



## South African Photovoltaic Industry Association

### SAPVIA – Gender and Economic Development Working Group

**Date: 19 August 2025**

**Time: 10:00 – 11:00**

**Chairperson: Janelle Krishna**

#### **Declaration of Interest and Prevention of Anti-Competitive Behaviour**

Participants of all SAPVIA meetings agree not to engage in or discuss the following topics:

- **Price-Fixing** - current or future prices, pricing strategies, or price changes.
- **Market Division** - allocation of customers, suppliers, territories, or market shares. dividing markets by geographic areas or product lines.
- **Collusive Tendering** - bid-rigging, including agreements on who will submit bids or the terms of bids, information about tender processes or strategies.
- **Production and Supply Control** - agreements to limit or control production, supply, or distribution of products or services, capacity, production quotas, or inventory levels.
- **Boycotts**- agreements to boycott or refuse to deal with specific customers, suppliers, or competitors, collective actions against any market participant.
- **Information Sharing** - competitively sensitive information, including sales volumes, market shares, costs, marketing strategies, future business plans, research and development projects, or investment strategies.
- **Exclusionary Practices** - strategies to exclude competitors from the market or to create barriers to entry, exclusive dealing, tying arrangements, or predatory pricing.
- **Anti-Competitive Agreements**- discussions that could lead to anti-competitive agreements, whether formal or informal, conversations that could be interpreted as attempts to coordinate competitive behaviour.

<b>Facilitator</b>	Janelle Krishna (JK)	<b>Attendees:</b> Tebogo Marufu (TM) Katlego Modisane (KM) Cecillia Mulenga (CM) Olebogeng Mokwadi (OM) Victor H. M. Santos (VS) Frank Elcheck (FE) Monique Leendertz-Lang (ML) Zimkita Bilibana (ZB) Wendy Mogale (WM) Ofentse Ntohla (ON)
<b>Note taker</b>	Thabang Molai (TM)	

