



CCG in Zambia

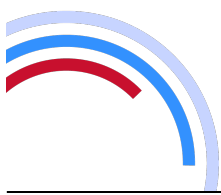
**Gender Equality and
Social Inclusion (GESI)
in Energy and
Transport Sectors 2026**

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Glossary

Energy system: A combination of technical (e.g., infrastructure) and economic systems (e.g., electricity markets) designed to supply energy services to end-users

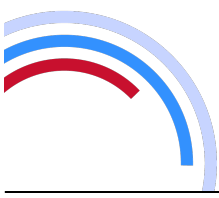
Gender equality and social inclusion (GESI): An approach used to eliminate barriers and create enabling environments so that all categories of people (gender, disability, class, sexual orientation, refugee status, etc) can access resources and benefits equally, and participate fully in development initiatives, including in decision-making processes.

Intersectionality: An analytical lens which examines how different social stratifiers (such as gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, refugee status, ethnicity, race, and income, etc.) intersect with each other and structural determinants (e.g., politics, globalisation, war, education) to create unique circumstances of power, privilege, and marginalisation.

Marginalised and vulnerable groups: Demographics of individuals who experience discrimination and exclusion because of unequal power relationships across economic, political, social, and cultural dimensions.

Transport system: The vehicles, infrastructure, people, and logistics involved in moving goods or people from one location to another.

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1. Executive summary

The Climate Compatible Growth (CCG) Programme works with partners in Zambia to support inclusive, low-carbon energy and transport development through applied research and capacity building. The promotion of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) principles at all levels is foundational to this. In line with this mandate, a targeted GESI assessment was undertaken to examine how inclusion is reflected across Zambia's energy and transport sectors, and to identify key structural barriers shaping equitable access, participation, and outcomes.

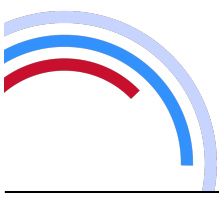
This report presents a condensed and revised version of a longer in-country contextual report. It synthesises key findings on how GESI is reflected across Zambia's energy and transport systems, drawing on demographic analysis, policy and legal review, and qualitative insights from key informant interviews and workshop discussions. This baseline understanding of the GESI landscape in Zambia is intended to support internal alignment, partner engagement, and evidence-informed dialogue on how to strengthen inclusive policy and implementation across both sectors.

Key takeaways

- Patriarchal norms limit transformative change, placing disproportionate unpaid labour burdens on women and girls and constraining their participation in energy and transport decision-making and employment. While national policies recognise women's roles, they largely reinforce existing gender divisions rather than promoting structural reform.
- Affordability and spatial inequality remain binding constraints for energy access, particularly for rural populations, women, PwDs, and people living in poverty.
- Transport infrastructure is urban-centred and motorisation-biased, neglecting non-motorised and public transport users. Rural communities have limited or non-existent transport services. Where public transport is available, the costs are high relative to income, meaning low-income households resort to walking or cycling on unsafe roads. This increases exposure to accidents, violence, and pollution.
- Accessibility and safety gaps in transport infrastructure systematically exclude vulnerable groups, particularly PwDs, women and girls, and older adults. Road and transport infrastructure frequently have inadequate safety features such as walkways, road signs, cycle paths, and lighting, and there is weak enforcement of safety regulations.
- Zambia has a strong and legal foundation for GESI, but implementation gaps persist. This is driven by limited GESI-disaggregated data, legislative ambiguities, low participation of vulnerable and marginalised groups in decision-making, and uneven quality of stakeholder engagement.

Sensitivity note

This report applies a GESI lens across all relevant population groups. However, some topics are socially and/or politically sensitive in Zambia: **LGBTQIA+ inclusion, ethnicity, and refugee status**. It is also important to note that all Zambians are considered Indigenous and expected to live by the motto of 'One Zambia, One nation'. Researchers should proceed with caution when raising these issues, both to protect affected communities and to avoid inadvertently undermining relationships or access. Sensitive topics should be discussed only in appropriate settings, with appropriate counterparts, and within the confines of Zambian laws. Engagement with GESI should be demanded, locally anchored, and guided by a do-no-harm approach. In practice, this means using trusted local intermediaries, applying careful informed consent, building in safeguards such as anonymisation, and avoiding any approaches that could increase risk or visibility for participants.



