

Spotlight on the Interdependencies between SDG5 and SDG7

Introduction

The Global Forum on Sustainable Energy (GFSE) is a neutral multi-stakeholder platform which is facilitating international dialogue on energy for sustainable development by taking into account the special interests and challenges of developing countries. GFSE aims at the establishment of a sustainable world energy system from a social, economic and environmental perspective.

GFSE contributes to both international discourse and information dissemination on sustainable energy. The multi-stakeholder platform plays a crucial role in facilitating sustainable energy projects by bringing together donors, investors and project developers. Their interaction creates new opportunities and enhances existing initiatives in the field of sustainable energy.

Though energy efficiency and renewable energy sources have substantial potential to ameliorate the living conditions of poor-income households by stimulating growth and creating new jobs, women are still more likely to suffer from poverty than men due to a lack of access to education, employment and property ownership.

Poverty eradication is one of the greatest global challenges. The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 calls for an end to poverty in all its manifestations by 2030. It also aims to ensure social protection for the poor and vulnerable, increase access to basic services and support people harmed by climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks. Poverty needs to be addressed from a multi-sectorial perspective. This involves creating jobs, supporting inclusive and sustainable business, and improving policy frameworks, among others. The responsibility lies not only with governments but also with the private sector, civil society and other actors.

Energy, especially access to clean, affordable energy (SDG 7), is considered to be an enabler to tackle poverty. Energy poverty is keeping people poor by having a detrimental impact on their health and safety and denying them the possibility to pursue education or business opportunities, among others.

Though energy efficiency and renewable energy sources have substantial potential to ameliorate the living conditions of poor-income households by stimulating growth and creating new jobs, women are still more likely to suffer from poverty than men due to a lack of access to education, employment and property ownership. Despite the fact that limited gender-disaggregated data on energy access exists (Dutta, Kooijman, Cecelski, ENERGIA, & Energy, 2017), most studies still confirm that increased access to modern energy services can help transform the lives of both women and men. This being said, since women and girls spend most of their time performing basic time-consuming subsistence tasks (i.e. collection of firewood and water, cooking) in developing and emerging countries, better access to sustainable energy can significantly empower them. Ensuring that women and girls have energy access is about women's rights — and therefore it is a fundamental human rights issue. Its importance is also acknowledged in SDG 5 on achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls. Empowering women is one of the key elements to achieve SDG 7. Full and equal participation of women in all energy-related matters may also help speed up the energy transition, which is happening at a much too slow pace all over the world.

Lack of gender equality is a major obstacle to sustainable development. Since women are more likely to live in poverty than men due to unequal access to paid work, education and property, it becomes increasingly important to address the role access to clean energy services can play in women's economic empowerment. By empowering women to become producers and suppliers of clean energy services, women can help lift their families and communities out of poverty. In addition, securing additional income sources encourages women to reinvest them within their communities and become entrepreneurs as well.

Though women entrepreneurs, especially in developing countries, play a significant role in boosting economic growth and development, they face numerous challenges in acquiring the necessary access to capital and other financial services. Business models and innovative financing models targeting women should be developed to help women achieve economic empowerment by becoming involved in renewable energy and energy efficiency value chains. Such schemes can enable the provision of clean energy services to low-income populations in a more flexible and equitable manner.

It is also necessary to involve women in the development and implementation of energy policies, projects and programmes, ensuring that their views and experiences are reflected in the resulting measures and promotion of social and economic empowerment along energy value chains. The involvement of women at the decision-making level as well as at the implementation level in the energy sector is essential. However, barriers such as a lack of access to finance, deeply ingrained cultural and social norms, and a lack of high-quality data on quantifiable measures of women's empowerment are hindering progress. The following sections give an overview of selected international goals and programmes dedicated to the achievement of gender equality, while also providing a list of barriers and good practices that are working to break these down.

International Goals and Programmes

The importance of women and girls in the fight against climate change is undeniable and highlighted in a number of international initiatives as well as in developmental agendas, some of which are described in more detail below.

