



BRIEF

GENDER, ENERGY AND POLICY

A REVIEW OF ENERGY POLICIES IN EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

THE ISSUE

Renewable, clean energy and gender equality are preconditions for sustainable development and for tackling climate change. This linkage is tacit in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Gender equality and women's empowerment (Goal 5) and women's and men's equal access to secure energy services (Goal 7) are central to building more environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient societies (Goals 13 and 15) (UN Women and UNDP-UNEP PEI, 2015).

Throughout Africa, more than 600 million people (about 50 per cent of the population) do not have access to sustainable, clean energy sources.

Further, energy combustion is mostly inefficient and toxic. About 600,000 people in Africa die each year as a result of household air pollution (Africa Progress Panel, 2015), and approximately 60 per cent of these victims are women (ESMAP, 2011; IRENA 2013). Dependence on firewood and biomass for household energy contributes to environmental degradation and climate change, as it exacerbates air pollution, deforestation, land degradation and desertification. However, small-scale, off-grid clean energy solutions offer the potential to bring reliable energy to the most in need and deprived, with limited adverse impact on the environment (African Development Bank Group, 2012).

KEY POINTS

A review of 15 energy policies in East and Southern Africa shows that over half (60 per cent) have integrated gender:

- 60 per cent acknowledge the need to enhance women's participation in policy- and decision-making in the sector
- 60 per cent recognize women's particular role as energy providers and consumers at the household level
- 60 per cent make references to mainstreaming gender in energy policy, programmes and activities
- 53 per cent cite enhancing women's access to energy services and technologies as a means of empowerment
- 40 per cent link women's empowerment to enhanced environmental sustainability in the sector

For good practice to spread across all countries, however, decision-makers need to go further:

- Mainstream gender across all aspects of policy
- Generate gender-specific and sex-disaggregated data on energy access and consumption patterns
- Ensure that women's voices are heard in policy development and in the energy sector
- Allocate appropriate financial and human resources to implement policies on the ground

These actions will inform a new narrative which clearly depicts women as active participants and agents of change in the energy sector.

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Women are producers and consumers of energy in both urban and rural areas. In Africa, women are responsible for producing energy mainly through collecting biomass-based fuels and for consuming energy in their household activities, microenterprises and agriculture. The disproportionate effects of energy poverty on women have been well documented (Glemarec, Bayat-Renoux and Waissbein, 2016). Indeed, the lack of sustainable, clean energy services has economic, social, health and security-related impacts on women's lives, which hinders their economic empowerment. Environmental degradation and climate change exacerbate some of these problems; for example, women must walk further to fetch firewood, which increases both the time and energy they expend on this task and related security risks¹.

On the other hand, women can be powerful agents for change in the transition to and promotion of sustainable energy, through their role as the primary energy manager in households in urban and rural communities (UN Women and UNDP-UNEP PEI, 2015). However, women's current participation in energy sector decision-making and policy processes, as well as in its labour force², is low (UN Women and UNDP-UNEP PEI, 2015), meaning that they have limited opportunities to inform the policies that regulate the energy sector. In Africa, as in developing countries in general, female employees are a minority in most energy enterprises, particularly in managerial and technical positions. In Botswana, for example, the number of female professionals in energy-related institutions is less than 5 percent (Botswana, 2009).

More knowledge is needed on how to integrate gender issues more comprehensively into energy policies³. In 2015, the United Nations Agency for Gender

Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN Women) for East and Southern Africa, together with the Poverty-Environment Initiative of the United Nations Development Programme and UN Environment in Africa, published a working paper, "[Empowering Women for Sustainable Energy Solutions to Address Climate Change](#)", which proposes assessment of the gender responsiveness of energy policies in the East and Southern Africa region.

Although more is being written on the topic, including handbooks and manuals on how to mainstream gender into energy policies, comprehensive multi-country reviews for the region as a whole are lacking⁴. Such an overview could help spread good practices and facilitate the development and adoption of gender-responsive energy policies while accelerating responses and actions from policymakers to the gendered experience of energy poverty.

OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

This brief follows up on the recommendation made by the working paper by conducting an initial review of gender integration in energy policies in East and Southern Africa. To this end, it reports on the results of an analysis of national energy policies and strategies in the region. While countries may have adopted complementary laws and sub-sector strategies or programmes focusing on, for example, biomass, renewables or rural electrification, this review is restricted only to the most recent (1998–2015) overarching national energy policies and strategies.

Fifteen of the 22 countries in East and Southern Africa are included in the analysis: Botswana, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Somaliland, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe. For the remaining seven countries in the region, no national energy policy/strategy could be obtained for the purpose of the review⁵.

¹ For example, as a result of deforestation in Uganda, the average distance typically walked by women and children in collecting firewood increased between 1992 and 2000 from 0.06 km to 0.9 km (UN DESA, 2010).

² In industrialized countries, the share of female employees in the energy sector is estimated at about 20–25 per cent, with most women working in administrative and public relations positions (IRENA, 2013). Only 4 per cent are in decision-making positions, and less than 1 per cent are in top management. Statistics on women's and men's employment (including self-employment) in the renewable energy sector in East and Southern Africa are unfortunately not available.

³ There are already some positive examples in this regard; for one, the Policy for Gender Mainstreaming in Energy Access was

adopted in 2015 by 15 countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

⁴ Multi-country reviews of the gender responsiveness of energy policies in the region include a 2005 analysis by AFREPREN/FWD in Botswana, Kenya, Tanzania and Zimbabwe; and gender audits in Botswana, Kenya and Senegal under the TIE-ENERGIA project.

⁵ The national energy policies/strategies for Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Seychelles and South Sudan could not be obtained online or through UN Women country offices. For Ethiopia, the research team was informed that a specific energy

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The review provides an initial overview of the regional status of gender integration in energy policies/strategies, which serves as a good starting point to inform more detailed country- and regional-level analysis. No such regional overview of energy policies has been conducted to date. However, the review is limited in scope, as it does not undertake an in-depth assessment of the policies or of their development or implementation. Interviews with relevant stakeholders have also not been undertaken.

The review was based on methodologies for qualitative data and policy analysis proposed by several scholars (e.g. Fisher, Miller and Sidney, 2007; Ritchie and Spencer, 1994). The approach involved the identification and categorization of relevant key themes using a sorting frame; and then sorting, indexing or coding to determine patterns according to the key themes across the policies analysed⁶. The information was set within an analytical framework – a gender-responsive energy policy; see box 1 and table 1 – in order to obtain a snapshot of the level of gender integration in the energy policies reviewed.

This brief was also informed by deliberations at the Women's Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Energy workshop in Libreville, Gabon, during the Sixteen Session of the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN 16) on 13–15 June 2017, which brought together women energy entrepreneurs, energy experts, policymakers and civil society⁷.

Unfortunately, because many policies often simplify gender relations, agency and vulnerability as well as the different needs of women and men, few policies demonstrate a realistic and viable commitment to addressing sector-specific gender inequalities (UN Women and UNDP-UNEP PEI, 2015). Furthermore, policies are often designed as "one size fits all", without taking into account the fact

policy/strategy does not exist, even though energy is extensively covered in the country's national development plan. As this analysis is of stand-alone energy policies/strategies, Ethiopia was not included in the cohort.

⁶ Qualitative policy analysis essentially entails identifying and categorizing patterns across the material analysed to set the phenomenon investigated within a broader context (Esaiaasson et al., 2004; Ritchie and Spencer, 1994).

⁷ The outcome document of the workshop "Libreville Statement on Women Entrepreneurs and Sustainable Energy in Africa" is available at <http://theageo.org/WESE/outcome.pdf>. The document was incorporated in the AMCEN adopted 16 June 2017.

