DiversityInc (international focus) and Women in Governance (Canadian focus).

**Outlined below are a few highlights.
To read the full report, visit:
www.freetogrowinforestry.ca/resources**

The Canadian workforce is rapidly changing with millennials expected to comprise up to 75% by 2025. The younger generation is seeking employment in organizations where social values and actions are integrated into organizations' business strategies. [52]

Cutting-edge organizations that have received Inclusion and Diversity awards or that have been certified have identified an approach to attracting and retaining an inclusive and diverse workforce. These organizations have embedded a social agenda into their business models, adopted new approaches to doing business (shifting from a power-control to power-sharing mentality), and have held a standard of accountability for behaviors reinforced through recognition.
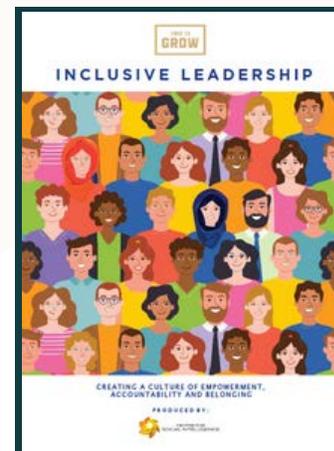
They have also instilled a nurturing approach to the employee life-cycle. All these key actions have helped them attract and retain talent. Some companies are also using new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence to recruit talent. [53]

Every human seeks to belong in their lives. When employees feel they belong in their workplace, the result can foster profound social and economic rewards including increased job performance, greater ability to solve problems and creativity, and a decrease in turnovers. [54]

Transitioning from a traditional leadership style to an inclusive leadership style is the key to creating a sense of belonging. Organizations that have embedded inclusion and diversity into their corporate social responsibility, while creating a connection to a greater social purpose at the community or national/international levels, demonstrate a strong value proposition for attracting prospective talent. These organizations also provide an opportunity for all employees to feel valued and empowered.[55]

Social issues that are important to employees can be tracked using Employee Resource Groups, which creates a space for those who share a common identity to meet and support each other. These groups also facilitate communication with senior management to bring forward concerns or issues, while allowing management to engage and seek advice and input from employees, creating a win-win scenario for all. This sense of belonging enables organizations to not only survive but thrive. [56]

Quick Tips to Create Inclusion

- Hold all employees in positive regard and value their contribution
- Listen carefully and be respectful of everyone's humanity
- Give voice to all
- Don't make quick judgements or feel pushed towards a specific groups' point of view
- Don't pretend to know everything; allow for vulnerability
- Foster values of respectful dialogue, mindful inquiry, civil dissent

Source: Centre for Social Intelligence. (2021). Inclusive Leadership – Creating a Culture of Empowerment, Accountability and Belonging. Produced for Free to Grow in Forestry.

Tips to be an Inclusive Leader

- Focus on culture and not culture fit
- Tie psychological safety to physical safety
- Ask questions; don't assume
- Listen more
- Educate yourself

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

Focuses on Results | Leverages Diversity and Talent

LEADS SELF
Courageous | Authentic and Open | Values Perspectives

LEADS RELATIONSHIP
Communicates Adaptively | Buildings and Connects Relationships | Facilitates Development

LEADS CULTURE
Builds a Climate of Trust and Respect | Shares Authority Power and Credit | Allows for Differences

Getting into Team – Leveraging Power and Privilege - An Allies Toolkit

This report outlines what an ally is, how to become an ally, and the various roles allies can play. The report provides individual and corporate strategies to becoming an effective ally, including leveraging and sharing power and privilege to support underrepresented groups.

Outlined below are a few highlights. To read the full report, visit: www.freetogrowinforestry.ca/resources

Getting into Team - Leveraging Power & Privilege

AN ALLIES TOOLKIT

How to Leverage Your Power and Privilege:

- Educate yourself about your privilege
- Advocate/sponsor others in the workplace
- Amplify voices of underrepresented groups
- Be assertive about challenging forms of discrimination such as sexism, racism, and homophobia
- Support businesses and colleagues of underrepresented groups

Source: Centre for Social Intelligence; White Ribbon. (2021). Getting into Team – Leveraging Power and Privilege. Produced for Free to Grow in Forestry

Ally Roles

Allyship shows up in different forms. Below outlines the main roles allies can play in an effort to bring clarity to what they are and what an individual can elect to do:

The Sponsor: Sponsors vocally support the performance and expertise of their colleagues by highlighting the performance, expertise and goals of others to boost their reputation and access to opportunities they might not have otherwise (e.g. sponsors provide references or arrange for a learning opportunity).

