
Gender Mainstreaming in District Heating Projects in the Commonwealth of Independent States:

A Toolkit



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The objective of this toolkit is to provide guidance to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) staff and Climate Investment Funds (CIF) partners on how to identify gender issues in district heating and how to integrate gender considerations in district heating projects at different stages of the project cycle, from project preparation and implementation, through to monitoring and evaluation phases. The toolkit is based on findings from four gender assessments undertaken by the EBRD to inform district heating projects in Kazakhstan¹ and Ukraine² (see Box.2 for details). While it focuses on gender mainstreaming in district heating projects, some approaches and observations may also be applicable to broader energy efficiency investments.

This toolkit is structured in two parts. Part A provides the context and background on energy efficiency and district heating in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and the importance of assessing the gender-differentiated priorities, roles and needs of women and men in the district heating sector. Part B provides guidance on how to identify gender issues in the district heating sector and mainstream gender-responsive actions across the district heating project cycle.

Box 1

Glossary

District heating is a system where heat for more than one building or an area is produced at a central location and typically distributed through a network of insulated hot water pipes.

Gender refers to the social, behavioural and cultural attributes, expectations and norms associated with being male or female.

Gender mainstreaming is a process that systematically integrates gender perspectives into legislation, public policies, programs and projects. This process enables making women's and men's concerns and experiences to be made an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres with the goal of achieving gender equality.

Sex-disaggregated data is the collection and separation of data and statistical information by sex to enable comparative analysis.

¹ Cities of Aktau, Semei and Kyzylorda

² City of Lutsk

Part A

Background and Context of Gender in District Heating

Energy Efficiency, District Heating and the Link to Gender Equality

“Energy efficiency” refers to the practices of using less energy resources to provide the same or more services, in a cost-effective, environmentally-friendly manner that helps mitigate climate change impacts by reducing fossil fuel consumption and associated greenhouse gas emissions. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the Climate Investment Funds (CIF) and other partners support market transformation of energy-efficient appliances and widespread adoption of energy-efficient technologies in various sectors, including in the district heating sector.

Gender mainstreaming in energy efficiency projects takes as its starting point the identification of the roles and responsibilities of women and men as beneficiaries and users of electric power in their communities and as users of energy for domestic, productive, and community uses, and also as potential actors as employees, managers, and owners in energy value chains. Deployment of renewable energy technologies can have positive social impacts on both women and men, including enhanced access to services and the creation of employment opportunities, provided that such identification of potential benefits and challenges, as well as remedial measures, are identified upfront in the project process. Rural electrification and renewable energy projects have resulted in positive impacts on women and girls in terms of, e.g., improved security with street lighting, improved business opportunities for small and medium size enterprises, and improved access to information and education through radio and television, to name just a few.^{3 4} Whereas several studies have explored the link between energy access, welfare and gender by focusing on access to fuelwood, improved cooking technologies and access

to electricity, little has been written to date about the gender implications of the provision of district heating to households in multi-unit dwellings.

For people in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) left vulnerable by the economic transition, meeting the basic needs of heating has become increasingly difficult. Low-income families typically pay a higher proportion of their household income for heat than higher income groups. They are more likely to live in less energy-efficient dwellings because they cannot afford improvements that would make their homes more energy efficient and they may also lack information about such options. Additionally, female-headed households tend to cluster closer to the poverty line, further making the assessment of gender differences regarding access to services provided by district heating projects even more important from a poverty and social inclusion perspective.

Integrating gender considerations into district heating projects supports effective project implementation and attainment of overall project objectives. For example, during the stakeholder engagement process, ensuring that all current and potential users, both female and male, participate in consultation meetings during project preparation and provide feedback during project implementation can yield important insights into how services can be made more customer-responsive for both women and men, and thereby be further improved. Given women’s traditional role as primary care providers, enabling their participation in project planning is critical as they tend to spend more time at home and are more impacted by the quality of services provided. Further, as women frequently bear responsibility for managing the household budget, their engagement can also have a direct impact on collection rates and, ultimately, financially sustainable operation of energy services. Finally, it

Box 2

Contribution of District Heating to Climate Mitigation in the CIS

Reliable and affordable heating in homes and workplaces is of paramount importance in the CIS countries with long, cold winters. District heating was a popular heating method in Soviet times, and remains today a cost-effective way of supplying heat in a large number of CIS cities, where beneficiary residents have lower-middle incomes and live in high-density apartment buildings. The district heating systems in CIS countries were built under an economic system where cross-subsidies were commonplace and where artificially low fuel prices removed financial incentives for energy efficiency measures. Today, the sector remains mainly state-owned with few private operators active in the region.

