

Proceedings Report on Gender Focal Persons Capacity Building Workshop on Gender and Renewable Energy



Towards a critical mass of gender and energy network

27 May 2021

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Introduction

The Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC) in collaboration with the SADC Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (SACREEE) jointly held a virtual Regional Workshop on Mainstreaming Gender in the SADC Renewable Energy Sector for Gender Focal Persons (GFPs) on 27 May 2021. The workshop was attended by GFPs representing the Ministries of Energy and Gender/Women Affairs from Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe. Representatives from regional and national energy regulatory bodies also attended the workshop.

The purpose of the workshop was to strengthen the capacity of GFPs from SADC Member States and regional energy regulatory bodies on mainstreaming gender in the formulation and implementation of programmes and projects in the SADC renewable energy (RE) sector. The main objective being to build a critical mass of gender and energy stakeholders' network with increased capacity to ensure meaningful gender mainstreaming in the programmes that promote gender equality in the RE sector.

The capacity-building initiative was held against the background that the region is facing specific challenges in the area of energy development and women are disproportionately affected by the challenges associated with access to modern sources of energy compared to men. Women and girls are largely responsible for household and community activities including energy provision and without access to modern energy services, women and girls often spend most of their time performing basic subsistence tasks which are time-consuming and physically draining, such as collecting biomass fuels. The necessity of doing such tasks limits the time for participation in decent wage employment, accessing educational opportunities, and enhancing the standard of living. It further limits the options for social and political interaction outside the household.

Gender and renewable energy are central to human and socioeconomic development as stipulated in various developmental frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals, the SADC Energy Protocol, the Revised SADC Protocol on Gender and Development as well as the SADC regions development blueprint, the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan 2020-2030. Access to energy is gendered and women in most countries in the region are experiencing energy poverty differently and more severely than men. Gender mainstreaming, if implemented in RE, has the potential to advance equitable and sustainable distribution of benefits for men and women at national and regional levels. Therefore, the workshop targeted GFPs as they are strategically positioned to influence and guide gender mainstreaming in RE programmes and projects under formulation and implementation in their respective Ministries or institutions.

The workshop was officiated by Mr. Pascoal Bacela, the National Director of Energy in the Ministry of Mineral Resources and Energy of Mozambique on behalf of the Minister, Hon. Ernesto Max Tonela. Mr Bacela highlighted the need for GFPs to use their capacities to push for implementation of gender sensitive programmes and projects as they deal with the various energy situations in their respective countries. The SARDC Executive Director gave the welcome remarks followed by a statement by SACREEE.

Welcome Remarks by SARDC Executive Director,

Munetsi Madakufamba



The SARDC Executive Director, Mr. Munetsi Madakufamba, welcomed participants to the important workshop whose purpose was to advance gender mainstreaming in renewable energy in the SADC region which was being held amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Madakufamba noted how the new SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020-2030, supported by the SADC Protocol on Energy recognizes that energy is the main driver for economic development and the drive towards industrialization in the region, although the benefits of renewable energy are currently not being fully exploited or maximised. He mentioned how vital it is for the region to shift towards cleaner sources of energy such as solar which can be better

exploited at a smaller scale, making it suitable for rural and peri-urban communities, instead of solely relying on hydro power which is prone to climatic challenges such as droughts and fossil sources that often have far reaching health problems and hurt the environment.

Madakufamba said it was imperative to mainstream gender in the energy sector as women are key players in the transition to universal energy access, yet they are often disproportionately affected by the challenges associated with access to modern sources of energy compared to men. He called on GFPs to address the limited representation and participation of women in designing home energy systems, resource access, and decision-making at national and regional levels as these are some of the major challenges within the gender and energy nexus. He added that access to modern energy services liberates and allows women to play an equal role in the development of any community, country or region and it frees the time for women and girls to concentrate on other economic and social pursuits which can improve the standard of living.