The Champion: Champions are like Sponsors but they advocate more publicly and in broader audiences (e.g. advocate for underrepresented group members to chair a meeting or publicly celebrate someone's work).

The Amplifier: The Amplifier helps to ensure the underrepresented group members' ideas and voices are heard and included in workplace communication (e.g. invites and visibly supports an idea or point put forth by a member of an underrepresented group).

The Advocate: An advocate utilizes their power to bring people into exclusive circles (e.g. advocates for their involvement in high profile projects).

A key aspect of "how" to create a diverse and inclusive culture starts with allyship or "getting into team" which means being an ally to women and other underrepresented groups.[57]

People who hold positions of power and come from privilege are the most effective allies. Privileges are unearned and granted to specific dominant social groups, including those who are white, middle or upper class, heterosexual, and male. This privilege can provide power to people in these social groups to access resources and exercise their position over others; it can also be used to become effective allies for those who are underrepresented. Understanding how to be a better ally can help attract a diverse and inclusive workforce.[58]

White women also have an important role as allies, that is by standing up for all women, mentoring/supporting other women and celebrating their accomplishments, boosting self-esteem and confidence, and allowing women to rise to management/leadership positions. These actions will help all women reach their potential.[59]

It is critical to have the leadership of an organization incorporate allyship as a cornerstone piece of their diversity and inclusion strategy. Flanked by human resources and communication teams, the leadership plays an important role in ensuring the success of onboarding allyship across an organization. Human Resource and Communication teams can deliver the necessary allyship skills and training, while allyship campaigns demonstrate commitment and follow-through to both internal and external audiences.[60]

Source: Centre for Social Intelligence; White Ribbon. (2021). Getting into Team – Leveraging Power and Privilege. Produced for Free to Grow in Forestry

Allyship is a key component of helping organizations create a diverse and inclusive culture. It can also look beyond the workplace into the household as well, creating role models that can influence the next generation.[61]

Repositioning the sector
What has been achieved?

Why "Free to Grow in Forestry"?

The term is used in forestry when the forest renewal stage has reached a level where it no longer needs human intervention and the forest is considered "free to grow" naturally. In the context of this initiative, it also implies that everyone who enters this sector is "free to grow" to reach their full potential in their professional development.

Launch of microsite and communications campaigns (#ForestryForward)

Following a year-long creative process led by MediaStyle, the Repositioning the Sector Sub-committee developed branding for the Gender Equity in Canada's Forest Sector initiative. The "Free to Grow in Forestry" campaign and microsite (www.freetogrowinforestry.ca) was launched in January 2021 and is a one-stop-shop to learn more about the initiative, the partners involved, and resources to take action. It is also a culmination of efforts and actions undertaken in this initiative including, but not limited to, communications "shareables" that individuals and organizations are encouraged to utilize in their spheres of influence.

A unique hashtag **#ForestryForward** was also developed that relates to the campaign name and tagline to share and track campaign content across social media.

A targeted communications plan is being implemented through the initiative's social media channels and beyond with the development of a "Free to Grow in Forestry" podcast series. The first episode aired in May 2021 and new episodes will be published monthly, featuring guests from all groups in the forest sector, experts and organizations sharing their stories on inclusion and diversity.
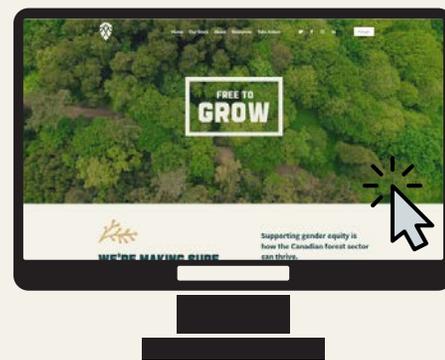
The logo icon represents a number of symbols including a pine cone for growth and progress, a shield that represents safe spaces and protection, as well as the various pathways for success.

