Gender Mainstreaming in the Energy Sector

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Issues

- People don’t see the link between gender and energy. Energy is not gender neutral: men & women are affected differently by energy development; decisions on energy uses are different between men and women.

- What is gender mainstreaming? Why do we need it? How to do it?
What is gender mainstreaming in the energy sector?

- Women’s and men’s perspectives taken into account
- Equal opportunities for women and men to participate and be represented in energy sector decision-making
- Knowledge and capacities of women and men validated and strengthened
- National budgets and accounts build in women and men’s needs, concerns and interests
- Enhanced access to alternative and modern energy services that benefit both women and men equally
Gaps in Energy Institutions

- Energy policy are gender neutral in theory & gender blind in practice
- Lack of clear strategy on gender mainstreaming for people to implement
- Lack of understanding from both energy managers and “gender machinery” (gender focal points/officers) on how to mainstream gender into energy
- Fewer women in ministries/agencies decision-making positions
- Few women graduates with backgrounds in engineering & technology
- Low retention of women in male working environment that is threatening & uncomfortable for women
Gender mainstreaming

How to do?

- Awareness building/gender sensitizing workshop: varies from a lunch seminar to a day workshop for people at all different levels.

- Collect sex disaggregated data in energy sector →Baseline, monitoring and evaluation

- Increase female participation in the sector by promotion of science education to female students through outreach campaign (school visits, radio program), career orientation days, female role models, etc.
Gender mainstreaming (cont.)

- Needs and gaps assessments. Identify barriers for women to participate in working in the sector, and to propose measures.
- Gender mainstreaming training workshop for gender focal points/gender officers (methodology and tools).
- Replications using TOTs in each institution.
Career orientation day
Women’s empowerment through access to energy, energy use and benefit

- Needs and gaps assessment workshop to identify needs and gaps in access to energy for women
- Training: development of a core group of women and men to be able to transfer knowledge and skills on gender and energy as an empowering process for improved well-being in local communities in Liberia.
- The training includes: To develop an ability to be a trainer, to enhance the understanding of gender and energy issues, to enhance skills of proposal and writing skills. Replicating the training to different levels by TOTs (20:150)
Women’s empowerment through access to energy (cont.)

- Identify and support the development of women-led energy initiatives
- Networking and advocacy among community organizations, women’s groups and work on energy use and its benefits.
- Mutual support and exchange of knowledge through the women forum
- Support the development of women micro/small business in energy: training, contacting financial institutions for micro-finance
Building solar centre at the Juan Town
Productive use of electricity - business development

- Food Preservation (cool storage)
- Ice repair
- 3. Wielder
- 4. Watch repair
- 5. Printing
- 6. Internet Café
- 7. Catering

Reasons for selecting three:
- to prevent the waste of our produce
- to meet the need for sale of water and drinks
Some success factors

- Commitment from the top level
- Women’s involvement at decision-making level
- Gender mainstreaming should be both: one separate project component with activities and budget, and cross-sectoral
- Gender team and activities should involve both men and women
- Gender network for mutual support: eg. GenPet in South Sudan (operators, ministries, NGOs).
- Increase female participation in the sector by promotion of science education to female students.
Summary

Challenges

- Lacks of awareness of gender concept, linkages between gender and energy, and benefits of gender equality
- Lacks of gender competence and supports (finance, implementation, legal framework, etc.)
- Resistance due to culture, traditions & religions
- Time to change the mindset
- Institutionalize gender mainstreaming

Opportunities

- Not costly for awareness building, gender training.
- Gender network for mutual support
Thank you