**Transcript 8**

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| **Interviewer name** | **XXXX** |
| **Sub-contractor organisation** | **ARU** |
| **Interview date** |  |
| **Duration of interview audio recording** | **64 mins 47 secs** |
| **Face-to-face or virtual interview** | **Virtual** |
| **Interview participant** |
| * **Code**
 | **P8** |
| * **Participant name**
 | **XXXX** |
| * **Organisation name**
 | **XXXX** |
| * **Gender**
 | **Male** |
| * **Stakeholder category**
 | **Development Planning**  |
| * **Country**
 | **Pakistan** |

***Note: Prior to the interview with Mr XXXX, there was a little bit of conversation between INTERVIEWER and two of Mr XXXX’s colleagues that was also recorded. This is documented prior to the start of Mr XXXX’s inerview. Mr XXXX and his team also shared written responses to the interview protocol, that has been uploaded seperately as well.***

RESPONDENT: Equitable energy access for both the genders so the priority was that the team comprised of equal ration of men and women. I started working with them two years back and I will be more than happy to be working with him because I am provided with equal opportunities, equal development, equal trainings and everything.

INTERVIEWER: Do you deploy solar panels yourself in rural areas, how does it work?

RESPONDENT: We do EPC, that is engineering, procurement and construction. So we actually import solar panels, ensuring that they are as per the compliance of quality standards and its not, you know, like, something that is micommitted in the market. If we say they are from Hyundai then they are actually from Hyundai. We know how Pakistani market works. So that was the primary reason of reformation of the company. We identify the need of the customers properly, what is the purpose of use, what is the energy crisis they are facing and based on this, we propose a proper system to them. My colleague sitting here with me is a design engineer, she identifies the technical aspects of the system. And then we give the customer the best possible solution we can offer. We don’t focus on what’s in it for us, but rather what would benefit the customer. That is how we work in the organization.

INTERVIEWER: Which income group is this focused on, is there a specific customer segment or any one can be your customer?

RESPONDENT: There is no limit on who the customer could be. Our offering is open to all. Energy is something needed by everyone, so we can’t limit it and say, this is not for you or this is not for you. It is for everyone and we try our best that we mitigate the energy crisis being faced by the country by providing another source of energy.

INTERVIEWER: Are you a not for profit or for-profit company?

RESPONDENT: it’s not a not for profit, it is a business platform. But in between we actualy started a campaign that was XXXX, the main purpose of which was to provide low-cost portable solar home systems and devices in low incom off-grid rural areas for example of interior Sindh. The systems included portable fans and portable lights that would be charged directly through solar energy and coud be used at night. We had a proper campaign on it that lasted for two years. It was a good initiative to help Pakistan combat the energy crisis.

INTERVIEWER: What does this come under? Is there a name for the campaign? How would you define this initiative??

RESPONDENT: This was a campaign run with XXXX. The purpose was to provide solar devices in areas that have no grid or no electric supply.

**Interview with Mr XXXX begins here:**

**Part 1: Introduction**

INTERVIEWER: Let me begin with a general checklist. You have gone through the details and signed the consent form?

RESPONDENT: I have signed and sent it to you.

INTERVIEWER: Absolutely. Sir, in this interviewwe request you to share your experience and expertise as someone working in the energy sector, as well as your views and opinions on gender equity in energy access.

RESPONDENT: Okay,

INTERVIEWER: Sir, will you have an issue if we record this interview, it will be an audio recording only?

RESPONDENT: please go ahead.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. All the information we obtain serves the sole purpose of this study and will be seen only by the research team. Your name and any other identifying features will not be used anywhere in reports and other publications emerging from this study.

RESPONDENT: Okay.

INTERVIEWER: Roughly, it will take us one hour, so let me start. Sir, first of all can you briefly tell me a bit about your current position and role and the organization you are working for?

