



Gender Briefing Notes

Supporting active inclusion of women in energy and development projects



About this Document

This document has been elaborated in cooperation with ENERGIA to highlight relevant gender dimensions in EUEI PDF's four thematic pillars: Energy Access, Renewable Energy, Biomass Energy and Energy Efficiency.

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 Austrian
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Acronyms and abbreviations

BEST	Biomass Energy Strategy
ECOWAS	The Economic Community Of West African States
EREP	The ECOWAS Renewable Energy Policy
EUEI PDF	EU Energy Initiative – Partnership Dialogue Facility
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
O&M	Operations and Maintenance
RE	Renewable energy



Introduction

This brochure has been developed to assist EUEI PDF partners, consultants and energy practitioners to ensure equal benefits for men and women in development projects in the energy sector, as well as to ensure a gender sensitive approach in ongoing and future interventions.

Objective

The Briefing Notes will provide the reader with gender dimensions of the four thematic areas:

- ▶ **Energy access**
- ▶ **Renewable energy**
- ▶ **Biomass energy**
- ▶ **Energy efficiency**

Awareness of the different gender dimensions in these areas will enable the reader to take into account gender aspects when implementing policy or projects.

Structure

Each Briefing Note is structured in five sections:

- 1. Core gender issues in the sector/ Thematic Pillar**
- 2. Possible entry points for gender integration**
 - ▶ Policy/strategy development
 - ▶ Implementation/action planning
- 3. Good practices in integrating gender in rural energy access strategies**
- 4. Indicators to track gender sensitive energy access policies and programmes**
- 5. Further reading and resources**

Additionally, there is a list of interesting literature at the end of this document.

1 Gender Briefing Note: ENERGY ACCESS

1.1 Core gender issues in expanding energy access

- ▶ Nearly three billion people rely on traditional biomass based fuels (fuelwood, crop residues and animal dung). Women and children are disproportionately affected by this phenomenon:
 - ▶ Women and children, mainly girls, spend from 2 to 20 hours a week collecting and carrying heavy loads of fuelwood and other biomass fuels, and are a target for sexual violence.
 - ▶ The long hours spent in fuelwood collection keep them from pursuing education, training and income-generating activities.
 - ▶ Globally, four million deaths every year are attributable to household air pollution, affecting mainly women and children.
- ▶ Rural electrification is a policy goal in most developing countries. However, in rural areas, electricity is mostly inappropriate for cooking, and hence not a substitute for traditional cooking fuels. Even electrified households continue to rely on traditional biomass for cooking.
- ▶ Women's capacity to benefit from productive uses of electrification is limited:
 - ▶ Women have limited productive assets (for example, land which can be used as collateral for taking loans), which makes it difficult for them to obtain credit and hence, access new technologies.
 - ▶ Poor and unreliable quality of electricity supply makes it difficult for women to operate home-based microenterprises, a sector where women predominate.
- ▶ Households headed by women are particularly disadvantaged, which constrains women's energy access as well. In Rwanda, as many as 34% of households are headed by women. Ensuring that such households benefit equally from energy services necessitates targeting women and women headed households specifically: in information dissemination, in consultations, in offering affordable electrification options, such as revolving funds and in credit facilitation.
- ▶ The energy sector continues to be dominated by men, especially at decision making levels. Responsibility of household chores from young age, gender inequality in higher education, and gender stereotypes in labour market restrict women's access to training, education and employment prospects.
- ▶ Energy interventions have demonstrated significant benefits for women, when carefully designed and targeted based on a context-specific understanding of energy scarcity, household decision-making and prevalent gender inequities.