2. Introduction and background

Zambia is a land-locked, resource-rich lower-middle income country (LMIC) located in southern Africa. The country is relatively stable and while Zambia's economic trajectory has fluctuated over the past few decades, it has experienced periods of growth – although development continues to be shaped by persistent inequalities in access to infrastructure and services. Nearly 60% of Zambians are classified as poor (earning between ZMW 367.60 to 517.60 per month), with 48% being extremely poor (earning less than ZMW 367.59 per month). Poverty levels are higher in rural areas at 78.8% compared to urban areas at 31.9%¹.

Zambia's population of 19.6 million is also projected to double in the next 20 years². As a result, demand is set to increase for services and infrastructure in sectors such as energy, transport, agriculture, education, employment, health, and social protection and security. In parallel, these sectors are under increasing pressure to adapt to emerging challenges, including climate change, the transition to sustainable energy systems, and the need for climate-resilient infrastructure. All of this has implications for Zambia's economic and social development trajectory, which may disproportionately impact marginalised and vulnerable groups if left unchecked. Marginalised and vulnerable groups represent over half of the population yet are underrepresented in decision-making structures and processes on energy and transport infrastructure development.

Zambia has established policy and legal frameworks that recognise these challenges and promote GESI, including the Eighth National Development Plan, the National Energy Policy, and the National Gender Policy (2023), alongside broader commitments to inclusive and sustainable infrastructure development³. However, gaps remain in translating these commitments into equitable outcomes in practice. In particular, there is limited context-specific and disaggregated evidence on how different forms of vulnerability interact to shape access to and experiences of infrastructure. This gap is significant given widespread evidence that inequalities in access and outcomes persist, highlighting the need for targeted and evidence-based analysis to better inform policy and programming.

This report uses an intersectionality approach to understand how people who embody one or more vulnerability interact with energy and transport to inform infrastructure needs in Zambia. Understanding the demographic composition and specific challenges faced by these groups is crucial to formulating comprehensive policies and interventions.

2.1. Objectives

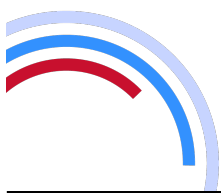
The objectives of this study are to:

1. Analyse the context of marginalised groups and vulnerable communities in Zambia, including the country's demographics, the specific energy and decarbonised transport needs of different marginalised groups, and barriers to accessing energy and transport infrastructure.
2. Review existing policies and legislation relating to energy and transport infrastructure, and GESI in Zambia.
3. Assess the extent to which policymaking processes in these sectors are participatory.
4. Map key stakeholders working with marginalised and vulnerable groups in Zambia and identify active taskforces related to GESI considerations.

2.2. Methodology

A mixed methods approach involving both quantitative and qualitative data sources was employed to collect and analyse data for this assessment. Three methods – a desk review, workshop, and key informant interviews (KIIs) – were deployed to collect data, and an intersectionality approach was applied to analyse findings.

A desk review examined national datasets, donor reports, legal and policy documents, and peer-reviewed and grey literature to identify GESI best practices in the energy and transport sectors and



generate baseline GESI indicators. Workshop discussions provided valuable primary data on participation patterns of vulnerable groups in the planning and implementation of energy and transport infrastructure in Zambia. Finally, a total of 14 KIIs were conducted. Respondents were drawn from academia and research institutions, policy makers and implementers, member organisations and GESI advocacy groups, and statutory bodies for vulnerable populations. The KIIs explored the nature and level of inclusivity, engagement, and participation of marginalised and vulnerable groups in the policymaking process. Respondents were recruited through a combination of purposive and snowball sampling techniques to speak to relevant GESI themes on energy and transport.

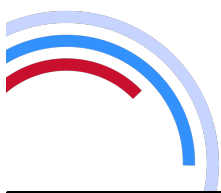
3. GESI context in Zambia

This section provides an overview of key demographic groups in Zambia that experience marginalisation and vulnerability, summarised in **Table 1**. The groups presented below are not exhaustive, but reflect populations most consistently identified in policy, data, and stakeholder sources as facing intersecting forms of exclusion relevant to GESI.

In conducting this assessment, careful consideration was given to the sensitivity of certain GESI dimensions within the Zambian context. Issues such as gender-based violence, land, and displacement are widely recognised development priorities, though they remain socially and politically sensitive. Topics related to sexual orientation and gender identity are also socially sensitive and situated within a restrictive legal context, which shapes how they can be discussed and addressed, even as individuals affected by these dynamics continue to experience barriers in access to services, participation, and safety.