BOX 1 A GENDER-RESPONSIVE ENERGY POLICY

A gender-responsive energy policy assesses gender gaps, identifies actions to close them and promotes women's engagement in the energy sector, including in decision-making processes (UN Women, n.d.; UN Environment and UN Women, 2016b). Such a policy, as defined by UN Women and UN Environment, is characterized as one that recognizes and identifies:

- The energy needs of different gender groups appropriately
- The need to increase women's participation in decision-making processes related to energy in a consistent manner
- Actions to address gender-related issues in the sector

This definition and related key themes relevant to women's empowerment in the energy sector provided the analytical framework for the analysis; it was identified in the working paper through a review of some 60 publications and reports. The key themes used for the sorting frame include the use of energy at the household level, access to energy and related technologies for women's socioeconomic empowerment, women's participation in decision-making, and gender mainstreaming. Connections between gender equality and environmental sustainability in the energy sector were also explored. These key themes with related indicators are presented in table 1; they could be further broken down in future analysis beyond this initial assessment of gender integration.

that women are not homogeneous and have varied social and economic needs. With this in mind, the analysis also looked at the way in which women and men, and their underlying gender relations, are described in the policies reviewed.

KEY FINDINGS

All 15 policies obtained were reviewed, and all references to "gender," "women" and "men" were identified and isolated. Of the energy policies analysed, 13 include references to gender, women or men at varying levels of frequency, as shown in figure 1; 2 of the policies reviewed included no references to these terms.

The references to gender, women and men in the energy policies were categorized and mapped according to the key themes noted in table 1 to identify common trends.

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TABLE 1 ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR GENDER-RESPONSIVE ENERGY POLICIES

Key theme	Indicator
Women and/or girls as a vulnerable group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Does the policy refer to the vulnerable situation of women and/or girls and related implications (e.g. in terms of access to sustainable energy)? ■ Does the policy recognize women and/or girls as key agents of change in the energy sector? ■ Does the policy refer to the impact of energy poverty on women's situation?
References to men/males	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Does the policy include specific references to men or males? ■ If yes, in what context are men referred to, and are they described as active agents of change, as vulnerable or in relation to women?
Use of energy at the household level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Does the policy refer to the different energy needs and uses of women and girls/men and boys at the household level and related implications (e.g. health effects)? ■ Does the policy refer to the different energy roles of women and girls/men and boys at the household level and related implications (e.g. in terms of work burden)? ■ Does the policy identify solutions to address gender inequalities related to household energy access, needs and related work?
Access to energy, services and appropriate technologies for women's empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Does the policy refer to the enabling role of energy in women's socioeconomic empowerment? ■ Does the policy refer to the role of energy in women's income-generating activities (e.g. entrepreneurship activities, such as food processing)? ■ Does the policy indicate actions to enhance women's access to energy, services and appropriate technologies (e.g. through better access to finance)?
Women's participation in decision-making processes and in the energy sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Does the policy recognize the need to increase women's participation in policy- and decision-making processes and in the energy sector at large (e.g. employment)? ■ Does the policy refer to women's and men's decision-making powers over energy that needs to be considered in and inform policymaking processes? ■ Does the policy identify specific actions on how to enable women to participate in the energy sector?
Gender mainstreaming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Does the policy make any reference to gender mainstreaming in any form or section? ■ Does the policy refer to gender mainstreaming/gender integration/gender responsiveness as an important aspect in achieving energy policy goals? ■ Does the policy recognize gender equality and or women's participation as important in achieving stated goals and targets in various facets of the energy sector?
Gender and environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Does the policy make a link between addressing gender inequalities and/or enhancing women's participation in the energy sector and environmentally sustainable energy solutions? ■ Does the policy make the link between environmental degradation (e.g. deforestation), women's workload and dependency on biomass?

All the references fit within the categories identified. The quantitative results of the coding process are shown in figure 2. Sorting the gender-related references in this manner provided useful insights on how gender aspects are integrated into energy policies; the next section presents a qualitative account of gender references by key thematic area.