1.2 Gender responsive energy access strategies

1.2.1 Entry points for national energy access policy/strategy development

- ▶ Promote a long term strategy to ensure sustainable and affordable supply of clean cooking energy fuels and technologies.
 - ▶ Promote and support productive use of energy and entrepreneurship in sectors where women are active.
 - ▶ Ensure that energy sector policies comply with government's commitments to addressing gender equality, for example the Beijing Declaration.
 - ▶ Identify women as a specific target group in the overall energy access policy framework, recognizing their specific energy needs. The ECOWAS Renewable Energy Policy, for example, identifies "Support to gender equality" as a guiding principle: "...in the context of implementation of the EREP an effort will be made to mainstream gender issues... and participatory approaches will be applied."
 - ▶ Engage women's groups and organizations working on women's issues and with the poor in the policy formulation process through their participation in stakeholder forums, workshops and consultations.
 - ▶ Support design of regulatory processes/service delivery models that enhance access to energy to unreached and un-served areas and groups, including poor women.
- ▶ Support a gender-equal human resources strategy in energy sector institutions, including elements such as setting a target for increasing the percentage of women employees and ensuring a gender-sensitive working environment for women.





1.2.2 Entry points for energy access action planning/ implementation

- ▶ Provide affordable options to offset the high, upfront cost of energy technologies for women and low-income consumers through mechanisms such as consumer credit/microfinance, rental models, and by developing smaller, low-cost systems.
- ▶ Promote energy technologies that reduce women's vulnerability and enhance safety, such as street lighting to improve women's mobility and safety; solar lighting to improve education for girls and boys; lighting for adult education centres and energy services for primary health care facilities.
- ▶ Ensure that energy service delivery and information services reach women and men equally.
- ▶ Promote women as service providers in the energy sector, providing additional support and creating enabling conditions for them (for example, training near home, additional mentoring business planning, accounting, and marketing skills; and access to affordable financing and credit facilities) as required.
- ▶ Provide technical and vocational training for women to promote women's employment, e.g., as technicians, in routine operation and maintenance, meter readers and as community mobilisers.

1.3 Good practices in implementing gender sensitive energy access strategies

- ▶ A concrete target on cooking energy (at par with electricity) adopted under the ECOWAS Renewable Energy Policy: "to universalize dissemination of high efficiency cook-stoves (> 35%) to the urban population by 2020" (ECOWAS Renewable Energy Policy developed with EUEI PDF support).
- ▶ Men and women share construction work, women form 3/7 members of management team, and women do bookkeeping and administration (microhydro project, Philippines).
- ▶ Local women employed through Self Help Groups, as franchisees, for meter reading, bill distribution and revenue collection (Uttaranchal Power Corporation Ltd, India).
- ▶ Combine provision of cooking fuels and stoves with supply of electricity (Eskom, South Africa).
- ▶ Women trained to install, maintain and operate multi-functional platforms (a diesel engine with interchangeable attachments that can be used for a variety of tasks, such as milling, grinding, water pumping, electricity generation) and manage them as business enterprises (Mali and other African countries, Multi-functional Platform Programme).

1.4 Gender sensitive indicators to track implementation of energy access strategies

- ▶ Identification of women as a specific target group and reference to their energy needs in energy sector policies and strategies
- ▶ Electricity (and other energy service) coverage with % of poor households and those headed by women
- ▶ Number of energy based enterprises (with % owned by women)
- ▶ Improved quality of health services, especially maternal health and children's health services, in dispensaries, clinics, and hospitals
- ▶ Percent of women's representation in local (energy related and other) decision-making bodies
- ▶ Percent of women among employees (by level) in the energy sector institutions

1.5 Further reading

ENERGIA 2011. Mainstreaming gender in energy projects: A practical handbook, Elizabeth Cecelski and Soma Dutta. Available at

www.energia.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/01.-Mainstreaming_gender_in_energy_projects_A_practical_Hand_book.pdf

ADB 2012. Gender Tool Kit: Energy, Going Beyond the Meter, Asian Development Bank. Available at

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UNDP and ENERGIA 2004. Gender and Energy for Sustainable Development: A Toolkit and Resource Guide. Available at www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/environmentandenergy/focus_areas/sustainable-energy.html

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www.energia.org/knowledge-centre/training-material/energias-genericttraining-modules

Norad, 2011. Gender Equality in Financing Energy for All. Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, Oslo, October 2011.