The assessment therefore applied a context-sensitive, do-no-harm approach that upheld the dignity and inclusion of affected populations, while ensuring engagement was appropriate to the national context. It is also important to note that Zambia does not formally classify indigenous or ethnic minorities in its national data systems, as all citizens are considered indigenous under the national ethos of “One Zambia, One Nation.” As such, ethnicity was not treated as a primary analytical category in this assessment. Instead, the analysis focuses on other dimensions of vulnerability that are more clearly reflected in available data and policy frameworks.

Groups	Population / key statistics	Critical issues
Women and girls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 51.5% of population² Female-headed households comprise 28.9% of households¹ Women comprise 32.9% of the energy sector’s total workforce⁴ Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) 2024 score of 0.697, with a widening gap since 2020.^{5,6} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender norms and structural inequalities continue to shape access to resources, opportunities, and decision-making⁷ High levels of unpaid care and domestic labour (e.g., for fuel, water, food), limiting time for education, paid work, and participation⁷ Lower financial inclusion (10.8% vs 17.6% men) and mobile access (53.0% vs 65.7%) limit access to energy services, digital platforms, and transport-related opportunities⁸ High exposure to gender-based violence (GBV) (36% physical, 14% sexual, 39% combined) constrains safe mobility and use of public and transport systems⁷ Child marriage remains a significant challenge, with 29.0% of women aged 20-24 married before age 18, reinforcing cycles of limited education and economic opportunity⁸ Female-headed households face heightened poverty and vulnerability¹
People with disabilities (PwDs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10.9% of adult population⁹ Higher incidence in women: 10.5% of males and 11.3% of females⁹ Only about 20% PwDs have access to and use assistive devices⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stigma, discrimination, and exclusion due to cultural beliefs and institutions lacking adequate response mechanisms¹⁰ Lack of access to education, healthcare, and support services¹⁰ High levels of unemployment driven by discrimination, limited skills development opportunities, and inaccessible work environments; disability and poverty are mutually reinforcing, restricting livelihood opportunities and increasing vulnerability. Higher exposure to violence, exploitation, and exclusion for PwDs living at the intersection of gender, age, socioeconomic status, and rurality¹⁰ Limited access to information due to non-inclusive communication formats; excluded from stakeholder engagement for same reason



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health-related vulnerabilities are significant, with 33% of disabilities linked to disease and illness, increasing dependence on accessible health and transport systems¹⁰
LGBTQIA+ individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No census data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of legal recognition and criminalisation under national law increase experiences of bullying, stigma, discrimination, marginalisation, and/or arrest High levels of school dropouts and job losses, increasing exposure to poverty Exclusion from official data, policy frameworks, and stakeholder participation Diverse needs and priorities within LGBTQIA+ communities can result in uneven representation and access to services, participation, and opportunities
People living in poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60% of population 'poor' and 48% 'extremely poor'¹ Gini Coefficient (2022): 0.507 (high inequality)¹ Poverty is predominantly rural: 78.8% in rural areas compared to 31.9% in urban areas¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poverty intersects strongly with rurality, gender, age, and disability Excluded from stakeholder engagement due to inaccessible processes There is limited inclusion in formal decision-making spaces, especially for rural and low-income groups
Youth and children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 63.3% of population below the age of 25 years¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High levels of unemployment hamper youth socioeconomic potential Limited representation and meaningful participation in policy and decision-making processes Gender gap in youth job participation
Older adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3% of population aged 65 years and above¹ Older adult-headed households constitute the largest proportion of the poor (64.8%)¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Older women experience higher burdens due to their unpaid caregiving roles Older individuals who live at the intersection of disability, refugee status, gender, rurality are particularly vulnerable due to their dependence on natural resources Excluded from stakeholder engagement due to inaccessible processes
Indigenous and ethnic minorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zambia does not have a category of Indigenous and ethnic minorities in its population data as all Zambians are considered Indigenous and expected to live by the motto of "One Zambia, One nation". 	
Rural communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60% of population¹ Elderly headed households constitute the largest proportion of the poor (64.8%)¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited access to services and infrastructure, including markets, finance, and economic opportunities, constraining income generation and livelihood diversification Higher poverty rates and dependence on natural resources for livelihoods; resultant disproportionate exposure to climate change impacts Higher exposure to gender-based violence against women, with rural women more likely to experience physical violence (37%) compared to urban women (34%), and sexual violence (15% vs 13%)
Refugees and internally displaced people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refugee population of 113,054 (57% male and 43% female)¹¹ Those classified as 'vulnerable refugees' comprise 63% women and children, 3% older adults aged 60 and above, and 1.5% PwDs¹¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing population has socioeconomic implications Legal constraints – such as being restricted to living in designated settlements – affect movement, employment, and participation Often excluded from stakeholder engagement due to inaccessible processes

