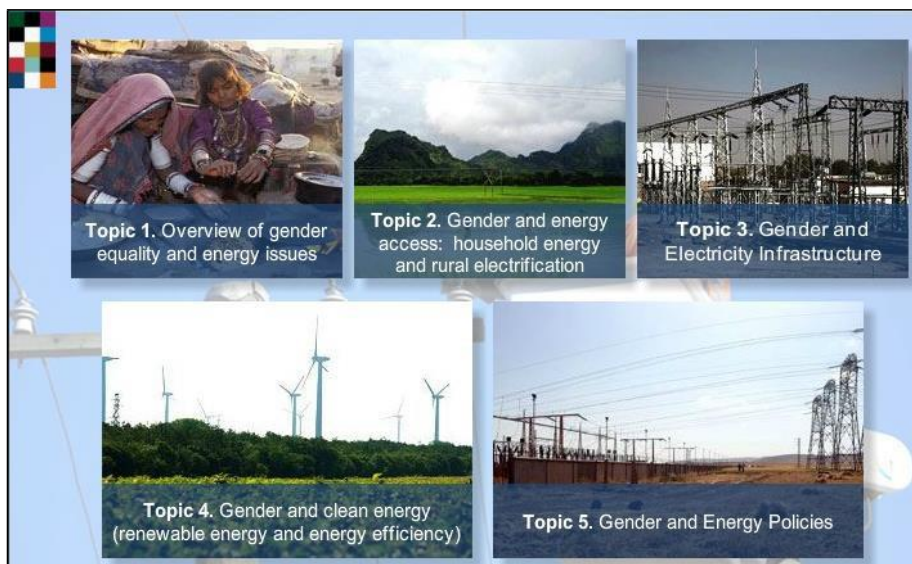


### Overview

Welcome to Topic 6 of the e-module on Gender and Energy.



We have already discussed the basic concepts in gender and energy and have reviewed key gender issues in energy access, in electricity infrastructure, in clean energy, and in energy policies in the first five Topics of this Module. This final Topic will cover tools and guidance for incorporating gender issues in the energy sector.





## Gender aspects of energy sector interventions

In order to adequately integrate gender considerations in energy sector interventions, several aspects need to be considered:

- Energy sector interventions can often impact issues related to health, safety and the quality of life. These need to be identified and considered for targeting impacts or putting in place mitigating measures. These may include the negative impacts of cooking with solid fuels in poorly ventilated kitchens, the risk of gender-based violence when collecting fuelwood, the need for electricity in health centers, or the safety benefits of street lighting.
- New employment opportunities may emerge from energy investments and income-generating opportunities resulting from better access to electricity and energy services in households and in communities need to be identified.
- One must also consider that energy sector interventions can have positive or negative impacts on household expenditures, for example through reforms that raise electricity tariffs, which may increase household energy expenditures, or through activities that improve energy efficiency, which can reduce household expenditures on energy. Changes in household energy expenditures will impact men and women differently, due to their roles in household decision-making and in the use of disposable income after paying for energy services.
- It is essential to ensure men and women's equal voice and participation in decision-making through inclusion in consultations and participation in energy sector interventions, as the impacts of energy projects may be different for men and women
- Furthermore, large infrastructure projects often result in resettlement. When individuals or communities are resettled, the livelihood and income generation losses and new opportunities may differ for men and women. For a successful resettlement process, gender differences must be taken into account in the consultation and participation process, and in the design and implementation of resettlement and compensation plans.



### Key gender issues to consider at the design phase of energy projects

There are several barriers to successfully addressing gender inequality in the energy sector that need to be considered when designing and implementing an intervention:

- Cultural and social norms may constrain women's economic and social activities, impacting their ability to be consulted on, or use, different energy technologies, or to access training or financing. Recommended actions must be sensitive to the reality within the country and its culture.
- Lack of institutional capacity to address gender disparities may also be a barrier. Weaknesses and solutions need to be considered at an early stage to support successful implementation.
- Often, the lack of gender-disaggregated data or analysis hinders efforts to recognize the need for, and design of gender-focused interventions.

Taking into account these issues, there are three design aspects to consider in energy sector interventions in order to improve gender outcomes:

- **Do no harm:** ensure the design will not lead to unintended negative gender impacts as a result of the energy project. The social assessment done during project preparation presents a great opportunity to address these matters.
- **Achieve the project objective:** ensure the design incorporates any gender-specific elements that are necessary to achieve the project development objective.
- **Seek opportunities to improve gender equality:** incorporate design features that

capitalize on opportunities to reduce gender disparities in energy projects and improve overall development outcomes.



