Towards Sustainable Development

POLICY BRIEF

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Will the lack of gender disaggregated statistics affect the attainment of energy SDGs in Uganda?

Executive Statement

Availability of gendered energy statistics is critical to guide decision makers and practitioners in the gender-responsive policy making and implementation at both national and sub-national levels. However, during the implementation of SDG 7 on "access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all" in Uganda, we observe key gender statistics gaps in: (a) access to electricity, (b) regional progress in use of electricity for lighting, (c) developments in Uganda's lighting systems, and (d) cooking energy, which are likely to impede the country's achievement of equal access to energy and reporting on SDG 5 "leave no one behind". There is need to include systematic gender disaggregated data collection and analysis as part of programming for the energy sub-sector. There is need to build capacity on integration of energy gender statistics in survey tools.

Introduction

Access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all is one of the pre-condition for achieving several sustainable development goals (SDGs) relating to poverty eradication, access to clean water, improved public health and education, women's empowerment and increased food production. Uganda was the first countries in the world to embrace the sustainable energy for all (SE4ALL) initiative in 2012 which aimed at ensuring that all countries achieve SDG 7 by 2030. Among the key interventions undertaken to accelerate achievement of the goal was the rural electrification programme (form of subsidy). This has yielded some dividends with the proportion of Ugandans accessing electricity increasing from 8.6 percent in 2001 to over 22 percent in 2017 (Figure 1). However, during the implementation of SDG 7, we observe key gender statistics gaps in the energy sector which are likely to impede the country's achievement of equal access to energy for men and women and reporting on SDG 5 "*leave no one behind*". And yet Universal energy access cannot be achieved without more gender-responsive programmes and policies.[1] Available energy statistics are gender neutral and some cases only disaggregated at male and female headed households' level and yet associated energy policies have implications for the different gender groups. Implementing gender focused interventions in the energy sector would require gender disaggregated statistics to guide energy plans and interventions. However, the availability of gender statistics to guide Uganda's decision makers and practitioners in the gender-responsive policy making and implementation at the national and subnational levels is still missing.

Available gendered statistics for the energy sector are from: the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) and Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development (MEMD) Energy for Rural Transformation survey report 2014, Uganda National Housing Survey (UNHS) reports, and Uganda's energy sector gender statistics profile November 2012 by UBoS are only disaggregated by male and female household heads, and yet gender is beyond the head of a household and it includes further dynamics such as age, persons with disabilities, education levels, among others. This is a clear indication that gender aspects have not been effectively integrated in the data collection process (developing tools and data collection methods) by mandated institutions (UBoS, MEMD) which makes it hard for analysis and eventual reporting.

Using secondary data from Uganda National Household Surveys and a working paper at the 2017 Annual Gender statistics forum (AGSF) titled '' gender statistics and affordable sustainable energy for all", this brief explores critical gender statistics gaps for the energy sector in terms of: (a) access to electricity, (b) regional progress in use of electricity for lighting, (c) developments in Uganda's lighting systems, and (d) cooking energy, as some of the key indicators for realization of SDG 7 which seeks to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.

Lack of gender disaggregated data to inform electricity access

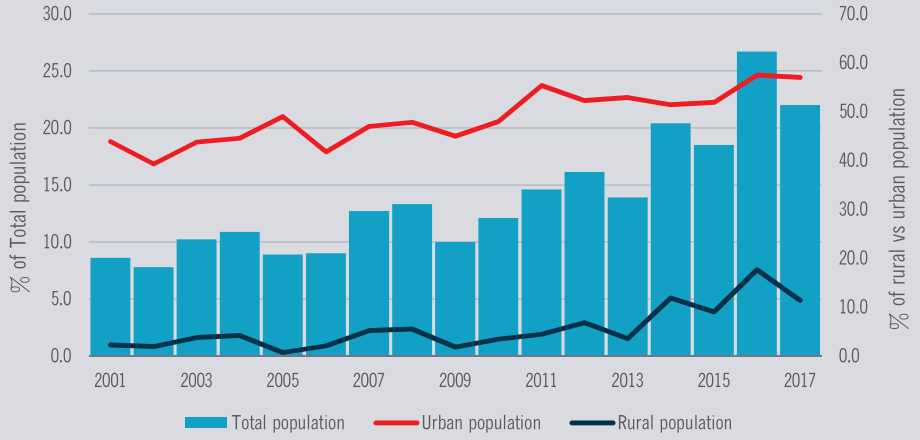
While there is vast global and regional literature[2] [3] that shows that different gender groups (men, women, youth, girls, boys, disabled) are affected by different energy sources through startup of economic

enterprises, economic empowerment, and provision of goods and services in affected communities, these have not been explored in Uganda due to lack of gender disaggregated statistics. The mandated institution "MEMD" responsible for generation and reporting on energy statistics does not produce any disaggregate statistics by gender. Available statistics on electricity access show a positive trend from 8.6% access in 2001 to over 22% in 2017 (Figure 1), but these statistics is not disaggregated by gender. This is further exacerbated by the regional electricity access (about 57% and 11% accessed electricity in urban and rural areas respectively), which is also gender blind on which gender categories have access. This presents a fundamental barrier to achieve the desired transformation in wide range of development indicators, including: health, education, food security, gender equality, livelihoods, poverty reduction, and efficient technologies for lighting in households. Achieving Uganda's target of 98 percent universal access to electricity by 2030 calls for gender statistics to clearly understand which gender categories have access (business type, youth, educated) and eventual shift towards stimulating productive uses of electricity and energy services as options for stimulating growth economic.

