

# GAPS IN WOMEN'S UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO RENEWABLE ENERGY

## INTRODUCTION

The Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network commissioned a Rapid Assessment on Gender and Energy in Zimbabwe in March 2017. This study was conducted under the project 'Advocating for Gender Equity and Social Inclusion in Access and Utilisation of Green and Inclusive Energy in Zimbabwe.' The rapid assessment identified Gaps and Opportunities for women's universal access to renewable energy.

This fact sheet provides a summary of the identified gaps in women's universal access to renewable energy in Zimbabwe.

## POLICY LEVEL

- The current energy policy framework which comprises the National Energy Policy of 2012 and the current Renewable Energy Policy (REP) draft, is limited in its gender responsiveness. There is little recognition of the differing roles and diverse needs that exist between women and girls, men and boys, as regards energy access including existing energy deficiencies.
- Though the draft REP recognises the importance of ensuring access to renewable energy by women and children, this recognition mainly considers women and children as renewable energy consumers that need energy to satisfy their socially ascribed roles. It fails to recognise the role women can play in the energy value chain.
- The REP mentions gender mainstreaming but without accompanying clear goals, strategies and details on institutional framework for accomplishing the goals for gender equality in access to renewable energy.
- The technical nature of the policy documents makes it inaccessible to the general populace, especially women and children.

## INSTITUTIONAL AND PROGRAMME LEVEL

- Information obtained from past and current energy projects during the rapid assessment indicate men dominate energy projects implemented by government, and non-governmental organisations. Women's concerns, thus, remain peripheral.
- The intrinsic value of energy projects leads to their elite capture which sidelines women.
- A majority of energy projects are not mainstreaming gender and therefore remain unresponsive to women's energy needs.
- Due to their technical nature, a top-down approach is usually adopted for energy projects, which undermines gender responsiveness.
- Women have limited access to information on entry points and strategies to participate in the renewable energy sector.