Towards Empowerment of Women: Renewable Energy & Management Capabilities

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Major Concern for Renewable Energy

- A general agreement that renewable energy has a major role in the current global energy crisis
- Gender audit of energy policy in India, with attention to:
  - Traditional and non-traditional sources of energy in villages, who uses and manages them?
  - How energy development can help reduce poverty and unemployment and more so feminization of poverty?
  - Does inclusion of women in use and management of energy make a difference for reducing women’s drudgery and discrimination?
  - To what extent cultures/social norms limit women in their use and management of energy resources?
Further building the perspective

- Two research studies: 1) gender and energy in transitional Asia, 2) gender tools in understanding of energy use and management
- Learning from African experience of gender audits of energy policies and programmes
- Participation in DFID research and World Bank energy weeks, with attention to gender concerns in energy
- Technical gender advisor to ENERGIA
Field Visit Observations

- A noticeable resistance from men in buying the biomass
- SHG have been reported as enabling institutions for increasing women’s negotiating powers at home for biomass equipments as solar panels
- Labour opportunity cost of women is not realized even when women are doing work in agriculture and cooking and caring
- Caste factor embedded in the gender question as well
- Wood has to be considered as fuel, however regeneration of wood has to be kept in mind
- Women’s role in fuel management is totally ignored. Therefore their capacity development in generation of energy is also ignored
Common factor in the papers:

- Women's rights to land are not socially recognized;
- Lack of adequate implementation;
- Customary practices which also influence implementing need checking and monitoring;
- Discrimination of women in ownership and control rights to land adversely affect productivity and economic agency of the producers.
Major Learnings

- Policy attention has been on use of energy by women within domestic sphere mainly cooking.
- This attention to cleaner energy for cooking drawn as a result of increasing reports on indoor air pollution and its health effects.
- Not disregarding the need for cleaner energy for cooking, attention is lacking on women’s innovations and management roles in energy infrastructure.
- How women use, conserve and benefit from different renewable energy systems.
- Need for drudgery reduction technologies and increasing efficiency in production/reproduction spheres.
UN Women’s initiatives

- The scoping study to understand and contribute towards social knowledge, hence policy development

- The study investigate:
  - Gender dimensions of renewable energy policies
  - Existing gender roles in renewable energy systems
  - Analyzing policy changes, adequate or not
  - Explaining that attention to gender makes a difference in energy operations, poverty reduction, reduction of inequalities and increasing productivity in agriculture, micro enterprises and other enterprises
UN Women’s initiatives

- **Partnerships**
  - TERI: Gender Renewable Energy and Climate Change
  - TIDE: An assessment of options and opportunities for a gender sensitive intervention in renewable energy
  - HBF: Gender Concerns in Renewable Energy Options of Solar and Biomass Systems
  - UN ESCAP: Attention to household energy security, a consultation with energy policy makers and NGOs, energy industry and energy consumers
  - ENERGIA: Gender Analysis of energy policies in India and Philippines and with UN ESCAP in Institutional strengthening of NWMs in South Asia
  - SEWA: Energy Auditing
Vision and Priorities

- Institutional Strengthening of NWMs and relevant Ministries, Civil Societies on gender concerns in renewable energy, more so in the context of climate change

- Seeing women and the poor as agents of their own change (and not only as end users) thus the need of building capabilities and enterprises

- Making use of opportunities depends on capabilities, e.g. ownership of capital, land and access to knowledge/ new technologies

- Gender, poverty and inequality factors from the non energy domain to be understood as a propelling force for the inclusive energy outcomes
Thank You!!!

Comments and Suggestions....