



GENDER EQUITY AND ENERGY ACCESS IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

Energy Access and Gender in India: Policy Brief

JULY 2021



Does Gender Equity in Energy Access in the Global South effect transformative changes on ground as envisioned in SDG7:

“Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.”

Sub-questions:

- Are policies gender aware?
- Are implementation of policies impactful in terms of gender equity?
- Does access to energy implement transformative changes in the lives of the gender marginalized?
- Are there visible impact on equity in development evidenced as an impact of gender aware energy access



Rosenberg, M., Armanios, D.E., Aklin, M. *et al.* Evidence of gender inequality in energy use from a mixed-methods study in India. *Nat Sustain* 3, 110–118 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-019-0447-3>.

Image Credit: Bloomberg

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Interviews were conducted amongst 20 professionals involved with the energy sector in India. Their backgrounds were:

- 4 technical professionals from **Companies concerned with the generation, distribution and supply of electricity**
- 2 experts/ consultants from **Government policy institutions and regulatory bodies**
- 4 experts from **Non-governmental organisations operating in the energy sector**
- 3 technical consultants from **Development authorities/ planners/architects**
- 3 technical professionals who were **Engineers and others responsible for putting those vision-led plans into action**
- 4 independent experts who were involved with **research/ data support or advice to government for gendering of energy infrastructure.**

Research Method:

Qualitative interviews with experts on key themes and topics



Coding such interviews on themes keywords and subtopics on a scoring matrix



Converting such scores to infer specific gaps, challenges that professionals encounter and solutions they propose.

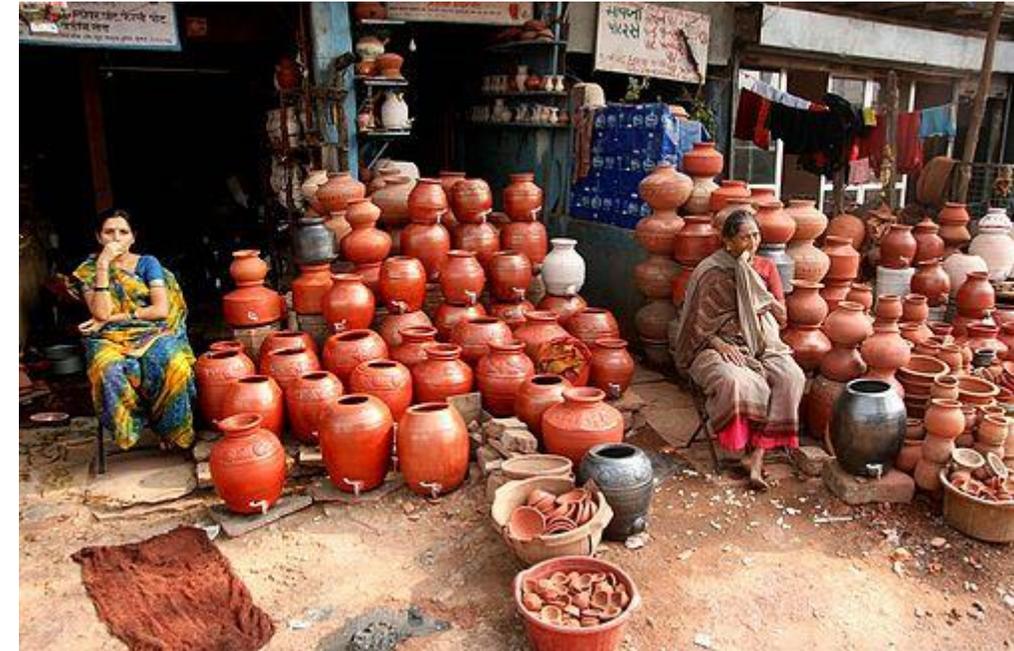
At least 50% of all respondents were non male. The exercise was carried out in four countries with country specific perspectives.

Challenges within Indian Policy Frameworks

Energy context viewed from a MACRO perspective:

- Misrecognition of intersectionality of vulnerabilities, viz., religion, caste and gender inequities.
- Access evaluated based on connectivity. Energy needs require more nuanced targeting – e.g. where energy is needed and when?
- Allocation of energy is based on geophysical locations, ignoring overlaps of usages and functions.

