

**UiO** : **Centre for Development and the Environment**  
University of Oslo

## **Applying a gender approach in practice: what does it mean when we meet people in the field?**

Input to discussion, gender approaches, ENERGIA webinar 29 May 2015



Tanja Winther RA1: 'Examining Factors that Enhance and restrict Women's Empowerment through Electrification' (EFEWEE)

# The interview context

Positions

People speak for effect



Mixed or same sex groups

Trust



Detached from daily life

Close to practice

# Gender research

## Mapping the situation within the household

- Attempt to talk to both wife and husband, at least register each persons' income/occupations and other important individual data
- Register the gender of respondent (and interviewer)
- Avoid using the term “head of household”!
  - Ethical problem: Assumes the man is head if there are two partners
  - Important data will be missing
- Include: “Who in the household...”
- Separate between questions on norms and what they actually do
- Relatively easy: questions on income, assets/ownership, routines
- Challenging: questions on decision making

# What do we hear?

(economist and anthropologist analysing same interview)

## Interviewee:

'Yes, I am worried about the future and what kind of world my children will live in'

## Economist interpretation:

This person **has** a strong environmental concern



## Anthropologist interpretation:

In this interview with two **female** researchers **focusing on sustainability**, this **woman** expressed a strong environmental concern and **even anxiety** when **being asked** if she believes in global warming (...and she seemed uninterested when receiving the chocolate gift)



Mixed methods:

# Interpreting conflicting findings



# Comparing what people say and do

(examples from Zanzibar)

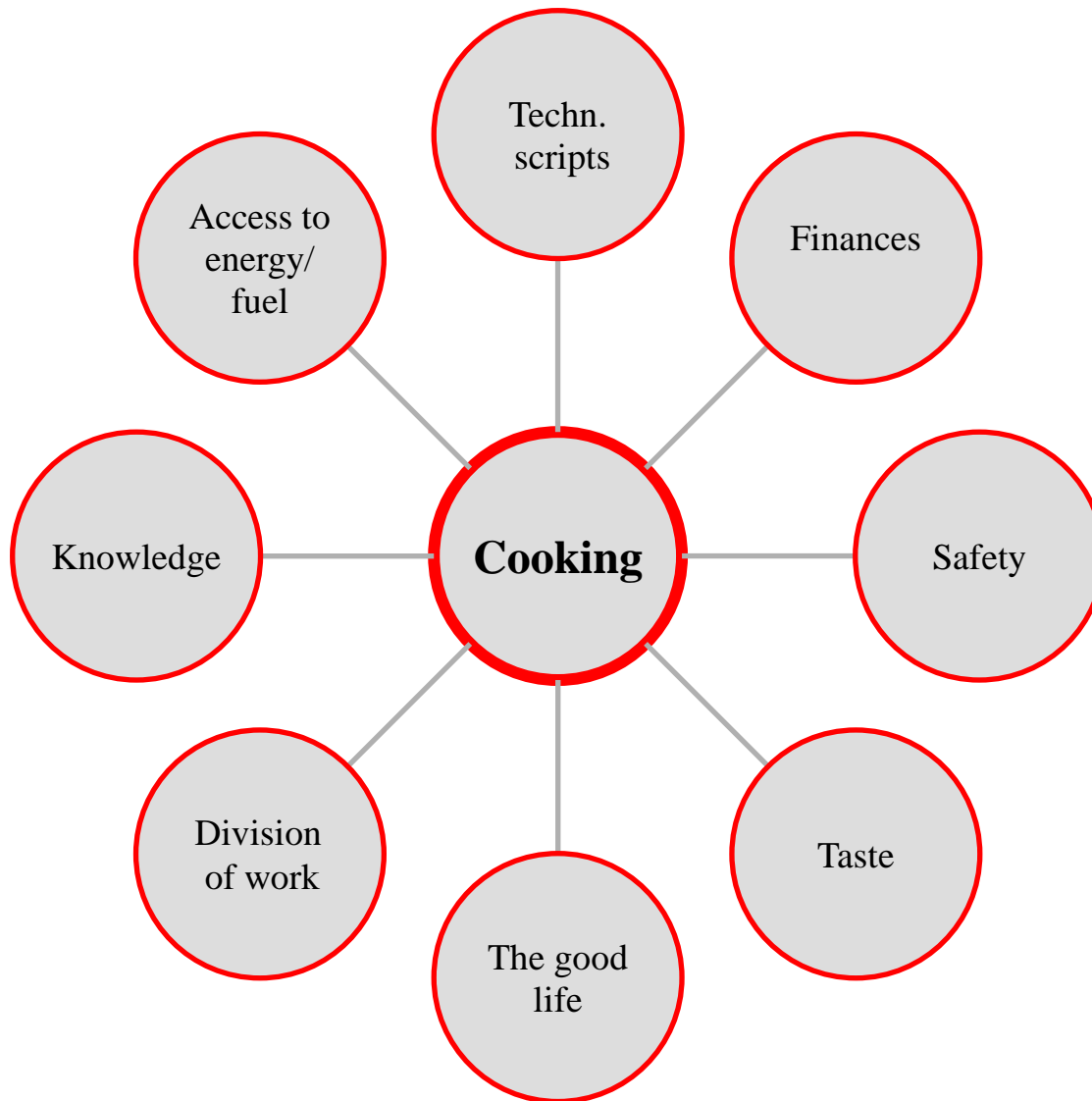
## Interviews 1991

After light and radio, what appliances would you obtain next?

- Men: 1) freezer (fish) 2) electric stove 3) TV
- Women: electric stove (but also much fear)

## Observed 2001

- Relatively few freezers, but rarely used for storing fish
- No electric cookers
- Many television sets





## Examine gendered realities before intervention

- Opportunities
- Assets/endowments
- Decision making power



## Examine the nature and process of intervention

- Various groups of women empowered (process)?
  - Other groups empowered?

Document gendered realities after intervention including careful treatment of changes caused by intervention (attribution)