For more publications and resources on gender and energy, visit www.energia.org.

2 Gender Briefing Note: RENEWABLE ENERGY

2.1 Core gender issues in renewable energy technologies and programmes

- ▶ Women in developing countries are responsible for a number of survival tasks needed to sustain the household, such as water collection and food processing. Many of these laborious tasks can be made easier using renewable energy technologies, freeing women's time and labour for other income generating, leisure or self-improvement activities.
 - ▶ In addition to energy for basic household uses, women need improved energy services for their informal production and marketing activities. Many of these, like food processing, brewing beer require large amounts of time and heat energy. Modern fuels and renewable energy technologies can help women to accomplish these activities in less time, with greater efficiency, and bring higher profits.
 - ▶ Women have proven to be good candidates to be renewable energy entrepreneurs; women who live in rural areas know local circumstances and understand local needs. A woman may be able to sell more effectively to other women, and access to potential female clients is not hindered by social constraints.
 - ▶ Men and women may have different energy priorities and needs and an energy service may impact them differently. For example, men may choose to locate a light outside the house for security reasons (e.g. protecting livestock from theft) while women may want light in the kitchen.
- ▶ Men and women respond differently to promotional messages. Women often use different communication channels than men, as they have lower literacy rates, less access to TVs and radios, and less time to attend meetings.
 - ▶ Women in rural areas face particular obstacles in accessing renewable energy technologies due to their relatively high poverty levels, lower access to credit (compounded by low access to land as collateral), lower literacy rates and less access to information.

2.2 Gender responsive renewable energy strategies

2.2.1 Entry points for renewable energy policy/strategy development

- ▶ Identify women as a specific target group in the overall policy framework and recognizing their specific energy needs. The ECOWAS Renewable Energy Policy, for example, identifies "Support to gender equality" as a guiding principle: "...in the context of implementation of the EREP an effort will be made to mainstream gender issues... and participatory approaches will be applied."
- ▶ Ensure participation of women in renewable energy sector policy formulation consultations and workshops.

- ▶ Promote long term strategies, including targets (backed by financial allocations) to ensure sustainable and affordable supply of clean and renewable cooking fuels and technologies, at par with electricity.
- ▶ Ensure that energy sector policies also include a focus on expanding women's business activities through use of more energy-efficient processes and equipment, especially in sectors with a relatively high share of female entrepreneurs
- ▶ In developing regulatory framework for renewable energy sector, ensure that regulatory aspects of clean cooking (setting performance standards for equipment, facilitating consumer education, designing financial mechanisms such as subsidies, creating an M&E framework) receive due attention.
- ▶ Promote a gender-equal human resources strategy in renewable energy sector institutions, including elements such as setting a target for increasing the percentage of women employees and ensuring a gender-sensitive working environment for women.

2.2.2 Entry points for renewable energy action planning/ implementation

- ▶ Provide targeted support for women's entry as energy suppliers in renewable energy markets, such as technical training that takes into account women's schedules and mobility constraints; mentoring in business planning, accounting, and marketing skills; and access to affordable financing and credit facilities.





- ▶ Develop operational models for the O&M of decentralized energy systems based on women's participation, to include
 - ▶ training for women in new technologies as system operators, technicians and O&M crews
 - ▶ increased women's participation in local user groups/management committees
 - ▶ gender-sensitive user education programs in O&M of renewable energy technologies
- ▶ Partner with local NGOs to pilot/implement livelihood programs which include training for women in use of labour-saving energy technologies; access to microcredit and/or concessional loans; business management; marketing strategies and other business development services.
- ▶ Invest in support for social infrastructure such as health clinics, water pumping, street lighting and schools that can help women in particular connect with the benefits of electricity.
- ▶ Promote affordable options to offset the upfront cost of renewable energy technologies for women and low-income consumers through consumer credit/microfinance, rental models and by developing smaller, low-cost systems.

