

# **ECREEE Regional Workshop, October 24-26,2011 Mensvic Hotel**

**Socio-Economic Dimension of Energy Access for  
Women**

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# Outline

- Introduction
- Gender Roles
- Gender and Energy
- Women and Energy
- Challenges
- Advantages
- Way Forward

# Introduction

- Energy is one of the fundamental pillars of human development.
- Energy is needed for any kind of activities and a key input to all economic sectors such as industry, commerce and agriculture
- It is important for the provision of social services such as education and health
- The wealth of a nation and its people is closely correlated to the type and dimension of access to energy.

# Introduction Cont'd

- Access to energy is important not only for consumption but also for income-generating activities that provide sustainable livelihood opportunities
- Estimated 2.7 billion people, almost half the world's population, are deprived from clean and energy efficient cooking technologies and around 1.4 billion have no access to electricity

# Introduction Cont'd

- Energy is a particularly critical area and renewable energy is often cited as a key climate change mitigation technology

# Gender Roles

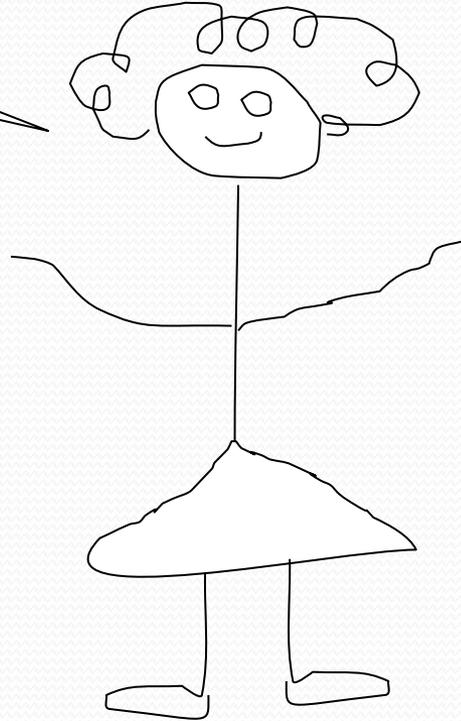
- Gender refers to socially constructed roles and relations between men and women
- This includes the different responsibilities of women and men in a given culture or location
- Roles vary within and between cultures, ethnicity , households, etc and can change over time

# Gender roles

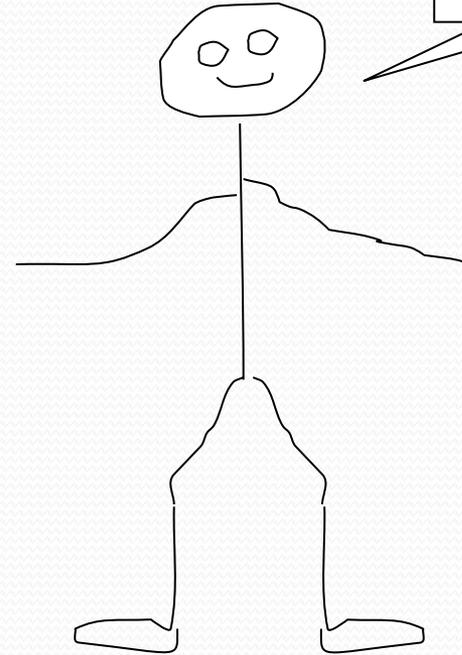
- Gender refers to socially ascribed roles, responsibilities and opportunities associated with women and men, as well as the hidden power structures that govern relationships between them
- Reproductive
- Productive

Ama's **gender** and Kofi's **gender** are socially constructed, meaning that society attaches certain expectations and roles to each of them based on their sex.

Ama



Kofi



# Gender and Energy

- Use of energy and the production of energy are areas in which men and women have different roles, information and perspectives
- Situations in which energy is scarce, in both urban and rural settings affect activities undertaken by women and men

# Available Renewable Energy

- Biomass
- Solar
- Waste
  
- Which of these are available to most women?
- An absence of choice in energy access or use in their daily lives
- Cost implications

# Women and Energy

- Women are most often collectors, users and managers of natural resources
- Main burden of providing and using fuels (dung, raw biomass) for cooking
- Women and children are responsible for collection of fuel-wood
- If time increases, children's capacity to attend school is at risk

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- In rural sub-Saharan Africa, many women carry 20 kilograms of wood-fuel an average of 5 kms every day (IEA)
  - The effort uses up a large share of the calories from their daily meal, which is cooked over an open fire with the collected wood
  - Impacts associated with deforestation and desertification also make it more difficult for women to find wood-fuel

# Women and Energy



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- Inefficient ways of using biomass for cooking, is a source of indoor and outdoor pollution
  - Health implications for women and children

# Rural vs Urban

- Rural:
  - *May not have much choices*
  - *Cost implications*
  
- Urban:
  - *Available choices*
  - *Cost implications*

# Challenges

- Women have less access than men to credit, extension, land and training, necessary for improving energy access to support their livelihoods and income generation from micro enterprises
- New energy technologies may even have unintended negative consequences for women

# Advantages

- Improved cook-stove reduces 1 ton of carbon a year used by 2M poor women and men in the kitchen (Energia)
- Less burden for women
- Improved energy services could play an important role in enhancing the life of the poor, particularly for women and children

## Ordinary gari roasting stove



## Improved roasting stove



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- Electric light extends the day, providing extra hours for school work
  - Modern cook-stoves save women and children from daily exposure to noxious cooking fumes.

# Way Forward

- Bringing women's perspectives into the centre of policy making
- Working with both women and men is a key to success
- Energy projects should be integrated in a holistic way with other improvements relating to health, education, agriculture, etc



THANK YOU