The creation of the United Nations Women Undersecretariat in July 2010 brought various gender-related entities of the UN system together in one cohesive structure, which gave an important impetus to promoting gender equality. In creating UN Women, UN Member States took a historic step in accelerating the organisation's movement towards gender equality and the empowerment of women. Since then, numerous projects and programmes have been developed to support UN Member States to set global standards for achieving gender equality, design new laws, policies, programmes and needed services to ensure that the standards are effectively implemented and truly benefit women and girls worldwide. Some new flagship programmes of UN Women include "Women's Political Empowerment and Leadership", "Women's Access to Justice", "Transforming Financing for Gender Equality", "Women's Entrepreneurship for Sustainable Energy" or "Supporting the SDGs with UN Women's Flagship Programmes" (Nations, 2018).

On 14 November 2017, the first ever UNFCCC Gender Action Plan (GAP) was adopted at the Conference of Parties 23 (COP23). Heralded as a landmark decision, it is a step forward for integrating gender equality and human rights into climate action. Its overall goal is to support the implementation of the gender-related decisions and mandates in the UNFCCC process so far with a set of specific activities identified for the next two years. The GAP recognizes that gender-responsive policy needs strengthening in all activities relating to adaptation and mitigation as well as implementation processes (finance, technology development and transfer, and capacity-building). Furthermore, it emphasizes the need for enhanced female participation in decision-making processes on the implementation of climate policies. It also recognizes that all targets and goals in activities under the Convention should mainstream gender in order to increase their effectiveness (UNFCCC, 2017).

This resonates very clearly with commitments in the Paris Agreement (2015) to mainstream gender in adaptation actions and capacity development. Five priority areas were defined as critical to achieving gender objectives:

1. Capacity-building, knowledge sharing, and communication – increase understanding of all stakeholders on how to integrate gender into policy and planning;
2. Gender balance, participation, and women's leadership – as a follow-up to the Lima Programme on Gender, which outlined commitments to increase the participation of women in climate negotiations at national and global levels, this plan continues to strive towards "the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in the UNFCCC process";
3. Coherence – "strengthen the integration of gender in the work of UNFCCC bodies, the secretariat, and other United Nations entities and stakeholders";
4. Gender-responsive implementation and means of implementation – "ensure the respect, promotion, and consideration of gender equality and the empowerment of women in implementation of the Convention and the Paris Agreement"; and
5. Monitoring and reporting – improve tracking of implementation and reporting on UNFCCC gender-related mandates.

The GAP is a solid step forward in encouraging gender-responsive climate action at the national level and in focusing on implementation of climate policy and commitments. It moves beyond the limited approach of gender balance in policy negotiations to integrating gender equality in all sectors of climate policy and action. (UNFCCC, 2017)

Another example is the Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL), an international non-profit organization working towards faster achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 7 and the Paris Climate Agreement. SEforAll incorporates gender-inclusive approaches into its agenda as shown in its work to develop the "People-Centered Accelerator, a voluntary partnership of various stakeholders interested in advancing gender equality, social inclusion, and women's empowerment in the sustainable energy sector" (SEforAll, 2017).

The Global Gender and Environment Outlook (GGEO), a collaborative project between the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Strategic Partners, aims to bring gender issues to the centre of environmental assessment and decision-making. The GGEO provides an overview of existing knowledge to generate insights and aims to tackle questions, including "Will the impacts of the ongoing ecological changes be gender-differentiated?", "Are future projections and scenarios gender-differentiated?" and "What steps can be taken for a sustainable future to ensure that men and women will be treated as equals?" (UN Environment, 2018)