In this regard, Madakufamba emphasised how SARDC strives to promote gender equality in the renewable energy sector through knowledge support and capacity building on mainstreaming gender in the sector.

Statement by SACREEE Executive Director,

Mr Kudakwashe Ndhlukula

Mr Readlay Makaliki who is the Lead Technical Expert at SACREEE gave a statement on behalf of the SACREEE Executive Director, Mr Kudakwashe Ndhlukula. Makaliki introduced SACREEE and gave a brief background of the centre.



SACREEE was established in 2015 to contribute towards increased access to modern energy services, and improved energy security across the SADC region, through promotion of market-based uptake of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies, and energy services. SACREEE was mandated by SADC member states to play a key role in the implementation of the Southern African renewable energy and energy efficiency strategy and Action Plan, which spans from 2016 to 2020.

Makaliki highlighted that the SACREEE's business plan for 2019 to 2023 envisions to empower women in the energy sector through;

1. mainstreaming of gender in the regional and national energy policies,
2. promoting women's economic empowerment entrepreneurship and innovation and
3. women networking activities.

He added that mainstreaming gender is one of the main goals in all programs that SACREEE is implementing. For example, the SADC Renewable Energy Entrepreneurship Support Facility which is supported by International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), will be implemented to empower and capacitate the small and medium enterprises which are mainly owned by women, to upscale their projects.

Makaliki stressed that SACREEE aims to work closely with the SADC Gender Unit, as well as Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and the Global Network for Regional Sustainable Energy Centres (GN-SEC) to advance gender equality through monitoring, training and capacity building as RE offers diverse opportunities along the value chain requiring different skill sets.

Opening Remarks by Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy of Mozambique,

Mr Ernesto Max Tonela

The Opening Remarks were shared by Mr Pascoal Bacela who is the National Director of Energy of Mozambique on behalf of the Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy, Ernesto Max Tonela who could not attend due to prior engagements. Bacela began by commending SARDC and SACREEE for convening such an important dialogue which served as a platform to share experiences and build capacities of GFPs towards advancing the role of women in RE.

Bacela noted with great concern the different impacts women and men are facing due to power shortages with women and girls being the most affected as they are, to a large extent, responsible for household and community activities, including energy provision.

In this regard, Bacela highlighted the need for a regional outlook on the challenges of mainstreaming gender in the RE sector in southern Africa to identifying ways in which to enhance the equal participation and benefit to both women and men as a critical dimension for sustainable development and gender equality. He stressed that the GFPs workshop will be a chance to map a way forward in pushing for implementation of gender sensitive programmes and projects in the SADC region. He further emphasised on the need to put into practice effective actions for gender equality in the energy sector in SADC Member States through campaigns and discussions and other initiatives.



Renewable Energy in the SADC Region

Eugenia Masvikeni, the Renewable Energy Expert at SACREEE presented on the status of Renewable Energy in SADC. She introduced SACREEE and its role in the SADC region and highlighted that the main focus area of the centre is policy development and research, capacity building, knowledge management and facilitating finances for various private sector projects.

She highlighted that the energy access in the SADC region has an average of 48 percent with electrification in the urban areas being at 75 percent and 32 percent in rural areas. Masvikeni touched on the main drivers of renewable energy and energy efficiency uptake which will upscale energy access in the region. The drivers are effective environmental policies, implementation of international commitments (e.g Paris agreements), energy security and self-sufficiency, declining costs of renewables and improved technologies. She also mentioned the barriers that are inhibiting fast deployment of renewable energy which are institutional barriers, environmental barriers, technical barriers, financial barriers and social barriers. She said the barriers are inhibiting development in the energy sector, which is mostly because of policy gaps caused by lack of commitments and general lack of awareness in the region. The COVID-19 has also caused challenges to the RE sector where development targets of promoting RE are not being met.