2.3 Gender sensitive indicators to track implementation of renewable energy strategies

- ▶ Identification of women as a specific target group and reference to their energy needs in energy sector policies and strategies
- ▶ Renewable energy service coverage with % of poor households and those headed by women
- ▶ Male and female-headed households accessing electricity in proportion to their percentage in the population
- ▶ Number of energy enterprises (with % owned by women)
- ▶ Percent of women's representation in local (energy related and other) decision-making bodies
- ▶ Percent of women among employees (by level) in the energy sector institutions

2.4 Good practices in implementing gender sensitive renewable energy strategies

- ▶ A concrete target on cooking energy (at par with electricity) adopted under the ECOWAS Renewable Energy Policy: "to universalize dissemination of high efficiency cook-stoves (> 35%) to the urban population by 2020" (ECOWAS Renewable Energy Policy).



- ▶ Strategies to encourage women to become biogas masons and supervisors through special training for women, interest-free working capital loans, advance subsidies, material support, quality control, institutional support, exposure visits and marketing incentives (Biogas Support Programme, Nepal)
- ▶ Women trained and provided technical and financial support to disseminate solar lighting and cooking energy technologies. A partner organization trains women masons to construct the stoves and set up businesses. SEWA Bank provides a host of services to poor, self-employed women workers, including savings and credit, health care, child care, insurance, legal aid, capacity building and communication services. (Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) Bank and SELCO India)
- ▶ Training of women to produce, market, repair and maintain solar home systems and other renewable energy technologies (Grameen Shakti, Bangladesh).
- ▶ Woman-to-woman direct sales approach to marketing affordable solar technology, where women earn independent income as Solar Sister entrepreneurs selling equipment on consignment. (Solar Sisters, Uganda)

2.5 Further reading

IUCN, ENERGIA and HIVOS, 2012. Guidelines on renewable energy technologies for women in rural and informal urban areas. Available at

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ENERGIA 2012. Empowering women in developing countries through energy for entrepreneurship, Gail Karlsson, ENERGIA International Network on Gender and Sustainable Energy

ENERGIA 2007. Where Energy is Women's Business: National and Regional Reports from Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Pacific, ENERGIA, 2007. Available at

www.energia.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/06.-karlsson_csdbook_lores.pdf

UNDP and ENERGIA 2004. Gender and Energy for Sustainable Development: A Toolkit and Resource Guide. Available at

www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/environmentandenergy/focus_areas/sustainable-energy.html
www.solarsister.org/

3 Gender Briefing Note: BIOMASS ENERGY

3.1 Core gender issues in biomass energy

- ▶ Nearly three billion people rely on traditional biomass based fuels (fuelwood, crop residues and animal dung) for cooking and heating: women are disproportionately affected by this phenomenon.
 - ▶ Women and children, mainly girls, spend from 2 to 20 hours a week collecting and carrying heavy loads of fuelwood and other biomass fuels, and are a target for sexual violence.
 - ▶ The long hours spent in fuelwood collection keep them from pursuing education, training and income-generating activities.
 - ▶ Globally, four million deaths every year are attributable to household air pollution, affecting mainly women and children.
- ▶ Fuelwood is increasingly becoming scarce and the time and effort spent on fuelwood is on the rise, especially for poorest and women headed households who have no other option. Fuelwood is also being commercialized widely, further adding to the pressures faced by cash-strapped households.
- ▶ Women operate large numbers of fuelwood and charcoal based informal, small-scale industries in the food and beverage processing sectors, constantly facing scarcities and rising fuel costs.
- ▶ Women's unequal rights to land mean that they may not have the same opportunities (as men) to benefit from biomass energy projects (such as production

of bio-fuels). Moreover, diversion of land for bio-fuel production can have negative impacts on food production and security for women.