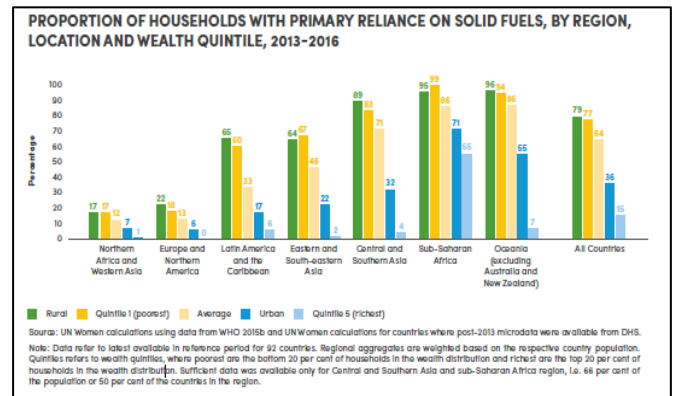
In the following section, the interactions between SDG5 and SDG7 (affordable and clean energy) will be looked at in further detail.

Interactions between SDG5 and SDG7

Women play a significant role in not only conserving energy, but also extending sustainable modern energy. However, they are largely absent in the industries that produce modern sources of renewable energy (in some cases, only 20 percent of the workforce). As such, female empowerment is one of the key elements to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 7 (affordable and clean energy).

Furthermore, women are often the primary energy managers of the households. In case of fuel shortage, they are primarily in charge of collecting the necessary fuel source to cook and heat their homes. Data from 83 countries and areas show that women perform most of the domestic work, such as cooking and cleaning, and are the main caregivers of children and adults needing care. Women on average spend 18% of their day on total unpaid care and domestic work, while men allocate 7% of their day to this work (UN Women, 2018):

Households in Northern Africa and Western Asia generally show the lowest reliance on solid fuels, at 12.4 per cent (UN Women, 2018), as is shown in the figure below:



By facilitating access to modern and clean energy options, many communities can be lifted from poverty. For example, affordable and clean lighting sources can help increase women’s ability to continue autonomous activities outside the households after dark.

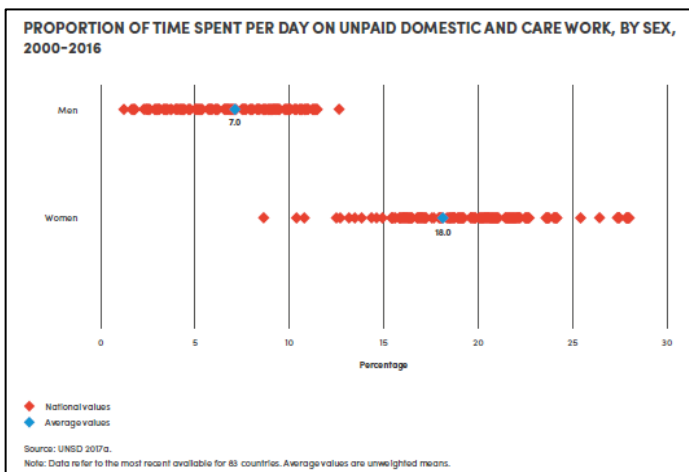
Overcoming the Barriers to Progress

Recognizing the interaction between gender and other inequalities, including poverty & cultural norms, is crucial to fulfil United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5: “To achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”. Where the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) primarily focused on targeting inequalities between low/middle-income and high-income countries, the Sustainable Development Goals shift the focus to highlight the complex distribution of inequality. Progress in access to education, for example, can contribute significantly to break down gender inequalities. However, other factors such as governance, the labor market, access to information and finances, culture and religion are also crucial in determining the rights and freedoms available to women. In this section, the barriers to achieve gender equality will be discussed and recommendations to overcome them will be made:

Access to Finance

Women’s role in a number of sectors is critical for a country’s economic development. Having access to credit and loans can open up a number of economic opportunities for women. However, female entrepreneurs often face numerous challenges before they can gain access to a wide range of financial services as their male counterparts do. In many societies, women are not allowed to open bank accounts without the consent of a male relative and thus have control over the accounts in name only (Isaac, 2014).

