**Transcript 2**

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| **Sub-contractor organisation** | **ARU** |
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| **Interview participant** | |
| * **Code** | **P2** |
| * **Participant name** | **XXXX** |
| * **Organisation name** | **XXXX** |
| * **Gender** | **Female** |
| * **Stakeholder category** | **Government Body** |
| * **Country** | **Pakistan** |

INTERVIEWER 1: Quotes will be indicated with confidentiality.

RESPONDENT: If I want to give you a quote after, does that work as well. If something comes to my mind?

INTERVIEWER 1: Definitely.

RESPONDENT: That’s wonderful.

INTERVIEWER 1: You can email that to us. If you have any added thoughts or if any question is left from our side, it would be great if we can continue to communicate. Okay, XXXX do you want to start now?

INTERVIEWER 2: Marium, thank you so much for making time for this interview. Before we start, we have shared the consent form with you which you have signed and returned to us. And the whole purpose of this interview now is to request your experience and expertise since you are working in the energy sector, and your views with regards to this sector in Pakistan, of course your opinion on gender equity in the energy access as well. So, for documentation purposes, we are recording this interview, which will be transcribed and analyzed later. We will share the transcript with you as well for your approval. Any thing that you are sharing with us right now, is for the purpose of this study and will only be shared with the research team. And as XXXX already mentioned to you, that it is going to be anonymous. So if we quote you anywhere, it will not include your name and designation in any sense. Roughly, it takes more or less one hour for the interview subject to your responses. So we will be done within the hour. So, I will just move on to the questions now.

**Part 1: Introduction**

INTERVIEWER 2: If you could start by telling us a little bit about your current role and position, the organization that you work for, what is the role and purpose of the organization and what do you really do over there?

RESPONDENT: I work with the XXXX, and specifically under an entity that was formed in 2015 called XXXX (XXXX). The purpose of this agency was to work on demand side energy management that was not happening in Pakistan.

Quick question, if I switch between the languages, is it fine or should I stick to English?

INTERVIEWER 2: No, we will translate it so its fine.

RESPONDENT: So the primary focus at that time was to work on demand side management. It’s an area that has been focused on all over the world and it’s important because we can work on the supply side issues by adding more supply but its actually more cost effective and environmentally friendly to work on the demand side management. so XXXX has about 9 specialized agencies working on different areas. This particular agency works on energy efficiency and conservation and I work as the head of legal at XXXX.

INTERVIEWER 2: Okay, in terms of your background, like how and why did you get into this line of work, because legal could be anywhere, but energy specifically?

RESPONDENT: I actually was working in private law firms, before the government which was a very different experience. My undergraduate was here in XXXX and I went to XXXX for my Masters. If you ever lived in XXXX you can't escape energy or natural resources. It's quiet dominant and they do a lot of work on it as well. So when I came back, somewhere at the back of my mind it was there that this is an area I want to work on. After returning from XXXX. The Punjab government was very active at that time but being a private sector person, I was a bit hesitant to work with the Government. But it's been an excellent experience. With this job I was able to get an industry wide experience and look at the bigger picture that I was not able to look at with the private sector. Initially, I couldn't figure out my role. But the more I read about it, I realised that XXXXX. It's also been interesting because I have picked up a lot of technical knowledge from my XXXXX. So it has been a good move in that sense. And as I said energy efficiency is an area that requires a lot of attention in Pakistan. So it’s a win-win situation.

INTERVIEWER 2: it does. So you have been involved with energy issues roughly for about 5 years right? Since XXXX I believe?

RESPONDENT: Technically, completely focused on energy 3 but overall yes.

INTERVIEWER 2: Yes, because I remember meeting you one time in XXXX very briefly.

RESPONDENT: I think it was 2017 – 2017 winter, maybe December.

INTERVIEWER 2: Of course.

RESPONDENT: I remember XXXX was with us at that time, XXXX and I both met you and your other partner.

INTERVIEWER 2: Yes, with XXXX, yeah. So in terms of like you have already mentioned that, the focus of XXXX has been on energy efficiency, but if we look at specific energy related activities or programs, could you share some examples of more specific activities?

RESPONDENT: I can tell you about the projects that we are doing and of course the link with energy access in a bit. So what our primary work is starting of with standards - we have been introducing standards along with XXXX, the federal body focusing on energy efficiency in appliances. Because appliances take up a lot of energy so starts off with lights, fans, air conditioners – moving on to buildings. XXXX would know this much better that buildings consume a lot of energy. We have actually modified an XXXX code, an energy conservation building code which has to become mandatory in the due course of time, but once it is approved, it will be voluntary for about 2 years. There is a lot that it covers – design, HVAC systems. But if that is implemented in letter and spirit, you would be saving a lot of electric energy, through buildings as well. Then of course another thing we have been doing is retrofitting in buildings. Like some of the universities in Punjab have been built over a year ago, some have been built over 50 years ago so these are very energy inefficient buildings and they are massive. So you can just imagine the kind of energy they are consuming on a monthly basis or an annual basis. We have actually looked into this that if we retrofit these buildings, and then we will move on to hospitals after public sector universities. The kind of energy you are saving will of course be saving you money, the kind of environmentally friendly impact will overall have an impact that is pretty immense.