RESPONDENT: Basically I have a background in… basically I am a chemical engineer. Then I did my masters in XXXX and then I did my MBA from XXXX. Then I have worked in the industry and also then in the banking. In pakistan I have had the honor of serving as XXXX um.. you only talk about housing but you have to equip the people with all the things and primary ingredient is energy. So, there I develop the concept that all the umm low-income housing possibly could be equip with the energy or as you know that when you move different areas, low-income areas is not like US or Europe. They hardly have less than half the population is on the grid and whatever is even on the grid, the power outages… be it india, be it pakistan many other countries, the rural area or um peri urban area there are massive power outages. Umm so the, I started here, promoted as solar company. on my right, she might have introduce you is um XXXX and she is um engineer, very competent engineer and she is working with the solar industry so as the female gender and also working in the solar energy or renewal energy, I thought maybe um XXXX and then on my left is XXXX. So I ask them to join me because maybe at times they might give better views of the gender equality when we talk of it, of the energy. So in Pakistan I am working as XXXX and we prepare the policies and all that. One of the main areas that we are converting is when we talk of the housing, um we need to ensure whether it’s rural housing, peri urban housing and even in the urban housing, roof top solar now that and all that energy is available. Ahem, and um energy primarily it would be solar but when go to the rural areas and all that, the other sources of energy like biomass umm because biomass is a very critical element and luckily in pakistan we have not been able to promote and when we talk about the female empowerment particularly in the rural areas has been women, the questions I’ll explain that why all this is very important so this goes with my background, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you so much sir. Okay, how long have you been involved with energy issues specifically?

RESPONDENT: I would say that I have been involved all along but my active participation um serving as associated with this solar energy in pakistan, the issues because I came over 2 years before so specific to this I have seen this as I have said solar for social housing concept, I worked in XXXX for that matter so that that’s my association.

INTERVIEWER: And all the work in this is related to energy access?

RESPONDENT: Yes, actually the basic as you know that when we talk of empowerment so issue so empowerment means: 1. Availability; 2. Reliable availability.

So when we ensure reliable availability, as I said, in rural areas, we don’t have access in most of the villages in pakistan. They are not even grid umm connected and those who were they are, even if they are grid connected you will see that those areas are basically um facing massive out power outrages so um that’s why female empowerment. Now what to say about that. If men are outside the house all day and women are at home, as house wifes, they will have to do the chores. For those chores they needs resources and one of the main resourecs is energy. Whether in the form of biomass for cooking and all that. Global experience suggests for example in India, Dharavi, this Dharavi is one of the most famous slums, one of the 3 largest slums in the world and you must have seen the famous movie, Slumdog Millionaire that shows that area but what did they do for female empowerment? During the day the poor females are doing ten different kinds of tasks but after sunset they are provided electricity so they could use these sewing machines and that’s where garment industries is all about. They are doing some other businesses. They make envelops, they do stitching and they are able to increase their income when power is available in their homes and they get an extension in working hours by 2-3 hours. During the day they don’t get enough time, because they do also the cleaning and cooking, whatever the environment and many time they also work umm.. low income segment the female is both, she is the wife, she is the mother and also adding income value by working somewhere here and there um so yes go ahead.

INTERVIEWER: Alright, in relation to the policy context shaping your work, tell us which policies, whether ther are at the provincial level or national that have been influencing your work. Please mention any specific policies.

RESPONDENT: See, there are two things. One thing is the policy and second thing is enforcement of the policy. The biggest issue of the third world is that if you take the policy… maybe you will find the policy because they do copy paste. People who make the policies copy paste whether they read the original policy or not. They go to the websites of America, Europe, best websites of the world and copy paste. Thus, our policies are made and we don’t even see if they match the ground reality or not. Do we have to do everything in one go or do we need to take a phased approach? Meaning if I go to any country and I want to promote education, if I just go there and open up a college or university without realizing that we don’t have the primary school and the secondary schools so we have to really be empowered. When we empower these people we have to ensure that when the policy rolls out is gradual. Which segment of the population we are addressing to, are we addressing to the affluent society where generally electric power is available, if there is a power outrage there is a hue and cry. The red ticker on the TV also appears that there is a power outage in Defence, Karachi, but who bothers that the moment we go the periurban areas, then the rural areas that 12 hours, 24 hours 2 days there are power outages? So this is about enforcement, about equitable distribution and enforcement. I think there is a big issue with regards policy, and the angle that you are addressing it from, we do not address it from that angle of gender and gender equality. I always say one thing, you see as long as the history goes, there is data available for gender divide for global population and you can explore this on google - the female population is marginally more than 50% and male population is marginally less than 50% - then who is the dominant one? The female gender but in our parliament if you have even one extra vote, that party declares it is their right to rule. God has made female 50 plus, they are not even the subordinates where they, they could be able to listen to .. so particularly our societies be it India or Pakistan, the female population don’t even get basic rights. And we are talking of full empowerment? These things are not all policy issues there are many other contributing factors. I will talk about them later.

INTERVIEWER: No, please do mention if anything is left in this.