Regional progress in use of electricity for lighting not informed by gender statistics

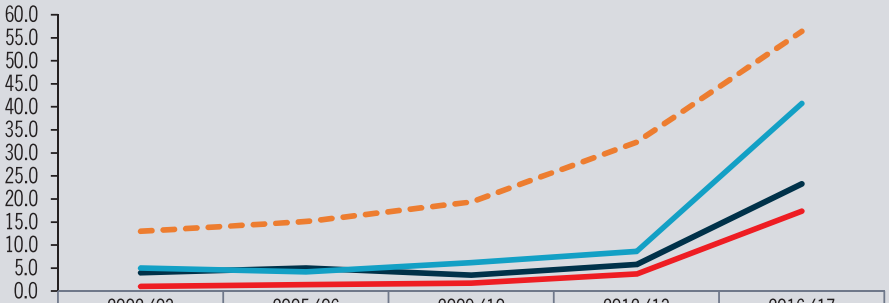
Access to electricity to stimulate economic activities in communities needs to become more widespread if the SDG 7 goal of universal access to electricity is to be met by 2030.[4] Using electricity for lighting as proxy for use of electricity to spur activities due to prolonged hours of work, available statistics show that there has been an increasing trend in use of electricity for lighting for the different regions in Uganda (Figure 2), but the proportions are much lower for the Eastern and Northern regions. This could partly explain the high poverty rates for Eastern (35.7%) and Northern region (32.5%) compared to central (12.7%) and western (11.4) in 2016/17 due limited access to services like electricity to spur economic activities. In addition, available statistics are not disaggregated by gender to clearly understand which category of gender are being affected by the interventions. There is need for renewed efforts to review the energy interventions with a gender lens in order to bridge the gap.

Figure 1 Trends in access to electricity in Uganda (2001-2017)



Source: World Bank Development indicators (2019)

Figure 2 Skewed trends in use electricity for lighting



	2002/03	2005/06	2009/10	2012/13	2016/17
Central	13.0	15.1	19.4	32.3	56.4
Eastern	4.0	5.0	3.5	5.8	23.3
Northern	1.0	1.4	1.7	3.7	17.4
Western	5.0	4.2	6.2	8.6	40.8

Source: UNHS reports several issues

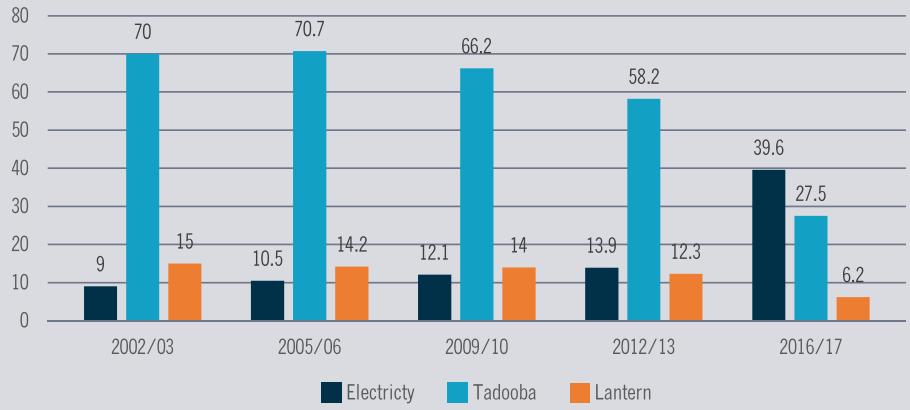
Developments in Uganda's lighting systems not informed by gender statistics

Lack of access to reliable lighting is estimated to limit the productivity of a country by as much 85%[5] due to its associated hindrances on peoples' ability to carry out basic activities at night or in the early morning, including household chores, reading, schoolwork, and business activities. Government effort to connect villages and households to the grid has had some positive effect evidenced by a reduction in the proportion of households that use unsafe lighting systems-tadooba (kerosene lamps) (Figure 3).