#### Four key steps to incorporating gender issues in the energy sector

To incorporate gender equality considerations in the energy sector we need to use the right tools at the project level, and we need progressive policies at the national level.

We will begin at the project level, by examining four tools for to be used at four different project stages:

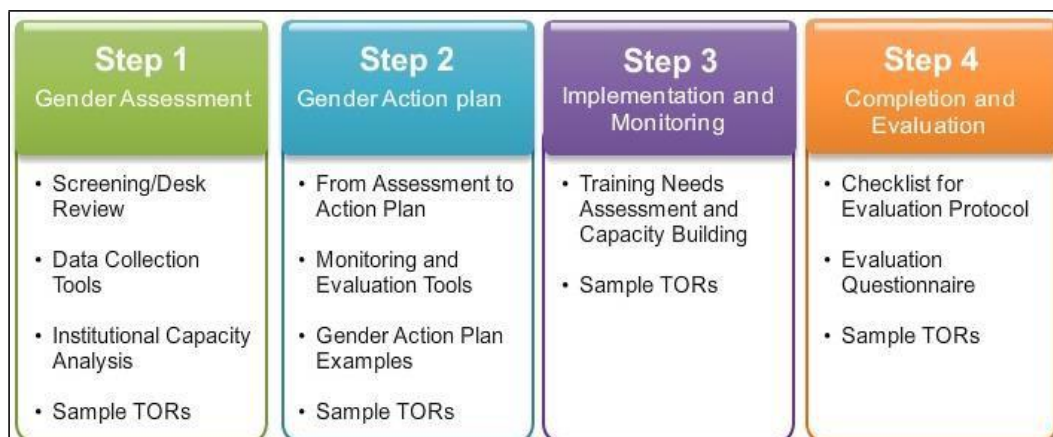
- Gender assessments, to identify the key gender issues related to the operation;
- Gender action plans, to set out a series of actions to implement the recommendations of the gender assessment -- at this stage it will also be important to identify relevant baseline data, gender targets and indicators that can measure progress and results;
- Supervision of the implementation, and monitoring of gender-related components and activities; and
- Analysis of the adequateness of implementation and gender impacts at the time of project completion and evaluation.

We will discuss each of these tools in turn, keeping in mind that one of the first steps for integrating gender into a project is through consulting with a gender expert.

Then, we will look at possible actions at the national level, where we will discuss appropriate policies to ensure gender equality considerations are taken into account in the energy sector.



Finally, we will discuss the role of global and multilateral agreements in ensuring gender equality considerations are taken into account in global energy initiatives.



### Step 1: Conduct a gender assessment

The first step to integrate gender considerations into an energy sector operation is the preparation of a gender assessment. It will identify key gender issues, risks, constraints and opportunities associated with a proposed energy sector intervention.

- The scope of the gender assessment needs to be tailored to the specific situation, but it will include data collection, and analysis of issues such as:
- The environment in which the proposed activities will take place, including applicable energy sector policies and responsibilities and key existing gender inequalities. Often, national gender assessments are available, to help identify major gender inequalities;
- The stakeholders for the proposed intervention, by identifying the men and women who will be affected;
- The institutional capacity of entities that have a role in gender-related decision-making and implementation;
- Other gender and energy programs and initiatives already engaged in this area; and
- Implications of the above analysis with respect for the proposed energy sector intervention.
- When planning for the gender assessment, careful consideration of the data collection is needed, as this will be the basis for monitoring progress and evaluating results. It is important to explicitly discuss gathering gender-sensitive data, as project managers and technical staff may lack awareness of gender issues, and women may often be under-represented in evaluation and interview teams. It will

be important to obtain information on needs and opportunities from both women and men, and to collect sex-disaggregated baseline information. At this stage, it is advisable to have a discussion with partners on how will the gender data be used – why and what to measure.