INTERVIEWER 2: So again in terms off, like you mentioned about retrofitting and energy and the HVAC and energy efficiency, so if we could sort of focus on issues to do with energy access specifically. How does your work fit into the energy access domain?

RESPONDENT: One other thing that I want to focus on is our XXXX as well, that we are focusing primarily on universities and then we will move into hospitals and GHQs. But what the XXXXs are doing is getting the private sector into the mix with us. Because the government is obviously always tapered for cash. And we don’t have the kind of efficiency that the private sector has. So what we are trying to do is set up solar projects in these universities using the expertise and finance of the private sector. So what the government is doing is identifying the universities for them and then obviously you have your bidding process as per the procurement rules, and the companies which obviously, provide the lowest cost win. They will setup a XXXX operated at the same time because at this stage we don’t have the expertise at the government sector to manage these plants as well. How I link this up with energy access, it is an indirect link – when we think of energy access, we generally thinking of providing access to energy to begin with. The places that we are focusing on have that access but what we are trying to do is make it more affordable. We are trying to make the energy more reliable and of course save these institutions some money so they can spend the money elsewhere.

INTERVIEWER 2: so in terms of specific issues, we can say you are working on policy, you are working on education and awareness?

RESPONDENT: As I mentioned, we are not working on the energy access directly. We work on energy efficiency and this has an indirect link. Because what we target right now already has access to energy, but what we are trying to do is to make it more efficient. The Punjab government has been working on policy and our focus is on energy access more on the indirect side – the stakeholders we are working with already have the energy access, we are trying to make it more reliable and affordable

INTERVIEWER 1: So you had mentioned that you are XXXXX code. Can you please tell us more about this?

RESPONDENT: We have already modified them. A code exists at the federal level. But that is also The building codes already exist at the federal level, but we have adopted and modified as per climatic zones of Punjab. The next step is of course to implement them. The implementation will be the hardest part because we will have to tap in to the housing schemes, the municipal corporations, XXXXbecause they have to enforce it. Basically how we need to get no objection certificates for architectural design, similarly when these codes become mandatory, you will have to submit these designs as well. A brief indication of what this code is exactly covering: basically provisions of these codes will apply to building envelopes, HVAC systems, service water heating, lighting and electric, water and power. So it will be quite comprehensive.

INTERVIEWER 2: So in terms of, like you mentioned Punjab policies, what about the overall Pakistan government policies, federal policies and which specific ones that you can quote that shape your work and of course the current issues and developments in policies within Punjab and federal that influence you or if there are any challenges to go with policy?

RESPONDENT: I think the first challenge that would be is that energy efficiency has not featured yet in our policies. And the biggest issue I see when I look at these policies are that they are not looking at energy landscape as a whole. I just give you one example, when I started working in the energy sector, I had a look at the policies and legislations in the US and it always boggled my mind how comprehensive they were. So, for instance their 1992 Energy Act covers everything from supply to energy efficiency, to buildings to electric vehicles when we hadn’t even heard of them at the time. So, their policies I find look at this in a very holistic manner. So for instance renewables and energy efficiency are always seen as working side by side. Renewable energy is not energy efficiency and vice versa, but they are working in tandem because you realize that you need to work on both to meet the requirements under the Paris Climate Agreement. So that is my biggest issue with policy that we will come up with independent policies in the Oil & Gas sector, then we will come up with an independent policy for thermal energy or for some other use of energy but the Alternative & Renewables Energy (ARE) Policy 2019 does focus on a number of different areas now, but energy efficiency is not really an area of focus. So when I look at policy challenge there is no policy to begin with. That is the issue, we don’t have a strategy, we don’t have a guideline that is focusing on energy efficiency as part of your entire energy transition.

**Part 2: Understanding of the Issues**

INTERVIEWER 2: Let’s move on to the second part of the interview which is more focused on understanding of the issues, in terms of practices that are going on in Pakistan at the moment. So, what does energy access mean to you? What would it look like in terms of SDG 7? If you could perhaps explain what SDG 7 means to you and then maybe unfold that a bit.

RESPONDENT: I think that the traditional understanding was having access to energy as a basic need for cooking, if you have work in the night you have access for that, but I think it has kind of grown from that and it is actually more to do with affordability and affordable energy as well, and uninterrupted supply as well. It’s not as basic as it may have been. For instance as I said, our work is not starting of with that you don’t have electricity at your house at all. It goes a step beyond that as well. So my traditional understanding of this obviously would be people having access to cooking facilities, people having access to light at night. But now another area that I find interesting for women particularly is for those who are running their own business. So this has strong links with entrepreneurship, especially in rural areas where obviously better access to energy means you are improving your economic conditions and getting rid of energy poverty.

INTERVIEWER 2: So you have sort of come on to the next question yourself but if you could more specifically talk about what gender equity in energy access means to you and do you think… maybe first you can talk about gender equity and then I can ask the follow on question.