<b>Minutes</b>		
1.	<b>Opening</b>	<b>Chairperson</b>
	<p><b>Welcome and Introduction</b> The chairperson welcomed everyone to the working group meeting and acknowledged attendees for making time to attend.</p> <p><b>Apologies</b> No apologies received.</p> <p><b>Agenda</b> The agenda was adopted with no amendments.</p> <p><b>Minutes</b> The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true reflection of the meeting proceedings.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Overview of the Working Group and Updates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JK:</li> <li>• Provided an update on the workstreams and focus areas of the Gender and Economic Development Working Group.</li> <li>• To contextualize the vision, mission, and expected outcomes of the group, especially for members who were not part of the AGM.</li> <li>• The SAPVIA Gender and Economic Development Working Group (GED WG) was established to address gender diversity and economic inclusion in the renewable energy sector.</li> <li>• The group operates under the SAPVIA Governing Committee and reports on its initiatives and achievements at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).</li> <li>• The WG's purpose is to:</li> <li>• Promote gender diversity (aligned with the WGE strategy) and foster an inclusive environment for women and non-binary individuals in leadership and technical roles.</li> <li>• Drive economic development by developing guidelines, analysing impacts, and leading industry conversations.</li> <li>• Enhance community development and financial inclusion.</li> <li>• Focus on solar-related activities, with clear KPIs and targets for the financial year.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision: To foster a sustainable and inclusive renewable energy industry characterized by equitable opportunities and gender mainstreaming.</li> <li>• Mission: To drive initiatives that promote gender diversity and enhance economic participation of women within the renewable energy sector.</li> </ul> <p><b>The GED WG Strategic Pillars / Workstreams &amp; Objectives</b></p> <p><b>1. Gender Diversity Charter</b></p> <p>Objective: Promote gender diversity and equality within the renewable energy sector.</p> <p>Key Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operationalize the WGE strategy.</li> <li>Foster an environment of equal opportunity and barrier-free workplaces.</li> <li>Ensure equal pay and inclusive workplace policies.</li> <li>Encourage member companies to sign the charter, complete annual surveys, and implement interventions using a provider toolkit.</li> </ul> <p>ZB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A baseline study (2022–2023) identified a set of short- and long-term industry targets.</li> <li>• The official launch of the baseline study is scheduled for 29 August 2025 by DMRE.</li> <li>• To date, 12 SAPVIA members have signed on, committing to close identified gaps.</li> <li>• The association considered the potential risks and challenges associated with implementing a Gender Diversity Charter, including compliance monitoring and reputational risk.</li> <li>• Due to these concerns, it is proposed that the charter be converted into a guideline with voluntary participation.</li> <li>• This approach would allow members to opt-in and track progress, while avoiding governance and accountability risks.</li> </ul> <p><b>2. BBBEE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objective: Strengthen economic development and inclusion through BBBEE compliance.</li> <li>• Key Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage stakeholders to align on BEE targets.</li> <li>Collaborate with industry stakeholders and task teams.</li> <li>Share progress through the Social Impact Working Group.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• JK:</li> </ul>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The group has been working on the Triple BEE sector targets in collaboration with SAWEA.</li> <li>• Meetings have been set up with industry stakeholders to discuss targets and expectations, and feedback will be discussed in the next meeting.</li> <li>• The group will also receive minutes from the Social Impact Working Group to provide broader context on the Triple BEE sector and its progress.</li> </ul> <p><b>3. Digital Transformation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objective: Improve SMME competitiveness and bridge the digital divide.</li> <li>• Key Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide mentorship programmes and digital tools.</li> <li>Organize workshops/webinars on digital solutions.</li> <li>Promote inclusivity in digital transformation efforts.</li> <li>Encourage adoption of digital practices to address challenges faced by SMMEs and startups.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• JK:</li> <li>• The Financial Inclusion and Digital Transformation work streams are working together to develop KPIs and explore ways to support efforts in these areas.</li> <li>• The group aims to run workshops and webinars to explore digital solutions and financial inclusion, emphasizing their importance in driving economic planning and reducing inequalities.</li> <li>• Key areas to be addressed include access to financial services, digital payments, fintech adoption, and SMME entrepreneurship support.</li> <li>• The group has proposed involving key individuals and organizations in panel discussions and workshops to share expertise.</li> <li>• Monique Leendertz-Lang and Victor H. M. Santos expressed interest in joining the Digital Transformation Workstream.</li> <li>• Their inclusion was welcomed, and they will be added to the workstream distribution list and activities.</li> </ul> <p><b>4. Financial Inclusion</b></p> <p>Objective: Support women entrepreneurs and SMMEs in accessing finance and economic opportunities.</p> <p>Key Actions:</p>	
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	<p>Establish guidelines for community development.</p> <p>Collaborate with regional task teams on inclusion initiatives.</p> <p>Lead discussions on the Triple PEE S Industry Charter.</p> <p>Develop industry position papers and organize networking events/webinars.</p> <p>Work with banks and financial institutions to address compliance challenges and design KPIs.</p> <p>Raise awareness about affordable financial options and digital solutions.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Industry Updates</b></p> <p><b>3.1 Solar &amp; Storage Live Partnership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JK:</li> <li>Reported on an opportunity secured through the working group's partnership with Solar &amp; Storage Live.</li> <li>As part of the arrangement, 30 businesses will be able to showcase their products and services at the Start-up Pavilion free of charge.</li> <li>The event will take place in October 2025 at the CTICC in Cape Town.</li> <li>Each business will be provided with a 4x4m stand, sufficient for banners, a table, and a display pod.</li> <li>The initiative directly supports the gender inclusivity and financial literacy workstreams, offering SMMEs a platform for market exposure without incurring event participation costs.</li> <li>Participation is open to businesses able to travel to Cape Town for the exhibition week. Members were encouraged to promote this opportunity among SMMEs in the solar PV space.</li> <li>Priority will be given to gender diversity-focused businesses within this working group, with the opportunity then extended to other groups such as the Skills for PV Working Group.</li> <li>Members are encouraged to apply by Friday this week.</li> <li>ZB will circulate Jenelle's email and contact details in the chat for submissions.</li> <li>Members are also encouraged to nominate or share the opportunity with female-owned businesses in the renewable sector.</li> </ul>	All

