



## The Energy Sector: Women's last frontier?

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## The Energy Sector – an exciting place to work

- Female employment in the Electricity, Gas and Steam, and Water – 50% of male employment
- Mainly administration and customer payments
- Sector with representative face of (white) male 50+ in suit
- Engineering requires physical work 'not suitable for women'

## Does it matter?

### **For women:**

- Gender equity
- Women's personal fulfilment
- Women's economic empowerment → transformations in gender roles and relations

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## Does it matter?

### **For companies:**

- not tapping into a pool of talent
- company with women on its board outperforms their rivals
- teams that include women are found to make better business decisions
- woman may be able to sell more effectively to other women
- access to potential female clients is not hindered by social constraints

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## Does it matter?

### **For government/society:**

- women tend to invest their assets in their families and communities

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## **A VIEW FROM THE NORTH**

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## GENDER ASSESSMENT EU NON-NUCLEAR & NUCLEAR ENERGY PROGS

Research in 2001 within Europe

- research by women: women researchers and as activists in energy.
- research for women: women's energy priorities - what are they and are they different to men's?
- research on women: women as energy professionals  
do women experience different career problems to their male counterparts?

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## Findings

- There was little gender awareness amongst Commission staff
- Gender wasn't seen as an issue for research in energy (here the South has been much more progressive!)
- Small number of women as lead applicants
- Female applicants lacked proposal writing skills and networks
- Including women is tokenistic

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## Findings

- Private sector was more gender aware (at least in recruitment)
- ENEQO Project supported by EC 4<sup>th</sup> Action Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men
- Electricity Industry Personnel Managers concerned about EI male image - barrier to recruiting young m/f professionals

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## ENEQO

- Women positive asset to work force
- Different skills – different (=better) work environment
- Awareness raising – promoting benefits of a diverse work force (not only gender)

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## What does (n't) work - Canada

- Quotas don't work
- Putting the responsibility on management not on women
- In context of diversity in society should reflect in employment
- What produces a shift in seeing women as a +ve asset?  
A shortage of men!

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## Some progress within EC (but not all my own work!).....

- Initial evaluations of proposals now done on-line (addresses problem of child care)
- Gender as a topic for investigation within the human dimension of the energy system
- Network established
- Women are taking the initiative in local energy initiatives eg Saerbecke

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## Is it any better working for yourself?

Experience of woman engineer own consultancy company

Clients usually men, who often hesitate before accepting that her as professionally competent

*“Every new customer or colleague treats me like a beginner, a male colleague of my age would never have to defend his competence.”*

*“More often than necessary, I have to explain why I am working in this ‘exotic non-female field’.”*

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## **A VIEW FROM THE SOUTH**

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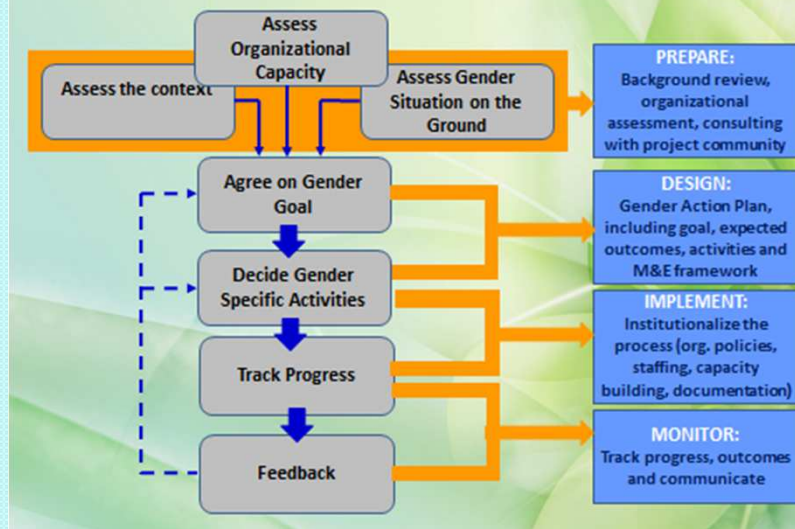
## ENERGIA Gender Mainstreaming in Energy Projects

- ENERGIA is international network on Gender and Sustainable Energy (established 1995)
- Phase IV (2007-2012) 19 energy projects supported to mainstream gender
- Asia and Africa – biogas, stoves, rural electrification, micro-hydro

