



## DEUTSCHE GESELLSCHAFT FÜR INTERNATIONALE ZUSAMMENARBEIT (GIZ) GMBH



Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Study in Energy Sector (Province-1)

Alternative Energy Promotion Center/Renewable Energy for Rural Areas (RERA)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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This survey work was led and coordinated by S.W. Nepal Pvt. Ltd (Scott Wilson Nepal). The study was carried out for the Renewable Energy for Rural Areas (RERA) project being implemented in Province 1 by GIZ. The assignment was designed to assess the status of GESI in eight RERA partner Municipalities in Province 1 and to identify and suggest measures to ensure inclusion of women and DAG in energy related governmental and public decision making and planning process so that they would additionally benefit from the renewable energy interventions.

This report summarizes the key findings of 32 KIIs, 16 FGDs and 11 interactions targeting partner Urban/Rural Municipalities within selected districts of Province 1: Morang, Jhapa, Panchthar, Ilam, Okhaldhunga and Bhojpur. The discussions with large number of stakeholders and community members brought to the fore a number of issues related to energy access, on-going practices, its implications, decision making, governance, available services, support and future energy plans and programmes.

S.W. Nepal Pvt. Ltd. (Scott Wilson Nepal) would like to thank GIZ for entrusting us to carry out this important assignment and for providing valuable suggestions in shaping the report.

We also express our sincere gratitude to all the women, men, members of DAG communities and younger people from the study community, representatives of the Rural Municipalities, civil society organisations, private sector and financial institutions who shared their experiences on energy use, services and governance to provide the perspectives included in this report. It is their views that has shaped the study. We have endeavoured to remain faithful to their views but the interpretation is, of course, solely the author's responsibility.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This report provides information on the status of Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) in RE in Province 1 of Nepal. The report also includes information on the readiness of the 8 Rural Municipalities within selected districts of Province 1: Morang, Jhapa, Panchthar, Ilam, Okhaldhunga and Bhojpur

The study was conducted to assess the status of GESI in the 8 partner municipalities of RERA in Province 1, and develop solutions and approaches to ensure the inclusion of women and DAG in energy related governmental and public decision making and planning, as well as to ensure the benefitting of women and DAG from renewable energy, and recommend measures to be taken up by RERA. It includes the assessment of the situation of DAG and Women in the 8 partner municipalities in terms of: energy access situation; their specific energy needs; involvement in energy related entrepreneurship and participation in governmental and public decision making processes; assessment of current energy policy and provision in terms of the participation of DAG and women in governmental and public decision making processes and identification of challenges and barriers for women and DAGs in relation to getting access to energy, inclusion in decision making process, getting access to finance, and benefitting from using RE technologies, as well as becoming energy-related entrepreneurs (micro entrepreneurs, productive use of energy).

The findings of the study were meant recommend RERA with appropriate measures for: addressing the specific energy needs of women and DAG, leading to improved access to energy, access to finance and energy increased energy entrepreneurship.

- ensuring participation of women and DAG in energy related decision making of relevant government processes (e.g. planning).
- ensuring women and DAGs are equally benefitting from programmes as entrepreneurs and beneficiaries of energy products and services.

The methodology for this study involved desk review of national constitution and policies related to renewable energy, Stakeholder consultations were carried out with selected stakeholders. In total 32 KIIs, 16 FGDs and 11 interactions were conducted.

The key findings of this study are as follows:

- The rural municipalities have been assigned the role of promoting RETs in their respective areas, for which purpose some have already created an energy sub-committee, while others were in the process of doing so. The structure has provisions of women and DAGs representation but this was not seen in case of Jahada.
- The Vice Chair has been assigned the responsibilities as GESI Focal Persons
- The rural municipalities still depend largely on fuelwood for cooking energy. In case of Jahada and Gaurigunj RMs, the marginalised group in particular depended on dung and agro wastes. Very few have biogas plants while LPG was seen mostly along the roadside households. It was not used regularly used but only for preparation of quick snacks and in times of emergency.
- Houses were electrified through the national grid as well as mini-micro-hydro. Solar was more common as reliability was a concern in case of both grid and the mini and micro hydro supplies. Use of kerosene for lighting was also noted in case of Jahada RM. Firewood, electricity (grid and hydro), solar and diesel facilities were used for productive activities.

- Women, Dalits and those living in inaccessible areas within small settlements (dispersed houses at higher altitudes and having no roads) were most disadvantaged and challenged groups.
- Planning and budgeting for energy access was reported across the municipalities. However, support measures for women and the marginalised have not been considered in the process.
- Difficulties to access service providers were notable in Jahada, Mai, Miklajung, Amchowk and Hatuwagadi. They either had to travel to the district headquarters or larger markets in neighbouring districts for the technologies and services. Solar related service providers were available in the local markets of Manebhanjyang RM.
- The municipalities did not have concrete plans to address this poor access to services. An immediate step adopted was the formation of Energy Sub-Committee in all the Municipalities. However, the capacity of the Committee on technical knowledge and mainstreaming of GESI into energy program was weak.
- There was interest in electrification of schools and health posts. Solar was commonly installed for public places and for pumping drinking water. A hybrid system was mostly in place.
- Most female technical staff were engaged either in agriculture or health sectors.
- Information display or communication system comprised of putting up notices or making telephone calls. This was not effective and unsuitable due to low level of literacy and distance from the Municipalities and Ward offices to access the shared information. The information was not comprehensible to many as it was mostly technical. The women and DAGs report that there is no system of channelling information that reaches them effectively
- Migration for employment was common across the Municipalities. This increased burden on the women.

Nonetheless, the study noted varying level of awareness about RETs at the decision making levels, women and DAGs. Their engagement of women and DAGs in the energy planning process was very low.

The study noted the following areas of interventions:

Local Government Level for:

1. Capacity enhance of the RMs and its Energy Sub-Committees for proper GESI analysis to develop and implement specific GESI actions for energy programs and projects;
2. Developing clear guidelines for implementing a GESI Sensitive energy programs;
3. Support to the formulation of policy and development of tools and guidelines for mainstreaming GESI friendly plans, programs;
4. Mandatory use of GESI disaggregated indicators for monitoring the outcomes of local energy activities; and
5. Last but not least, allocation of adequate resources (financial and human).

## Women and DAGs<sup>1</sup>

- Build their knowledge on the benefits of RETs their operation and safe use
- Encourage the use of clean energy both for domestic as well as economic activities through enabling policies for livelihood enhancement
- Build IECs and mechanisms for dissemination such that they are comprehensible and accessible for women and the marginalised groups
- Capacitate women and DAGs as energy entrepreneurs for delivery of RETs (cook stoves, solar and biogas), operation and maintenance (all RETS) and agency-based empowerment
- Establish service local service providers for undertaking and sustaining energy initiatives
- Develop innovative financing means especially in areas where FIs are absent such that both women and DAGs are able to access finance for upfront investment

Based on the energy needs assessment, the report also presents a list of technologies for the Municipalities that will address the energy needs of women and DAGs thereby reducing drudgery save time and uses for income generation activities.

For effective implementation of energy initiatives that address the needs of the community, especially women and DAGs, it becomes pertinent to engage with the private sector, CSOs and finance institutions.

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<sup>1</sup> DAGs According to IIDs, (Concept and Method for MAPPING OF DISADVANTAGED GROUPS In 15 DACAW Districts ) 2006, a study conducted for DECAW Section, UNICEF, Country Office, Nepal, Disadvantaged Groups are those groups of population that are dependent upon daily wage labour or occupational or any other work of their livelihood which is hardly sufficient to sustain their daily needs; or landless or have marginal land or have food sufficiency for less than 6 months a year; are unable to access minimum education, health and other services provided by the state; lack the confidence to voice even legitimate demands and social, economic, political, religious and other rights; lack access to decision making process even within the community or at local levels; are excluded from participating in development mainstream; and are socially excluded, subordinated and suppressed. National classification of DAGs is provided in Annex 1.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

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AEPC	Alternative Energy Promotion Centre
BFI	Banks/Financial Institutions
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DAGs	Disadvantaged Groups
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
GoN	Government of Nepal
HH	Households
IIDS	Institute for Integrated Development Studies
JTA	Junior Technical Assistance
KII	Key Informant Interviews
km	kilo meters
LPG	Liquefied Petroleum Gas
m	meters
MFI	Micro Finance Institutions
M	Municipality
NCDC	Namsaling Community Development Centre
NPC	National Planning Commission
NRREP	National Rural Renewable Energy Program
RERA	Renewable Energy for Rural Areas
RETS	Renewable Energy Technologies
RM	Rural Municipality
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SHS	Solar Home Systems
SW Nepal	Scott Wilson Nepal

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

This “Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Study in Energy Sector” report is prepared for the Renewable Energy for Rural Areas (RERA), a joint programme initiative of the Government of Nepal (GoN) and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) to support small scale renewable energy sector in Nepal. The programme is jointly implemented by the Alternative Energy Promotion Centre (AEPC) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

The overall objective of RERA is ‘to ensure efficient and effective service delivery of small-scale renewable energy through improved outreach and enhanced local cooperation in a federalised and decentralised Nepal’. RERA is designed to deliver its objective through a framework for participatory and demand-led promotion of small-scale renewable energy at central, provincial and local government levels working in cooperation with civil society and the private sector. RERA also seeks to support AEPC in its transition to a more decentralised service delivery and in effective operationalization of provincial offices in Provinces 1 and 7, Biratnagar and Dhangadhi respectively. In brief, the four principal components of the programme are:

- Supporting central government institutions to help them prepare for decentralised energy service delivery
- Supporting AEPC in establishing a decentralised outreach structure so that they are enabled to implement support programmes in collaboration with local and central government structures
- Promoting local energy service delivery through effective institutional engagement with local governments, civil society, the private sector and banking sector
- Involving disadvantaged groups (DAGs) and women to ensure their engagement in the energy service delivery as decision makers, implementers and beneficiaries

Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) in energy sector underpins access to energy by women and the DAGs for economic empowerment. The unhindered and comfortable access to and use of energy by women and DAGs is essential for their improved livelihoods. The participation of women and DAGs in decisions made by the government on renewable energy is one of the key areas of priority for RERA.

RERA has commenced its activities in province 1 & 7 to strengthen capacity and provide support to the local governments and stakeholders in energy sector. A separate GESI study in addition to the energy baseline survey is carried out to mainly determine the GESI status in the selected Municipalities of Province 1, to develop tailor-made solutions/approaches to meet the needs of women and DAGs, and to further the strategies in Province 1 for the RERA programme.

## 1.2 Objective of the assignment

The overall objective of this study assignment is to assess the status of GESI in eight partner Municipalities of RERA in Province 1. The study is expected to contribute to developing solutions and approaches to enhance inclusion of women and DAG in energy related governmental, public decision making and planning process and to ensure that women and DAG benefit from the renewable energy

intervention and recommend measures to be taken up by RERA.

More specifically, the objectives of this assignment are to:

- assess the situation of DAG and Women in the 8 partner municipalities in terms of (1) energy access situation, (2) their specific energy needs, (3) involvement in energy related entrepreneurship, (4) participation in governmental and public decision making processes.

Therefore, the secondary Data collected by GIZ needs to be reviewed and additional information collected through focus group discussions (no additional survey required).

- assess current energy policy and provision in terms of the participation of DAG and women in governmental and public decision making processes.
- identify challenges and barriers for women and DAGs in relation to getting access to energy, inclusion in decision making process, getting access to finance, and benefitting from using RE technologies, as well as becoming energy-related entrepreneurs (micro entrepreneurs, productive use of energy).
- Recommend solutions and appropriate measures to
  - Address the specific energy needs of women and DAG, leading to improved access to energy, access to finance and energy increased energy entrepreneurship.
  - Ensure participation of women and DAG in energy related decision making of relevant government processes (e.g. planning).
  - Ensure women and DAGs are equally benefitting from programmes as entrepreneurs and beneficiaries of energy products and services.

### 1.3 Contextual Analysis

In Nepal, 55% of the population still lives on less than \$1.25 per day, and 78% on less than \$2 a day. Moreover, gender and social exclusion have been found to be the drivers of poverty<sup>2</sup>. Inequalities have also increased with a rise in the Gini coefficient (from 0.34 to 0.41 between 1995 and 2004), and it is clear that poverty continues to affect social groups in differing degrees. A recent report on gender disparities concluded that Nepal is one of the least equal countries in the world – ranking 115<sup>th</sup> out of 134<sup>3</sup> but is in the process of transition from this status.

There are two major dimensions of exclusion: economic and social. However, this study considers only the socially excluded groups which include Women, Dalits, Adivasi Janjatis, Madhesis, Muslims, and those people from geographically remote areas. Poverty rates among socially excluded groups in Nepal are often higher than the national average and have, in general, been significantly slower to decline compared to non-excluded groups. At the intersection of economic and social exclusion are the groups considered as being 'disadvantaged' (See Annex 1). In other words, those who, by virtue of their gender, caste ethnicity and location, are living in poverty (i.e. already part of the programme target group) also face social exclusion and specific barriers to accessing and benefitting from various development interventions. In other words, disadvantaged groups are both poor *and* excluded.

Exclusions can be cross-cutting and cumulative. Individuals could suffer some dimensions of exclusion - for example, a poor Brahmin woman might be relatively advantaged in terms of her caste and her fairly well-connected location, but excluded by her level of poverty and her gender. Others

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<sup>2</sup> UN Human Development Report, 2009. Broader measures of poverty that include living standards, health and education dimensions confirm this scale of poverty ( Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI); Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, 2010)

<sup>3</sup> The Global Gender Gap Report, World Economic Forum, 2010

will suffer from exclusion in almost all dimensions: for example, a poor Dalit woman is contend with four dimensions (poverty, caste, gender and remoteness) of exclusion. As these dimensions all interact with each other in different ways to frame the life chances and economic opportunities of different individuals, exclusion needs to be understood in a holistic way<sup>4</sup>. Therefore, gender and social inclusion, as evident prior experiences in Nepal is far less effective when targeted separately.

The Constitution of Nepal (2015) clearly envisions Nepal as an inclusive state and guarantees the equal rights for all its citizens<sup>5</sup>. This is an important moment in Nepal's development that offers the GESI Working Group an opportunity to help realize the constitution's vision of inclusion and equality. Nepal, being a signatory to various international conventions, is also legally committed to gender equality and social inclusion. The GoN has also initiated various policies and programs in line with these mandates.

Unless the disparities between women and men and different social groups are recognized and addressed, it will be difficult for Nepal to achieve its goal of inclusive growth, or reach Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1- elimination of absolute poverty and reduction of poverty by half) or SDG 5 - gender equality and empowerment of women and girls by 2030. The central principle of the SDGs is to "Leave No One Behind (LNOB)." The SDGs demand that activities go after the most difficult-to-reach groups, which often face not only poverty but disadvantages related to location, language, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, caste, ethnicity, or age. In fact, the National Planning Commission (NPC) report on the SDGs notes<sup>6</sup>:

*Nepal is marred by gender, social and geographical exclusion and inequality in Millennium Development Goals and human development outcomes and so needs to better target the delivery of development to the hardest to reach segments of society, those who have been excluded from development and those who have been overlooked.*

In the context of access to energy both social and economic exclusion have been critical factors in determining who benefits from various developments including energy interventions. It is important to note that while policies are positively oriented to enable access of the groups to renewable energy for livelihood enhancement, very few women and the disadvantaged groups have benefitted in practice.

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<sup>4</sup> Dynamics of exclusion in this section are taken directly from the DFID/World Bank/ADB paper 'Sectoral Perspectives on Gender and Social Inclusion: Agriculture Monograph', hereafter referred to as the Agricultural Monograph

<sup>5</sup> 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. (3) 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."

<sup>6</sup> NPC, 2015. Sustainable Development Goals, 2016-2030, National (Preliminary) Report, National Planning Commission, Page 5, Kathmandu.

## 2. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The study largely builds on consultations with a wide range of community stakeholders and leaders, including political leadership supported with literature review of relevant publications. The literature review was useful in better understanding of the socio-cultural aspects of the study areas, recent policy developments and roles and responsibilities assigned to government agencies and service providers. The prominent were the qualitative tools we adopted, i.e. the focus group discussions (FGD) and semi-structured in-depth key informant interviews (KII). The report is based on the findings the application of these tools.

Briefly, the following describes the study process:

- *Literature review*: The documents review included grey literature and peer-reviewed journal articles retrieved from the Internet (i.e. online databases) and through personal requests to concerned organizations and individuals. This phase particularly contributed to the development of checklist and in understanding socio-economic situation of the Municipalities in the study area.
- *Stakeholder mapping*: This phase involved the identification of key actors in the Municipalities in consultation with GIZ principal Project Manager. The actors identified as crucial for effective RERA implementation were approached for key informants' interviews.
- *Key Informant Interview*: KIIs were carried out with selected stakeholders to understand their roles and responsibilities in influencing the rural energy sector. We looked at prevailing energy use practices; present and future energy programs; provisions of the government with respect to energy access for women and DAGs; inclusion of women and DAG in energy related governmental decision making and planning and the availability of service providers. This also included the consultation meeting with the private sector as well as banks operating in or outside the district for energy systems and level of investment support.
- *Focus Group Discussions*: The target groups, RERA key beneficiaries, were identified in consensus with GIZ principal Project Manager. The study carried out FGD to understand the practices, challenges and choices with respect to energy use for domestic and productive uses. Checklists were developed to collect information from different groups. Consent from each participant was obtained in written or verbally prior to the administration of any ethnographic tools.

### 2.1 Stakeholders, Survey Tools and Sample Size

The SWN team carried out the study in eight partner Municipalities of Province 1. The data collected are derived from FGD and KII events. The principal stakeholders with whom we spoke included:

- Stakeholder 1: Elected Representative of the Rural Municipality (Chairperson/Vice Chairperson)
- Stakeholder 2: GESI focal person from the Rural Municipality
- Stakeholder 3: Community leader of women from the Rural Municipality
- Stakeholder 4: Community leader of DAGs Rural Municipality
- Stakeholder 5: Women's Group
- Stakeholder 6: Disadvantaged Group
- Stakeholder 7: Private Sector
- Stakeholder 8: Banks

Stakeholder 9: CSOs

Stakeholders 10: Educational Institutions (Training Centres)

Stakeholders 11: Individual Expert

The range of tools, sample size, the target individuals and groups is summarised in Table 1. More information on the sample size, tools is presented in Annex 2.

Table 1: Stakeholder, Tools and Sample Size

Stakeholder	Tools	Sample Size
1. Stakeholder 1: Elected Representative of the Rural Municipality (Chairperson/Vice Chairperson)	KII	8
2. Stakeholder 2: GESI focal person from the Rural Municipality	KII	8
3. Stakeholder 3: Community leader of women from the Rural Municipality	KII	8
4. Stakeholder 4: Community leader of DAGs Rural Municipality	KII	8
5. Stakeholder 5: Women's Group	FGD	8
6. Stakeholder 6: Disadvantaged Group	FGD	8
7. Stakeholder 7: Private Sector	KII	5
8. Stakeholder 8: Banks	KII	2
9. Stakeholder 9: Training Centres	KII	2
10. Stakeholder 10: CSOs	KII	1
11. Individual Expert	KII	1

In total, the SWN carried out 32 KIIs out at the local government (LG) level, and had consultation meetings with 5 private sectors, 10 Finance Institutions and one training centre. Similarly, the team carried out 16 FGDs: one with all women's group and one with DAGs (both men and women) in each of the study areas.

## 2.2 The Identification of Participants

RERA had identified the participants for the survey based on their positions and the specific responsibilities in the study area. This selection process was followed for Government Representatives, Focal Persons concerning GESI and DAGs Representatives in the Municipalities. The private sector, CSOs, Training Centres and Financial Institutes were selected from the list provided by GIZ. FGDs were carried out with two groups—only women's group and a group of men and women representing the marginalised population. The FGD participants were selected in consultation with the Municipalities.

## 2.3 The Study Areas

Province 1 is located in eastern Nepal. Three specific geographical features dominate this province: the Himalayas in the north, the Hills in the middle and the Tarai in the south. The Province comprises 14 districts, and is illustrated in Figure 1.

The province stretches from the Tarai in the south to the Himalayas in the north. The Province flaunts two of the world's highest peaks - Mt. Everest (8848 m) and Mt. Kanchanjungha (8586 m). Other notable peaks are Lhotse (8516m), Makalu (8848m), Choyu (8201m), Nuptse (7555m) and Pumori

(7161m). The Province is widely acclaimed and reputed for its high potential as well as current level of production of quality tea, high value agriculture products such as ginger and cardamom, dairy industry, hydropower and tourism.

There are 44 constituencies spread over 25,905 sq. km of the Province. The mountainous region covers an area of 10,438 sq. km, the hills cover 10,749 sq. km and the Tarai extends over 4,718 sq. km. According to the 2011 census, there are around 4.5 million people in the province. It is estimated that this province is now home to about 5 million people. The Province is also ethnically diverse.

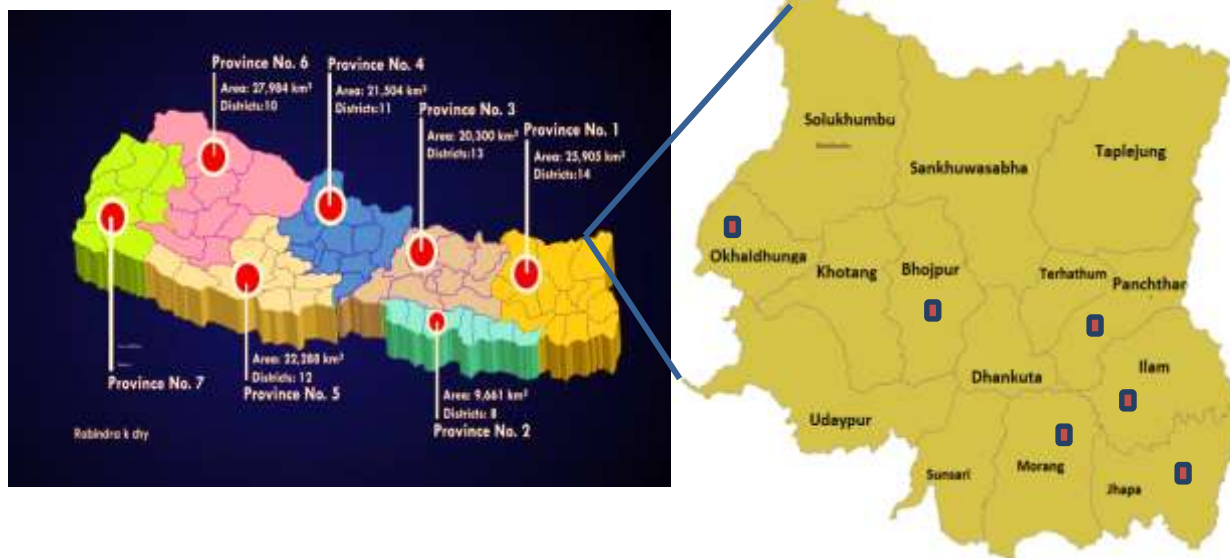


Figure 1: Map of Province 1 and Study Areas

Chhettris, 14.66% of the population, dominate the province, Rais make up for 11.32%, 11.2% are Brahmins and 8.04% are Limbus. About 74% of the people originate from the Hill region whereas 22.46% are Madhesis and 3.58% are Muslims.

