Gender mainstreaming in Energy: Lessons from International Experiences

WOMEN IN ENERGY

APPLICATION WORKSHOP ON EFFICIENT ENERGY MANAGEMENT AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

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Current Energy Situation in Developing Countries

In developing countries, energy consumption patterns are characterized by a high dependence on traditional biomass, with cooking as the primary energy consuming end use.
High levels of inequity in the distribution of energy services – rich and poor, rural and urban.

Women and men are impacted differently by the lack of energy services.

Of the 1.3 billion people who live in poverty, 70% are women mostly in rural areas.

Lack of access to modern energy affects poor women disproportionately due to traditional divisions of labor and responsibilities in most rural settings.

Consequences of the Situation

The energy ladder: household energy and development are inextricably linked

Increased prosperity and development

Increased use of cleaner, more efficient and convenient fuels for cooking

Crop waste, dung

Wood

Kerosene

Coal

Ethanol, methanol

Gas, LPG

Electricity

N Gas

Non-solid fuels

Solid fuels

Very Low income

Low income

Middle income

High income

Men and women have different energy usage and needs
Acting against socially accepted gender roles can be a challenge!
Interventions in energy technology have different effects on men and women
Well-intentioned energy projects may even increase women’s drudgery without meaning to
Women are an important target group in developing countries
One reason why projects have failed in the past is lack of participation –of women, in particular
A gender approach can help reduce poverty and help support livelihoods
What is Gender Mainstreaming?

The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action,

....in any area

......and at all levels

Strategy for making women's and men's concerns an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes

.....In all spheres

so that women and men benefit equally
Gender Sensitive Energy Project
Experiences

- Rural Energy Development programme, Nepal
- Mali Multi Functional Platforms, Africa
- Aga Khan Rural Support Programme, Pakistan
- Women entrepreneurs through stoves project, India
- Cambodia Fuelwood Savings Programme
- Improved stoves for street food vendors, Philippines
Rural Energy Development Programme, Nepal

More than 90% of the Nepalese population lives in rural areas.

The hilly remote areas are not expected to be covered by the grid in the near future.

Low Human Development Index (HDI), deep rooted poverty, isolation.

Women’s literacy rates less than 10% in the hilly regions, no exposure, lack of training/information.
Rural Energy Development Programme, Nepal

Joint project of the government of Nepal, UNDP and the World Bank


171 micro hydro plants 2.2 MW benefiting 21,303 households in rural areas

Development Objective: Enhance rural livelihoods through the promotion of rural energy systems, specifically micro hydro, for the sustainable development and poverty alleviation.

Other activities: toilet linked biogas plants, SPV lighting, environment management, income generation, enterprise development
REDP Gender Mainstreaming Strategy

- Women clearly identified as a vulnerable group
- Institutional spaces created at the community level for women to participate in project processes: Women Community Organizations (meeting/saving)
- Capacity building inputs (group management)
- Capacity building (skill development, income generation)
- Gender aware NGO selection process
- Gender disaggregated data collection
Gender, Energy and MDG Impacts

Direct impacts
- **Savings on expenditure on energy** (kerosene/ batteries)
- **Convenience**
- **Health benefits** from reduced burning of kerosene and biomass fuels for lighting and cooking respectively
- **Time saving** and reduction in drudgery and opportunities for education/ leisure/ self development

Indirect benefits
- Increased awareness
- Enhanced skills

Long term inter-generational impacts
- Opportunities for self development
- Girl’s education
Mali Multi Functional Platforms, Africa

Government of Mali, UNDP and UNIDO, since mid-1990.

The project seeks to reduce rural poverty in general and that of rural women in particular, while creating income-generating opportunities through provision of affordable energy services.

Expanded to Burkina Faso, Ghana, Guinea, and Senegal.
The Multifunctional Platform supports a simple diesel engine that can power different tools: cereal grinding mills, de-huskers, oil presses, carpentry tools...
Mali Multi Functional Platforms, Africa

- The multifunctional platform has a simple diesel engine that can power a variety of tools, such as a cereal mill, husker, and/or battery charger.
- The engine can also generate electricity for lighting and refrigeration and to pump water.
- Simple and multiple uses.
- Can be used for a variety of services that can generate incomes
- Installation and maintenance can be handled by local artisans and spare parts readily available.
Gender Mainstreaming Strategy

- Applications received from rural and duly registered entities such as a village women’s association
- Participatory pre-feasibility and feasibility assessments
- Configuring the platform to fit the community’s needs.
- 40-60 percent of cost financed by beneficiaries themselves
- One-time subsidy to cover the rest
- Establishing women’s ownership and management
- Building women’s capacity to operate the platform
- A business approach
Gender, Energy and MDG Impacts

