

How Gender Audits can Improve Kenya's Policy Impacts



Gender Audit Results

**Ensure that both men and women benefit from sustainable energy services
Develop policy initiatives that deliver sustainable and affordable energy services for the nation**

Promotes gender analysis of policies and programmes to help achieve energy, gender and development targets

What is a gender audit?

Gender audits determine who has access and control; who is positively or negatively impacted by the policy or programme; and how the situation can be improved. A gender analysis of energy policies and related programmes and projects can provide substantial benefits, both for the direction of existing policies and for future planning. The objectives of a gender audit are to:

- Identify gender gaps and formulate strategies to address the gaps in energy related policies at national level; and
- Make energy and gender issues visible to a wide audience through networking and advocacy initiatives in order to influence energy policies, programmes and projects.

The gender audit of energy policies, programmes, institutions and projects in Kenya has helped stakeholders to understand the linkages between energy, gender and poverty and the importance of gender mainstreaming in different energy needs and assets of men and women. The team that carried out the gender audit was from the Ministry of Energy and the University of Nairobi. They had been trained on Gender Analysis before starting the work. The literature review, interviews with community members, use of gender analysis tools, case studies, focus group discussions and workshops were all conducted using the participatory approach. This ensured that a comprehensive gender audit of energy policy, institutions and programmes in Kenya was accomplished.

The analysis

The audit analyzed the results from a gender perspective in the following five thematic areas;

- a) Organization, management, programmes and project issues;
- b) Gender and energy situation in Kenya;
- c) The Kenya Energy policy;
- d) Energy access as a vital crosscutting component to achieving the MDGs; and
- e) Resource mobilization for engendered energy interventions.



Results of the Audit

The audit revealed that women and men obtain, use and pay for energy in different ways. However the results indicated a huge disadvantage on women as follows:

- Women are mainly responsible for production and use of biomass which is the main domestic cooking fuel;
- Some social structures such as the land tenure system inhibit access to biomass fuel for women;
- Indoor air pollution, due to inefficient cooking energy technologies, poses a serious health threat to women and



and Action in Kenya

children.

Commercial biomass activities such as charcoal and firewood trading are male-dominated activities.

What did we learn from the Gender Audit?

Gender structuring and gender mainstreaming

- At macro level there is political will to mainstream gender as seen in the establishment of a Ministry of Gender, a Gender Policy and inclusion of gender in Development Plans and as stipulated in the Bill of Rights. However, this is not being translated into action at the sectorial level;
- Institutional support for engendering energy policy is increasing but awareness of gender issues is still low in the rural areas;
- There are a few women in the top management positions in the energy sector.
- In as much as there is a Gender Officer in the government line ministries, the position requires a deliberate effort to make it more relevant and focused activities and deliverables e.g. how does the presence of an officer add value to the work going on in the related government ministry? One of the ministries that has taken deliberate steps in line with engendering policies is the Ministry of Agriculture in Kenya;
- Previously there had been limited availability of gender disaggregated data on energy development and this had been detrimental to engendering of the Energy policy.

Policy

During the audit it was found that there was limited achievement in energy and gender mainstreaming in the Energy Policy, programmes and activities and concluded that the policy measures in Sessional Paper No. 4 of 2004 on energy were “gender blind”. This was because:

- The gender perspectives had not been articulated in the policy document making it unlikely that gender issues would be considered when planning small-scale rural and urban energy projects;
- There was no mention about efforts being made to eliminate gender disparities with respect to each policy measure;
- The vision statement, “To promote equitable access to quality energy services at least cost while protecting the environment” is unlikely to achieve equitable access if the historical gender biases not explicitly addressed at a policy level;
- The property rights system, income disparities between men and women and household decision-making power negatively impact on women with respect to access to and control over productive economic resources including energy; and
- Strict adherence to least-cost criteria for energy supply while ignoring the socio-cultural dynamics can only increase energy poverty already experienced by women.

Implementation Challenge

It was not evident how the interaction and integration between gender and energy would be addressed nor were the allocations deliberate on this in the policy. It showed that:

“I realize that gender is not just about shouting that life is unfair for a woman, but is about improving the situation for both men and women”
- Comments from the team as a result of the exercise.

- The energy budget put ‘social dimension’ projects as a top priority;
- There was an absence of gender disaggregated data to inform national energy budgets; and
- Investment funding mainly went to conventional energy projects and not the non-conventional services used by the majority of rural women.

What will we do now?

It was therefore recommended that:

The Ministry of Energy will:

- Data: create a relationship with Kenya National Bureau of Statistics to start establishing database of necessary gender disaggregated data.
- Policy: ensure that the action and

- implementation plans for the policy include activities that start mainstreaming gender.
- Impact Assessments: establish criteria for Impact Assessment of programmes and project and monitor their effects on different gender groups.
 - Budget/resources: use gender budgeting tools in the energy sector.
 - Structuring/Mainstreaming: establish clear mandate and terms of reference for the Gender Officer.
 - Energy and Gender Linkages: coordinate information gathering and analysis to establish links between energy and gender policies/institutions/individuals; set-up forums of stakeholders to encourage the engendering of the energy agenda.



Way forward

Implementing the recommendations arising from the audit will help deliver effective energy policy, programmes and projects and therefore increase and improve energy access to vulnerable men and women. A Gender Audit for other sectors and policies should also be carried out in order to mainstream gender in all Kenyan policies and programmes.

To date

However since the creation of the Ministry of Gender and Sports, most of these issues have been addressed. This Ministry has tried to accurately portray the gender balance in all sections of the country forming the basis for developing gender-sensitive policies, plans and programmes. The Ministry of Gender is coordinating other ministries to build a common understanding on this process, with the vision to disaggregate gender related data and information and see an enhanced gender parity in policies.

TIE ENERGIA Programme

The Gender and Energy Audit is part of the TIE-ENERGIA project that aims to raise the awareness of planners, policy makers and practitioners in 12 Countries in Africa on the gender aspects within the Energy Sector, through building skills and capacities and including conducting gender audits and mainstreaming gender in the sector. Besides Kenya, Gender and Energy audits have been implemented in Senegal and Botswana.

TIE-ENERGIA builds on the existing network, ENERGIA-Africa, a network on energy and gender that is part of ENERGIA, the International Network on Energy, Gender and Sustainable Energy.

For more information and resources on gender please visit the website www.energia-africa.org

Or contact the ENERGIA Secretariat on co-ordinator@energia-africa.org.

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