

## **ENERGIA and DFID join forces to further knowledge on impacts of energy access for women and girls**



The International Network on Gender and Sustainable Energy, ENERGIA, and the UK Department for International Development, DFID, signed an agreement to advance knowledge and awareness regarding the impact of energy access—or the lack thereof—on women and girls. DFID has committed £4.5 million over the period 2014 – 2019 to ENERGIA in a contract that encompasses research, evidence gathering and dissemination, and raising public awareness on the importance of energy access for women and girls, in line with their commitments to the Sustainable Energy for All Initiative.

The research programme, aims at collecting and analysing empirical evidence on the impact of the lack of energy access on women and girls and then to translate this evidence into energy policy and project recommendations.

“Women and men often use, are affected by, or benefit from energy services differently” says Joy Clancy, Associate Professor in Technology Transfer at the University of Twente and the Principal Researcher for the programme. “The same energy service may affect men and women in different ways, with different social or economic outcomes. However, there is little independent and empirical evidence of these differentiated impacts. We believe that once we have credible evidence, we can convince both policymakers and the private sector that a gender perspective is beneficial for all sectors and stakeholders.”

The research will focus on five areas: electrification through grid and decentralised systems; productive uses of energy; the political economy of energy sector dynamics; energy sector reform; and the role of the private sector in scaling up energy access. Each research area will provide responses to key questions such as: ‘What are the impacts on women and girls of access to electricity?’; ‘Does a gendered approach provide greater empowerment to women and girls than traditional approaches in the energy sector?’; ‘Does energy access for women’s enterprises have a positive impact on poverty reduction?’; ‘Are women disproportionately disadvantaged relative to men by energy sector reforms?’; and ‘Which business models for increasing energy access contribute most to women’s empowerment?’.



ENERGIA and DFID expect the results of this study to contribute to more effective policy and project interventions related to energy access, as well as to women's empowerment and gender equity.

Lynne Featherstone, the Minister responsible for DFID, said "Energy poverty greatly constrains women's opportunities at the most basic level. There is a real need for innovative and sustainable approaches to address this inequality, and I am pleased this research programme with ENERGIA will be at the forefront of these efforts".

ENERGIA will also engage with DFID's campaign to raise public awareness, in the UK and internationally, of the benefits for women and girls of access to clean energy. Further, ENERGIA will also collaborate with Ashden, a sustainable energy charity, to conduct research on sustainable energy enterprises, including past Ashden Award winners, to assess their impact on women and girls. The aim will be to draw lessons from previous experiences and disseminate them widely.

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