District heating has the potential to be energy efficient and thus contribute to climate mitigation when well managed. Due to economies of scale present in high-density buildings, it results in lower carbon emissions than other sources of heating. Synergies from cogeneration can also raise the overall efficiency of power and heat production in such systems. Furthermore, district heating can also utilise energy from multiple sources, including industrial waste heat, municipal waste incinerators, geothermal energy and biomass. The use of local sources that would otherwise be wasted, as in the case of cogeneration, industrial waste heat and biomass, also helps improve energy security.

However, current district heating systems in CIS countries tend to have high distribution losses.

Underinvestment and inadequate maintenance since the breakup of the Soviet Union has resulted in deteriorated plant and equipment, outdated technology, and poor performance compared to Western European heating networks. Total heat losses from generation to end user of around 50% have been observed. This is due to use of older, less efficient boilers, poorly insulated pipes and hot water leaks from burst pipes⁵. Boilers often operate with low-quality heavy fuels without flue gas cleaning systems; management may also lack appropriate visibility and control of the network. Consumers often have limited control over the temperature or volume of heat supply (e.g., through use of thermostats). Metering of energy provided is also limited: most consumers are billed a flat rate charge for heating services, irrespective of consumption levels. This effectively removes incentives for users to reduce their consumption as no savings gains would be realized, as would have been the case with an accurate metering and pricing system.

Recent studies⁶ show that district heating in CIS countries is also inadequate in delivering services to low-income end-users. The particular obstacles can be sub-divided into issues with pricing and affordability⁷, as well as service reliability. The use of district heating services can cost much more compared to the direct use of coal or firewood. In sum then, some households use electricity or wood as a supplementary source of heating due to inadequate, costly, and/or unreliable supply of district heating.

³ Joshua Lewis. 2014. *Short-run and long-run effects of household electrification*, paper presented at Economic History Workshop, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada, April 25, 2014. Available at: http://www.econ.queensu.ca/files/other/Lewis%20electrification_SR_LR.pdf

⁴ World Bank/Independent Evaluation Group. 2008. *The welfare impact of rural electrification: A reassessment of the costs and benefits: An IEG impact evaluation*. Available at: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTRURELECT/Resources>

⁵ EBRD. 2008. Russia, Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) Municipal Services Development Project. Available at: <http://www.ebrd.com/work-with-us/projects/psd/sakha-yakutia-republican-msdp-gup-zhkh.html>

⁶ IFC. 2014. *Unlocking the Potential for Private Sector Participation in District Heating*. Available at: http://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/8fb84a00496e1a08a2c9f2cda2aea2d1/WB+IFC+Private+Sector_web.pdf?MOD=AJPERES

⁷ EBRD. 2005. *Can poor consumers pay for energy and water? An affordability analysis for transition countries*. Available at: <http://www.ebrd.com/downloads/research/economics/workingpapers/wp0092.pdf>

is well recognised that women can act as agents of change, encouraging their families to amend energy consumption practices (e.g., recycling, reducing heating use) thereby further enhancing energy efficiency.

Gender differences in the district heating sector

In accordance with its Strategy for the Promotion of Gender Equality (2016-2020)⁸, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), applies a gender perspective to infrastructure projects, including district heating projects, which can positively benefit both the service providers and their customers who include women and men, as well as girls and boys, and society in general.

Although district heating projects may at first appear to benefit everyone equally in a community, women and men may have different needs and priorities in terms of how a service should be designed and delivered, especially where these needs relate to their different economic activities and care responsibilities. Women and men often experience gender-differentiated barriers both to access and use of public services with respect to issues such as availability, safety, reliability and/or affordability, as documented in numerous studies worldwide. These barriers, more often than not, disproportionately affect women's lives, their perception of utility of the service, and may in turn restrict their initial and continued uptake and purchase of services, with impacts on physical mobility and employment.