RESPONDENT: Gender equity talks about parity and having a role in decision making. I think until the past few year’s energy access was not really being linked to energy equity, its only in the last few years that we have started seeing this nexus. We used to look at gender equity from a number of other areas: women having the right to open up a bank account, men and women having the right to vote, women having the right to such and such things. But I think that the energy access and the energy equity has been linked up maybe in the last few years more so and its important because most of the individuals who work with household appliances are women. And these women are never part of decision making. They have no idea what appliances are being worked with, they are just kind of given something to work with it when they have had no input in it at all. When I look at energy equity and energy access, I think it is so important to have that 50% of the population, who is going to be the end consumer of that energy to be a part of the conversation as well.

INTERVIEWER 2: Do you think our policy, like you said the 2019 ARE policy includes a set number of issues, but does it include gender equity in energy access as a priority?

RESPONDENT: I don’t think the ARE 2019 policy includes gender equity in energy access as a priority area and that would be the same for other policies as well. There was a water policy e.g. that was approved sometime back with not even a single woman being part of it.

INTERVIEWER 2: Perfect so in your view, and again this is your view, why do you think gender equity and energy access needs to be a priority for the policy?

RESPONDENT: Because you are missing out 50% of the population that is going to be heavily using this. Especially when we recognize that energy access is so important and so closely linked to economic empowerment, this is one of the best way we can lift these women and when you lift these women, you lift their families and their generations, which will be the next coming generations. We always say that, when you obviously lift a woman out of poverty, she is going to be teaching her kids. Her kids are probably going to school. That is going to translate into a much better economic position. That is why it’s so important to include women in this conversation.

INTERVIEWER 2: and how equitable is energy access at community and household level in terms of gender equity?

RESPONDENT: It doesn’t exist at the rural level at all, but even at the urban level, we don’t really have women part of this conversation even in urban areas. As I said about appliances, how many women have a decision on when it comes to what to buy, even though they are the ones that are going to be using it most of the time. So no, even at urban levels, you don’t really have women part of this. I mean another example I can give you is actually an example that would apply to a very few percentage of individuals and households who are using solar systems. How many women that we know are part of that discussion. They have no idea of what is being set up at their homes, they don’t know how it works, how it operates. But I think that is partly to do with our culture as well – we generally put women at the back seat when it comes to decision making, they are at the fore when they have to use it but answering your question, we don’t have energy equity even at the urban level – it is getting better at least the conversation has started. It will take some time but the conversation has started.

INTERVIEWER 2: I am trying to probe a little more so some of the questions might seem repetitive to you. If we look at energy usage in the household, how does gender affect energy usage? So for example, who has the responsibility for different tasks that use energy? And if you can give specific examples, again according to your view point? How (if at all) do men and women use energy differently, and why? How does gender relate to energy access in specific domain challenges such as clean cooking?

RESPONDENT: Okay, maybe I will break this up into two parts. When you say who has the responsibility, traditionally, women spend the most time at home. We are very few women who are active part of active workforce so they are spending the most time at home. So obviously everything from household appliances to cooking stoves, all of this comes under their radar. So how exactly, can you expect them to understand the efficient use of these appliances let’s if they don’t understand …. They don’t understand… can you just ask me this question again so I can phrase my thoughts better…

INTERVIEWER 2: so, who has the responsibility for different tasks, if I am looking at a household and energy consumption within the household. What are the roles that you know.. or what are the different tasks that genders are playing… how are men and women using energy differently and why?

RESPONDENT: Men will be the ones making the decision to purchase the appliance, men would be making payments for the utility bills but the women would be the ones using it the most because traditionally their roles have been delineated to households and kitchens in particular. So they are the heaviest consumers with absolutely no role in the purchase of it. And why would you buy one over the other and what would be more efficient appliance like, its just not there. Women tend to focus on the bigger picture as well but when it comes to energy efficiency and energy access I think men are too focused on the cost and the thing is that the culture that needs to change, which is why we talk about conservation is , most of these things involve cost right at the beginning but then there is a payback as well. So if women understood the benefits of that they may be able to inculcate that in their family better that you may be investing a little bit more in something more expensive in beginning but over time is going to be benefit for you. I just think that is why women need to be part of the conversation because they think, they think in the bigger way and have this tendency to kind think forward for the next few years in terms of what would they like in the next 5 or 10 years and they are very good with savings so if they understand the benefit of how to use energy properly, then it’s the next step because when you talk about energy access but if you are talking about using energy right as well it is equally important, then its good if you can target women who could probably harp on the importance of it for the long run.

INTERVIEWER 1: I want to ask a question here. Because your work is indirectly linked to energy access, its more to do with demand management so I was wondering especially how you described gender differences in the household, how does XXXX determine demand and how does it understand the consumer to begin with, does it rely on government statistics, or does it do it own surveys.

RESPONDENT: we get our data by doing something called an energy audit. We identify our consumers, through audits, to identify what their energy bill is, where are they consuming energy, where are they wasting energy. And then these are the people who become our designated consumers. Of course there is separate data for commercial buildings, universities and hospitals. And there data separate for households, residential. So that’s how we identify the data, we can’t really rely on government’s data because it hasn’t been gathered with this perspective. But we start off with the energy audit, which is the right way to do it, determining, how much energy is being used and is it being used in the right way or not and then we take it from there. And then we offer our solutions accordingly.