	<p><b>3.2 SAWEA Social Impact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ZB:</li> <li>• Reported that some GED WG overlap with SAWEA's Social Impact SC activities, particularly in relation to the Gender Diversity Charter and the Triple BEE Scorecard.</li> <li>• SAPVIA has joined these discussions, which are held quarterly.</li> <li>• No update was available for this meeting as the last session coincided with SAPVIA's AGM and Awards Ceremony.</li> <li>• Will share the meeting minutes with the group as soon as they are received.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>4.</b></p> <p><b>Any Other Matters</b></p>	<p><b>4.1 Women in Energy Conference 2025 (Skilling SA)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SkillingSA is a skills development and training organization that operates across multiple industries, with a focus on advancing workplace readiness, leadership development, and progression for women.</li> <li>• TM represented SAPVIA and the Gender and Economic Development Working Group at the <b>Women</b> in Energy Conference held on Wednesday and Thursday last week.</li> <li>• Participants included representatives from various sectors of the energy industry.</li> <li>• Opening keynote by Iman Gwanazi, highlighting the importance of women's representation in energy and how inclusion drives better governance and financial outcomes.</li> <li>• Presentations by companies including Hakeem Energies, Bricks, Nuclear Platform, SANEDI, and City Power.</li> <li>• TM participated in a panel on day two, focusing on "Breaking Systematic Barriers by Advancing Women's Inclusion in the Energy Sector."</li> <li>• Panel members included Lynda Way Johnson from the Presidential Climate Commission.</li> <li>• TM highlighted SAPVIA's initiatives in gender diversity, research, advocacy, and the Gender and Diversity Charter.</li> <li>• Topic discussed:</li> <li>• Systematic barriers preventing women from entering or advancing in the energy sector.</li> <li>• Equity in just transition policies.</li> <li>• Importance of mentorship and extending opportunities to rural and economically vulnerable women.</li> <li>• Industry transformation and integration of gender inclusivity into corporate strategy.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Zimkita B</b> <b>Tebogo M</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practical workplace inclusion measures, e.g., maternity PPE, nursing rooms, and workplace policy adjustments.</li> <li>TM concluded the update, noting the conference was well-received, and highlighted the ongoing importance of advocacy and mentorship for women in the energy sector.</li> <li>ZB thanked TM for the detailed Women in Energy Conference update and requested that the presentations be shared with the working group for future reference.</li> </ul> <p><b>4.2 Women in Festival</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ZB:</li> <li>presented an opportunity from the <b>Women in Festival</b>, scheduled for October/November (exact date to be confirmed by Nestlé).</li> <li>The festival is a platform dedicated to <b>empowering women across sectors</b> through knowledge sharing and impactful initiatives.</li> <li>Suggested leveraging the festival to:</li> <li>Launch the Digital Transformation webinar series, with continuation post-event.</li> <li>Include a Financial Inclusion workstream item in the agenda.</li> <li>A draft partnership has been shared, offering a speaking slot or program inclusion.</li> <li>JK:</li> <li>Agreed it is a valuable opportunity for both the digital transformation and financial inclusion workstreams.</li> <li>Highlighted importance of reaching women who can benefit from initiatives, including entrepreneurship opportunities in travel, tourism, and clean tech.</li> <li>Suggested combining financial and digital workstream discussions in one session due to overlapping themes of compliance, finance, and digital transformation.</li> <li>Members agreed to set up a single joint meeting to finalize program content and approach for the festival participation.</li> </ul>	
<b>5.</b>	<p><b>Closure</b></p> <p>With a vote of thanks, the chairperson formally closed the meeting.</p> <p><i>Next meeting: 21 October 2025</i></p>	<b>Chairperson</b>

**Action Items:**

No:	Action	By Whom
1.	Share SAWEA Social Impact meeting minutes once received.	<b>Zimkita B</b>
2.	Circulate Solar & Storage Live exhibition opportunity email to working group members.	<b>Zimkita B</b>
3.	Share Women in Energy Conference presentations with the working group	<b>Tebogo M</b>
4.	Schedule a meeting to review and provide input on participation in the Women in Festival for the Digital Transformation and Financial Inclusion workstreams. Finalize program content, including potential webinar launch and session topics.	<b>Zimkita B</b> <b>Pamela G</b>