

**PRESS
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**COMMUNIQUE
DE PRESSE**

No.014 – October 4, 2023 – Cotonou, Benin

Workshop on Gender Mainstreaming Rekindles Enthusiasm in West Africa's Energy Sector

A regional workshop for Gender Focal Points on the Gender Mainstreaming Guidelines for National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs) in West Africa's energy sector has ended with renewed enthusiasm to mainstream gender in ECOWAS Member States.

The workshop, which was organized in collaboration with the European Union, was held on October 2 and 3, 2023 in Cotonou, Benin, was addressed by the Chairman of ERERA, Engr. Laurent Tossou.

It was sequel to the virtual meeting held for Gender Focal Points from the NRAs on June 12, 2023 to review inputs from the countries on the draft Gender Mainstreaming Guidelines for national electricity regulators.

The Guidelines are designed to familiarize staff and management of the NRAs with the basic concepts of gender issues in the energy regulatory sector and to ensure that gender considerations are mainstreamed in the day-to-day operations, programmes and projects of national power regulators.

Specifically, the Guidelines are to help national regulators identify and recommend approaches to promoting gender equity and increased women's participation within the NRAs; provide the general principles to adopt for implementing gender mainstreaming and good practices by the NRAs; as well as serve as a mechanism for information sharing on gender mainstreaming and social inclusion performances within the NRAs.

The workshop sought to help participants understand the principles of the Guidelines which will serve as a tool to conduct an institutional gender analysis and assist them to draft and/or review gender mainstreaming strategies for their respective institutions.

Understanding of the Guidelines will also serve as a guide on how to better integrate gender in energy projects as well in project cycles.

ERERA's commitment to gender mainstreaming is part of its fulfilment of obligations based on two critical documents. They are the ECOWAS Policy for Gender Mainstreaming in Energy Access and the ECOWAS Directive on Gender Assessment in Energy Projects.

The Directive on Gender Assessment in Energy Projects was adopted to operationalize the Policy and enforce gender responsive energy development projects. It spells out the responsibilities of the regulator in fostering gender mainstreaming in the energy sector.

ECOWAS Member States are required to adopt the Directive at the national level and put in place the relevant institutional and legal arrangements for its effective implementation.