Media interest/coverage: since the official launch and press release issued in 2018, the project has generated significant media attention. National Steering Committee and Sub-committee members have participated in interviews, podcasts, developed articles, etc. on the project.

Stay connected by following Free to Grow in Forestry on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube or subscribing to the email list. Help spread the word by using the hashtag #ForestryForward.

Results Framework

A Results Framework includes a variety of indicators and was developed to measure and report on progress of gender, diversity and inclusion within the forest sector.

Reliable data for some of the indicators can be obtained through Statistics Canada from the five-year census, but other indicators may require the development of new data gathering tools such as surveys or reporting that would need to be carefully designed to ensure data is reliable and complete.

The Gender Equity in Canada's Forest Sector initiative has been featured as a Canadian case study in the International Union of Forest Research Organizations' (IUFRO) efforts to share understanding of the barriers to gender equity internationally.

RESULT 1

Canada's forest sector has access to resources to implement the Free to Grow in Forestry initiative vision: cutting-edge gender data, research, analysis, strategies and communications materials to inform better decision making.

INDICATORS
- **Gender Equity Principles for the Canadian forest sector**
- **Gender Research and Analysis in the Canadian Forest Sector document (Canadian Forest Service)**
- **Gender Resistance (Resilience) Strategy**
- **"Free to Grow" Communications Strategy and materials for Advancing Gender Equity in the Canadian forest sector**
- **Gender champions provided with tools to influence the Canadian forest sector**

RESULT 2

Canada's forest sector is more inclusive and gender-balanced.

INDICATORS
- **Percentage of women working in Canada's forest sector**
- **Percentage of Indigenous Peoples working in Canada's forest sector**
- **Percentage of visible minorities working in Canada's forest sector**
- **Percentage of new immigrants working in Canada's forest sector**
- **Percentage of people with disabilities working in Canada's forest sector**
- **Percentage of youth/young professionals (under 30) working in Canada's forest sector**
- **Percentage of youth/young professionals currently enrolled in forestry related programs in Canada**

RESULT 3

The number of women in senior executive roles and technical woodland positions is increasing.

INDICATORS
- **Percentage of women working in senior executive roles in Canada's forest sector: by total, Indigenous, visible minorities, new immigrants and women with disabilities**
- **Percentage of women working in logging, forestry and forestry support positions in Canada's forest sector: by total, Indigenous, visible minorities, new immigrants and women with disabilities**
- **Percentage of women working in wood product manufacturing positions in Canada's forest sector: by total, Indigenous, visible minorities, new immigrants and women with disabilities**
- **Percentage of women (youth/young professionals) (under 30) working in Canada's forest sector**
- **Percentage of women (youth/young professionals) currently enrolled in forestry related programs in Canada**

RESULT 4

Gender equity is contributing to improved workplace culture in Canada's forest sector.

INDICATORS
- **Pay-inequity is shrinking between women and men**
- **Retention rate of women employees is increasing**
- **Career advancement (promotion opportunities)/professional development for women vs men are increasing**
- **Workplace harassment and discrimination in all forms are declining**
- **Absenteeism due to poor working environment is declining**
- **Development of gender-balanced human resources (HR) policies and support mechanisms**
- **Development of gender-based safety protocols**

RESULT 5

Gender equity is contributing to increased economic competitiveness in Canada's forest sector.

INDICATORS
- **Productivity in Canada's forest sector**
- **Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Canada's forest sector***
- **Employment in Canada's forest sector***
- **Exports from Canada's forest sector***
*These indicators will depend on the size of the industry going forward.

Results Achieved Across the Sector

In addition to all that was accomplished through the initiative, organizations represented on the National Steering Committee and Sub-committees have implemented actions, initiatives and programs in their own spheres of influence as well, helping move the forest sector forward. Below is just a snapshot of the actions undertaken across the sector since the project got underway.

Industry
The results below include a few of all the great initiatives taking place across industry.