To obtain a snapshot of the level of gender integration in the energy policies reviewed, those that included all three characteristics of a gender-responsive energy policy (see figure 3) were considered to have **integrated gender well**. Two countries, or 13 per cent of the policies, met this criteria – Mauritius and Rwanda. What sets the policies of these countries apart is that they do not only

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FIGURE 1 NUMBER OF GENDER-RELATED REFERENCES IN COUNTRY ENERGY POLICIES

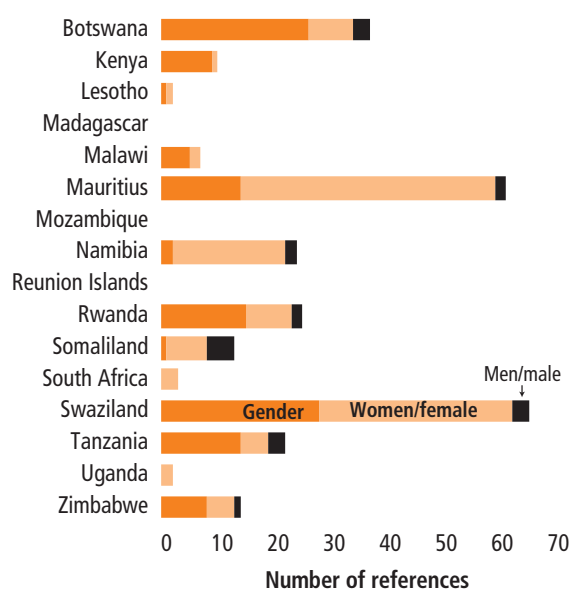


FIGURE 2 CATEGORIZATION OF GENDER-RELATED REFERENCES IN COUNTRY ENERGY POLICIES

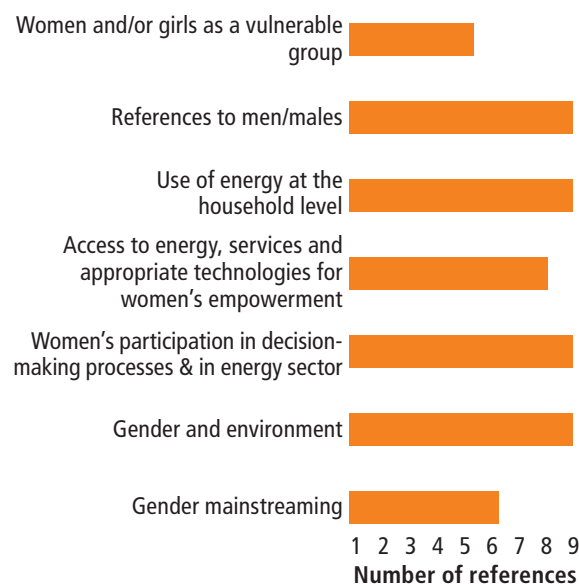
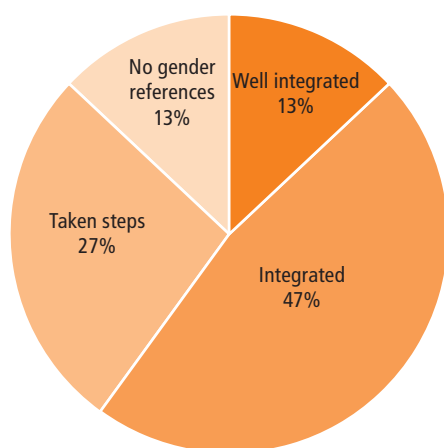


FIGURE 3 GENDER INTEGRATION IN COUNTRY ENERGY POLICIES



A gender-responsive energy policy recognizes and identifies (i) the energy needs of different gender groups appropriately, (ii) the need to increase women's participation in decision-making processes related to energy in a consistent manner and (iii) actions to address gender-related issues in the sector (UN Women and UNDP-UNEP PEI, 2015).

