

The Dynamics of Energy Access and Gender in Nigeria

Dr. Norbert Edomah

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**SCHOOL OF
SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY**

PAN-ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

Background and Methods

- Gender plays a major role in energy use in diverse ways.
- Some challenges still persists:
 - 85m lack electricity access (over 15m households)
 - Only 5% access to clean cook fuels & technologies
- We interviewed 20 stakeholders in the energy sector
 - Govt. departments and regulatory agencies
 - Development authorities and planners
 - Practitioners and engineers responsible for turning policy into action
 - NGOs, Advocacy groups and end users
- We explored gender dimensions to energy access and how gender dynamics shape energy access interventions

Challenges for Policy – what we found

Multiple understandings and meanings of energy access pose challenges for (infrastructure and policy) interventions

- ❖ Energy as a material raw resource (e.g., coal, firewood, gas, etc.).
- ❖ Access to infrastructure of supply (e.g., cables, transformers, etc.).
- ❖ Access to domestic services that energy enables (e.g., cooling, food preparation, ironing, etc.).
- ❖ Energy as a human right.
- ❖ Wider sustainable development enabled by energy (e.g., good health, sanitation, etc.).

Access to an energy supply does not guarantee energy use

- ❖ Local stakeholder and user's acceptance (people's buy-in) and affordability

Challenges for Policy – what we found

Local understandings and framings of gender roles (at both household and community levels) shape energy use patterns.

- ☹ Housework and cooking are often regarded as tasks for women.
- ☹ Women are considered as agents of change at the community levels
- ☹ Men are viewed as more energy competent

Some energy technology interventions produce unintended gender meanings.

- ☹ Solar Home Systems are viewed as infrastructure for women and children.
- ☹ Hard-wired energy systems are viewed as infrastructure for men

Inequality in access to finance for energy assets poses a risk to achieving energy efficiency and climate goals.

- ☹ Most energy assets decisions are made by men
- ☹ Many financial institutions still require men to serve as guarantors.

Recommendations for Policy & Practice

For national and state governments

- ❖ Understanding the various gender roles as energy users will be useful for targeting energy systems interventions, particularly at community level.
- ❖ Energy interventions targeting the community level should begin from understanding the local framings of energy access.
- ❖ There is greater need for inter-agency/sectoral coordination and action on energy infrastructure planning so as to yield multiple benefits.

Recommendations for Policy & Practice

For advocacy groups and non-governmental organisations

- ✿ There is a need to develop targeted energy training programmes that prioritize economic and social empowerment for women.
- ✿ Professional women can help in scaling up access to energy assets for rural women through the provision of alternative financing options.

For financial and funding institutions

- ✿ There is a need for more gender-sensitive financing policies that address the energy needs of women.
- ✿ Financial and funding institutions should partner with women social entrepreneurs and cooperatives to enable viable energy asset financing options for women.

