**CONFIDENTIAL**

Date Transcribed: 6th May 2021

Interviewer(s):

Respondent(s):

**INT: So my name is XXXX, I have already introduced myself. I work with Friends of Ghana. We are doing this research in collaboration with Anglia Ruskin University and Leeds Beckett University, all in the UK. And this study is basically focused on assessing gender equality when it comes to energy access.**

**So we are trying to understand the balance or the relationships between men and women when we are talking about energy, in terms of whether there is equitable distribution of access between men and women in the Ghanaian society? And what do you think are the certain challenges specifically when it comes to energy access? And any recommendations that you would have for us to be able to use to ensure that women have equal access to, or women benefit equally from energy access as men.**

RES: Women use more than men. We have our hairdryers, our straighteners and things.

**INT: So let’s start with your experiences with XXXX. Can you tell us a little bit about your experience with XXXX? So tell us a bit about your experience with XXXX?**

RES: Experience? It’s an energy company that’s owned by the government and, what else?

**INT: So what does XXXX do?**

RES: They distribute for Ghana oil.

**INT: Okay, so let’s go straight into the questions. So tell us a little bit about equitable energy access in Ghana? So we are trying to understand the levels of, we are trying to understand energy access in Ghana and we want to get your perspective.**

RES: I don’t think everyone has equal access to energy.

**INT: Okay, so why is it everybody does not have equal access to energy?**

RES: I think not everyone is rich.

**INT: Do you think everybody needs to have equal access to energy?**

RES: Yeah why not.

**INT: Okay, why is that? So you said that you don’t think everybody has equal access to energy? But do you think everybody should have equal access to energy?**

RES: Oh yes.

**INT: Why is that?**

RES: Because it should always be fair.

**INT: Going to be fair, okay.**

RES: Because everybody uses it, it’s not like, this person needs it and this person doesn’t need it. We are all equal, we need it.

**INT: That’s great. So let’s bring it to gender, do you think when it comes to energy there is a balance between men and women? Do men and women have equal access to energy?**

RES: Not really.

**INT: Not really.**

RES: Yes.

**INT: Okay, explain?**

RES: Us woman we need it more than you guys, you guys what do you use? Aside from charging your phones, watching TV, what else?

**INT: Okay.**

RES: But women, our hair is long, we need straightener, we need hair dryers, we need electric, there is something for electric devices here, you know. And, you know, we charge our cell phones and stuff. Like some women like have electric stoves and stuff, you guys what do you do, not all of you know how to cook so you don’t have a stove.

I think women benefit more than men.

**INT: Okay. But when it comes to decision making, do you think women, men are usually making all of the decisions, or who is usually in charge in terms of making the decisions?**

RES: In charge of using electric stuff in your house?

**INT: Yes.**

RES: I would say that in the poor homes.

**INT: In the poor households?**

RES: Yes.

**INT: You think in the rich households everybody has equal?**

RES: Of course yes. It is the case from the kids to the mum and dad, yes. So I don’t think nobody is in charge of don’t use this, use this, you can’t use this, but it does in the poor house.

**INT: In the poor households?**

RES: Yes because they are trying to save, you know not everybody does really have the money to be like every day or every month they are going to (unclear 06.03), every workday you are going to eat scram food sometimes, it’s been a problem for them, so. It will be like, you can use this, you cannot use that or you cannot use that.

And some of the city has (unclear 06.16) assistance, this is electricity I am talking about, it’s not every home that has it, except for the rich homes.

**INT: Okay.**

RES: So the poor homes, even their blender, your husband is not even going to allow you to buy because it uses electricity, or your iron, so even to talk about a fridge, no way.

**INT: That’s good. So you talked about the benefits and you also talked about the decision making. So you mentioned also a little bit about costings, so I was about to ask about energy infrastructure, so you talked about a fridge, the blenders, but let’s bring it to community level infrastructure for us and street lights. Street lights are provided in a community, do you think it benefits both men and women equally or men benefit more than women or women benefit more than men?**

RES: The street lights? We all benefit from them equally.

**INT: We all benefit equally?**

RES: Yes, why not because we walk on the same streets, drive on the same streets, so why is it not going to be equal?

**INT: Okay. How about infrastructure such as gas filling stations, do you think they benefit women more than men because women, you mentioned it is women who usually…?**

RES: We benefit more than men, all day I use that. So women have benefited more than men.