- Well integrated = policies that include i, ii and iii
- Integrated = policies that include i and ii
- Taken steps = policies that include some reference to gender but do not cover the first two characteristics

recognize and describe gender inequalities and the need to increase women's decision-making in the sector, but also identify and recommend concrete actions for how to address the obstacles identified. For example, Rwanda's policy supports activities to enhance credit programmes

for women in the energy sector and promote women's participation through research and advocacy activities.

Policies that include the first two characteristics are considered to have **integrated gender**; this was the case for

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Kenya, Namibia, Somaliland, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Policies that include some reference to gender but do not cover the first two characteristics and lack a more comprehensive gender analysis are considered as having **taken steps towards integrating gender**; this group comprised Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi and South Africa. Finally, the policies of two countries included **no references to gender**, women or men – Madagascar and Mozambique.

ANALYSING GENDER REFERENCES

Discriminatory socially constructed gender roles and biases make the terms used to describe women and men quite sensitive. While it is important to consider women's and men's different situations and needs, policymakers concerned with achieving gender equality and women's empowerment need to avoid language which solely or primarily depicts women as being vulnerable or victims in relation to energy. Instead, the best practice advice is that women should also be recognized as active agents for and participants in change. In conducting the analysis, attention was particularly paid to the ways in which women and men are described in national policies.

WOMEN AND/OR GIRLS AS A VULNERABLE GROUP

Five policies (for Botswana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi and Mauritius) out of the 15 analysed refer to women as a vulnerable group. Botswana and Mauritius highlight that there are more female-headed households below the poverty line than male-headed households. This vulnerable situation causes women to use cheaper types of fuel such as wood and kerosene; thus, they are most affected when electricity is disconnected for non-payment within the prescribed time (Mauritius). These types of references to women's vulnerability are important in to recognizing gender-specific needs and corresponding actions. However, Malawi's and Kenya's energy policies, for example, discuss women together with youth and the physically challenged without making reference to the different needs of the three groups; they thus fall into the trap of depicting women and other marginalized groups primarily as victims.

REFERENCES TO MEN/MALES

Nine policies (for Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, Somaliland, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe) of the 15 analysed include references to men or males. The references to men are mainly in comparison to women – e.g. male-headed households have better access to electricity, stronger decision-making power in the energy sector, are less poor than female-headed households (Botswana and Mauritius) or that it is important to recognize the needs and roles of both men and women in the energy sector (Rwanda, Somaliland and Zimbabwe). Interestingly, Namibia's policy highlights that "where men understand the potential benefits of particular interventions aimed at assisting women, they are less likely to oppose the allocation of household resources to address women's energy needs.

Following is a qualitative account of the categorization of references to women, men and gender in relation to the identified themes relevant to women's empowerment and women as potential agents of change in the energy sector.

USE OF ENERGY AT THE HOUSEHOLD LEVEL

Nine policies (for Botswana, Kenya, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, Somaliland, Swaziland, Tanzania and Uganda) out of the 15 analysed recognize women's and girls' particular role as energy providers and the related burden of fuelwood collection and exposure to indoor air pollution from open fires.

Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda, Somaliland, Swaziland, Tanzania and Uganda also provide potential solutions to the problem. For example, four policies cite increasing access to green (environmentally sustainable) and cleaner alternative fuels for cooking by empowering women and men in making energy choices (Rwanda, Somaliland, Swaziland and Tanzania).

Four policies note the need to increase awareness among the public as well as policymakers on the adverse health effects of the use of wood fuels and the benefits of alternative technologies (Kenya, Namibia, Somaliland and Uganda). Rwanda's and Uganda's policies highlight that

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such solutions will enable women to further engage in economic activities. Namibia's policy calls for more information sensitive to gender relations at the household level to inform energy policies.

ACCESS TO ENERGY, SERVICES AND APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGIES FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Eight policies (for Kenya, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, Somaliland, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zimbabwe) of the 15 analysed emphasize the role of reliable and – in many cases – renewable energy in enabling women's socio-economic empowerment.