- **Forests Products Association of Canada –** Greenest Workforce; supporting all diversity and inclusion initiatives across the forest sector
- **Tolko Industries –** inclusion and diversity initiatives; Indigenous training; deep dive on childcare support; performance review tactics; focus groups on women in leadership
- **Resolute Forest Products –** respect and civility training
- **EACOM –** Indigenous training; inclusion and diversity training; international program
- **MLTC Industrial Investments LP –** Indigenous awareness training; inclusive hiring; first 45 days mentoring program
- **Canfor Corporation –** inclusive and diversity training; Indigenous awareness training; inclusive leadership training
- **Conifex –** inclusive leadership training

Not-for-profit
The results below include a few of all the great initiatives taking place across not-for-profits.

- **Association of British Columbia Forest Professionals –** leadership and awareness; representation; professional development (i.e. sessions at conferences and resources for forest professionals, councils and staff regarding gender equity, diversity and inclusion)
- **National Aboriginal Forestry Association –** internal efforts
- **Sustainable Forestry Initiative/Project Learning Tree Canada –** creating opportunities to grow a diverse and resilience Green Job workforce across Canada
- **Canadian Institute of Forestry –** updating operating bylaws and HR policies; leading organization in forest sector inclusion and diversity

Academia

The results below include a few of all the great initiatives taking place across academia.

- Universities are prioritizing hiring of women and other underrepresented groups for teaching positions in the forest sector
- Course-corrected hiring practices to be more inclusive
- Integrating diversity principles and practical tools into courses
- Increasing guest speaker representation in the professional workforce to include women and other underrepresented groups
- Identifying summer co-op placement, internship and other employment positions are under the supervision of women and other underrepresented groups
- Including diversity in the Canadian Forestry Accreditation Board standards
- Collaborating with professional associations to ensure that educational institutions include diversity training in their programs

Government

The results below include a few of all the great initiatives taking place across government.

- **Statistics Canada –** crowdsourcing approach for data collection
- **Natural Resources Canada –** GBA+ framework integration to identify the potential impacts of policies, programs and services on diverse groups of women, men, gender-diverse people and underrepresented groups; established a Diversity Working Group to identify ways the forest sector competitiveness programs can contribute to addressing gender and diversity gaps and to promote women and underrepresented groups in the forest sector.

Lessons for Success

There are a number of lessons learned that facilitated the implementation of this initiative:

Leadership:
Coordinated leadership at the outset by CSI and CIF was essential to secure initial project funding and to develop partnerships with key stakeholders.

Champions:
Many organizations from all across Canada's forest sector were engaged through the National Steering Committee and Sub-committees. These organizations have proven critical to championing the initiative by contributing significant in-kind support to lead the development of deliverables, and collaboratively sharing practices, experiences, and expertise, helping to create momentum and energy to ensure the success of Free to Grow in Forestry.

Ability to adapt:
To be able to complete all the deliverables set out in the initiative and beyond despite the COVID-19 pandemic, which introduced complications and challenges for communications at all levels and increased work and home burdens of all National Steering Committee and Sub-committee committee members.

Change takes time:
An initiative of this scale takes time (at least five years) and funding to influence key stakeholders, and keep them engaged, but time and money are essential to maintain momentum.

Engagement across networks:
Uptake and continued promotion of Free to Grow in Forestry by all stakeholders is necessary to continue increasing awareness and ensuring a coordinated voice to address inequality in Canada's forest sector.

Moving #ForestryForward

PHASE 1

Vision to Action (2018-2021)

PHASE 2

Action to Traction (2021-2024)

Moving forward, Phase 2 of this initiative will continue work within the existing three pillars but concentrate on a regional context, instead of a national one, by engaging forest sector organizations along the supply chain:

1. **Building the Evidence Base** – Data collection, analysis and indicator reporting will further our reach to understand the demographics of the sector by increasing the number of data sources and developing indicators to capture the representation of underrepresented groups.
2. **Fostering an Inclusive Culture** – Diversity and inclusion training and skills development on overcoming resistance to diversity and inclusion; how to create an inclusive culture; and how to be an effective ally.
3. **Repositioning the Sector** – Ongoing communications - reaching a wider audience; creating communication campaigns on diversity and inclusion.

These efforts will lead to greater impacts on the ground. Additional research will also be conducted to fill data important research gaps identified in the first phase.