**INT: Okay. So you also talked a little bit about the rich and then poor households but do you, let’s bring it to, do you think there is a difference between women who live in urban areas and the women who live in rural areas, their levels of access to energy. Do you think some people have more access to energy then those who, those who live in the rural areas have better access to energy then those who live in the city?**

RES: No, those who live in rural areas don’t benefit more than those who live in urban areas.

**INT: You mean those living in the rural areas…?**

RES: They don’t benefit more than. Actually all that we do is based on city, city, city and we give less attention to the rural areas. That’s why they always have to come to the cities to provide, the government really gives less attention to it, it doesn’t give much. You can hear on the news that they complained that they need lights, they need this.

**INT: That’s great. So in the context of XXXX, the distribution of fuel, do you think they have considered the needs of men better than the needs of women or just do they consider, did they take into account or did they factor the needs of women? So we need to provide these specific services for women, or they just provide services for everybody?**

RES: Everybody. They don’t do it for men or women these days, and men need this, no, no, no, everybody.

[0:10:06.6]

**INT: So you mentioned earlier about Ghana’s energy policy sectors, the PDS, the privatisation of ECG, do you think, I mean some of these policies and also the Coronavirus rebates that government gave out during the Covid era, do you think these policies or government’s energy policies they take into account the needs of women and provide specifically for the needs of women? Or these policies are just general for everybody?**

RES: General.

**INT: They are general for everybody?**

RES: Yes general.

**INT: But do you think they need to take into account specifically the needs of women in certain situations?**

RES: For me, no. Everybody is equal, only it has to be general, not just specifically women. It has to be general, yes, from my experience.

**INT: But you do agree that women have specific energy needs, or women need, there are certain energy areas that women need energy more than men?**

RES: We need energy more than men.

**INT: So you mentioned earlier that women are usually in charge of cooking and so do you think that government needs to provide certain policies that target say the provision of LPG gas, which specifically it is women that benefit more?**

RES: Women benefit more than men that is a fact.

**INT: But do you think that government needs to take that into account when developing policies?**

RES: So why can’t it be like general, you want to do it for only like women, if women then fine, if men then fine, but why can’t it be general, why?

**INT: Do you think currently it is general? I mean government policies; do you think it is general?**

RES: No.

**INT: Currently it is general for everybody?**

RES: Yes.

**INT: Okay.**

RES: That’s what I am going to say.

**INT: You mean these energy policies, they benefit the rich?**

RES: More than the poor.

**INT: More than the poor?**

RES: Oh yes. The poor doesn’t really get access to energy as the rich. So it doesn’t have to be based on do men benefit more than women or women benefit more than men, it has to be rich and poor because the rich benefits more than the poor, hundred per cent. Because the poor use, when (unclear 13.26) rural homes, some don’t even have TV, not even talk about AC often, only one bulb radio, that’s it.

But when you go to a rich home, yes, here we go, washing machine, white goods stuff like electric stove and stuff, fridge and stuff. But the poor it’s not for them to get, even blender, so we talk about iron, so you see it’s not everybody that has.

**INT: So if I understand you, you think that these policies should rather take into consideration the needs of the poor?**

RES: Yes.

**INT: The needs of the poor?**

RES: Yes and it’s not everything that has to be based on like urban areas. If the government want to build something at least they should go to the rural areas and build that thing there. Because I think that will make them not come to the cities.

**INT: The rural communities?**

RES: Yes. Because if you go there, okay here’s an example, just tell someone I am going take you to Accra right now, see how the person would be so happy that. I see the person going to you, I say, oh yes like urbans have what you don’t have. Yes so the person will be glad I am bringing him or her to Accra, you see, yes. So I think if a woman does something she will just do it ourselves.

**INT: In rural areas?**

RES: Yes.

**INT: Okay. Right, so let’s look at it from the national level decision making, do you think there is a balance between men and women in terms of the representation of women at the ministries, at the districts, at the parliamentary levels?**

RES: Hmm-mm.

**INT: You think there is a balance.**

RES: Hmm-mm. Women make more decisions then men there. I mean men make more decisions then women there.

**INT: Men?**

RES: Yes.

**INT: Men make most of the decisions?**

RES: Uh-huh.

**INT: Why is that?**

RES: You talk more, (unclear 15.44), how many every day.

**INT: Okay.**

RES: Just tell me, give me names, how many? Men.

