USAID Policy on Gender Equality and Female Empowerment

USAID/Central Asia
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“When women do better, countries do better, communities do better, and families do better.”

- Mark Green, USAID Administrator
The goal of this 2012 policy is to improve the lives of citizens around the world by:

- Advancing equality between females and males
- Empowering women and girls to participate fully in and benefit from the development of their societies.
USAID’s Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy Goals

• **Reduce** gender disparities:
  • In access to, control over and benefit from resources, wealth, opportunities and services - economic, social, political, and cultural.

• **Reduce** gender-based violence;
  • And mitigate its harmful effects on individuals.

**Increase the** capabilities of women and girls to:
  • realize their rights;
  • determine their life outcomes, and influence decision-making in households, communities, and societies.
Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Requirements:

- **Conduct gender analyses** to identify and explain gaps between males and females that exist in households, communities, and countries;

- **Integrate activities to address gender gaps into all USAID’s strategies, projects, and activities.**

- **Use indicators** to track progress towards reducing gaps and achieving gender equality.

- **Document** and manage negative consequences.

- **Learn from and adapt** future work to better promote gender equality.
What is Gender Analysis?

Gender analysis is a social science tool used to identify, understand, and explain gaps between males and females that exist in households, communities, and countries such as:

• Differences in the status of women and men and their access to assets, resources, opportunities, and services;

• The influence of gender roles and norms on the division of time between paid employment, unpaid family care work, and volunteer activities;

• The influence of cultural norms and beliefs related to leadership roles and decision-making; constraints, opportunities, and entry points for narrowing gender gaps and empowering females; and

• Potential different impacts of development policies and programs on males and females, including unintended or negative consequences.
Gender Analysis: 5 Domains

Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
• Women and girls constitute 70% of the global population in extreme poverty: high upfront costs of electricity connection making it harder for women to connect to the electric grid or adopt new technology or adjust to rapid tariff increases.

Patterns of Power and Decision-making
• Energy policy and planning is dominated by men: Women account for only 5% of executive board membership and 14% of senior management positions. Women account for 9% of the global workforce in construction, 12% in engineering, 15% in financial and business services, and 24% in manufacturing.

Cultural Norms and Beliefs
• Women are usually concentrated in the financial, administrative, human resources, and promotional aspects of energy organizations. Perceptions that ‘energy work’ involves heavy labor and is not ‘suitable’ for women remain common and girls and women may be discouraged from doing “men’s work”.

Gender Analysis: 5 Domains

Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices

• Even though the Constitution and labor legislation says that men and women should be treated equally there is a pronounced gender wage gap (the difference between the average wage for men and the average wage for women) in Kazakhstan of 32% even when women and men have the education and training. (2014 data)

• In the Kyrgyz Republic, about 400 professions—such as drillers, battery attendants and electricians—are forbidden for women. In Tajikistan, women cannot work in the manufacture or repair of aircraft or be a master at metallurgical enterprises (metallurgy is the study of the physical and chemical behavior of metal elements).

Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use

• Accessing energy reduces time on household chores made by improved household lighting, electric water pumps and clean cook stoves, improved security and mobility due to better outdoor lighting around the house and in public spaces, and access to news and information via TV and radio. Access to energy can provide women and men with more free time to enjoy leisure or community engagement interests.
Women’s Participation in the Energy Sector

• Women’s leadership and participation in the energy work force will lead to more effective clean energy initiatives and lead to higher returns on investment.

• Further research and investment is needed to attract and retain women to participate in the energy sector.

• Creating and sustaining suitable environments for women is necessary such as providing flexible working arrangements and better access to information.

• The private sector has the potential to offer many opportunities for women to formally participate in the sector. More work is needed to ensure the private sector is actively recruiting and retaining women, as well as developing gender-responsive and inclusive strategies.
USAID’s Energy and Infrastructure Gender-Based Violence Toolkit

- Provides guidance on how to analyze gender-based violence in energy and infrastructure projects
- Outlines highest risks in these types of projects (sexual harassment, risk of violence using public spaces, risks of violence and public transportation)
- Provides recommendations for activities to prevent and respond to GBV prevention and response during project implementation
USAID: Engendering Utilities Project

The Engendering Utilities Program focuses on improving information about and knowledge of gender in power sector utilities at the distribution level.

Approaches include:

• Increase women’s participation in the energy sector workforce.
• Outreach to universities and schools to interest women in utility careers
• Gather data/evidence on the impacts of gender equity and women’s economic empowerment.
• Address unconscious bias in organization’s human resources.
• Develop diverse change agendas to sustain organizational transformation.
QUESTIONS?