- Women’s groups annual income per woman increases.
- Freeing-up women’s time (to rest…one day per week)
- Freed time is also used for income-generating activities.
- The MFP is used for productive activities such as rice de-hulling or shea nut grinding.
- The MFP provides employment (and new income opportunities).
- The equipment allows women more choices in determining the uses of time and energy that they desire and are willing to pay for.
- Increased access to education by girls
Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) Micro hydro

- Women and men are involved in the identification, design and construction of the scheme
- Capital cost is shared b/w AKRSP and beneficiary communities
- Scaling down and indigenization of technology for better manageability, cost efficiency, and sustainability
- AKRSP builds linkages with its other programmes (women’s empowerment/ income generation etc.)
Gender, Energy and MDG IMPACTS

From dark to light…MDG 2

Cost saving from reduction in use of kerosene oil..MDG1

Workload reduction through labor saving appliances and technologies.. MDGs 3, 4

Positive impacts on women – Opportunities for productive work and contribute to household income, leisure, safety….MDGs 1, 4, 5
Gender, Energy and MDG Impacts

Increased opportunities for community integration and social cohesion…MDG3

Improved education, exposure to the outside world and access to information…MDG3

Positive impact on environment due to use of clean and renewable energy…MDG7
Redefinition of desirable stove features:
- Robust, sturdy, good-looking, long-lasting
- Requires little maintenance
- Can be used with a range of vessels

Features of fuel efficiency, smokeless valued as well.

Women’s self help groups used as a dissemination vehicle.

Rural women trained in mass-scale production of ICs

Supported with market surveys, investment support, and other training.
What is a gender sensitive project?

ARE ALL COOKSTOVE PROJECTS GENDER SENSITIVE?
The designs used may be faulty or not address women’s needs.

They may only target households and not productive activities/women as entrepreneurs.
Choosing the cook stove and the project conditions

KEY QUESTIONS

✓ Who is the user?

✓ Which are the needs of the user?
  ✓ Technical aspects of design?
  ✓ Comfort?
  ✓ Does it compare to traditional stoves?

✓ Which materials are available?

✓ What can people (men/women) pay? How much time would they need to pay back?

✓ Will we seek preferential treatment to women-headed households?

Photo by Sabina de Graaf
Women as Stove Entrepreneurs?

✓ Should I see beyond cook stoves for households?

✓ Can women be good entrepreneurs?

It may be important to know that:

✓ In developing countries the majority of informal sector enterprises are owned and run by women.

✓ Many of these enterprises are energy intensive, rely on biomass and their viability and costs are affected by energy prices and availabilities.

✓ Women are effective entrepreneurs with a good credit record

Photo by Sabina de Graaf
**Production Capacity**

- **What is the production capacity available?**
- **What type of entrepreneur am I looking for?**
- **Would the production center be there mid-term?**
- **What about repairs and maintenance to the stoves?**

It may be important to know that:

- With stoves targeted at women in rural areas, cultural restriction can make them the best to build, disseminate and market stove e.g. TIDE stove project in India.

- Women work near home and don’t migrate after receiving training, as men often do.*

- Women’s effectiveness in regular and preventive maintenance has been better than men’s
Marketing

✓ Who will do the marketing of the stoves?

✓ How much does it cost to produce the stove?

✓ How is it delivered?

It may by important to know that:
✓ Women can more effectively market to women (eg. Vietnam Women’s Union promotes solar home systems, collects payments, etc.)

✓ Women are users of these devices so may be more sensitive to customer’s desires and can share their own experiences.
Awareness raising

- Which is the message that I want to convey?
- Who’s the best person to convey this message?
- If I use the media, which sources will allow me the greatest outreach?
- Are there special needs to take into account? Illiteracy, social exclusion, distance from populated centers.

It may be important to know that:
- Men often play a key role on whether or not to buy an improved stove as most women do not have strong participation in economic decisions.
Women in energy projects.....

 ✓ Involving women is not the only piece in the complex energy equation, but is often necessary for successful energy projects and enterprises.

 ✓ Women have a role in management & decision-making about uses and benefits of the projects that affect their lives.

 ✓ Involvement in energy projects can increase women’s status and self-confidence.
Lessons from experiences

There is more to women than just being the end-users of a technology.

Gender sensitive energy projects are all about processes.

Must address women's basic energy needs for labour and time-saving, improved health and income

Offer a bundle of services to (a) enable women to access improved energy, (b) enhance their entrepreneurial and technical skills, and self-confidence.

Specific gender strategy in energy projects: mainstream gender concerns throughout the project cycle
Lessons from experiences

Capacity building for practitioners to integrate gender concerns

• Developing skills in employing gender sensitive tools, especially gender sensitive M&E

• Sharing information on successful instances of involving women in energy project

Build capacities of women to have voice and participation in the energy sector.

....through partnerships and networks among grassroots women, NGOs, and energy policymakers at the national and international levels.