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# GENDER ACTION PLAN APPROACH AND DEVELOPMENT

## USAID SOUTHERN AFRICA ENERGY PROGRAM

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# I INTRODUCTION

USAID's Southern Africa Energy Program (SAEP) is a forward-looking program, implemented by Deloitte Consulting LLP, which aims to overcome the challenges of energy access and power sector development in Southern Africa. SAEP will employ an agile approach to design, deploy, monitor and sustain interventions that are compatible with and responsive to the evolving needs of the region over the next five years. SAEP recognizes that in order to sustainably advance the accessibility, reliability and security of the regional energy ecosystem, the Program must promote energy enabling environment reforms, stimulate private sector participation and promote new investment within the power sector. As part of the Power Africa (PA) initiative, SAEP will work to contribute to the Power Africa goals. Over the course of the program's five years of implementation, SAEP will work to increase electricity supply and access and as a result deliver:

- 3,000 MWs of new power generation
- 1,000 MWs of new transmission capacity
- 3 million new connections

## I.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF GENDER INTEGRATION ON SAEP

The SAEP recognizes gender integration as a strategy to accelerate women's socio-economic empowerment, achievement of project objectives and to maximize its impact. Under these overarching program goals, SAEP has a specific, cross-cutting gender equality goal, explicitly listed in its Year 1 Work Plan as stated below:

*“SAEP will integrate social and gender considerations into every aspect of planning, programming, and execution to: increase access by women to modern electricity services to enhance social and economic opportunities; increase female employment opportunities at utilities and government agencies; and increase the number of women trained in electricity reform and associated fields.”*

### I.1.1 POSITIONING GENDER INTEGRATION

Prior to the development of the Gender Action Plan, the SAEP team laid a strong foundation for including gender integration as a key component of this program. This foundation was critical to the SAEP Gender Team being able to advance discussion with team members and embed gender considerations into program activities.

**Year 1 Work Plan Gender Objectives:** Gender integration was included as an explicit cross-cutting theme in the SAEP Year 1 Work Plan, which positioned gender integration as a priority from the outset for the SAEP management and technical teams. In drafting the Year 1 Work Plan, the SAEP team outlined the basic gender objectives and established a baseline for the Gender Action Plan. The gender objectives across the project were intentionally not overly detailed; these objectives created the space for gender inclusion from the beginning.

**Dedicated and Empowered Gender Resources:** The SAEP Team hired a full-time local Gender Advisor early in Year 1 as the broader SAEP team was mobilizing staff and local resources. The Gender Advisor was responsible for prioritizing and leading the gender work early in the program, including holding gender discussions with stakeholders during the early initial meetings. The SAEP Chief of Party

and Engagement Principal also underscored the importance of real gender integration to all the technical advisors working on the project, which was critical to its consideration across all technical areas.

**Gender Components in Scopes of Work:** SAEP requires a Scope of Work (SOW) for every activity listed in the Work Plan. Each SOW is required to have a *Gender Component* section where the gender implications and gender integration efforts for the activity are discussed. This process ensures that the advisors undertaking the work are thinking through how best to integrate gender into the activity and are committed to seeing those considerations through during implementation (*this is discussed further in Section **Error! Reference source not found.***).

## 1.2 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document is a summary of SAEP's approach to gender integration and can serve as a guide for other USAID energy programs in their gender programming. Section 2 of this document provides an overview of the SAEP Gender Action Plan, the roadmap for gender integration in program activities. This section includes a discussion of key sections within the action plan and the purpose of those sections in driving gender integration across the program. Section 3 breaks down the process the SAEP Gender Team underwent to develop the Gender Action Plan.

The two appendices at the end of this document include 1) a series of materials and templates that were used by the SAEP team and can be tailored for other USAID program and 2) pictures of the SAEP Gender Action Plan Workshop.

## 2 THE GENDER ACTION PLAN

The Gender Action Plan was developed in line with SAEP Year I Work Plan. Similar to the work plan (a roadmap for project activity implementation), the Gender Action Plan is a roadmap for the practical implementation of SAEP's gender equality goal. It lays out the gender equality goals for the SAEP program, the overarching high-level entry points for gender mainstreaming across the contract, and the specific implementation activities for each program outcome to address local social and gender issues. The goal of the Gender Action Plan is to lay out priority areas and activities where SAEP can advance our stated gender objectives while moving forward on its core program objectives.

### 2.1 KEY SECTIONS OF THE GENDER ACTION PLAN

The Gender Action Plan has key sections that enable SAEP team members, particularly those not familiar with the local social and gender environment, to understand the gender constraints in the region and potential interventions to address those constraints.

