



Government of Nepal
Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation
Alternative Energy Promotion Centre

**Alternative Energy Promotion Centre Gender Equality and Social
Inclusion (GESI) Policy, 2018**

August 2018

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1. Background

Alternative Energy Promotion Centre (AEPC) is committed to the mandate of the Constitution of Nepal and to the policy directives of the Government of Nepal on equality and inclusion and the inclusive use of renewable energy.

AEPC believes to execute “Sustainable Energy for all” through the development and expansion of renewable energy projects, programs and policies that explicitly improve the livelihood of entire communities. AEPC supports for necessary amendment to address gender and inclusion issues for women empowerment and development and have better outcomes from target groups. By involving women, poor, disadvantage group, vulnerable population, marginalized groups and people of excluded social groups in different activities of development with meaningful participation enhance these services for sustainable development and to uplift the whole community with positive outcomes. Applying a GESI lens to energy policies, programmes and projects helps to identify the different impacts, to bridge existing gaps and contributes to higher gender equality and social inclusion in the renewable energy sector.

AEPC believes to share equal benefit from the sector resources and opportunities for women, low income people and marginalized groups. The constitution of Nepal, The 14th Three Year Plan and Sustainable Development Goals aims to Gender Equality and Social Inclusion and instructed the State to work in these arena. As Nepal is committed to ensure Human Right promotion, preservation and embrace agreeing upon the Human Right Treaty, it is the responsibility of all organization to help the human right execution.

AEPC has adopted this GESI policy believing, The constitution of Nepal which ensures the provision of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion, commitment to assure Rights of Women in Nepal and sustainable development through the concept of renewable energy for all and equally improve the livelihood of entire communities.

2. GESI related national and sectoral policy guidance

The Constitution of Nepal (2015) clearly envisions Nepal as an inclusive state and guarantees the right to equality for all its citizens. The Preamble of the Constitution states: “Ending all forms of discrimination and oppression created by the feudalistic, autocratic, centralized, unitary system of governance, recognizing the multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious, multi-cultural and diverse regional characteristics, resolving to build an egalitarian society founded on the proportional inclusive and participatory principles in order to ensure economic equality, prosperity and social justice, by eliminating discrimination based on class, caste, region, language, religion and gender and all forms of caste-based untouchability. The Fundamental

Rights under Right to Equality states: No discrimination shall be made in the application of general laws on grounds of origin, religion, race, caste, tribe, sex, physical condition, condition of health, marital status, pregnancy, economic condition, language or region, ideology or on similar other grounds. The State shall not discriminate citizens on grounds of origin, religion, race, caste, tribe, sex, economic condition, language, region, ideology or on similar other grounds.”

The 14th Three Year Plan (2016/17-2018/19) of Government of Nepal (GoN) aims for economic prosperity with social justice. The 14th Plan recognizes that improving gender equality and addressing issues of “backward” regions, classes and communities and excluded groups requires conscious efforts, such as targeted programs, equitable distribution of resources, and social security for poverty reduction. It has dedicated chapters on gender equality and women’s empowerment (6.1.1) and on inclusion (6.1.2), recognizing that these are cross-cutting themes. The plan emphasizes the meaningful participation of all citizens for Nepal’s inclusive development and aims to improve the human development and empowerment index of those who have been economically and socially left behind. This includes Dalits, Adibasi/Janajatis, Madhesis, Tharus, Muslims, Other Backward Classes (OBC), minorities, the marginalized, persons with disabilities, gender and sexual minorities, farmers, laborers, people of backward regions and poor Khas Aryas.

In line with these national and international commitments of Nepal, the energy sector also has some positive policy provisions. GoN has been providing subsidies, particularly in rural areas, to promote alternative forms of renewable energy, namely, mini-, micro- and Pico hydropower, solar, wind, biogas and biomass, which has resulted in incremental progress in rural electrification.

The Rural Energy Policy 2006, explicitly states ‘as rural energy is directly linked to activities traditionally carried out by women, programmes of rural energy technology will be implemented considering it as an integral part of the women’s enabling activities’ (Article 10.6). The policy also emphasizes issues such as community management, enhancing productivity of end-users, and representation of excluded groups in user committees.

The Rural Energy Subsidy Delivery Mechanism 2013 also states that. “To maximize service delivery and efficiency in the use of renewable energy resources and technologies in rural areas and to use renewable energy solutions thereby reducing regional disparity, creating rural employment and enhancing livelihood of rural people particularly households from single women, low income, natural disaster victims and socio-economically disadvantaged groups (Article 8.2).

3. GESI Mainstreaming Principles

(1) A gender and inclusion analysis of division of labour, access to resources and decision making authority of women and men of different social profiles will regularly inform policies and programmes of AEPC.

(2) GESI assessment of policies, programming and budgeting, institutional arrangements, human-resources issues and M&E system of AEPC and its programs/projects, partner organizations and community groups will be the basis for renewable energy related programming.