The SADC Renewable Energy Entrepreneurship Support Facility project, which is being implemented by SACREEE, seeks to address the barriers and challenges raised. Most businesses fail to access funding from finance institutions because of various reasons, hence, the program assists entrepreneurs to secure funding as well as maintaining their business successfully through capacity building programs. She said so far, they have trained SMEs from Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, with 54 percent of the participants being women and 56 percent being men.

Masvikeni added that SACREEE is running the Renewable Energy Decision Support Tools which aims to identify renewable energy resources and grid integration strategies in order to intensify energy access to remote areas in the region and identify knowledge gaps as well as ways of developing capacity. Under the same program, they will be focusing on mapping of renewable energy and power systems planning and policy processes, potential projects in areas of prioritization and the renewable energy impacts on capacity investments and power systems operation.

Masvikeni concluded by stating that gender remains a key area that SACREEE prioritizes and makes a conscious decision to ensure that all the programs have a gender component. She said they are in the process of setting up a sustainable energy knowledge hub where they will collect information that will be made available to different stakeholders and will strive to make ensure that all the information that they collect is gender mainstreamed.

Rationale for Mainstreaming Gender in the SADC Renewable Energy Sector

A presentation by SARDC on the Rationale for Mainstreaming Gender in the Renewable Energy Sector emphasised the key role of the gender and energy nexus in achieving gender equality and sustainable development. The presentation noted the importance of gender equality as a central component in sustained economic growth and industrial development, which are the drivers of poverty reduction, social integration, and environmental sustainability. Energy, particularly Renewable Energy, was presented as a critical crosscutting issue with the potential of improving the standard of living as it is safe, clean, secure, sustainable and affordable.

The presentation explained why access to renewable energy can reduce some of the challenges in Member States such as load-shedding, deforestation, unproductive time spent in sourcing alternative energy sources, crime (particularly gender-based violence) and household air pollution, among others. The presentation showed that if the energy challenges are addressed and gender equality achieved, the economic development in the SADC region would accelerate. This perspective was supported by the examples of countries that have advanced toward gender equality and have economies that are doing better than those yet to advance women empowerment, gender equity and equality.

SARDC therefore encouraged GFPs to approach social and economic development using a gender-energy nexus framework rather than addressing the issues in isolation. A SARDC case study on the impact of energy poverty on women in Mutare, Zimbabwe was shared to illustrate the socio-economic challenges that can affect women and men when energy is not readily available and what benefits can be achieved when energy is available.

Community benefits from mainstreaming gender in energy

A study conducted by SARDC in September 2018 on the impact of mainstreaming gender in transboundary water management documented the many benefits that access to energy can bring to communities, particularly women who bear the burden of inadequate access to modern technologies.

The study which was conducted in Zimbabwe, in a small community in Mutare, revealed that with no access to electricity there was no lighting at the local clinic and this had a negative impact on the women who got into labour overnight. Women in labour had to bring their own light sources such as candles, torches and kerosene lamps which are not a reliable source of illumination. Medication storage was a challenge as the clinic had no access to electricity for proper refrigeration of drugs which required such storage.

At the local school, it was difficult for teachers to teach their pupils subjects related to Information Technology (IT), as there was no means of doing practical lessons. It was in additional difficulty for teachers to stay after hours marking books and preparing for lessons due to the unavailability of reliable illumination sources. The headmaster of the school noted in addition that the school was understaffed because teachers did not want to be employed at this school due to the unavailability of electricity.

The people in the community had limited access to information, as only a few had solar panels to charge and listen to the radio and charge phones, some community members noted no reason to purchase TVs and radios because of the unavailability of electricity in the community.