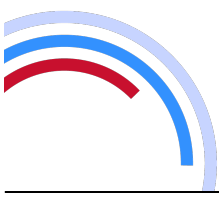
Table 1. Key demographic GESI groups and related challenges in Zambia

*Note: Population and statistical estimates are drawn from multiple sources over recent years and are intended to provide indicative trends rather than precise annual figures.

4. GESI and energy

Zambia's heavy dependence on hydropower, which accounts for over 80% of electricity generation, makes the system highly vulnerable to climate-related shocks, such as drought³. Reduced water levels at Kariba Dam and other hydro power sources have repeatedly led to widespread power shortages and prolonged load shedding, affecting households, businesses, and essential services. In response, many households rely on alternative energy sources such as charcoal and firewood, which are often inefficient, associated with high levels of household air pollution, costly over time, and environmentally unsustainable.

N.B.: There is insufficient data on GESI variables in the energy sector. Most reports provide data that are disaggregated by household, location, stratum, and province – but little by gender, disability status, refugee status, and age, which are crucial to a comprehensive GESI analysis.



4.1 Affordability

Vulnerable and marginalised groups require access to affordable clean energy for cooking, lighting, tools for education, machinery for businesses, pumping water, and communication facilities. However, high costs of energy sources constrain its uptake, particularly amongst women, unemployed individuals, PwDs, and rural communities. Affordable clean energy options are particularly limited in rural areas, and so the majority of rural households turn to using free wood as fuel. In rural households, women and children bear the burden of this, often spending several hours per day collecting fuel, as well as cooking. This takes time away from their education and paid work, increases the risk of violence against women and girls when collecting biomass fuel, and increases their exposure to toxic smoke and health risks whilst cooking¹².

PwDs also face affordability barriers to clean energy products, such as solar home systems, electric stoves, and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), the latter of which calls for frequent refilling and, in turn, transport. Most rural households therefore rely on wood as their main energy source⁹.

4.2 Accessibility

Access to electricity remains spatially unequal, as energy infrastructure is concentrated in urban areas. For example, only a small proportion of rural households (7.7%) use national grid electricity, compared to 70.8% of households in urban areas¹.

Access to electricity in Zambia is also particularly low among female-headed households. These gender disparities in electricity access are more pronounced in off-grid technology, where male-headed households were about four times more likely to have access to electricity through solar-home systems or solar lanterns compared to female-headed households¹. Inadequate access to information and affordable renewable energy technologies among female-headed households are some of the reasons for the observed gender gap.

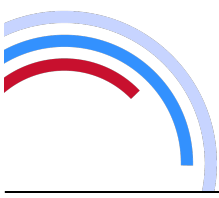
4.3 Clean cooking

Access to clean cooking is also heavily spatial, with rural households overwhelmingly relying on firewood (81.9%) and charcoal (15.8%), with very few accessing electricity (1.2%). Meanwhile, urban households rely mainly on charcoal (73%) and electricity (19.1%), with few using firewood for cooking (7.5%). Of the two biomass energy cooking sources, charcoal is cleaner than firewood¹.

The low use of grid electricity as a source for lighting (5.7%) and cooking (1.2%) in rural areas compared to urban areas with lighting (74.5%) and cooking (19.1%) reflects the high concentration of clean energy infrastructure in urban areas, as well as its aforementioned high cost¹. In addition to electricity, urban areas have access to LPG for clean cooking, lighting, and heating which is not readily available in rural areas. It is also worth noting that households in urban areas that depend on electricity for cooking have been affected by load shedding and the high cost of alternative energy.

