



Digital Seminar Series:

'Maximising the Impacts of Energy Access'

Takeaways from Seminar 5:

'Mainstreaming Gender-Responsiveness'

This digital seminar explores how energy access interventions can effectively integrate gender-responsiveness for the empowerment of women. We talked with Silvia Sartori (Gender & Energy Consultant), Thabit Mikidadi (Program Manager at tangsen, Tanzania), and Ashma Pakhrin (Monitoring Evaluation and Learning Expert at ADB TA 9334, Nepal). Here are our key takeaways from the session:

On key terminology in gender mainstreaming:

- Gender-discriminatory: reinforcing negative cultural norms and practices
- Gender-blind: ignoring gender disparities and power dynamics, thus perpetuating inequalities
- Gender-sensitive: recognising gendered needs and power dynamics, but not intentionally integrating them into their project designs
- Gender-responsive: being aware of differences and integrating specific actions into project designs to address these differences
- Gender-transformative: acknowledging gendered differences to explicitly address the root causes of inequality and strengthening positive norms that reinforce equality

On energy use technologies and markets:

- It is crucial to integrate gender aspects as early as possible in the project design. Women in this context should not only be considered as beneficiaries: a gender balance in project staff and stakeholders is important for addressing sensitive issues.
- A gender analysis should be carried out in an early project phase to grasp the root causes of inequalities and vulnerability levels. It captures the status quo and looks at different roles and power dynamics at household level and in society as a whole.
- Identifying these challenges reveals effective entry points and resources in terms of stakeholders for promoting gender equality during project implementation.
- A gender action plan allows for the identification of measurable indicators of concrete results. It helps to monitor progress during the implementation phase, in which close consultation with local stakeholders is key.

On mainstreaming gender into energy policy, strategies and programmes:

- Policy determines if energy access programmes are gender-blind, gender-sensitive, gender-responsive or gender-transformational.
- If policy is demonstrably gender-responsive, other actors are also likely to follow the example and consider gender as a crucial factor. Thus, try to influence policy makers first.
- Understand multiple entry points in an advocacy strategy; try to leverage the power of those who are ahead! If the direct way (e.g., by consulting the national ministry) does not work, approaching alternative stakeholders can be fruitful.
- Diverse actors should be involved at policy level: middle management at inception, senior staff for buy-in, sub-national/national gender entities during implementation (government entities or CSOs), and international support for finance and capacity building.
- Funding will not solve everything.



On economic empowerment through the productive use of energy:

- Resources and support play a key role for the successful economic empowerment of women, such as skills training, access to loans (low interest rate financing) and network-building.
- Methods for capacity development include business management training and specific skills training, such as the safe use of energy or the adoption of energy efficient technologies.
- Regular business counselling, mentoring and support that continue after the initial training phase are critical factors for sustainable success.
- To successfully empower female entrepreneurs, husbands and in-laws should be involved in training, to encourage their awareness and support. Written commitments for ongoing family support is also key.

Links to relevant resources:

 [Gender Integration in Renewable Energy Policy: A Guideline for Renewable Energy Policy and Decision Makers](#)

This guideline by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) provides practical advice for policy and decision makers to introduce and improve the integration of gender issues in renewable energy policies, plans and strategies.


 [Advancing sustainable development and women's empowerment in Asia - Experiences from SWITCH-Asia programme](#)

This publication by Silvia Sartori, on behalf of the European Commission, Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development, offers insightful case studies of sustainable consumption and production projects in South Asia, Southeast Asia and East Asia.

 [Towards Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in Energy Utilities: Approaches, Methods, and Results from Nepal](#)

This publication by ENERGIA highlights how gender equality and social inclusion can be mainstreamed in the programme and project cycles of the Nepal Electricity Authority. It provides an overview of the objectives, methodologies and project results.

To the digital seminar:

 [Mainstreaming Gender-Responsiveness – Maximising the impacts of energy access by effectively integrate gender-responsiveness for the empowerment of women](#)