However, when the Micro-Hydro and Irrigation Scheme was introduced, the community now has access to electricity. The micro-hydro scheme draws water from a river in the community which it uses to power the community with electricity. The establishment of the scheme has had manifold benefits which include,

- ❖ **Health** Women can now deliver overnight with lighting in the rooms, and the clinic can stock drugs that require refrigeration.
- ❖ **Education** The Chipendeke Primary School is now connected to electricity and can attract more teachers, reducing the teacher-pupil ratio as well as offering a night-school facility for elders in the community who include women.
- ❖ **Media** Women and children can now watch cable television as well as own devices such as cell phones which allow access to entertainment and information services

Effective Strategies for Mainstreaming Gender in Renewable Energy

The presentation on Effective Strategies for Mainstreaming Gender in Renewable Energy focused on some of the methods which can be used to identify gender gaps and the tools which can be used to address them through the process of gender mainstreaming. These include;

- **Gender Sensitive Analysis** - a systematic attempt to identify key issues contributing to gender inequalities so that they can be accurately addressed
- **Gender Sensitive Indicators** – indicators that point out gender-related changes in society over time. Their usefulness lies in their ability to point to changes in the status and roles of women and men over time, and therefore to measure whether gender equity is being achieved. This is how gender-disaggregated data is collected
- **Gender Sensitive Planning** - A planning approach that recognizes the different roles that women and men play and their different needs. This approach is informed by gender-sensitive analysis and informs design and implementation
- **Gender Sensitive Budgeting** - A process of integrating gender perspectives into the overall context of collection and allocation of public resources effectively.

The presentation touched on Mainstreaming Gender in the Programme/Project Cycle. The Project Cycle encompasses identifying, developing and implementing a project and during these stages, there is need to implement the right gender mainstreaming strategies to understand the situation of women and men in any given context and ensure project design addresses the practical and strategic needs and priorities of women and men. The presenter highlighted key questions to ask during each stage of the cycle to ensure the needs of the target group are identified and addressed.

- **Project identification and formulation stages** - initial phase which identifies the problem and generates project ideas and identification of interventions. The interventions are designed to address the problem through targeted interventions to the concerned groups. During the project identification stage, the key questions to ask are;
 - a) How will the project affect women and men differently?
 - b) Was the targeted group involved in conducting the needs assessment and were they asked for their opinion on problems and needs?
 - c) How will the intervention advance gender equality and address the identified problems?
 - d) What indicators are best suited to track results and impact?
 - e) Allocate sufficient financial resources for gender equality and women empowerment activities.
 - f) Is the level of funding enough to complete the planned tasks and will both women and men benefit equally?
- **Project implementation stage** - the phase where the project is carried out or implemented. It signals the operational phase of the project where tasks and activities are carried out in sequence based on a time frames and project implementation plan. Key questions to ask during Project implementation stage are;
 - a) Is continuous consultation being done with the beneficiaries?
 - b) Are women and men equally participating in the development of a Micro-Hydropower Project;
 - c) Are the budgetary allocations addressing gender issues?
 - d) Are the women, men and vulnerable groups accessing the resources equally
 - e) If there is any training involved, e.g., operating equipment, key questions to ask are:
 - f) Is the target group receiving the training equally?
 - g) Have all the project personnel received gender sensitive training?
 - h) Ensure collection of gender-disaggregated data to assist with monitoring and evaluation after project closure
- **Project monitoring and evaluation stages** - the continuous observation and documentation of the project based on the initial plan. This process is often conducted from project inception through to closure. Key questions to ask during the project monitoring and evaluation stages are;
 - a) Have the identified challenges been addressed?
 - b) Have the differentiated challenges of women and men been addressed with a gender-perspective?
 - c) Did women and men equally participate and benefit from the intervention?
 - d) Has gender-disaggregated data been collected?

- e) In what way has the project improved the lives/situations of women and men?
- f) What was done well?
- g) What can be done differently in future?

SADC National Experiences

Gender focal persons were invited to share national experiences on their progress with regards to mainstreaming gender in renewable energy. This opened room for sharing of effective practices for replication and identification of challenges.

