

INSTITUTIONALISING GENDER MAINSTREAMING PROCESSES IN ENERGY ORGANISATIONS



One of critical gaps in the energy sector that hinders progress on gender equality and women's empowerment is the absence of clear enabling frameworks for consideration of gender issues within implementing organisations. Without this enabling framework, gender mainstreaming activities and the efforts of people serving as gender focal points are unlikely to be fully effective.

This technical brief provides guidance to energy organisations interested in adopting such frameworks. It sets out processes and steps for an organisation to follow when incorporating gender concerns into its projects, procedures, work ethic and overall structure.

Why should your organisation institutionalise gender mainstreaming?

Because it will:

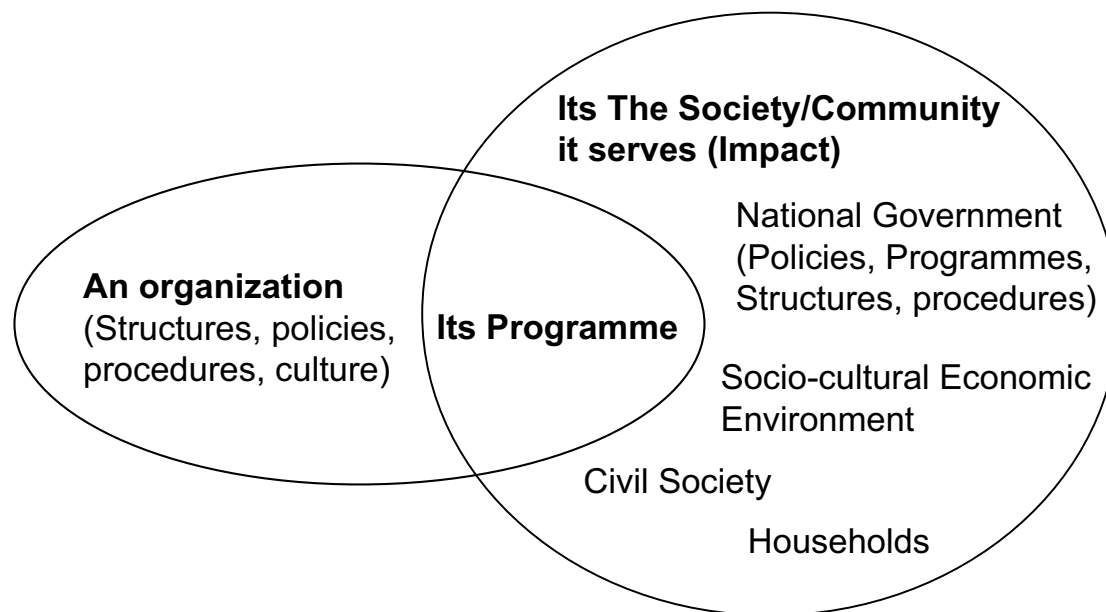
- Maximise the impacts that energy projects have on women and children, who are among the most vulnerable groups in society
- Increase the effectiveness and sustainability of gender mainstreaming initiatives
- Link project and organisational objectives to gender-related international objectives, such as the Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals
- Promote a better, more equitable, working environment within the organisation and among project staff
- Equip project staff with the capacity to identify and respond to gender concerns and opportunities.

The interlocking arenas of gender mainstreaming for an energy organisation

Gender mainstreaming strategies are relevant in three linked arenas or 'spheres' that an energy organisation operates in:

- (a) in the organisation's structures, policies, procedures and culture;
- (b) in the substantive activity that it undertakes (its programmes); and
- (c) in the impact of its work on increased gender equality in the broader community.

The figure below shows the inter-relationship between these three arenas. Activities in each arena are critical to ensure effective gender mainstreaming, even though change at the societal level is the final goal. It is important not to conflate these three arenas, as different strategies and indicators of change apply to each.



The figure is taken from Murison, S, 2004. 'Elements of a gender mainstreaming strategy: A 14-point framework', Development Bulletin, no. 64, pp. 95-99.