RERA project is working in six of the districts: Morang, Jhapa, Panchthar, Ilam, Bhojpur and Okhaldhunga. The assessment specifically focussed on the following rural and urban municipalities.

- Amchowk RM and Hatuwagadi RM in Bhojpur
- Gaurigunj RM in Jhapa
- Mai M and Mansebung RM and in Ilam
- Jahada RM in Morang
- Manebhanjyang RM in Okhaldhunga
- Miklajung RM in Panchthar

Table 2 and Figure 1, respectively provide a picture of the population and diverse ethnicity in the study districts.

Table 2: Population Distribution by Gender and Household Size

District	Bhojpur Amchowk RM-	Bhojpur Hatuwagadi RM	Jhapa Gaurigunj	Morang Jahada	Ilam-Mai	Ilam Mansebung	Okhaldhunga-Manebhanjyang	Panchthar Milkajung RM

Household	3194	4,579	7,140	9,622	8,578	3,729	3,893	5,550
Total Population	16263	20,404	33,034	49,717	39,336	18,503	18,024	24,615
Male	7830	9,482	15,938	25,172	18,828	9,049	8,252	11,302
Female	8433	10,922	17,096	24,545	20,508	9,454	9,772	13,313
DAGs Population	1416	1938	8691	35017	3349	641	2649	1310
Average Household Size	5.06	4.45	4.63	5.12	4.58	4.92	4.64	4.45

Source: CBS 2011, Nepal

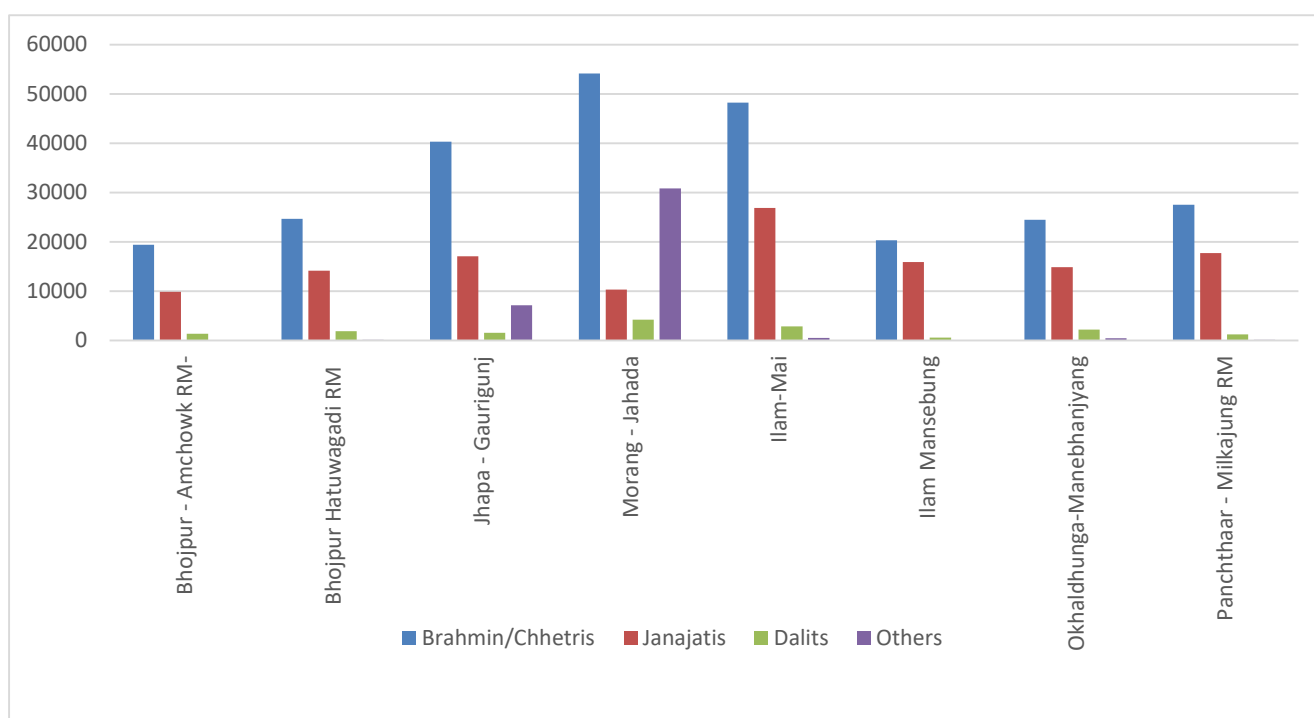


Figure 2: The distribution of Population by Gender in the Project Areas (Source: Based on CBS 2011)

### 3. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Key findings from the study are grouped and analysed into the following four different categories:

- National Provisions and Policy Areas
- KII with representatives from the local governments
- Focus group discussions with women's group and DAGs
- Consultative meetings with Private Sector, Financial Institutions and Training Centres

#### 3.1 National Provisions and Policy Areas

The Government of Nepal (GoN) has been promoting renewable energy technologies (RETs) since mid-90s. However, the aggressive promotion of RETs started only when the Government provided a subsidy for biogas in 1992 and Solar Home Systems (SHS) in off-grid areas in early 2000s. The objective behind the subsidy programs was to promote the adoption of clean energy by the poor (Government of Nepal, 2000).

With the promulgation of the new Constitution of Nepal in 2015, the nation has now further committed to creation of an equitable society based on proportional inclusiveness and participatory principles. These principles would preserve and promote unity among diversity, socio-cultural solidarity, tolerance and harmony. The constitution seeks to do so by internalising wide ranging characteristics of ethnicity, language, religion, culture and geography.

The Constitution ensures the citizens the economic equality, prosperity and social justice and specifically postulates the rights and social justice for women, marginalised groups including Dalit communities. It provides equal opportunities for political, social and economic opportunities for all. This commitment is further strengthened with the agenda on formation of Dalits Commission- "Dalit community shall have the right to preserve and develop their traditional occupation, knowledge, skill and technology". State is also committed to provide necessary skills and resources by prioritizing Dalits in the modern professions related to the traditional occupations of Dalits.

However, constitutional provisions are yet to be delivered in practice, and this also includes the energy sector. This has created even more gaps in policies, but these would be more evident only with further implementation of the current policy provisions.

Accordingly, the programmes such as RERA are designed to reflect the spirit and objectives of the constitution with provisions for women and the marginalised groups to engage and benefit for Renewable Energy sector activities.

Broadly, overall policy framework and key policy areas are briefly described below:

Subsidies as tools for improved access to RETs by the poor and marginalised communities

The Renewable Energy Subsidy Delivery Mechanism 2000 clearly stated that the goal of the subsidy policy is to provide clean and renewable energy to poor households of rural areas. Similarly, the Subsidy for Renewable (Rural) Energy Arrangement, 2006, clearly states that the rationale for the arrangement is to make the RETs delivery to the rural poor more effective. The subsidy policy was amended in 2009, 2013 and 2016. The 2009 policy has the same poverty agenda as in 2006 but the

Subsidy Policy for Renewable Energy, 2013, has the major focus of having RETs reach the rural poor households with the added aim of using the RETs as a means of poverty eradication, reducing drudgery and improving health. This focus has been reinstated in the Renewable Energy Subsidy policy 2016. These measures have been designed to reduce the upfront cost, to maximize service delivery and efficiency in the use of renewable energy resources and technologies in rural areas and to use these renewable energy solutions; creating rural employment and enhancing livelihood of rural people particularly households of single women, low income, natural disaster victims and socio-economically disadvantaged groups.

However, the initial costs for RETs continue to be prohibitive for the poor to access the RETs. Therefore, GoN developed some initiatives to achieve universal access to clean, reliable and affordable renewable energy solutions by 2030. The subsidy policy has been formulated with the objectives of reducing dependence on traditional and imported energy by increasing access to renewable energy for improving the livelihoods of people and create rural employment and enhancing livelihood of rural people particularly households from single women, low income, natural disaster victims and socio-economically disadvantaged groups.. Specific measures adopted to reduce upfront costs for this target group are:

- Subsidy is granted for RETs based on use, capacity, ownership and geographical location.<sup>7</sup>
- Subsidy for RETs to be provided to the least cost to energy output best available technology on the basis of technology type, cost and capacity, geographical location and targeted beneficiaries.
- Additional subsidy of Rs. 4,000 per household to be provided to “targeted beneficiary groups” for new mini/micro hydropower constructions and solar systems for productive use applications and for water lifting in case of solar;
- Additional 10% of the subsidy amount specified per biogas plant per household will be provided to the “targeted beneficiary groups”.
- No direct subsidy to be provided for the promotion of household mud improved cooking stoves. However, local bodies to be encouraged to provide financial support to install mud ICS to targeted beneficiaries like women-led households with dependent children, earthquake victims, endangered indigenous community identified by GoN.
- Additional subsidy amount of Rs. 1,000 per stove per household will be provided for the metallic improved cookstoves
- Subsidy amount of NRs. 10,000 is to be provided for each when they are operated by household to run enterprises
- Additional subsidy of up to 10% but not exceeding Rs. 10,000 have been declared for enterprises operated by households of the “targeted beneficiary groups”<sup>8</sup>

#### Promotion of GESI friendly practices

AEPC has made more focused and concerted efforts to integrate GESI friendly practices in its activities for both domestic and productive interventions with the following tools:

- user friendly GESI manuals,
- result based framework,
- disaggregated database
- gender budgeting and gender audit
- capacity building for its staff

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<sup>7</sup> AEPC, 2016, Renewable Energy Subsidy Policy, 2073 BS, Ministry of Population and Environment, GoN

<sup>8</sup> AEPC, 2016, Renewable Energy Subsidy Policy, 2073 BS, Ministry of Population and Environment, GoN, pg. 14

- capacity building for the beneficiaries for use as well as installation and operations training (barefoot engineering training was conducted for the first time during the National Rural Renewable Energy Program (NRREP) period)

This is reflected in the design of new projects and programmes with significant focus on improving the access and use of women and DAGs to energy in general, and RETs in particular.

Recently, AEPC has formulated a GESI policy. The policy has the following objectives:

- To ensure equal access to the benefits and opportunities related to renewable energy for women and the marginalised groups to improve livelihood and reduce dependency on traditional forms of energy
- To enhance the capacity of women and marginalised to participate in and take right decisions related to energy activities
- To help reduce discriminatory social norms that prevent women and the marginalised to access and use clean and modern energy technologies and promote appropriate mechanisms to access such opportunities

To achieve the above objectives, the policy adopts the following strategies:

- Access to financial support for women and marginalised groups
- Equal participation in energy related activities with equal wages
- Reduce initial investment to enable access to energy technologies and develop mechanisms for promoting its use by men women and the marginalised groups
- Develop appropriate mechanisms to distribute energy technologies in remote areas
- Develop appropriate means for informing men and women of different ethnicity about renewable energy and its access
- Encourage engagement of men and women across the energy project cycle
- Create enabling environment for accessing energy services
- Develop and implement measures to address effects of climate change and reduce the prevailing gender gaps
- Emphasis on the quality and appropriate documentation of mainstreaming GESI approach and report accordingly
- Educate relevant stakeholders on GESI approach and its implementation
- Adopt the use of disaggregated data in the monitoring and evaluation of projects and programs

However, what is critical is how these strategies are put into practice and monitored for results conforming to the set objectives. So, a range of limitations exist, including limited documents of achievements made in these areas. Information on participation of women and marginalised groups in local meetings, awareness programs and skill based trainings on energy activities and their ownership of energy systems is not currently available<sup>9</sup>.

Additionally, learning from on-going or completed projects are not either adequately captured, or when done, not widely shared among stakeholders and institutionalised across the related institutions both within and outside the Government. This also applies to limited number of studies that have been conducted in Nepal on impacts of energy systems, decision-making status and economic

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<sup>9</sup> The MIS system of AEPC was not operating at the time of this study.

empowerment of women and marginalised groups following introduction of energy interventions.

### 3.2 Key Informant Interviews

KII were carried out in an extensive manner covering a range of topics. Accordingly, qualitative information obtained from KII was analysed after categorising it into eight overarching themes as follows:

- A) Energy uses
- B) Access to energy systems
- C) Energy services
- D) Preferable choices
- E) Decision making
- F) Economy of women
- G) Participation/Engagement of women within the governance system.

Within each of the major areas, a number of sub-themes were assessed as well. Sub-themes are discussed within the presentation of each theme.

### 3.3 Overarching Discussion Themes

The KII events were highly informative and were able to collect information on a range of areas covering practical application of renewable energy, social and economic constraints and how productive and sustained access could be made possible for the women and DAG members.

The main points of the discussion with each key persons in the Municipalities are summarised below in Table 3.

Table 3: KII-Overarching Discussion Themes

RM Chairperson/Vice Chairperson	GESI Representatives	Representative of Women/ Different Ethnic group (DAGs)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Roles and responsibilities related to energy, its development and promotion</li> <li>2. Energy use pattern by purpose in the community</li> <li>3. Plans and budget of the RMs related to concerning energy access especially that of women (female headed households) and the DAGs</li> <li>4. Potential energy sources and plans of harnessing these source</li> <li>5. Issues related to energy service provider and plans of addressing the issues</li> <li>6. Availability of community buildings (schools, hospitals, telecommunications)</li> <li>7. Governance structure</li> <li>8. Technical skills, knowledge and services of RM related to</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Energy use pattern by purpose Productive/income generating activities and energy use in these activities</li> <li>2. Persisting challenges in terms of energy access, availability and challenges related to energy service and perceived solutions for addressing the challenges</li> <li>3. Perceived support required for addressing persisting issues related to energy access and energy services</li> <li>4. Engagement of DAGs within the governance activities and its effectiveness</li> <li>5. Energy access plans and programs targeting DAGS</li> <li>6. Migration and its implications on women and changes in their roles and responsibilities</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Specific GESI related activities, programs and provisions taken up by RM</li> <li>2. Economic empowerment activities for women and DAGs</li> <li>3. Challenges on energy access for women and DAGs</li> <li>4. Knowledge, Skills, practices associated with GESI approach to energy projects and programs</li> <li>5. Challenges and support required at the organisational level for addressing energy activities targeting women and DAGs</li> <li>6. Present and future agenda regarding energy and women annual plan</li> <li>7. Measures for ensuring that information reaches the target group</li> </ol>

<p>gender and social inclusion and energy</p> <p>9. Persisting challenges and support programs for women and DAGs with respect to energy access</p> <p>10. Migration and its implications on women</p>	<p>at the domestic and productive activities</p> <p>7. Information dissemination process regarding projects/programs/special provisions for women/DAGS</p> <p>8. Monitoring practices pertaining to access to information and support programs especially by women and DAGs</p>	<p>8. Status and practice related to women and DAGs participation in planning and designing annual activities, prevailing challenges and measures for encouraging their participation in these meetings</p> <p>9. Implication of male migration on women's workload/roles/responsibilities and adaptation measures in practice</p>
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### 3.4 Results from the Key Informant Interviews

#### 3.4.1 Roles and Responsibilities of the Rural Municipalities, Plans and Implementation Approaches

Rural Municipalities (RMs) are assigned with the following implementation responsibilities for the RE program:

- Annual planning
- Budget allocation, acquisition
- Facilitating access to clean energy for domestic, productive and community services
- Capacity building
- Policy formulation

It is generally understood by the Municipalities that the work is to be closely carried out in cooperation and coordination with the AEPC. All the Municipalities have developed energy plans for the current fiscal year while the implementation has been slowed down due to the absence of working norms.

For taking further the energy program, each Municipality has set up an energy task committee comprising 3-5 members of the elected representatives. They are at different stages of planning and have allocated budgets for needs assessment, project identifications, and development of energy profile to be taken up in this fiscal year. However, they are yet to proceed with operationalization of the energy activities. The evident enthusiasm associated with meeting the needs and programs of energy activities has not yet translated into priority for renewable energy growth. A review of the Municipality plans still demonstrate priority for roads, education, health and tourism, followed by energy, which is often more tilted towards grid electricity rather than renewables.

The need to promote access to energy is understood and commitment is demonstrated by all the Municipalities. The energy activities embrace both conventional as well renewable energy systems. However, the emphasis lies in increasing access to grid-electricity. According to Prem Kumar Rai, Chairperson, Hatuwagadhi, Bhojpur, *“Access to electricity is of prime importance especially for enterprise development as this leads to enhancing economic progress of the constituency.”* In the process of expanding energy access, connecting to the unreached areas is prioritised, especially in Mai, Jahada, Gaurigunj and Miklajung. There is also recognition that this goal can be achieved through the promotion of renewable energy.

#### 3.4.2 Energy Use

Across the study areas, biomass is commonly used for cooking. LPG is used in areas along the roadside. However, this is not the primary source for cooking. The range of energy used for cooking,

lighting and productive purposes is presented in Table 4.

In general, all the Municipalities highlighted the agreements to be finalised with GIZ's RERA Program. They strongly believed that the program would support them in formulation of activities related to renewable energy, some of which were cited as follows:

- Campaign for indoor air pollution (smoke)-free RM
- Constructing a hydropower together with neighbouring RM (Ekhuwa Khola project 3 MW)
- Expanding grid electricity and replacing wooden poles with metal/cement poles
- Formulating policies for enhancing energy access
- Implementation of "Ujyalo Gaun Abhiyan"
- Implementation of solar grid installation for lighting the streets
- Installing solar systems for lifting water for drinking/irrigation purposes

Table 4: Range of energy use by purpose/function

Municipalities	Energy Use					
	Cooking		Lighting		Productive	
	Women	DAGs	Women	DAGs	Women	DAGs
Amchowk RM	Firewood, LPG, bio gas	Firewood, LPG	Solar, Kerosene (backup), micro-hydro	SHS, Kerosene (backup)	Firewood, Solar, electricity (micro Hydro)	Firewood, coal,
Hatuwagadhi RM	Firewood, LPG, Biogas (not effective)	Firewood, LPG	Solar, Micro hydro and national, SHS,	Grid, Solar and Rasin (Khoto)	Electricity, firewood	
Mai M	Firewood, LPG, biogas	Fuelwood, LPG, Biogas, husk,	grid and solar	Solar, grid, kerosene	Solar, electricity	Coal, electricity, firewood
Mansebung RM	Firewood, LPG, biogas	Fuelwood, LPG, Biogas	Electricity (grid, peltric), solar,	peltric set, solar and firewood	Solar, electricity	Solar, fuelwood
Jahada RM	Firewood, agro-wastes and dung	Firewood, agro-wastes and dung	national grid, solar kerosene	Solar, kerosene	Electricity in very few shops by the roadside, firewood	Fuelwood, solar
Manebhanjyang RM	Firewood, LPG, biogas	Fuelwood, LPG	National Grid, Peltric Set, SHS, solar lantern and Micro Hydro	solar	peltric set, solar and firewood	LPG, diesel
Gaurigunj RM	Firewood, LPG, bio gas	Firewood, agro-wastes and dung	Electricity, solar, kerosene	Electricity, Solar, kerosene	Electricity, firewood, diesel	Electricity, solar
Miklajung RM	Firewood, LPG, biogas	Cooking: wood, LPG gas	Peltric set, solar, national	Solar, peltric, kerosene, candle	Solar, electricity, diesel,	solar

Source: Field Survey, SWN, 2018

### 3.4.3 Challenges encountered by women and DAGs

Participants cited a number of challenges during the consultations. When challenged, the participants felt constrained in accessing or using the RET due to a number of factors which are not always articulated well, but was felt nonetheless. These challenges and the group who felt them are classified by caste as well as by settlement as follows:

- Dalit community is most challenged in terms of energy access due to their poverty, their settlement is largely in wards 4,3,9,8 and 10 – Aamchowk RM, Bhojpur
- The whole community in wards 4,5,6,7 and 8 irrespective of their caste – Hatuwagadhi RM, Bhojpur
- The whole community in wards 4,5,6,7 and 8 irrespective of their caste – Mai M, Ilam
- The whole area is challenged due to hilly terrain and sparse and scattered settlement – Mangsebung RM, Ilam
- The whole area is challenged due to hilly terrain, sparse and scattered settlement and drying up of water sources – Manebhanjyang RM, Okhaldhunga
- The Gathagai and Sanyal community (Adivasi) and Rishidev community (Dalit) are most challenged in accessing education, government facilities and information related to energy services– Jahada RM, Morang
- Dalits felt most challenged in accessing energy services and related facilities provided by government– Gaurigunj RM, Jhapa
- The Dalits living further away from the market areas are all challenged in terms of energy access – Miklajung RM, Panchthar

### 3.4.4 Nature of challenges

The key challenges within the Rural Municipalities were poor understanding or absence of information on renewable energy and related technologies. This was felt to be the case for the decision makers as well as the general communities. Challenges specific to women were noted to be mainly due to:

- Low level of social awareness
- Low level of literacy and education
- Their participation is very less in social, political as well as income generating activities.
- Low budget allocated for women related programs and even less of it being used purposively

Women in the study areas were seen to be mainly engaged in household activities as is often the case across Nepal. The study noted a significant gap in the level of knowledge, exposure and access to economic activities between women and men, and this appeared to fuel social *misdemeanours* such as domestic violence, child marriage and dependency of women upon male members of the family etc. Interestingly, however, the division between female and male members was less pronounced within the Rai community.