INTERVIEWER 1: so at what level is this audit conducted. Are you able to tell that what are the gender differences in the household and who is consuming the energy?

RESPONDENT: I mean I will look into this and get back to you if this can be broken down exactly that what is being used gender wise. Because normally audits are not designed this way, but this is a very interesting perspective to look at. If we can actually through audit get an idea of that how much is being used gender wise. But if I just think from the top of my head that obviously, the energy you are consuming in household items, for cooking, majority, like 95% would be women. But ACs, TVs, this would also be mixed, you would have household women who are heavily dependent on their TV sets. The same goes for men when they have to listen to the news. So it’s very interesting, let me look into this, probe my engineering team and ask them if its is possible to get this data.

INTERVIEWER 1: also do ask the level, are they able to get a measure for each appliance in the household separately or do they get the data for overall consumption of a household, just to see how they determine this.

RESPONDENT: I will get back to you on this.

INTERVIEWER 1: XXXX, sorry, please continue.

RESPONDENT: XXXX, if you feel I don’t give you a response that is satisfactory, you are welcome to ask me again.

INTERVIEWER 2: That is exactly what I have been doing. Just to sort of recap my understanding of what you have said so far: energy access in terms of electrical consumption of appliances, it is in terms of cooking…clean cooking and access to heat energy. And then of course there will be a little bit of heating and cooling within the household, like for example we have solar heaters or things like that. And then all of this needs to be coupled up with energy efficiency where we are trying to bring people access to energy efficient appliances or energy efficient cook stoves and things of that sort. Right? So do you feel there is…

RESPONDENT: One of the things that I want to add on when I talk of the nexus is when we provide more efficient usage of energy to a certain population, we are making way for the government to divert its funds you know to energy access more so. Because you know we are retro-fitting or we are doing an XXXXwith government universities of Punjab, which are by the way around 44 plus. If I could just give you the statistics of what the estimated savings in Gigawatts is per year and if you just multiply that over a number of years and then you think that these models can be replicated all over Pakistan, you are saving the Government of Pakistan a pretty hefty amount of money, which they can then direct towards consumers which have absolutely no access.

So that is how I am looking at two different segments: 1) traditional energy access where you talk about rural areas, we obviously don’t have a grid system and you are thinking of either having an off-grid system or providing them with… you know.. starting off with solar lamps or something to that sort.

But the other segment I look at is that if you make sure that you are bringing in energy efficiency to households that have access, then you have extra funds to divert to these other households. With absolutely no extra cost. Let me get you a figure by the way, just to put this in a mathematical fashion that how many savings we are looking at in terms of money and energy.

INTERVIEWER 2: Absolutely. So in the context of women benefitting from access to energy, does it make a difference in terms of the age of the women, so you know if there are older women or younger women, do they use energy differently, or benefit from energy differently? Or in terms of income groups, or where they may be located across Pakistan? Or in terms of religious or ethnic sort of cultural groups. Is there a difference in how they benefit?

RESPONDENT: Look, if you are looking at income groups, then the needs of a family in a rural setup is polar opposite to needs of a family in a more urban setting. So for instance as I said, in rural areas when you are looking at energy access, you are literally looking at something starting at a very basic level. You know if you are provide them with a solar lamp or a solar gadget, then you know that they have at least access to light by the time the sun sets. It’s very different comparing it to a family in an urban setting which would have access to something basic and obviously their usage would be much more superior to that.

In terms of ethnic or religious communities, the only thing I can think of right now is, we have a very rare percentage of religious minorities in this country who are economically or financially empowered to the extent of the majority. You know it is unfortunate but… and I think Karachi would be one of the places where you would have a very thriving… I don’t want to use the word minority, I have never liked it… but you have people of different faiths, very economically empowered and kind off really business savvy. But I you look at Punjab, there is a very limited amount of number that I can think of. So I think energy access would affect them this way as well. If they don’t have economic empowerment then energy access is also something they don’t have access too the way someone else would. This wasn’t put together very coherently but I think if I give you answers written as well, maybe that would be better. But I think you understand what I am trying to say.

INTERVIEWER 2: Yeah, I do, but if you could add more detail to that, it would definitely be better. So, in terms of, if you are looking at new energy infrastructure and technologies, again, what is the difference between men and women in terms of who benefits from any new energy infrastructure and technology that is provided?

RESPONDENT: who benefits? Could you give me an example of what do you mean by new technology?

INTERVIEWER 2: so at home, if you are looking at the home…

RESPONDENT: for instance you are saying that we see an improvement in cooking systems…

INTERVIEWER 2: so at the home or at the community level, who would be making decisions about what technologies or appliances are purchased and used? And again in terms of…

RESPONDENT: Decision making … in our culture, in our society, it always boils down to the men. I think that is something that is very evident. Who will be the beneficiary, that would be both. I mean you benefit as a family. Obviously if you have access to energy you know at every basic level and more, as a family you benefit. But in terms of decision making, there is absolutely no qualms about it, it will always come down to men. Which is a pity because when we speak of energy access in households, we know that your consumer, 50% of it or more are women.

