

## Renewable World Global Gender Equality Policy

Version 1.0 of the policy approved by the Renewable World Board on 20th November 2018.

### Purpose

This policy outlines Renewable World's approach to gender inclusion when designing and delivering our programmes of work.

**Renewable World** is a registered charity which tackles poverty using renewable energy. We support the provision of affordable renewable energy services to improve incomes, health and education in the developing world.

**Our Vision:** A world where renewable energy is readily accessible to all, through which the organisation aims to reduce extreme poverty and mitigate against climate change.

**Our Mission:** We will bring affordable renewable energy and its productive benefits to poor communities by providing expertise, methodology and funds.

### Renewable World's commitment to gender equality

For Renewable World, realising our vision means a world where men and women have equal access to renewable energy, and equal opportunity to participate in decision-making, including how renewable energy is both distributed and used in their community to alleviate poverty. We envisage that this will result in a continually evolving range of diverse and productive uses of renewable energy that respond to the needs of all members of society.

Our aspiration is to give men and women an equal voice in renewable energy decision-making resulting in positive and sustainable change at all levels of society, from immediate poverty alleviation at household and community level to long-term climate change mitigation at global level.

Globally, over 1.1 billion people do not have access to reliable and affordable electricity services, and over 2.7 billion people do not have access to clean cooking facilities.

In poor rural and semi-urban areas in developing countries, female-headed households are less likely to have access to energy services than male-headed ones.

When energy services are available, the same services have different outcomes for men and for women.

*World Energy Outlook 2016*

### Renewable World's statement of policy

Gender equality is a basic human right. Based on this understanding, Renewable World believes that only by directly addressing gender discrimination and promoting gender equality and social inclusion can we advance our vision.

As an organisation Renewable World monitors and actively seeks to promote and maintain a gender balance within our Board, management and decision-making structures.

### Scope of policy

Our Gender Equality Policy guides Renewable World to ensure that we can deliver programmes, partner with like-minded organisations and organise for gender equality. This document highlights Renewable World's key and guiding principles for engaging in gender equality activities. It further clarifies why a focus on gender equality is fundamental for achieving our vision, and the important role each of us must play in translating this policy into action.

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### Definitions

**Sex:** refers to the genetic and physiological characteristics and traits that indicate whether one is male or female.

**Gender:** refers to socially constructed roles and responsibilities of women and men, and expectations held about characteristics, and likely behaviours of both men and women; the roles that we learn to fill from childhood onwards. Such roles, though deeply rooted in every culture, are changeable over time, and have wide variations both within and between cultures.

**Gender Equity:** refers to fairness and justice in the distribution of responsibilities and benefits between men and women (e.g. equal number of women and men on an organisation's Board of Directors). The concept recognises that power relations between girls and boys, men and women are unequal, and that such inequalities should be addressed.

Energy plays an essential role in both women's and men's lives. The energy sector is influenced by a set of persistent gender inequalities, including:

- gender gaps in energy access
- gender gaps in the energy labour market
- gender gaps in energy-related education
- gender gaps in decision-making

*Gender and energy. European Institute for Gender Equality, 2016*

**Gender Equality:** refers to the absence of discrimination on the basis of a person's sex in opportunities, the allocation of resources or benefits, or in access to services (e.g. equal participation and decision-making power by men and women on a Board of Directors). Gender Equity is a first step towards the goal of Gender Equality. Equality does not mean that women and men are the same but that their enjoyment of rights, opportunities and life chances are not governed or limited by whether they were born female or male.

**Women's Empowerment:** involves awareness-raising, building of self-confidence, expansion of choices, increased access to and control over resources and actions to transform the structures and institutions which reinforce and perpetuate discrimination against women and gender inequality.

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### Key approaches for gender equality

Renewable World recognises two key approaches to achieving gender equality:

**Gender Sensitive:** when the different needs, abilities, and opportunities of men, women, girls and boys are identified, considered and accounted for. Renewable World believes all our work should be gender sensitive as a minimum standard.

Significant evidence is now emerging to show that energy interventions that consider women's needs are more likely to have a significant impact on addressing household and community energy poverty and on gender equality. Ensuring women's equal participation in energy interventions has much higher potential of benefits for all.

*UN Women 2016; Glemarec et al. 2016*

A gender sensitive programme recognises that the role women play is as important as the role men play in addressing environment and development issues. It acknowledges that, because they have different roles, women and men may have different needs, which must be addressed to achieve sustainable development. A programming process is gender sensitive when the gender dimension is systematically integrated into every step of the process. This includes defining the problem, identifying potential solutions, agreeing the methodology and approach, and implementing the project. It further includes the stakeholder analysis, defining the objective, outcomes, outputs, and activities, the composition of the implementation and management team, budgeting, and the

monitoring and evaluation process.