- Applicable *energy sector policies* and responsibilities and key existing *gender inequalities*
- The *stakeholders* for the proposed intervention by identifying the men and women who will be affected
- The *institutional capacity of entities* that have a role in gender-related decision-making and implementation
- Other gender and energy programs and initiatives already engaged in this area
- Implications of the above analysis with respect for the proposed energy sector intervention

## Step 2: Develop a gender action plan

The findings of the gender assessment should inform the overall project design, usually through a gender action plan, which is not a stand-alone document, but an essential part of the project design. It is developed by discussing the findings of the gender assessment with senior level officials, whether they are managers, policy makers or community decision makers. Obtaining their buy-in is critical in developing an action plan which is meaningful and will have support and adequate resources to be implemented.

The details of the action plan can then be designed by working groups, through workshops and discussions with relevant stakeholders.

The gender action plan should discuss the implications of the gender assessment for the overall project design, which may lead to adjustments in the design, and may define specific activities to be included in the project scope; and it should also identify milestones and performance indicators through a monitoring and evaluation framework.

The gender action plan should include not only actions targeted to potentially affected people, but also actions for institutional capacity building, since some of the key actions are in the areas of project management and supervision.

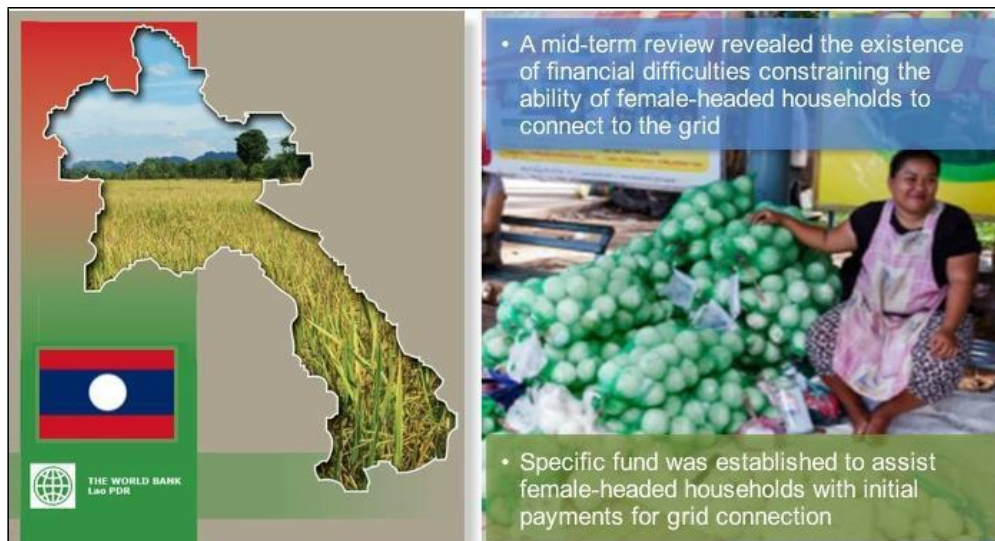


### Step 3: Keep track of gender issues during project implementation and monitoring

The efficiency and equity of development programs are enhanced when gender differences are taken into account. Depending on a country's cultural and social context, strengthening the implementation of the gender aspects of the energy project can be done by developing partnerships with women's groups, building capacity, including through on-the-job training, for the gender focal points and project staff, and, if necessary, identifying additional gender expertise to support the project implementation team.

It is also important to have adequate funding and clear responsibilities for supervision of implementation and monitoring the implementation of the gender action plan.

Mid-term reviews are instrumental for improving project implementation. For example, in Lao PDR, a mid-term review revealed the existence of financial difficulties constraining the ability of female-headed households to connect to the grid, so a specific fund was established to assist female-headed households with initial payments for grid connection.



### Issues and challenges with gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation

Conducting gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation encounters several challenges, such as:

- Energy project managers generally lack experience with gender issues and methods, and may only include gender-blind indicators, implicitly assuming the project will be gender-neutral. But energy projects affect women and men differently, and the monitoring framework needs to take this into account.
- Project managers and staff may be unaware of the existence of gender issues when considering a monitoring framework. This underscores the importance of the gender assessment.
- Women are often under-represented in evaluation and interview teams. Having women on these teams can help gain information on women impacted by the project, as many women may not be able to express themselves freely in interviews or to attend or speak in community meetings.
- Obtaining information from both women and men may increase the cost and time of data collection. This may require additional resources initially, but the developmental impact of the project will be enhanced.
- Carefully choosing a few meaningful indicators will be important. For example, how actively women participate and impact final decision making will often be more important and useful to measure than the number of men and women participating in a meeting.
- When indicators have been chosen, baseline data will need to be established.