4.4 Workforce participation

Despite a 50% recruitment policy target, there is underrepresentation of women in Zambia's energy sector workforce⁷. Available data shows that women comprise 24% of the total workforce in public energy institutions. Their roles are mainly administrative and corporate, such as legal, finance, and HR, with only 6% of women holding technical roles¹³. Management and energy board positions are also dominated by men. These dynamics limit women's decision-making capabilities and income generation, in turn widening the gender gap and income disparities.



5. GESI and transport

In Zambia, transport exclusion is driven by affordability, safety, accessibility, and rurality. Low-income groups, women, older adults, youth and children, PwDs, and refugees are most impacted by these reinforcing constraints.

5.1 Affordability

Public transport is unaffordable for most vulnerable groups, including low-income households, refugees, and young people. For example, KIIs revealed that the average cost of bus fares for short distances is K600 per month, which exceeds low-income households' consumer price index of less than K517.60 per month¹. Walking or cycling on unsafe roads is, therefore, the mode of daily travel for most Zambians, which reinforces exclusion and exposure to accident and violence risks. This especially excludes PwDs and older adults, who may not have the ability to walk or cycle. The high cost of public transport also prevents young people from going to school.

5.2 Safety

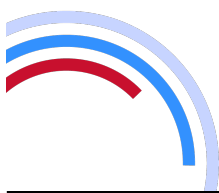
Road infrastructure in Zambia is designed for motorised vehicles, making it unsafe for those who rely non-motorised forms of transport (mainly, walking and cycling). In 2023, 43% of road traffic deaths were among pedestrians. Pedestrians are therefore classified as vulnerable road users, with the most vulnerable being women, children, PwDs (including persons with mental health conditions), and older adults¹⁴. Their safety is compromised largely due to inadequate safety features such as lighting, dedicated walkways, cycle paths, and crossing zones to accommodate cycling, walking, and free movement on wheelchair or crutches. Further, the use of these roads exposes vulnerable groups to traffic congestion, air pollution, and incidents of theft and violence, in addition to road traffic accidents¹⁵. For women and girls in particular, these risks are further compounded by exposure to harassment and GBV in public spaces.

5.3 Accessibility

PwDs freedom of movement is also limited due to inappropriate infrastructural designs. High-risk design features include walkways that are adjacent to open drains and discontinuous paths that require assistance to traverse. KIIs attributed the lack of accessible transport for PwDs to their exclusion from transport infrastructure planning. This highlights the limited integration of universal design principles and inclusive planning approaches in current transport systems.

5.4 Rurality

In Zambia, well-developed road infrastructure is concentrated in urban areas, while rural areas face significant spatial inequalities in transport accessibility. Further, rural communities generally have limited access to public transport because it is either cost-prohibitive, in a poor state, or – in most cases – entirely non-existent. This is augmented by a lack of awareness: only 27.1% of households in rural areas know the location of the nearest public transport infrastructure facility (road, rail, water), compared to 58.4% of households in urban areas¹. This suggests that people in rural areas are less likely to access public transport infrastructure than their urban counterparts, preventing rural communities from accessing economic opportunities in markets or city centres¹⁶. As a result, rurality not only limits physical mobility but also constrains livelihood opportunities, service access, and broader economic participation.



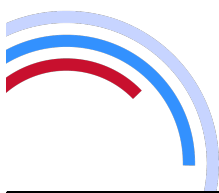
6. GESI policies and barriers

Zambia has developed a relatively robust legal and policy framework to address discrimination and exclusion of vulnerable and marginalised groups across all sectors. The policymaking process also emphasises wider stakeholder consultation, engagement, inclusivity, and participation, including youth groups, women, and PwDs.

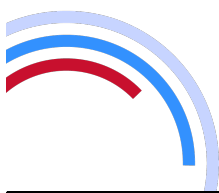
Nonetheless, these laws and policies have still been shaped by socio-cultural norms, resulting in a regulatory environment that reinforces the exclusion of vulnerable and marginalised groups from various political and economic spaces. For example, women’s roles in resource management are defined and the tendency is towards gender mainstreaming measures that improve women’s performance within these existing roles, rather than towards transformative change that shifts norms and power dynamics. Furthermore, policy intent is not consistently translated into practice. For example, there is a lack of *meaningful* stakeholder engagement, with some stakeholders being excluded from certain stages of the policy formulation process, whilst others have been deliberately excluded from the entire process, such as PwDs and LGBTQIA+ individuals.

Table 2 summarises the key GESI-relevant policies and highlights where the most consistent gaps occur. This table is not exhaustive; the full report includes additional policies and details.