Box 3

Assessing the Gender-Differentiated Priorities, Roles and Needs of Women and Men in the District Heating Sector in Kazakhstan and Ukraine

Between 2014-2016, the EBRD undertook four project-level gender assessments on the needs and priorities of women and men energy users in the cities of Kyzylorda, Aktau and Semei in Kazakhstan, and the city of Lutsk in Ukraine. The assessments addressed three interlinked aspects, namely: (a) gender differences in the use of energy, (b) customer engagement of women and men with the service provider, and (c) women's access to employment in the district heating service providers. The main findings of the gender assessments were as follows:

- **Heating source preferences:** While decision-making on heat use appeared to be jointly made by men and women, there are gender differences with regards to the preferred source of heating. Most women and men preferred district heating compared to other sources of heating as it was considered reliable, comfortable while using coal and wood was considered labour-intensive. There was, however, a gender difference when the choice was between district heating and gas. In Kyzylorda, more women than men preferred district heating, mainly because women had safety concerns related to the use of gas;
- **Service quality and complaints:** The quality of district heating services seemed to affect women more than men, due to women's presence in the home for longer hours. This resulted in women being more active in submitting inquiries and complaints;
- **User control of heating service:** The assessment revealed relatively high interest among both women and men in consumption-based energy regulation, specifically the ability of residents to better control their heating by using thermostats;
- **Energy conservation awareness:** The awareness of energy conservation measures was low among both women and men and environmental considerations did not appear to influence their choice of heat source, which were instead dominated by consumption-based energy regulation concerns;
- **Sector employment:** Employment in the district heating sector remains male-dominated, particularly in technical and management positions.

EBRD/CTF. 2014. *Gender Assessment of District Heating Projects in Kazakhstan.*

EBRD/CTF. 2016. *Gender Assessment of District Heating Project in the City of Lutsk in Ukraine.*

⁸ The EBRD's first ever gender strategy seeks to increase women's economic empowerment and equality of opportunities in EBRD's Countries of Operation (CoOs) by focusing on three specific objectives: improving access to finance and business support for women-led businesses, ii) increasing access to employment opportunities and skills for women, and iii) improving access to services, across sectors. See EBRD. 2015. *Strategy for the Promotion of Gender Equality 2016-2020*. Available in five languages at <http://www.ebrd.com/gender-strategy.html>

Part B

The Toolkit: Mainstreaming Gender Issues Across the District Heating Project Cycle

Gender mainstreaming approaches

Gender mainstreaming in district heating projects is a process in which any planned action or project considers the needs of women as well as men. When done effectively, it can become an integral dimension of project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, in all intervention areas and at all levels, so that men and women can benefit equally from project activities. District heating projects impact men and women differently, therefore it is important to examine who is affected and in what manner, so as to enable equitable distribution of project benefits.

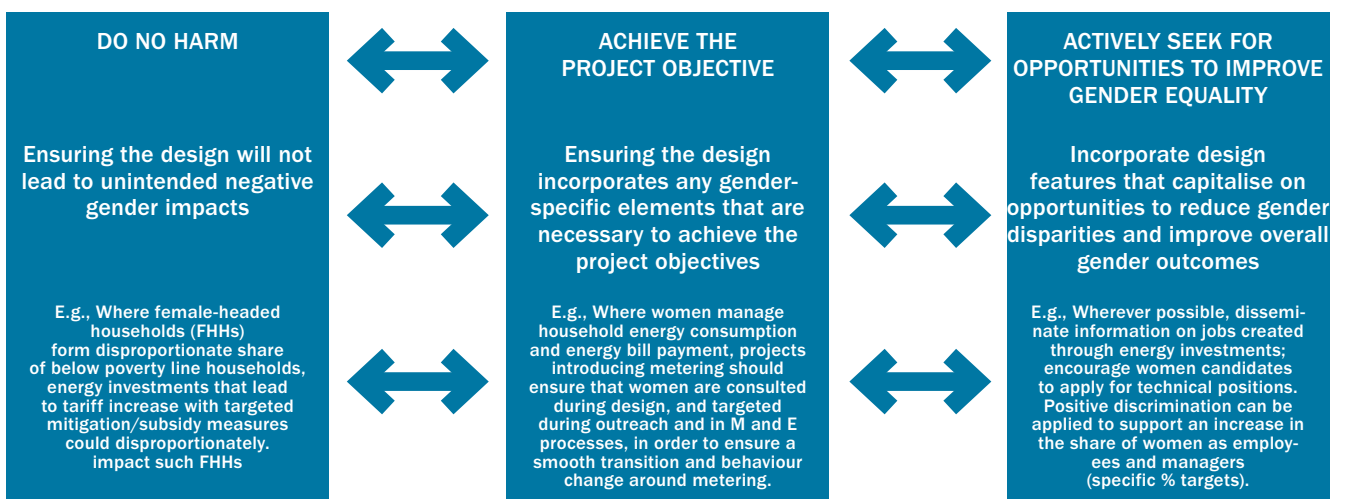
Mainstreaming gender into district heating projects requires an understanding of the importance of considering gender as a critical factor for the project's success and sustainability. The gender assessments in Kazakhstan and Ukraine showed that women are the ones managing household budgets. It is, therefore, critical to involve them in consultations to hear their

