

## SUPPORT IN DEVELOPING A RESEARCH FRAMEWORK FOR EASE

### TSD team

CERES has been the coordinating body for academic research on development in the Netherlands since 1992, and achieved recognition as a research school by the Royal Academy of Sciences in 1994. The core is made up of senior researchers from branches of the social and geographical sciences and from relevant specialisations within economic and agro-ecological disciplines. CERES represents the vast majority of researchers in the Netherlands engaged in development-oriented studies.

The fundamental mission of CERES is to maintain high standards of academic research. In practice, the main thrust of the research falling under CERES is the interaction between human and natural resources. Core research questions focus on the processes and principles underlying perception, access, control and management of such resources in developing countries, and their implications for development. This problem orientation indicates a multidisciplinary and comparative approach, using a range of paradigms and a multilevel methodology, covering case studies to global surveys.

### CERES members in the EASE project

Under the overall management of the Director of CERES, Professor Ton Dietz, the Chair of Technology and Sustainable Development in a North South Perspective (TSD) of the University of Twente, Professor Nico Schulte Nordholt, will coordinate the CERES input into EASE. TSD is an associate member of CERES, and the focus of its research is on the role of technology in the socioeconomic development of developing countries. Technology systems are studied within the institutional setting of both the public and the private sector. Research covers technical, institutional, organisational, socioeconomic and cultural aspects. One of the main themes has always been the role of energy in development.

### The role of CERES in EASE

CERES' role within EASE is to support partner organisations in their research activities. This will include establishing a multidisciplinary panel of CERES researchers, also from other universities in the Netherlands that will provide guidance and make suggestions on EASE research design and implementation. In addition, CERES will contribute to the newsletter and provide information on lessons learnt in other projects.

One of the first activities that CERES is organising is a Summer School that members of the EASE project are welcome to attend. In the Summer School, CERES will present four position papers which will stress "what we know and what we do not know" within the



*The TSD team, coordinating CERES input into EASE. From left to right: Nico Schulte Nordholt, Annemarije Kooiman, Margaret Skutsch, Wendie Klieverik, and Joop Neinders.*

themes of "energy", "gender", "environment" and "poverty". Through these papers we hope to draw out the key issues that can guide the EASE research.

### The concept of livelihoods in terms of EASE

The objective of the EASE research work is to develop recommendations on how energy interventions can contribute to poverty reduction. In order to develop such recommendations, the livelihoods

framework will be used to analyse the impacts of energy interventions on poverty.

The impact of energy interventions on small end-users will be the standpoint from which research questions will be identified. Case studies on energy interventions will need to be identified and analysed in such a manner that results can be raised above the exemplary character of "potentially positive or negative impacts". In this study, it will be important to answer questions as to why energy interventions are successful.

The livelihoods framework enables one to study the various needs of households. In livelihoods research, a key concept is that the poor are not victims but rather that they actively shape their own lives by means of material and non-material assets (social, cultural, human, produced and natural assets), depending on the context in which they have to make a living. The poor develop their own strategies to deal with the risks and insecurities in order to make their livelihoods sustainable. As livelihoods studies are people-centred, it is appropriate to ask questions as to if and how energy interventions impact on poverty or, in a wider sense, if they impact on the material and non-material assets of the poor.

We hope that our contribution to the EASE project will be beneficial, and that it results in useful conclusions and recommendations that deepen the understanding of the role that energy plays in reducing poverty and that, from this, ways in which energy interventions could be improved in the future will become apparent.

### TSD

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