Many locations in India, like Dharavi of Mumbai need to be redefined as SEZs rather than informal settlements.



Dharavi, India: The Most Entrepreneurial Slum In The World? 03/11/2011 02:43 pm ET
Updated Dec 06, 2017

[Randall Kempner](#), Contributor

Executive Director, Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs
https://www.huffpost.com/entry/dharavi-the-most-entrepre_b_834300

Image Credit: Huffpost Plus

Challenges within Indian Policy Frameworks

Women's location defined within their homes:

Women as legitimate participants of energy sector – owners of energy infrastructure, workers within energy supply chains, business owners with energy needs are still to be explicitly recognized within systems.

Pitfalls of avoiding a gender-identified approach, and lack of gender-disaggregated data:

Ignores gender inequities within access, usage and benefits as well as wider developmental inequities. Implementation structures are not designed in a gender aware manner recognizing different needs of women at all levels.

Fallout of greater central grid dependence:

weakened decentralised system has shifted control and power over energy delivery from consumers to suppliers, further marginalising women stakeholders.



ISH News, Aug 1, 2020
<https://youtu.be/Ej-kcAqGnd0>

Recommendations for Indian Policy Structures: For government policy makers

Recognise women's diverse role systemically

- Consumer of energy in and outside home
- Equal participant and stakeholder of the energy sector
- Diversity of households need to be integral.

Implementation structures design to be gender aware

- Embedded at policy level with SOPs for plans and programs
- Efficacy of programs linked to gendered M&E assessment.

Gender Segregated Data Collection

- Will help capture equity gaps in development parameters linked to energy access.
- Will help capture efficacy of programs in transformational gender equity



Recommendations for Indian Policy Structures: For government policy makers

Gender capacity building and equal gender representation

Must be an integral part of all policy design to overcome historic disadvantages women have faced within science and technology fields and wealth access and ownership:

Ensuring equal women's participation at all levels, by making such measures mandatory quantitative deliverables.

Affirmative action, like quantitative gender diversity of boards, needs to be designed into implementation frameworks.

Gender training should be an integral part of all personnel development and staff training at all levels.