The study noted changes and achievements made too. The women shared that the government policies in recent times have strongly encouraged and enabled the inclusion and participation of women local level planning processes as well as local programs. The change process has been slow, but the people believed that this will lead to more women taking up leading and decision making roles.

### 3.4.5 Some measures adopted by local government for addressing existing energy related challenges

The consultations highlighted areas on how the communities continually respond to and address the challenges in accessing energy with support from the local organisations and government. The study team noted the following measures that were being adopted across the Municipalities to overcome the continual challenges they encountered in accessing energy needs:

- Development of strategic master plans to address emerging challenges related to energy access and exercise accordingly for seeking necessary external support
- Allocation of budget, albeit limited and scattered, specific to energy projects and rehabilitation, repair and maintenance of existing energy systems
- Promotion of use of solar energy for lighting as well as lifting and pumping of water for drinking purposes
- Extension of the national grid line for lighting

The study additionally noted a number of approaches, activities and tools planned and designed by the Municipalities to support women and DAG in improving their access to renewable energy in general:

- Commitment to follow the GESI policies formulated at the national level.
- Promotion and support for women's empowerment activities and allocation of required budget for activities that would contribute to improving women health, promoted cooperatives and increase allowance to women health volunteers
- Spread awareness and encourage use among women on biogas and improved cookstoves.
- Support to promote solar pumping systems to meet drinking and irrigation water needs
- Formulate GESI friendly Policy and creation of Friendship Centre to mitigate child marriages, train on income generating activities such as sewing and dhaka making (a type of traditional cloth), and counselling parents against discrimination between girl and boy child and child marriage.
- Engage students in social development initiatives including those above.

### **3.4.6 Impact of Migration**

The study areas are also visibly impacted by migration taking place across the country. The consultations informed the study of significant increase in the rate of male migration for employment leading to both positive and impact on women. Some of role that the male carried in household (such as maintenance, income generation, social visits/networking etc.) and agriculture sector now shifted onto the shoulders of the already burdened women. On the other hand, women had more direct source of income, and families were now moving to urban areas leaving behind farm work and with improved access to grid-electricity, cooking gas, school, markets, services etc.

The overall impact was that the rural areas were less populated with reduced access to household help among the local inhabitants, lowered food production and overall setback for prosperity in the rural areas.

### **3.4.7 Access to Energy Services**

The access to services in provision of renewable energy was key element of KII discussions. In brief, the availability of services to enable improved access to RET in the Municipalities was as follows:

- In Amchowk RM, solar companies were not available while solar agents provided services. Users felt services were expensive despite subsidies mainly due to costs of transportation of goods.

- In Hatuwagadhi RM, NGOs and private shops provided services. NGOs and the Community Forest Users promoted ICS relying heavily on government programs. No longer active support. Nearly half a dozen private shops selling solar systems. Balankha, Ranitar, Bayang & Ghodetar are the nearest markets for this RM. General maintenance service of solar such as wiring and fitting were available. Battery too could be changed if it is damaged, but they were not aware about maintenance/repair services for the solar panels. Small energy items such as wires and bulbs too were available in these markets. However, for higher quality and capacity systems, they depended on markets in Dharan, Biratnagar and Beltaar.
- Mai Municipality did not have energy service providers. Few poorly equipped electricity shops were available. They relied on the markets in Birtamod, Itahari, Dharan and Damak.
- In Mansebung RM, they relied on markets in Damak and Biratnagar.
- In Manebhanjyang RM, Local solar shopkeepers cater to only SHS.
- Jahada RM depended on markets in Biratnagar for these services.
- Limited service providers in Gaurigunj RM who relied on services from Damak.
- Miklajung RM had service providers in Rabi Bazaar. Local shop owners accessed services through from the markets in Birtamod and Biratnagar. Service notice period up to 3-4 days.

#### **3.4.8 Access of Energy for Community Services**

RMs informed the study team that they have taken initiatives to provide health centres and schools in Amchowk with solar energy and informed that they would continue this effort. The communication network towers were also noted to be operated using solar energy.

The public health centres in Hatuwagadhi RM were electrified a year ago. Other health posts and schools had solar panels which was mostly used for lighting purpose. However, in all these cases, regular power supply remained a major bottleneck.

Most government offices in Mai municipality have electricity. There are plans for electrifying all schools and health posts within a year. The electrification plan uses solar systems. About 30 percent of the schools were electrified by the national grid while others have solar systems. Health posts had mix use of national grid and solar systems, but were still not regular.

Most schools in Manebhanjyang RM are not electrified. Some had dysfunctional solar systems. A solar system had been set up to power Nepal Telecom tower.

Similarly, most of the schools and health facilities in Jahada RM had mixed solar and grid based supply. For irrigation purpose, diesel continued to be in use for operating pumps. A limited number of these pumps operated on the national grid.

In Miklajung RM, schools, hospital and telecommunication used solar energy.

#### **3.4.9 Composition of the Governing Body**

The formation of the Governing Body (GB) in the Municipalities has been influenced by the national norms which requires the representation of men, women and marginalised groups. Table 5 presents a picture of the existing GB in each of the Municipalities.

Table 5: Composition of the Governing Body in different RMs

Municipalities	Number of elected members in the LG	Presence of women members in the LG	% of women members in the LG	Presence of Dalit members in the LG	% of Dalit members in the LG
Amchowk RM	55	24	44%	12	22%
Hatuwagadhi RM	46	20	43%	10	22%
Mai M	52	21	40%	14	27%
Mansebung RM	34	14	41%	9	26%
Jahada RM	34	15	44%	7	21%
Manebhanjyang RM	49	19	39%	10	20%
Gaurigunj RM	34	13	38%	16	47%
Miklajung RM	42	17	40%	9	21%

#### 3.4.10 Access to Technical Staff

Reliable access to technical skills through technical staff is a prerequisite for effective implementation of any technology based project interventions. According to the organisational structure for Local Governments, each Municipality has provision for engineers, sub engineers, agriculture technical assistant and health workers. Besides, they have provisions and plans on deputing staff for RETs in the near future.

In overall, how prepared a Municipality is in providing energy services to its citizens is important. The indicators for preparedness of the Municipalities to undertake energy activities are mainly the number of technical staff (employed and currently in place), status of energy planning, budget allocation and prioritised provision for female headed households and Dalits.

A number of priorities, plans and initiatives in provision of energy by the RM are in place. For example, four RMs emphasised on the connection of grid electricity, three were open to promoting RETs. In Miklajung RM, the Vice Chairperson informed that they were working on installing grid line; poles were already erected, wires were extended; wind turbines generating 20 KW and solar panels generating 50 KW were already in place. Plans were to supply electricity on pre-paid basis to the community and a nearby tea factory. Though this RM has budgeted for energy provisions, the first priority has been on improving road access, and to be followed by RET works.

Details of existing status on energy related activities are presented in Table 6. This clearly demonstrates that the Municipalities were at different stages of operationalization of the Energy Sub-Committee.

Table 6: Outlay of Preparedness for Energy Activities

RM	Technical Staff	Energy Officer/Technical staff	Energy Programs for the present Fiscal Year	Budget Allocated for Energy Programs (present Fiscal Year) – NRs	Support for Female headed HH and Dalits
Amchowk	Total technical staff - 7 , 3 female JTAs	To be deputed soon	ICS promotion & MHP.	3 million	None to date as they are still working on working policies
Hatuwagadhi	Total technical staff - 12 , 2 female JTAs	To be deputed soon	for upgradation of distribution poles and expansion of grid electricity	0.2 million in each electrified wards; 0.4 million in non-electrified wards	None to date as they are still working on working policies
Mai	Total technical staff - 18 , 3 female JTAs	To be deputed soon	Promoting improved stove, biogas, solar energy, street lamps, lifting system, etc. and expanding grid electricity	20 million for RETs 100 million for grid electricity	None to date as they are still working on working policies
Mansebung	Total technical staff - 3 , no female	To be deputed soon	Extension of grid electricity	1.5 to 2 million	None to date as they are still working on working policies
Jahada	Total technical staff - 3 , 1 female JTA	To be deputed soon	Extension of grid electricity	10 million	None to date as they are still working on working policies
Manebhanjyang	Total technical staff - 7 , no female	To be deputed soon	Construction of Power House and training of technical staff	0.6 million	Plans to provide solar for poor and Dalits of the community but no policy for this has been made yet
Gaurigunj	Total technical staff - 3 , 1 female JTA	To be deputed soon	Promotion of RETs	4 million	None to date as they are still working on working policies
Miklajung	Total technical staff - 10 , 7 JTAs	To be deputed soon	No idea	Not aware	Plans to support through subsidy

### 3.5 Focus Group Discussions

Qualitative data derived from FGD has been categorised into seven overarching thematic areas along with sub-themes as below. The themes reflect the prevailing situation of the Municipalities in relation to gender and other disadvantaged groups.

#### i. Energy uses

- ii. Access to energy systems
- iii. Energy services
- iv. Preferred energy systems
- v. Engagement in decision making process
- vi. Economic activities performed by women and DAGs
- vii. Ownership of enterprises by women and DAGS
- viii. Participation/Engagement of women within the governance system

The specific themes relevant to the stakeholders are presented in Table 7.

The full FGD checklist is given in Annex 3.

### 3.6 Results: Focus Group Discussions

#### 3.6.1 Energy Use

Firewood was commonly used for cooking while there is notable increase in recent years in the use of solar for lighting. Only Mai municipality reported that the use of electricity was also being used for washing machines and pumping water. Elsewhere, electricity was used for watching TV, operating radio, charging mobiles and limited number of people used electricity for operating rice cookers and grinders. In some households, they use kerosene and resinous twigs for lighting. Electricity and diesel were used especially for running mills.

Table 7 8 illustrates key issues in energy access by use as reported in the FGD with women groups.

Table 7: Summary of the Discussions with Women's Groups

Municipalities	Access to Energy systems			Use of Electricity for operating Appliances
	Domestic Uses	Lighting	Productive Uses	
Amchowk RM	Firewood, biogas, LPG	Electricity (micro-hydro, solar)	Fuelwood, electricity	TV, radio, charging mobile phones
Hatuwagadi RM	Firewood, LPG, not sure about biogas	Electricity (grid, micro-hydro, solar)	Fuelwood, electricity	Phone, TV, Heater, Water boiler, rice cooker, mixture
Mai M	In Market area mostly LPG gas followed by firewood whereas in village area firewood followed by bio-gas.	Mostly main grid line, solar is also used in same proportion	Electricity and solar	TV, computer, rice cooker, oven, washing machine, water motor, mill, ironing,
Mansebung RM	Firewood, LPG	Electricity (grid, micro-hydro, solar)	Electricity and solar	radio, TV, mobile charger, grinders in hotel and iron for ironing the clothes in the tailors
Jahada RM	Agro wastes and animal dung, firewood	Electricity (grid and solar) and kerosene	Electricity, fuelwood	Television, Mobile Chargers, Water pumps
Manebhanjyang RM	LPG, Firewood and Biogas are the main sources of fuel for cooking.	Electricity (National Grid, Peltric Set, SHS, solar and	Electricity peltric set, solar) and firewood	Television, Mobile Chargers

		Micro Hydro) kerosene.		
Gaurigunj RM	Firewood, coal, biogas	Electricity (grid and solar)	Electricity, diesel	Refrigerator, TV, Mobile Charger, Grinders, Rice Cooker, Water pumps
Miklajung RM	Firewood, LPG gas, biogas.	Electricity (peltric and solar)	Coal, diesel, electricity (solar and peltric set) and fuelwood	Radio, TV, Mobile Charger

Similarly, the key points that were reflected in the FGDs with marginalised groups is summarised in Table 8 below:

Table 8: Summary of the Discussions with Marginalised Groups

RMs	Access to Energy systems			Use of Electricity for operating Appliances
	Domestic Uses	Lighting	Productive Uses	
Amchowk	Firewood	Solar	Coal, firewood	Mobile phones & radio
Hatuwagadhi	Firewood, LPG	National grid and solar, resinous twig	Firewood and coal	Mobile phones, mixture, television
Mai	Firewood, LPG, husk,	Electricity (grid and solar), kerosene	Coal, firewood, electricity	Radio, Mobile, Television
Mansebung	Firewood, LPG, biogas	Electricity (grid and solar), kerosene	Electricity (grid and Solar, firewood	Radio, Mobile, Television
Jahada	Agro waste, firewood and dung	Electricity, kerosene	Firewood	
Manebhanjyang	Firewood, LPG, biogas	Electricity (grid, solar and peltric), kerosene	LPG, diesel	TV
Gaurigunj				Mobile phones, mixture, television
Miklajung	Firewood, LPG,	Solar and kerosene		

### 3.6.2 Energy Sources

Firewood is collected from community forests as well as purchased. Women spent between one to four hours in collecting fuelwood. While in Jahada and Gaurigunj RMs, women also spent time in preparing *quintha* (dried sticks of animal dung and agro waste). This was prepared as and when necessary or even prepared in quantity and stacked for later use. A bundle of fuelwood weighing 25-30 Kg (*Bhar*) sufficed for only a day. This amount would cost between NRs. 120-200 depending upon the size (twigs or otherwise) and quality. The use of firewood was reported to have implications on health and time which then prevented the women and the marginalised groups tapping on economic

It takes about 4 hours to bring firewood at one go. Some people bought the firewood from those who brought it from the forest. This whole bunch costs Rs. 200 - Rs. 250

*DAGs FGD in Mai*

opportunities and education. Eye irritation, headache, back pain, chest pain and cough were some health problems that were commonly listed. In case of Jahada RM, they also reported the prolapses of the uterus.

Firewood is used in most of the cases. There is a practice of using LPG as well but it is used only in emergency cases and other condition like for preparing snacks and soft light items. Some people even use coal for cooking

*DAGs FGD in Mansebung*

LPG was not easily available. Mai reported that LPG was available only once a week, during the weekly market. One often had to go to bigger markets for the initial installation as well as to refill. It was expensive too hence the use was limited to preparation of limited dishes. The initial cost of the LPG system was between NRs. 5000 and 6500 and that of the refill around NRs. 2000. Depending on the quantity used, the cylinder was refilled only 2 to 4 times a year. However, incidents of refilling after 18-24 months were also reported.

All works are doing manually and it takes more time. We are unable to provide services on time. We are spending more time for collecting firewood.

*DAGs FGD in Amchowk*

A limited number of households were using biogas in Mai and Gaurigunj. Improved cook stoves and biogas were provided by different organisations as reported by both the women and the marginalised groups

Electricity in the form of grid, solar or even mini-micro hydro was reported. A monthly tariff of grid electricity ranged between NRs. 100 and 500 while that for micro-hydro was NRs. 200. Investments in case of solar ranged between NRs. 3000 and 25000.

Responding to choice of fuel for cooking and its prioritisation, first on the list was LPG followed by biogas, electricity and fuelwood. Across the Municipalities electricity was the most preferred energy for lighting.

### 3.6.3 Access to Energy Services

Discussions on access to energy services included access to knowledge on available systems, system installations, availability of hardware of the energy systems, their accessories and post project services including maintenance. Some widely held views on the above were as follows:

*Installation services* – for the installation of systems such as biogas, dependence on the companies from the nearest district headquarters as well as those in the neighbouring districts (biogas) was common. For solar installations were also carried out locally available technicians.

*Hardware* – solar panels for home systems were available in the local market as well. This differed from municipality to municipality. For other technologies, the users had to depend on nearby markets or even companies available in the district headquarters.

*Accessories* - spare parts were not easily available and the users had to travel to the larger markets in the district for elements when replacements were required. This was true in case of battery replacement as well.

*Post project services* – due to absence of qualified technicians for micro-hydro, water wheels (*ghattas*) and biogas, the users depended on companies who had installed the systems. In case of solar systems, local electricians were contacted for repair. The local market also provided services like distilled water for batteries; maintenance of solar system, repair of mobiles etc. However, there were none other necessary energy service providers- private nor public.

### **3.6.4 Drudgery levels**

Common outcome from the use of firewood was continued drudgery for women (in addition to the impact on environment). The participants suffered from burning of eye, cough and asthma. They also attributed the cause of uterus prolapses to the drudgery of having to collect fuelwood and water from long distances. This was deeply felt by the study team when the team members saw a woman with a load of fuelwood and fodder lying unconscious by the highway.

Biogas was available in Gaurigunj but not in the other Municipalities. However, the users had bad experience with biogas and the communities were disinterested to install more, largely due to their dissatisfaction the existing systems and associated with poor backstopping services. They also had little or no idea of economic and social benefits of using clean energy technologies nor knew of any comparative cost advantages of using biogas or other renewable energy systems.

### **3.6.5 Engagement in decision making processes (or being heard seriously)**

The discussions showed that the participation or engagement in decision making was contextual or depended on which purpose the voice was made. More specifically, women felt that the following scenario was applicable:

- On daily house needs - women took independent decisions
- On children's education - joint decision was more common
- On productive activities (shop, agriculture) - final decisions were made by men
- On sale and purchase of high assets such as house and land - decisions lay with men

Mostly men made domestic and economic decisions.

However, women also expressed that decision making roles are changing. A number of women said "We are also involved in making decisions. We consult men in the process, even if they are away from home, but we make the decisions here". This trend was rising partly due to the large scale male migration for employment and partly with growing assumption of responsibilities locally by women.

Interestingly, this change in role did not extend widely to activities related to RETs. This was because these women have low level of knowledge of the RE technologies and were afraid to take a risk in an area of high investment and complexities. Here they considered that the decisions should be done in the presence of the male counterparts.

### **3.6.6 Economic Activities Performed by Women and DAGs**

Across the Municipalities women were largely engaged in agriculture, animal rearing and vegetable farming. However, these activities were mainly livelihood activities rather than enterprises.

Income generated activities of women and DAGs and the energy requirements are presented in Table 9:

Table 9: Results of FGD with Women and DAGs

Municipalities	Economic activities of women	Economic activities of DAGs	Energy used for productive activities	Potential economic activities related to energy	Energy needs for women and DAGs
Amchowk RM	Running businesses like small eateries, poultry farms, vegetable farming, tailoring	Agriculture livestock	Firewood, coal, LPG	Furniture factories, biscuit factory, rice mills, electrician	water pumping for drinking and irrigation purposes, ICS for cooking food, more MHPs for continuous energy supply for HH
Hatuwagadhi RM	Agriculture, animal husbandry, poultry farms	Agriculture and livestock	Firewood, coal, LPG	Electrician, furniture factories,	Technicians for repair and maintenance of energy products, water pumping for drinking and irrigation purposes, energy service providers in the locality, ICS and solar for cooking,
Mai M	Mills, bakery, poultry farm, <i>Dhaka</i> weaving,	Brewing alcohol, tailoring	Solar, national grid line, firewood, LPG	Mushroom production, processing centre (turmeric, ginger, banana)	Subsidies or financial supports for Dalits and disabled groups for acquiring energy technologies, technicians for solar plant, biogas plants repair and maintenance, training on productive use of RETs
Mansebung RM	Local eateries, beauty parlour, cottage cheese processing, <i>Dhaka</i> weaving, tailoring	Agriculture livestock tailoring	Solar, peltric set, LPG, firewood, grid line	Ginger processing, cottage cheese processing, water lifting, commercial agriculture, small scale enterprises for making soaps, sweets, <i>churpi</i>	Repairing of solar appliances, water lifting for drinking and irrigation purpose

Jahada RM	Retail shops, farming, Making puffed rice,	Farming	Firewood, national grid line	Eateries, vegetable processing	Energy service providers in RM including technicians , installation of ICS (domestic and commercial use) and solar for lighting and water pumping
Manebhanjyang RM	Poultry farm, mills, small grocery shops	Farming and livestock	Solar, firewood, peltric set	Furniture factory, poultry farm, grinding mill, jewellery making, metals and grill industry, printing press	Energy service providers in RM including technicians installation of ICS (domestic and commercial use) and solar for lighting and water pumping
Gaurigunj RM	Livestock, Vegetables farming, Grocery store, Tailoring, Beauty parlour, Teaching	Livestock, Agriculture Vegetables farming, Tailoring	National grid line, diesel	Poultry farming, Carpentry, Mill, Stationary (photo copy)	Energy service providers in RM including technicians installation of ICS (domestic and commercial use) and solar for lighting and water pumping
Miklajung RM	Labour in tea plantations, Livestock, Vegetables farming, Grocery store, Tailoring, Beauty parlour, Banking sector, Teacher, Agricultural junior technical assistant, Farmer, Kiwi farmer	Tailoring, Livestock, Farming, Labour in tea plantations	Peltric set, solar, coal, LPG, firewood	Poultry farming, commercial agricultural farming, making chowmein	Cold stores for larger kiwi farming, -specifically mentioned during the FGD

### **3.6.7 Assets Ownership and Decision making – Women and DAGs**

Women were primarily engaged in farming, including horticulture, and livestock rearing. They were also involved in family run eateries, hotels and shops. Key considerations here is on sharing and even control over the income.

Women reported that they hardly owned any land, house or had bank accounts. But there was an increase in women's participation in group savings and their number and frequency was on the rise. This saving allowed women to take limited loans. But for larger loan amounts, they were required to get permission of their husbands. Men had control over all issues related to assets - house, land, other property, saving, etc. The society did not take the matter affirmatively when women were independently making decisions. However, a number of women also reported that they made joint decisions while spending money. They mentioned it is increasingly necessary and common for men to discuss with their wives or mothers in matters related to investing on education of their children, buying large furniture, processing for foreign employment, starting a business etc. This marks an increase in women's participation in decision making within households. Men can get their way even if other family members do not agree. But this would not be the case for women. They bear serious consequences if they go against her husband or father.

### **3.6.8 Access to Information**

The access to information on RETs as well as development activities in the community was truly limiting. The women univocally stated that *'they have no proper knowledge or information on RETs. Their source of information is only verbal information through friends and neighbors'*

Municipalities claim that information is forwarded to each ward offices and from the ward offices, the information is passed on to the community through phones or by person. Use of radio was also reported to convey information in some cases. Women from the community have formed groups for social and financial purposes. In most places, these groups were sources of information on different issues and they were seen to be active with respect to energy programs as well. These groups have managed to bring about drinking water projects and free health check-ups program in the past.