Botswana

Budani Madandume, a Gender & International Development Specialist at the Ministry of Nationality, Immigration and Gender Affairs shared the Botswana government's efforts in pushing the gender and renewable energy agenda. Madandume advised that the Ministry of Nationality, Immigration and Gender Affairs is actively supporting institutions to develop sectoral gender committees to help mainstream gender matters across all facets of development. More so, he said the Botswana Power Company has taken towards mainstreaming gender in its power utility and provision development agenda. However, he aired concern on how the recognition towards the role and work of a GFP is still low in the country, with GFPs not being given much room to make contributions in key planning processes. He added that, some GFPs are appointed without the knowledge and experience on gender issues and there is therefore need for more capacity building initiatives and tools such as this GFPs workshop to promote effectiveness of their work. With regards to gender responsive budgeting, Madandume advised that Botswana was not doing so well in this area as the nation has not been able to achieve the "energy for all agenda" due to small funds being allocated towards programmes and projects that seek to alleviate women's position.

Malawi

Thokozani Malunga, the Assistant Director/ Chief Energy Officer and GFP in the Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining pointed out that the economic empowerment for women in Malawi is one of their major objectives and the Ministry has been working with the Ministry of Gender, Children Disability and Social Welfare to train women on the productive uses of RE. Due to the training programmes, women in the communities have been able to own businesses using power from RE powered mini grids and they oversee most of the day-to-day operation, planning and management. However, Malunga noted that there was a decrease in the uptake of RE products due to the Malawi market being saturated with substandard devices which the community deemed as low quality. In this regard, he said there is need to enforce or regulate standards on RE products for quality purposes.

John Taulo, Lecturer and Head of Department at the University of Malawi of Science and Technology emphasised the lack of awareness on the linkages between poverty, sustainable development and gender equality. He said the University have done a lot of pilot studies on RE, which have not been very successful because only a few people benefit from most projects, get frustrated and end up not participating.

Mozambique

Angelina Bombe, MIREME Gender Focal Point from the Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy of Mozambique pointed out that the ministry in collaboration with the implementing agencies is developing a plan of activities with regards to the National Rural Electrification Strategy. These agencies are technicians from the areas of renewable energy, energy efficiency, energy planning, planning and budgeting, mining area (artisanal mining). She said that the major obstacle on getting funds is the lack of concrete and well-structured tools to share with partners in order to source funds for its implementation and there is no guarantee that the state budget will finance RE activities. She added that at the ministry level, before identifying and defining activities related to the mainstreaming of gender and RE, there should be a design of very specific recommendations where gender issues are included particularly in response to the Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL) commitment.

South Africa

Winnie Mamatsharaga, Deputy Director in the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy for South Africa spoke about skills development and school development initiatives where the communities are being trained and sensitized on the benefits of renewable energy and its technologies. The initiatives have been reducing gender inequality, unemployment and poverty in the community with more women and girls participating in the renewable energy sector.

Elizabeth Marabwa, the Chief Director of International Cooperation at the Department of Energy in South Africa gave insightful practices that are aimed at advancing gender integration into the RE sector. She highlighted that the energy sector has a policy document that carries an implementation plan with specific targets that the government has to meet in mainstreaming gender in the energy sector. The policy document was developed after a consultative process with the utilities and the end users of RE, including women and children. To support these efforts the Integrated Energy Plan (IEP) 2015-2050 and the National Gender Policy provide for mainstreaming gender in the RE sector.

Zimbabwe

Constance Nyamhuri, from the Ministry of Energy and Power Development shared that the ministry developed the Renewable Energy and the Biofuel policies which are gender sensitive. In addition, the government is working on legal instruments which will see the reduction in prices of Renewable Energy Technologies for ease of access to the majority and the promotion of clean energy uptake especially by women in the rural areas. These legal instruments will compliment or enforce the already existing frameworks such as the Statutory Instrument of 2019-2035 on Electricity (Solar Water Heating) Regulations encourages consumers to make use of solar water heating instead of the conventional electronic geysers which consume high amounts of grid energy.

