Mainstreaming Gender in Renewable Energy Sector: Needs and Strategies

Dr Indira Shakya &
Ms Nigma Tamrakar
GEWNet, Nepal
Presentation Outline

- Why gender issue is important in the context of energy?
- What does ‘meaningful participation’ of women in energy initiatives mean?
- What are the constraints in achieving meaningful participation?

Policy Needs and Strategies
Characteristics of Energy

• Large source of energy-bio-mass-domestic cooking is the largest energy end-use sector (> 90%)

• Natural energy use for subsistence

• Poor penetration of commercial fuels (Commercial: Kerosene and Electricity)
Women’s Role in Energy Management

• Manage energy for cooking and agro-processing

• Responsible for the procurement of biomass resources for fuel

• Process fuel into a form readily amenable to domestic cooking tasks

• Build stoves
## Role of Men & Women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Care taker, supporter</strong></td>
<td><strong>Bread earner, decision maker, finance controller</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reproductive: major role player for child birth, family take care, hh work, etc</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reproductive work-supporting role</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community: major role in socializing process</strong></td>
<td><strong>Community: supporting role</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Productive: supporting role</strong></td>
<td><strong>Productive: active role</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Coping Strategies to Deal with Energy Scarcity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Energy Use</th>
<th>Constraints</th>
<th>Traditional Coping Mechanism</th>
<th>Implications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cooking Fuel</td>
<td>Scarcity of Fuel wood&lt;br&gt;Reduced availability of agro wastes</td>
<td>-Increased time &amp; effort for fuel wood collection&lt;br&gt;-Change in cooking practices and food habits&lt;br&gt;-Collect inferior fuel</td>
<td>Less time available for other household activities and family care.&lt;br&gt;Force girl child to assist in fuel collection&lt;br&gt;Indoor smoke and adverse impact on family health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fetching water</td>
<td>Environmental Degradation leads to depletion of water sources like springs and wells</td>
<td>Increased time &amp; energy in water collection</td>
<td>Conflicts and social disharmony&lt;br&gt;Adverse health impacts of using poor quality water&lt;br&gt;Negligence of women’s knowledge relating to water quality and needs in policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fodder Management</td>
<td>Decreased availability of fodder because of loss of common lands</td>
<td>Increased time &amp; energy in fodder collection</td>
<td>Less time available for other household activities, child care and productive activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home based micro-enterprise</td>
<td>Bio-mass based fuel becoming Scarce</td>
<td>Increased time and effort in fuel collection&lt;br&gt;Switch to inferior fuels</td>
<td>Low energy efficiency &amp; more fuel&lt;br&gt;Increased indoor air pollution&lt;br&gt;Negative impact on family health</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Energy Interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Energy</th>
<th>Women’s Needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practical</strong></td>
<td><strong>Productive</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Electricity</strong></td>
<td>Pumping water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mills for grinding, Oil expeller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lighting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Access to information and entertainment- Radio, TV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunity to work more hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Power for variety of formal and informal income generation activities (IGA).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Safety at evening &amp; night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More working hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunity to explore more livelihood strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Open horizons through radio, TV and internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Improved biomass (supply and conversion technology)</strong></td>
<td>Improved health through better stoves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less time and effort in gathering and carrying fuel wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mechanical</strong></td>
<td>Milling, grinding, Transporting water and crop outputs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increases variety of enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transport: allowing access to commercial and social/political opportunities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Multiplier Effects of Women -Oriented Energy Interventions

Specific Energy Interventions
- Energize water pumping
- Energize agricultural processing
- High efficiency cooking devices
- Improved lighting

Immediate Impact
- Time and Labor Saving
- Health of women and children
- Reduced indoor air
- Security
- Convenience
- Extension of work hours in micro-enterprise
- Improvement quality of life

Long Term Output
- Other opportunity for productive work-IGA
- Improved Family Well being
- High Family Income
Constraints in Involving Women in Energy Programmes

- Traditional decision-making roles in the society
- Access to resource and benefit sharing pattern
- Control, sharing & priority of hh income
- Social constraints on mobility
- Workload and time constraints
- Educational constraints
- Exclusion from regular information channels
Program Level Barriers

• Sectoral approach of interventions
• Gap between extension services and women
• Inadequate mechanisms to facilitate women’s involvement in project planning
Why Then Women and Energy?

- Women & men have different roles, responsibility and authority in the energy system. Women bear burden of the human energy crisis.
- Women have less access than men to the credit, extension services, ownership and training.
- Women and men have different kinds of knowledge and experience about energy.
- Women may need different energy policies and program than men to relief from energy poverty and to improve the productivity.
Lessons Learned From Past Interventions: 

Energy

Electricity provision does not address rural cooking needs

• New technologies/ interventions can have unintended negative consequences for women

• Biomass likely to remain the commonly used cooking fuel

• Cooking is a very large share of household energy consumption

Imperative to address cooking energy needs
Lessons Learned From Past Interventions: Technology

• Socially acceptable
• Easy to adopt and use
• Training services must recognize the economic constraints and cultural barriers of women clients
• Credit facility for women
• Women involvement in all range of program designing, implementation & Monitoring
Involving Women In Project Designing: Key Questions

• Who benefits from the intervention?
• What is the impact of the intervention on women’s social and economic status?
• What is the impact on women’s time & workload?
• Is women’s knowledge, especially on ecosystems and biological diversity taken into account?
• How far knowledge and experience of individuals and women's NGOs considered in gender mainstreaming during project identification, formulation and appraisal?
‘Meaningful Participation’ Of Women In Energy: Indicators

- Improvement in women’s position in energy context
- Increased acceptance by women and men of women as community decision-makers
- Enhancement of women's access to and control of resources
- Increased women’s involvement in personal, family or community development
- New, more visible, and more effective women’s organizations
- More women in education and training programs
- Support for women to enter nontraditional spaces and gain legitimacy in new roles
- Improved health of women and children
- Gender equality in all range of energy interventions including services institutions
Suggested measures for mainstreaming gender into energy policies

• Shift in approach from ‘technology’ focus to ‘energy service’ provision
• Promoting improved access to a variety of fuels and energy technologies, through investments in market development, taxes and tariff policies
• A more market-oriented approach to the energy sector, which would promote greater understanding of consumer needs, including those of women.
• Directing technological interventions that meet women’s practical, productive and strategic needs.
• Capacity building of women to grow at different levels – national policy makers, implementers of energy programs and NGOs.
Cont.:

- Promoting women as energy technician, entrepreneurs and end users.
- Use of gender tools and methodologies for incorporating gender concerns into planning, implementation and monitoring processes.
- Addressing knowledge gaps in gender and energy through research.
- Providing support mechanisms like credit and other information to improve women’s access to energy services
- Legislation and institutional reforms
Current Strategies

- Building up a body of evidence and experience linking attention to gender in energy policy and projects to equitable, efficient and sustainable outcomes in energy and development;
- Advocacy in national and international arenas on the importance of bringing a gender perspective to policy analysis and design;
- Capacity building and assistance to energy programs, policy and projects in integrating a gender perspective; and
- Creating networks and institutions at the national, regional and international levels to support these efforts at the practical and political level.
Thank you