- ▶ Experience shows that gender-responsive biomass energy strategies can help improve women's work and quality of life both within and outside the home, and at the same time, contribute towards reducing gender inequalities.
- ▶ The use of solid biomass in traditional devices (three stone fire or traditional cookstove) leads to serious health effects. Household air pollution causes lung cancer and chronic lung disease, increases the risk of delivering low birth-weight babies, who are then at increased risk of developing diseases later in their lives. Emerging evidence suggests that household air pollution may also cause cardiovascular disease, cancers of the digestive system, and cervical cancer.

3.2 Gender responsive Biomass Energy Strategies (BEST)

3.2.1 Entry points for biomass energy policy/strategy development

- ▶ Promote a long term strategy to ensure sustainable and affordable supply of clean cooking energy fuels.
- ▶ Ensure that women's rights to land as a source of food and a means of energy supply are safeguarded at all times, including when commercial biomass production is introduced.

- ▶ Biomass energy programmes should not intensify (and mitigate, if possible) women's works and drudgery.
- ▶ Include women and/or women's representatives in national bodies such as steering committees and focal groups on bioenergy.
- ▶ Ensure the participation of women and/or women's representatives in stakeholder forums, workshops and consultations.

3.2.2 Entry points for biomass energy action planning/ implementation

- ▶ Advocate equal employment opportunities and conditions for male and female workers in biomass energy projects.
- ▶ Transfer responsibilities for management of forest resources to the community level. Quotas for women's representation in management institutions should be considered, for example the requirement that a minimum of one-third of the positions of voting power are held by women.





- ▶ Promote women as service providers (stove makers, resellers) in the biomass energy sector, through
 - ▶ addressing specific challenges they face (such as lack of exposure, illiteracy);
 - ▶ training them in areas of technology, business planning, accounting, and marketing skills, and
 - ▶ creating enabling conditions (for example, linking them with affordable financing and credit facilities, training near home, additional mentoring) as required.
- ▶ Support and promote, where appropriate, productive use of energy in sectors where women are active, such as fish or fruit drying.
- ▶ In improved stoves dissemination/cooking energy programmes,
 - ▶ ensure that cookstoves' designs are well aligned with the needs, affordability and cooking practices of the primary users, i.e. women;
 - ▶ target women directly in information dissemination, user training, consultations and feedback processes, and
 - ▶ promote cookstove models that reduce indoor air pollution as compared to traditional cooking methods.
- ▶ Introduce complementary activities to further reduce woodfuel consumption (e.g. pressure cookers, haybox cookers, energy-saving cooking practices), with awareness raising, marketing programmes or commercial interventions as appropriate.

3.3 Good practices in integrating gender in BEST

- ▶ At programme level, articulating a specific objective for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment through improved access to modern energy services and women's participation in energy value chains. Providing assistance to potters (poor men and women) manufacturing clay-based energy efficient stoves in terms of enhancement of traditional production and marketing systems, and facilitating women's access to microfinance (Senegal Programme to promote rural electrification and a sustainable supply of domestic fuel, PERACOD).
- ▶ Working with women's to create a woman's enterprise on biomass dryers (for drying agricultural produce and fish), with support on technical and enterprise training, market development, loan financing and hand holding (India).

3.4 Gender sensitive indicators to track implementation of BEST

- ▶ National biomass energy policy with meeting both men's and women's needs as an explicit goal
- ▶ Concrete targets on cooking energy in the national biomass/energy access policies and programmes
- ▶ Increase in employment and revenues by male and female entrepreneurs in production and trade of biomass/charcoal and appliances
- ▶ Gender balance in institutions and agencies working in the biomass energy sector

3.5 Further reading

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Biomass Energy Strategy (BEST) Guide for Policy Makers and Energy Planners. EUEI PDF (2011) Available at www.euei-pdf.org/publications/flagship-publications

For more publications and resources on gender and energy, visit www.energia.org.