2018

Phase 1

2021

Phase 2

2024

Result 1
Canada's forest sector has access to the resources to implement the Free to Grow in Forestry initiative vision, including: cutting edge gender data, research, analysis, strategies and communications materials to inform better decision-making.

Result 2
Canada's forest sector is more inclusive and gender-balanced.

Result 3
The number of women in senior executive roles and technical woodland positions is increasing

Result 4
Gender equity is contributing to improved workplace culture in Canada's forest sector.

Result 5
Gender equity is contributing to increased economic competitiveness in Canada's forest sector

Continuing momentum towards achieving gender equity, diversity and inclusion is important and will continue to help position the forest sector to attract the brightest talent and create a sector where everyone feels they belong. Stakeholders across the sector are encouraged to take on the following actions including: pursuing diversity and inclusion training and skills development for all employees, fostering more inclusive hiring and recruitment practices, and implementing diversity and inclusion policies.

November 2021 marked three years since the Gender Equity in Canada's Forest Sector initiative started and progress has already been made towards achieving gender equality. This initiative used a sector-wide approach to shift the workplace culture by highlighting the business case for diversity and inclusion. Engaging with executives to show the financial return on investment on inclusion and diversity has increased awareness of this conversation in a new way, and more and more companies are beginning to take action.

This initiative has gained considerable attention from Canada's forest sector, as well as internationally, and is now recognized as a model approach to shifting the workplace culture to be more inclusive of underrepresented groups.

The CIF-IFC and CSI are proud to co-lead this initiative and are eager to continue moving #ForestryForward!
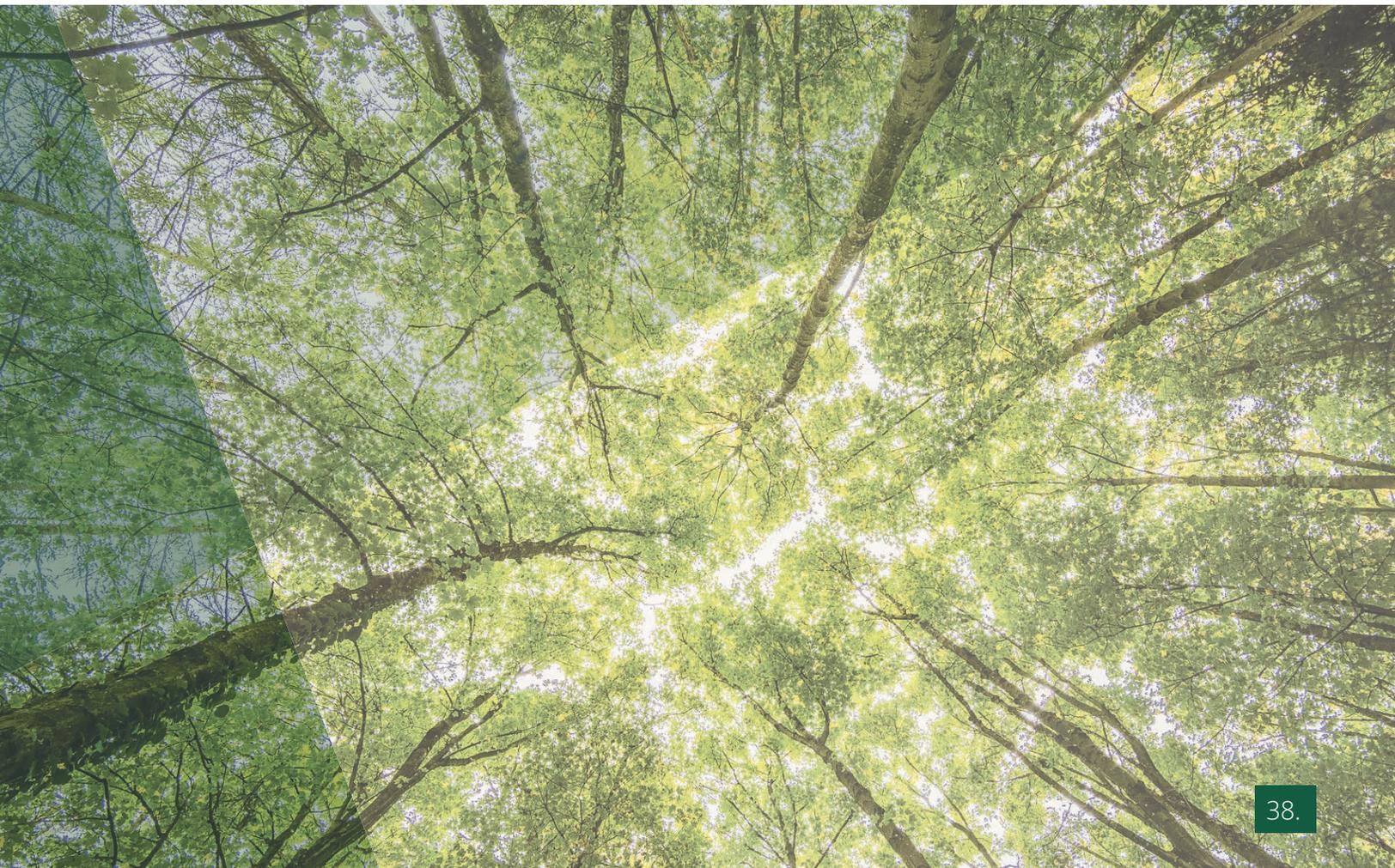
PHASE 1 NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Luc M. Rainville: Co-Chair and Project Partner, President (2019-2020), Canadian Institute of Forestry
- Kelly Cooper: Co-Chair and Project Partner, Founder and President, Centre for Social Intelligence
- Beth MacNeil: Assistant Deputy Minister, Canadian Forest Service, Natural Resources Canada
- Tanya Wick: Vice President People & Services, Tolko Industries
- Jonathon Lok: Managing Partner, Strategic Natural Resource Consultants
- Melissa Picard: Director, Organizational Development and HRIS, Resolute Forest Products
- Johanne Latour: Director, Corporate Human Resources Services, EACOM Timber Corporation
- Sacha Munro: Director of Finance, Meadow Lakes Tribal Council Industrial Investments
- Tina Chui: Director of Diversity and Sociocultural Statistics, Statistics Canada
- Joel Neuheimer: Vice President, International Trade, Transportation, Corporate Secretary, Forest Products Association of Canada
- Christine Gelowitz: CEO, Association of British Columbia Forest Professionals
- Kathy Abusow: President and CEO, Sustainable Forestry Initiative
- Brad Young: Executive Director, National Aboriginal Forestry Association
- Dr. Peggy Smith: Professor Emerita, Faculty of Natural Resources Management, Lakehead University
- Dr. Maureen: Reed Professor, School of Environment and Sustainability, University of Saskatchewan
- Dr. Stephen Wyatt: Professor, Social Forestry and Forest Policy, Université de Moncton