views on energy consumption and energy bill payment given their familiarity and knowledge of household spending. In the case of household visits for meter reading and cost estimation, for example, women prefer to interact with women staff of the district heating company instead of men mainly due to safety concerns.

There should be attention paid also to the allocation of responsibilities for undertaking different aspects of gender mainstreaming and integration of these into project management. It is important that the company collects sex-disaggregated data across all levels to identify gender gaps in the company's workforce and ways to promote women's employment as well as identify where the gender balance could be improved in order to ensure higher customer satisfaction levels. Moreover, it is recommended that a gender specialist is involved in project preparation, design and implementation to ensure that differentiated needs of men and women are addressed throughout the project cycle.

Figure 1

Range of approaches to gender mainstreaming in district heating⁹



⁹ The World Bank 2013: Integrating Gender Considerations into Energy Operations

Gender entry points in district heating

If gender issues are properly identified and understood, they can be integrated into project design and implementation to ensure that project benefits are equally distributed among service users, utility employees and the community at large.

The following can be considered key entry points and good practices in gender mainstreaming in district heating:

Table 1

IDENTIFIED ISSUES	GOOD PRACTICE
Stakeholder engagement	As part of the due diligence process, gender sensitive stakeholder engagement needs to be undertaken. The project needs to involve both women and men in the planning and decision-making processes of the project, ensure adequate information dissemination to reach both men and women end users through the appropriate communications channels, which may require modification from “standard” approach (timing/location/language), as well as ensure that the project’s grievance mechanism is accessible by both men and women.
District heating service delivery	Insufficient heat levels and a lengthy heating season in Central Asia affect women more than men, as women tend to spend more time at home on household chores and looking after children and the elderly. Most heating-related inquiries and complaints are submitted by women, as women tend to be affected more by the quality of the heating services provided therefore it is of value to ensure that the service delivery of district heating is gender sensitive.
Information dissemination	Communication channels mostly used by women should be chosen so that information dissemination reaches more women service users. For example, in Kyzylorda, it is more common for women than men to participate in meetings related to district heating. Women tend to communicate more with neighbours and relatives than men and often tend to be more involved in community issues. For example, in Aktau, few women expressed a preference to participate in meetings related to technical issues, while they participated in meetings related to payments, thus reflecting the gender-based roles and responsibilities within their families.
Lack of awareness on energy conservation	Considerable amounts of energy can be saved on district heating by making minor adjustments, such as the temperature control device at the radiator, or making sure windows are properly closed. Providing accessible information and training on energy conservation to women service users can be instrumental towards energy conservation, since women tend to spend more time at home than men.
Women’s employment in the male-dominated district heating sector	District heating companies tend to employ male technical staff, while female employees are found in customer-relations, financial and administrative positions. Managerial positions are largely held by males. The district heating company in Semei financed four female and three male engineering students with a view to employing them after course completion. The company has also established an agreement with technical training institutions on student internships in the district heating company.