Limited efforts to produce gender statistics on cooking energy

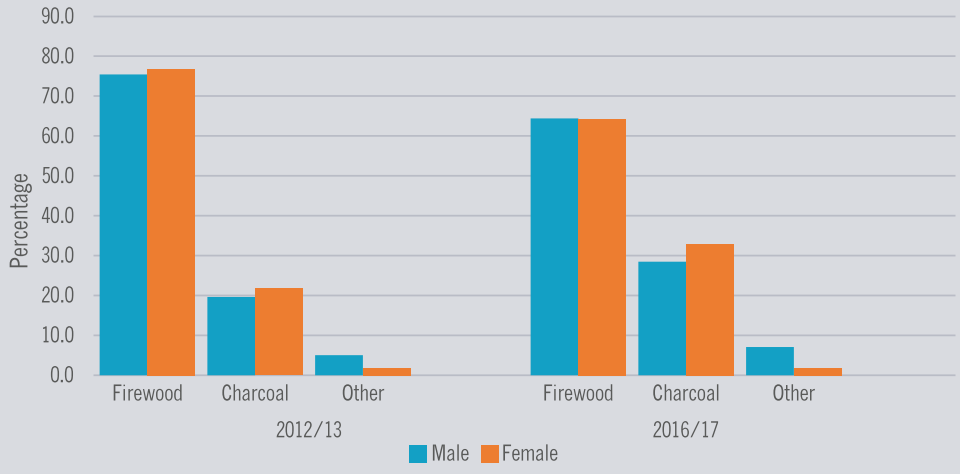
Women and children are disproportionately affected by lack of access to clean cooking fuels. But access to clean cooking energy solutions is even less promising for Uganda given the concentrated efforts to use firewood and charcoal (figure 4), compared to other alternative sources like biogas, electricity, Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG). Uganda is indeed among the top 20 countries in the world with the lowest rates of clean cooking access rates estimated at only 1 percent of Uganda's population.[6] Household air pollution from the use of inefficient stoves paired with biomass, and kerosene for cooking is responsible for some 4 million deaths a year, with women and children at most risk (ibid). Efforts to generate gender statistics on cooking energy through the UNHS reports show mixed results given by increasing trends in use of charcoal (Figure 4) despite varying intervention to promote clean cooking energy. Available statistics (Figure 4) is only disaggregated by male and female households, and yet within a household, there are a number of gender dynamics as far as cooking sources are concerned. Compared to available data on male and female headed households' use of cooking energies, relatively little statistics is available about cooking energy access for other vulnerable groups, such as people living with disabilities, youth, and individuals who are displaced. Given Uganda's commitments to these groups by the Uganda's gender policy and SDG 5 *" leave no one behind"*, they should be included expressly in the analysis and their statistics easily availed to aid gender focused energy programme design, and policy formulation.

Figure 3 Trends in Uganda household lighting systems



Source: UNHS reports several issues

Figure 4 Sources of energy for cooking by gender, 2012/13-2016/17



Source: UNHS reports several issues

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Conclusion and recommendations

Lack of gender disaggregated data and statistics is a major gap in achieving universal access to energy for men and women, without which the extent of energy gender disparities cannot be masked. Universal energy access cannot be achieved without more gender-responsive programmes and policies which in turn require better data collection, gender-sensitive indicators and gender analyses to generate gendered statistics. Given the increasing number of new energy options to improve access to sustainable energy for all, integration of gender statistics in the energy sector can help to reap benefits at multiple levels. It will contributes to SDG reporting which is a key requirement for SE4ALL. At the same time gender statistics can guide appropriate interventions to achieve gender equality in the energy sector.

In order to understand the gender dynamics with the energy sub-sector, there is need to:

a) Address the energy gender statistics gaps to inform investment planning
b) Strengthen existing data collection systems like UBoS surveys and censuses to incorporate gender variables in development of tools
c) Build capacity on integration of energy gender statistics in survey tools
d) Include systematic gender disaggregated data collection and analysis of gender statistics as part of programming for the energy sub-sector.
e) MEMD in collaboration with other agencies should ensure that UBoS collects, analyses and disseminates reliable and up-to-date gender disaggregated data on energy indicators. This can be through building capacity of mandated date reporting institutions in developing of tools and analysis.

Endnotes

1 Energia, World Bank group/ESMAP and UN women (2018). Global progress of SDG 7. Energy and gender policy brief No. 2.
2 Rewald, R. (2017). Energy and Women and Girls: Analyzing the Needs, Uses, and Impacts of Energy on Women and Girls in the Developing World. Oxfam Research Backgrounder series (2017): https://www.oxfamamerica.org/explore/research-publications/energy-women-girls
3 EACREEE (2018). East African Centre for renewable energy and energy efficiency. Situation Analysis of Gender and Sustainable Energy in the East African Community. A report prepared by Sustainable Energy Solutions for the Clean Energy Solutions Center for at the First Sustainable Energy Forum for East Africa, held March 19-21, 2018 in Kigali, Rwanda.
4 Tracking SDG7 (2019) The Progress Report. A joint report produced by the International Energy Agency (IEA), the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), the World Bank, and the World Health Organization (WHO),
5 Enclude BV, Lisanne Heemskerk, Geert Eenhoorn, and Bobby Namiti (2014). Market assessment of modern off-grid lighting systems in Uganda. World Bank report No. P07170868 produced for Lighting Africa
6 Tracking SDG7. (2019) The energy progress report. a joint report produced by the International Energy Agency (IEA), the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), the World Bank, and the World Health Organization (WHO).

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