Key Policies and Laws	GESI Elements Present	GESI Gaps or Weaknesses
GESI		
Constitution (Amendment) Act, No. 2 of 2016	Prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, and/or disability; provides for 50% representation of women and equitable representation of youth and PwDs in public office nominations and appointments.	Does not recognise economic, social, and cultural rights of other vulnerable groups, including older adults, people living in poverty, and LGBTQIA+ individuals; GESI provisions that require appointment of women, youths, and PwDs to key positions have not been evenly applied across public office. Despite constitutional provisions, entrenched social norms and institutional practices continue to shape unequal access to leadership and decision-making spaces between women and men, limiting effective representation of vulnerable groups.
Eighth National Development Plan (8NDP) (2022)	Commits to gender equality and access and participation of PwDs, including through the provision of PwDs-friendly infrastructure across all sectors.	GESI commitments are broad and not consistently translated into sector-specific implementation mechanisms, particularly in energy and transport.
Gender Equity and Equality Act, No. 22 of 2015	Strengthens the legal framework for eliminating all forms of discrimination in all sectors; prohibits employers discriminating against women based on sex, marriage, disability, pregnancy, or maternity leave; promotes gender equality by public and private bodies; provides for equal participation in decision-making. Domesticates the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, the Maputo protocol).	The Act gives too much power to the minister and the commission as the national 'gender equality police'. Provisions on representation have not been consistently implemented across public institutions Persistent gender norms, unequal power relations, and limited institutional capacity constrain the realisation of gender equality in practice, particularly in access to economic and infrastructure opportunities.
Persons with Disabilities Act, No. 6 of 2012	Provides for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against PwDs in the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural spheres; sets out a comprehensive mandate for the Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities (ZAPD).	Enforcement mechanisms have been weak. Social stigma, low awareness, and limited enforcement capacity constrain effective inclusion of persons with disabilities, particularly in infrastructure access and service delivery.
Children’s Code Act, No. 12 of 2022	Recognises and protects the rights of children; emphasises the rights of children with disabilities to be treated with dignity and respect. It also closes legal gaps that previously allowed child marriage under customary law, strengthening the enforcement of the minimum age of marriage.	Socioeconomic inequalities and limited infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, constrain children’s access to safe transport, education, and essential services
Local Government Act (2016) was enacted in 2019	Establishes inclusive decision-making structures in local government; mandates composition of categories of people to participate in policymaking at Ward level, including representation of vulnerable groups and PwDs, a youth, sports and recreation focal point person, and a gender focal point person.	No provisions to include LGBTQIA+ individuals in decision-making. For included groups, representation does not always translate into meaningful participation.