Elements of an enabling framework for mainstreaming gender in an energy organisation

1. **Policy on Gender Mainstreaming** – An overarching policy on gender equality that is formally adopted by the governing board of the energy organisation or by its management is needed to give the organisation a mandate for gender mainstreaming and to guide gender mainstreaming in all programme activities of the organisation. The policy should cover all levels within the organisation, as well as related outside parties (such as contractors, partner organisations and customer service providers). To be effective, it should also provide directives and set priority areas for human resources, finances, and middle and senior management activities.
2. **Strategic Plan** – A Strategic Plan provides details of objectives, activities, budgets and outcomes (often stretching over several years) to implement the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming. The Strategic Plan should be viewed as a working document, open for scrutiny, change, refinement and adaptation as experience and reflection requires.
3. **Gender focal point** – This is a staff member (or members) within the energy organisation designated to guide the gender mainstreaming process and to support management and staff in carrying out their responsibilities to implement gender sensitive approaches in their work and in monitoring and reporting on progress. The gender focal point reports to, and should receive support from, senior management. There should be a clear mandate for the position with a specific percentage of time allocated for this work, along with the necessary budget. Terms of reference for the gender focal point can be developed in consultation with senior managers.

4. Capacity building of project staff and stakeholders - Gender focal points should assess the capacity building needs of energy organisations, and conduct gender trainings as a key part of their duties. Gender training can be focussed at different levels:

- Energy project management should be able to explain the relevance of a gender-sensitive approach to their work, and cite strategic elements.
- Field teams should include members with social expertise, including knowledge and skills related to gender issues, and technical team members should understand the need for a gender-sensitive approach and be able to show elements of such an approach in their own work.
- Project stakeholders need orientation on gender as it affects the project activities.

Ideally, gender training should be well funded, carried out as part of regular training and orientation for all staff and key partners, and use participatory methods and tools.

Gender and energy training resources

ENERGIA has designed training packages for practitioners (policy makers, planners and project implementers, non-governmental organisations, the private sector and academia) to increase their understanding of gender and energy inter-relationships and their capacity to bring gender aspects of energy into policy and project planning.

Six training modules, entitled “The Gender Face of Energy”, are available in English and French at <http://www.energia.org/nl/knowledge-centre/training-material/energias-generic-training-modules/>

- Concepts in Gender and Energy
- Gender Tools for Energy Projects
- Engendering Energy Policy
- Gender and Energy Advocacy
- Engendering Energy Project Proposal Development: Capacity Building of Organisations
- Sub-module on Communication of Project Results

The ENERGIA website also has an online course on Gender and Energy introducing gender and energy concepts. The online course has been used as part of capacity building efforts in both the Africa and Asia regions and is available at: <http://www.energia.org/nl/knowledge-centre/online-learning/>

5. Engendering a project’s logical framework and planning documents - Programme planning documents set the framework between the donor and/or government and the implementing agency, and should clearly include commitments and deliverables on gender mainstreaming. This will ensure that attention is paid to gender issues in processes of management, resource allocation and monitoring. For example:

- The section on target groups should clearly state whom the project is targeting. It should be clear which activities and outputs target women, or men, or both.
- General terms such as “households”, “the poor” or “poor farmers” should be replaced, where appropriate, with “poor women and men” or “poor women and men farmers”.
- The promotion of gender equality (benefits for women as well as for men) should be an aspect of the purpose and goal of any development project concerned with improving women’s lives. This needs to be reflected in specific activities, outputs and indicators in the logical framework and, where possible, in the wording of the goal statement.

6. Engendered manuals and publications - Project training manuals, fieldwork guides, and checklists need to incorporate conceptual approaches as well as practical methods, approaches and activities informing staff members on how to work with and involve both women and men in project processes. Publications are the public face of an organisation and its projects. The needs and concerns of both women and men need should be reflected in publications, where relevant. It is also good to include pictures of both women and men in publications.