The International Finance Corporation (IFC) estimates that approximately 65% of women-led small- and medium-enterprises (SMEs) in developing economies are either unserved or underserved financially (Alper & Hommes, 2013). For a women entrepreneur, this means the odds are already stacked against the growth potential of her business.



In developing and emerging countries, where access to clean energy sources is limited, women and girls suffer from health problems caused by the use of biomass for cooking. The reliance on traditional cooking and water collection methods severely depletes the time that could otherwise be spent on education or on pursuing economic opportunities. “Lack of access to cooking fuel forces women and children to spend many hours gathering fuel - up to 5 hours per day - or spend significant household income purchasing fuel. In some cases, women provide 91% of households’ total efforts in collecting fuel and water, and women have an average working day of 11-14 hours, compared to 10 hours on average for men.” (Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves, 2018)

A study carried out by UN Women showed that across 92 countries, 64% of households rely on solid fuels, including wood, crop wastes, charcoal, coal or dung. Often, these and other unclean fuels (including kerosene) are used together with inefficient technologies, such as open fires and leaky stoves, which lead to high levels of household air pollution. The use of solid fuels for cooking and heating is highest in sub-Saharan Africa and Oceania, where 85.7% and 86.2% of households, respectively, rely on it.

Giving women **access to credit and other financial tools** will not only help those businesses, it will also help achieve critical Sustainable Development Goals. This gap in access to capital for women-led SMEs exists despite significant contributions by these businesses to gross domestic product and employment. Women-owned businesses account for approximately 40% of the world's 340 million informal micro-, small- and medium-enterprises and one-third of the 40 million formal SMEs (Stupnytska, Koch, MacBeath, Lawson, & Matsui, 2014).

Because women-owned businesses are such a major force in the global economy, allowing these businesses to thrive and grow by ensuring access to credit will also drive progress on several SDGs. Advancing women's financial inclusion is linked to eliminating poverty (SDG 1), reducing hunger and food security (SDG 2), achieving good health and well-being (SDG 3), fostering quality education (SDG 4), and promoting gender equality (SDG 5). **Greater financial inclusion** also has indirect impact on promoting shared economic growth (SDG 8), innovation and sustainable industrialisation (SDG 9), and equitable and peaceful societies (SDG 10 and 16). The impact that women's financial inclusion can have on the SDGs proves that advancing these goals is not just up to the development community. Private sector and governments of emerging economies must also take action.

Financing schemes targeting disadvantaged populations of society should be expanded, such as the inclusion of women-centred funds into existing sustainable energy financing. Another example would be **pro-poor public-private partnerships (PPPs)**, which can combine public and private financing to serve low-income markets, overcoming government budgetary constraints and allocating project risks between the public and private sector. Business models and innovative financing models targeting women should be developed to help women achieve economic empowerment by becoming involved in renewable energy and energy efficiency value chains. Such schemes can enable the provision of clean energy services to low-income populations in a more flexible and equitable manner. Furthermore, interlinkages between sectors that disproportionately affect women (i.e. cooking, food security, clean water) should be used to develop **comprehensive funding schemes**. Capital access programs must also be in place to facilitate the **access of women to seed capital** as well as programmes to support small- and medium-enterprises (SMEs) owned by female entrepreneurs in increasing their earnings.

The involvement of women in renewable energy projects can be encouraged through targeted funding and business models, such as enabling **access to affordable financing and microcredits**, which do not have asset or land ownership eligibility criteria. Development banks and international development organizations also dedicate support to sustainable energy activities, and finance projects through grants, loans that are specially targeting women entrepreneurs. In a similar manner, the private sector should also provide credit and create targeted access to finance energy access projects.

Capacity Building and Training

Women are often underrepresented in technical fields, thereby limiting their ability to participate in technical professions and expand their involvement to other economic sectors. According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, averaged across regions, women accounted for less than a third (28.8%) of those employed in scientific research and development (R&D) across the world in 2016. Central Asia (47.2%), Latin America and the Caribbean (44.7%), Central and Eastern Europe (39.6%), and the Arab States (39.9%) are regions in which women represent over a third of the R&D workforce. In the European Union (EU-28), women accounted for less than half (42.2%) of tertiary education graduates in the natural sciences, mathematics and statistics, and information and communication technologies combined in 2015. According to EUROSTAT, the gender gap is especially wide in engineering, manufacturing, and construction.

