

Summary Report
1/31/99
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**An Informal Workshop in Connection with Village Power '98
Sustainable Energy and Gender: A Facilitated Discussion on Linkages**

Monday, October 5, 1998
World Bank
Washington, DC

The Workshop was organized to provide a forum for attendees of the Village Power '98 meeting to discuss sustainable energy and gender, a topic that heretofore had not been on the agenda of the Village Power meetings. This Workshop was the first time that gender was a formal topic of the Village Power conferences. Because the Workshop was not listed when Village Power '98 was initially announced, most conference attendees had already made their travel plans when they learned of it, and were unable to attend. Nevertheless, the Workshop's 15 participants created a lively and thoughtful discussion that lasted the entire day. Participants, as well as others who learned of the Workshop but could not attend, requested that another Workshop be held next year.

Participants introduced themselves and stated their expectations for the Workshop. Participant expectations for the Workshop included the following:

- Learn more about what others are doing
- Meet colleagues
- Understand why the Workshop is not more well attended
- Become more exposed to literature that exists
- Explore the potential for renewable energy as a mechanism for gender-sensitive programs
- Disperse and share information
- Focus on rural applications, such as battery stations and communications
- Understand investment initiatives in Africa
- Share information on World Bank project: infrastructure and economics micro hydro in several countries
- Understand how renewable energy can be used more to alleviate poverty, especially in rural areas
- Develop idea that women are key to getting PV implemented widely
- Develop further understanding of gender issues important in development, and the linkages
- Explore how gender and rural development can be further implemented
- Understanding how to involve more organizations in gender and sustainable energy.

Presentations

Joy Clancy, University of Twente, The Netherlands, gave a presentation on ENERGIA. Her overheads are as follows:

1. How it all started

Preparation phase for Beijing (1995)

It became apparent - despite cross-cutting nature of energy - no international institution had women and sustainable development as a major objective in the context of energy

Lack of dialogue between gender and energy specialists

Lack of case studies

There were good examples from other sectors:

PROWESS

FAO, Forest, Trees and People

GTZ Household Energy Programme

UNIFEM

2. Organizations

TOOL Consult

Energy Environment and Development

TDG, University of Twente

Established ENERGIA - a loose network

Objectives

Engender energy

Empower women

Achieved through

Information exchange

Training

Research

Advocacy

Actions

Emphasis

Decentralized actions
Putting people in touch
Dialogue between policy makers and field works

Funding

NEDA (DGIS) - mainly for ENERGIA Newsletter

3. What's Been Achieved So Far

ENERGIA News - 7 issues
Theme issues
Circulation of 1,000

and, on basis of *no funds*:

Training materials
Resources persons at workshops and conferences
Advisory services and work
Advising on project proposal development
Lobbying to include gender in energy
Web Site (WIRE/ISES) www.energia.org

As a consequence . . .

More international energy programmes are taking gender seriously

e.g., UNDP/SEED
NREL

ENERGIA has . . . Inspired/galvanized
 Provided support
 Provided legitimacy

4. How Does ENERGIA Work?

Membership = anyone who receives *ENERGIA News*

No formal secretariat

Decentralized, "virtual" organization based around production of newsletter

ENERGIA Support Group "Think tank" of 30 professionals
Provide advice and support

5. The Future?

Move from provider of newsletter to facilitator

Putting in touch those who need services with those who can provide services

1. Formalizing ENERGIA into organization with full-time manager
2. Continue with *ENERGIA News*
3. Resource Centre and further development of web site
4. Regionalization
 - Extend local membership
 - Generate articles
 - Local newsletter
 - Workshops and training
 - Bringing groups together for projects
 - Advocacy on women and energy
5. Grants for study, visits, workshops, seminars and meetings
6. Manuals, training materials, videos
7. Development of case studies, especially non-stoves
 - Awareness raising

Ellen Kennedy, Winrock International, Washington, DC gave a presentation entitled "Gender and Renewable Energy: An Issue of Language." Her overheads were as follows:

1. Why does gender get left out of renewable energy projects?
 - Lack of capacity
 - Lack of history
 - Culture and language "disconnect"
2. Lack of Capacity
 - Lack of women in energy planning
 - Dearth of women engineers in field
 - Cultural, credit, or linguistic barriers

- Data anecdotal-need more peer review

3. Lack of History

- Renewable energy is still relatively young (some attention in the 1970s)
- Focus on cookstoves
- Past 2-3 years: ENERGIA Network, workshops, seminars, pilot projects
- Would we have had this meeting at Village Power 3 years ago?

4. Culture and Language Disconnect

- Good development professionals identify with the user
- But industry has to operate from the bottom line

Need to translate the importance of gender projects in commercial terms

5. Development Benefits

- Saves time
- Reduces drudgery
- Enables children, especially daughters, to go to school
- Cleaner water, better health
- Cleaner lighting
- Possible income generation uses.

6. But Industry Benefits Are . . .

- Women are key household customers
- Women are excellent credit risks
- Unless purposefully engaged, women may be lost or alienated customers
- Women are good at O&M
- Women are invested in health, education, and other family-related applications.

7. How to Reach Industry?

- Desegregate data for all projects
- Make markets visible
- Team up with other groups working with rural women
- Educate donor community
- Market studies and trials
- Hire women distributors, planners, etc.

8. Doubt Demons

- Backlash for rural women?
- Forcing systems on women?
- What about very cheap, locally made energy solutions that don't involve industry?

Elizabeth Cecelski, Energy, Environment and Development, Witterfürth, Germany presented on Gender, Poverty, and Sustainable Energy.

Overheads for this presentation are included in the regular Village Power '98 Proceedings, and are not duplicated here. At Ms. Cecelski's request, the Workshop reviewed her presentation for the Village Power '98 and offered comments and suggestions.

Barbara Farhar, National Renewable Energy Laboratory, presented information on the gender discussions at the World Renewable Energy Congresses in 1996 and 1998. Highlights of this presentation included the following:

Women in sustainable energy is both a domestic and an international issue. For example, in the United States, more than half of low-income households' budgets are needed for rent and utility; disproportionately high percentages of these households are families of women and children. Abroad, most energy in developing countries is supplied and used by women in households. Environmental effects include deforestation and desertification, and health problems resulting from poor indoor air quality.

Energy projects, even sustainable ones, have been largely driven by technology, rather than by the needs of users.

The potentially significant role of microcredit lending programs to foster sustainable energy and economic development has been largely overlooked; it is just beginning to receive attention.

The need for education in these areas was stressed.

The renewables industries should be involved in better understanding these potential markets.

Gender issues should be included in the energy programs of major development agencies; energy should be included in the gender programs of major development agencies.

Discussion

Because the workshop was small, much of the time was spent on discussion. Important themes on which there was consensus were as follows:

1. In rural areas, access to renewable energy is difficult in general, and even more difficult for women. For example, access to credit and training is even less for women than it is for

- men. These barriers need to be overcome by women-specific measures.
2. Participation of local people, including women, is essential for the effective design, implementation, finance, and maintenance of renewable energy projects.
 3. International financing agencies should integrate energy into their gender policies.
 4. Energy projects should focus on the household-level to benefit poor households in remote rural areas, matching resources with actual household needs.
 5. Electricity access can be scaled up by addressing women's energy needs and matching resources to those needs.
 6. Financing should be proactively extended to women for the acquisition of renewable energy systems.

The importance of gender in Village Power was formally recognized at the Conference's closing remarks by Roger Taylor, based on Elizabeth Cecelski's presentation and the Workshop.

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