Renewable World recognises that it is not enough to state that *"We do not make any distinction between women and men."* The so-called 'neutral' approach usually fails to address the specific needs of women and the constraints they face. In fact, women's invisibility leads to their exclusion.

**Gender Transformative:** when we use a gender sensitive approach and actively promote gender equality. In this instance, the shared control of resources and decision-making, and women's empowerment are central to an intervention. Renewable World strives to utilise gender transformative approaches whenever possible across our programmes. A gender transformative approach is a step up from gender sensitivity, with a project's interventions actively seeking to positively transform the existing situation for men and women, girls and boys.

In the context of ensuring access to energy, a gender-transformative approach entails not only improving women's access to key infrastructure and services, but also helping communities understand and challenge the social norms that perpetuate inequalities between men and women.

Although access to more modern energy alternatives will not necessarily lead to greater equality in gender roles, it can at least relieve some of the most burdensome and unhealthy aspects of their daily lives and expand the development options available to women, their families and their communities.

*ENERGIA, 'Fact Sheet on Energy, Gender and Sustainable Development', 2011*

Renewable World sees renewable energy-powered technology as a gender enabler, with time-saving technologies transforming women's and girls' lives, untying them from a cycle of unproductive and unrewarding tasks.

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### Guiding principles

Renewable World seeks to advance gender equality in all aspects of our work and across our organisation, guided by the following five principles:

1. **Recognising gender equality as a right:** Gender equality is of critical importance to achieve our organisation vision. This principle is upheld by international standards such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).
2. **Addressing root causes:** It is critical to identify and work to transform the root causes of gender inequality. This requires addressing social norms and institutions which reinforce gender inequalities and advocating for energy policies that promote gender equality.
3. **Adopting culturally-sensitive approaches:** Acknowledging that gender equality is about relationships, transformative gender approaches require working with whole communities, and at all levels, equally engaging female and male stakeholders in culturally-sensitive gender sensitive and transformative programming.
4. **Ensuring meaningful participation:** Men and women must be equally engaged in all activities throughout the project cycle, through the adoption of the organisation's Community Implementation Model.
5. **Engaging in collaboration and learning:** Integrating gender analysis in our research and work is essential to ensure our programming meets the needs of men and women. It is important to collaborate with organisations and stakeholders working on gender, translate what we learn into practice, and to share learnings widely.



*Yo Maya Gurung's life was transformed by the introduction of a hydraulic ram pump in her community in 2016.*

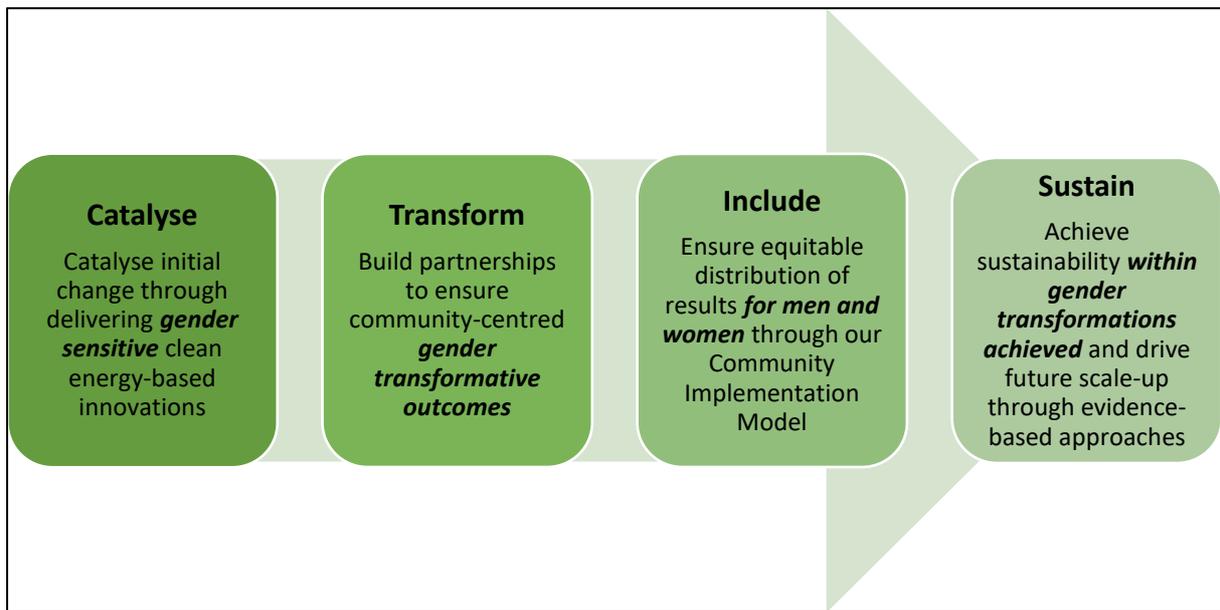
*"Before the project, life was difficult for women in my community. Domestic chores were hard and never ending. I used to spend two hours a day carrying water to irrigate a small vegetable plot near my house. We never imagined that we would have access to a technology that would pump*