Governments and educational institutions should help **develop programmes to train women** to produce, operate and maintain renewable energy technologies and energy-efficient equipment. Improvement in women's **access to training for technical jobs** related to renewable energy technologies is a must in order to strengthen women capacities to engage in clean energy local value chains. In this context, women entrepreneurs should **receive training in business skills** (e.g. business plans, accounting, marketing etc.) as well as **support in business creation**. A good example of institutions offering such training programmes is Fandema, a women's development centre, in the Republic of Gambia. Fandema offers young women the opportunity to acquire basic, cross-cutting education related to renewable energy technologies (Chang, 2017).

In order to understand the practical needs of women, different impacts of the political decisions need to be evaluated. Gender action plans and capacity building activities should include women's views and reflect in the resulting measures supported by objective statistical data.

Lack of Information

Having **reliable, high-quality and solid data** is critical to tackling gender-based constraints. Some indicators, such as the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) – measuring the extent of women empowerment and inclusion in the agricultural society – , while the Gender Equality Index (limited to the EU) combines a number of gender indicators (work, money, knowledge, time, power and health) into one composite measure, aim to tackle this information deficit. Another example is the Gender Development Index by the UN, which measures gender gaps in human development achievements by accounting for disparities between women and men in three basic dimensions of human development, health, knowledge and living standards using the same component indicators as in the Human Development Index.

In addition, another index from the UN is the Gender Inequality Index. It measures gender inequalities in three important aspects of human development — reproductive health, measured by maternal mortality ratio and adolescent birth rates; empowerment, measured by proportion of parliamentary seats occupied by females and proportion of adult females and males aged 25 years and older with at least some secondary education; and economic status, expressed as labour market participation and measured by labour force participation rate of female and male populations aged 15 years and older. One more example is the Global Gender Gap Index that was introduced by the World Economic Forum. It has four sub-indices composed of 14 different indicators; the sub-indices are economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, political empowerment and health and survival. All are explicitly gender-related.

Constant and timely data help ongoing monitoring and evaluation efforts in the aim to achieve SDG5. In some cases, efforts exist to capture women's empowerment, however the available indicators are either overly broad or narrow (SEforAll, 2017). Efforts need to be taken to not only **differentiate existing statistics by gender** (i.e. gender disaggregated data), but to also raise awareness on the importance of such data.

Under-Representation in Decision-Making Processes

Women are often under-represented in higher decision-making bodies leading to many instances where their priorities and interests are not adequately addressed. **Equal representation of women in decision-making bodies** can better ensure that their perspectives are also included. The involvement of women at the decision-making level as well as at the implementation level in the energy sector is essential. In order to evaluate the barriers, **multi-stakeholder consultations** are needed that can identify supporting measures toward women employment in the energy sector. Aside from this, the current gender-framing in energy policies need to consider the **access-aspect of women to energy** and support women in their household and productive activities. Increasing their participation in the energy value chain stresses their bargaining power in the decision-making processes. In addition, securing additional income sources encourages women to reinvest them within their communities and become entrepreneurs, as well.

Cultural and Social Norms

Gender inequality and discrimination are most often rooted and deeply ingrained in cultural and social norms. The prevalence of patriarchal cultural norms prevents women and girls from receiving economic recognition for their work, thus limiting their ability to become independent. Furthermore, women are often not able to obtain the societal and financial support for completing their education. In many emerging and developing countries, women are considered to be subordinate to men. As a result, they are unable to participate in decision-making bodies in which they could make their needs heard. Targeted measures, including **awareness-raising and information programmes**, at the community level could help to tackle patriarchal cultural norms.