The Citizens Economic Empowerment (Amendment) Act (2021)	Prohibits discrimination against individuals on the basis of status, disability or gender in employment.	Application of safeguards varies across projects, with limited monitoring of inclusion outcomes.
Zambia National Gender Policy (2023)	Sets out strategic objectives that aim to increase participation of women in science and technology, transport and infrastructure development; reduce poverty among vulnerable groups, especially women and girls; improve gender responsiveness in disability, HIV&AIDS and climate change.	Policy adopts a gender mainstreaming approach which is insufficient to achieve desired change.
National Social Protection Policy (2014)	Aims to ensure that vulnerable people have sufficient income security to meet basic needs and protection from worst impacts of risks and shocks; emphasises the importance of community participation.	No mention of refugees.
National Disability Policy (2015)	Provide guidance to mainstream disability in national development; paves way for legal reforms that enhance PwDs' rights.	Operationalisation remains constrained by resource limitations and weak integration into infrastructure systems such as transport and energy.
National Refugee Policy Draft (2023)	Guided by the principle of inclusion of stakeholders in the implementation of the Policy, regardless of gender, age, class, race, or disability; aims to enhance access to social security protection for children, the elderly, women, and PwDs.	Implementation mechanisms are unclear.
Climate		
Zambia National Policy on Climate Change (2016)	Provides a framework for coordinating climate change programmes; aims to address gender aspects, roles and needs of youth and PwD in capacity-building activities.	Limited GESI provisions; no indication of how women, youth and PwDs will be involved in policy development and implementation.
Green Growth Strategy (2024)	Emphasises the need for government to work with all stakeholders to reduce inequalities among all categories of society particularly the vulnerable and marginalised; provides for the creation of opportunities for every citizen including women, the youth, PwDs, the aged, and people living with HIV/AIDS to sustain their livelihoods.	Strategy is unclear on transport needs of vulnerable and marginalised groups in the country.
Climate Change Gender Action Plan	Aims to create coherence and increase public awareness of Zambia's climate change processes, as well as mainstream gender considerations, to guarantee that women and men have access to, participate in, and benefit equally from climate change initiatives.	Focuses on gender; does not address the needs of all vulnerable groups.
Energy and transport		
Rural Electrification Act, 2023	Promotes the use of available rural electrification options in rural areas and coordination between the private sector, NGOs, and other institutions; provides for a Rural Electrification Fund.	Does not mention GESI issues.
Road Traffic Act (2002), and the Road Traffic Amendment Act (2022)	Establishes disqualifying criteria for the issuance of a provisional driving license.	Unclear how PwDs are to obtain such certificates or what should be the qualifying criteria.
Energy Regulation Act No. 12 of 2019	Provides for the implementation of an Environmental Impact Assessment in energy projects; provides the Energy Regulation Board (ERB) with powers to, inter alia, formulate measures to minimise the environmental impact of activities carried out in the energy sector.	Does not require the ERB to develop measures to mitigate social impacts in the energy sector, unless a project is funded by an organisation with its own safeguards, such as the World Bank Group.
National Transport Policy (2019)	Commits government to mainstreaming of GESI issues including disability in the transport sector.	Implementation is constrained by limited resources, weak enforcement, and infrastructure design that does not adequately consider vulnerable users.
National Energy Policy (2019)	Provides guidance for the continued development of Zambia's energy sector to facilitate access to reliable, sustainable and affordable energy services; guided by the principles of social justice, equality and non-discrimination, which are translated into policy objectives and measures that align with GESI ambitions in the energy sector.	Clear on gender objectives but not so on social inclusion; limited application as does not name vulnerable groups it commits to protect.



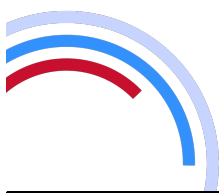
Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) for Zambia's electricity sector	Provides a Social Safeguards Framework to guide project developers and other stakeholders to mainstream GESI at all stages (generation, distribution and supply) of the power sector.	Application of safeguards varies across projects, with limited monitoring of inclusion outcomes due to limited legal backing.
Renewable Energy Strategy and Action Plan 2022	Provides for mainstreaming of community engagement to reflect their traditional gender roles.	Vulnerable and marginalised groups not considered among challenges and recommendations.
Gender Equality Strategy and Action Plan (GESAP) in the energy sector	Aims to advance gender equality and non-discrimination in the energy sector; identifies clean cooking as a key energy need among women.	Takes a gender mainstreaming approach which is insufficient to bring about real change in the sector for GESI.
Non-Motorized Transport Strategy	Aimed to achieve "safe road network for all road users" by providing facilities that are accessible to many people, including those with disabilities.	Little progress due to lack of political will and no funding.
Gender Impact Assessment Guidelines for the energy sector	Provide a framework for assessing gender impacts.	Still in early stages of implementation, with limited institutional uptake.

Table 2. Key GESI-related policies in Zambia and gaps affecting implementation

7. Key stakeholders

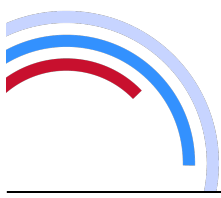
Effective GESI integration in Zambia's energy and transport sectors requires the collaboration of diverse stakeholders, including government agencies, development partners, civil society organisations, private sector actors, and research institutions. **Table 3** highlights key stakeholders, grouped by category, and outlines their role in promoting inclusive infrastructure development. Given the dynamic and evolving nature of stakeholder engagement across these sectors, as well as the presence of multiple actors operating at national, sub-national, and project levels, the table is not exhaustive. Rather, it highlights the most prominent and consistently engaged stakeholders identified by participants and literature reviews during this assessment.