**INT: Okay.**

RES: It’s not up to the kids or women for that, it’s not always we have to talk, you know, we also (unclear 16.01) and then we can always make decisions for ourselves.

**INT: So is this just at a parliamentary level or it’s also at a ministerial level?**

RES: Everywhere, oh yes.

**INT: Including at a district level?**

RES: Oh yes.

**INT: Okay. Why do you think that is the case that men are usually in charge of decision making at the ministerial and the district levels? Why is it that we don’t have more women at those levels making the decisions?**

RES: We are not that educated.

**INT: Education?**

RES: Hmm-mm.

**INT: Okay.**

RES: Let’s say the kids are more, this stuff, and you know, okay so at the local farm we had like a lady, oh I am going to do this and she ended up getting pregnant at 18. Once you get pregnant, it’s not every one that will support you and push you forward, most of the time you are a disgrace to the family so we are not going to help you anymore. Example, like no one is supporting me so how is the child going to get there, see? It’s not everybody like, okay, if you see me.

**INT: What do you mean you?**

RES: Oh you think, yes that has happened to me. Yes I was going to school, yes I got myself pregnant and family just disowned me, just like that, I don’t have family, no I don’t.

**INT: They decided not to support you?**

RES: No, no education, no nothing. So I won’t say my dreams are just vanished in the air because I am still struggling to get there, you see. What I want to be, okay here’s an example, I got myself pregnant and I still have this (unclear 8.03), I will be getting closer to my dreams and not being here struggling for myself to get out there. So yes, that’s all.

**INT: Do you think there is also a cultural element that men see it like men have to be in charge and women have to be, I mean supportive rather than being in charge? Do you think there is that cultural element or is it just lack of education?**

RES: Lack of education, yes. Come on, women can be in charge, it’s not always based on men, men, men, men, that’s not how it is. We (unclear 18.49) men more than women there, am I lying?

**INT: No that’s true.**

RES: Yes, so we need to like, even the mother when she dotes on her son, he stood there and pushed her out, because don’t think about your family, if she goes up there it’s for her country to. Oh yes because shattering her dreams it’s not only going to be like, she will be beneficial to society, not only about you being proud of her and stuff, she will be beneficial to the government. So that’s my thoughts. Yes it’s not everybody.

**INT: So what I was trying to understand is you mentioned earlier about the differences between rural low income households or poor households and then the rich households. I am just trying to understand whether you think this has some implications for their energy access? Do you think that the poorer households because of this financial challenge, it has any implication for their energy access? Can you describe that a little bit?**

[0:20:07.3]

RES: I guess I do have, they are just trying to save more energy, most of them really pay much. Because even they have, there is no money, so they have to really use less energy and yes. But some do have, no some don’t, some don’t have, so they just have to be dependent on whatever they have.

**INT: Like charcoal?**

RES: Yes, not everybody has got charcoal; some have to go to the forest or gallivant around to find woods for their cooking. Not everybody has access to energy nor the charcoal, it is some, finding charcoal is really hard for them, so the wood is better.

**INT: Okay, yes. And is this because of their financial challenges?**

RES: Oh yes, hundred per cent. Maybe some, like I know a lady she has, even though she has charcoal stuff like her cookers and stuff, she always uses wood because she is trying to save money. Even getting the charcoal, even the wood after you burning it or something, it doesn’t do much so you have to go and buy. So yes they are trying to save money and finding wood more.

**INT: Who is usually in charge of that, the getting of the charcoal, the getting of the firewood, is that men or women?**

RES: Mostly it would be the women don’t work so they depend on their husbands so yes. I think in that case it would be men.

**INT: It’s the men?**

RES: Yes I wouldn’t say one hundred per cent because I am talking from experience. Maybe the man would give the money away but the lady, the wife is trying to save, so she will go, wife she is cooking so, yes, the man would give the money, so she is trying to save, so she will go for the wood. Not only is she saving, she is going to buy charcoal herself, yes, the money she saves she is going to buy charcoal, yes. I don’t think I was really specific about that was I?

**INT: No that’s quite understandable. But do you think this has any health implications of economic implications to the women?**

RES: Oh yes, for example there’s smoke. You can breathe in smoke; you are going to have effects. I will give you an example, when like you cough it or something, it’s in your eyes, if that fine dust enters your eye there is a problem, because that dust is fine. From charcoal I think you are going to get a lung problem or?