Sometimes a specific baseline survey will be needed. If the team opts for a rigorous impact evaluation, considerations for the test and control group will also be needed.



#### Step 4: Analyze gender impacts during project completion and evaluation

The gender assessment conducted prior to the gender action plan can help provide a baseline for the impact evaluation, but a specific baseline survey may also be needed.

Once the project is completed, the implementation completion report should analyze the gender components, their outcomes and impacts.

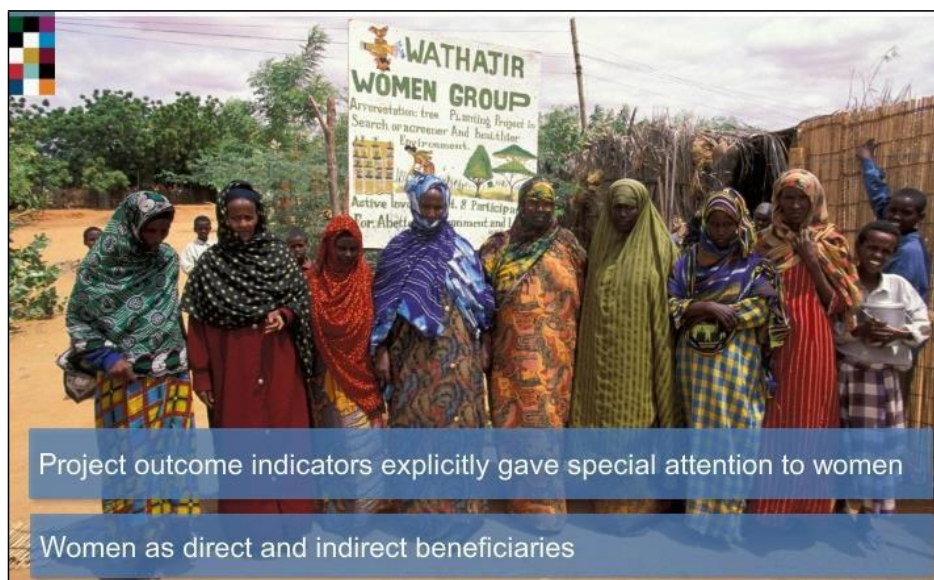
Completion reports should examine three key dimensions when reviewing energy projects:

- Analysis and/or consultations on gender-related issues;
- Actions to address gender disparities, to incorporate the distinct needs of men and women, or to have positive impacts on gender equality; and
- Mechanisms to monitor gender impact and facilitate gender-disaggregated analysis.

The lessons learned from the implementation of the gender components should be integrated into subsequent energy operations within the country, and be integrated into dialogue for policy interventions with the government, power utilities, and other development partners.

For example, in Senegal, the findings of the gender assessment of an energy and forestry project were integrated into the design of a follow-up project, which included gender equality in the project development objectives, with a focus on women's employment. As a

result, project outcome indicators explicitly gave special attention to women, with clear targets for women as direct and indirect beneficiaries.



### Actions at the national level: national policy and institutional frameworks

There are many aspects of energy policy relevant to gender equality. A few of these include:

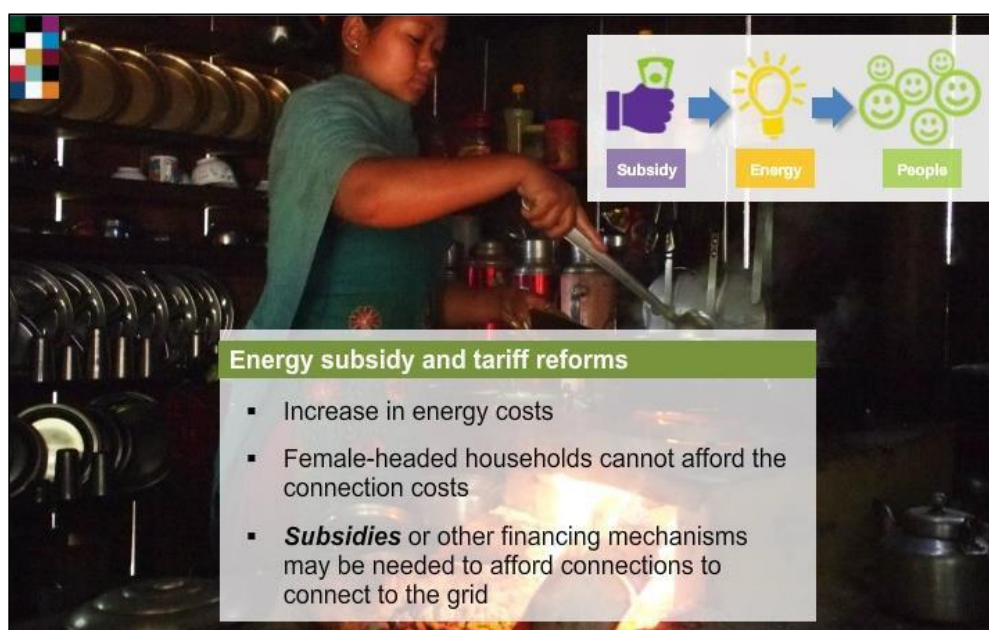
National gender assessments and gender action plans. These are generally the responsibility of a central ministry or an entity with a gender or women focus, and/or a cross-sectoral mandate within the government. They provide the context and framework for more focused sectoral assessments and actions directly related to a proposed general sector intervention by the line ministries. Such sectoral assessments have been carried out in several countries. For example, the Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy in Ethiopia is conducting a Gender Action Plan that will enable it to strategically address gender considerations in the process of moving towards sustainable energy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Dissemination of information on overall energy sector activities to local men and women, regarding forthcoming projects, availability of new energy-efficient products, training on how to use and access them, and consultations on energy interventions.

Affordability may be an issue when energy tariff reforms cause an increase in energy costs, or when, for example, female-headed households cannot afford the connection costs when electricity becomes available to their community. Because female-headed households are often overrepresented among the poorest households, subsidies or other financing mechanisms may be needed to allow those unable to afford connections to connect to the grid. To the extent that affordability varies by gender, the responses must be gender-targeted; or to adopt new technologies, such as solar home systems.

Subsidies are also important mechanisms to promote renewable energy or more efficient energy technology.

Energy sector institutions, such as the Energy Ministry, can improve equity in access to energy services by ensuring consultations with relevant men and women and involving women at the senior levels in energy decision-making. They can also help establish fruitful partnerships with women's organizations or non-governmental organizations to aid in targeted outreach to women.



**Energy subsidy and tariff reforms**

- Increase in energy costs
- Female-headed households cannot afford the connection costs
- **Subsidies** or other financing mechanisms may be needed to afford connections to connect to the grid

### Global initiatives

International initiatives and actions can help remind the world that gender equality and sustainable energy for all will contribute to equitable and sustainable development for men and women. They can help advance the gender and energy agenda by setting ambitious new targets, by adopting good diagnostic tools and generating better and more meaningful data, and by providing evidence showing how gender-smart investments pay off.

One example of such initiatives, Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL), is a global coalition of governments, private sector, civil society and international organizations, which aims for universal energy access by 2030, double energy efficiency, and double the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.

SE4ALL has explicitly indicated that a priority in 2015 will be to focus on the connection between energy, women, and children's health, recognizing that women most often pay the price for lack of access to clean and efficient energy services, by considering the key role that access to energy services, especially electricity, mechanical power, and clean cooking systems play in enhancing women's economic opportunities.



### What will your role be?

There is a need going forward to deepen and strike a balance on evidence building and practical experience.

- Research should continue to focus on gathering sex-disaggregated data to help inform energy programs and policies, and help track results. Under-researched areas should try to gather more insights on issues such as gender-based violence or female labor force participation in the energy sector.
- However, as evidence gets built, project teams must also apply a learn-by-doing approach and pilot interventions within their energy projects that can lead to positive impacts on gender equality. Carrying out a training session, or creating specific gender targets within their programs may produce immediate results and operational lessons.





▪ Gender-based violence or female labor force participation in the energy sector

We hope the resources and guidance in this last Topic will help you apply the many lessons from this Gender and Energy Module, and we also hope you will continue to learn and share your experiences.

### Check Your Understanding

1. What key aspects are important when including gender considerations in energy projects?
  - A. Ensure affordability, 'do no harm' and use sex-disaggregated data
  - B. 'Do no harm', achieve the project objective, and seek opportunities to improve gender equality
  
2. When integrating gender considerations into an energy sector operation, the first thing to do is to prepare a gender assessment plan.
  - A. True
  - B. False