But no, even if we look at infrastructure, of course women will benefit. If you particularly focus on the cooking range and stoves, but it is not just the… I don’t think it’s a question of who benefits in terms of men or women, your environment then… I mean if you just look at the kind of cooking mechanisms that you are using in rural areas, it is pretty destructive to your own health and to the environment. I mean I can imagine the kind of lung issues you would have with the fuel and the fumes you are consuming on an everyday basis. So I think you kind of improve not just your economic health, you improve your health overall and the environment as well. So I think that is something I want to add on as well. Its’ not just a question off who benefits in terms of men or women, it’s a question of your environment at large as well.

INTERVIEWER 2: and in terms of decision making about energy access, do men and women participate equally?

RESPONDENT: not at all, absolutely not.

INTERVIEWER 2: and this would vary subject to the households, but also if we look at the larger scale so let’s suppose, it just occurred to me, if I am looking at it from a company that is going to purchase a solar equipment for their factory or something like that, do you think that the decision making, there would be difference in decision making over there as well?

RESPONDENT: Yes, potentially yes because if you have female engineers and if you have a technical team that has women, then of course when those women will be a part of the decision making. But if you are looking at residential dynamic, then very rare, and that would change obviously from a more, it would change from a more… it would vary from a financial background, I would imagine. I would imagine more women would be part of decision making in more educated families, you know they will have a say. That impact will come in. but if you are looking at a more commercial perspective, then it really depends on if they have those women in their team to begin with. If they have female engineers, if they have female financial analysts, if they have economists, more female.. if they have lawyers, then all of them would weigh in on that decision. But you and I both know XXXX, that this is something that we are working on, to make sure we have women in the energy sector, working in these jobs, and that would be the key.

INTERVIEWER 2: so further to that, especially when it comes to finance related to energy technologies and access, so the decision making with regards to finance, how would you… like… what is your purview on that? So is that something specifically that you know is more in the hands of men or in your experience women also participate in decision making for finance related to energy access?

RESPONDENT: women do participate, but I mean it’s a question of how whether that decision making will result in something tangible. So for instance, I can imagine and I am just thinking if I take my own example, so if I am setting up something in my home, you know I will have the conversation with my father whether that works or not, but that will be now. Ten years ago that would not have been the question. I could not have been part of that conversation. So I think it varies, I don’t know if we have statistics on this or not, but I think it really varies if women are part of financial… but I think yes to some extent because generally speaking a lot of men, that is again a traditional thing, hand over their salaries to their spouses and then they figure out what to do with it. So if women are part of that conversation and they know about using energy wisely, it would be easier for them to spend on appliances. But I think women, I don’t know if I am going off on a different tangent, in the rural areas would understand the importance of energy access even more. Because they don’t have anything to start off with. So I would imagine if they were in a decision making position, they would understand the importance of having access to energy. Irrespectively of the financial because they would be having more of awareness.

INTERVIEWER 2: I would think the same way. Women in rural communities are more empowered and more involved in decision making, than women in urban communities per say. But this is, maybe, sort of a repetition again, but in terms of gender equity in energy access, you have already spoken a little bit about the difference in rural and urban context. Is there anything that you would like to add as a specific example?

RESPONDENT: I can’t thing of anything right now, but I am sure if I revisit this and if something comes up, when you guys are working on your transcript, I will be happy to add.

INTERVIEWER 2: Sure thing. And in terms of these issues that you have indicated, right now we are talking about the perspective of energy efficiency agency where you work and of course in the context of some large-scale utilities and the work you are doing with XXXXs. But, you know all of these issues, if I could somehow summarize and say what is the kind of evidence or the experience you are backing this from, what would it be. More personal or more how you have been engaging so far?

RESPONDENT: I think a combination of both. So, obviously the residential is coming from observing people and families in a more personal context but the commercial perspective is coming from seeing this in the workforce. Seeing the men and women who are involved in projects that we do, for instance I can give you my example. Even in my organization, which is a very progressive organization I think, in terms of government is a pretty progressive organization, but if we lets say have 5 engineers, then 3 of them will be male and 2 females. So it is not 50-50, but it is somewhat better, lets say 60-40. So if there are 10 auditors then there will be like 7 men and 3 women. But that varies organization wise as well, but yeah the evidence I am drawing on in the commercial sector is from the projects we are implementing. The amount of women I see participating in these decision making roles, whether from an economic perspective or a legal perspective, or a technical perspective.

**Part 3: Policies and Interventions**

INTERVIEWER 2: Right, if I move on to the next part which is focusing on policies and interventions, again in terms of your work on energy access, to what extent is gender equity in energy access factored in to your work? And you did mention just now, you were just talking about it, that it depends on organization, but from the point of view of again efficient appliances, XXXXs, education you know, what is XXXX or your focus, or how do you factor in gender equity?

RESPONDENT: OK, I think we have heard a lot on this and we try to make a distinction between what the quota system is and hiring beyond that. So, of course as a government organization we have a mandatory quota and we have to stick to that, but if we get more applications from females then we make a conscious effort to get more of them on board, whether that’s for internships or that’s for projects. But in terms of policy, it’s not something that we have delineated or written down, you know as a conscious effort. But in practice generally, I have been here now, it has been three years, I have seen that. I have made that effort myself as well, I have seen my colleagues do that as well. We do have a pretty decent number of females working with us.