PHASE 1 SUB-COMMITTEES MEMBERS

- Dr. Adrina Bardekjian, MFC, Ph.D.: Director, Engagement and Research, Tree Canada
- Dr. Tracey Adams: Professor, Department of Sociology, Western University
- Anne-Helene Mathey, Ph.D.: Director, Economic Analysis Division, Canadian Forest Service, Natural Resources Canada
- Mahsa Mojahednia: Economist – Trade, Economics, and Industry Branch, Canadian Forest Service, Natural Resources Canada
- Michael Buzzell: A/Director, Forest Information Services Division, Canadian Forest Service, Natural Resources Canada
- John Boakye-Danquah, Ph.D: Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Saskatchewan; Research Associate, Canadian Institute of Forestry
- Xue Feng, MPH: University of Saskatchewan
- Brian McConkey: Vice-President, Human Resources and Corporate Affairs, Millar Western
- Kristen Stinson: Vice President and General Manager, Corporate Services, Conifex Timber Inc.
- Kara Biles: Director, Learning and Leadership/Inclusion & Diversity Lead, Canfor Corporation
- Elaine Jensen: General Manager, Human Resources, West Fraser Timber Co. Ltd.
- Natasha Machado: Director of Programs and Initiatives, Canadian Institute of Forestry
- Jen Dickman: Communications Manager, Canadian Institute of Forestry

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Taking Action on Gender Equity in Canada's Forest Sector

Free to Grow in Forestry Phase 1 Final Report

June 2021