Another source is the community based groups such as forest users community group, drinking water community groups, etc. which conduct regular meetings. During such meetings, information is passed out with ease among the members then on to the community members, mostly verbally.

### **3.6.9 Energy governance/ Participatory planning**

Federal governance structure is designed to promote participation of women and DAGs. Accordingly, specific seats are designated for women and DAGs in Municipality as well as ward levels. The LG body is more inclusive and has provided a platform for disadvantaged groups to voice and make their opinions heard at the decision making level.

However, women still feel overpowered by men and have very limited role to play even for those who are in different leadership positions. A women vice chairperson of Miklajung RM feels that it is ultimately Chairperson's decisions that matters in carrying forward certain plans despite other meaningful ideas proposed in the meetings. Further, she was saddened by the fact that her efforts to motivate other elected female members in the governing body to raise their voices was has not been successful so far.

In Jahada RM, women did participate in the annual planning meetings in previous years. However,

their voice or views were not on energy related matters. They expressed that women and marginalised groups at least attended the ward level meetings last year, but this year they were not a part of such meetings. As a consequence, they have even low level of awareness of programs and plans laid out for them for this year.

### **3.6.10 Challenges**

Key challenges of women and DAGs expressed in the FGD has been assessed under four specific categories:

#### **1. Political:**

##### ***Women***

- Local Government not very supportive;
- Need for committed long term energy planning necessary
- Despite women's representation in the municipalities women's issues are not addressed in time
- There are few elected women representing in planning process and in user or working groups
- Effective participation of women is lacking as only limited persons have access to information of the municipality related to any development activities and the support available for these
- Only few programs are conducted focusing on energy sources where only male members tend to participate.
- Female representatives are present in the government but do not have the capacity to influence decisions
- Not aware of any meeting being held regarding energy planning
- Local Government encourages women to attend all development activities on an equal basis is observed only in Mai RM

##### ***DAGs***

- Not informed about any energy plans and programs in the community
- Especial DAGs focused programs take place; voices are heard but not acted on
- There are representatives of DAGs but their opinions are ignored.
- Except elected female representatives no local women participate in meeting as women being involved in household works, can't travel alone & mainly energy stake holders haven't called us till today.
- Do not participate in local planning
- Representation mandatory but not effective
- DAGs representatives not included in energy committees within the municipality

#### **2. Technical**

##### ***Women***

- Very little knowledge about RETs
- RETs are expensive, not accessible and not available within the community
- Women do not have knowledge about domestic and productive uses of RETs
- Lack of service providers for RETs installation, repair and maintenance which challenges the sustainable use of technologies
- Technical services not available in time, hence reluctant to adopt technologies
- No access to information about government's plans and programs related to any development activities
- Low knowledge of RETS

### **DAGs**

- No knowledge about RETs
- Affordability major constraint to accessing even cook stoves
- Available energy-grid and off grid – not reliable
- Technical services not available in time, hence reluctant to adopt technologies
- Low priority given by the family members for cleaner cooking solutions due to free availability of fuelwood

## **3. Socio-cultural**

### **Women**

- Less restriction on women's mobility
- With male-migration for employment workload on women increased
- Domestic responsibilities remains a constraint for effective participation in development activities
- Decision making remains in the hands of men
- Need for awareness programs and need for capacity building
- Men always take superior position in taking decision on family and community matters;
- Women's groups help build confidence
- No recognition by communities and institutes of women's capabilities
- Inability to convince local government

### **DAGs**

- Discrimination is less within communities
- Limited opportunities for funds, trainings and initiation of income generation activities
- Existing stereotypical patriarchal society, males still have the sole decision making power
- Not able to take initiatives due to low economy
- Low education and no understanding of procedures for accessing information, technology and support measures

## **4. Financial**

### **Women**

- Financial decisions still in the hands of the men
- Women friendly loan schemes available even without collateral
- Depends more on savings and credit schemes, collateral a constraint for larger loans; especial loan programs also available for women, but is a problem in Manebhanjyang and Mansebung
- Micro Finance Institutions in the community such as Jeevan Bikash, Forward, etc. which provide loans for up to 1 Lakh under group guarantee.
- Loans available from local FIs not aware of special provisions in case of Mikhlajung
- Local government providing support for ICS

### **DAGs**

- Financial constraints of individual households
- No knowledge about special schemes for DAGs
- Select financial institution present in the community providing loan at reduced interest rate without collateral except in in Manebhanjyang and Mansebung
- No financial institutes in the community providing loan in a DAG friendly manner except in Gaurigunj

### **3.6.11 Perspectives and technology choices**

The survey participants were requested for their perspectives with respect to present energy use, energy services, preferred energy and forward actions necessary for enable the use of clean energy for livelihood improvement.

Some of the perspectives of women on energy and related actions are:

On the present energy use

- Not satisfied with present energy in use both for cooking and lighting
- Energy is not sufficient.
- Available ICS not sufficient for cooking for large number

#### ***Available services***

- Available services are not sufficient nor reliable-
- Need for local service providers
- RETs to be made available within the community

#### ***Preferable Energy***

- National Grid line for lighting and LPG or biogas for cooking daily meals
- Solar system for water lifting purpose, it would be much better for irrigation and drinking purpose

#### ***Forward Actions***

- Need for energy for fostering productive and entrepreneurial activities
- Need for skill for general maintenance,
- Need for awareness on RETs
- Need to have women's representatives in the Energy Sub- Committee
- Some work on ICS & bio-gas with a subsidy

Some of the perspectives of DAGs on energy and related actions are

On the present energy use

- Not satisfied with present energy in use both for cooking and lighting
- Need more dependable and affordable energy for cooking and lighting

#### ***Available services***

- Available services are not sufficient nor reliable-
- Need for local service providers
- RETs to be made more easily available

#### ***Preferable Energy***

- National Grid line for lighting and LPG or biogas for cooking daily meals
- Energy for easing occupation

#### ***Forward Actions***

- Energy Committee should be formed at the municipality level and women and DAGs should be appointed in lead roles.

- Provide solar and MHP for meeting multiple energy needs of small settlements
- Energy service providers should be available at the municipality level
- Subsidy should be provided for RETs
- Awareness on RETs
- Training and energy for income generating activities.
- Training on energy related activities

### **3.7 Consultative Meeting**

A series of consultations were conducted with individuals and organisations providing technical, financial and skill development services. Their selections were based on legality of their existence and the recognition of their services in the sector.

The discussions were related to:

- Types of services
- Experiences and area of service (coverage)
- Special provision for women and marginalized groups
- Challenges and suggestions in overcoming them

### **3.8 Results from Consultative Meeting**

#### **3.8.1 NGO: Namsaling Community Development. Centre (NCDC)**

This non-profit organization registered in District Administration Office, Ilam and the Social Welfare Council. Previously, they were engaged in the Village Development Committee's periodic planning for renewable energy. Renewable energy remains their main focus areas and continue to operate in 16 districts including the Tarai. After the earthquake, they have expanded their work in Dolakha, Dang and Dhading on environment and agriculture issues.

This organisation also works on gender and social inclusion aspects of energy especially for Micro Hydro Projects. They ensure inclusion of women in micro hydro committee, train them as operators and make provisions for using energy generated for their practical and economic uses. Making these agendas mandatory within the project is one approach.

Challenges for women lie in the economic status. This is the main barrier and they also lack adequate facilities in terms of access to technology and finance. Besides, they have very little knowledge about availability and usability of technologies. This is further escalated by the fact that they are unable to make demands for energy for any purpose. Government policy must encourage adequate financing for renewable energy activities especially for the women.

As CSO, they principally act as a bridge between the targeted group and the government. They continue to participate in the annual planning meetings and advocate for allocating funds for energy sector. Their engagement also includes advocacy for extension of electricity for lighting, road expansion and water supply for local people.

#### **3.8.2 Private Sector**

Under this category, the respondents were private sectors engaged in different activities related to RETs such as provision of technology, implementation, feasibility assessment etc. The respondents included:

- Pathivara Gobar Gas company, Ilam

- Lok Kalyan Gobar Gas Pvt. Ltd, Birtamod
- Dipjyoti Sourya Urja Pvt. Ltd., Jhapa
- Krishna Grill & Engineering Works Pvt. Ltd., Biratnagar, Morang
- Munal Biogas Nirman Tatha Urja Bikash Company Pvt. Ltd., Damak, Jhapa

These companies have worked closely with the Alternative energy Promotion Centre (AEPC) in the promotion of RETs. Their target group and the provision of support to these groups have also been aligned with the policies of AEPC. Technologies have been promoted to meet energy need for cooking and lighting but very little for economic activities. In recent years, these companies have also been involved in the promotion of RETs for irrigation, operation of communication and institutional systems.

The private sector considers the challenges of promoting RETs for women and the poor to be:

- Lack of education
- Lack of awareness about the use of RETs
- Financial constraints
- Geographical variance which increase the installation cost
- Low participation of women in activities related to any RETs activities
- The insertion-removal of subsidy policies

Survey respondents believed it was an advantage to be working in coordination with the local government agencies, local NGOs and INGOs in the past. They hope that similar support and coordination opportunities with the government will continue.

The subsidy policy and its operationalization procedures have had varying implications on the market affecting the business at large. Though subsidy is important for increasing the affordability of the marginalised groups, the private sector seeks a finance policy that creates a win-win environment for the users as well as the private sector.

### **3.8.3 Financial Institutions**

The following finance institutes were approached for consultation:

- Mahuli Samudayik Laghubitta Bittiya Sastha Ltd, Amchowk, Bhojpur
- Siddhartha Bank Ltd, Amchowk, Bhojpur
- Jaribute Cooperative Pvt. Ltd. Miklajung, Panchthar
- Jeevan Bikas Samaj, Morang
- Gramin Bikash Bank, Morang

These institutes vary in their entity, coverage area and service delivery mechanisms. To date, their principal activities have been

- Providing loans to group members between NRs 50,000 to 300,000 without collateral.
- Reduced interest rate on loan packages for enterprises
- Loan products such as education, foreign employment, RETs, agriculture, home and land and emergency loans - accidents, and natural calamities
- Conducting finance-education focusing on importance of loan, income generation
- Helping create product and market linkages
- Conduct periodic meetings (weekly, monthly) and discussions on the relevant ideas
- Provide door-to-door service for collecting savings, deposit it, and even provide on-the-spot-loans
- provide leadership trainings to the women
- create matching loans based on affordability of the people
- Create and disburse group loans thereby promoting economic activities

Some challenges specific to finance were:

- Inability to fulfil high demand of loan
- Managing and monitoring loans that were not used for the declared purpose
- Lack of corporate culture
- Poor economic condition and few income generating activities.
- Repayment pay of loan not in time
- Lack of energy and proper road access inhibiting market access and hence the productive activities
- Loan duplication from multiple micro finance companies

According to the respondents some specific challenges of working on gender, poor and marginalised groups were related to:

- Providing information
- Convincing the potential clients
- Extensive travel requirement for collecting loans
- Inability to attend meetings
- Economic condition and low level of savings and investment
- Control over loan by men, often women bears the loan but control lies with the husbands

Table 10: Summary of activities of the Financial Institutes (FIs) relevant to Women and the Marginalised Groups

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Mahuli Samudayik Laghubitta Bittiya Sastha Ltd</b>	<b>Siddhartha Bank Ltd</b>	<b>Jaribute Cooperative Pvt. Ltd.</b>	<b>Jeevan Bikas Samaj</b>	<b>Grameen Bikash Bank</b>
<b>Type of FI</b>	Micro Finance	Commercial Bank	Cooperative	Cooperative	Micro Finance/Bank\
<b>Legalities</b>	Legally registered in 2051 at Saptari	Legally opened and following directives of NRB	established in 2057 B.S.	established in 2054 B.S.	Legally registered as a single corporate in 2071/04/30.
<b>Coverage Area</b>	35 branches in 15 districts ; Total of 550 female members	Covers Amchowk RM. Total 3000 female Members.	8 wards in Miklajung RM and 3-4 wards in Ilam	7 districts: Morang, Sunsari, Jhapa, Dhankuta, Udaypur and Sindhuli	5 regional offices in total, Biratnagar has 42 branches.
<b>Finance Service for:</b>	Multiple purpose including RETs	Enterprise promotion	RETs, livelihood activities and livestock, agriculture	Multiple including RETs	Multiple including RETs
<b>About work specific to energy women</b>	Nearly 4 crores loan provided in all sectors including RETs.	No special program for energy promotion but can make provision as per demand by coordinating with central office and other organizations.	loan provided for peltric sets and household solar systems	Working on promotion of gratifier stoves.	In 42 branches of Biratnagar regional office, 46724 Female members and 36864 total loanees Concessional loan provided to women for RETs
<b>Special support for women and the Dalit</b>	Discounted Loan (2%) on loan for Dalit and marginalized people	No special provision but we have loan schemes for enterprise promotion.	No specific programs for DAGs and women.	99% of beneficiaries are women. Built shelters for single women. Re-build and renovate schools, temples, society cleanliness and forestation programs. Provide scholarship to children from DAGs Provided loan for bio gas plant installation.	Supporting women, every branch provides awareness trainings to economically poor women regarding family planning, hygiene,  No specific programs or subsidies for supporting the disadvantaged groups.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

The comprehensive level of findings derived from the KII and FGD interactions and consultations have been noted in the earlier section. The analysis of the findings is presented below:

### A. *Policies and Programs:*

The new constitution of the country emphasis on recognition and respecting rights of women and the marginalised groups. It emphasis on the need for ensuing representation of women and marginalised groups at various levels of the government structure and their participation in development activities. Creating environment for ensuring the citizens economic equality, prosperity and social justice and specifically postulates the rights and social justice for women, marginalised groups including Dalit communities. It promulgates the need to provide equal opportunities for political, social and economic opportunities for all.

The renewable energy sector has adopted various means for addressing prevailing issues of women and the marginalised groups. Considering them as the “target group” of their initiatives, AEPC has formulated a more GESI friendly subsidy policy to overcome upfront investment challenges. It has developed framework for implementing activities reduce the drudgery of women and dependency on biomass.

AEPC’s GESI policy embraces the objectives of promoting renewable energy for domestic and productive uses for economic enhancement of men and women and a social transition that encourages women and the marginalised to access RETs. Adoption of GESI approach in the implementation, educating relevant stakeholders on integrating GESI Approach in the renewable, energy sector, enabling access to energy services followed by use of appropriate monitoring measures and its reporting are highlights of the AEPC GESI policy.

### **Gaps**

It is clear that the constitution has transferred the roles and responsibilities of RETs to the local government. However, this has come without the clarity on the organisational structure. Consultations under this study showed that there are very few, and in some places only one technician, within the RM either with very little knowledge and experience about RETS or none at all. This illustrates a number of clear gaps at policy level as follows:

- Though the GESI Policy 2018 emphasises on the participation and representation of women at different levels, it is has not clear how this will be implemented.
- The policy does not specify figures related to participation and representation of women and DAGs at the decision making and planning stage or in trainings.
- There is strong emphasis on the need for monitoring and evaluation of projects but it does not articulate the use of GESI specific indicators.
- The policy also mentions about the need to report on gender disaggregated data but the responsibilities of gathering this information is yet to be specified.
- Above all norms and processes related responsibilities, accountability and co-ordinations between stakeholders is not clear.
- Budget allocation has been specified but it is not clear who will be responsible for it.

## **B. Rural Municipalities**

- The present planners in the RMs, including women and men from the marginalised groups have little or no knowledge about RETs.
- Very few houses are connected to the national grid hence solar is presently the source for lighting.
- Plans are being developed for the use of solar for street lights in all the RMs, hybrid solar and wind systems in operation at Miklajung, Panchthar
- The RMs has taken positively to the partnership with RERA project and awaits its support for the promotion of RETs in their respective areas.
- They have set up energy sub committees, with representatives from the local elected members of government, preparing themselves for the energy program
- There is low level of engagement in decision making process as well as making the voice of women and DAGs heard in the local government planning processes and other forums.

## **C. GESI Focal Persons**

- At present they have very limited knowledge about renewable energy technologies, its potential uses and the benefits for women and children
- Planning process appears a challenge especially when it concerns integration of gender and social inclusion nexus
- According to the respondents the communities' have a growing inclination towards electricity and LPG with less confidence in renewable energy systems which poses a challenge in meeting their aspirations only through RETs
- There is a growing concern about the state of women and their continued drudgery in relation to the present energy use and management of fuelwood- a resource that is dwindling as well as a resource that is controlled by the community forest management; especial concern has been shown in Jahada where the use of dung and agro wastes is common
- The community have inhibitions where private sector is concerned: difficulties in accessing their service, none adherence to the roles and responsibilities towards quality deliverance and responses to grievances from the clients.

## **D. Community Level**

### **i. Women and Disadvantages Groups**

#### **Energy Use**

- Across the districts, both the women and the marginalised groups depend highly on fuelwood for cooking. In case of Jahada and Gaurigunj there is some use of dung and agro wastes amongst the women. Amongst the Dalits in the two RMs, it is the principal fuel for both cooking, space heating.
- Agro wastes agro wastes and some fuelwood is also used for animal feed preparation by Dalits as well. Whereas in Gaurigunj and Jahada duns is also commonly used for this purpose including the Dalits.
- Grid electricity, micro hydro and SHS are common. Solar and kerosene were also used as backup systems. In case of Dalits solar home systems, kerosene and candles were used together with resinous twigs.
- Firewood, grid and micro hydro were used for income generation activities.
- LPG and biogas are also in use however only as secondary fuel. Similarly Dalits also use LPG.

***Even with the introduction of new cooking technologies, it appears to be difficult to reduce the use traditional stoves remarkably. People here depend on it for large size –cooking during festivals, alcohol-brewing (cultural practice), preparation of animal feed and space heating.***

### **Energy Services**

- For fuelwood community forest was the main source across all fuelwood users.
- For LPG the users depended on market within district headquarters as well as markets in neighbouring districts, except for Gaurigunj where it is available in the market within the RM.
- Minor maintenance of the solar electricity system can be done locally in Gaurigunj and Jahada; however others had to depend on services available outside the RM.
- Available electricity from mini hydro system and the grid are not sufficient even for lighting alone and the service gets even worse in the dry season
- Services for installation are provided by the private sector for both biogas and solar systems, however it is not satisfying. There are additional difficulties in acquiring their services for repair works and replacement of accessories.

***Everyone including the Dalits desired grid electricity for lighting and income generation activities, as fuelwood was freely available; it remains primary choice of the women and Dalits especially for activities other than cooking main meals. Similarly in Gaurigunj and Jahada dung and agro-wastes were preferred by the Dalits. Services from private sector has deterred the confidence in RETs. There is high demand, including from the Dalits, for repair and maintenance services of systems,***

### **Energy Needs**

Regular, dependable and sufficient electricity was the need for hotels and poultry farming. Energy needs for using appliances such as rice cookers, TVs, computers, and freezers. Energy was also required for water lifting (drinking and irrigation) is also resonated by the Dalits. They in turn show a willingness to shift from traditional fuel source to improved cook stove. However, affordability would be the major challenge for them.

***Energy Needs for productive uses, drinking water and irrigation and improved cookstoves are areas for intervention where women and Dalits are concerned. Besides, high upfront cost remains a challenge for uptake of RETs for the Dalits and households especially having no economic activities.***

### **Sources and access to information**

There is no formal channel nearby that provided information on renewable energy sources. Thus both women and the Dalits have limited access to information on energy access. Municipalities and ward offices are immediate centres for grievances on energy related issues. Private sector and word of mouth are also common forms of information in all these RMS including for the Dalits.

***A more effective means of information disseminations is required for efficient proliferation of RETs programs enabling the users to make informed decisions.***

### **Energy Governance**

Women's participation in development planning meetings is low. There is understanding of the value of woman's participation in such meetings and also claim these meetings to be vital for women. Even

with women representatives in the municipalities, there is dissatisfaction with respect to their issues being heard and addressed.

Very few DAGs men and even less women actively participated during decision making process and planning meetings. The DAGs feel the level of discrimination to have reduced. They seem to be happy with the opportunities they are getting to participate in training and workshops. They consider capacity building as the crucial factor to empower and encourage them to access energy services and engage in income generating productive activities. However, there was complains of their suggestions and demands not receiving serious response.