IDENTIFIED ISSUES

GOOD PRACTICE

Customer service

Women are considered to be good communicators and able to easily reach consensus, which is one of the reasons why the centre responsible for receiving payments for communal services in Aktau (*MAEK1 Settlement Centre*) only employed women for meter reading and cost estimation. Nearly all dispatchers in charge of the telephone hotlines are female, which was appreciated by many women submitting complaints. Women appeared to appreciate that most staff receiving complaints and inquiries through the telephone hotlines are female staff.

Gender analysis of the demand and supply sides

It is useful to analyse the gender differences both from the *demand-side* (women as users of district heating services) and the *supply-side* (of district heating service provision, including women as employees of such entities). The analysis from the *demand-side* will look at gender differences in heat

use, including access to district heating and women and men's stated ability and willingness to pay for heating. The gender analysis from the *supply-side* will look at women's access to employment in the male-dominated district heating sector, their respective positions of decision-making and gender-informed customer engagement with regards to district heating services.

Demand- and supply-side gender analysis in district heating¹⁰

DEMAND-SIDE GENDER ANALYSIS:

What are the gender gaps, opportunities and constraints for women and men as users of district heating services regarding:

- a. Energy access, use and needs for improvement and new technology;
- b. Affordability;
- c. Customer satisfaction;
- d. User knowledge;
- e. Ability to benefit from improved energy services (e.g. participation in decision making);
- f. Impact of proposed energy sector interventions (i.e. both gender benefits and gender risks/adverse impacts) measures to address them.

SUPPLY-SIDE GENDER ANALYSIS:

What are the gender gaps, opportunities and constraints for women and men in the workforce of district heating service providers in relation to:

- a. Employment;
- b. Working environment (facilities) of the district heating utility company;
- c. Institutional capacity and training needs;
- d. Representation in decision making through committees, board, or management;
- e. Procurement criteria;
- f. Maternity/paternity/parental leave;
- g. Customer engagement/client interface.

¹⁰ Asia Development Bank. 2012. *Gender Toolkit: Energy*.

Integrating gender issues in project preparation

Gender issues should be assessed in parallel with environmental and other social issues and be incorporated into the project planning and preparation process. Information collected during the project preparation phase as part of the feasibility study and/or environmental and social impact assessment can be used to better inform the project design from a gender perspective.

Project scoping

During project scoping, an early assessment takes place of the scope for potential gender mainstreaming activities as part of the project and the requirements for technical capacity building. It intends to provide a broad outline and estimate the extent to which gender is relevant to the project.

- *Stakeholder Identification*
 - Who are the service users (male/female)?
 - Are the service users represented by any interest groups/NGOs?
 - Which are the stakeholders with decision-making capacity, who will implement the project, what are their values and what is their understanding of gender issues?
- *Initial scoping discussions with key stakeholders*
 - Has the information been disaggregated by gender?
 - Have discussions with female and male stakeholders been undertaken?
- *Is there a specific gender component of the project and what it is expected to achieve?*
 - Overall, how is the project expected to affect men and women? What about in regard to any gender component?

- What is the current situation of men and women district heating service users?
- What is the current situation of men and women in the district heating sector in terms of employment?
- Is the proposed project likely to exacerbate existing gender inequalities (e.g., through policy or pricing reforms)?
- Who will be responsible for integrating gender considerations in the project design and who will be monitoring during project implementation?
- Are specific training and employment activities envisioned for women?

Baseline data collection/gender assessment

This is an analysis of how men and women may be differently impacted by the project, by taking into consideration their respective needs, priorities and preferences. The gender assessment is undertaken as part of the wider appraisal/due diligence/preparation process to ensure the credibility, efficiency and effectiveness of the gender mainstreaming component. It is usually based on a participatory process drawing on information from desk studies, focus group discussions, key informant interviews and surveys. The process of selecting the methods and designing the research questions depends on the scale of the proposed project and the resources available. A gender assessment is expected to provide:

- i. An overview of women and men's activities in the district heating sector and respective context, based on qualitative and, wherever possible, quantitative information
- ii. An analysis of the underlying causes of women and men's differences
- iii. Potential measures that can help change the current situation
- iv. An assessment of capacity-building needs, with associated costs and resources needed.

