

# Online Resources for Integrating Gender into Energy Operations

## Step 1: Gender Assessment Resources | Institutional Capacity Analysis

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Available on [www.ESMAP.org](http://www.ESMAP.org)

### SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT

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Semi-structured interviews<sup>1</sup> can be used to explore issues related to gender mainstreaming within an organization. It can be used together with the survey outlined in the tool “*Sample Questionnaire for Organizational Assessment Survey*”. Since it is a more intensive data gathering tool, it should only be conducted with a small sample of staff which should be representative of the different functions, and grades. The staff sample should also be gender balanced.

One should allow no more than 30 minutes per interview since generally people’s attention, in all but the most committed begins to wane and the quality of the data diminishes.

The type of information that can be expected from such interviews includes:

- Assessment of existing knowledge and capacities of staff on gender including availability of resource materials on gender
- Cataloguing project experiences and best practices on working with women and men
- Identifying challenges encountered in working with women and men
- identifying possible entry points or opportunities for addressing gender issues in the project
- identifying needs for training, support, etc. on gender

#### INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

*[The information in the background section could be sent to the interviewees beforehand.]*

Gender consideration is an important element of the Africa Renewable Energy Access (AFREA) Program. The AFREA Gender and Energy program aims to contribute towards the greater outcome of increasing energy access while understanding and addressing the needs of the poor, through capacity building, dialogue and engagement with women and men in the region. Based on this and the agreement between the World Bank and the government of [X], AFREA is now supporting [Y] to mainstream gender into its internal operations and supported project activities. This conversation is part of the internal gender assessment of [Y] to establish the baseline situation within the organization *[and is carried out in conjunction with the written questionnaire sent to all members of staff]*. We are interviewing a number of members of staff who are representative of the different functions and grades throughout the organization. This survey has the full support of the Board of [Y].

The overall objective is to develop a realistic and practical Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan and Capacity Building Plan for [Y]. We appreciate your help in talking to us to help us improve gender mainstreaming in [Y]. If you have any questions about the purpose or use of this conversation, please do not hesitate to ask. Please feel free to contact Mr/Mrs B of [Y]- who is/are staff member(s) responsible for the survey if you have questions or concerns regarding this survey .

During our conversation, with your permission, I will take notes. **Anything you say will be kept CONFIDENTIAL. Your responses will not be used to evaluate you in any way.** The objective is to develop a sense of what gender mainstreaming means in [Y] and to its employees. No names will be attached to any answers, nor will any individual’s response be shared with their manager or colleagues.

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<sup>1</sup> Cecelski, Elizabeth and Dutta, Soma (2011) ENERGIA: Mainstreaming Gender in Energy Projects A Practical Handbook.

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There are NO RIGHT OR WRONG answers. So please answer the questions from your own perspective of how you see the situation in [Y]. The more honest and thoughtful your answers the clearer will be the picture of the existing situation and the more useful the information to ensuring gender mainstreaming in [Y] is a success.

I expect the conversation to last no more than 30 minutes.

Before we begin do you have any questions?

Possible questions the project staff being interviewed might ask YOU. It is better to be prepared with responses to these questions:

What is gender anyway?

Is there funding available if I want to do something on gender?

Why is there all this focus on women? Does it mean that men will lose their jobs?

What does gender have to do with my work/this project?

There is enough to do on this project anyway, why should I be bothered about another angle?

[You may get a sense of other issues that could be raised from the written questionnaires (if it has taken place) and your counterpart in the organization responsible for gender mainstreaming.]

### 1. Background Data

Name:

Title – Unit:

M/F?

Technical field/area of expertise:

Key work areas/tasks:

Gender training (dates/type):

### 2. How relevant is gender in the sector and in your work?

2.1 Have you had to address gender issues in your own work? Please give examples. [*Explore what kinds of issues/topics are raised, if any*]. What roles do women and men play in the project?

2.2 Are there some parts of the project that you think DO have a gender dimension and other parts of the project that you think do NOT have a gender dimension?

*You may hear responses such as...*

*Rural Electrification Coordinator: I think women and men both want electricity, but sometimes women don't have the authority to sign. For bill collection, we only hire men. I wonder if women could also do that job.*

*Rural Electrification/ Micro Hydro Project Coordinator: Electricity in homes is used by everyone. So there are no gender issues in rural electrification. Gender issues are more relevant for biogas and cookstoves projects, not for us!*

### 3. Entry points and Opportunities

3.1 In your opinion, what are the principal entry points or opportunities for addressing gender issues in the project?

*Eg the staff being interviewed might suggest one or more of the following entry points:*

- *Monitoring and evaluation – we should look at the impacts on men and women*
- *We need more knowledge about gender differences in energy use, I don't know enough to*

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*identify any entry points right now*

- *Policy dialogue, policy makers need to recognize gender before we can work at project level*
- *Women do not have the skills or training to work in these activities*
- *I can see the relevance of women in household energy but not in construction of power lines*
- *Men's ideas need to change, we need awareness-raising*
- *Men and women work together in the family, we have to educate them both*
- *We could employ women as extension agents*
- *We could offer credit to women's groups equally as to men's groups*
- *We could design our promotional materials to target both women and men*

3.2 Can you give any examples of innovations or good practices in addressing gender in the project or in this energy subsector?

- *Charcoal trade project, Senegal: Yes we have separate funds available to women's groups and men's groups in the villages where we are working, because we thought both should benefit. The men are charcoal producers, and the women are traders; both want to improve the efficiency of their businesses. We had to give extra support to the women, because they are illiterate and have less status than the men.*
- *Rural electrification project, Laos: Yes we are subsidizing connection costs to poor households; being a female headed or single parent household is one criterion to receive a subsidy.*
- *Improved stoves project, Senegal: Yes we had a problem because the woman in the pottery group who attended the entrepreneur and accounting course was not literate and could not read the materials. We solved the problem by supporting her daughter to attend the course with her and help her understand and later, her daughter helped her to keep records.*

#### **4. How is impact assessment done in your project?**

Are poverty impacts measured? Social assessment? Is this by gender? Do men and women benefit equally from the project?

#### **5. Issues and Challenges**

What are the principal challenges in integrating gender into this energy project?

*Eg the staff might say:*

- *lack of time for me to do it*
- *low priority, too many other responsibilities*
- *lack of budget*
- *lack of skills/knowledge on gender*
- *lack of easy-to-use tool kits, check lists, good practice examples*
- *lack of demand for gender mainstreaming*
- *lack of support from my manager*
- *lack of training or background in gender and development issues in general*
- *I never thought about it*
- *Project activities have already begun, it is too late to add new things now.*