Influencing policies and public opinion
ENERGIA’s Advocacy and Awareness Raising Programme

Since the creation of ENERGIA in 1995, advocacy and policy influencing have been among ENERGIA’s interventions. Our goal is to:

- Change decision- and policy-making regarding energy policies and investments;
- Catalyse the interest of, and collaboration with, key energy stakeholders;
- Strengthen alliances with and between national and international governments.

To this end, ENERGIA is an active and outspoken actor in the international energy arena. We are present at international meetings, forums, workshops and similar events. Whenever possible, we engage with decision- and policy-makers to spread and explain the evergreen message: that when aiming for energy access for all and poverty eradication, it is essential to look through a gender lens.

Back in 1995, ENERGIA was a pioneer in the field of gender and energy. Looking at the past twenty years, we can say that we have managed to break through with our message. It is being heard and adopted, with a growing number of organisations now active in the same field, gender audits are being carried out and policies and international indicators are being redefined to include gender. However with worldwide 1.2 billion people still lacking access to electricity and 2.7 billion people without access to clean cooking facilities, the work is far from being done.

As part of our commitment to Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL), a multistakeholder partnership launched in 2011 by the UN Secretary-General, we are implementing a comprehensive Gender and Energy Advocacy Programme. This programme uses a model that combines global, regional and national advocacy to deliver results. The diversity of activities within the scope of this programme is illustrated in this brochure.

The aim of our Gender and Energy Advocacy Programme is to convince governments and donors to invest in gender-informed energy programmes. We want to ensure that the voices of women from the South and of those working at the international level are heard in energy policy discussions and inter-governmental negotiations. We also specifically aim to integrate gender in national SEforALL action agendas and other SEforALL processes that revolve around the commitments made. Under the SEforALL umbrella, governments, the private sector and civil society actors have committed to ensure – by 2030 – universal access to modern energy services, and to double the global rate of improvements in energy efficiency as well as the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.

Besides our own international advocacy, we have been actively supporting awareness raising and advocacy conducted by our partners in five countries: Kopernik in Indonesia, Practical Action East Africa in Kenya, Centre for Rural Technology in Nepal, Energy 4 Impact in Senegal and Solar Sister in Tanzania.

As the examples on the following pages demonstrate, these partners implement a range of activities: from taking part in special task forces and working together with governments at the national, regional and local levels to awareness-raising campaigns that target the general public – and convey the importance of including and promoting women in the energy value chain and showing the impact of ENERGIA’s Women’s Economic Empowerment Programme.

PHOTO: ENERGIA brings voices from the grassroots to the global arena. Here, Niru Shestha, a Nepalese energy entrepreneur involved in ENERGIA’s Women’s Economic Empowerment Programme, speaks during a SEforALL Forum 2017 plenary session. Photo: Adam Schultz/ENERGIA
Together with our partners, our advocacy efforts have contributed to:

- Inclusion of gender in county energy plans in Kenya
- Engagement of other actors such as schools, ministries of education and media as advocates for gender equality in the energy space.
- Inclusion of cooking, energy and indoor air pollution in SDG indicators
- Development of the unique ECOWAS Policy for Gender Mainstreaming in Energy Access
- Change in SEforALL rhetoric from women as beneficiaries to women as agents of change
- Increased public awareness through campaigns that have reached 14 million people
- Shaping UN Women and UNEP flagship programme: “Women’s Entrepreneurship for Sustainable Energy”
- Prioritisation of women’s entrepreneurship and economic empowerment in the EU energy access portfolio
- Integration of Gender and Renewable Energy into primary school curricula in Nepal
- Inclusion of gender indicators in the SEforALL Action Agenda in Kenya, Nepal, Senegal and Tanzania
- Inclusion of gender indicators in the SEforALL Strategic Framework, Business Plan, People Centered Accelerator and Forums
- Integration of gender and renewable energy into primary school curricula in Nepal
- Change in SEforALL rhetoric from women as beneficiaries to women as agents of change
Changing perceptions and attitudes among stakeholders

In November 2016, we held a survey among stakeholders to assess our contribution to the changes that have taken place in perceptions and attitudes towards applying a gendered lens to energy policies and programmes. We were gratified that the responses were strikingly positive about ENERGIA’s work and relevance. To the question as to whether ENERGIA brings a different perspective to the discussions on energy access, 93 of the 99 reactions were affirmative.