Recommendations for Indian Policy Structures: For government policy makers

Effective Budgeting for Women

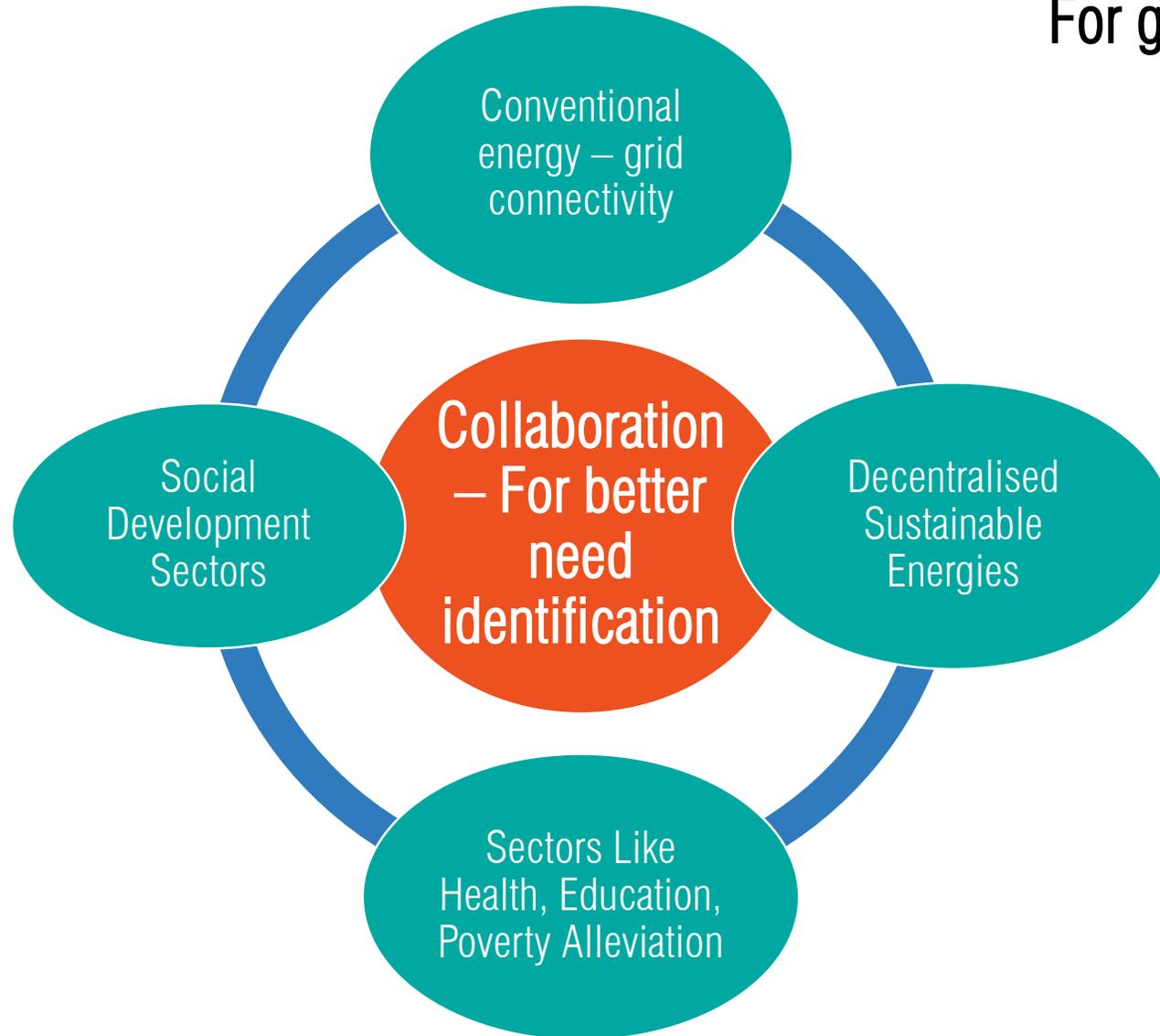
Must be an integral part of all policy design to overcome historic disadvantages women have faced within science and technology fields and wealth access and ownership:

Dedicated Gender Budgeting for specified women's needs: Sector specific training, support infrastructure like on site safe housing and toilets etc.

Impact assessment of projects monitoring effective utilisation of gender budgets – reducing implementation gaps

Gender friendly lending and funding policies within financial structures for greater access of liquidity for women.

Recommendations for Indian Policy Structures: For government policy makers



Recommendations for Indian Policy Structures: For Supply Agents of Energy

Gender equal participation within supply chains

- Leverage women's skills like networking and connectivity
- Address specific needs of women, like special training needs, or infrastructure support.
- Create mix gender work groups to leverage mutual strengths and close gaps.

Gender Inclusive Communication Strategies

- Domestic Benefits should target all family members as potential beneficiaries for greater household investment.
- Commercial and Business Energy supply chains need to be gender aware to address the woman consumer as well as the woman asset owner.

Recommendations for Indian Policy Structures: For Supply Agents of Energy

Electricity Distribution Companies (DISCOMs)

- Make Infrastructure design more women friendly – like heights or weights of utilities etc.
- Give Special training to women for better participation as Linespersons, Meter Reading staff as well as working in power stations and distribution centres.
- Provide Supporting infrastructure like restrooms, toilets and childcare facilities.
- Create structures for female ownership of power generation/ distribution

Oil Management Companies

- Focus on greater family health for better transition to clean fuels for cooking.
- Create effective structures for women's ownership for dealing and distributing clean cooking fuels.
- Expand the conversation of clean fuels to electric cooking and other clean fuels equally.
- Focus on last mile connectivity for clean fuel by creating easily accessible door delivery structures, like integrating refill stations with petrol stations.

Questions for the Discussion Table

- Think of a live project and how E&D initiatives can be implemented at the ground level.
- Discuss E&D initiatives for sector specific implementation.
- What are the three most important initiatives that needs addressing for implementation of Gender Equity Indian Energy Sector.

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Thank You