***Both groups resonate that sometimes special meetings for women and DAG communities were also conducted, lack of knowledge prevented active participation in energy planning, Very limited participation in capacity building trainings.***

## **Challenges**

### **Women and DAGs**

- Lack of knowledge, awareness and poverty affecting access to clean and new technologies
- None availability of service centres for maintenance of solar, MHP & technology
- Technologies installed, biogas, not performing as expected/specified
- No timely response to complaints, ignorance to complaints and absence of redressal mechanisms
- High cost of the systems specifically biogas system
- Issues related to access to necessary funds and subsidy

### **Perspectives of Women and DAGs**

- Not satisfied with current energy in use
- Reliable, affordable energy required for both domestic and productive uses
- Need for energy service providers (technology supply and repair and maintenance) within the community
- Skill required for effective energy use and for income generation activities
- Need women and DAGs representatives within energy sub-committees in ward and municipality level

### **E. Finance Institutes**

- The finance institutes consider energy systems as a loan product, they have also been examples of FIs with special provisions for women and the marginalised groups
- MFIs work closely with women in contrast to commercial banks, they had special provisions of door-to door services as well

### **F. CSOs**

- CSOs have experiences of working with the government's energy projects
- Unless demanded by the project, women and DAGs do not necessarily form their target group
- Their agenda on energy activities are driven by the national rules, policies and programs

### **G. Private Sector**

- Operate from the capital or the district headquarters hence not available within close proximity of the community under consideration – RMs
- Services very much dependent on plans and programs of AEPC and implicated by the policies at AEPC

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the above conclusion and from the first-hand experience of the involved consultants, ample opportunities have been observed for the improvements in the use of both electrical as well as thermal energy in all the eight sectors of industries. For enhancing the energy efficiency and to realize the saving potentials as given in the preceding sections, the following recommendations have been made:

### Rural Municipalities

- Support Municipalities in integrating GESI in energy projects and programs. This would require the following steps
  - Conduct capacity building of the RMs on RETs and its implications for livelihood enhancement of women and DAGs
  - Make it mandatory for RMs to develop and use annual GESI action plan, including GESI segregated targets and activities for periodic and annual energy projects and programs and allocation of budget for the activities
  - Include GESI segregated monitoring along the lines of GESI-segregated planning in the planning in the monitoring system of RM
  - Support in the formulation of GESI friendly policy/strategy focusing on access to energy for domestic and productive use which includes
    - representation of women and DAGs in the energy sub committees – 33 percentage and hold at least two key position (Refer to Case Study-1 provided in the section on International Good Practices which presents an example of process used in Rwanda)
    - indicate the percentage of women and DAGs participants in energy related trainings, else hold separate trainings for women and DAGs
    - capacitate women and DAGs with necessary trainings and financial support (innovative finance mechanisms to be developed) such that they are able to engage effectively in the planning process as well as actors in the energy supply chain (supply, instal, operate and carry out repair maintenance work
    - Due to low economic level of the DAGs, it is imperative that innovative financial mechanisms are in place for enabling access to energy systems (refer to Internation Case Studies 4 and 5.
  - Engage with private sector, CSOs, training centres and financial institutions for effectively delivering services for energy access for women and DAGs without compromising on quality. Specify roles and responsibilities of each actor, encourage private sector to induct the RM trained women and DAGs
  - Conduct economic and self-empowerment trainings for women and DAGs (the self-empowerment trainings can be conducted together with other trainings or independently, it is also important for the Women and DAGs representatives in the Municipality
- Design information sharing mechanisms appropriate for women and DAGs. Measures used must align with the purpose of the information. Examples:
- Case study 2 in the International Good Practices presents how a radio program well managed can serve as a good means of communication even at the community level.
  - Conduct mass awareness programs through – rally, street dramas, posters

- Mobilise media existing networks of women and DAGs, municipality/ward notice boards and that of places that women and DAGs commonly visit such as health centres, market areas
- Strengthen the capacity of the energy sub-committee on planning for RETs and integration of GESI agenda such as identifying most deprived communities especially of poor women and DAGs households, energy needs; preparation for special subsidy for accessing RE; conducting monitoring and evaluation and reporting, maintain GESI disaggregated data, co-ordination with CSOs, private sector and line agencies (entrepreneurship development, financing, access to inputs for different income generation activities).

The Energy Sub Committee is to include representation of women and DAGs. This committee should be capacitated to intervene in critical planning cycles of the local government. In particular, following step given in Figure 7, it is important to activate the subcommittee to:

- a) Actively lobby with Federal & Provincial Governments to formulate Guidelines that reflects RE priority for women and DAGs.
- b) Engage with private sector, relevant local and federal organisations in step 3 to select projects that would promote RETs for the target groups.
- c) Continue aggressive engagement and lobbying, through women and DAG members, as well as LG leadership, in continued retention of the projects and budget agreed at step 3.
- d) Discuss challenges and way forward for accountable service delivery, including retention of RET skills and service providers in the Municipalities.

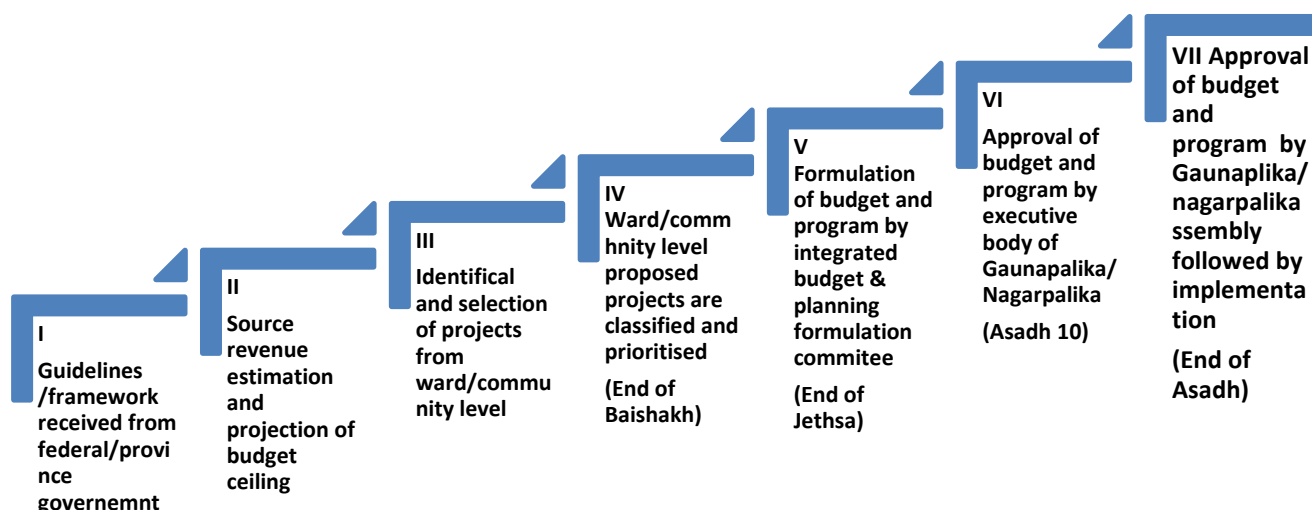


Figure 3: 7-step Local Planning Process for Local Governments

### GESI Focal Persons

- Conduct leadership training for the GESI Focal persons which will help build self-confidence and

the confidence to efficiently deliberate on issues of women and the marginalized groups as well as act on the measures identified for implementation

- Build skills in assessing projects, plans and reports using each of identified GESI indicators, maintain GESI disaggregated data, and ensuring the integration of GESI issues in policy, planning, program and tracking the changes
- Mobilize GESI focal person and energy sub-committee for awareness raising on RE at community/settlement level on its use for domestic and productive uses
- Encourage women to take up economic activities based on clean energy backed by entrepreneurship training. The economic activities suggested here are: vegetable farming with irrigation provisions; poultry farming with solar for lighting; chilling systems for milk, vegetable and fruits, ; improved cookstoves for roadside eateries
- Develop an inventory of GESI friendly energy technologies for both household and productive uses

### **Women and DAGs**

- Build their knowledge on the benefits of RETs, their operation and safe use through awareness programs, IEC materials and use of media
- Encourage the use of clean energy both for domestic as well as economic activities through rally and whistle-blowing campaigns, mobilisation of local health workers and women's groups
- Build IECs and mechanisms for dissemination such that they are comprehensible and accessible for women and the marginalised groups
- Train female energy entrepreneurs for delivery of RETs (cook stoves, solar and biogas), operation and maintenance (all RETs) and agency-based empowerment. These trainings can be for individuals as well as groups of women (refer to International Case Study 6)
- Include women along the RETs supply chain, provide counselling and mentoring long the way over a period of time (refer to International Case Study 7)

Technologies recommendations on Municipality basis are presented in Table 11:

### **Finance Institutes, CSOs and Private Sector**

- RMS need to develop partnership with the CSOs for carrying out awareness and capacity building of women and DAGs, lobby and advocacy at the provincial and federal level, engaging women and DAGs in planning and implementing RE programs, setting up local service providers,
- Similarly the local FIs would stand out as immediate means for accessing loans for women and the DAGs, thus together with the FIs RMS need to implement innovative financing mechanisms
- Partnership with the private sector is necessary for supply of goods, installation of systems and ensuring the smooth operation with timely repair and maintenance of RE systems,
- Develop innovative financing means especially in areas where FIs are absent such that both women and DAGs are able to access finance for upfront investment

However, it is to be noted that these entities too need to be sensitized on the gender and social aspects specifically related to energy; this does not undermine their understanding of issues of women and DAGs in the sectors that they are

For enabling access to energy services and the sustainable use of technologies, it is pertinent that the following enabling activities are undertaken:

- RMs and the Private sector coordinate to organise energy fairs for demonstration of technologies focusing on technologies for domestic and productive uses for women and the marginalised groups
- Establish counters for purchase of equipment, appliances, spare parts for easy access for womenPrivate to establish Installation and repair services within the Municipalities through on-the-job training for local women and men

Access to finance due to location of the financing institute has stood out as one of the major barriers for women. As per discussions with the target group it is also seen important to build in new financing mechanisms that are closer home for the women. Case Studies, 3, 4 and 5 presents two different mechanisms that have proven to be successful especially in the case of women and the marginalised groups (see International Good Practice)

Table 11: Technologies Recommended by Municipality

Municipalities	Technologies					Additionalities	Remarks
	ICS	Biogas	Briquettes	Solar	Micro-hydro		
Amchowk RM	Domestic and Commercial Cooking and preparing animal feed	cooking	cooking	Lighting homes and shops, pumping water for drinking and irrigation, mobile repair shops	For operating poultry farms, mills, furniture factories,	promote energy for health posts, education and drinking water and well as the production of processed fuel such as briquettes/pellets	Local technicians must also be created to work independently (income generation opportunity) or housed within the Municipalities; train women to deliver the SHS and improved cookstoves
Hatuwagadi RM	Domestic and Commercial Cooking and preparing animal feed	cooking	cooking	Lighting homes and shops, mobile repair shops	Light, milling and furniture factories, poultry farm, mobile repair shops		
Mai M	Domestic and Commercial Cooking, brewing alcohol	cooking	cooking	Light and mushroom production, drying fruit and vegetables, mobile repair shops	Mills, bakery, dhaka weaving, processing spices, mobile repair shops		
Mansebung RM	Domestic and Commercial Cooking and preparing animal feed	cooking	cooking	Light , mobile repair shops, water lifting,	Light, mills, processing spice and running enterprises – soap and sweets		
Jahada RM	Domestic and Commercial Cooking	cooking	cooking	Light , mobile repair shops, water lifting			
Manebhanjyang RM		cooking	cooking	Light , mobile repair shops, poultry farm, water pumping	Light, furniture, mill, metal and grill industry, photocopy,		
Gaurigunj RM		cooking	cooking	Light , mobile repair shops, retail shops			
Miklajung RM		cooking	cooking	Light , mobile repair shops, retail shops	Cold storage, poultry farm, food processing		

It is important that the Municipalities continue to look into the individual household systems while having a greater focus on energy needs for community services. The latter support for health centres, schools, street lighting, and pumping water are particularly important for the following reasons:

- Energy for Health Centres – health posts have been established in the Municipalities, however they are not effectively operating due to lack of energy for lighting and operating various equipment/appliances such as refrigerator, pumping water for washing hands, wounds, appliances and sanitation. Men, women and other groups in the community are compelled to travel long distances for health services despite the presence of the health infrastructures in their community. In emergency situations of delivery of a child, there is greater risk in loss of lives of many women and children.
- Schools – for the use of modern (better) education methods, it requires the operation of various gadgets/appliances to deliver different kinds of audio and visual contents through PowerPoint, images, documentaries and so on. Also, to promote adult education, it is necessary to conduct classes in convenient hours for the learners, especially women and marginalised groups, which might be different from mainstream class hours. It can be during evening or early morning hours that requires lighting, heating, cooling specific to the regions.
- Street lights for safe and secure mobility at night targeting women.
- Water supply – women spend long hours in collecting water like they do for fuelwood. A community water supply would save a great amount of time and reduce drudgery

Much dissatisfaction has been expressed with the present subsidy delivery mechanism. The subsidy is delivered through private sector who in turn tends to reach out only to the low hanging fruits. This leaves out the poor and the marginalised. The subsidy delivery mechanisms require deeper assessment and if necessary revision such that it reflects the economic status and energy needs of women and DAGs.

Summarising the recommendations, a proposed Action Plan has been presented in Annex 12.

## 6. INTERNATIONAL GOOD PRACTICES

This section provides of illustrations of international good practices that are relevant to RERA work. The SWN Study team believes that these seven case studies, while not directly associated with works done by the study team members, offer learning that could be applied in the delivery by RERA.

Some of the lessons cited here have also been referred to in the text above where they are comparable and support the analysis carried out in the earlier sections.

### **Case Study 1: Rwanda: Women in decision-making positions<sup>10</sup>**

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#### **Background: Reasons why changes are required in relation to gender equality and women's empowerment**

After independence in 1962, Rwanda experienced a succession of political regimes characterized by ethnic and regional discrimination, and a culture of impunity towards those who committed crimes. The climax of the genocide of 1994 exacerbated this situation of inequalities, with women strongly affected and assuming new roles.

The Government of National Unity set up after the genocide hastened to install mechanisms to address discrimination and exclusion, seeking to also address gender equality and the integration of women into national development. To facilitate the integration of gender equality in all policies and programmes, the Government adopted a national gender policy in 2004 and initiated a strategy for the implementation of this policy as a cross-cutting issue; institutional mechanisms for the promotion of gender and women's rights were created; and priority was given to capacity-building to enable women to participate in all fields of national life, given a tradition of low representation by women in decision-making and instances of discrimination resulting from cultural and traditional practices, in particular in terms of ownership of property, land titles and access to formal education

#### **Objective of the documented good practice**

The June 2003 Constitution highlights principles of gender equality and assigns to women a minimum quota of 30 per cent of elective decision-making positions in order to fight against discrimination and the marginalization that women face, and to strengthen democracy and development through women's participation in public life.

#### **Strategies adopted to achieve the objective**

##### ***A. Establishment of new institutions and practices***

The Constitution enshrines affirmative action in favour of women through the allocation of at least 30 per cent of elective seats in the Parliament. The Constitution has also set up a National Council of Women to act as a forum for dialogue, advocacy and mobilization of Rwandan women. It includes a general assembly, executive committees and a permanent secretariat. It is represented at all administrative levels throughout the country. Elections to the Council are organized by district. The Constitution also provides for a Gender Observatory to monitor indicators of gender equality in national development planning. A law specifying the mission, organization and operation of the

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<sup>10</sup> Adopted from, Compendium of Emerging Good Practices in Gender Mainstreaming African Centre for Gender and Social Development, Economic Commission for Africa 2009

Observatory was adopted in December 2007.

The Government has set up through legislation machinery to follow up the decisions of the Beijing Conference. This includes a national coordinating committee whose members come from the government, United Nations agencies, donors, international and national non-governmental organizations, religious organizations, the National Council of Women, the National Youth Council and the private sector. It is supported by a permanent secretariat, which ensures the implementation of committee decisions and coordination of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

### ***B, Interventions in education***

Investments have been made in training and education of women, and public awareness campaigns have been undertaken on a large scale

### **Outcome of the good practices**

Government: Most ministerial posts go to men (62 per cent), and men occupy 67 per cent of the positions of Minister of State. Local government: Women fare better in some local government structures, holding 40 per cent of the governors' posts and forming close to half the membership of District Consultative Committees. However, men occupied 93 per cent of the powerful posts of Mayor. Gender biases are also reflected in the positions of deputy mayors, with those responsible for social affairs overwhelmingly occupied by women (63 per cent), while those responsible for economic affairs are predominantly occupied by men (86 per cent).

### **Factors contributing to or hindering success**

#### **Factors contributing to success:**

Policies favouring women and deliberate special quota measures, reinforced by strong political will at the highest level, have increased women's access to political life. Importantly, the mandates of the national mechanisms for gender are clear, and the Ministry for Gender and Women Promotion has responsibility for policymaking and implementation of programmes on gender equality and women's empowerment and ensuring coordination at the national level. The National Council of Women supports the Ministry through advocacy and mobilization of women, while the Gender Observatory, an independent national body, is in charge of monitoring the implementation of policies and programmes by all development stakeholders with respect to gender indicators. Political parties are legally required to reflect the national make-up of Rwanda and promote women in the recruitment of their members, the composition of their leadership and all their operations and activities. Each must ensure that at least 30 per cent of their elected positions of leadership are occupied by women.

The Constitution requires affirmative action to ensure that at least 30 per cent of decision-making positions are occupied by women. Article 76.2 further allocates 24 of the 80 seats in the Chamber of Deputies to women, while article 82 specifies that of the 26 members of the Senate, at least 30 per cent must be women.

There is also close cooperation between the official institutional machinery whose task it is to promote gender equality and civil-society organizations.

#### **Limiting factors:**

Hindrances include: the lack of adequate support for increasing the number of women in non-elective senior decision-making positions, especially in the civil service and certain arms of government; lack

of access to university-level education for most women, hampering their access to leadership positions in tertiary institutions with male-dominated structures that also work against women's participation in leadership; lack of adequate national expertise in research, analysis and gender mainstreaming; insufficient sex-disaggregated data; the absence of expertise in gender analysis and research within the National Institute of Statistics; lack of conceptual clarity with regard to GAD and WID among stakeholders; resistance to affirmative action, which is viewed as a "favour" to women; resistance, especially in rural areas, to legal reforms that give girls new inheritance rights and women access to strategic resources; poverty and economic dependence, which is still more acute among women, while the burden of reproductive work limits their participation in higher education, further limiting their access to decision-making positions; and lack of confidence on the part of women due to prejudices and cultural stereotypes, which have traditionally made women fearful of competing for leadership positions

### **Potential for moving the good practice forward**

The high number of women within Parliament will reinforce the empowerment of women in all domains of life. The role of Parliament is to make laws and to oversee the actions of government. This presents an opportunity to advance gender-sensitive laws, especially on issues not yet addressed, and to sustain the attention of government and action for the implementation of national policies and programmes that take into account gender equality and women's concerns. The parliamentary elections of September 2008 proved that political parties have taken the law on gender equality into account.

### **Ways in which the good practice could be improved**

The Government must pursue its efforts to invest in higher education for girls so as to bridge the gap between men and women in decision-making positions, invest in expertise on gender issues and make it available to all institutional levels, and assist the National Institute of Statistics to make sex-disaggregated data regularly available in all fields for decision-making purposes. Training for the media to create public awareness of gender equality and women's rights issues and ensure the continuation of non-discriminatory legal reforms must also be on the agenda.

### **Lessons learned**

- Political will is crucial for progress in relation to gender equality and women's rights
- Addressing cultural constraints on women and women's ownership of strategic resources has positive outcomes for women's empowerment
- Efforts must be focused on the full implementation of legal reforms if women are to take advantage of the opportunities presented.

## **Case Study 2: Radio as a Tool for Gender Mainstreaming**

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### **Background**

Villages in Gujarat's Kutch region tend to be geographically remote and socially secluded. The incidence of migration amongst men is high, and this, coupled with the frequent occurrence of natural disasters, tends to make the life of women very hard.

The Kutch and Saurashtra regions are prone to drought, cyclones, earthquakes and floods. The lowering of water tables and the shifting of water sources has led to increasing water scarcity and agricultural uncertainty. The Rann of Kutch has been marked as an extremely high-risk earthquake zone; it was at the epicentre of the January 2001 earthquake (along with Saurashtra) that destroyed millions of lives.

These factors and developments have left the local economy vulnerable and in disarray. In the absence of productive job options, women are left with little choice but to engage in home-based work, such as traditional embroidery and crafts.

It is against this backdrop that the role of radio assumes great significance. The interplay of dimensions such as distance, illiteracy and poverty make it almost impossible for other forms of media to have the same breadth of outreach for social marketing and for impacting attitudinal changes to gender issues.

The approach and work of the Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan (KMVS), a rural women's organization is based on the premise that the empowerment of women involves the interplay of four interrelated and naturally reinforcing components: (i) collective awareness-building, (ii) capacity-building and skills development, (iii) participation, greater control and decision-making power, and (iv) actions to bring about gender equality. From its inception, KMVS has concentrated on building local leadership and creating women's collectives or Sangathan. It has promoted women's groups (mahila mandals) at the village level, which collectively form a block-level collective (taluka sangathans). While KMVS staffs are not members of these collectives, they act as a resource support unit for the issues raised by the sangathans. Today, the organisation has more than 12,000 rural women members, throughout the five talukas that span 165 villages. There are independent sangathans in each of the five talukas where the KMVS works, two of which are already registered. Each taluka sangathans is led by a taluka committee, comprising of rural women leaders, who give direction to programmes undertaken in the area.

### **Good practices**

**Description:** The KMVS uses the medium of radio to disseminate information and awareness on gender issues and to create a demand for literacy, especially among women in the region.

**Evolution:** The first KMVS intervention to reach women was the literacy programme that aimed at organizing and mobilizing women in remote villages. This programme produced a newsletter, Ujjas Patrika, which kept people (particularly newly elected women representatives in the gram Panchayats) informed about KMVS activities. While the readership and popularity of the newsletter soon increased, it also exposed the low rate of literacy amongst the women in the district and the inability of many to access media (due partly to social reasons, exacerbated by the remoteness of the villages in Kutch). At the same time, elected women representatives also expressed their difficulties in reaching taluka headquarters for regular trainings.

One manner in which an accessible flow of information could be enabled, was distance education, to which end KMVS produced an audiotape. The response to this initiative was good and it encouraged the organization to explore the idea of using the radio as a medium to raise issues on gender and

good governance among newly elected female representatives. A survey on which was the most popular medium for accessing information was conducted (between the period 1998 to 1999); the results convinced KMVS that radio was the best medium to consider.

- **How it works/methodology followed:** Fourteen individuals (both men and women) were selected from the community and trained in reporting. The KMVS, with the help of its partners in this initiative produced a pilot episode for a radio serial. Gradually, over a span of three serials, the entire agenda, reporting, production and feedback activities were taken over by the KMVS radio team
  - The strategy used was collaborative, with participants building upon each other's strengths to translate the concept of gender mainstreaming into real action.
  - Capacity-building workshops were held on gender issues to enlarge the team's perspectives and knowledge base.
  - Within the framework and context of developmental issues, gender concerns were woven in, thus building credibility and outreach for the gender mainstreaming process.
  - Active community participation (particularly of women) was encouraged, through techniques such as surveys, interviews, opinion polls and debates.
  - As the predominant language spoken in six of the nine talukas is Kutchi, all but one of the radio serials was in this language.
  - Religious leaders were included in the initiative, by inviting them onto radio programmes to decry practices harmful to women, such as Satta. This has had a very positive effect on changing attitudes in the community.
  - The content of the serials challenged stereotypical gender roles. Women were portrayed in roles traditionally allotted to men, such as that of protagonists/heroes/leaders. The projections were subtle, but still managed to convey key messages to both men and women in the community.

The methods and processes were designed to be women-friendly, encourage participation and provide a legitimate space to women to express themselves.

As a result of the KMVS community radio programmes, more and more women are now being accepted as social leaders and are approached for advice on social (particularly gender) issues. A concerted effort is undertaken by all KMVS staff and sangathans leaders, using a combination of street 14 plays, songs and posters in public places to give exposure to forthcoming programmes. Regular feedback is an integral aspect of the community radio project, for which different participatory methods are used.