7. Gender sensitive monitoring and reporting - This is a critical element in tracking the energy organisation’s commitments and targets. Monitoring and reporting systems should collect data that is disaggregated by sex, where relevant, and collect specific information on the participation of, and effects on, men and women. This data should be used to adjust strategies, and establish indicators and targets by sex for the project goals, outcomes and activities, as part of regular project monitoring systems. In this way, annual reports will automatically reflect gender issues, and the actions taken by the energy organisation towards gender policy objectives can be adjusted to better meet those goals.

- 8. Enlisting partner organisations with gender expertise** - If the implementing organisation and its current partner organisations do not have the necessary gender expertise to implement gender mainstreaming activities, and a well planned capacity development programme is not sufficient to build that expertise, then a new institutional partner with relevant expertise may need to be brought in to support the organisation.
- 9. Management support and incentives** - Little progress can be made if the managers of an energy organisation are not conscious of gender issues, or consider them not their responsibility, or if they do not acknowledge gender consciousness in their staff, or even actively discourage it. Targets for management support and staff performance, as well as incentives, are essential parts of the enabling framework to build gender capacity in an organisation. This would include quantitative evaluation of whether there are an increased number of gender sensitive activities, outputs and results produced by management and staff.
- 10. Creating a gender balance within the organisation** - In general, women tend to be under-represented in energy organisations, at all levels. It is true that both women and men can be trained to have a gender perspective and are able to carry out gender analysis, and that female staff may not necessarily be either gender-sensitive or knowledgeable about gender work. However, the complete absence of women at any level, or low representation, is not likely to result in gender-sensitive

Gender balance in TaTEDO

TaTEDO, Tanzania is implementing a project titled “Up-Scaling Access to Integrated Modern Energy Services for Poverty Reduction (ACP)”, with the overall objective of contributing to improved livelihoods, poverty reduction and sustainable rural development through improved access to modern energy in rural communities of Tanzania. The project aims to work with and benefit women as well as men. As part of the gender mainstreaming activities for this project, the gender team made a presentation to project management on its findings from an institutional assessment, including the following slide:

Gender Balance in ACP

	Men	Women	Total
Managers	4	2	6
Project staff	5	3	8
Zone field coordinators	2	0	2
Field staff	6	1	7
Total	17	6	23

Project staff regarded the slide and noted: “Look at this, at HQ level we have some women managers and project staff. But most of our field staff are men. The baseline gender survey showed that male field staff can have difficulties accessing women. How are we going to work with women in this project?”

outputs. Not only would women in the target group lack role models for their participation in the project, but in many cultures, male project staff members face real practical difficulties in collecting information from and working together with women.

- 11. A gender-conscious workplace** - In general, human resources practices that are sensitive to the gender equity issues of both female and male staff are legal requirements for energy organisations. Indeed, implementing a gender sensitive management style that promotes mutual respect for diverse working or management styles can be critical for encouraging more women to apply for jobs and to remain with the energy organisation.

Some gender-conscious workplace strategies that can be adopted are:

- Adopting equal opportunity practices in staff recruitment, training and promotion
- Integrating gender targets into all job descriptions performance reviews and interviews
- Establishing policies on maternity and paternity leave
- Organising working hours to recognise the links between the personal and professional responsibilities of staff, including setting a definite ‘quitting time’ and/or allowing staff the option of ‘flex-time’
- Providing facilities that respond to gender-based needs, including childcare or separate lavatories for women and men
- Ensuring gender sensitive behaviour in the workplace, in the language used, comments that are made, images or materials displayed, dress code, and meeting practices
- Posting spouses to the same community or region so that families are not separated
- Spreading travel responsibilities widely among staff
- Securing the health and safety of staff, with mechanisms to deal with sexual harassment, provide safe transportation for women, limit the travel assignments that pregnant women are required to do, etc.

Encouraging a gender-sensitive management style and promoting mutual respect for diverse working or management styles.