RESPONDENT: See, like I said, there is no concept of compliance in our country. When we talk about energy, its’ about the environment, that is why it is called renewable energy. Today, if you go and see in Pakistan, everywhere they will say that we don’t have the gas. Everywhere there is the same issue. Why? Because gas is a nonrenewable resource, we never realize that nonrenewable source one day one supposed to admit it, you have no choice but God was kind, God developed another source of energy which called renewable energy. But if that you go back to the history, it’s hardly 50-60 years the term renewable energy is came to surface. If you go back 100 years, there is no such term as renewable energy that you will find in the literature. Why? Because there was less population, resources were sufficient. At the beginning of the 19th century, the world population was about 2 billion, then by mid 90’s went up to 4 billion and today the population is closer to 7.8 billion. So maybe 100, 200 years before um less population energy whatever the gas, whatever the wood, whatever coal was, was enough so they had the concept of non-renewable. When the population, the users of those energy resources, went really massively increased, we saw the issue of renewable and non-renewable but the sun hasn’t come out today. The sun has been there from day 1 but only in 1960 when NASA was planning to go to the satellite state so they thought that why not to power the satellites with solar energy. So in 1960-65 the first concept of solar came about. But before that the even the concept that solar could be a source of electricity practically even at that time it took many years to make it useable for the commercial sense but God was there. Now the light of the sun that is emitted, global total energy requirements are less than 1% of that. So the energy requirement of the whole world can be fulfilled by less than 1% of the energy emitted from the sun’s light, which is available for us to harvest. Anyway, next?

**Part 2: Understanding of Issues**

INTERVIEWER: Thank you so much sir. Ok, let’s go towards part two which is basically about understanding the issues. So, in this, the first question is, what does equitable energy access mean to you?

RESPONDENT: See, equitable energy as a source of, as I said that you see there are 3 or 4 basis of equitable. One is gender based which is probably your main area. Second is its segment in the population, high end, middle end and low end, this is another basis of equitable, third is rural urban and peri urban as I said explained you all this so when we talk of umm… these issues we have to understand the gender equality for this. Equitable distribution is one area but in our case, even in Karachi, low-income segments and urban slums face extended power outages even from K-Electric. Then if we go to the villages, there are 3 or 4 different segments that need to be explored for equitable distribution and gender divide is one of them.

INTERVIEWER: OK. So let’s talk about this a little. What does gender equity in energy access mean to you?

RESPONDENT: See, first we have to correctly understand why there is a difference between gender equality um in what we say is gender equality that is women’s usage different or is men’s usage different? Yes, first we have to really understand this issue for example I say… that you see if the wife is at home and there is no electricity, then the basic chores at home, though she is not born and created by God only to do cooking but even that work she cannot do. Normally, what should happen is that she should be doing cooking and then maybe stitching, sewing, embroidering maybe some other, maybe jobs as well. So we never think about equality for women, that she also needs rights. Basically, when you go and study this, you will find that out right from being a housewife to a working lady, there are no rights. Then if we go to the villages, from sunrise, even before sunrise, women need electricity. Ok, they have nothing, even the kerosene is very energy expensive in the villages so if the kerosene finishes, they will have to bring the kerosene from the city. Now the man is sleeping or he goes to the farms, so if the woman has to start the household chores, she will light a candle, or kerosene lamp or if they have some light then they will start that. Now imagine that the kerosene lamp or the wood she has lit, so if we look at it from that angle then we have to see what are the requirements she has. And you know, as I said, after sunset if she gets electricity, more reliable electricity so the tasks she is not able to do during the day, she can do in the evening. Women have to do this, their own work as well as stitching because they’ve become the very important component of the wage earner of the family. We call this informal income and family income. So if we get into the family income, in all the low-income segments women are working. They are not been recognized as wage earner, they are not being given the respect as wage earner… you know pakistan very well. I am sure this situation is in Africa and other parts also, the female travel from their house maybe 6 am, reach to, to defence to big houses to work as servants, maids what we call *massi’s* and then upto 5 pm they work and then they go back. When she goes back she cannot say I am tired, she has to cook she has to do everything. Eventually she reaches home she needs 3-4 hours and then one of the empowerments is electricity, energy.

INTERVIEWER: Absolutely. Thank you so much. Ok sir, like you told us about your company and the work you have done for XXXX XXXX, so how is the dmean for energy calculated and how are the consumer needs understood? Do you do any onground survey or do you rely on existing government statistics? How do you understand the demand?

RESPONDENT: See it’s the same thing, the demand is in the same intricacy. I am sure data will be available but there is no need for it in a country like Pakistan. If you see the per capita electricity consumption in Pakistan versus per capita electricity consumption in India and other regional countries. We are maybe 60% so if we go to the level of India, we need much more electricity so when our planners say that total electricity demand is 20 to 22,000 megawatts it is wrong. We have one of the lowest consumptions of energy per capita in the world. How much of Pakistan’s population is connected to the grid, let’s say 50% to 60% so a big issue of the policy comes right here. We have to at least make sure that the grid is there, transmission is there so electricity can be there.

