

1 Equality Assessment

This equality assessment has been produced by RSK ADAS Ltd to be used as guidance by the Source to Tap (StT) consortium on the potential impact to different equality groups of the proposed Land Incentive Scheme (LIS). Potential actions to mitigate any impact on equality groups have been outlined. The Equality Assessment has been produced considering guidance from the practical guidance from Equality Commission on the Northern Ireland Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, as well as guidance from The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission which was set up under the Irish human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 as an independent body and is responsible for promoting and protecting human rights and equality. The guidance documents above are set out to help policy makers assess equality impacts of new and ongoing policies. The StT LIS is smaller in scale and therefore the process has been completed in slightly less depth and practical considerations have been used where recommendations have been set out.

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 places the following statutory requirements on each public authority:

- 1) A public authority shall in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity
 - a) between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
 - b) between men and women generally;
 - c) between persons with a disability and persons without; and
 - d) between persons with dependants and persons without.
- (2) Without prejudice to its obligations under subsection (1), a public authority shall in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

The main aim of the EQIA is to determine to what extent and what impact a policy may have on different groups. If the policy is deemed to be adverse to a certain group the policy must consider how to mitigate the adverse affect. A full EQIA normally has the following steps:

- 1) Define the aims of the policy.
- 2) Consider available data and research.
- 3) Assess impacts.
- 4) Consultation.
- 5) Publication of EQIA
- 6) Monitoring for adverse impact in the future.

1 Define the aims of the policy

The Source to Tap Pilot Land Incentive Scheme (LIS) aims to give farmers in the Derg catchment grants for selected land management and infrastructure projects. The scheme aims to improve water quality in the area with an emphasis on reducing MCPA levels and sediment in water courses. The Derg catchment has been chosen for this scheme because there are regular failures of MCPA at Derg Water Treatment Works raw water inlet and the raw water shows great variability in colour and turbidity which makes the water

more challenging to treat to ensure compliance with the stringent drinking water quality requirements. The extent of the catchment was agreed upon because smaller scales (5-10km² and 80-100km²) were deemed either too small (few farms) or too steep (difficult to monitor). Using the whole of the catchment upstream of the intake also provides sufficient scope for socio economic data to be collected.

2 Consider available data and research

Public authorities are expected to monitor the impact of their scheme for impacts on equality. This can include collecting new quantitative and qualitative data to include the nine equality categories in Section 75 equality (age, marital status, men and women, persons with disabilities, persons with dependents, political opinion, racial group, religious belief and sexual orientation). As the LIS is aimed at farmers in the Derg catchment collecting sensitive data may be inappropriate. However, as part of the application ADAS recommends that Source to Tap include questions to collect quantitative data on age, gender and disabilities. Further, Source to Tap should include an opportunity for stakeholders to comment on the potential impact of the LIS on different equality groups via phone, email, mail or face to face. Once the scheme is open, the StT Project Officers should monitor and feed any comments on equality back to the wider consortium and efforts should be made to mitigate any adverse impacts.

The StT consortium should use the data collected to assess if any groups in comparison to other groups are:

- less successful than other applicants,
- receive lower financial support or
- are less likely to apply (census data of the area should be used for group comparison).

3 Assessment of Impacts

The potential for the scheme to disadvantage an equality group has been assessed in the table below. This table should be updated if stakeholders raise a concern or the scheme changes.

