



Social and Gender Assessment Fact Sheet

www.mca-m.gov.mw

MCA-Malawi Compact Social and Gender Assessment

The main goal for the Malawi Compact is to reduce poverty through economic growth. MCC recognizes gender inequality as a major constraint to economic growth. Social and gender integration in the Malawi Compact is one of MCC's key requirements for ensuring economic growth that effectively factors in social inclusion. MCC has a specific Gender Policy and Guidelines that provides Compacts with systematic direction during the planning, implementation and evaluation of the Compacts as a mechanism for ensuring that women and men equally participate and benefit from all the Compacts projects and activities.

The MCC Gender Integration Guidelines requires the development of a Social and Gender Integration Plan (SGIP) to systematize and ensure gender integration across the compact's projects and activities. Accordingly, the Malawi SGIP highlights social and gender issues that relate to the compact's projects and examines how social and gender integration in all projects' activities will be accomplished. This Plan is a working document that will be updated as required during the implementation of the Compact, following further social and gender analysis that will be conducted by the Consulting Engineer during the Environmental Social Assessments (ESA's) by the various contractors and Social and Management Plans (SMP's) and the Resettlement Action plan in addition to close monitoring of the included activities by MCA and MCC as well as following consultation with all involved stakeholders.

1. Social and Gender Assessment in the Power Sector Reform Project

The Power Sector Reform Project complements the Infrastructure Development Project by providing support for the Government's policy reform agenda and building capacity in pivotal sector institutions: ESCOM, the Malawi Energy Regulatory Authority ("MERA"), and the Ministry of Energy ("MoE"). The Power Sector Reform Project consists of two activities: the ESCOM Turnaround Activity and the Regulatory Strengthening Activity.

The social and gender issue that emerged during the development of the project was how to ensure that the revisions of the electricity tariff met the objectives of financial viability for ESCOM

while being socially responsible by addressing the poor and women headed-households' constraints in accessing electricity.

Capacity Building for MERA and MNREE

MERA and MNREE will be given the knowledge and skills for factoring in women and men's different needs for use of energy and be able to effectively integrate social and gender issues in all their operations.

Data collection and analysis for planning, monitoring, evaluation and communication activities will have to be disaggregated by gender or by social groups. Building (or increasing) the capacity of MERA and MNREE to integrate social and gender issues in their planning and operations is an important step towards reducing gender inequalities and social exclusion in the sector

ESCOM:

Underrepresentation of women in decision-making positions and the low levels of women in engineering and technical education in general are issues that relate to the objective of improving governance within ESCOM. Equity and inclusiveness are essential components of governance, which must translate in the adoption of measures to ensure the full participation of all groups in equal terms in informal and formal decision-making structures.

The mission of ESCOM is to “generate, transmit and distribute electrical energy and provide related services, motivated by desire for excellence through the use of appropriate technologies, to the satisfaction of customers and other stakeholders.” At present, ESCOM lacks the knowledge and skill to integrate social and gender issues in their programming and operations, both internally and externally to promote gender equality and social inclusion. An assessment of social and gender integration in ESCOM will provide the basis on which interventions can be better developed to fully engender the institution.

2. Social and Gender Assessment in the Infrastructure Development Project (IDP)

Women's lack of education/illiteracy, lower status and lack of decision-making power make them more vulnerable to discrimination when it comes to equitable treatment in access to jobs in construction activities and to resettlement and compensation activities.

The ESIA identified as a positive impact of the ID project the *use of local workers for infrastructure construction*. Women may however be precluded from accessing work with the possible exception of unskilled labour jobs, unless appropriate measures are taken to ensure their participation. For example, information on such jobs made available locally may not reach them if the means of advertising the jobs are limited to posters or the local radio. Prejudices against female workers in construction may also preclude firms from hiring women.

Measures will be identified in the ESIA's and implemented as per the ESMPs to ensure full and effective participation of women and their capacity to draw benefits from the construction itself and other related operations and businesses

Another issue that needs to be taken into consideration is the increased community and worker exposure to HIV/AIDS associated with mobile workforce (*ESIA*). The Assessment reports that “*the Southern Region (where most of the ID and ENRM activities will take place) is the most densely populated area of the country and currently has the highest prevalence rate in the country, 20,5*”. Malawi’s 2003 National HIV/AIDS Policy recognized that mobile populations tend to be more vulnerable to the transmission of HIV/AIDS. If construction requires the hiring of workers from outside the communities, these workers will be more vulnerable to contracting HIV and AIDS and contaminating women of the communities. They may engage in risky sexual behavior such as unsafe casual sex with local partners in the communities or with sex workers. Women would, in both cases, face an increased likelihood of contracting the virus.

Resettlement:

With the acquisition of ‘right of way’ (ROWS) for the rehabilitation of the power lines, the ESIA identified as potential impacts the loss of assets (land, crops, structures, improvements) and the loss of future land uses and economic activities such as residences, agriculture, trading. In such cases, women may find themselves in a disadvantaged position. Poverty, heavy workload, lack of control over land and their products, dominance of men in decision-making process and overall lower status of women when it comes to dealing with outsiders are key gender issues identified in the ESIA. Current ESCOM mechanism and compensation modalities for PAP do not factor issues pertaining to women and vulnerable persons and loss of livelihood and if safeguards are not put in place the women and the vulnerable are likely to be left worse off than before.

The issue of child labour is also relevant for the construction activities of the project as there will be hiring of local labour force among the communities. Poor households with small plots of agricultural land and facing difficulties in accessing income-generating activities may try to find employment for children under the legal working age.

3. Social and Gender Assessment in the Environment and Natural Resource Management Project (ENRMP)

A baseline analysis for the ENRMP findings affirmed that the gender differences at play in the Shire River catchment area include lack of women’s access and control over resources and decision making over the household assets: in most villages, women have generally less access to productive assets even if they contribute to the household livelihood; men tend to make larger contributions and therefore have greater control over the assets. Women in townships and urban areas are more dependent on men for their livelihoods, which makes them more vulnerable to food and income insecurity. Women also expressed their limited capacity to influence household decisions and actions that would result in adoption of farming practices in line environmental protection measures.

The ENRM project through its small grants mechanism and/or the Trust Fund will fund NGOs, CBOs, farmers’ associations and other groups through the issuing of RFPs (Request for Proposals) for specific types of land resource management interventions. In order for those interventions to take into consideration the gender issues identified above, measures will need to be taken throughout the RFP process. As stated in the ENRMP, “*the interventions prioritized in this plan should*

also increase livelihood options and address gender inequalities in natural resource dependent households in the Upper Shire catchments (p.20)”.

4. Social and Gender Enhancement Fund (SGEF)

The second component to enhancing the promotion of social and gender integration in the Compact is the Social and Gender Enhancement Fund (SGEF) which specifically complements the ENRM interventions. The SGEF has been designed to answer specific gender issues relating to the Compact, with a separate budget of \$2m.

The purpose of the SGEF activity is to address social and gender challenges that inhibit adoption and sustainability of ENRM-related programs. Therefore, the SGEF activity is to be implemented in conjunction with projects that focus on conservation agriculture and improving the management of natural resources either through the ENRM project or projects supported by other organizations. Considerations of efficiency in managing grants that will be provided, early results as well as sustainability will be taken into account during the identification of appropriate NGO's and CBO's that will access the grant through a competitive process to implement a set of integrated activities.

- **Activities**

- Community engagement and training of local leaders and men
- Community-based tools for improved and equitable land utilization and management
- Leadership training for women
- Adult Functional Literacy and Numeracy for women and men.
- Economic empowerment of women and training in business skills