Exploring Factors that Enhance & restrict Women’s Empowerment through ‘Electrification’ – EFEWEE

- 2015 – 2018
- Comparing grid and decentralised systems
- India, Kenya and Nepal
- Mixed methods Research

Key Research Members EFEWEE

- Tanja Winther, University of Oslo, Norway
- Kirsten Ulsrud
- Karina Standal
- Debajit Palit, TERI, India
- Mini Govindan
- Bigsna Gill
- Anjali Saini, Seacrester Consulting, Kenya
- Henry Gichungi
- Magi Matinga, Dunmai Energy, Malawi
- Raju Laudari, AEPC, Nepal (collab. partner)
How may electricity make a difference?

Study Objective

- Overall goal is to provide policy recommendations on what it would take to enhance women’s empowerment;
- Not only interested in measuring outcomes & impact of electricity but how and why this happens;
- Focus on conditions & attempt to explain why electricity produces a given set of gendered effects.

Research framework EFEWEE

6 conditional factors

1 Socio-cultural factors
2 Design of electricity system
3 Ownership & management
4 Process of electrification
5 Policy, regulations & financing schemes
6 International actors
The research organised into 6 WPs

A. Project Management
B. Literature & Policy review (2015-16)
C. Qualitative case studies India, Kenya, Nepal (Central Grid + Mini/Off-grid) (2016-17)
D. Cross country HH Survey (2017)
E. Synthesis (2018)
F. Dissemination, stakeholder engagement and recommendations (2016-18)

- International Frameworks
- Electricity (grid + off-grid) in India, Kenya and Nepal
Policy Review: Our findings (1/3)

• Electricity policies rarely address gender issues explicitly
  – Even when addressed, they do not appear to translate into practice in a systemic way

• International initiatives & national policies for electrification often are gender-blind in terms of anticipated benefits,
  – assumes benefits will trickle down & be of equal use to women & men; or they primarily focus on women’s domestic role
  – they do not explicitly acknowledge the differentiated needs of women, men, girls and boys for creating equal outcomes
  – very few cases to observe where women have actively involved in decision-making processes, policy formulation or in electricity supply chain.

Policy Review: Our findings (2/3)

• Much of this stems from lack of understanding & documented evidence of the merit of including gender elements in electricity policies or programmes

• Most of the available knowledge on the policy-electricity-gender nexus derives from singular case studies, with off-grid supply receiving more attention than on-grid

• Recent growth in private sector off-grid decentralised solutions over the last few years appear to show some interesting anecdotal evidence towards gender inclusion and women’s empowerment, although varied in ‘pace’ and ‘depth’
  – This may be due to the fact that these initiatives are usually designed through demand-driven “bottom-up” approaches
Policy Review: Our findings (3/3)

• Wider legislation such as on land rights, inheritance rules etc. affects women’s degree of empowerment through electrification
  – Greater attention may be required on how policies in other areas hinder or enhance the empowerment of women through electrification

• Energy Ministries fail to systematically collect gender-disaggregated data
  – This hinders accumulation of knowledge for research & policymaking

• Lack of pressure from grassroot level act as a barrier for realising gender goals
Literature Review

- Problem 1: What is ‘empowerment’?
- Problem 2: Unclear definition of gender goals in energy interventions (Skutsch 2006, Clancy et al. 2007, IEG 2008)
  - Women’s increased welfare
  - Women’s economic empowerment
  - Women’s political empowerment
- Problem 3: Fragmented evidence

Electrification in the South:
“Strangely little is known about the impact on women’s empowerment”

Motivation 1: The marvel of electricity
Motivation 2: Social change is complex

Invest in a lamp and let a girl read...