Stakeholder Category	Key Stakeholders	Roles in GESI Integration
Government Agencies and Regulatory Bodies	Ministry of Energy; Rural Electrification Authority (REA); Energy Regulation Board (ERB);	Develop and implement policies for the equitable access and sustainable use of energy resources.
	Ministry of Transport and Logistics; Road Development Agency (RDA); Road Transport and Safety Agency (RTSA); National Council for Construction (NCC); Lusaka City Council	Develop and implement transport policies, including improving transportation infrastructure and infrastructure development.
	Ministry of Community Development and Social Services; Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities (ZAPD); Zambia Gender and Energy Network (ZGEN); Cabinet Office Gender Division; Ministry of Education	Develop policies that aim to support and empower vulnerable households; coordinate programmes that tackle inequalities; promote the well-being and rights of PwDs.
Regional and Intragovernmental Organisations	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA); Southern African Power Pool (SAPP)	Facilitate regional coordination, cross-border infrastructure, and energy trade; influence policy harmonisation and inclusive development standards.
Development Partners and Multilateral Organisations	United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO); Finnish International Development Agency; Finnish Political Parties for Democracy; European Union Zambia; Netherlands Development Organisations (SNV); Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA); Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA); Irish Aid; The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ); KfW Development Bank; Danish Aid United Nations Joint Programme on Social Protection (Phase II, UNJPS II); World Bank; United Nations Zambia; United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); UNHCR; International Organization for Migration Zambia; United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); UN	Support and fund social protection programmes; provide capacity-building and training to vulnerable communities; support the government in achieving its development goals.



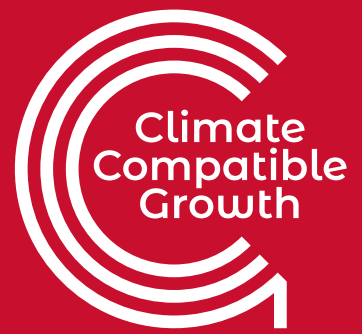
	Women; World Food Programme (WFP); World Health Organization (WHO); African Development Bank	
Service Providers	ZESCO Limited; Copperbelt Energy Corporation (CEC); Independent Power Producers (IPPs) Bus and Taxi Owners Association of Zambia; Truckers Association of Zambia; bus drivers, conductors, and informal transport operators	Generate and distribute electricity; influence affordability, reliability, and equitable access to energy services; ensure vulnerable groups are protected from construction related GESI impacts Provide transport services; determine cost, availability, and safety conditions; directly shape user experience, including risks of exclusion and harassment.
Civil Society Organisations and Advocacy Groups	Passenger, Pedestrian, and Cyclist Association of Zambia (PAPECA); Bus and Taxi Owners Association of Zambia; Truckers Association of Zambia; Zambia Road Safety Trust (ZRST) Zambia Federation for Persons with Disability Organisation (ZAFOD); Zilole Images Productions - Women and Girls Disability Rights of Zambia; Disability Rights Watch; Mental Health Users Network of Zambia (MHUNZA); New Foundation of the Blind in Zambia (NEFOBZA); Zambia Association of Parents for Children with Disabilities (ZAPCD); Youth in Action for Disability Inclusion in Zambia (YADIZ); Cheshire Homes Society of Zambia (CHSZ); Norwegian Association of Disabled (NAD); Orbis International Zambia; Transbanthu Association of Zambia (TAZ); LATU Human Rights Foundation; Caritas Czech; Young Women Christian Association; YWCA Zambia; Zambia National Women's Lobby (ZNWL); Zambia Gender and Energy Network (ZGEN) Non-governmental Gender Organizations Coordinating Council (NGOCC); Catholic Relief Services Zambia; Non-governmental Gender Organizations Coordinating Council (NGOCC); Oxfam; Plan International Zambia; World Vision Zambia; Norwegian Church Aid	Promote and campaign for safety, rights, and better welfare of road users; lobby for sector policy, regulations and practices. Represent and provide support to specific vulnerable and marginalised groups, including PwDs, the elderly, youth, refugees. Promote full inclusion, equal opportunities, access to rights, and improved quality of life for PwDs. Advocate for the socio-economic, political, and legal inclusion of vulnerable, marginalised, and minority groups. Advocate for and protect women's and children's rights. Implement gender and social justice programmes.
Research and Academic Institutions	Zambia Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (ZIPAR); University of Zambia; Zambia Statistics Agency; Universities and Colleges, Climate Compatible Growth Zambia Network	Conduct research on gender, social issues, and economic participation; provide policy-relevant research; analyse energy and transport policies; study and disseminate findings on marginalisation in development projects

Table 3. Key stakeholders advancing GESI in Zambia



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