4 Gender Briefing Note: ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN HOMES

4.1 Gender dimensions in energy efficiency programmes

- ▶ Women play a key role in household energy use, make and influence decisions about:
 - ▶ Use of appliances (lighting, cooking, heating, air conditioning, hot water), including the choice of time of use, and, therefore, peak use.
 - ▶ Household purchases of goods and services, which may be more or less energy-intensive or wasteful, e.g., packaging.
 - ▶ Educate and shape children's future energy consumption habits.
- ▶ Women are keenly aware of the relative energy efficiency of various appliances. In urban households, appliances, such as refrigerators and washing machines are associated with tasks carried out by women. These appliances account for a substantial portion of a household's electricity consumption.
- ▶ Poor women are the hardest hit by increases in fuel and electricity prices.
- ▶ Studies indicate that women are more willing to make changes in how and what they consume, so information and awareness raising could enable women to live more energy efficiently.
- ▶ Women can work as energy entrepreneurs in sales and servicing of efficient appliances.
- ▶ In rural areas, one of the most energy-inefficient processes is that of cooking. The low efficiency of

biomass fuels is one reason why women have to spend long hours cooking, which is directly connected to the health hazards induced by smoke and emissions from traditional cookstoves.

4.2 Energy efficiency in homes: Entry points for action planning/ implementation

- ▶ Target women as key "motivators" in the delivery of energy conservation and efficiency in households and communities.
- ▶ Include cooking energy interventions (replacing traditional biomass fuels with modern fuels as well as improving the efficiency of use through improved cookstoves/kitchen improvement etc.) as energy efficiency interventions.
- ▶ Complement energy efficiency projects with household user education programs in the safe and efficient use of electricity.
- ▶ Promote user education programs targeting women to raise awareness and change household behaviour patterns to improve energy conservation in households.
- ▶ Engage women groups in the formulation and implementation of energy efficiency measures and policies, the identification of efficiency energy technologies more suitable to adequately support women's income-generation activities and domestic needs.



Three Sisters Energy Conservation Programme

The “Three Sisters” project implemented in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia increased the awareness of women in energy conservation measures, and demonstrated good results including an increased understanding among households to understand their electricity bills, read their meters, and voluntarily reducing household energy demand. Women are also well placed to encourage their children to bring about lifestyle and behavioural changes including shutting off electrical appliances when not in use etc.

4.3 Gender sensitive indicators to track implementation of energy efficiency in homes

- ▶ Number of women and men reached/covered through energy efficiency programmes
- ▶ Women involved in designing (and testing) of energy efficiency measures
- ▶ Number of men and women involved in sale and servicing of energy efficiency technologies and devices
- ▶ Number of women whose workloads have been reduced due to the energy efficiency interventions
- ▶ Number of men/women whose household expenditure on energy have been reduced due to the energy efficiency interventions

4.4 Further reading

For more publications and resources on gender and energy, visit www.energia.org.

5 Additional Literature and Resources

Integrating Gender Considerations into Energy Operations, ESMAP (2013). Knowledge Series 014/13

www.esmap.org/node/2743

Addressing the Gender Dimension of Energy in Africa. ESMAP (2011)

www.esmap.org/node/1292

Training Manual on Gender Mainstreaming, PREEEP Programme of GIZ (2011)

www.energia.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/04.-1319143629-Gendertainingmanual.pdf

Gender and the Rocket Mud Stove. PREEEP Programme of GIZ, Uganda (2011)

www.hedon.info/View+Article?itemId=10203

Online Compendium of Gender Resources, ESMAP

www.esmap.org/node/2757

Gender and Development portal, World Bank

web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTGENDER/0,,contentMDK:22758228~pagePK:210058~piPK:210062~theSitePK:336868,00.html

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