Nyamhuri further highlighted that the energy sector is seeing some growth as there is renewable energy being fed into the main energy grid thereby increasing distribution. To that effect, the setting up of more off-grid systems to cater for the remote population in the country is in progress. The private sector has become involved in the process and are offering a wide range of affordable products and systems on a pay as you go arrangement which is convenient for most consumers. More so there is a Biogas digester programme being rolled out in the country to improve the uptake of clean energy. The programme is targeted at the rural populations whom the majority are women and children. Lastly, she stated that awareness campaigns are being conducted nationwide in which clean energy information and solutions are exhibited to the general public.

Autoridade Reguladora de Energia - Mozambique

Dacia Zavala, Legal Advisor at ARENE, which is an Energy Regulatory Authority of Mozambique indicated that there are only a few RE projects that are being implemented due to high costs of such development. She said it is important to have policies and legislation that support resource mobilisation for development of projects since one of the main objectives in Mozambique is to attract investments on RE which will benefit the community.

Southern African Power Pool

Bonje Muyunda, an Environmental Specialist at SAPP emphasised on the issue of reduction in deforestation and other ecosystem functions and services. She said issues of access to energy is beyond just adding megawatts but mostly about health, education and other benefits that occur as a result of access to energy. She added that access to energy will result in reduced impacts on the environment which links to issues of climate change. She said as we mainstream gender in the RE sector, women and girls will benefit because they will have access to education and other benefits.

SARDC

Kizito Sikuka from SARDC pointed out that one of the issues for SADC Member States to consider is undertaking research into why there is a low uptake of renewable energy by communities or citizens. Sikuka said RE is clean and cheaper than fossil fuels. He said getting to understand these challenges will assist in mainstreaming gender in RE more effectively and increase the uptake of RE.

Roles and Responsibilities of Gender Focal Persons in Mainstreaming Gender in Renewable Energy

Towards the end of the workshop, GFPs were invited to share their thoughts and actions going forward based on the discussions and capacity building sessions they had undergone. Elizabeth Marabwa from South Africa pointed out that the sessions were insightful and they had helped her in understanding the benefits of mainstreaming gender in RE. Mrs Marabwa highlighted in South Africa there is a performance plan that is presented to parliament annually to help track and monitor programmes targeting gender and development in the country. This reporting follows the pact made between the president and the ministers to ensure that in all their endeavours, gender should be mainstreamed. With such measures by the government in place, she pointed out that if political principals and executives embrace this pre-set, the work of the GFP becomes effective as their reporting would automatically feed into the higher tier reporting done to parliament within the parliament hence promoting the mainstreaming of gender at higher levels.

Muyunda outlined that SAPP has a gender statement with regards to development of projects around renewable energy. However, she highlighted that going forward, they may need to develop policy statements directly addressing the planning and operations or any other activities that may feed into the agenda for mainstreaming gender in the RE sector. As SAPP they would seek further guidance with the SACREEE, SARDC and the rest of the participants on how that can best be achieved.

Masefako Segooa from Department of Mineral Resources and Energy for South Africa highlighted that Gender mainstreaming is not prioritized in some institutions due to the lack of a broad understanding of its importance, he added that it is sometimes done for compliance and not for transformation hence it is not prioritised and is an added responsibility to individuals who already have other tasks. He said institutions need to mainstream gender into institutional structures so that a specific unit dedicated for gender mainstreaming is established with adequate capacity and budget allocation.

Malunga from Malawi stated that as a GFP, one of his key roles is to share the knowledge gained from this workshop with his colleagues in other departments that work in the renewable energy sector to ensure that the gender agenda is fulfilled. Sharing such information would help fast-track all efforts to a significant extent on mainstreaming gender in RE development. He highlighted that there is need to draw an action plan for the gender and energy ministry, covering the procurement division and the policy divisions of the government. In terms of support, he highlighted that there is need for assistance in formulating a data collection tool to help in any project related undertakings or policy formulation and a checklist to evaluate these policies adequately.