Women play a significant role in not only conserving energy, but also extending sustainable modern energy. However, they are largely absent in the industries that produce modern sources of renewable energy (in some cases, only 20 percent of the workforce).

Good Practices

The above-mentioned barriers – from a lack of access to finance, deeply ingrained cultural and social norms, to a lack of high-quality data on quantifiable measures of women's empowerment – are hindering progress towards the achievement of SDG5. Programmes initiated by new start-ups as well as NGOs and networks are looking to directly break down these existing barriers to women's empowerment. In the next section, a small selection of such programmes and initiatives are presented that offer unique solutions to improve gender equality around the world:

Frontier Markets

<http://www.frontiermkts.com/index.html>

Around 10 million households - about half the homes in Rajasthan, India - have no electricity or have to depend on unreliable grid power. Frontier Markets, based in Jaipur, works primarily on tackling last-mile distribution to clean energy through its sale of solar lights, which offer safety from traditional harmful fuels. Village-level entrepreneurs often experience seasonal spikes in product demand, but lack free capital to invest in the products during those times. The enterprise is "standardizing a line-of-credit model to extend credit to entrepreneurs during these times and to take advantage of entrepreneurs' local market knowledge to disperse a greater volume of solar products". Furthermore, a network of trained women called Solar Sahelis act as the face of marketing and after-sales service for the company. The company serves low-income households in India and actively works with local NGOs and locally trained field staff to educate families. Frontier Markets has sold over 127,000 clean energy products in 16 districts in Rajasthan, with plans to reach up to 5 million households in the next five years. Frontier Markets' incredible work was recognized in 2016, when it received the Ashden Award for Clean Energy for Women and Girls.

ENERGIA

<http://www.energia.org/what-we-do/womens-economic-empowerment/>

ENERGIA's Women's Economic Empowerment programme recognizes the important role women's enterprises can play in scaling-up energy access. By investing in women's economic empowerment, women (and their families) can be set towards poverty reductive and gender equality. The programme helps to scale-up proven business models that strengthen the capacity of women-led MSEs to deliver energy services and provides funding and technical support to partner organisations in Asia and Africa. Together with its partners, ENERGIA develops a step-by-step capacity building progress focused on technology orientation coupled with targeted support designed to identify new opportunities in order to expand the MSEs beyond immediate communities. The programme also makes sure to put in place a reliable system for supply, repair and maintenance of high quality energy technologies to guarantee long-term sustainability of the businesses.

Global Alliance of Clean Cookstoves

<http://cleancookstoves.org/>

The Global Alliance of Clean Cookstoves (GACC), a non-profit organisation operating under the support of the United Nations Foundation since 2010, actively works on improving livelihoods and protecting the environment through the development of a global market for clean and energy-efficient household cooking solutions. Since traditional methods of cooking disproportionately affect the lives of women and children, the Alliance has developed a gender strategy to increase the role of women, while addressing gender issues to scale adoption. Through gender-informed practices as well as awareness raising and information exchange, the Alliance addresses the major challenges (ex. lack of appropriate financial schemes and gender-informed business models or lack of capacity) to scaling up women's empowerment and entrepreneurship. The GACC additionally commissions research on the gender and social impacts of adoption from clean cooking solutions in order to monitor progress and improve data on the subject.

Shine

<https://www.shineinvest.org/>

More than a billion people currently live without access to electricity, while approximately 3 billion people still rely on traditional forms of energy (wood, crop waste, kerosene, etc.) to cook and heat their homes. Shine is an independent global campaign dedicated to ending energy poverty by providing access to affordable and clean energy. Through its vast network of partners, Shine works to unlock new forms of capital, build local capacities through programs and raise awareness about the multitude of social, health and environmental benefits that clean energy solutions have.

One Day's Wages

<https://www.onedayswages.org/leadership/>

The organisation and international grassroots movement "One Day's Wages" believes that the best way to empower women and girls is through improved access to high quality education. Increased participation in education can contribute to economic growth for the entire community through boosting a girl's earning power and thus fight poverty. Currently, the organisation works in numerous countries around the world – predominantly in Africa, Asia and South America – to not only provide girls with access to secondary education, but to also reduce gender-based violence, improve child health and build technical capacity to reduce global poverty.