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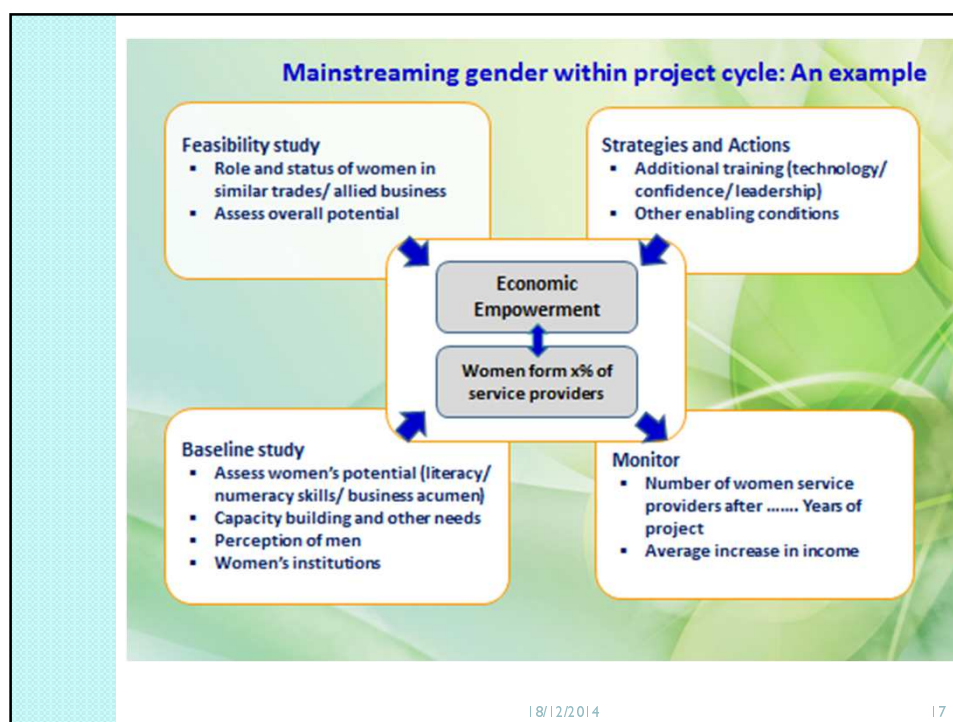
### Gender mainstreaming approach in practice



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## Having a tool box

- Knowing where to start and how to do it
- ENERGIA & World Bank AFREA both have tool kits to assist at each stage of project cycle
- Aim to build capacity to mainstream gender in their policies, programmes and practices

## Getting started

The preparation and adoption of Gender Action Plans, with clear gender goals, activities, indicators and M&E framework

- to improve women's welfare, income generation and empowerment
- to involve women in the operation, installation and maintenance of technologies
- gender-sensitive training and promotion material
- ensure women's participation in project activities.

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## Gender Organisational Assessment

- Good entry point – by a consultant
- Awareness raising – staff in general
- Formulate a Gender Action Plan
- Basis for proposal to the Board
- Design a training programme
- Remember mainstreaming is not a one-off
- Also conduct GOA for partner organisations

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## Tanzania Rural Energy Agency

- Organisational Assessment
- levels of understanding, attitudes, perceptions, capacity building needs, supporting tools, and commitments of senior management and all staff towards gender mainstreaming
- Questionnaire (22 out of 27 returned)
- 19 Face to face interviews – key staff from each department

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## Findings

- Gender mainstreaming = number of women participating
- Lack of clear targets and indicators
- High level commitment (Board level) is needed
- Staff were aware of 'gender' as an 'issue' – even if understanding wasn't good
- Staff need to be more gender aware – training and guidelines needed
- Gender unit or embedding in each department?

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## What's this got to do with Northern Utilities?

- Globalisation – looking for new markets
- Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate (NVE) – is required to mainstream gender in all parts of its operation eg Liberia  
Had to have its capacity built to do this

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## Concluding remarks

- Gender mainstreaming in the energy sector is seen more as 'something for the South'
- In Northern energy organisations – diversity in work force might be easier entry point
- Often it's a problem of not knowing how to do it
- Having a clear gender goal is key in the South – it isn't essential to focus on women's empowerment (creates resistance)

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**° THANK YOU FOR LISTENING**

**(SPECIAL THANKS TO SOMA DUTTA, ENERGIA INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT FOR SOME OF THE SLIDES)**

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