### **Building Partnerships**

Until 2006 there was no government policy in India regarding the promotion of community radio. KMVS, 16 based on its positive experience of using radio to mainstream gender concerns, (along with other national organisations) lobbied for a redefinition of the national policy to include NGOs and sangathans as well.

By involving themselves with KMVS' activities, women leaders from the sangathans have now expressed confidence in being able to run their own programmes. Communities have increasingly begun to take up gender-related issues, thus demonstrating a change in the way women see themselves and how they are viewed by the community.

### **Replicability**

Realizing the potential of radio to change community attitudes, organizations in other states have also developed demonstrable models in community broadcasting. This is an eminently replicable programme.

### **Challenges and Limitations**

When the KMVS first conceptualized the idea of using radio to spread gender awareness amongst their communities, there was no favourable national policy on community radio; consequently, KMVS had had no option but to collaborate with the official radio broadcasting station. This first radio experience, however, showed KMVS that many 19 people were not ready to take them seriously and that KMVS and the women's sangathans needed a space of their own in the mainstream media. The challenge lies in maintaining the organization's integrity. The KMVS media unit has begun extending its expertise in media issues to other NGOs. This has, however, proved to be equally challenging, for collaborating NGOs occasionally wish to deliver information on issues other than gender, or on concerns that do not form part of the KMVS agenda. Although this is just the beginning, KMVS has realized that it needs to be firm (when it comes to dissemination of information) and remain consistent in its approach and priorities.

### **Lessons Learnt**

The KMVS initiative using radio as a tool to mainstream gender concerns has shown the potential radio carries in a country where the 'participatory' and 'socially responsible' roles of the mass media are extremely relevant. It also shows that the radio makes it possible to reach and mobilize a large number of women, at an extremely low cost. Since literacy is still a substantial barrier to development, small-scale media needs to be encouraged, even as large-scale media formats are invading almost every aspect of society. While mass media has its own advantages, community radio creates a space for the community to bring in collective participation in all aspects of broadcasting. At the same time, it has the potential to incorporate the culture and language of the area. When local people produce programmes, it not only empowers them, but also brings to light local issues and concerns. Efforts must continue to support and encourage such initiatives, especially amongst marginalized communities such as Dalits. KMVS radio—reaching out to women in Kutch 18 These include the Deccan Development Society (Pastapur, Andhra Pradesh), VOICES and MYRADA (Kolar, Karnataka) and the Shree Ramanna Maharishio Academy for the Blind (Kannakapura, Karnataka). 19 For their first broadcast, the women had planned to discuss environmental degradation and its impact on rural women. The officials of the radio station however asked them to sing festive songs instead and refused to even record the episode that the women had prepared.

### **Case Study 3: Support for Entrepreneurialship Development<sup>11</sup>**

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#### **India: Ensuring financial support for having improved income generation options**

Engaging closely with financial institutions

Many a times, absence of finance is the only reason for lack of empowerment opportunities and the following section presents how these issues can be tackled. Lupin Human Welfare & Research Foundation organised women Self Help Group promotion during 2009 to January, 2016 in Raisen and Vidisha district, M.P in collaboration with microsat branch of Indian Bank due to which 470 women SHGs with membership of over 5000 families mobilized own savings of over Rs. 2.25 crores. It also led to bank loan mobilization of Rs. 20.06 crores for income generation activities, in collaboration with microsat branch of Indian Bank, Bhopal with 100% bank loan recovery rate. Over 3000 families started having additional annual income of Rs. 60,000 to 3 lakh. It helped over 3000 families to improve their economic conditions significantly and also has improved their participation in the local governance.

Jan Chetna Sansthan intervened to provide sustainable microfinance for empowerment of tribal for enhanced livelihoods. Their initiative led to membership base of 8640 women and men constituting of four clusters. It covered 470 villages in 105 Panchayats of 11 blocks. This is promoting livelihoods of the most vulnerable group, that is persons with disability, in order to promote livelihoods amongst PWDs. Accordingly, 2000+ farmers now follow better farming system.

Parineeta Piprural Development, an NGO setup in Karnal, Haryana, helps the local women through skill training like sewing, making handicrafts, and they also give primary coaching. 70% of the women that have been a part of the NGO have started their own business at home. They are now able to earn for themselves. The women have learned skills that have made them confident enough to lead a stable life and also send their children to school. The NGO provides sewing machines to the physically challenged women so as to remove their dependence on their families, at least financially.

SARTHAK has motivated and inspired many women to start saving in a group on a regular basis and utilize the saved money for small ventures to be financially independent to support their families. SARTHAK has made literate more than 8000 women who are now comfortable in reading, writing along with basic skills of calculations. This has made them confident enough to lead their life with a renewed pride. These literate women are now acting as role models for other women of the villages and inspiring others to start learning to bring a change and a better understanding in their lives.

#### **Support in setting enterprises**

Some of the NGOs have helped women set up their own businesses which have significantly improved their socio-economic status. The practices are presented in this section.

Practical Action South Asia Regional, in Sirohi, Mount Abu has worked for economic empowerment of women. They helped women to start registering their own business for creating income.

Be Fund Provides risk capital to young adults, especially young women, preferably in the 18-30 age groups to start enterprises that solve development gaps for women and girls in particular in impoverished communities. Their focus and interventions are in the area of enterprise development. So far, 90 entrepreneurs have been funded in different sectors such as food, agriculture, renewable energy, recycling waste, handloom, traditional craft and more. Over 180 jobs were created by

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<sup>11</sup> Adopted from, Compendium of Emerging Good Practices in Gender Mainstreaming African Centre for Gender and Social Development, Economic Commission for Africa 2009

entrepreneurs over the last four years. This has led to financial and social empowerment. These women entrepreneurs have created 132 jobs for women in their communities. 41 women entrepreneurs funded up to January 2015; 85 women in 17 villages earn an average of Rs. 1000-1500 every month through a woman entrepreneur, Archana's enterprise. Women in Archana's village did not have access to jobs that they could do from home. Archana too did not have the formal education qualifications to secure a job. She started an areca leaf plate making enterprise which earns an additional income of Rs. 5,000 to 6000 per month and provides employment to 85 women in 17 villages.

Nearly 80% of the farming work in India is carried out by women. Despite all the hard work, agricultural incomes are variable. Uncertain availability of tractors used for agricultural work disrupts the schedule of agricultural activities. A woman entrepreneur, Kalpana is a role model for women in her community. As a result of her initiative 20 women farmers have additional earnings of Rs. 24,000 to 36,000 by selling ginger directly to APMCs. Kalpana, took to farming to support herself and her family. She had to do the ploughing by using a pair of bullocks and had to wait for a tractor to complete agricultural operations, which was time taking. She decided to start her own business of making tractor services available for farmers and their families, enabling them to access this basic service easily.

Though women do 80% of the agricultural work in India, they own only 13% of the land. While Sulekha cannot reform the land ownership structure in her village, she found a way to achieve higher returns for the work women put in agriculture. She mobilized the women farmers in her community to start community managed cultivation of ginger on a wasteland. She sells this produce directly to the APMC (Agriculture Produce Marketing Corporations).

In all these three examples the NGO has made specific and targeted interventions to individuals by helping them in setting enterprises so that they not only support themselves but become job creators where other women also gain advantage. In this way the intervention done at one point brings outputs at multiple households.

## **Case Study 4: Financing Models**

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### **India: Through Institutional strengthening of women as Self Help Groups and Federations**

Most of the NGOs work with this approach. Bhoruka Charitable Trust, Aaspur is dedicated to socio-economic transformation of rural and remote areas of India, especially the weaker and socially underprivileged groups, through physical, social, cultural and economic development of rural people, groups and institutions. BCT has been actively involved in formation of Self-Help-Groups in its all the target villages in Rajasthan. In Dungarpur, BCT has been implementing the promotion and linkage of 250 SHGs in 74 villages of 17 Gram Panchayat of Aaspur block since September, 2010. A total of 37 SHGs were formed and linked with the bank up to March, 2011. Special focus on migrant labour and their families for improved awareness on HIV/AIDS about 300 such family and 145 labours are given regular awareness and counselling. Their initiatives have helped in financial and social empowerment of women and in providing entrepreneur training. Also, it has caused skill improvement on technical and non-technical trade for improved employability.

SARTHAK in eastern UP has been actively working with women of vulnerable community since 1997 especially for their health and exclusive rights to live with dignity. It has formed 235 Women Self Help Groups including women groups with 4500+ active members across more than 200 villages of Majhwa and City blocks of Mirzapur.

SARTHAK has also made 408 adolescent girl groups in both of the blocks covering 200 plus villages. These 408 AGGs have more than 7300 adolescent girl members who are regularly being trained on life skills along with a focus on their specific health issues; making them to overcome hesitation and be confident about themselves.

Development Alternatives (DA), New Delhi, has promoted formation of women collectives to enhance their bargaining power and enable them to engage in savings and inter-loaning for financial resilience; income generation activities for livelihood development; and addressing development concerns of the community through multi-stakeholder action. DA facilitates the formation of women's collectives at two levels: Self Help Groups (SHGs) and Federations.

To ensure sustainability of the SHGs and Federations, DA has built the capacity of the Federations for access to livelihood development solutions; access to products such as solar lights, seeds, cook-stoves, water purification and agriculture inputs; provide its members with access to basic needs products; establishes market linkages for procurement of products and creates demand for the same amongst the community. The federation manages and operates community level infrastructure for basic needs such as drinking water, home electrification, and sanitation facilities on a payment for services model. Federations act as change agents

### **Harness the power of groups**

One way of expanding the reach of entrepreneurs is for them to work in groups. In Kenya, while some women entrepreneurs work individually or with their families, others prefer to work in groups of 12 to 30 members, many of them linking to already existing Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs). When working in groups, the entrepreneurs come together for specific tasks such as pooling individual contributions to purchase products and raw materials in bulk, renting a shared space for stocking inventory, sharing transport for bringing products to markets or sharing the costs of conducting promotional events. All of these enable them to reap economies of scale.

In most groups, the selling is however mostly done on an individual basis, ensuring a “business-like orientation”. Group members, through discussions, divide up areas among themselves so that they do not compete with each other. Women say that, by buying together, they are able to place larger orders, negotiate better prices with suppliers and transport their inventory in bigger batches. This reduces breakages and cuts the cost of transportation. This is a big gain in rural Kenya where the roads are bad and boda-bodas<sup>28</sup> are used to transport fragile equipment such as the ceramic liners of improved cookstoves. Working in groups also gives women confidence and much-needed peer support, both for the business and also more generally. Group members support each other, and most groups have set up a small fund, which they lend to members in emergency situations at zero interest rate for short durations. In Senegal, Energy 4 Impact works predominantly with existing women’s groups in its energy work. In Senegal, it is a common practice for women in rural areas to organize themselves into income-generating groups and work in the farming/ processing and agriculture sector. Each group is led by a group leader who is usually literate, has some knowledge of accounting and an entrepreneurial spirit.

According to Abdoul Dosso, the programme manager for Energy 4 Impact in Senegal, working with existing groups gives a good degree of assurance that the energy enterprises will build on a solid, existing base. It also helps that these groups are already experienced in business and hence accustomed to dealing with cash transactions. Most groups also operate as a savings group and hence have some savings that help finance some of the initial investment required.

## **Case Study 5: Activating community-based savings groups for enterprise finance**

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### **Kenya: Women's Economic Empowerment, Kenya (WEEK)<sup>12</sup>**

During the first year of operation of the WEEK project, Practical Action Eastern Africa explored working with formal MFIs, however this was fraught with multiple challenges. These included the poor reputation of some MFIs, high handedness in debt recovery, high interest rates and difficult collateral and guarantor requirements. Failing in this approach, the WEEK project explored setting up a guarantee fund but this did not work either because of the stringent collateral requirements by the FIs that made it impossible for any of the WEEK entrepreneurs to access credit. Practical

Action's prior experiences with loan guarantee funds had also not been successful in Kenya. Even though Practical Action negotiated lower interest rates and deposited guarantee funds with the FIs, the FIs still insisted on a number of conditions that the entrepreneurs found difficult to satisfy. These were that they must belong to a registered group in order to qualify, must open an account and save with the FI and will only qualify for a loan after saving for six months. These were difficult conditions for the entrepreneurs to meet, and many WEEK entrepreneurs are not members of any group.

The project has since decided to instead work with Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA) to facilitate entrepreneurs' access to affordable credit, and this approach has been more successful. A VSLA is a group of people (12 to 30 persons) with a common interest in pooling their financial resources through individual contributions. They extend micro-loans amongst themselves at affordable interest rates and with no collateral requirement. Members of the VSLAs deposit savings fortnightly or monthly with their group. Each member is entitled to receive a loan from

the group, the amount depending on her share of the total deposit and the available money. Normally, VSLAs provide small loans, with the largest being about USD 200.

The groups follow the "table banking" system. During a group meeting, each member Unravelling access to finance: Mobilizing enterprise finance puts an agreed sum of money on the table for the purchase of individual shares in the group. These funds go into a pool that is given out in loans at the end of the meeting to members who are in queue for approved loan applications. When working with the VSLAs, the WEEK project first builds their financial management capacity and then advances an interest-free loan (from project funds) to boost the VSLA's fund for lending to its members who run energy businesses. Such capital injection enables more members to access loans and to borrow larger amounts for their enterprises.

A locally accredited public accounting and audit firm has been engaged to support the credit fund, including ensuring that the VSLAs comply with the government's regulatory framework for running savings and credit schemes. The VSLAs receive training on all aspects of financial management and leadership, and are constantly monitored and mentored as part of the WEEK project. The firm undertakes due diligence on the VSLAs' capacity to absorb the loan from the WEEK project, tracks

each VSLA's repayment performance and audits the group's accounts. In total, 107 entrepreneurs in five countries have benefitted from this.

This approach has worked well. It has enabled entrepreneurs to access business capital while

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<sup>12</sup> Adopted from, Compendium of Emerging Good Practices in Gender Mainstreaming African Centre for Gender and Social Development, Economic Commission for Africa 2009

mitigating the risk of fraud and misuse of revolving funds. Findings from the end-of-project impact survey in 2017 indicate that the entrepreneurs' access to credit and financial services improved from 18% in 2014 (baseline) to 62% in 2017, with over 80% of the entrepreneurs taking loans from the local VSLAs. This is an impressive increase.

As the group progresses through a few rounds of loans and repayments, their confidence grows and they start taking larger loans. In 2017, after two years of operation, 66% of the Lakeside Energy Women Group members had obtained loans. Interestingly, 68% of those who took loans made the decision independently, while 24% made the decisions jointly with their spouses. Ninety per cent of the loans were for increasing business stock, and ten per cent to pay school fees. They also started approaching other agencies, mainly because they wanted larger loans.

While this approach to mobilizing community saving groups for raising enterprise finance worked well, it has some inherent constraints. Typically, the amount of savings that VSLAs can mobilize by themselves is small. In the Lakeside Energy Women Group, for example, the women meet twice a month. During each sitting, every member contributes between USD 1 and USD 10 to purchase shares. The money is then taken to the bank. A member can borrow money (take out a loan) but only up to a maximum of twice the value of her individual shares. Further, at times, the way the VSLAs operate may limit their ability to grow their capital base. For example, at the end of every year, the Lakeside Energy Women Group distributes the shares to members, instead of accumulating and growing their fund.

When working with VSLAs, one should take into account that:

- Injection of external capital is needed for loans of meaningful size. Typically, VSLAs have only low levels of savings. As long as the VSLAs only revolve their own money, they will only be able to provide small loans. In Kenya, this amount was in the range of USD 150 – USD 200. Thus, the injection of external capital is needed for growing larger enterprises.
- When larger loans are given, it may be necessary to guarantee them. When members find it difficult to furnish collateral, one alternative mechanism is for more than one member to stand guarantor for the loan. In the Lakeside group, for loans of more than USD 50, a member is required to have two guarantors from the other members. This is one of several other conditions that include assessment by the group members. In 2017, the group applied for and received a loan of USD 977 from the Women Enterprise Fund (WEF). This loan has since been fully repaid by the group. The members converted the loan into interest-free business capital to boost their businesses.
- The loan from the WEF was split between all the 17 entrepreneurs in equal amounts of USD 55 and repaid in monthly instalments by each beneficiary over a period of one year. This was a simple and affordable repayment plan, which enabled the entrepreneurs to expand their businesses through increasing stock and purchasing raw materials. They have since realised that it would have been more beneficial for the group if they had charged interest to members and used this to increase their savings.
- When a revolving fund model is adopted to operationalize capital injection, it is important to agree the payment mode and period with the groups, and to continuously review this based on the performance of the group as well as to build in a weaning off process to minimize dependency and ensure the financing model's growth and sustainability.
- Community savings groups will need training on financial literacy. Along with capital, community savings groups such as VSLAs have to be trained in financial literacy, discipline and leadership. Some of the training needs can be met through identifying and establishing partnerships with public and non-profit institutions that offer training for free or at a small fee

in different aspects of group management. The performance of the groups also needs to be tracked on a regular basis.

## **Case Study 6: Case 6: Sri Lankan Women Come Together in Producer Groups to Assemble LED Bulbs**

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Traditionally, women in the rural areas of Sri Lanka are engaged in a range of income generating activities like food processing, sweet making, dairy, dress making, and agriculture. Most of these activities are home-based and provide them with supplementary income for their families.

An ADB-supported project financed under the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction (JFPR) — entitled Improving Gender-Inclusive Access to Clean and Renewable Energy in Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka and coded as JFPR 9158 – built on and expanded these traditional activities to include energy-based livelihoods.

Through the JFPR 9158, Practical Action, together with ENERGIA, the International Network on Gender and Sustainable Energy, worked with women entrepreneurs of Ampara district in Sri Lanka to enhance the productivity and incomes of their enterprises. JFPR 9158 aimed at assisting people, especially women, in Ampara District who were affected by natural and human-induced disasters – such as tsunami, prolonged droughts, periodic floods, and internal war – and who could hardly recover from the disasters due to lack of capability and financial resources.

Women were trained in livelihood skills for the productive use of electricity. In Sri Lanka, JFPR 9158 was attached to an ADB-financed project (Loan 2733, Sustainable Power Sector Support Project), which improved rural electrification and distribution system in Eastern and Uva provinces so as to expand the access of the poor and rural households to electricity – A total of 190 persons (150 men and 40 women) were trained in assembling Light Emitting Diode (LED) bulbs. The training included building understanding of electricity, electronics and safety; energy efficiency and costing of domestic lighting options; market opportunities; and hands-on training on the assembling of LED. Their training was followed up with additional technical briefings to help them resolve technical difficulties experienced.

Apart from training women on energy-based livelihood skills, Practical Action and ENERGIA also enhanced the awareness of the communities on ways to reduce electricity consumption and expenditure.

Of the 190 persons trained in the assembly of LED bulbs in 2013-2014, 37 (13 men and 24 women) were from Uhana and Ampara. They were identified through the Divisional Secretariat Division offices and the Women Development Centre of Samanabedda, a local organization. In Damana another group of 13 women and 16 men was trained.

The women were determined to apply their learned skills in spite of their 7 to 8 hour daily household chores. The prospect of earning additional income for their households and having their own' money drove them. At the start, however, women perceived bulb assembling as men's job and were afraid to handle electric gadgets. Many also felt that they did not have the required capital. The training and subsequent engagement of women in LED bulb assembly changed this perception that electricity is a man's domain.

The women set up their LED bulb assembly businesses in different ways. Some women put up individual businesses; others formed two-person groups with shared capital; and the rest set up relatively larger production operations in partnership with mixed groups that include the suppliers of parts, assemblers and sellers. There were women who did not start their own assembling units as they did not have the capital, but got engaged in the production process.

In April 2015, the Samanabedda Women Development Centre brought together the trained women of Uhana and Ampara Divisional Secretariat Divisions for sharing of experiences. At that time, 18 women and 4 men were engaged in bulb assembling. The meeting was led by Janaki, a trainee of

the Uhana training programme who was engaged in grassroots activities in the Rajawewa old village. Inspired by a producer group formed by Janaki and her friends in 'Rajwewa Purana village', other trainees requested Janaki to organize this meeting and help them form an Association of LED bulb Assemblers. They visited Rajawewa twice to learn how LED bulb assembling was done as a group enterprise.

Women in Uksiripur employed a slightly different model. Uksiripura is a small, interior village in the Damana Divisional Secretariat Division. After attending LED bulb training in Damana in June 2013, the women formed a four-member group 'SuhadaKantha Karya Sanvidanaya'. Since they had no capital and were unwilling to secure loans, Rasika, the secretary of local women's organisation, suggested to form small groups instead of working individually. The women got together and collected LKR200 from each member. They work at Rasika's house who has some spare space. The group produces two bulbs per week and through a round robin system, one woman takes the bulbs produced in 1 week. She keeps one bulb for the household, if she needs it, and sells the other one or sells both. The earnings are put together as a common or shared capital for further production. Women enjoy the flexibility to work independently, and welcome other women in the community to join and learn the skill.

At present, 40% to 50% of the trainees have applied their skills and are confident in assembling LED bulbs. Initial reports show that their incomes have increased by 60% to 100%. The demand comes from three sources: their own households and relatives; neighbours; and outsiders including small retail shops run by known parties. Thanks to the awareness raising by the government, the benefits of using LED bulbs have become well known. However, because purchasing household electric items like bulbs from unknown producers is considered risky, the women mostly sell their products to known parties who have contacts with the producers and consumers.