Global Women's Network for the Energy Transition (GWNET)

<http://www.globalwomennet.org/>

The Global Women's Network for the Energy Transition (GWNET) is an international non-profit organisation, headquartered in Austria, which aims at advancing the global energy transition by connecting and empowering women working in sustainable energy in both developed and emerging/developing countries. GWNET empowers women in energy through interdisciplinary networking, advocacy, training, coaching and mentoring, and services related to projects and financing. As part of the network's activities, GWNET has launched a Global Mentorship Programme for women in the energy sector. The mentorship program is designed for women in early career and middle management positions. Participants will be mentored by seasoned professionals, eminent experts and industry leaders. The mentoring programme with mentors and mentees from Africa, North & South America, China as well as Europe began in March 2018. The mentee – mentor interaction, based on careful matchmaking by GWNET, is the main element of the programme; it will be accompanied by GWNET knowledge transfer webinars.

Ibu Inspirasi Programme

<http://kopernik.info/page/wonder-women-indonesia>

Currently, approximately 80 million people in Indonesia live without electricity. A programme in the country's eastern Solor archipelago is tackling this issue by empowering women with renewable solutions for remote and rural communities. Kopernik, a non-profit organisation based in Indonesia, wants to empower women to become micro-social-entrepreneurs in order to boost incomes and increase the use of renewable energy technologies in off-grid communities. The programme "Ibu Inspirasi" ("Wonder Women" in English) provides clean energy technologies (ex. solar lanterns, water filters, clean cookstoves) on consignment to women and shares the margin with them on every sale. After the first year of the programme, 26% of the Wonder Women already have the know-how to run a business and are thus also able to take a more predominant role in household decision-making.

The Educate Girls Development Impact Bond

<http://instiglio.org/educategirlsdib/about-the-dib/>

The Educate Girls Development Impact Bond (EG DIB) is an innovative new method to encourage private investors to fund international development projects. The project is a joint initiative between the Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF), Educate Girls (EG) and the UBS Optimus Foundation. Under the three-year pilot project (2015-2018), the Fund aims to improve education in Rajasthan, India by working together with 166 schools across 140 villages. The ultimate goal is to benefit 15,000 children, of which 9,000 are girls. In order to attract private investment, the EG DIB creates a proof of concept, directly demonstrating how such funds contribute to societal improvement, while also resulting in financial gains. The fund is based on a payment-by-results model, where the outcome payer promises to pay back the investor the original investment amount plus extra returns, as long as the agreed targets (ex. increased enrolment of marginalized girls) are met.

ECOWAS Directive on Gender Assessments in Energy Projects

<http://ecowgen.ecreee.org/index.php/ecowas-validates-its-regional-directive-on-gender-assessments-in-energy-projects/>

In June 2017, energy experts from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) validated and adopted the ECOWAS Directive on Gender Assessments in Energy Projects, a groundbreaking achievement for the advancement of women's empowerment. This Directive aims to ensure that vulnerable and marginalized groups are "not excluded as participants in and beneficiaries of energy infrastructure development". By making sure that the specific interests of all groups, including women, are taken into account during all phases of project development and by ensuring that transparency is improved to increase the participation of vulnerable groups, the Directive sets out a framework for the ECOWAS Member States to ensure equality across their social and economic development efforts.

A Look to the Future

Despite strides made towards ensuring that women have the same rights and opportunities as men, much still needs to be done. Tackling the challenge of gender equality needs to start in the educational system, so that efforts are taken to make sure that girls take an early interest in technology, science, mathematics and engineering (STEM). Increasing female participation in such sectors can help boost the bargaining power of women at future stages of employment.