Table 2

Gender issues to be included in a gender assessment

ASPECT	KEY QUESTIONS	BASELINE DATA TO BE COLLECTED
DEMAND-SIDE: USERS, CUSTOMERS, BENEFICIARIES AND AFFECTED PEOPLE		
Demographic information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How large is the current population of the city/municipality – men and women? ■ What are the trends in the city/municipality's demographic development – men and women? ■ What are the trends in terms of household composition? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Percentage of households headed by women ■ Percentage of households headed by women with more than one member considered vulnerable (elderly, persons with disabilities) ■ Dependency ratios of households (share of household members who are children, elderly)
Income distribution and poverty level of households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Are female headed households generally poorer than other households? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Average income and expenditure levels for households headed by women
Access to energy services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What is men and women's current access to various energy (district heating) sources and services? Are there any differential access patterns among poor households and female-headed households? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Energy service coverage with percentage of poor households and those headed by women ■ Sex-disaggregated data on income, expenditure and poverty
Energy use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Are there any gender-differentiated preferences in terms of energy sources? Any differences by income groups? ■ Do both men and women make efforts to conserve energy in the same way? ■ Are men and women equally aware of the benefits and different ways of energy conservation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Household energy use patterns
Affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Are energy services and sources affordable for poor households, particularly for female-headed households? ■ How can affordability be improved? ■ Are there any differences in terms of willingness to pay and services affordability between men and women? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cost of connection and services vs. household income ■ Disposable income among households headed by women
Customer satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Are customers satisfied with the current provision of services? ■ Are women consumers asked about service satisfaction, given their important role as household energy managers? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Customer survey (data disaggregated by sex)

ASPECT	KEY QUESTIONS	BASELINE DATA TO BE COLLECTED
DEMAND-SIDE: USERS, CUSTOMERS, BENEFICIARIES AND AFFECTED PEOPLE		
User knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Are users aware of efficient energy use, availability of other affordable options? ■ What role could women potentially play in the community in order to be active agents of change and drive efficient energy use practices? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Awareness of efficient energy use (data disaggregated by sex)
Decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Do women have voice in influencing energy services and making decisions on energy use in households and communities? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Percentage of women's representations in local decision-making bodies
Impacts of proposed project interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Would the proposed project intervention contribute to empowering women and narrowing gender gaps in access to district heating services? ■ Would the proposed project intervention likely increase gender-specific risks or disproportionately impact women? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Due diligence (data disaggregated by sex)
Stakeholder engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Who are the stakeholders and do they include gender-sensitised groups? ■ Is there a gender balance in the institutions and bodies consulted? ■ Is there a group of stakeholders who would oppose gender mainstreaming and if so why? ■ Which channels of communication are used by the energy utility company for customers' engagement? Does this reflect preferences of men and women? ■ What processes are in place for receiving inquiries and complaints? Does this reflect preferences of men and women? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Inquiries and complaints received (disaggregated by sex)

ASPECT	KEY QUESTIONS	BASELINE DATA TO BE COLLECTED
SUPPLY-SIDE: SERVICE PROVIDERS		
Employment opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Are women currently employed in the energy utility company? ■ Does the company apply any restrictions to the tasks or occupations that can be done by female employees? ■ Does the company have an equal opportunities, anti-sexual harassment and non-discrimination policy? ■ Does the company have an equal pay policy for work of equal value? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Due diligence data on the company's labour force by position and department (disaggregated by sex)
Work environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Does the energy utility company apply international and national labour and safety standards? ■ Does the energy utility company have a good track record of gender-sensitive human resources policies and practices? For example, flexible working hours or maternity/paternity/parental leave? ■ Which procedures are in place in relation to recruitment, talent retention, remuneration and promotion? Do these reflect gender aspects? ■ Does the company have a good track record of engaging with both women and men consumers? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Due diligence data (disaggregated by sex) ■ Collect copies of the human resources policies and practices including non-discrimination and equal opportunity policies
Institutional capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Do women have equal access to training opportunities as part of career progression in the energy utility company? ■ What is the awareness level of the nexus between gender equality, energy efficiency and district heating at the company level? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Percentage of women staff participating in training offered by the company
Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Are women well-represented in the management of the energy utility company, high level committees, or board in the sector? ■ What is the management structure of the company? How many women are in management positions? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Percentage of women in management positions, committees and boards