We proudly present some of the survey responses:

“ENERGIA has been a key player in advocating for the inclusion of the voice of grassroots women groups to the highest levels.”

“We have developed efforts to mainstream gender in all of our work over the past year, and ENERGIA’s work has informed this greatly.”

“The capacity building and also the advocacy done by ENERGIA has influenced the change in the inclusion of gender consideration in project planning and implementation (in my organisation).”

“ENERGIA’s concern with energy access covers the broadest spectrum, unlike other forums which are more focused and therefore limited and unable to bring out the inter-connectedness of issues.”

“ENERGIA takes into account women and men issues. Traditionally women are more affected if there is lack of fuel. They know what works for them and by involving them they will adopt the technology because it would have come from them.”

“By conducting gender audits of energy policies as well as other studies on gender and energy, ENERGIA has made a breakthrough in a traditionally marginalized policy relevant area.”

“I worked actively with ENERGIA many years ago, which helped establish my worldview concerning the imperative of always keeping in mind the gender factor.”

“Its research and partnership building have been fundamental in raising the profile of these important issues.”
Contributing to a one-of-a-kind gender mainstreaming policy

In 2012, ENERGIA co-organised an expert-level training workshop which spurred the launching of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Program on Gender Mainstreaming in Energy Access. Thus, and through the subsequent membership of the Technical Advisory Group and Steering Committee of this flagship programme, ENERGIA has directly contributed to ECOWAS’s increasing recognition of the importance of gender mainstreaming.

A concrete demonstration of this recognition is the ECOWAS Policy for Gender Mainstreaming in Energy Access that was developed in 2015. This unique policy – described by the ECOWAS Commissioner for Energy as “revolutionary” – will mainstream gender in all energy programmes, projects and initiatives implemented within ECOWAS, including large-scale energy infrastructure projects and investments.

The policy was initially endorsed by the energy ministries of the 15 ECOWAS Member States. In 2017, it was adopted by the ECOWAS Heads of State, which clearly indicates that gender mainstreaming in energy access is gaining traction at the highest levels of policymaking.

Through active involvement in the steering of ECOWAS Gender Mainstreaming and Energy Access Program – and based on a broad recognition of our expertise in this area – ENERGIA was able to provide strategic input to ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE), which initiated the development of the policy. Moreover, two ENERGIA partners, ABANTU for Development and Energy 4 Impact, made practical contributions through their participation in various related workshops and meetings that preceded the presentation of the final draft. For instance, ABANTU and other energy and gender organisations prepared a situational analysis of gender and energy in the ECOWAS region, provided technical guidance to the policy development process, reviewed the draft policy and participated in the validation workshops.

An important step towards the implementation of this ground-breaking policy was taken in June 2017 when energy experts validated and adopted the ECOWAS Directive on Gender Assessment in Energy Projects. This directive sets the legal framework for operationalising the policy at the national level, for which ENERGIA and partners continue to provide technical support.

www.abantu-rowa.com
Engaging with national governments

Having been appointed by the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum as the convener of civil society organisations (CSOs) in Kenya, ENERGIA partner Practical Action Eastern Africa mobilised civil society to engage in the SEforALL process at the national level.

Our partner collated CSOs’ views through workshops and direct communication with individual organisations, and presented these to the Ministry for consideration. Practical Action also represented Kenyan CSOs and advocated for gender mainstreaming in the preparation of the SEforALL Action Agenda and Investment Prospectus. Later on in the process, the Ministry constituted a SEforALL Technical Team consisting of CSOs, Private Sector and government agencies to further improve the direct engagement of a wider range of stakeholders, including more civil society partners, development partners, other line ministries, and private sector.