Better and more systematic data collection is needed for improved monitoring and communication of progress made towards achievement of SDG5. Gender statistics and other relevant data should be harmonized across countries to ensure comparability and that international targets are being met. Having such data could help hold governments accountable for the commitments they make towards gender equality.

Financial support, which takes a gender-equal approach, needs to be drastically scaled up. Donors from the private sector can play an important role by becoming more involved in international initiatives. Clear criteria to monitor gender equality commitments should be set as milestones within projects and programmes.

Useful Links

CTCN Information Database was recently expanded to include information on climate technologies that "take into account the particular needs of women and differential impacts on women compared to men": <https://www.ctcn.org/technology-sectors/gender>

Faces of Energy: new interactive map of stakeholders in the gender and energy landscape <http://facesofenergy.org/>

Gender Equality in the 2030 Development Agenda: <http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2018/sdg-report-gender-equality-in-the-2030-agenda-for-sustainable-development-2018-en.pdf?la=en&vs=948>

Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI): <http://www.ifpri.org/publication/womens-empowerment-agriculture-index>

Gender Equality Index: <http://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/about>

Gender Development Index (GDI): <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-development-index-gdi>

Gender Inequality Index (GII): <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii>

References

- Alper, Oya Pinar Ardic; Hommes, Martin (2013): *Access To Credit Among Micro, Small, And Medium Enterprises*. Retrieved from <https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/1f2c968041689903950bb79e78015671/AccessCreditMSME-Brochure-Final.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>
- Chang, Daniel (2017): *Empowering Young Women Through Renewable Energy Training*. Retrieved from <https://www.unido.org/stories/empowering-young-women-through-renewable-energy-training>
- Dutta, Soma; Kooijman, Annemarije; Cecelski, Elizabeth; ENERGIA; Energy, International Network on Gender and Sustainable (2017): *Energy Access and Gender Equality. What We Know So Far and Knowledge Gaps*. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank. Washington D.C.
- Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves (GACC) (2018): *Women and Gender*. Retrieved from <http://cleancookstoves.org/about/news/01-01-1990-women-and-gender.html>
- Isaac, John; World Bank (2014): *Expanding Women's Access to Financial Services*. Retrieved from <http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2013/04/01/banking-on-women-extending-womens-access-to-financial-services>
- SEforAll (2017): *Opening Doors. Mapping the Landscape for Sustainable Energy, Gender Diversity & Social Inclusion*. Sustainable Energy for All, Washington, DC.
- SEforAll (2017): *People-Centered Accelerator*. Retrieved from <https://www.seforall.org/partnership/accelerators/people-centered-accelerator>
- Stupnytska, Anna; Koch, Kathryn; MacBeath, Amy; Lawson, Sandra; Matsui, Kathy (2014): *Giving credit where it is due. How closing the credit gap for women-owned SMEs can drive global growth*. Retrieved from <http://www.goldmansachs.com/our-thinking/public-policy/gmi-folder/gmi-report-pdf.pdf>
- UN Environment (2018). *Global Gender and Environment Outlook*. Retrieved from <http://web.unep.org/ggeo>
- UNFCCC (2017, November). *COP23 Presidency Announces First Gender Action Plan, Highlights the Role of Women in Climate Action*. Retrieved from <https://cop23.com.fj/cop23-presidency-announces-first-gender-action-plan-highlights-role-women-climate-action/>
- UNFCCC (2017, November). *Gender Action Plan*. Retrieved from <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2017/cop23/eng/11a01.pdf#page=15>
- United Nations (2018): *Flagship Programme Initiatives*. Retrieved from <http://www.unwomen.org/en>
- UN Women (2018): *Turning Promises into Action. Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. Retrieved from <http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2018/sdg-report-gender-equality-in-the-2030-agenda-for-sustainable-development-2018-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5653>



Imprint

Published and produced by: Global Forum on Sustainable Energy, c.o.
Österreichische Energieagentur – Austrian Energy Agency
Mariahilfer Straße 136, A-1150 Vienna

E-Mail: gfse@energyagency.at

Internet: <http://www.gfse.at>