

The Gender and Energy Innovation Facility



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Despite increasing efforts to reach Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG 7) – ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all by 2030 – 7.9 million people still lack access to energy, and 2.8 billion rely on traditional, polluting and hazardous cooking fuels. If we are to reach SDG 7, we need new and innovative approaches to address persistent gender challenges in scaling up access to modern energy and modern cooking services. This is especially relevant for achieving SDG 5 on gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. To stimulate innovation, Hivos, ENERGIA, Energising Development (EnDev) and Modern Energy Cooking Services (MECS) have created a platform for creative experimentation: The Gender and Energy Innovation Facility.

The concept of innovation

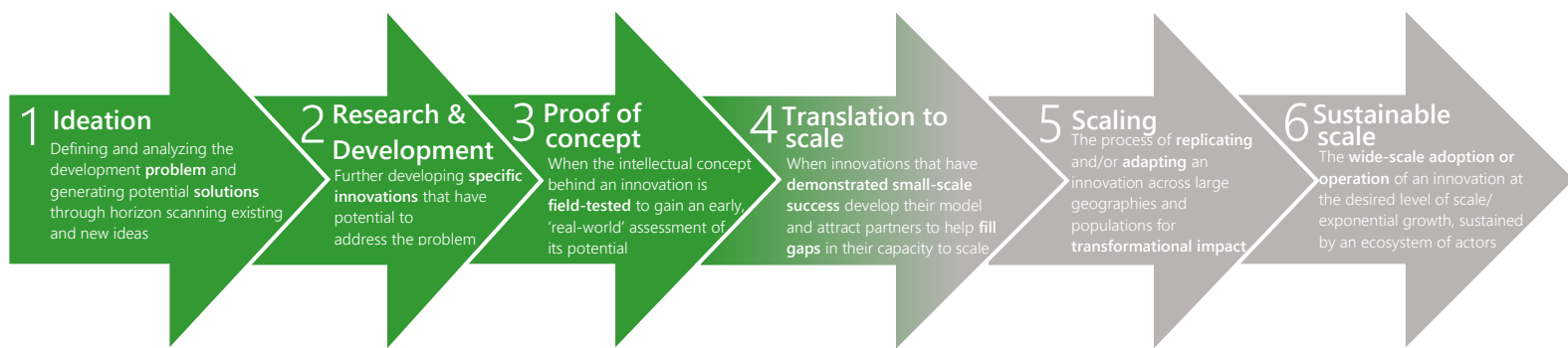
The Facility defines innovation as experimentation to create something new, something that deviates from the norm and requires working with the unknown. It aims to stimulate a wide range of innovations on:

1. Product or service (making something new)
2. Process (changing the way a product or service is created or delivered)
3. Positioning (trying out something that already exists, but in a new context)
4. Paradigm (a complete shift in thinking)

Phases of innovation

In reference to the six-stage model developed by the International Development Innovation Alliance (IDIA), the Facility will support innovations throughout the first three stages: Ideation, Research and Development and Proof of Concept. The support will consist of multidisciplinary brainstorm events (bootcamps), resulting in pilot proposals, funding and tailor-made support to the implementers. Furthermore, if a pilot shows the potential to scale, the Facility will support the implementers in creating a path to transition to scale (the fourth stage).

Figure 1: The Facility will support the first three of the six stages of innovation



Source: International Development Innovation Alliance (IDIA). 'Insights on Scaling Innovation' (June 2017) p. 7

The process

The Facility works with a 'closed call' and 'bootcamp' approach. The 'closed call' means that the four partners – Hivos, ENERGIA, EnDev and MECS – will suggest a long list of potential participants. The Facility will operate in three countries, starting with Kenya. The other two countries will be decided at a later time.

The selection process pathways

1. Idea generation

- Facility partners identify a long list of potential interested participants (nominees);
- Nominees send in an Expression of Interest through an application form with a short description of challenges, problems or solutions they are interested in working on (1 to max. 3 ideas);
- Facility partners select a short list of 15 innovative ideas to participate in a bootcamp.

- A bootcamp with 15 participants to build innovation capacity and shape innovative ideas takes place (2-3 days).

2. Research and Development

- Participants develop and submit a concept note to Facility Management on the innovative ideas they wish to pilot;
- A Selection Committee selects five to seven concept notes per bootcamp for implementation and testing, and grants funds up to EUR 25,000.

3. Proof of Concept

- Pilots are implemented (3-12 months).

4. Transition to scale

- Facility Management selects and support pilots for transition to scale support (3-4 months). The support consists of a grant fund of up to EUR 10,000 as well as non-financial support.

Throughout all phases, knowledge management and sharing is a key element.

Thematic Areas

The Facility will focus on three thematic areas to spur innovation:

- **Gender and Energy Entrepreneurship and Employment**

Women should get equal opportunities to participate in and support the clean energy economy, as entrepreneurs and employees. This includes getting equal access to funding and investment for their businesses.

- **Gender and energy in the care economy**

Both women and men need support in their roles in the care economy, given their key roles as care-givers, and as breadwinners. Better energy access and suitable

appliances can make a major contribution to time- and labor saving, to essential health and sanitation, and to closing the digital divide between men and women. Access to clean cooking is especially critical, for health and for the environment, and for gender equality. Addressing broader contextual issues is also important to achieving a gender-equitable enabling environment for energy access.

- **Gender in energy policy and practice**

Women need to have a place at the table - or create their own tables - when strategies about energy transitions and economic recovery are planned and decided.