As a result, gender perspectives have been integrated in the Kenya Action Agenda and Investment Prospectus, including:

1. Prioritisation of concrete actions towards ensuring 100% energy access by 2030.

2. Recognition of the need to enhance the participation of women in energy development and the need for capacity building of all stakeholders involved.

3. Prioritisation of initiatives that focus on Energy, Women, Children and Health, such as:
   - Adoption of clean cooking solutions (modern cooking appliances and fuels) to improve indoor air quality and reduce drudgery.
   - Scale up initiatives to provide energy for lighting to the underserved.
   - Lighting programmes for schools, market places and health facilities.

4. Recognition of the need to incorporate gendered perspectives in all energy programmes to ensure participation and equitable benefit for women and men.

5. Recognition of the need for a comprehensive study to provide sex disaggregated data on energy to inform the sector.

6. Recognition of the need for financing for access to energy services and clean cookstoves.

The process of developing energy related policies and documents has also brought recognition of the need for gender mainstreaming in other development sectors. Practical Action continues to support gender mainstreaming in SEforALL’s country-level energy planning.

www.practicalaction.org/east-africa
Solar Sister has taken global advocacy efforts to communities across Tanzania by rolling out the Women and Energy: WE Shine campaign. The campaign aims to increase awareness of the benefits of energy access and economic opportunities for women by raising the voice of women entrepreneurs in the energy value chain and providing inputs on strategies and success stories to support the integration of women in Tanzania’s Sustainable Energy for All Action Agenda.

Among other campaigning activities, Solar Sister released and widely promoted video portraits of six economically empowered women who have been improving the wellbeing of their communities through clean energy technologies: Hadija, a farmer; Esupati, a nurse; Valentina, a community leader; Hilaria, a business woman; Beatrice, an educator; and Chrecensia, an entrepreneur.

In addition to the online video portraits and social media content, Solar Sister developed a nationwide radio campaign which reached five million people.

www.solarsister.org
Kopernik has expanded the reach of its advocacy through a volunteering programme, enlisting skilled storytellers with a wide social media audience. The #IDWomen4Energy – Indonesia Women for Energy – campaign was launched in 2016 with a contest that drew more than 100 applicants. They submitted one-minute videos explaining why they should be selected as volunteers who would then live and work with three ‘wonder women’. Wonder women (locally known as ibu inspirasi) are entrepreneurs who, supported by Kopernik, are making life-changing clean energy technologies available in remote Indonesian communities.

The volunteers created compelling stories about their first-hand experiences, and they shared those stories through their social networks. Kopernik reported that, “The three selected volunteers, also strong social media buzzers, could access a wider audience beyond Kopernik’s networks. Additionally, their continued engagement with their audience drove greater interest in our advocacy messages.” This novel way of promoting women’s economic empowerment and energy access gained more than 10,000 engagements on social media. Further, over 18,000 people have visited Kopernik’s website and learned how access to energy and engaging in an energy business can be life changing.

Based on the success of the first round, Kopernik issued a new call for volunteers in 2017. The plan is to keep the #IDWomen4Energy going as a continuous campaign, and not limited to a specific period of volunteering. In this effort, Kopernik will be able to rely on social media influencers whose support they also started to systematically enlist in 2016.

www.kopernik.ngo
ENERGIA’s partner, the Centre for Rural Technology Nepal (CRT/N), has been reaching out to children and young people, their parents and their educators to increase awareness of the importance of sustainable energy solutions. Activities include a creative portrayal of the importance of improved cookstoves, capacity building programmes, the distribution of educational materials, as well as meetings with policymakers and curriculum developers aimed at integrating energy issues into primary school curricula.