#### 2.1.1 BUSINESS CASE AND APPROACH

In order to support the inclusion of gender mainstreaming activities and highlight the importance of those activities, the team developed the business case for women as drivers of megawatts and connections. The business case shows that women are critical stakeholders in energy access and power sector development programs and should be meaningfully included in energy policymaking as well as in the supply and demand sides of the energy value chain for programs to be successful. This idea, that meaningful gender integration can advance program goals, is at the core of why the program invests in it as a priority and the Gender Action Plan states it at the outset. **Tying and tailoring the program's gender goals to its core technical areas is critical for leadership and technical advisor buy-in.** It also helps the team reach its gender goals more efficiently and effectively.

This section of the action plan also highlights the unique approach SAEP is taking to (a) integrate gender equality in all program outcome areas, and (b) specify "targeted gender priorities" focused on strategic interventions needed to achieve participation, access and economic benefits for women. The approach consists of high-level entry points—areas in SAEP assistance where gender mainstreaming can be integrated and where gender issues are prevalent—and the implementation methodology—the primary types of assistance SAEP can provide within the entry point areas to improve gender equality.

#### 2.1.2 REGIONAL AND COUNTRY BACKGROUND

The action plan includes a discussion of the current state of gender equality and women's empowerment in energy sectors within the Southern Africa region and within the priority countries (i.e., Malawi, Madagascar, Namibia, Zambia). This also highlights current efforts that can lay the groundwork for SAEP's gender mainstreaming activities and that SAEP can build on.

#### 2.1.3 GENDER MAINSTREAMING ACTIVITIES

The bulk of the action plan is centered on the gender mainstreaming activities that aim to (a) increase women's access to modern electricity services to enhance social and economic opportunities; (b) increase female employment opportunities at utilities and government agencies; and (c) increase training and educational opportunities for women in the electricity sector and associated fields. The activities are

laid out in three formats to help the project’s various advisors—outcome leads, country managers, and other technical staff – understand how to carry out the gender work.

**High-Level Summary Table:** The action plan contains a summary table that is broken out by SAEP outcome area. For each outcome area, the table shows the key gender issues / considerations, the entry points that align, the key stakeholders, and illustrative gender mainstreaming activities. This table is meant to be used as a “quick reference” for outcome leads and technical staff as they begin discussion with stakeholders on gender mainstreaming activity implementation.

**Aligned Activities by Outcome:** The action plan also provides a detailed view of each gender mainstreaming activity. Under each outcome, the plan breaks down the outcome-specific gender issues and considerations, standalone gender activities that fall under the outcome, and gender alignment points for each applicable outcome activity for all five program outcomes under the Year 1 Work Plan.

**Aligned Activities by Country:** Since SAEP is a regional project consisting of 11 countries, the action plan also provides a detailed view of the gender activities by country. Mirroring the Year 1 Work Plan, the applicable activities and gender alignment areas are also grouped by country across all five outcomes.

## 3 GENDER ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The team developed the Gender Action Plan over three months, through a five-step process. The team initially performed desk research on existing issues in the region and validated those during in-country stakeholder consultations. The consultations also brought to light country-specific and outcome-specific priorities pertaining to gender mainstreaming, and the findings from those consultations were integrated into the Gender Action Plan. Following the development of the draft action plan, the team socialized it with the broader technical SAEP team and with the USAID Southern Africa Mission through a workshop session. The team used the feedback from the session to finalized the action plan and distribute it across the team for implementation.

### 3.1 DESK RESEARCH

The team initially performed a desk review of past, current and planned gender and energy activities in the Southern Africa region and in the four focus countries. This desk review included researching and analyzing relevant country-specific and regional documents and consulting SAEP technical team members for inputs.

The broader gender equality challenges and entry points were based on general themes that were cross-cutting and common in the region and relevant to SAEP focus areas. The country-specific desk reviews did an initial validation of these general patterns on gender and energy issues within the broader regional context. These results were incorporated to develop the general framework of the Gender Action Plan.

### 3.2 REGIONAL STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

The team conducted a three-week trip to the Southern Africa region and held meetings with key stakeholders. Prior to the trip, the team conducted a stakeholder mapping exercise and spoke with the SAEP technical leads and country coordinators to determine which stakeholders and institutions the team should meet with.

The team also developed a summary of the SAEP Gender Action Plan approach as a pre-read presentation for stakeholders. This ensured that the institutions pulled in the right people from their organizations to be at the consultation meetings.