**INT: Lungs?**

RES: And yes I think you will have difficulty breathing, yes so there is that. You end up coughing and stuff, so it’s really not good for you. But I think that charcoal is more, if they have access to energy that would be so cool. Because the money they are trying to save, the same money they are going to use to...

**INT: Treat you at hospital. Why is it that the men are not involved in this activity, like getting the wood and then doing the cooking?**

RES: They have to find the money, you are home, so you have to prepare the food, you have got to look for, men have to go out and get money to give to you to go and buy and some stuff and come and cook. You don’t expect them to go and find money and at the same time help you to find the wood. So like it’s usually based on the woman and the kids, yes.

**INT: You mean they have to do the cooking and the getting of the firewood?**

RES: Oh yes, speaking from experience, yes. They always have to go and find the wood and come back and cook and stuff, even though smoke is entering their eyes they still have to cook before the man comes back. Because he is the one finding the money, not you, so you have to take care of the household, cook before he comes. So yes, it’s always the women finding the wood and stuff.

**INT: I guess what I am trying to understand is are there certain situations where the woman goes out to go and get the money and then the man will stay in the house to cook and get the firewood and do all of these things in the house?**

RES: No I haven’t come across that.

**INT: Why is that?**

RES: It’s always the man, the lady can go out and say you are going to find money in the right areas, no way sir, no, no, it’s always the women and the kids, it’s something of a tradition.

**INT: Something what?**

RES: Tradition. Because the man doesn’t cook, the man needs to find the money and the lady is a housewife so you stay in the house, you are going to cook whilst the man goes to find money, so yes.

**INT: Oh okay, I see. Do you think these poor households, we are almost done, do you think these poor households are usually in the rural area or there are some poor households in the urban areas as well?**

RES: Yes it is in the urban areas as well but it’s not as much as the rural areas.

**INT: Oh okay.**

RES: Yes, for example, some parts of East Legon you are going to find the same thing. This is what I was saying, I was speaking from experience was East Legon, yes they are living in uncompleted buildings and that thing is happening there.

**INT: That the woman has to go and look for the firewood?**

RES: Yes, exactly. Oh yes.

**INT: In East Legon?**

RES: Oh yes.

**INT: In Accra?**

RES: Yes it’s happening, of course it’s happening, there is not as much as in the rural areas. Because they go to this house with no lights, no electricity or they are based on is the wood, yes. But here you are not going to see it unless you go into regions and I say it’s not as much as the rural areas.

**INT: Okay, so you described a very interesting experience, a very interesting situation and it looks like there is a lot that these women are going through, especially the poor households. What do you think the government can do to address that situation?**

**So again, what do you think the government can do to address these challenges that these women are facing?**

RES: I think the government should, you see, with the poor (unclear 28.31), so I think you should just build houses like, every day houses. For example like okay, I will say openly for the poor, because it’s not everybody here in Ghana that gets shelter, because it’s not everybody in Ghana who has shelter, so if they are living, then you have got to provide them with jobs.

If they are working, electricity won’t be free; water won’t be free because you are working, so you have got to pay for those stuffs. So the government will be benefiting from that, yes. And I think they should reduce gas price, yes because it’s not everybody that can afford that. So I think they only think about the rich, they should also think about the poor because we all need help. That’s what I think they should do.

**INT: Okay, that’s great. So that was the last question. But I just want to find out if there is anything else you would like to ask today in our discussion? So we’ve talked about equitable energy access, we’ve talked about the representation of women in decision making, getting more women into decision making. We have also talked about the challenges that low income household’s face. Is there anything that you would want to add that we have not addressed in this discussion?**

[0:30:21.1]

RES: For me I would say you guys should give us money because it’s going to finish, what we need is jobs, yes, more jobs. Because not everybody does jobs you see. Yes more jobs and we are good to go.

**INT: Okay. Right thank you very much, so you are about to add something?**

RES: I think it’s going to reduce this like robbery and stuff if we have more jobs, yes.

**INT: Thank you very much; I really appreciate your time and insights. So like I mentioned earlier this is an on-going research, we are still doing some interviews and we are also planning more like either a national workshop or regional workshop so we will keep you informed when there is some activity to be done either at a national level or a regional level. And if you are available to participate in any of these activities, we will be happy to know.**

**So thank you very much for your time, I really, really appreciate it.**

RES: I appreciate it, thanks.

**Audio ends: [31.39]**