Addressing gender issues during project implementation

The gender assessment undertaken during project preparation will provide all the necessary information to properly integrate gender considerations and respective actions into project design. For instance, when consumption-based metering is introduced for district heating in individual houses to both conserve energy and reduce cost of heating services used, it is important that both men and women are consulted beforehand. Introducing new payment modalities for low-income households, such as payment in instalments, can further facilitate female-headed

household's access to energy services. Using a variety of communication tools to promote efficient energy use will also help reach both women and men in different income groups. It is often worth exploring whether companies could employ women to visit households for meter reading, cost estimation and receiving customer payment as women employees are often more welcomed as home visitors, especially by women. Table 3 below proposes gender activities that can be integrated in project design to further enhance the services provided by district heating companies.

Table 3

Gender actions during project implementation

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE STEPS	GENDER ACTIONS
Capacity building for gender-sensitive project implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure that the energy utility company is gender aware and has an understanding in terms of gender issues in human resources and customer relations ■ Build the capacity of the energy utility company to develop gender sensitive policies, procedures and practices
Gender-sensitive information dissemination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use a variety of communication tools to promote energy efficiency in the use of district heating services among women and men from different income groups, such as provision of information in writing; by company employees visiting household for meter reading or payment collection
Gender-sensitive grievance mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure that the grievance mechanism set up during construction provides different entry points for lodging complaints ■ Undertake dialogue with the implementing organisation – whether it is the energy utility company or the City Administration – to ensure that they have the capacity to handle complaints ■ Install procedure for registering complaints by gender and ensuring that data collected are sex-disaggregated
Gender-informed Human Resources policies, practices and processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Support the development of human resources policies, practices and processes that ensure equal opportunities for both men and women, including procedures for recruitment, talent management and retention, remuneration and promotion ■ Ensure that district heating company remuneration and promotion schemes are based on the principle of 'equal remuneration for work of equal value' ■ To the extent possible, allow for flexible working arrangements
Gender-sensitive service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure that service delivery is continuously improved by inviting energy users, men and women, to provide their feedback, through household visits and customer satisfaction surveys, as well as by sharing knowledge and ideas for service improvement

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE STEPS	GENDER ACTIONS
Gender-sensitive customer relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure that customer engagement meets the needs of both men and women end users, by using appropriate means of communication ■ Ensure that the energy utility company is responsive to women's inquiries and concerns ■ Ensure that women employees are recruited for customer interface
Gender-sensitive operation grievance mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure that mechanisms to receive inquiries and complaints are designed to accommodate the needs of both men and women customers, reflecting their respective preferences in terms of channels for filing complaints (such as telephone hotline, mail or in person meetings) ■ Ensure that the grievance mechanism set up for operation is providing different entry points for lodging complaints ■ Ensure procedure is put in place for registering complaints by gender and ensuring that data collected are sex-disaggregated

Box 4

Kazakh and Ukrainian Companies Promote Women's Employment in the Male-Dominated District Heating Sector

At the time of the study all technical staff employed in the district heating company in Semei were men whereas women were mainly employed in administrative positions related to customer relations, accounting and dispatch. To address this gender imbalance in terms of employment in the energy sector, the company had given priority to female technical students to access internship opportunities in the company. Additionally, the company paid the study fees of seven students, four of which were female.

The district heating company in Aktau has adopted a gender-sensitive employment strategy after learning that most female customers were not happy to open their doors to male employees visiting their homes for the purpose of reading meters. In response, women were employed in these positions to visit households for meter reading, conduct of cost estimates, and collection of utility payments.

Engaging with customers in a gender-sensitive manner provided the company with information that enabled them to improve customer service. Meeting customers' needs and preferences in a satisfactory way significantly contributes to operational efficiency and high level of customer service.

The district heating company in Lutsk has successfully employed women in boiler house operator positions, with 154 of 188 positions (i.e., 82%) occupied by women. These positions are available to unskilled workers during the heating season (October 1st – April 30th); they provide additional employment opportunities for women who are seasonally employed in agriculture during the summer period. The company reported women's strong performance in these jobs compared to men, due to women's careful approach to their work tasks.

EBRD/CTF. 2014. Gender Assessment of District Heating Projects in Kazakhstan.