The second issue remains that if there is power then there are outages, power breakdown outages that we call loadshedding. In Pakistan the transmission system doesn’t cover the whole country so this is the most basic thing so I think that all these issues… like I tell people in the housing sector, that statistics are there but we all know that people living in the city slums in rented houses, desire that they have their own homes. We officially say that in terms of housing needs, there is a shortage of 11 to 12 million housing units. Right? So if we make 1 million homes then also it will take us 15 to 20 years to cover the back log and also provide housing… incremental housing.

But in meating incremental need of housing in Pakistan these things are not happening. So I tell people not to go too much into statisitics. Like last year, Pakistan’s net population growth was 4.2 million while 86 countries around the globe had population less than 4 million. You should google and check this, how many had less than 4 million population? 86 countries. That population we have increased in 1 year so when we increased that population, we need for them shelter, we need for them clothing in cotton - grow more cotton; we need for them food, good wheat; and we need for them more electricity - we need for them all those basic needs. So if we do planning I think that existing per capita consumption of our population should be taken to the same level as India. We have to compete with India not only in the cricket - we have to excel them or compete with them in all areas. So what I am saying is you should do google search and you will see that India’s per capita electrucity availability and consumption is more than Pakistan. I am not talking about Malaysia and China, China is way above, when we look at the huge growth of China then one of the factors is the availability of these empowerment factors electricity and all that, growth, transmission, power all of these things. Yes, next?

INTERVIEWER: Okay, one question you have answered, that how will gender affect energy use in households. So I will not repeat this. If you could say a little bit again about how equitable is energy access at community and household level in terms of gender equity?

RESPONDENT: See, like I said, that three areas require basic equilibrium: gender is one; rural urban is second; within city slums, low-income segments and high-income segments are third.

Dekhyn meiny apse jaisay kaha k teen areas k andar basic equilibrium hain, gender is So, I don’t think we have any consideration for equality in any of these 3 areas.

INTERVIEWER: OK. Do different groups of women benefit from access to energy differently? Basically what you have said with regards income, so within women the different segments of women, who belong to different groups such as income, religion, ethnicity. Please talk a little bit about this.

RESPONDENT: So if we take an example, XXXX and XXXX over here, their requirement for electricity will be that there should be electricity in their home, things are happening, internet is working and computer can also be used. If they have electricity they will also be able to heat water, so there are a lot of small things.

But when you go to different areas for them their issue is that is the stove burning or not? Heating and cooling water to take a bath is not their issue. Then if you move to different segmets and the society, if you ever go on you tube and search for the videos about the Rohingya camps. It will be interesting that when you go there, the issue will not be what they will get to eat, the issue is that some companies come and distribute the food there. Will there be any food served that day or not, will be the issue. Secondly, if there are 100 cups or packs of food and 1000 people are there so they don’t know whether I’ll be lucky to have that cup. So the moment you move to those segments even in Pakistan, the basic differs. But I have said to you that in gender divide, we have to empower women for example education. I was reading that in India children from low-income communities work and they go to school as well. Then after sunset they have time to do their homework and studies. But they insist they don’t have the electricity they go for kerosene lamps and candles and kerosene lamps or candles for 1 hour cost them maybe 20-30 rupees so parents hit them to make them leave their studies. All this information is available on Google. Children from low-income segments need electricity to study at night… it is very easy for parents that at night father, mother and children are all there so children are studying. During the day, this kind of family life is not possible in poor-income segments. Then in these segments, as I told you about income enhancement by stitching, if machines are running and stoves are burning using biomass… maybe this has started in India as well… if you go to Bombay these women cook food and then organizations like food panda take the food from them and distribute it. If you study, you will find all these things, so they have to be provided. Next?

INTERVIEWER: You spoke about your company so please tell us a little bit about what infrastructure or technologies you provide.

RESPONDENT: So basically this company (name of solar company) in the area you are talking about, there are 2 areas they can… they are serving. What they are trying to do is roof top solar. If XXXX sends electricity to my roof at 8 am, which has no power outage. Power outage happens on the day clouds come out – even on days when there is no sun, the solar system works at lower efficiency. In XXXX’s system, there is no power oiutage. Under normal consideration, you have a power plant in Hyderabad or Mirpur and then a transmission system and transformer, this and that but XXXX’s power comes on the rooftop right in the morning. You have to only bring it into your room and a solar system does that.