INTERVIEWER 2: Right, so we can sort of summarize this and say that in terms of priorities, you guys do factor in gender equity. In terms of internal processes it is not documented per say but you do make a conscious effort, especially when you have the applications. In terms of projects do you have specific gender focus, specially when you are doing these education awareness drives or you know when you are promoting more efficient, like the fans project that you guys did or purchasing energy efficient appliances.

RESPONDENT: Even when doing awareness, in projects we made sure that we included all females colleges as well so for instance we have some in XXXX, we have some in XXXX… so as I said, we haven’t documented it, it was a conscious effort. But what I am trying to say is that even if we meet our quota and we have good applications coming in we will exceed that. We will not stop at it. It’s not like a… it’s not as if we have to tick that box specifically. If we get good applications, we make sure we include them.

INTERVIEWER 2: can you talk a bit about issues and your perspective on the challenges?

RESPONDENT: I think, one its an internal challenge, I think women kind of generally have become used to taking the back seat. So there are very few women that we get who have that internal drive that we want to do this and we want to be on the field as well. And those are my favorite candidates, because the first step has to come from them. Same thing with teams, even if you see a team of 10 people and there are some women, they would be fine in not voicing their opinions as much as their male counterparts. There is a cultural shift you have to work on. And for them to understand that if they are there, they are there for a reason, you know their voice matters as much. And this is where organizations have to play a role as well. They are the ones deciding which women will fill that quota and to look good that we are progressive. I think that you have to walk the line and make sure that these women are doing proper field work because tomorrow if they have to lead their own teams they can’t do it if they have been relegated to admin or office work.

So I don’t know if that answers your question, or I will be happy to take it again if you want me too.

INTERVIEWER 2: No, I think I am getting a sense of what you are saying. XXXX if you feel that you have to interfere, please feel free to at any time.

INTERVIEWER 1: I mean, do talk about any gaps that you see in your own organization or in policies in general that should be addressed for gender equity.

RESPONDENT: You know, all the gaps that I am saying are stemming from these cultural barriers, so again, I don’t know if I am repeating myself if I say this, we have to push some of our female staff at times and make them understand, that come on, go for it. We will provide you the safe environment. But go for these audits even if they are outside XXXX, because some of them have been outside XXXX. And we have to take the onus of making sure that they are safe, they are fine. That their colleagues, male colleagues also behave in a certain manner, because its like a really tough street to walk in, when women don’t understand that public space belongs to them. And they have to make sure that it belongs to them and they don’t feed it. So that is the challenge. I don’t know how this will pen out into a more policy shift, and I think the way we look at it initially has to be a quota system because you have to make sure that women are there to begin with and the second step will be for them to own that, and to become more comfortable. And not everyone, like it varies in from individual to individual, not everyone is someone who will thrive in an environment. So when we see that is not happening we have to make an effort to push our employees to get out in the field. I think that is the kind of barrier that I see, that even sometimes when you hire these women, they become complacent in more administrative work. Which I don’t like, I don’t want them to be stuck in a room, taking notes from their senior colleagues or kind of just being support staff to their contemporaries. That is something that we have to actively, at times I have noticed counsel them on. That you have to get this done even if it’s difficult you have to met certain people because tomorrow if you have to lead a team, you need to be able to get your hands dirty. If you don’t get your hands dirty you won’t be able to lead a team.

INTERVIEWER 1: How do you make sure this happens? You are saying there is this push, this drive informally. Do you think if it were formalized somehow in your department through a policy, would that help and what would it look like?

RESPONDENT: I think this happened because there were women in senior positions in our organization. So there was me, there was another colleague XXXX that you would probably speak to, who is with the world bank. She was our head economist. So you know together we made sure that women were in these positions and then they were comfortable. Even if that meant calling their team of boys and making sure we drill it in their head that the work you are doing, they (females) have to do it too so we shouldn’t hear any complains about you. We are watching you. I know some organizations have a sexual harassment policy as well, but there is so much work that needs to go into making people understand what this means. And making work environment conducive to growth. It is very convenient to be in an office but if I sit in my office, all day long, I am not really working. So there are many factors like this, it is not just one factor. It is organizational, it requires cultural shift, and it is also about teaching women to be thick skinned that for a while you have to just put your head down and tolerate and just work, because this will continue happening, but you have to make the inroads. But you are right that if we make it a policy, two or three things will happen. Quota system should remain till women don’t actively come in to join the workforce, as much as we know we have people who disagree with this, but it needs to be there. Sexual harassment policies need to be in place and active counseling sessions have to be done for colleagues. Because it is engraved, people don’t have an understanding of what this really means. There is such a negative connotation attached to this but this is very important for men to understand that what are the things about them that can make women uncomfortable and prevent growth of women in an office setting. Because look, we have so many example, engineers, doctors, lawyers who join the workforce but don’t stay. Maternity policies, you know you need… female staff get’s married, it’s understood that they won’t come back to work. If they come back to work, once they have kids, you will make it so difficult for them that they won’t be able to balance at all. So with technical things I think these are the non-technical things that you need to work on and this is very important that if you want to retain your female staff, and you want to be part of the decision making, you have to recognize that this is something that you need to do for them.