The policies for Mauritius, Namibia and Rwanda further identify a number of interventions, including proper assessments to determine women's needs and access opportunities, to enhance women's access to energy for empowerment. Rwanda emphasizes the importance of taking gender differences into account in relation to end user needs, preferences and behaviours in a more market-oriented approach to energy sector development and policy interventions.

Regarding the enabling role of energy in women's empowerment, Mauritius's and Swaziland's policies state that energy plays an important role in women's entrepreneurship activities – such as food processing, commercial vegetable growing and sewing – and that energy costs are a significant input for such businesses. Rwanda cites the need for credit to promote women as entrepreneurs and for them to invest in clean energy technologies. Conversely, Zimbabwe's policy recognizes that "energy sector interventions have failed to maximize on the economic strengths of women hence the economy continues to rely on predominantly gender biased economics".

Mauritius's policy notes that lighting in public places will enhance women's safety and facilitate their mobility, thereby improving women's access to education and economic opportunities, especially after dark.

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES AND IN THE ENERGY SECTOR

Nine policies (for Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe) out of the 15 analysed acknowledge the need for women's

enhanced participation in policy- and decision-making in the sector and/or the low level of women's participation as a problem leading to their interests and concerns not being sufficiently considered in the energy sector. Several policies also make reference to gender imbalances in the energy sector with few women being employed in energy and petroleum institutions (Botswana, Kenya, Swaziland and Uganda).

Some of the policies clearly identify specific actions on how to increase women's participation in decision-making processes and in the energy sector at large. Rwanda's policy refers to the need to recognize the different roles of men and women to inform policymaking; Malawi's promotes the participation of gender organizations; and the policies for Botswana, Namibia, Rwanda, Tanzania and Zimbabwe cite the need to accelerate women's participation in the formulation and implementation of energy as well as forest-related interventions. Mauritius's, Swaziland's and Rwanda's policies propose the most concrete actions, including awareness campaigns, capacity-building programmes and education – particularly in science – and the development of guidelines to enable women to participate in the energy sector.

The policies for Namibia, Rwanda and Tanzania note that, at the household/community level, women and men have different decision-making powers over energy usage and the acquisition of appliances, which needs to be considered in policymaking.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Nine policies (for Botswana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Rwanda, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe) of the 15 analysed make general references to mainstreaming gender throughout the energy policy and energy programmes and activities.

Uganda's policy states that gender imbalances within the energy sector are a barrier to gender mainstreaming; Swaziland's policy emphasizes that valuing the contribution of women and improving their involvement in various facets of the energy sector is important in ensuring successful policy implementation.

Botswana's policy, while recognizing that policies and programmes have failed to take gender differences

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in energy needs into account, sets a goal that gender, age and socioeconomic status be mainstreamed into all energy policies and programmes. To achieve this, it calls for disaggregated data for gender mainstreaming and recommends the development of suitable training programmes for the Energy Affairs Division in gender and other socioeconomic aspects of energy development.

Rwanda's policy mandates that national gender mainstreaming guidelines be adopted in energy planning strategies and that gender issues be considered at every stage of the energy project cycle from identification to evaluation.

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In at least 6 policies (for Kenya, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, Tanzania and Zimbabwe) of the 15 analysed, a link between gender and sustainable and renewable energy is made. It is in this context that women most often are recognized as agents of change in the energy policies.

For example, Mauritius's policy notes that enhanced participation of women in the energy sector can contribute significantly to the adoption of less-polluting fuels and technologies and achieve energy savings. As a concrete action, it proposes education programmes for women so they can become more familiar with options for more efficient use of energy.

Tanzania's energy policy includes a specific goal to jointly enhance gender and environmental considerations in energy planning and development. The policies for Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda and Zimbabwe point out that increased awareness about and access to green alternative fuels and renewable energy for women is a potential avenue towards gender equality and empowerment. As a solution, Rwanda seeks to promote women's access to credit to invest in clean energy technologies, such as solar-powered lamps.