Tools for assessing an energy organisation regarding gender issues

Before developing an enabling framework, an assessment of the energy organisation should be conducted to:

- identify existing capacities that can be drawn on, as well as gaps in capacities that will need to be addressed;
- propose indicators and decision points for the energy organisation, on actions for gender mainstreaming in the organisation and in projects; and
- create an empirical baseline that can be used to set targets and to measure later progress on the institutionalisation of gender mainstreaming.

Outcomes of an assessment of gender integration at the institutional level, Biomass Energy Conservation in Namibia

In Namibia, interviews and a document review by a gender consultant for an assessment of gender integration in the National Biomass Energy Management Steering Committee (NAMBESC) revealed that:

- NAMBESC is approximately gender-balanced in individual membership.
- There are no gender experts or women's organisations involved in NAMBESC.
- Only one member of NAMBESC has participated in gender training.
- Technical members of NAMBESC generally do appreciate a gender-sensitive approach, do not have a clear understanding of gender concepts, and cannot cite examples of a gender approach in their work.
- Planning and monitoring of NAMBESC activities does not specifically collect information on participation of and effects on men and women, nor does it use this information to adjust strategy.
- NAMBESC defines women's roles partly from a welfare perspective: women are beneficiaries of improved stoves. It also encourages women in new roles in decision-making, management, production and marketing in stove producer groups.

Tools for organisational assessments include:

Briefings and interviews with project staff and management, including individual interviews with key informants and focus group discussions carried out by an experienced gender facilitator who can answer questions and give explanations as well as stimulate discussions.

Self-assessment questionnaires administered to project staff and management, either through individual questionnaires or through facilitated group work.

Gender balance analysis in the energy organisation, showing the number of women and men at different levels (management, technical, field staff). This provides a baseline for setting future targets for staffing.

Gender analysis administered through a workshop with management and staff in order to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT):

- Strengths: internal features of the organisation that have proved effective in addressing gender issues;
- Weaknesses: internal features of the organisation that have hindered effectiveness in addressing gender issues;
- Opportunities: external factors that may assist in overcoming the weaknesses of the organisation and building on its strengths; and
- Threats: external constraints that restrict the range of opportunities for change.

Gender budgeting as a tool that can be used to break down and identify the differentiated impacts of the energy organisation's budgets and expenditures as they affect men and women. This analysis examines not only the content of budgets (inputs, outputs, and outcomes), but also the negotiation processes used to arrive at final budget decisions. In this respect, gender budgeting gives the organisation the opportunity to redirect programme activities and expenditures to promote gender equality. For example, German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) in Uganda has committed that 1% of project budgets, including energy projects, will be spent on gender-focussed actions.

SCODE Institutional assessment: Identifying elements for a gender strategy

SCODE's mission is to facilitate adoption of cleaner energy technology and sustainable land use approaches through capacity building and applied research for enhanced livelihoods, with concern for the environment and sustainable development. The organisation has two key programmes, namely: Renewable energy technologies; and Sustainable Land Use Management. The SCODE organisational assessment identified strong and weak points and actions to address them:

Strong points	Weak points	Agreed actions
Organisational culture and policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equal opportunities for men and women in recruitment Gender balance in staff composition No issues with regard to sexual harassment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCODE does not have an overall gender policy No consideration of gender in choice of partners organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a gender policy for SCODE and inform partner organisations Support partner organisations' capacity development on gender
Information and knowledge systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to the internet Availability of office telephones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No operational documentation centre specifically on gender No general information on gender collected and disseminated among SCODE staff No coverage of gender issues on SCODE website or newsletter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a well stocked, operational documentation centre with a collection of documents and materials on gender issues Engender content of SCODE's website and incorporate information on gender mainstreaming case studies

* The Technical Brief uses information from 'A Guide on Gender Mainstreaming in the Africa Biogas Partnership Programme (ABPP), July 2010' developed by ENERGIA for the Africa Biogas Partnership programme (ABPP).



ENERGIA, the International Network on Gender and Sustainable Energy



Practical Action (Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan Programme)