Then in the villages, it hasn’t started in Pakistan yet, but in Europe, Anerica and advanced countries, there is a system of mini-gride. In those areas, they set up a small solar plant and provide electricity to their village and surrounding area. They don’t wait that any transmission system will be implemented.

Because in a rooftop every persone serves his own purpose but in a village 100 houses can come together on a local distribution system by setting a small power plant. That is very popular now emerging concept as well, but nobody is working on it in Pakistan. Even the rooftop is not as much as it should be. Karachi is one city in the world that has the highest solar exposure meaning around 320 days in a year solar power is available but if you stand on the rooftop not even 2% of the houses in Karachi has solar systems. If you go to Germany like Stuttgart and all that where there are only 160 days sunny.. but almost every second house is a solar rooftop so that’s it anyway next.

INTERVIEWER: Right. Okay, you have already answered this before. It is written very well as well. So I will go on to the next question that do men and women participate equally in decision making about energy access?

RESPONDENT: I have already given this answer to you. No, the difference in this is that our girls don’t have this understanding, like these girls sitting here, that they have done their engineering degree. If you go to the NED University, the female population is about 40% maybe more, who graduate, but hardly 5% to 10% of these girls get into the job market. This is something they should understand as well, why should they waste so much time in a 4 year degree and not utilize it.

In the last days, there was a slogan that became very popular in our women, “my body, my will” .. that’s nonsense. They should say I am equal human beings like you. When they get married, nobody asks them how much they have studied. They will be asked, daughter, are you able to cook food? This is bad.

All women work. My daughter is PhD, she did her PhD from the top most university in xxxx. But she is a very good cook, she is raising xxxx kids um she is running the house but also working in xxxx. My wife she is a xxxx and from the day we got married she has not left her profession for a day. People said to me that what are you doing, you will make your wife work professionally. So I said, go ask my mother, when she went to request for the girls hand in marriage she asked for a xxxx – if my wife had to stay at hom only, then she should have asked for a *jutti* (an uneducated girl).

Why you are saying now that she shouldn’t work - she is now retrained and educated as a xxxx and my experience is, might be yours as well, that girls who do job, who are educated, they do household work more than the ladies who are so called 24 hours houewives. These housewives wake up late, at 10-11 am – girls like XXXX and XXXX wake up at 7, 8, I don’t know.. because they know that they have to go to work. We need to change the way we think.

INTERVIEWER: But sir, you can’t oppose our society, it is a male dominated society …

RESPONDENT: I am sorry I am on record but I will still say that, this is something fabricated by the so called religious scholars. You tell me, Prophet Mohammad married to whom? Khadija! Khadija was what? She was one of the leading businessman of Makkah, lady, she was very handsome beautiful lady, beautiful, young and she was running the business, one of the most successful. Nobody asked at that time that Prophet married a working lady? Everything she was, she inherited the business from the father and she was running so successful. These things that our religious scholars say, this has nothing to do with culture, nothing to do with islam, it’s all nonsense. Prophet Muhammad’s first wife, she was very successful business woman. Our prophet never said that Khadija you have married me so now stop working. She continued working and you know she… Prophet Muhammad was her employee. He was running her business as a employee and she was impressed by his honesty and trustworthiness and then she sent a proposal. What if she was a working lady before they got married and she continued working after they get married. This is society’s nonsense that they say that our culture is like this and that – this is not culture, this is domination that happens in our country. In India, like the Brahmans say that Shudrs’ are made from gods feet that is why they have to be kept under the feet. Same is in our society. Let me share an incidence… people were talking in a bus, and someone said that women should be kept as the shoes on our feet. So the person who narrated this to me asked him, you are saying something very good. Is your mother a man or a woman? That person asked, what are you asking? So my friend said that this slipper on the foot has given birth to a great boy, you see something different in your wife and something else in your mother – both are female.

I am the male person I am saying we have to fight against it. This is not in any religion or in any society, like in America blacks are born slaves. You know that ‘S-I-R’ that we say sir what it means? In the 1860’s when slaves used to go to their masters, they used to submit themselves and say “Slave I Remain” meaning SIR. So to this day our thoughts are exactly like that – samthing we are doing with women that Trump is doing with the black people and Hindu’s are doing but this is not god, this is weak. Next question?

**Part 3: Policies and Interventions**

INTERVIEWER: Let’s go to part three that is about policies and interventions. So to what extent does gender equity factor in your work on energy access? Please share some examples from your projects and how do you prioritize energy access for women. Please talk a bit about this.