Namibia highlights how deforestation, partly driven by biomass use, is increasing women's burden as related



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to firewood collection and that women's control over decision-making processes concerning the use of forest resources in this regard is very important.

CONCLUSIONS

The review shows a positive trend at the policy level in integrating gender into energy policies. More than half (60 per cent) of the policies acknowledge the need for enhancing women's participation in policy and decision-making in the sector; more than half (53 per cent) note the need to enhance women's access to energy services and technologies as a means of empowerment. Some of the policies also identify specific actions as to how to address the challenges identified. Interestingly, when such solutions are presented, they tend to be green and decentralized at the local level. Several (40 per cent) of the policies highlight the link between women's empowerment and enhanced environmental sustainability in the sector.

A remaining challenge is that gender is often considered in stand-alone chapters of policy documents rather than integrated across all chapters. Also, in a few instances, women are still mainly considered vulnerable, rather than recognized as key agents of change towards sustainable energy solutions. In Kenya's and Malawi's policies, the needs of women, youth and the physically challenged are lumped together without making reference to the different vulnerabilities – and related root causes – of the three groups. Most seriously, two policies in the region do not include any references to gender, women or men.

Moving beyond what is stated at the policy level, on-the-ground implementation is challenging, and gender gaps in the energy sector remain. Women continue to have less access to efficient energy sources and to meaningful roles in influencing energy policies as compared to men. Socially constructed gender roles, identities and underlying power dynamics affect whether (and how) women and men access and use energy and participate in decisions and investments (UN Environment, 2016).

To address implementation challenges, decision-makers need to allocate sufficient budget to implement gender-related policy objectives. Also, an appropriate system for measuring progress through key indicators needs to

be put in place. With the exception of two policies, the overarching policies and strategies reviewed for this analysis did not include budgets and cost estimates, as these usually are specified in sector implementation and annual work plans. Similarly, only three of the policies reviewed (for Malawi, Mauritius and Rwanda) included an indicator and monitoring framework.

WAY FORWARD

Gender issues and inequalities must be addressed more comprehensively and consistently in energy policies. Further, such policies must be more closely linked to programming and budgeting to ensure implementation – and, consequently, meaningful change in the lives of the country's women and men – as envisioned in the SDGs. Several ways forward could be considered to promote the development of gender-responsive energy policies; some of these are outlined below.

More detailed gender analysis of energy policies and implementation. This review has provided an initial overview of the regional status of gender integration in overarching national energy policies/strategies in East and Southern Africa. Using this review as a starting point, a more detailed and broader country and regional analysis should be conducted. This analysis should look at policy development and energy programmes as they relate to women and girls to inform good practices and share experiences for peer learning, replication, scalability and accelerating achievement of results for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

This review has pointed to several interesting policy aspirations to further gender equality and environmental sustainability in East and Southern Africa's energy sector. It would be very useful to conduct further analysis such as gender audits and impact assessments to see how these particular policy aspirations are being implemented on the ground and the impacts for citizens. Such analysis could help demonstrate to policymakers the value added to the lives of women and girls, and men and boys.

Such analysis may further help to ensure that the narrative depicts women as agents and active participants of change and "move beyond an attitude of women [primarily] as victims" (Huyer, 2016, p. 3) and mere recipients of energy solutions and services.

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It would also be interesting to extend the analysis and experience sharing to include West and North Africa. This type of research could be carried out by regional inter-governmental and inter-parliamentary bodies, national government partners and/or in partnership with development and civil society organizations.

Generate gender-specific and sex-disaggregated data as part of energy policy development. The lack of gender-specific and sex-disaggregated data related to the energy sector – especially in developing countries – has contributed to a lack of awareness amongst policymakers on the different energy needs of women and men (Routledge, 2016). Gender analysis that identifies and makes visible the different needs of men and women and gender gaps in the energy sector would help policymakers develop more gender-responsive energy policies and identify concrete targets and solutions to close gender gaps.