In the discussions with stakeholders, the SAEP team validated the desk research, identified the country level priorities aligned to addressing gender issues, and came away with an understanding of the network of gender focused organizations that could support the work. These meetings were critical to test the assumptions from desk research and better understand the context for the planned gender activities for each country and each outcome area.

### 3.3 GENDER INTEGRATION FRAMEWORK WORKSHOP<sup>1</sup>

The team conducted a Gender Integration Workshop for SAEP technical leads and the USAID Southern Africa mission in Pretoria, South Africa. There were two purposes to this workshop: 1) to create an awareness and understanding of the importance of gender in achieving the SAEP goals related to energy connections, new generation, and new transmission and 2) to show the technical outcome leads how they can think through specific gender challenges and activities as they move toward implementation.

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<sup>1</sup> Workshop tools and templates are included in Appendix A.

This workshop centered on the USAID Gender Integration Framework (GIF) – a USAID tool authored by the Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Bureau to understand, address, and measure gender activities on a wide variety USAID programs. The SAEP team tailored that baseline GIF to the SAEP objectives and initial findings from the desk research and regional consultations (see *Appendix A*).

The SAEP GIF focused on the seven primary constraints facing women in the Southern Africa energy sector as identified through in-country consultations and the desk review. For each of the constraints listed in the framework table, each outcome team discussed the ways the gender constraint manifests itself in their outcome area and identified existing outcome activities that can address the constraint. These were written down on sticky notes (color-coded by outcome area) and placed on constraint-specific poster boards. The outcome teams then gathered back together to review each constraint, indicate commonalities or areas of similar intervention between outcomes, and brainstorm measurement ideas and potential indicators. The workshop tools and templates are included in *Appendix A*.

Several key elements made the workshop a successful component of the gender strategy: 1) attendance and prioritization by project leadership; 2) utilization of facilitation techniques that helped make the subject matter digestible, relatable, and interesting; and 3) detailed pre-planning to form the outcome teams for the brainstorming post-it session.

The outputs from the workshop were also used to shape and finalize SAEP’s gender activities for the Gender Action Plan.

### **3.4 GENDER ACTION PLAN FINALIZATION**

Following the regional stakeholder consultations and the in-country workshop, the team analyzed the feedback and incorporated the analysis into a draft version of the Gender Action Plan. The SAEP gender advisors then circulated the action plan internally in the SAEP team and sent to key USAID stakeholders (the SAEP COR, Southern African Mission Gender Team, the USAID HQ Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment team) for final input. The team submitted the final version of the plan to USAID and incorporated it into the SAEP Year 1 Work Plan.

### **3.5 INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES ACROSS THE PROGRAM**

Using the Gender Action Plan as a roadmap, each outcome and technical team is integrating any applicable gender considerations and gender mainstreaming alignment areas into activity implementation.

Each SAEP activity has a dedicated SOW that the SAEP technical team develops in conjunction with the applicable counterpart stakeholder (e.g., utilities, regulators, ministries) and every SOW must indicate the gender consideration(s) for that activity. The Gender Action Plan, as well as the workshop, are helping outcome leads and technical teams integrate those considerations into the activities. Led by the Gender Advisor, the SAEP team either drafts the activities listed in the Gender Action Plan into individual SOWs for implementation or the sews those gender activities into SOWs for planned technical activities.