RESPONDENT: see, the thing is that there are 3 females who work in my company so we push them to get certified and specific solar education. Mostly we are developing proposals for rooftop solar so they cannot influence any policy but I keep telling that study, get the knowledge. Why have I involved them today, I will only give you ceremonial responses based on my experience but I have involved them because this is a global issue of gender equality in energy. This is an emerging issue so I hope that after today they will study what are the issues of gender equality in Pakistan and in the region. Maybe they might write an article also that what are the issues. To date, we only see the issue of gender with regards education and jobs but there are so many other things.

Even in education there is not enough gender equality. In our culture, there is a trend of sending boys to school but not the girls. In rural areas nobody sends girls to school. And with girls, whether she studies up till 8th grade or 10th grade, the day her marriage proposal comes send her off. As if she is born only for that. There needs to be awareness for gender equality, that girls need to study. Then if they come on the forums for decision making somehow.

Like I said, renewable energy is not only solar, there is biomass also. What is biomass? Science has not yet been able to crack solar cookstoves, they become a little massive but with biomass if you setup a small power plant, you can produce gas and that gas powers also the household chores. Water is also heated in the villages – this is a lot. India is one of the main exploiters of biomass. Infact after solar and wind biomass is the third source that can be used for domestic use so this is their work that these issues need to be understood. Then they should go to the NGOs and say that awareness needs to be created that the need of electricity in the house is more than the need of the housewife or the lady than the male. First this awareness needs to be created, few of the things I have shared, then we should talk about how to promote. Right, ok. Next.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, you have spoken a little bit about women participation in you company. What about your solar related projects, how do you look at gender equity in those? People who are your clients, how do you….

RESPONDENT: At this stage, at this stage we have no joints – if the client comes and asks for soalr system, we cannot dictate him. The example for this is that if someone is buying potatoes at a grocery shop, we cannot tell them don’t eat potatos, eat peas. So this is part of business, but there needs to be awareness, they should start working from today that this issue needs to be understood. Then think about the energy issues pertaining gender equality. I am 200% sure before attending your questions, they did not have this awareness that the area we are working in, of energy, empowerment of the female gender is such a big issue in this. At the moment, for them it’s like we at least get a job. If they didn’t get a job in a solar company and they got in some electric company, they would have gone there. But the issue you are raising is separate about understanding. I hope after today’s discussion they will start working and you also, don’t just give the thesis and get free. You should develop a platform for an NGO on gender in Pakistan that can work on global level. However it is, whatever your findings are, make the objectives and promote this. Then you will realise that maybe in cities, it is the issue of slums, low income, urban, periurban area and more in the rural areas. When you study each area then you will have to decide way forward on stage 1, stage 2, stage 3 … Next.

*Note for analysis: this response was given with reference to the two colleagues, XXXX and XXXX and the interviewer.*

INTERVIEWER: Ok. Do you think energy accesss policies in your region should be gender sensitive?

RESPONDENT: Oh yes. But as I said first issue has to be understood. When you do any intervention, policy intervention, before that you have to understand the issue. Then maybe you will write that it’s an issue from day 1 and we can’t do it. For example what we are doing in the world for housing, if female population are given loans for houses, they should be given at 1-2% lower interest rate. That is called gender equality. So if she is a widow, this will help. So if the government commits interest in things like this, companies create awareness and institutions like PCSIR (Pakistan’s scientific laboratories) explore how can we fulfill their needs. For example, if the sewing machine needs batteries, then what kind and what type of solar system to install that batteries run through the night. See, Tesla can make a car which is solar, driven through battery so why can’t a home sewing machine run on battery.

There should be research on this. But first they need to see that it is not only sewing machine, there are so many other things that women need. Like at night, from 7 pm onwards, or from 6 pm to 9 pm they will get 3 more hours for productive use. I spoke about Dharavi, you can check on youtube that what people are doing – they have been provided electricity, they are working 3 more hours, those 3 hours are more productive because during the day, there are many disturbances but at night they can work dedicatedly. When you study a slum like Dharavi then you will learn in which areas women can contribute and have economic empowerment and energy provision is supporting that economic empowerment. Next.

INTERVIEWER: You have said a little bit about policy gaps, if you want to add something more?

RESPONDENT: Like I said, most of the countries don’t have that kind of awareness and that is basically the policy gap. The study you are doing, it is the first time I have heard of this type of study and the issue you are looking at. If you did this study in America, it would be relevant. There is no issue of gender equality. But if we do this study in the third world you will find that it is a very big issue. Because in America, in London, you will never have heard that electricity has gone, that grid is off-grid… grid systems are designed in a completely different way. In Germany etc they are designed with the assumption that electricity will be provided 24/7 for 365 days.

