

Mainstreaming gender in Renewable energy



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Organization of the Presentation



- ❖ **Context: Linkage between energy and gender**
- ❖ **Perspective shifts: recent thinking**
- ❖ **Addressing gender concerns through renewable energy**
- ❖ **Existing barriers and opportunities**
- ❖ **Suggestions**

What is "Gender"



“Gender is a system of
SOCIALLY DEFINED roles, privileges, attributes
and relationships
between women and men,
which are NOT determined by biology,
but by social, cultural, political and economic
expectations”.

Gender Perspectives in Energy

- ❖ Of the 1.3 billion people who live in poverty, 70% are women
- ❖ One-third of households in rural areas have female heads
- ❖ Women are the primary collectors and managers of energy for homes
- ❖ Women and men have different degrees of access and control
- ❖ Energy scarcity has a disproportionate effect on women and girls.
- ❖ Women and men have different perceptions about the benefits of energy

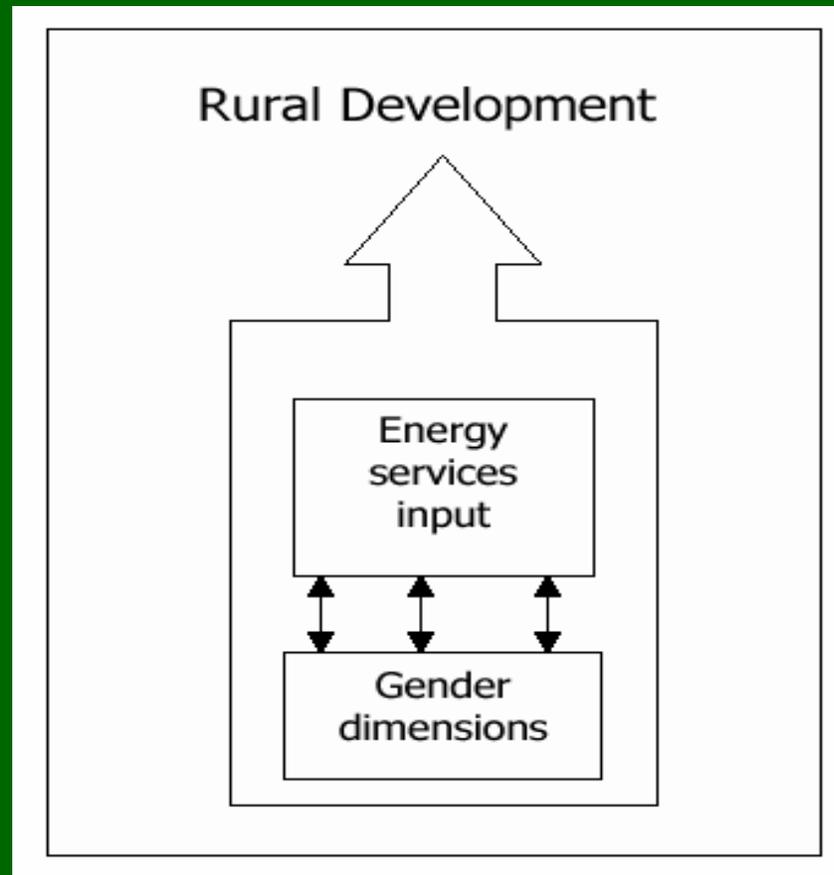
Gender in Energy- Perspective shifts

- ✓ Energy's contribution to sustainable development recognized
- ✓ Household energy no longer seen entirely as a woman's preserve

Broader definitions..

- Encompass all activities within a household
- Linkages to a wider system of energy supply and demand
- Plus, Linkages between household energy and other sectors
 - Agriculture (agricultural residues as fuel sources)
 - Health (lung and eye diseases, nutrition)
 - Education (children's opportunities for after-school study)
 - Income generation (cottage industries)

Situating 'Gender and Energy' in sustainable development goals



Addressing Gender Concerns through Renewable energy

a) Provide basic services

- Free woman's time from domestic tasks
- Home lighting permits leisure, education
- Enable access to educational media and communications in schools
- Mitigates the impacts of indoor air pollution on women
- Allows access to better medical facilities for maternal care

b) Increase productivity and comfort at work

- Permits income generation activities
- Improve energy efficiency of micro-enterprises
- Improved quality of work and output
- Provide better working environments
- More attractive and secure environment for customers
- Open up new entrepreneurial opportunities

c) Empower women

- Increase disposable income
- Multiplier effect on families
- Social transformation

Energy Interventions for Women

Energy form	Practical needs	Productive needs	Strategic needs
Electricity	Pumping water: reducing need to carry Mills for grinding Lighting improves working conditions at home	Increase possibility of activities during evening hours Power for specialized enterprises	Make streets safer: allowing participation in other activities Open horizons through radio, TV
Improved biomass (supply and conversion technology)	Improved health through better stoves Less effort in gathering and carrying firewood	More time for productive activities Lower cost of process heat for income generating activities	Control of natural forests in community forestry management frameworks
Mechanical	Milling and grinding Transporting of water and crop outputs	Increases variety of enterprises	Transport: access to markets Social opportunities

Barriers and Constraints

- ✓ **Practical and social constraints in involving women in energy planning**
 - Lack of ownership and control over productive resources
 - Restrictions on decision-making
 - Education and information barriers
 - Informal nature of women's enterprises

- ✓ **Traditional institutional set up in energy institutions**
 - Lack of women in energy profession
 - Existing institutional mechanisms not women friendly
 - Gender concerns : 'Add and stir' approach

- ✓ **Gaps in knowledge base on the subject**

Opportunities

- Improvement in the quality of rural developmental efforts:
 - Addressing the missing link of
Gender-----Energy-----Rural development
- Women as energy entrepreneurs: vehicle for social empowerment
- Multiplier effect of women oriented interventions
 - Implications for family well being
 - long term Intergenerational impacts

What this means is...

Women are more disadvantaged than men in similar circumstances



Ability of women to respond to energy interventions is restricted



Special elements need to be included in projects and programmes to address these

And the pertinent question is ...

...not which technology is best for an end-user, but
...How to enable women to choose which option
meets their needs and fits their circumstances



Precondition: Women have to be able to afford to
pay for them.

Larger Question:

What role can energy play in addressing women's
needs, and how can they be made to access
these technologies and use them?

Suggestions

- ✓ Integrate energy access through RETs and finance for income-generation
- ✓ Offer a bundle of services to (a) enable women to access improved energy, (b) enhance their entrepreneurial and technical skills, and self-confidence.
- ✓ Specifically address women's development needs for labour and time-saving, improved health, security and income
- ✓ Prioritize cooking energy and women's health issues.
- ✓ Educate people (particularly women) about the benefits of renewable energy, and its potential for improving quality of life

Suggestions

✓ Network

Record experiences, opinions, view-points and perspectives of its members

Disseminate information, experiences, viewpoints, perspectives, etc., both within and outside the network

Facilitate exchange of ideas, experiences and concepts through exchange of materials and that of people

Advocate the needs and concerns of the members through collective pressure

Promote innovations and develop methodologies.

Suggestions

- ✓ Promote interaction between renewable energy sector and development sector
- ✓ Adapt and apply specific, proven "best practice" development sector approaches
- ✓ Improve sustainability of RET use by including gender tools at all stages in the planning cycle
- ✓ Develop a critical mass of gender sensitive and trained men and women