Equality Group	Positive Impact None Low High	Negative impact None Low High	Reason/comment	Mitigation suggested
Age (18-65 and people over 65)	None	None	<p>Different communication will be used to promote the scheme. Information on the scheme will be shared verbally, online and through a physical information pack. Language used will be simple and in plain English.</p> <p>Applicants will be asked how they would like to be communicated with (eg, via email, letter or telephone) and where possible the StT project officer will accommodate this.</p> <p>If the farmer is uncomfortable meeting a project officer alone StT can provide a chaperone and/or the farmer will be able to have a person of their choice present. If the farmer is not comfortable with their assigned project officer they reserve the right to request an alternative.</p> <p>It is possible there may be a low positive impact on younger farmers as often they are less capital rich.</p>	
Marital status (married people, unmarried people, divorced or separated people, widowed people)	None	None	<p>The project officer will visit the farmer at a mutually agreed convenient time and place. Firstly all options to meet within business hours (Mon-Fri 9-5) will be exhausted before considering evening and weekend meetings. This mitigates potential issues such as childcare and other commitments, access to transport and domestic responsibilities.</p>	
Gender (Men , Women, transgender people, transsexual people)	None	Low	<p>Project Officers will visit farms at the farmer’s convenience. This mitigates potential issues such as childcare and other commitments, access to transport and domestic responsibilities. The farmer can choose a time during daylight to mitigate feeling unsafe.</p> <p>If the farmer is uncomfortable meeting a project officer alone StT can provide a chaperone and/or the farmer will be able to have a person of their choice present. If the farmer is not comfortable with their assigned project officer, they reserve the right to request an alternative.</p>	<p>An initial meeting off farm can be offered in a place of the farmer’s choice where they may feel safer as a first introduction to the Project Officer.</p> <p>Gender neutral terminology should be used when describing a potential applicant, for example “the farmer” or “they”.</p>
People with a disability (Persons with a disability as defined in Sections 1 and 2 and Schedules 1 and 2 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995).	None	Low	<p>Project Officers will visit farms at the farmer’s convenience. The application form has an area for farmers to disclose any disability that may impact their ability to take part in the scheme. This information will be used to mitigate any impact and stored confidentially. The Project Officer will be going to local events, making phone calls to farmers and completing other promotion in the local area which should help inform all groups.</p> <p>If the farmer is uncomfortable meeting a project officer alone StT can provide a chaperone and/or the farmer will be able to have a person of their choice present. If the farmer is not comfortable with their assigned project officer, they reserve the right to request an alternative.</p>	<p>Project officers should make adjustments to their process to mitigate impacts of any disclosed disability where possible. This may include providing information in different formats (eg, braille, large print, alternative coloured print etc.) and being flexible with meeting times and cancellations.</p> <p>Where required StT should provide a hearing loop to assist the hard of hearing.</p>

Persons with dependants (persons with primary responsibility for the care of a child; person with a disability; persons with primary responsibility for the care of a dependent).	None	None	Project Officers will go to the farms of the farmers at a convenient time for the farmer. This mitigates potential issues such as childcare and other commitments, access to transport and domestic responsibilities.	
Political opinion (unionists generally; Nationalists generally; members/supporters or any supporters of any political party; other)	None	None	The project officer will not ask or make comment in support or against any political views of the farmer. If the farmer is uncomfortable meeting a project officer alone StT can provide a chaperone and/or the farmer will be able to have a person of their choice present. If the farmer is not comfortable with their assigned project officer they reserve the right to request an alternative.	
Racial group (Chinese; Irish Traveller; Indian; Pakistani; Bangladeshi; Black African; Black Caribbean; White; mixed ethnic group; any other ethnic group; nationality).	None	Low	The scheme will be open on a rolling basis over 24 months, which will mitigate the impact of any events or festivals. If English is not a participant's first language they may find it difficult to understand and feel confident enough to apply to the scheme. If the farmer is uncomfortable meeting a project officer alone StT can provide a chaperone and/or the farmer will be able to have a person of their choice present. If the farmer is not comfortable with their assigned project officer, they reserve the right to request an alternative.	
Religious belief (Protestant; Catholic; Hindu; Jewish; Islam / Muslim; Sikh; Buddhist; other religion; people of no religious belief).	None	None	The scheme will be open on a rolling basis over 24 months, which will mitigate the impact of any events or festivals. If English is not a participant's first language they may find it difficult to understand and feel confident enough to apply to the scheme. If the farmer is uncomfortable meeting a project officer alone StT can provide a chaperone and/or the farmer will be able to have a person of their choice present. If the farmer is not comfortable with their assigned project officer, they reserve the right to request an alternative.	When promoting the scheme religious buildings should be avoided.
Sexual orientation (Gay; lesbian; bisexual; heterosexual or other sexual orientation).	None	None	Different communication will be used to promote the scheme. Information on the scheme will be shared verbally, online and through a physical information pack. Language used will be simple and in plain English. One to one meetings will be held with the Project Officer for the creation of the individual Water Environment Management Plans. If the farmer is uncomfortable meeting a project officer alone StT can provide a chaperone and/or the farmer will be able to have a person of their choice present. If the farmer is not comfortable with their assigned project officer, they reserve the right to request an alternative.	Gender neutral terminology should be used when describing a potential applicant for example "the farmer" or "they".

4 Consultation

Whilst developing the scheme there have been two face to face consultations on the design, process and monitoring of the scheme. Although not asked directly, no equality concerns were raised. We recommend that the Source to Tap consortium give the opportunity for stakeholders to comment on the potential impact of the LIS on different equality groups via phone, email, mail or face to face. Once the scheme is open, the StT Project Officer should feed any comments on equality back to the wider consortium and efforts should be made to mitigate any adverse impacts.

5 Publication of EQA

The equality assessment should be published, and comments welcomed.

6 Monitoring for adverse impact in the future.

The scheme should be monitored for any adverse impacts on equality throughout.