Invest in a cow ...('girl effect')

Multiply 
Empowerment

Potential for empowerment

Motivation 3: the risk of more inequality

Men tend to be recruited in management/operation

Women’s representation in village groups: limited effect

Grid: owner of the house tends to be the customer

When electricity is new: the richest 10% tend to get subscription

Electricity & appliances: desired, high status: transformative potential?
**What counts as evidence?**
Results from EFEWEE

**Statistical studies (incl modelling)**
- Electricity access
- Indicator X

**Qualitative studies**
- Context
- Process
- Design
- Social practices
- Relations

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**Defininitions**
Drawing on Kabeer 1999 & 2001, Friedman 1992 and qualitative research

**Gender equality:** Women and men’s equal
- Rights
- Access to and control over resources (material, social, human)
- Power to influence desicions that concern or affect them

**Women's empowerment:**
A process towards gender equality
### Analysing women’s empowerment through electrification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 Overarching issues</strong></td>
<td>Women and men's rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gender ideologies and norms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women and men's social positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 Access to and control over resources</strong></td>
<td>Material opportunities (short term)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Material endowments (long term)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social resources (e.g. social networks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human resources (education, drudgery, health)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3 Power to influence decisions (Agency)</strong></td>
<td>Life decisions (incl. political power)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Everyday decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Electricity at home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Involvement in system of supply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4 Impact of including women in supply</strong></td>
<td>The impact of women's involvement in supply on the empowerment of women in the wider community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5 Negative effects</strong></td>
<td>Signs of negative effects of electrification on any of the above dimensions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Indicators:

#### How to understand intra-household relations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Indicator/question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material opportunities</td>
<td>Access to using electricity</td>
<td>In which rooms do you keep/use electric light?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency</td>
<td>Influence over electricity</td>
<td>Who decided where to put up the lights?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material endowments</td>
<td>Long term financial security</td>
<td>Who owns the land, the house, the mobiles and the el. appliances? (w/m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender norms and practices</td>
<td>Gender division of work</td>
<td>How many times during the last week did a male member prepare a meal?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### A gendered, daily schedule

**Elderly couple, farming and cattle (rural Eastern Kenya 2016)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 am</td>
<td>Get up, milk cows</td>
<td>7 am</td>
<td>Wake up, take tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 am</td>
<td>Prepare tea (breakfast)</td>
<td>9 am</td>
<td>Go to do other duty (collect and construct things)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 am</td>
<td>Eat tea</td>
<td>9 am</td>
<td>Go to shamba (firewood)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 am</td>
<td>Prepare lunch</td>
<td>1 pm</td>
<td>Eat lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 am</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 pm</td>
<td>Eat lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 am</td>
<td>Prepare lunch</td>
<td>1 pm</td>
<td>Eat lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 pm</td>
<td>Fetch water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 pm</td>
<td>Eat lunch</td>
<td>2 pm</td>
<td>Rest a bit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 pm</td>
<td>Fetch firewood</td>
<td>4 pm</td>
<td>Go back to work, look after goat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 pm</td>
<td>Collect lantern, socialise</td>
<td>5 pm</td>
<td>Sit and listen to the radio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 pm</td>
<td>Prepare supper</td>
<td>6 pm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td>8 pm</td>
<td>Eat supper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td>10 pm</td>
<td>Eat supper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 pm</td>
<td>Make ropes</td>
<td>11 pm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 pm</td>
<td>Go to bed</td>
<td>12 pm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Kenya (Ikisaya Energy Centre)

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Endau, Kenya (grid)

Challenge for policy: how to link the two Sustainable Development Goals?

SDG 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women & girls

Sustainable Energy for All & Global Tracking Framework (GTF):
Golden – but missed – opportunity to start collecting gender sensitive data?
What prevents change: 8 Lock-ins

Available results, EFEWEE
From the scoping phase (literature & policy reviews)

Websites:
• EFEWEE Web and Blog http://www.efewee.org
• ENERGIA http://energia.org/research/

Our contacts:
• tanja.winther@sum.uio.no Tanja Winther
• debajitp@teri.res.in Debajit Palit

Publications: In progress (Academic journals):
• Palit, D., Govindan, M. et al.: “Is gender mainstreamed in electricity policies: Perspectives from India, Kenya and Nepal”
• Matinga, M., T.Winther and K.Standal: “Electrification and women’s empowerment: What is the evidence?”
• Winther, T., M.Matinga and K.Ulsrud: “Electrification and women’s empowerment: Proposal of a framework of analysis”
Issues today

• Current energy frameworks: what policies actually work? What kind of new evidence is needed? (contexts and channels)
• Experiences from the field, the voice of practitioners
• How to achieve social transitions? Learning from other sectors

Welcome – and thank you!

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