EBRD/CTF. 2016. Gender Assessment of District Heating Project in the City of Lutsk in Ukraine.

Integrating gender issues in project monitoring and evaluation

Gender outcomes and lessons learned should be assessed during project monitoring and evaluation. Indicators should be gender-sensitive and integrated alongside other performance management indicators, while lessons learned and best practices for gender mainstreaming should be disseminated. For example, gender-sensitive indicators should identify whether

the quality of service provision has improved for women end users. Such indicators can be formulated to be both quantitative (for instance, monitoring sex-disaggregated data by level of poverty) and qualitative (for instance, monitoring changes in attitude, satisfaction, perception or levels of empowerment). Examples of gender-sensitive indicators are given in Table 4.

Table 4

Gender indicators for project monitoring and evaluation

EVALUATION PHASE STEPS	GENDER ACTIONS
Gender-sensitive indicators	<p>Include both quantitative and qualitative gender sensitive indicators, in order to grasp both the actual change and identifying changes in behaviour and perception with e.g. the energy utility company.</p> <p><i>Process indicators such as:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Gender issues identified at the design stage ■ The design adequately considered the gender dimensions in its interventions ■ Adequate resources (e.g. funds, time, and experts) allocated to address gender concerns ■ Needs and priorities of women and men were reflected in project design ■ Gender assessment was undertaken ■ Consultation with both men and women was conducted ■ The social assessment included sex-disaggregated staffing and training data ■ The stakeholder engagement plan is gender-sensitive ■ The proposed grievance mechanism includes various entry points accommodating differences in men and women's preferred communication channels <p><i>Aspect/ quality indicators such as:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Access to services: Percentage of low-income households connected to energy services including number or percentage of low-income female-headed households; ■ Affordability: Percentage of low-income households provided with alternative payment modalities (e.g. payment in instalments) for connection including number or percentage of low-income households headed by women or households headed by women with at least one member considered vulnerable (elderly, persons with disabilities); ■ Customer satisfaction: Customer satisfaction with the services pertaining to adequacy of supply, process charges, and tariff levels – disaggregated by sex; ■ Employment opportunities: Percentage of jobs in the company created for women and percentage of total jobs created by the project; ■ Decision making: Percentage of women represented in energy user's groups, committees, utility management level, energy board or other decision-making bodies; ■ Consultation: Percentage of women (and their profile) participating in public consultation meetings; ■ Capacity of service providers: Performance of energy service provider improved with regards to the promotion of gender equality
Tracking of gender sensitive indicators	<p>Tracking of gender sensitive indicators makes it possible to analyse progress being made. The relationship between different factors should be considered -for example, if the project has brought about an increase in the number of women employed in the energy utility company, has this impacted on the customer satisfaction among women customers? This will help identify ways to further strengthen the project, for example by identifying that women employees might need greater support to influence the gender performance of the energy utility company.</p>
Lessons learned and dissemination of best practises for gender mainstreaming	<p>Disseminating lessons learned and best practises within the energy sector can help improve the performance of energy utility companies vis-à-vis the promotion of gender equality.</p>

Annex

Resources for further reading

Asian Development Bank (ADB). 2012. *Gender Toolkit: Energy*.

Climate Investment Funds (CIF). 2010. *Strategic Environmental, Social and Gender Assessment of the Climate Investment Funds*.

Climate Investment Funds (CIF). 2010. *Exploring the Gender Dimensions of Climate Finance Mechanisms*.

Climate Investment Funds (CIF). 2013. *Gender Review of the Climate Investment Funds*.

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European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). *Gender Toolkit: Matrix 1 – Issues Relevant to Performance Requirements*.

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). 2014. *Gender Assessment of District Heating Projects in Kazakhstan*.

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). 2014. *Environmental and Social Policy*.

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European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). 2015a. *Strategy for the Promotion of Gender Equality*.

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). 2016. *Gender Assessment of Clean Technology Fund (CTF) Project in the City of Lutsk, Ukraine*.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). 2009. *Resource Guide on Gender and Climate Change*.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). 2012. *Powerful Synergies – Gender Equality, Economic Development and Environmental Sustainability*.

World Bank. 2013. *Integrating Gender Considerations into Energy Operations*.

World Economic Forum. 2015. *The Global Gender Gap Report*.

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