From these initial experiences in LED bulb assembly businesses, lessons on working with women entrepreneurs can be drawn, such as:

- Women are typically risk averse and face several obstacles as they start businesses. While they are able to use their social networks to open up sales opportunities, they find it difficult to grow beyond meeting the initial demand. For instance, the Ampara women entrepreneurs are afraid of selling bulbs because they lack standard certifications, and are afraid of selling bulbs to unknown parties. Hence, they restrict their sales to small local shops known to them, or to social networks that they are comfortable with. In the absence of formal channels, these short term strategies have limited capacity for sustaining their business.
- Group based operations are a replicable model for women and can help address issues related to lack of capital and confidence. Women prefer to work in small groups that share the returns and divide the risks. For them, a group based enterprise is not only an enterprise but also a space for learning, sharing information and social networking.
- Women view working in small groups rather than individually as a risk mitigation strategy. It helps them learn from each other and pool their capital to expand their enterprise opportunities. These groups, since they build on traditional methods, also offer a great deal of familiarity. In Sri Lanka, Seettu or Cheetu is the traditional systems of savings and credit. The participants contribute an agreed sum of money to a pool on a daily, weekly, two-weekly or monthly basis. The pooled amount is awarded to one member of the group at a time, either in an agreed order or by drawing lots. The system enables people who find it difficult to save to gain access to a lump sum of money which they would otherwise not be able to acquire. The round robin system that the women producer groups have adopted builds on these traditional systems. It offers the added advantage of accommodating members with differential capabilities: the ones with less confidence look at it as an opportunity to build their skills and gain experience. Producer groups also help to reduce vulnerability to market

competition and form business enterprise. In group operation, building leadership skills and providing support for financing, enterprise development, and market linkage are as important as technical skills

The benefits and challenges of this energy-based business venture are in the stories of many women, such as Saroja and Chmila Jayanthi. Saroja narrated: “We had no money to invest in this business. So in this first round we intend to sell half of the products. Then we could re-invest the money to expand our business. A shop keeper in Ampara town agreed to sell the bulbs and helped us to establish the business. At present we cannot produce more, but there is a good demand from our community for these bulbs. We take orders, but it will take some time to meet those requests.”

**Source:** <https://www.adb.org/projects/documents/improving-gender-inclusive-access-clean-renewable-energy-sri-case-study-dpta>

## Case Study 7: A Woman's Perspective of Entrepreneurship

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Ms Niru Shrestha, an ICS Business Woman The status of women in Nepal has varied throughout history. Nepal has predominantly been a patriarchal society where women are generally subordinate to men in virtually every aspect of life. Men were considered to be the bread owner of the family. However, the story of Ms. Niru Shrestha is different. Thinning the barrier to gender inequality and following her dream to be a successful business woman, she has achieved the level which her family and society had never imagined. She started business with light lamp in 2062 BS and continued expanding it with mud ICS and later metallic ICS. She received the international honor from ENERGIA/HIVOS Netherland "The ENERGIA Women Entrepreneurships Award 2017" on 5th April, 2017 at the SEforAll Forum, Duggal Greenhouse in Brooklyn, New York due to selling improved cookstoves. Beside the success in business, she is a successful mother and a social worker. She has not only earned money but also recognition and respect in the society.

York Ms Niru Shrestha, age 48, resident of Sindhuli district, Dhungrebas, Kamalamai Municipality, ward no 4. After marriage in Sindhuli district she worked in Community Forest Group and Alternative Energy Development Programme. Later, she resigned from the job and started business in 2062 BS. Initially she sold light lamp and received training on mud ICS which she said was a turning point for her business. She worked in consensus with Environment, Energy and Climate Change Division, Sindhuli to sell ICS as whole seller. She also received training on metallic ICS organized by Women Economic Empowerment Programme (WEE Nepal), Centre for Rural Technology, Nepal (CRT/N) supported by ENERGIA/Hivos. She also received guidance and mentorship from the WEE Nepal regularly.

Business modality Followed by Ms. Shrestha in her ICS business Ms Shrestha marketing her ICS at festival Ms Shrestha at her Shop of ICS, Sindhulimadi

- Formed group of ICS entrepreneurs trained by WEE Nepal.
- Mobilized those group members as an agent and to be her retailers
- Coordination built up with organizations, NGOs, INGOs, MFIs, LFIs of Sindhuli district
- Interaction at VDC level with women entrepreneurs and local institutions helped to launch activities
- Agreement made with national level dealers (Ajummary Bikas Foundation, (Jabari foundation, Smart Chaitya Metal, Matri Bhumi Private Limited) metal, Matri Bhumi private limited) from Kathmandu
- Coordination with representatives of village council
- Interaction with district forest office
- Lobby to involve women entrepreneurs of Sindhuli district as a retailer in business

Women can lead a business and can earn money Only what they require is to have a passion and strong determination. If you are determined, gender inequality will not hinder your business even though you are a woman. Diversify your business, never stick on one business I see money in everything. I run grocery shop at home. I sell vegetables grown at the backyard. I run cow farm, fishery, poultry farm, dock farm and chicken cutting center says Ms Niru Shrestha

Ms Shrestha uses electricity, solar, bio-gas, LPG and ICS in her daily activity. She uses solar and electricity to pump water to irrigate vegetables, feeding cows and for the fish pond. She uses LPG and refrigerator in her chicken cutting centre similarly she uses electric bulb for lightening, heating the poultry farm and operating other appliances. Ms Shrestha says energy is very essential in business, it provides the opportunity to advance the business.

Ms Niru Shrestha is a great example of a true entrepreneur. She has an entrepreneurial spirit and hardworking capacity. She finds opportunity in everything. While interviewing her, she said that she can work and earn money anywhere. According to her there is money in everything if we look it from

the business angle. Business opportunities can also be seen in remote areas.. Nepal is rich in natural resources. We can sell wood to nearby cities, make compost manure from leafs of tree, can have goat farming, can make tapari (Plate made of leafs) and even can sell the grass.

From the very beginning she worked hard for her children, so that they get a good education and have a better future. Initially she faced financial problems while starting the business but her friends provided the necessary support. The work experience in the field of community forest and in local NGO helped her for establishing network and other information for her business. She worked more than 12 hours a day and earned around 1.5 lakh per month. Her confidence is her strategy for the success; she says there is nothing that holds back a women or men unless they are confident. Other important thing is to have access to finance, which most of the women often lack There should be provisions to easily provide loan to women who are enthusiastic to start business.

She said the journey of her business was interesting and rewarding one. The most memorable moment according to her was when she received the international award at United States. She told that the moment reminded her entire journey, the obstacles and challenges she faced however felt immense pleasure to have the honor. Now, in her society people give example of her as an influential figure. Now business has become her identity in Sindhuli district. Currently, she is the president of Nepal Entrepreneurs Association and has also been involved in various social services. Prepared by: Gyanu Bist, Communication Officer, GIE Project Without access to energy there is no business Only the better access to energy leads to enhanced entrepreneurship developments, which simultaneously generate growth and improve productivity

Source: [https://crtnepal.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/I-SEE-MONEY-in-EVERYTHING\\_FINAL.pdf](https://crtnepal.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/I-SEE-MONEY-in-EVERYTHING_FINAL.pdf)

# ANNEXES

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**ANNEX 1: Definition of Disadvantaged Groups**

The disadvantaged groups is defined as those who, by virtue of their gender, caste, ethnicity location, are living in poverty (i.e. already part of the programme target group) but face additional barriers to accessing and benefiting from any interventions.

The specific constraints related to accessing and benefitting from markets differ between these groups. For Dalits it is caste-based; for Adivasi Janajatis it is cultural rights/language-based; for Madhesis it is identity based; while for remote regions it is distance-related. For women, it is gender-based, a characteristic that cross-cuts each of the other constraints. Brief definitions of these disadvantaged groups as per definitions in the DFID/ADB/World Bank publication: "Sectoral Perspectives on Gender and Social Inclusion: Agriculture", 2011

- *Women.* Due to existing gender relations in Nepal and a patriarchal society, women experience unequal power relations, resulting in their social exclusion. Although the depth of gender discrimination varies between social groups in Nepal, all women are excluded. However, women from excluded communities face caste, ethnicity and location-based constraints in addition to the constraints imposed by their gender. Women constitute 51% of Nepal's population.
- *Dalits.* People who have been suffering from caste and untouchability-based practices and religious, social, political and cultural discrimination form 13% of Nepal's population. Within the Dalit community, there are five sub-caste groups from the hills (Hill Dalits) and 22 sub-caste groups from the Tarai (Madhesi Dalits).
- *Adivasi Janajatis.* Peoples or communities with their own mother tongue and traditional social structures and practices, separate cultural identity, and written or unwritten history form 37% of Nepal's population, with 5.5% Newars and 31.8% Hill and Tarai Janajatis. There are 18, 24, 7, and 10 subgroups respectively among the Mountain, Hill, Inner Tarai and Tarai Janajati groups.
- *Madhesis.* People of plains origin who live mainly in the Tarai and have languages such as Maithili, Bhojpuri, Awadhi, Urdu and Hindi as their mother tongue are considered Madhesis. They include Madhesi Brahmin/Kshatriyas (2% of the population), Madhesi "other" caste groups (13%) and Madhesi Dalits.
- *Muslims.* Muslims are a religious group found predominantly in the Tarai and form 4.3% of Nepal's population.
- *People with disabilities.* Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. Persons with full disabilities cannot manage daily life without assistance. They include people with total mental, intellectual or sensory impairment such as complete blindness. People with partial disability are persons who have long-term physical and/or mobility impairments, and require regular assistance to manage daily life.
- *People of remote geographic regions.* This covers people living in geographic regions which have distinct, difficult terrain for movement, transportation and communication, and difficulties in accessing services (e.g. Karnali has been defined as geographically excluded by the government in the Three-Year Interim Plan). Similarly, in a DDC some locations (VDCs) can experience geographical exclusion due to difficult terrain and remoteness. Within these kinds of geographically excluded regions, people experiencing gender-, caste-, and ethnicity-based discrimination experience further exclusions.

Target groups (Definition of DAGs and excluded GROUPS)

- Women and Single women (widow, divorced, unmarried women over 35 years, women whose husband is disappeared, women who are not legally divorced but separated more than 12 years)
- DAGs (Dalit, Janajati/Indigenous People, Madhesi/Muslims, minority and marginalized groups,)
- Person with disability, (this includes, physically impaired and the old age people)
- People from geographically remote areas,

**AS PER CONSTITUTION OF NEPAL**

- *provisions by law for the protection, empowerment or development of the citizens including the s socially or culturally backward women, Dalit, indigenous people, indigenous nationalities, Madhesi, Tharu, Muslim, oppressed class, Pichhada class, minorities, the marginalized, farmers, labours, youths, children, senior citizens, gender and sexual minorities, persons with disabilities, persons in pregnancy, incapacitated or helpless, backward region and indigent Khas Arya.*

**ANNEX 2: Array of Sample Size, Tools and the Target Group**

Location	Tools	Participant Titles	Participants	Contact number
Jahada RM, Morang	KIs (4)	RM chairperson		
		GESI focal person		
		Community leader of women		
		Community leader of DAGs		
	FGDs (2)	Women's group		
		Disadvantaged groups		
	Private Sector (any 2)	Krishna Grill & Engineering Works Pvt. Ltd., Biratnagar, Morang,	Mr. Lavamani Rajbhandary	9852020428 021525492
		Mechi Gobar-gas Company Pvt. Ltd., Biratchwok, Morang,	Mr. Mahendra Acharya	9852025572
		Deep Jyoti Sourya Urja Pvt. Ltd., Morang,	Mr. Deepak Joshi	9852027100, 9802707600, 021-521584
		Agni Urja Engineering Company Pvt. Ltd., Indrapur-3, Morang	Mr. Binda Devi Acharya	9852057303
		Mega Tech, Biratnagar office, Main Road, Biratnagar	Mr. Sujan Thapa	021 532000
	Civil Societies (any 1)	Jeevan Bikas Samaj, (JBS) PO Box 272, Katahari-1, Morang, Nepal	Mr. Yogendra Mandal, Director Mr. Damodar Regmi, Mr. Shiva Kumar	21-538462, 21-440212, 9802796196, 9852026458 9802796022
		Sagarmatha Community Development Society (SCDC), Buddha Chowk, Biratnagar, Morang	Mr. Yadu Kumar Bista, General Secretary	021420734, 21420950,
	Financial Institutions (any 1)	National Cooperative Bank, Branch office Biratnagar, Morang		021 470153
		Nerude Laghubitta Bittiya Sanstha Ltd. Biratnagar-3, Bhupi Balaram Marg		Tel: 021-463032,462101
	Educational Institution (any 1)	Manmohan Memorial Polytechnic, Budhiganga-4, Hattimuda, Morang, Dhuhabi road		021 622058 021 420876
		Madan Memorial, Urlabari-6 Morang Private, CTEVT,		021-622058 021420876
		National Institute of Technology, Achyut rice mill-5, Biratnagar		021-460331
		Individual expert	Mr. Baburaja Shrestha, Biratnagar Metropolitan, Morang	9851000493

Location	Tools	Participant Titles	Participants	Contact number
<b>Gauriganj RM, Jhapa</b>	KIIIs (4)	RM chairperson	Mr. Baburaja Shrestha	9852676696, 023-412044,
			Mr. Dipindra Thapa	9852676504
			Mr. Raj Kumar Shakya	9842032171, 9852676909
		GESI focal person		
		Community leader of DAGs		
	FGDs (2)	Women's group		
		Disadvantaged groups		
	Private Sector (1)	Danphe Gobar-gas Company Pvt.Ltd., Anarmani-4, Jhapa	Mr. Sewanta Raj Bhattarai,	9852678303, 023-541520
		Munal Biogas Company Pvt. Ltd., Damak, Jhapa,	Mr. Youva Raj Poudel	023-580249
		Siddhakali Biogas Tatha Urja Bikas Company Pvt. Ltd., Anarmani-4, Jhapa,	Mr. Chandra Pd. Sigdel	9852678135
		Lok Kalyan Gobar Gas Company Pvt. Ltd., Birtamod, Jhapa,	Mr. Toya Nath Ghimire	9852674607
	Financial Institutions (1)	Sahara Nepal Saving and Credit Co-operative Society Ltd., Charpane, Jhapa,		023-543408 9816927444
Educational Institutions (1)	Damak Technical Education Foundation, Damak-14, Jhapa,	Mr. Shyam Kumar Bista	9852650518, 23584950	
<b>Miklajung, Panchthar</b>	KIIIs (4)	RM chairperson		
		GESI focal person		
		Community leader of women		
		Community leader of DAGs		
	FGDs (2)	Women's group		
		Disadvantaged groups		
<b>Mai M, Ilam</b>	KIIIs (4)	RM chairperson (any 1)	Mr. Deepak Kumar Thebe	027-412222, 9852671787
			Ms Bishnu Maya Rimal	9815084048
		GESI focal person		
		Community leader of women		
		Community leader of DAGs		
	FGDs (2)	Women's group		

		Disadvantaged groups		
	Private Sector (1)	Pathivara Gobargas Company Pvt. Ltd, Ilam3, B.P. Park,	Mr. Tirtharaj Dhakal Mr. Netra Bhandari	9860645639 9742621521
	Civil Societies (any 1)	Namsaling Community Development Centre (NCDC), Ilam	Mr. Ghanendra Bhandari	9842720512 027520411/ 520792
	Financial Institutions (1)	Nirdhan Utthan Bank, Regional Branch Birtamode		023 543252 9845241741

Location	Tools	Participant Titles	Participants	Contact number
<b>Mangsebung RM, Ilam</b>	KIIs (4)	RM chairperson	Mr. Dikendra Dingo	9852680580
			Ms Sunita Younghang	9742687468
			Mr. Ramraja Paudel	9852061877
		GESI focal person		
	Community leader of women			
	Community leader of DAGs			
FGDs (2)	Women's group			
	Disadvantaged groups			
<b>Hatuwagadi RM, Bhojpur</b>	KIIs (4)	RM chairperson	Mr. Prem Kumar Rai	9852052058
		GESI focal person		
		Community leader of women		
		Community leader of DAGs		
	FGDs (2)	Women's group		
		Disadvantaged groups		
	Civil Societies			
Financial Institutions				
<b>Amchowk RM, Bhojpur</b>	KIIs (4)	RM chairperson	Mr. Asoka Rai	9852056836
		GESI focal person		
	Community leader of women			
	Community leader of DAGs			

	FGDs (2)	Women's group		
		Disadvantaged groups		
	Private Sector/Civil Societies			
	Financial Institutions			
<b>Manebhanjyang RM, Okhaldhunga</b>	KIIs (4)	RM chairperson		
		GESI focal person		
		Community leader of women		
		Community leader of DAGs		
	FGDs (2)	Women's group		
		Disadvantaged groups		
	Private Sector/ Civil Societies			
	Financial Institutions			

### ANNEX 3: Checklists for FGD

Theme	Checklist
Energy Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Domestic use (cooking and lighting)</li> <li>• Productive use (Farming, income generation activities)</li> <li>• Others (animal feed, space heating and water boiling)</li> </ul>
Source of energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electricity (grid ,solar)</li> <li>• What is electricity used for</li> <li>• List the appliances in the households that run on electricity</li> <li>• Classify the appliances according to luxury and basic needs)</li> <li>• Fuelwood</li> <li>• LPG</li> <li>• RETS (biogas, solar, improved cookstoves)</li> </ul>
Access to Energy systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Source. Time spent, costs, investment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Fuelwood, LPG, Electricity, RETs</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Awareness of energy policies and programs</li> </ul>
Consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amount of fuelwood used per day/week (before and after)</li> </ul>
Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impacts of using the present energy forms on</li> <li>• Health, economy, time</li> </ul>
Choice of Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fuelwood, LPG, Electricity, RETS</li> </ul>
Access to Energy Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who provides the services such as installation, repair maintenance</li> </ul>
Energy Service Desire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choice and shift in energy use, future auctions</li> </ul>
Decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Domestic agendas</li> <li>• Economic agendas</li> <li>• Assets acquisition</li> </ul>
Economy of women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Ownership and control)</li> <li>• Land ownership</li> <li>• Bank Account</li> <li>• Group Saving</li> </ul>
Access to Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sources for information gathering information sought</li> <li>• Community Meeting</li> <li>• Women's Group Meeting</li> <li>• Public Announcement</li> <li>• Informal Community Interactions</li> <li>• Trainings/workshops</li> <li>• Existing knowledge on</li> <li>• RETs</li> <li>• Village level energy activities</li> <li>• Financing schemes</li> </ul>
Governance system – general and energy specific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation of women in planning, monitoring Institution/Groups formation</li> <li>• Engagement of women in planning</li> <li>• Demands of women related to energy</li> <li>• Response to demands of women</li> <li>• Participation in trainings/skill development activities</li> </ul>
Participation/Engagement of women within the governance system	
Women's agents (leadership, decision making, Groups)	
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access</li> <li>• services</li> <li>• technology</li> <li>• In repair maintenance</li> <li>• Culture and norms</li> <li>• Financial</li> </ul>
Perspectives of the target group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On the present energy use</li> <li>• Available services</li> <li>• Preferable Energy</li> <li>• Place of acquiring energy forms</li> <li>• Role of women</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services from the government</li> <li>• Additional energy needs</li> <li>• Suitable process/marketing/availing energy forms and technologies</li> <li>• Changes required</li> </ul>
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**ANNEX 4: Checklist for RMs:**

1. What are your responsibilities related to energy, its development and promotion?
2. What are the different types of energy used by purpose in the community?
3. What is the primary fuel used for cooking?
4. What are your plans concerning energy access?
5. What are some potential sources of energy?
6. How do you plan to utilise them in future?
7. Are there any energy service providers in the municipality if not where do you get these services? What are your future plans regarding the energy service providers?
8. Do community service centres (schools, hospitals, telecommunications) have electricity?
9. What is the composition of your governing body? Male Female Ethnic Groups and DAGs
10. What is the nature of your technical staff? – skill and gender
11. Which community is most challenged in terms of energy access?
12. How do you propose helping them out?
13. What are the challenges for women in the present context?
14. How will you be helping them out?
15. In the present fiscal year have you allocated budget for energy sector? If yes how much and for what activities?
16. What is the rate of male migration and how has it affected the activities of women?
17. How do you intend to support energy access for the women headed households and the DAGs, do you consider the provision of subsidy?

**ANNEX 5: Checklist for Representative from different Ethnic group (DAGs)**

1. What are the different types of energy used by purpose in your community?
2. What do they use for cooking, lighting?
3. What are the different productive activities carried out by your community?
4. Are these activities mechanised? What fuel do they use?
5. What are the challenges in terms of energy access faced by your community?
6. Are there any energy service providers in the municipality?
7. If not where do you get these services from?
8. How do you think these challenges can be overcome?
9. What will you do to overcome the challenges?
10. What support do you need for this?
11. What is the composition of your governing body? Male Female Ethnicity DAGs
12. How effective is their participation and have their issues been heard and addressed?
13. Are there service providers within easy reach by your community? If not where do they have to go to get the necessary services?
14. How do you plan to overcome them?
15. In the present fiscal year have you allocated budget for energy sector? If yes how much and for what activities within your community?
16. What is the rate of male migration and how has it affected the activities of women? What changes have you observed in their roles and responsibilities at the domestic and productive end?
17. What are the main sources of information delivery/dissemination regarding projects/programs/special provisions for women/DAGs

18. Are you aware of the subsidy that is provided in the energy sector (RETS) for women and DAGS, were you able to access it?
19. If yes how, if No why not? Any challenges? What will be most suitable way for the women and DAGs in future in this context

**ANNEX 6: Checklist for Women Representative:**

1. What are the different types of energy used by purpose by women?
2. What do they use for cooking, lighting?
3. What are the different productive activities carried out by women in your community?
4. Are these activities mechanised? What fuel do they use?
5. What are the challenges in terms of energy access faced by your community?
6. How do you think these challenges can be overcome?
7. Are there any energy service providers within easy reach by women? If not how far do they need to go to get these services?
8. What are the challenges for women with respect to energy access and use?
9. What will you do to overcome the challenges?
10. What support do you need for this?
11. What is the composition of your governing body? Male Female Ethnicity DAGs
12. What is the nature of your technical staff? – skill and gender
13. Women in which community are most challenged in terms of energy access
14. How do you propose helping them out?
15. In view of the challenges for women in the present context, how will you be helping them out?
16. What support do you require?
17. In the present fiscal year, have you allocated budget for energy sector? If yes, how much and for what activities concerning women empowerment?
18. What is the rate of male migration and how has it affected the activities of women? What changes have you observed in their roles and responsibilities at the domestic and productive end?