INTERVIEWER 1: and what will you say about these same policy gaps, from the perspective of women’s access to energy? Because you clearly said that this difference doesn’t exist in policy that how will access be based on gender equity. So can there be any formal mechanism?

RESPONDENT: because you don’t look at energy from a female lens… because you… how do you formalize this.. let me think this through, how the government does this… because what we are doing is, as women in energy forum, we have been working on blueprints for HR policies. but again those HR policies will only be successful as long as your staff owns them. but are you talking about policy at a government level or are you thinking how it will trickle down?

INTERVIEWER 1: Actually, the question includes everything, that how do you think it works at local level, at the regional level, and at the national level and how can it be incorporated? what are the gaps that exist?

RESPONDENT: Can I get back to you on this one? let me just think through this.

INTERVIEWER 1: and also in terms of, we are talking about energy policy for energy access but do you think there are other policies, non-energy policies as well, maybe social policies that also need to be brought into this just to improve equity for women.

RESPONDENT: For instance...

INTERVIEWER 1: like you spoke about culture, that definitely culture does play a huge role in how things are done and who has access and who doesn't and whose decisions? so do you think there would be any social policies as well, not just energy focused but generally social policies that can improve gender equity?

RESPONDENT: I think we have a few, I don't think there is a gap there. There are social policies, but they have to be linked with energy more so.

INTERVIEWER 1: which social policies are there that you think can integrate with energy policy?

RESPONDENT: so let me get back to you on this as well. I think policy questions let me get back to you because I will have to think through a bit more on this. Is that ok?

INTERVIEWER 1: ok... XXXX is saying I should continue the discussion....

RESPONDENT: Policy questions I will get back to you on all of them. is that ok?

INTERVIEWER 1: Ok. Generally speaking, the question is how can gender equity in energy access be improved in your district, country or international region. What are the challenges in this and how can it be improved?

RESPONDENT: I am just thinking that what have I not said that is not responding to this already...again, can I park this as well for now. I am blanking out on the policies.

INTERVIEWER 1: that is fine. so the last question in this section is that if you did not have any constraints, think of an ideal world, where there are no financial, no policy constraints. In that case, what would be the best practices for achieving gender equity in energy access? What would it look like in practice, how would it be achieved that you have no constraints? In an ideal world.

RESPONDENT: then we wouldn't be having this conversation. if there was no such thing as lack of gender equity when it comes to energy, then I think economically we would be much better off. how would it be achieved? how would it be achieved... what it would look like in practice would be something that I imagine to be much more economically beneficial and healthy. two immediate things that come to my mind. and how would it be achieved...

INTERVIEWER 1: your ground level is what exists right now. and you understand that there are gender disparities that need to be addressed. but if there were no constraints, you had all sorts of financial and policy support, then what would you do, what mechanisms will you keep on ground to completely eliminate those gender disparities? how would you work it out?

RESPONDENT: I will pick this up in the rural context and then the commercial context. in the rural context I think you would be empowering these women to be entrepreneurs and to educate their children better. aren't these two three major challenges that we face because we don't have access, education is not a priority. so your entire day goes by in survival. you are in survival mode. If we did not have these challenges you would be actually able to eradicate poverty. that is how I look at it. Your energy equity and your energy access is directly linked to energy poverty. When you lift them from here, they will go into some better jobs, they will come in industries.

and if on the flip side you look at a more urban context, I think that would be using energy more efficiently and in a sustainable manner because if people understand how to use it they would probably utilize it better. because I think at the moment there is a lot of energy wastage... because we in the urban settings don't understand that there are people in the rural communities who do not have this. so they take it for granted. we have not really seen any energy challenges except for the few years when there was extreme load shedding in Punjab. but beyond that we have always seen that these utilities have always been there. but these utilities and this infrastructure is so archaic. You will have to make so many changes going into the next century. Your consumption is never going to come down. I mean for instance your population is increasing so your use of energy increasing. You have these housing authorities coming up. for instance electric vehicles. You are talking about this at industry level, how are you going to power them? you need so much of that. Then your entire rural setup will be ignored if your focus is on the urban segment... I think..

i don't know if that answers your question but I would imagine that if there were no constraints of this sort, then my focus on at least the rural sector would be to get these families out of poverty and in the urban sector it would be to make them understand that you can't think like there will is no tomorrow. you have to make sure that you are using energy sustainably because if you have it today, you may not have it tomorrow. so I think those are the two things but I would be very happy to put this down in a more coherent manner because I can understand that in my last two minutes I have been going all over. I will put this down so you can...

INTERVIEWER 1: what can be the specific things in this through which gender equity can be improved? because clearly... like if I go back to some of the things you have said, that decision making is predominantly done by males, but actual use is done by women. Also, like you said that especially in rural areas women can have better outputs and they can have better say of what needs to be done. so if that is true, then how can these women then be empowered to make those decisions? and what will you do so that these women become the decision makers or they are the ones who are actually improving how energy is used and how energy is accessed?