# APPENDIX A GENDER INTEGRATION FRAMEWORK WORKSHOP MATERIALS

## Gender Integration Framework Placemat

| USAID SAEP GENDER INTEGRATION FRAMEWORK |   |  |  |  |                              |   |  |  |        |
|---|---|--|--|--|------------------------------|---|--|--|--------|
|   | Problem / Constraint to Address   | Desired Result   | Definition of Result   | SAEP Gender Entry Points   | Alignment with SAEP Outcomes | How is the problem / constraint relevant in your context? Please explain and provide evidence. Is the problem/constraint of high, medium, or low relevance? | What activities could you implement that address this problem? How can you integrate gender considerations into existing activities? | What indicators do/will you use to measure the success of activities in terms of gender integration? | Checks |
| 1                                       | Women are often excluded from leadership, supervisory, and technical positions in utility companies; typically, there is a lack of recruitment and internal support for women within the utility companies. | - Increased female participation in capacity building<br>- Increased female representation in leadership positions<br>- Trainings focused on building technical skills of women in the energy sector<br>- Female advancement programs within organizations | Beneficiaries are able to advance within power sector organizations; beneficiaries are able to take up leadership, supervisory and technical positions within utilities and other power sector organizations | - Leadership Development and Advancement<br>- Technical and Business Training                  |                              |   |  |  |        |
| 2                                       | There is a lack of women in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields and a lack of female participation in university programs focused on technical fields in the energy sector.            | - Awareness of STEM career opportunities for female students<br>- Increased female participation in energy programs in universities  | Beneficiaries are enrolled in programs that advance professional/career pathways in the sector and are able to follow a career in the STEM field   | - Technical and Business Training  |                              |   |  |  |        |
| 3                                       | There is a dearth of female entrepreneurs in the energy sector.   | - Increased opportunities for female-owned businesses within the energy value-chain<br>- Improved enabling environment for female-owned businesses   | Beneficiaries have reduced barriers to entry and greater business opportunities in the energy sector   | - Technical and Business Training<br>- Procurement   |                              |   |  |  |        |
| 4                                       | Women-owned enterprises are typically excluded from government procurements, and transactions with limited avenues to become formal businesses.   | - Increased opportunities for female-owned businesses within the energy value-chain<br>- Improved enabling environment for female-owned businesses   | Beneficiaries are more empowered and have greater opportunities to participate in the energy value chain   | - Procurement  |                              |   |  |  |        |
| 5                                       | Women and their unique uses of electricity may not be considered within access programs.  | - Programs tailored to the challenges facing women users of electricity and female-headed households<br>- Increased access to energy services for women  | Beneficiaries are consulted in program development and have reduced barriers to accessing energy services  | - Access   |                              |   |  |  |        |
| 6                                       | Women and female-headed households face financial barriers that may restrict their ability to access affordable energy services.  | - Programs tailored to the affordability challenges facing women in accessing energy services<br>- Subsidies and financial assistance programs that consult women and reflect their needs  | Beneficiaries have reduced financial barriers to accessing energy services and are enrolled in programs that support low income/poor household access to energy services                                     | - Access   |                              |   |  |  |        |
| 7                                       | Women are informally excluded from the policy and regulatory consultation process for most energy and electricity programs.   | - Increased policy and regulatory consultations with women<br>- Policies and regulations that are gender-responsive and gender-inclusive   | Beneficiaries participate in the policy and regulatory consultation process and are able to influence regulatory and policy changes  | - Leadership Development and Advancement/ Training (Institutional and Human Capacity Building) |                              |   |  |  |        |



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GENDER INTEGRATION FRAMEWORK WORKSHOP

## Constraint Poster Examples

**#1: Women are often excluded from leadership, supervisory, and technical positions in utility companies; typically there is a lack of recruitment and internal support for women within the utility companies.**

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GENDER INTEGRATION FRAMEWORK WORKSHOP

**#4: Women-owned enterprises are typically excluded from government procurements, and transactions with limited avenues to become formal businesses.**

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GENDER INTEGRATION FRAMEWORK WORKSHOP

## Gender Integration Framework Exercise Facilitator Guide

### BRAINSTORMING SESSION

60 min

**INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Organizes into groups of 1 – 3 people by SAEP Outcome.
2. Brainstorm how gender can be integrated into your Outcome.
  - a) Discuss 3 – 5 ways each gender constraints (column #1 of the framework) manifests itself under the Outcome Area.
  - b) Discuss 3-5 new or existing Outcome activities that can address these gender constraints.
3. Capture the constraints (#3) and Outcome activities (#4) on Sticky Notes and place them on the constraints boards.
4. Work in batches: 15 minutes for on constraints 1-3, 4-5, 6-7.

**Materials:**

- Gender Integration Framework Placemats
- Sticky Notes (color-coded by Outcome)
- Sharpies
- Banner

OC1

OC2

OC3

OC4

OC5

### REVIEW & PRIORITIZATION SESSION

30 min

**INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Come back together as a larger group.
2. Review the post-it activity ideas on each Gender Constraint board for themes and commonalities.
3. For select activities, brainstorm measurement ideas and potential indicators as a group.
4. Capture the main points for each Gender Constraint and any potential indicators on the Framework Banner.

**Materials:**

- Banner

## APPENDIX B GENDER INTEGRATION FRAMEWORK WORKSHOP PICTURES



*Limpho Maema, SAEP Gender Specialist, presenting at the Gender Integration Framework Workshop*



*SAEP Team working in breakout groups at the Gender Integration Framework Workshop*



*Limpho Maema, SAEP Gender Specialist, with the completed posters from the Gender Integration Framework Workshop*