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INCLUSIVE ENERGY TRANSITIONS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AND BEYOND

Cross-Regional Learning from South Asia

10–12 February 2026 • Jakarta, Indonesia



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Nepal: Mainstreaming GESI in NEA Operations (SASEC)

Empowering Communities Through Equitable Energy Access

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Introduction – The Challenge & Opportunity

Challenge:

Despite Nepal's >99% electrification rate, significant barriers persist for the poor, women, and disadvantaged groups:

- ❖ **Economic barriers** – high connection costs, seasonal income
- ❖ **Documentation issues** – landless communities, citizenship hurdles
- ❖ **Lack of awareness** – safety, theft prevention, productive use of energy (PUE)
- ❖ **Institutional gaps** – limited GESI integration in utility operations

Opportunity:

Mainstreaming **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)** within NEA to ensure:

- ❖ **Inclusive electrification** – reaching the last mile
- ❖ **Livelihood enhancement** – through productive use of energy
- ❖ **Organizational transformation** – embedding equity in service delivery

Project Design – The GESI Integration Framework

TA 6526 NEP: A Multi-Pronged Approach

1. Institutional Architecture

1. GESI strategy and operational guidelines endorsed by board in 2020
2. GESI core teams established across NEA directorates
3. Step-by-step implementation manual developed

2. Capacity Building

1. 556 NEA staff trained on GESI fundamentals
2. Customized GESI training modules for Administration, Distribution, Projects

3. Pilot Implementation in Madhesh Province

1. Inclusive customer service
2. Leadership training for female staff
3. SEAH (Sexual Exploitation, Abuse & Harassment) Code of Conduct

4. Community Engagement & Last-Mile Access

1. Hand-holding support for documentation and connections
2. Awareness campaigns using street dramas, radio, local champions

Social Inclusion in Design & Implementation

Inclusive Electrification Model:

❖ Targeted Outreach

- Field-level mapping of unelectrified households (4,760 mapped, 1,286 electrified)
- Involvement of NEA SASEC project team & NEA DCS office to identify the poor households/ disadvantaged groups for electrification. (Free meters)

❖ Awareness & Empowerment

- Local-language campaigns on safety, theft prevention, PUE
- Engagement of women, Dalit, and Muslim community champions

❖ Entrepreneurship & Livelihood Support

- 403 entrepreneurs supported (52.7% women-led, 72.2% from disadvantaged groups)
- Training in business management, technology, market access

❖ Impact:

- 97% of entrepreneurs improved business practices
- 98% invested in their businesses (over NPR 101 million)
- Improved energy use practices (96.5%)

Outcomes & Impacts

Transformative Results:

1. Enhanced Institutional Capacity

1. GESI integrated into NEA's operational framework
2. SEAH guidelines and childcare provisions adopted

2. Inclusive Service Delivery

1. Last-mile electrification through coordinated multi-stakeholder efforts
2. Increased trust and participation of women and marginalized groups

3. Economic Empowerment

1. New livelihoods created through PUE
2. Local job creation and economic diversification

4. Sustainable Model Developed

1. Replicable GESI-responsive electrification framework
2. Strengthened local ownership and institutional sustainability



Conclusion – Key Takeaways

1. **GESI is a catalyst, not an add-on** – Embedding equity in electrification leads to more sustainable and inclusive outcomes.
2. **Multi-stakeholder coordination is essential** – Utilities, local governments, communities, and financiers must collaborate.
3. **Beyond infrastructure** – Success requires awareness, capacity building, and hand-holding support.
4. **Invest in soft skills & local institutions** – Long-term change needs dedicated resources, training, and community ownership.
5. **Scalable & replicable** – Nepal’s model offers lessons for Southeast Asia and beyond in achieving just energy transitions.

THANK YOU!



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