So what you are doing here, you should go in Africa and do this study. It is a very big issue. When I was working in Africa, why did I think of solar input for social housing? Because in the rural areas, in Africa the land is owned by feudal lords, chieftains, tribal chiefs, so whatever they do, the rest of the land is there. But there are two issues: 1. Electricty is not there. 2. Water is not there.

Now how can water be there, through solar water pumps so we introduced that. In those communities if you implement a solar water pump then during the day they can use it for agriculture purposes etc. Water is a big issue, then women empowerment. If only one thing that is electricity comes in their homes, like you said according to studies, 5 – 10 things women can do additionally. Even I was surprised, in addition to embroidery work they can make envelopes – these envelopes in India are a domestic industry so the big businessman of Bombay, they provide small machines in the slums of Dharavi and the women work 2-4 hours after sunset, they make and pack the envelops and give them. See what you can find when you study Dharavi or similar maybe Kiberia, Kiberia is the slum in umm Kenya. Next.

INTERVIEWER: Okay sir, you had mentioned that there can be an economic impact as well through women’s energy access. Can you also shed some light on social policies that impact energy equity?

RESPONDENT: See, the simple thing is that till you don’t empower them nothing will change. We are not talking about the fact that when you give poor women electriicty, then they will put the fan on and sleep. They will sleep better and they will sleep more. We are only talking here that how will they do their own economic empowerment. For this the NGOs, the government also has to think that we need to get the labor involved in the cities for this. See what is in Bangladesh, garment industry is moving. Pakistan has been left far behind. In the garments, who is the main player? Who does the stitching? Female. So there has been a lot of empowerment in Bangladesh, India and like I told you about Dharavi. There are three areas in which women are working in Dharavi: 1. Garment industry. So when you study and explore this further, you will see for yourself that where the interventions need to be done. Now for this I can’t tell a rural woman that she has to think about this. No. I need to create the success story in the village that a women who is already poor, somebody came from the city and asked here to stitch clothes and supply to them. Now she sits daily 3 hours at night and does this extra work and when they see that her situation is getting better then there will be a grapevine effect. Other women will get involved and success greets success. Then you will see that something will happen, but who will do this work? People from the cities, educated people, NGOs etc. our NGOs also try and exploit, they do this type of work but very less.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, the next question is that imagine this world is ideal and there are no policy or financial constraints, then what will be the best practices to achieve gender equity in energy access?

RESPONDENT: See, if we give this to the women, that if she gets a solar system installed, then she will give only 2% interest on government subsidy and we can give other support as well. In America etc, the government also gives subsidy on capital for solar systems etc. But we can include this condition that we did in India and other coountries for housing that if a female is either the co-borrower then interest rate subsidy should attract the men, that instead of 10%, they will get an 8% rate. So we empowered the wifes along with the husbands. Later they realized that when they got the house, it was jointly owned and in the name of both the husband and wife. So in India, women empowerment began from that day like this. No man could tell his wife that he will throw her out of the house because it was jointly owned. This was such massive empowerment, just one concept that we promoted female ownership in housing. Similarly, for rooftop solar etc if we include things like this, if the government says that females will be upfront borrower and husband is the co-borrower then you will see that the men will become greedy and all this work will start. You have to do this to make it automatic.

INTERVIEWER: So in your organization, in your role, what can you do to enhance this?

RESPONDENT: Like I said, we are (name of solar company) so I try to incentivize these young girls a lot. I scold them that they should study and get more knowledge. Like I gave them both an assignment that there is a new topic they should learn about. See, the thing is, God created Adam and God said, Adam is superior over all other creations. What was the bases of that supremacy? Knowledge. And God said that ask him, does he know these things. Do you know them? The Devil said no. So God has established this supremacy of knowledge that one who has better or more knowledge is superior. Even today and till the last day of the world, supremacy of power is and will remain on the basis of knowledge. Why is America the leader of the world? Knowledge. China didn’t exist as a power before 1948 but after that they established themselves with knoweldge. Before 2000, people used to say India is the manpower country, IT graduates in India were the only people who could provide the IT score but then India came forward and transformed themselves from manpower country to brainpower country because they had the IT graduates. Today India ia respected for brainpower not manpower. Brain power is the same basis on which God made Adam. Every country in Europe competes on technological advancement index. Germany vs Switzerland, Switzerland vs German, who is ahead and by what score. How many years behind America are they.. so unless we promote this knowledge, and these religious scholars keep saying XXXX will do it, nothing will happen. If XXXX had to do this, then why would he create man. Neither would He have sent the prophets, 1 lac 24 thousand prophets that XXXX sent, he could have done it all himself. And it would have been so easy for XXXX, instead of sending 1 lac 24 thousand prophets he could have just lifted 1 devil from the earth. Neither there would have been a devil, neither would we do wrong things.