Systematic collection of gender-energy disaggregated data throughout the policy implementation process would be useful for countries in monitoring and tracking progress on key SDG indicators – such as indicator 7.1, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy services.

Gender analysis needs to further recognize that women are not a homogeneous group and only end users of energy but also active agents of change and energy entrepreneurs in order to inform more targeted and effective policies. Policies informed by such gender analysis and needs assessments may further promote the upscaling of green technologies, sustainable energy services and decentralized energy solutions (Smith, 2000, cited in IRENA, 2014). This upscaling in turn will enhance women's access to energy, reduce drudgery related to fuelwood collection, and contribute to women's empowerment and wider participation in the sector – as well as to more environmentally friendly energy use.

Enhance women's participation in energy policy development and in the energy sector in general.

For women to be powerful agents of change, it is essential to ensure their participation in energy decision-making processes and policy development as well as throughout the energy value chain. An important first step is to recognize women's unpaid work related to energy and allow women to engage in political interaction outside

BOX 2 TIPS FOR GENDER-RESPONSIVE ENERGY PLANNING AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

While the process of developing energy policies to ensure gender inclusion is outside the scope of this analysis, good practices exist in how to do so. When initiating the planning process, energy ministries should consider:

- Use of gender-responsive baselines, assessments and audits of gender-specific risks and underlying barriers
- Use of gender matrices, checklists and guidelines to inform energy policy development to be gender responsive and review policies before approval.
- Establishment of accountability frameworks to monitor and report on gender targets impact and results of the energy policy
- Percentage of women involved in designing energy plans and policies, including those in decision-making positions
- Number of consultations with the ministry of gender, women's association, gender focused civil society and women entrepreneurs in energy planning
- Cross-sector and integrated approach to policy-making by Energy, Environment, Gender, Finance and other relevant ministries (e.g. by setting up cross-sector committees or task forces; by introducing gender focal points with sufficient resources and capacities in energy ministries; rating on compliance with gender responsive guidelines as part of the performance evaluation of energy sector staff).
- Number of gender experts involved in the policy's development
- Number of trainings provided to energy officers to mainstream gender in energy-related policies

the household. Having targets for women's participation in the public energy sector (e.g. appointing 30 per cent of women in the public sector) and creating platforms where women entrepreneurs and other relevant stakeholders can inform policymaking are other avenues for further exploration.

Access to adequate education and training opportunities is critical to enable women to develop their skills and to seize opportunities in the sector. Indeed, investments in capacity development are necessary to realize such a transformation in women's lives (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2013). Furthermore, there is a need to invest in

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and promote education, outreach and awareness-raising activities to change cultural norms, behaviours, structures and practices that can lead to equitable energy access.

National budgets should fund implementation of green gender-responsive energy solutions. Sufficient budget allocations for addressing gender concerns and implementing gender-specific objectives included in policies and strategies need to be ensured. Economic arguments, sex-disaggregated data, gender-responsive budgeting and expenditure reviews, and capacity building of gender equality advocates and civil society organizations are important tools used by UN Women and the Poverty-Environment Initiative to influence national budget processes towards being more gender responsive to promote sustainability. Strengthening the economic evidence base by analysing the opportunity costs of not investing, and the benefits of investing, in gender-responsive energy policies will provide clear guidance on the funds that need to be allocated to implementation. Furthermore, gender-responsive guidelines and compliance standards from, for example, ministries of finance can provide the needed motivation for energy ministries to ensure that budgets are gender responsive. Use of these types of tools needs to be further institutionalized within national government planning processes.

RESOURCES FOR POLICY AND PLANNING DEVELOPMENT

- ENERGIA (2016). [Mainstreaming gender in energy sector policy and practice: lessons from the ENERGIA international network](#).
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