**ANNEX 7: Checklist for GESI focal Person:**

1. What are the gender aspects that you deal with through the organisation?
2. What are the women's economic empowerment activities?
3. What are the energy related activities?
4. What do most households use for cooking, lighting?
5. What are the different productive activities carried out by women in your community?
6. Are these activities mechanised? What fuel do they use?
7. What are the challenges in terms of energy access faced by your community?
8. Are there any energy service providers within easy reach by women? If not how far do they need to go to get these services?
9. What are the challenges for women with respect to energy access and use?
10. How do you think these challenges can be overcome?
11. What will you do to overcome the challenges?
12. What support do you need for this?
13. Have these agendas related to energy and women been addressed in your annual plan and what are the actions?
14. What support do you require to implement these actions?
15. In the present fiscal year, have you allocated budget for energy sector? If yes, how much and for what activities concerning women empowerment?
16. How will you make this known to the target group?

17. Do women participate in while designing the activities for the year, if yes how active are they? Do they mention any activities related to energy access? If no what do you think are the reasons?
18. What must be done and what are the plans for encouraging/increasing women's participation in these meetings?
19. What is the rate of male migration and how has it affected the activities of women? What changes have you observed in their roles and responsibilities at the domestic and productive end?

#### **ANNEX 8: Checklist for Civil Societies**

1. Type of civil society
2. Legalities
3. Area of work
4. Do they work on energy and gender related activities
5. What are the different activities carried out so far
6. What are the challenges
7. What should be done to address these challenges
8. What are the challenges of working on gender and marginalised groups?
9. What would be some driving factors to overcome this challenge
10. What has the government done in this aspect
11. What would be your role in executing some of these solutions
12. Do you participate in the local planning meetings
13. What are the common agenda's raised during these meetings? How often are these meetings held
14. Does energy get space in the discussions? How do they relate to improving the lives of women and the DAGs

#### **ANNEX 9: Checklist for Banks/Financial Institutions**

1. Type of Financial institute
2. Legalities
3. Coverage Area and service sectors (what all-purpose loan is provided)
4. Do they work on energy and gender related activities
5. What preferential support are being provided for women and the DAGs
6. What are the different activities carried out so far
7. What are the challenges
8. What should be done to address these challenges
9. What are the challenges of working on gender and marginalised groups?
10. What would be some driving factors to overcome this challenge
11. What would be your role in executing some of these solutions
12. Do you have any special policies or revisions for women and DAGs? If yes what are they? If not what about your plans for this in future?

#### **ANNEX 10: Checklist for Private Sector**

1. What are the types of activities within RETs Sector
2. Do you have a Gender GVM and policy
3. What are your engagement with government RETs activities
4. What are the different Gender and Social Inclusion related activities
5. What are the Challenges working with women and the marginalised groups
6. Which is your Working area in terms of districts
7. What are your Working area in terms of energy technologies

## ANNEX 11: Names of KII Participants

### Local Government

Local Government	Location	Name	Location	Organization	Position
1	Miklajung, Panchthar	Urmila Rai	Miklajung, Panchthar	Miklajung Municipality Rural	RM Vice Chairperson
		Urmila Rai	Miklajung, Panchthar	Miklajung Municipality Rural	Gender Representative
		Devi Rasaili	Miklajung, Panchthar		DAG Representative
2	Gauriganj RM, Jhapa	Laxmi Karki	Gauriganj RM, Jhapa	Women and Children Savings and Cooperative	Vice Chairperson
3	Gauriganj RM, Jhapa	Sarita Sherpa	Gauriganj RM, Jhapa		Women Representative
4	Gauriganj RM, Jhapa	Babu Raja Shrestha	Gauriganj RM, Jhapa	Gauriganj RM, Jhapa	Mayor
5	Gauriganj RM, Jhapa	Uddin Kumar Rai	Gauriganj RM, Jhapa		Energy Committee, Chairperson
6	Gauriganj RM, Jhapa	Raj Kumar Shakya	Gauriganj RM, Jhapa		Chief Administrative Officer
7	Jahada, Morang	Kailash Prasad Mandal	Jahada RM, Morang	Jahada Rural Municipality	RM Chairperson
8					
9	Jahada, Morang	Rajesh Kumar Shrestha	Jahada RM, Morang	Jahada Rural Municipality	Energy Committee Member
10	Jahada, Morang	Yasodha Pokharel	Jahada RM, Morang		Women and Children's Unit
11	Jahada, Morang	Binita Singh	Jahada RM, Morang		Working Committee Member
12	Jahada, Morang	Jai Kala Biswas	Jahada RM, Morang		Social Mobiliser
13	Hatuwagadhi RM, Bhojpur	Prem Kumar Rai	Hatuwagadhi RM, Bhojpur	Hatuwagadhi Municipality Rural	RM chairperson
14	Hatuwagadhi RM, Bhojpur	Sajana Pariyar	Hatuwagadhi RM, Bhojpur		DAG Leader
15	Hatuwagadhi RM, Bhojpur	Chandrama Rai	Hatuwagadhi RM, Bhojpur	Hatuwagadhi Municipality Rural	RM Vice Chairperson/ Women Representative

Local Government	Location	Name	Location	Organization	Position
16	Hatuwagadhi RM, Bhojpur	Michhuhang Kirat	Hatuwagadhi RM, Bhojpur	Hatuwagadhi Rural Municipality	Engineer/ Member Secretary of Urja Samiti formed by GIZ
17	Aamchowk Bhojpur	Anita Rai	Aamchowk RM, Bhojpur		GESI Member Secretary & Asst. Sub Engineer
18	Aamchowk Bhojpur	Sita Rai	Aamchowk RM, Balankha Bhojpur	Aamchowk Rural Municipality	Vice chairperson
19	Aamchowk Bhojpur	Amar Bahadur B.K	Aamchowk RM, Balankha Bhojpur		RM Executive Member
20	Aamchowk Bhojpur	Ashok Rai	Balankha, Bhojpur	Aamchowk Rural Municipality	RM Chairperson
21	Mai Municipality, Ilam	Deepak Kumar Thebe	Mai Municipality, Ilam	Mai Municipality	Chairperson
22	Mai Municipality, Ilam	Bishnumaya Subedi	Mai Municipality		Women Leader
23	Mai Municipality, Ilam	Rita Pokharel	Mai Nagarpalika-Ilam		Plan formulation department/ Energy Development Sub-committee/ Legal committee/ Ward Secretary
24	Mai Municipality, Ilam	Junu Rai	Mai Nagarpalika-4, Ilam	Human Rights For Women's Empowerment	Coordinator
25	Mangsebung RM, Ilam	Dikendra Idingo		Mangsebung RM	Chairperson
26	Mangsebung RM, Ilam	Shant Kumar BK	Mangsebung RM, Ilam		RM Ward Member/ Chairperson of <i>Dalit Samanwaya Samiti</i>
27	Mangsebung RM, Ilam	Indra Bahadur Limbu	Mangsebung-Ilam	Mangsebung Rural Municipality	Energy Focal Person
28	Mangsebung RM, Ilam	Til Rupa Sabehang	Mangsebung Gaupalika - Ilam		Local ward Representataive-5
29	Mangsebung RM, Ilam	Sabita Rai	Okhaldhunga, Manebhanjyang-5	Manebhanjyang Rural Municipality	Deputy Chairperson
30	Mangsebung RM, Ilam	Bhim Bahadur Magar	Okhaldhunga, Manebhanjyang-5		Ward president/ Community leader of DAG
31	Mangsebung RM, Ilam	Bindiya Rajbhandari	Okhaldhunga, Manebhanjyang-5	Mahila Bikas Nirichek (Naa.Su.)	GESI focal person

32	Mangsebung RM, Ilam	Dolumaya Magar	Okhaldhunga, Manebhanjyang-5		Community leader of women
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**Finance Institutions**

Local Government	Location	Name	Location	Organization	Position
1	Miklajung, Panchthar	Nirmani Dhakal	Miklajung, Panchthar	Agriculture Development Bank	Accountant
2	Miklajung, Panchthar	Dilendra Khanal	Miklajung, Panchthar	Jaribute Cooperative Pvt. Ltd.	Manager
3	Jhapa	Ishwar Prasad Bhattarai	Charpane, Jhapa	Sahara Nepal Saving and Credit Cooperative Society Ltd.	Senior Department Chief
4	Jhapa	Shiva Kumar	Katahari, Morang	Jeevan Bikas Samaj	Senior Officer
5	Jhapa	Gopal Adhikari	Morang	Grameen Bikash Bank	Loan Manager
6	Gauriganj RM, Jhapa	Laxmi Karki	Gauriganj RM, Jhapa	Women and Children Savings and Cooperative	Vice Chairperson
7	Hatuwagadhi RM, Bhojpur	Toknath Neupane	Balankha, Bhojpur	Mahuli Samudayik Laghubitta Bittiya Sastha Ltd, Branch Office	Branch Officer (Head)
8	Aamchowk Bhojpur	Hem Kumar Shrestha	Aamchowk Bhojpur	Siddhartha Bank Ltd., Branch Office	Branch Manager
9	Aamchowk Bhojpur	Suraj Thulung Rai	Bhojpur	Prabhu Bank	Branch Manager
10	Aamchowk Bhojpur	Laxman Rai	Bhojpur	SIFA (Saving Investment for Forest and Agriculture Multipurpose Cooperative Ltd.)	Manager

**Private Sector**

Local Government	Location	Name	Location	Organization	Position
1	Gauriganj RM, Jhapa	Sharmila Rajbanshi	Gauriganj RM, Jhapa	Jagriti Mahila Sangh	Chairperson
2	Biratnagar, Morang	Babu Raja Shrestha	Biratnagar, Morang	Private Sector	Independent Consultant
3	Biratnagar, Morang	Lab Mani Rajbhandari	Biratnagar, Morang	Private Sector	Managing Director, Krishna Grill
4	Mangsebung RM, Ilam	Netra Mani Bhattarai	Ilam	Pathivara Gobar Gas Company	Managing Director
5	Mangsebung RM, Ilam	Buddhi Thapa	Ilam	Namsaling Community Devt. Centre (NCDC)	Business Promotion Officer- Productive Use Unit
6	Jhapa	Deepak Joshi	Birtanagar, Jhapa	Dipjyoti Sourya Urja Pvt. Ltd.	Proprietor
7		Kamal Bahadur Khadka	Damak-11, Jhapa	Munal Biogas Nirman Tatha Urja Bikash Company Pvt.Ltd.	Proprietor

**ANNEX 12: List of FGD Participants**

District/Location	Okhaldhunga- Manebhangjyang RM	
Group	S.N.	Name
Disadvantaged Group	1	Tul Bahadur Pulaami
	2	Motilaal Balampaakhi
	3	Budhi Bal B.K.
	4	Ram B. Thapa Magar
	5	Kul Bahadur B.K.
	6	Tek B. Thapa Magar
	7	Tej B. Thapa Magar
	8	Saanu Maya Pariyar
	9	Mina Pariyar
	10	Maiya Pariyar
	11	Santi Pariyar
	12	Dhan Maya Pariyar
	13	Durga Kumari B.K.
	14	Ganesh Bahadur Magar
	15	Kunta Devi Thapa Magar
Women's Group	1	Asmita Thapa Magar
	2	Durga Kumari Magar
	3	Tara Magar
	4	Kamala Kumari Magar
	5	Suntali B.K.
	6	Ramila Magar
	7	Indraa Rai
	8	Divyekala Rai
	9	Maiya Devi B.K.
	10	Pushpa Pariyar

District/Location	Bhojpur - Hatuwagadhi RM	
Group	S.N.	Name
Disadvantaged Group	1	Sushila B.K.
	2	Jyoti Rasaili
	3	Fulmaya Darji
	4	Ramila Pariyar
	5	Gopal Sarki
	6	Gopal Magarati
Women's Group	1	Kusum Rai
	2	Anju Rai
	3	Ambika Devi Karki
	4	Sita Rai
	5	Harka Maya Thapa
	6	Anju Khulal

	7	Sashikala Rai
	8	Sabita Neupane

District/Location	Bhojpur - Aamchowk RM	
Group	S.N.	Name
Disadvantaged Group	1	Anita Sankha
	2	Sabita B.K.
	3	Radhika Pariyar
	4	Muna Pariyar
	5	Santosh
	6	Ramji Darji
	7	Sabitra B.K.
	8	Bimal Pariyar
	9	Sitamaya Shera
	10	Bal Bahadur Pariyar
Women's Group	1	Anita Khadga
	2	Nirmala Karki
	3	Goma Khadga
	4	Indira Bista
	5	Parbati Khadga
	6	Radha Magar
	7	Astha Rai
	8	Gita Rai
	9	Himali Rai
	10	Sumitra Rai

District/Location	Ilam - Mai M	
Disadvantaged Groups	1	Bir Bahadur Limbu
	2	Rudra Bahadur Magar
	3	Bal Krishna Poudel
	4	Bal Govinda Mandal
	5	Sangita Kumal
	6	Opindra Rai
	7	Durga Raj Shankar
	8	Sukumaya Tamang
	9	Rupa Rai
Women's Group	1	Bishnu Maya Subedi
	2	Sabitra Karki
	3	Sukumaya Tamang
	4	Yashodha Poudel
	5	Padam Maya Shrestha
	6	Renuka Sharma

	7	Sangita Rai
	8	Srijana Khawas
	9	Yam Kumari Magar
	10	Devi Maya Bhandari
	11	Chandra Kala Regmi

District/Location	Ilam - Mansebung RM	
Group	S.N.	Name
Women's Group	1	Panitra Tumnahamfe
	2	Anju Limbu
	3	Narmaya Kafle
	4	Muna Budhathoki
	5	Sanu Devi B.K
	6	Sunita Nepali
	7	Santoshi Pariyar
	8	Fulmaya Limbu
	9	Sangita Rai
	10	Sushila Dewan
	11	Basanti Dewan
	12	Rajkumari Limbu
	13	Nirmala Limbu
	14	Pratima Shah
	15	Jasrupa Rai
	16	Manita Rai
	17	Pusmita Sunuwar
	18	Mina Limbu
	19	Nirmala Mahara
	20	Sujata Rai
	21	Muna Rai
	22	Pabitra Tamang
Disadvantaged Groups	1	Khim Devi Magar
	2	Dil Maya Subba
	3	Ratna Maya Sawa
	4	Tuli Maya Sawa
	5	Sita Kumari Rai
	6	Ganga Rai
	7	Dil Maya Rai
	8	Bina Rai
	9	Jyoti Rai
	10	Anisha rai
	11	Khada Bahadur Limbu
	12	Birendra Limbu

	13	Raj Limbu
	14	Surendra Rai
	15	Durga Mahara
	16	Ramchandra Rai

District/Location	Panchthar -Miklajung RM	
Group	S.N.	Name
Disadvantaged Group	1	Narma Nepali
	2	Manju Pariyar
	3	Mamata Rai
	4	Radhika Luhagun
	5	Devi Rasaili
	6	Sita Rasaili
	7	Damanta Magar
	8	Ramila Mukhiya
	9	Devi Magar
	10	Bhim Bahadur Tamang
	11	Ganga Maya B.K.
	12	Khadka Singh Nembang
	13	Gobinda Shrestha
	14	Balkumari Rai
	15	Aitamaya Rai
	16	Ramila Rai
Women's Group	1	Tara Rai
	2	Sabita Rai
	3	Sunima rai
	4	Salina Bohora
	5	Bimala Khadka
	6	Jalpa Devi Bohora
	7	Panta Kumari Rai
	8	Khim Kumari
	9	Kabita Rai
	10	Sukumaya Rai
	11	Mamata Rai

District/Location	Morang – Jahada RM	
Women's Group	1	Kiran Devi Chauhan
	2	Guljani Devi Thakur
	3	Rita Devi Kamat
	4	Aarati Baski
	5	Pautri Devi Singh
	6	Sarmila Devi Kamat

	7	Kalari Devi Singh
	8	Basanti Devi Singh
	9	Panni Kamat
	10	Sumindra Devi Singh
	11	Manju Devi Singh
	12	Sarwam Mandala

District/Location	Morang – Jahada RM	
Disadvantaged Group	1	Lila Devi Kamat
	2	Baby Devi Kamat
	3	Surji Devi Kamat
	4	Chandani Bhurmu
	5	Keke Kisnu
	6	Tasila Tudhu
	7	Sanjuliya Devi Singh
	8	Dhanmanti Devi Kamat
	9	Manki Devi Kamat
	10	Budhni Devi Hembram
	11	Rupa Tudhu
	12	Aabina Begya
	13	Laxmi Muyu
	14	Sanjana Makhadi
	15	Tabi Tabisara
	16	Chandikala
	17	Lila Devi Ram

District/Location	Morang - Gaurigunj RM	
Women's Group	1	Udhim Rai
	2	Laxmi Karki
	3	Sita Pokharel
	4	Somni Devi Pasang
	5	Sarita Sherpa
	6	Purna Maya Tamang
	7	Devi Maya Bhandari
	8	Sushma Koirala
	9	Rita Tamang
	10	Devi Khatiwada
	11	Binita Khatiwada
Disadvantaged Group	1	Jetha Karka
	2	Kavita Devi Singh
	3	Manju Devi Singh
	4	Bimala Devi Singh
	5	Bhalsariya Devi Kamat

	<b>6</b>	Samila Rajbanshi
	<b>7</b>	Arun Rajbanshi
	<b>8</b>	Kamala Bhandari
	<b>9</b>	Jayakala Bishwash

## Proposed Action Plan to integrate GESI in Renewable Energy Projects (Province -1)

SN	Proposed activities	Expected results	Target Group	Tools
1	<b>Knowledge building on GESI and Energy Nexus</b>			
	Capacity building on integration of GESI in Energy Projects and programs	The target groups understand the importance of energy needs of women and marginalized groups and are able to identify domestic and productive energy needs of women and the marginalized groups and measures for addressing them	RMs, Private sector, local financial institutions	Trainings, orientation exposure visits, periodic follow up/review
2	<b>Renewable Energy Policy/Strategy/Guideline</b>			
	Support in the formulation of GESI friendly RE Policy in the context of the respective RMs	A GESI policy is in place for enabling access to energy for women and the marginalized groups including process	RMs	Interaction and Consultative meetings with like-minded Organisations, experts
	Formulation of comprehensive GESI mainstreaming Guideline for the RE sector integrating GESI perspective for respective RMS	All partners follow a common approach in the implementation of RE from a GESI perspective	RMs	Interaction and Consultative meetings with like-minded Organisations, experts
3	<b>Institutionalization of GESI friendly Actions for RE Activities</b>			
	Appoint Focal Person/desk/committee with defined roles and responsibilities and capacitate them for implementing GESI friendly Energy Program, addressing grievances, collecting demands, delivering necessary support	Effective implementation of GESI friendly energy programs with necessary budget allocated for initiatives of energy programs for women and the marginalized groups	RMs	Consultative meeting with like-minded agencies Refe to International Case Study 1

	Orientation of all municipality representatives & staff on implementation GESI friendly actions	Municipality staff provide necessary services in a GESI friendly manner	RMs	Curriculum develop, trainings, mobilize local NGOS and existing networks (women, Dalits, health worker, self-help groups)
	Develop an inventory of GESI friendly technologies for both domestic and productive uses	Knowledge building of women and DAGs	RMs and experts	booklets
	Integrate activities on GESI related energy and economic empowerment in the annual plans and ensure adequate budget for the same	GESI Sensitive planning, implementation, budgeting ensured	RMs	Work Plan, dedicated budget,
4	<b>Implementation of Initiatives</b>			
	Mandatory representation of women and marginalized groups in the planning, implementation and monitoring process	GESI Sensitive planning, implementation and monitoring process in place	RMs	Include percentage representation- 33% or proportionate; conduct focused group activities (only women ,only single women only men, only DAGs) Refe to International Case Study 1
	Set up norms for conducting meetings/ interactions/trainings in a GESI friendly manner including accountability		RMs	Agenda, curriculum, location, timing
	Set up help desk within RMs for information delivery/sharing		RMs	Time, types of information, sources, medium of information delivery, knowledge building, consultative meeting. Peer learning, review meetings
	Leadership Trainings	Target groups are able to voice their needs and participate effectively in meetings and decision making process	GESI Focal person, representatives of women and marginalized groups	Regular training, follow up and create space for exercising the skill attained Refe to International Case Study 1
	Capacity building on energy technology, uses and energy based enterprises	Voice needs, Informed choices of energy, its effective use and income from clean	GESI Focal person, representatives of women and	Class room training

		energy based livelihood activities, targeted service delivery are ensured	marginalized groups representatives, Women's groups, women and marginalized groups, financing institutes	
	Promote the use of RE for social community services (schools, health, communication etc.)	Women (including single women), DAGS, elderly, disabled, youth have better access these services	Women (including single women), DAGS, elderly, disabled, youth	Rally, campaigns, hoardings, posters, IEC materials, media, existing women and Dalit's group, voluntary health workers
	Technical training for youth, women and men on RE and its use	Local services of technology supply, repair maintenance, engagement in the supply chain ensured	Local Youth, men and women (target group and general)	Classroom training
	Training on productive use of RE for women and DAGs in enterprises, agriculture, livestock rearing etc.	Economic empowerment of women and DAGs, effective use of installed energy systems	Women and marginalized groups	Classroom training and field based, exposure Refe to International Case Study 3, 6 and 7
	Sensitization programs for private sector and financing institutions (FI, co-operatives, savings and credits groups etc.)	Understand the importance of GESI friendly approaches for the win-win situation	Private sector and FI	Interaction, consultative, periodic meetings Refe to International Case Study 4 and 5
	Develop and Promote innovative financing mechanisms for women and marginalized groups		RMs, FIs, Private sector	Consultative meetings and concerned thematic experts  Refe to International Case Study 4 and 5
	Engage with media for awareness on RE, rights and access to information	Mass sensitization and access to information	RMs	Consultative meetings and concerned thematic experts; media (FM, print and TV), develop IECs Refe to International Case Study 2
6	<b>GESI responsive monitoring and evaluation of RE programme</b>			
	Set up a M&E committee including women and DAGs representative	Effective monitoring and data building in place	RMs	Consultative meetings and concerned experts

	Set up indicators and reporting format to capture GESI seggregated results related to RMs annual plan		RMs	Consultative meetings and concerned experts (refer to SDG tracking report)
	Introduce public auditing and public hearing of the program for RE activities from GESI perspectives	Participatory monitoring and transparency system in place	RMs, media, stakeholders	Open discussion at local level – project site