No, God gave us the power, gave us the choice and gave us the guidance. Now the work that you are doing, stay in contact with these girls. XXXX and XXXX both have your contact. And all of these efforts, I have just given a few points but they have workd hard on writing the responses for you. So now they have this assignment that they should atleast start understanding the concept.

So this is probably, you can say we need to create some social platforms like Ngos and maybe a page like India’s.. if we study empowerment maybe we will find that to promote this concept, we need to do things beyond providing solar solutions. The new solar companies and renewable companies need to be educated about the solutions they can offer. At the end of the day they have to do business as well. Next.

**Part 4: Topical Questions**

INTERVIEWER: Ok, let’s move to part 4. The next question is how balanced is gender representation in various decision making bodies in energy governance?

RESPONDENT: See, like I have said so far, in Pakistan, in decision making power there is no role of gender. This is because we have not done any work on this. You see, the overall production of renewable energy is very nominal, the distribution is also nominal so the issue is access of energy. But you can say that at least they need to start working on this. 90% of the people will not accept that there is an issue of gender equality. So for this, you will be working, these girls will also be working to improve the issue. As I shared some points with you, that it is not about equality, it is about provision.

See, I tell people now that we have promoted Islamic Banking in Pakistan now Alhamdolillah. So I say that Islamic banking is not a matter of religion. Islamic banking is a matter that of an individual wants to ensure financial inclusion on the basis of religious teachings – before it used to be that people who did not believe in interest did not do banking. Now there are Islamic banks in Pakistan, so they do banking, which means they are now included in the financial sector.

Same should be true for the females, when we will give them these things, then something will move forward, next.

INTERVIEWER: Are energy access finance processes gender sensitive? Like you mentioned that in other countries, subsidies are provided to women for energy financing. Is that the case in Pakistan?

RESPONDENT: As I mentioned, in Pakistan, this topic you have stirred I don’t think any one in Pakistan has heard of these issues even before.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, so there is no consideration like this for females?

RESPONDENT: When you will do sufficient work, publish a few articles in newspapers, these girls study a bit, go on social media – then people will find out what this issue is, which you are discussing. That this is even an issue, otherwise people will say that when electricity comes in the home, it doesn’t see gender, it is there for everyone. Of course women have specific needs but you have to study and promot and you have discussed so many things as well.

INTERVIEWER: Next question is, what are the challenges for gender equity in terms of energy access finance that you see here?

RESPONDENT: I don’t see any big challenge because in Pakistan the basic issue is that there is very little energy access. Renewable energy production is very nominal. If you search on Google, you will see in India Modi has launched a program that they will provide 1 lac megawatt by 2022. They have already produced 52000 megawatts. In Pakistan we have not even produced 4 Megawatts. Right now, we have the issue of producing the total energy. But your issue is not whether this is renewable or non-renewable. Your issue is gender equality in trems of power. But the issue that is rising is that production should be on renewable basis because most of the underserved areas don’t have electricity. Electric poles are there, but there is no transmission. So first electricity needs to be provided then we will consider what are the needs in terms of gender equality.

When your study will inform what needs are there, then we can provide those and then we can say we should be need sensitive equally not only for the man, for the female and population at equal level.

INTERVIEWER: Please elaborate a little from point of view of finance like you mentioned that in our society what are the issues and key challenges for women to get finance for energy access?

RESPONDENT: Like I told you, it is already happening in housing, in India and other countries that females come forwrad as primary applicant. For rooftop solar we can include that if females come forward, we will give them 1% - 2% - when this requirement is there, females will automatically come in decision making. Maybe the husband is only making her sign but she will know what the sign is for. Then when the solar is installed, you do a survey to guage the difference from when they did not have solar and now they do, what is different. It’s not one day job but atleast it has to start somewhere. 1000 miles journey starts with a first step. Next.

**Part 5: Conclusion**

INTERVIEWER: Okay sir. I have covered all the questions. And you have answered inmuch detail as well. We also have the written version. Thank you so much. If there is any other question may I email you?

RESPONDENT: Absolutely. Keep XXXX and XXXX in the loop.

INTERVIEWER: absolutely, please share your email address so I can keep in contact.