(3) Disaggregation of data by sex, age, caste, ethnicity, religion, education, class, economic status, place of residence, and any other relevant variables (e.g. disability, minority community outside of caste and ethnic groups, urban poor, disaster affected people, people displaced due to development activities, where required) will be done as relevant;

(4) Evidence regarding discriminatory practices, gender and social norms will be regularly analyzed for their impact on the ability of women, poor and the excluded to benefit from AEPC's initiatives.

4. GESI Theory of Change of AEPC

AEPC recognizes that people and institutions influence each other and those with more power and status have more influence on shaping policies and programmes in their favour and thus perpetuating their dominance. To address these inequalities and exclusion, the GESI Theory of Change of AEPC is to focus on:

(a) Improving livelihood assets and capacities of women, poor and the excluded so that they can have access to different energy sources;

(b) Enhancing their voice so that they can recognize their rights and influence decisions affecting them;

(c) A platform to women, disadvantage group, socially excluded group, vulnerable people and people with disabilities, meaningful engage with influence and helps to hold accountable, the institutions that uplift their life chances; and

(d) Shifting of unfavorable policies, mind-sets and values which have traditionally favored the dominant social groups and the advantaged.

5. Vision, Mission and Objectives of the Policy

5.1 Vision

Women and men of all social profiles/circumferences (caste/ethnic groups, income status, age, disability, and geographic locations, project affected people) have equal and equitable access and control over renewable energy resources and benefits.

5.2 Mission

Gender equality and social inclusion is mainstreamed in sectoral policies, programmes, plans and budgets to achieve equality and empowerment of women, poor and the excluded.

5.3 Objectives

- a. To improve livelihoods of rural women, poor, marginalized groups, vulnerable population and socially excluded groups by increasing productive employment with the use of RETs and reducing dependency on traditional sources.
- b. To enhance the capacities of women, poor and the excluded to be actively involved in the governance of an energy system and participate in decision-making forums.
- c. To support changes in discriminatory gender and social norms which constrain women, poor and the excluded from using different RETs and to promote their benefit from non-traditional opportunities.

6. Strategies for mainstreaming GESI

- 6.1** Enhance women's access to financial and technical support and credit on energy related services.
- 6.2** Recognize women's involvement and their right to appropriate remuneration as per government norms in energy projects and programmes.
- 6.3** Develop affordable options to increase access and offset the high upfront cost of RETs for women, men and disadvantaged groups.
- 6.4** Design delivery models that enhance access to energy to unreached and un-served areas and groups, including poor men and women.
- 6.5** Ensure that energy service delivery and information service reach equally to women, men and people of different caste and ethnicities.
- 6.6** Involve women and disadvantaged groups in technical aspects of energy projects, and encourage their participation in energy infrastructure management.
- 6.7** Explicitly consult and engage women and disadvantaged groups effectively in all phases of the project cycle.
- 6.8** Strengthen the capability to influence decisions and ensure participation of women and marginalized groups in energy plans, programmes and decision making.
- 6.9** Promote women and people of socially excluded groups as service providers in renewable energy sector by providing additional support or creating enabling environment.

- 6.10** Revise the policy and regulatory framework and institutional mechanisms of the renewable energy sector to address more explicitly the issues of women, poor and the excluded.
- 6.11** Set a target for increasing staff diversity with representation of women and people of excluded social groups in different positions of decision making in AEPC and ensure a gender and inclusion sensitive working environment for them.
- 6.12** Design climate change mitigation and adaptation action to minimize social, economic and environmental GESI gap caused by climate change.
- 6.13** Engage in partnerships with community and non-state actors to increase awareness and to improve accountabilities, transparency, and locally appropriate models for delivery of energy services and use of RETs.
- 6.14** Strong emphasis on proper and quality documentation and publication of its work in GESI mainstreaming.
- 6.15** Separate GESI Grievance Redress Committee (GRC) will be established in order to address unusual behavior within the organization (e.g. verbal abuse, sexual harassment via any modes) and counseling for the same.
- 6.16** The committee is responsible for developing infrastructure and facilities for pregnant women, breast feeding, and sick bay (with a bed, medical supplement, sanitary, refreshment, etc) within the organization.
- 6.17** The right to free, prior and informed consent for information disclosure, sharing and taking photos and videos will be required in applicable circumstances.
- 6.18** Gender Equality Education will be provided for concerned stakeholders and organizational staffs to develop their horizon on GESI perspective and its best practices.
- 6.19** Organizational GESI code of conduct will be signed by its entire staff and implemented.

7. GESI sensitive Monitoring and Reporting

It is essential to monitor and report with disaggregation and also monitor changes in gender and inclusion related issues in the energy sector impacting women, poor, disadvantage group, vulnerable population, project affected people and people of excluded social groups. Collecting, maintaining, analyzing and interpreting disaggregated information, analyzing evidence, using disaggregated monitoring indicators, form and formats and reporting with disaggregation are key aspects of monitoring to mainstream GESI in AEPC and in its programmes.