A play that has been performed in the Udayapur and Lalitpur districts highlights how improved cookstoves reduce the amount of smoke in the kitchen and are therefore better for people’s health. The play also conveys the environmental benefits of clean cookstoves. By the end of 2016, the play had been performed at 21 schools, to an audience of more than 2,500 students, 50 teachers and 1,500 other attendees. Other people also received the play’s key messages through local media coverage of the performances.

Indira Shakya – overseeing ENERGIA’s Gender and Energy Advocacy Programme in Nepal – noted that “Schools have started demanding sensitisation of students and teachers regarding clean cookstoves and sustainable energy, and we have been receiving a number of requests for teaching materials.”

In May 2017, CRT/N’s targeting of policymakers and curriculum developers produced a very tangible outcome: energy-related topics were introduced into the curricula of 15 primary schools in the Lalitpur district, and teachers received associated guides and teaching materials.

www.crtnepal.org
To raise awareness of the link between gender and energy, and to enhance the involvement of women in energy policies and programmes, Energy 4 Impact launched two media kits: a social media kit with photographs, infographics, tweets and other materials, as well as a press pack with various story ideas and background information.

Previously, Energy 4 Impact had won the support of Coumba Gawlo Seck, one of the best-selling Senegalese singers, who has been acting as a Women’s Economic Empowerment Ambassador. She recorded sensitising radio-spots that were aired on three major radio stations with the potential to reach millions of people given that 55% of Senegal’s population listens to the radio.

In early 2017, the singer visited women entrepreneurs in Tambacounda, where Energy 4 Impact has been implementing a project within ENERGIA’s Women’s Economic Empowerment Programme. In the video produced during the visit, the singer explained why she had decided to get involved: “I think it’s an innovative project, which is empowering women and fostering their autonomy. It helps them earn a living and contributes to the socioeconomic development of our country, especially in rural areas. It’s a great project, which is why I’ve become an ambassador, raising awareness among women and motivating them.”

Coumba Gawlo Seck’s visit to Tambacounda was covered by six radio stations, six newspaper articles and 32 online media, and Energy 4 Impact’s key messages resonated in the interviews she gave that day. In addition, the singer has her own radio station and was broadcasting live updates during her visit.

The video that was produced during the visit was launched on International Women’s Day and features the famous singer promoting the cause of women’s empowerment and expanding energy access. It aired three times on national TV stations TFM and RTS1 during peak hours, ensuring a broad audience and raising awareness of women’s impact in the energy sector.

www.energy4impact.org

Partner in other countries have also been working with national celebrities who have agreed to help spread the message on the importance of sustainable energy solutions and the inclusion of women in the energy value chain and discussions.
Coumba Gawlo Seck, Senegal’s second best selling singer and Women’s Economic Empowerment Ambassador, visits Tambacounda. Local women entrepreneurs are showing her the solar fridge that helped them boost their business. Photo: Laura Nolan/ Energy 4 Impact
About ENERGIA

ENERGIA, an international network of like-minded organisations and professionals, is active in Asia and Africa. Our vision is that women and men have equal and equitable access to and control over sustainable energy services as an essential human right to development. To achieve this, we:

- contribute to energy access for all by scaling up the delivery of energy services through women-led micro- and small businesses,
- advocate for and provide technical support to mainstream gender approaches in energy policies and programmes,
- provide an evidence-base for improving energy investment effectiveness through research,
- raise awareness and enhance knowledge of issues related to gender and energy through networking and knowledge products.

ENERGIA is hosted by Hivos, People Unlimited, a humanistic organisation that seeks new solutions to persistent global issues. With smart projects in the right places, Hivos opposes discrimination, inequality, abuse of power and the unsustainable use of our planet’s resources.

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On the cover: Senegal’s second best selling singer, Coumba Gawlo, visits women energy entrepreneurs in Tambacounda. Photo: Laura Nolan/Energy 4 Impact