*water from river to our fields. Since the system was installed, I have had access to irrigation water all year round. I received agriculture training and training to use climate smart technology for irrigation. It encouraged me to engage in vegetable farming on a commercial scale. Training has increased my knowledge and skills and I feel confident to negotiate price of my vegetables in the market. Last year I was able to grow vegetables in the dry season for the first time. I planted climber crops such as cucumber, bitter melon, french beans, runner beans and tomatoes. I sold the produce and earned NPR 14,000 (\$140 in one season). **Life is easier and much better for me than before.***

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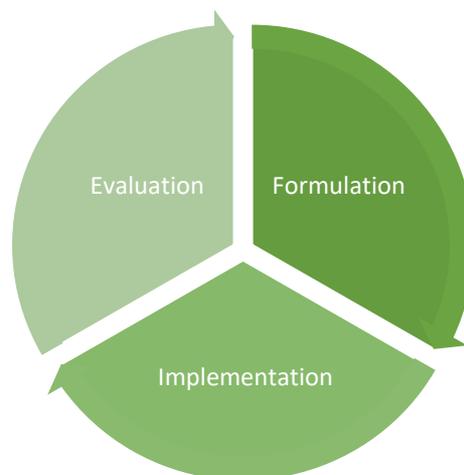
### Applying our gender principles within our Theory of Change

Barriers, such as cultural impediments, lack of infrastructure and difficulties in accessing finance are what Renewable World seeks to change through the introduction of sustainable, community-centred renewable energy using tools and business models developed over ten years of project work. Guided by our Theory of Change, attached as Annex One, Renewable World is committed to the promotion and advancement of gender equality through our development programming, partnerships and organisation. To achieve our goal of increasing access to clean and sustainable energy to tackle poverty among 100,000 people, whilst acting on our gender commitment, we will:



### What this means in practice – considering gender throughout the project cycle

To operationalise our Theory of Change in a gender sensitive – or transformative – manner, we will consider gender at every stage of the project cycle.



We will:

- Consider gender when developing any new **proposals**, guided by Renewable World’s proposal development guidelines: *‘Considering gender in proposal development’*, ensuring that all

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proposals are gender-sensitive as a minimum standard, and gender transformative where it is agreed that advancing gender equality should be one of the main objectives of the project.

- **Analyse each problem** to be addressed through Renewable World programmes from the viewpoint of women and men, girls and boys in the local context including, for example:
  - Local gender norms (e.g. different access and control over resources such as land, energy, water, sanitation, education or livelihoods; gendered roles and activities within the family and community; different mobility etc).
  - Gender gaps and barriers (different level of literacy, education, legal rights, property ownership, health and mortality outcomes, socio-political participation, participation in livelihoods etc).
- Engage women, youths and people with disabilities during initial socio-economic data collection consultations at **Pre-Feasibility phase**, following Renewable World's '*Socio-economic data collection*' template.
- Engage women and men at **Detailed Feasibility phase**, including single sex focus groups, as outlined in Renewable World's '*Participatory Focus Group Guidelines*'.
- Conduct a detailed socio-economic analysis at **Full Feasibility Phase** including a gender analysis, following Renewable World's '*Detailed Socio-Economic Data Tool*'.
- Assess gender considerations within project design, following Renewable World's '*Project design Guidelines*'.
- Address identified gender barriers in project activities, starting with project **Community Mobilisation activities**, guided by gender-sensitive tools including '*Good Governance training*' and '*Gender and Social Inclusion Training*' for communities, and '*Public Hearing Guidelines*'.
- Outline steps to ensure men and women and, where relevant, girls and boys, participate equally and have equitable access to project decision-making and project activities.
- Set a quota and outline empowerment strategies to ensure balanced representation of females and males in any committees, including in leadership roles, guided by tools such as Renewable World's '*Community Registration Checklist*'.
- Adopt a gender sensitive monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) approach including, for example:
  - Disaggregating all data and indicator targets by sex and age at output, outcome and impact level



- Ensuring equal representation of men and women within baseline, midterm and endline studies

- Consider the sustainability of actions from a gender perspective when planning, implementing and evaluating projects, guided by Renewable World's '*Sustainability Toolkit*'.

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**Annex one: Theory of Change**