RESPONDENT: I think if you empower one woman, that kind of creates a ripple effect. so I think in rural settings when one family sees another family in which women are improving the living conditions in their home, I think that kind of creates a ripple effect in communities. so I think the best thing would be to start with some targets. You know you target a particular community and then you try to create a ripple effect by replicating that. so I think it starts of with just... awareness is such a cliched word, I don't wont to use the word awareness, but I think that most of these families in rural areas don't recognize that there is something better than this. because that is all they have seen. so I think if we really show them the opportunities that exist, I can't imagine that they would be hesitant in coming in that realm. and I think that cultural shift as well, where you let women be more comfortable. but that will happen when you have more women in this stream. for instance we were discussing on a panel that in the solar market, women have such an amazing role to play. because in your cultural environment you know men don't like other men to come into their households. so if you actually have female engineers, female sales team that target residential areas in rural areas as well as here, so I think that would be a good way for them to come in to that realm as well. you need to take men out of this conversation. you need to put more women in it so that it becomes easier for women to see somebody like them and then think that this is possible. I think that would be very important in achieving this as well by putting more women into the mix.

INTERVIEWER 1: exactly, I think you have answered this question. But, just one thing, professionally how do you do that. one you mentioned the quota system, and awareness campaigns. what else could be done to achieve the same situation.

RESPONDENT: involving more women in the leadership position. and also making sure that we are developing our existing female staff well. because these are the women who are going to take the work from us tomorrow and they are going to be in leadership positions. so if we don't show them these things from now, the worst thing you can have in a field like this is for women to be in the conversation and not play the right role. you know it's very easy that you include women to check the box but they don't own it. so this is also very important. and as an organization, tangibly I think you need to develop these policies, but also have active training as well. I mean not every woman will be so proactive as well. so I think you need active training for both men and women from time to time, so you don't forget and you don't become complacent again. every few months you are having active trainings, you know... that how you have to meet this gap constantly.

INTERVIEWER 1: excellent...

RESPONDENT: you can;t have like one off training in a year that you forget. that is what I am trying to say. mostly donor agencies do this work and then those things go in the background. you need something like active work...

INTERVIEWER 1: consistent happening.

RESPONDENT: consistently... so that it becomes normal for me to have like 50% - 60% women in a team and it is not surprising any more for me... it is very aspirational but it should become normal to see women in public space. we still get surprised that this is an anomaly. this shouldn't happen and I think that if this is worked on consistently, then we will get this through.

**Part 4: Topical Questions**

INTERVIEWER 1: XXXX do you want to do part 4 or should I?

INTERVIEWER 2: go for it.

RESPONDENT: I can respond to this without you asking me.. it is not balanced. not at all balanced. The first question that I am looking at. It's not, it's not. But I keep on reading these reports of IEA that there is a lot of scope for women to get involved in the energy sector. However, as of now, if I just gave you Punjab's example, it is not at all balanced in terms of governance structures. But, maybe some years ago this was also not there. I know we have some female engineers in top positions in XXXX. But for me a balance is seeing a majority. It is not even half & half, it is only a handful. so if you walk into a room where there is a meeting, there will be 1 or 2 women only and even they wont be on senior positions. it will be very rare that you find them at senior positions. they will be a part of the staff. and that is also a cursory requirement at times for people to kind of give a soft image. this shouldn't happen. You need to have females on your team, you can't look like you have covered your boxes.

But it is happening. I think a couple of years ago your Punjab government came up with a law that you must have 30% women representation in public sector companies votes. and we personally know women in our network who have contributed to the votes. I think that is happening. I don't know if it is the same in other provinces. but again that is like 1 female director to 10 directors. so maybe we have shattered the glass ceiling a bit but there is a long road to cover.

INTERVIEWER 1: ok, the next question is on energy access finance. I am not sure if you would be able to answer that.

RESPONDENT: I think XXXX handles this and she is very actively involved in these kind of things. so yeah, are these processes gender aware or sensitive ... again I am not sure, but I can look into this if you want me to respond to this. and I will get back on this as well.

INTERVIEWER 1: is this something you deal with in your own work?

RESPONDENT: no I don't.

INTERVIEWER 1: then leave it. it doesn't matter. Ok so this is about what are the challenges in energy access finance, generally. you shared that men are the ones that are making the decision but you also said interestingly that men hand over their income to women. so what do you think about this, how much gender equity is there financially?

RESPONDENT: Let me also get back to you on this, because I think I can see a few things I have not responded to you on. One is the policy question and now this is remaining. because I have given you information from the top of my head, but I want to go back with figures and statistics and give you something more concrete if that works.

INTERVIEWER 1: ok that will be ok.

RESPONDENT: so just to reconfirm, I need to give you a proper response on policy questions and then on this one.

INTERVIEWER 1: is there any thing else that you would like to discuss or add to this topic.

RESPONDENT: not at the moment, if you have any further questions then do let me know.

INTERVIEWER 1: ok then this is it I think. XXXX do you want to add any questions.

INTERVIEWER 2: Not from my side. I think that if she cames back after thinking a bit more, then we can see.

INTERVIEWER 1: Ok thank you so much.

RESPONDENT: Thank you so much for getting me to think more about this. we work in this directly but this is been a good opportunity for me to look more into this.