The SARDC Executive Director, Munetsi Madakufamba was in agreement with the proposal made by South Africa of how it may be necessary to engage political leadership and the executive authority on gender and energy matters to ensure commitment from a higher level, which would then cascade down to the corresponding subsequent levels of authority for effective implementation. He also extended a call to other participating states on whether this can be applicable in their respective nations as well to ensure coverage of progress and implementations across the whole of SADC. South Africa responded to this, reflecting on the 2017 energy ministers meeting that saw the respective regional ministers suggesting that gender mainstreaming must become part of development efforts in the sector. Madakufamba highlighted that SARDC is ready to provide support to GFPs to ensure their work at national and regional level is effective in advancing the gender and renewable energy trajectory. He further stressed on the need to raise capacity at all levels from top to bottom including the technicians responsible for the distribution of energy solutions.

The GFPs were informed that SARDC has a gender and renewable energy portal with information on the SADC region, including gender disaggregated data. SARDC called on the support of the GFPs to vail data to keep the portal up to date with recent, accurate information and statistics. SARDC extended a call to the GFPs to aid SARDC in being the first point of reference with regards to providing statistical information for the SADC region.

Wrap-up and Way Forward

The participants acknowledged the highly productive and informative capacity building sessions, discussion and contributions made by the organizers and participants during the workshop. It was acknowledged that the objectives of the workshop which aimed to ensure meaningful gender mainstreaming in the programmes that promote gender equality, not only in the RE sector, but energy sector as whole were successfully accomplished. Key points emerging from the workshop were outlined as follows;

- Women in the region experience energy poverty the most. Women and girls without access to energy spend most of their time performing time and heath taxing tasks and this limits social and political participation outside households.
- People in Southern Africa generally lack awareness on the benefits of RE and the importance of EE access. To the people mostly in rural regions, evidence of pylons and powerlines is what signifies energy access and development.
- It was agreed that there is need for more capacity building programs on gender mainstreaming, especially in the ministries responsible for energy, targeting all levels including the leadership, as input by staff such as GFPs who are in most cases low and mid-level staff is barely considered
- Governments must take the lead to ensure meaningful gender mainstreaming in the programmes that promote gender equality in the RE sector. The policies and strategies must prioritise women to participate in the development and implementation of RE projects.
- Participation of women in RE businesses and projects cannot be over emphasized. Women have a role to play in the transformation of the male dominated RE Independent Power Pool (IPP) industry and must be capacitated to handle larger projects and related challenges that may arise. Women who want to participate in the energy sector, particularly RE must be supported through the appropriate measures such as information and funding
- The inclusion of men is considered key to support gender mainstreaming. Men must be seen as champions in promoting gender mainstreaming in the renewable energy sector.
- The issue surrounding gender mainstreaming is an add-on responsibility to already existing portfolios in ministries and there is therefore need to engage focal points who are sorely responsible for gender mainstreaming.
- There is need for development and modification of open source RE planning tools that can be used by policy makers, utilities and Academia to enable an upscale in the development and deployment of RE and RET's.
- The need to scale up the influence of GFP's that is allowing them access to relevant platforms, resources as well as direct access to ministerial offices to ensure their work and contributions are taken up for consideration.

VOTE OF THANKS

Mr Malunga from Malawi gave the Vote of Thanks citing that the workshop was interesting, informative and brought to light many aspects about the roles of Gender Focal Persons in mainstreaming gender in renewable energy sector. He extended his thanks to SARDC and SACREEE team for preparing and sharing critical presentations on the mandates of the GFP's in their respective ministries, citing that it has renewed momentum and focus towards the agenda of Gender and Renewable Energies (GENRE). He outlined that he looks forward to future engagement over these and other matters that aid in fostering critical national and regional development.

Annex –List of Participants

Participants	Designation	Organisation	Contacts
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