|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Interviewer name** | XXXX |
| **Sub-contractor organization** | XXXX |
| **Interview date** | 16th December, 2020 |
| **Duration of interview audio recording** | 57mins 22secs |
| **Face-to-face or virtual interview** | Virtual interview |
| **Interview participant** |
| * **Code**
 | N11 - GMT20201216 |
| * **Participant name**
 | XXXX |
| * **Organization name**
 | XXXX |
| * **Gender**
 | Female |
| * **Stakeholder category**
 | Engineers and others responsible for putting those vision–led plans into action |
| * **Country**
 | Nigeria |

CF: Finally you made It but your voice? Yeah, so just unmute yourself and we'll be fine Yes Well done, well done. Good morning I think this was a blessing in disguise really because my morning has been very hectic and I had to connect while still driving, but fortunately I'm just around I'm just around my car park now, so actually we can begin this conversation. It's fine.

Participant: Are you sure? You can feel free to like park properly I don't mind if we can delay.

CF: Yeah, very good. Not bad at all, good to hear from you after a long time.

Participant: Yes, It has been a very long time,

CF: Yes, we'll have more interesting things to work on and it definitely great. So I'm packed I am stable and now we can begin interesting. Well, I briefed you I briefed you a bit about what this whole thing is all about the fact that okay It's a funded research by the UK research and Innovation. And then what we want to do is really to unpack some of these the gender related issues with a gender equity issues around energy access and so I've been discussing with people who supposedly expert so I've been working in this line for some time in order to get some more insight particularly within the Nigerian case great. Hopefully it's not going to last more than an hour, but say if it goes beyond no problem. It's as the spirit leads depend on how much you want to share. Okay. Let's go straight. Really. Can you start by briefly telling me a bit about your current role and position your organization department you work for sure.

Participant: Sure, my name is XXXX, I am responsible for marketing Communications and sustainability projects with a XXXX West Africa and that basically involves engagement engaging people around the brandish and electric and giving them delighted about doing business which I XXXX or getting them interested with us for the marketing communication side and on this sustainability Parts. We're really looking going to create an impact not just business in a group from West Africa, but positively impact our environment through the access to the energy program, whereby we support training institutions with their programs in energy, It can be solar can be electrical installation, so we try to empower educational Institution, but also communities by bringing likes to roll environments where they are either of the great provided with very little sources of power.

CF: So firstly you should put lights on this year access to energy program again change just some more lights on it,

Participant: So the access to energy program started about 15 years ago in XXXX we’ve always had a very strong inclination towards sustainable development. Now through this program that was clearly formalized We will looking to positively impact our environment worldwide, so that's really the program is conducted in different versions and two different projects all around the world, and the objective is really ensuring in the terms of XXXX ensuring that life is own everywhere for everyone and at every moment and buy this at least for the access to energy, but we mean that we are really looking to make access to energy and accent to energy training accessible to us our target there are mostly communities and on the training part underprivileged youth so people that might not have had otherwise the opportunity to access energy training, that's our principal Target and this is actually the part as well of access to energy that I'm responsible for really making the training programs.

CF: Interesting!! Can you tell me a bit about your background and how and why you got into this line of work?

Participant: Yeah Okay I got into this line of work almost bye-bye opportunity really so my background is in Psychology for the BSc And human resources for the Masters, so I always had a very strong interest in people. So I started XXXX in human resources and eventually evolved into a v access to energy program through an opportunity that I had to come to live to Nigeria and really begin finding the partnership's that we currently have at the moment, but really begin to structure the yes to energy training space. So I guess what I found really interesting in there was their idea of having a real impact on my environment and really starting programs from scratch in order to assist populations. I would not necessarily have the access to those programs otherwise.

CF: Interested! Interesting!! I know you've highlighted this already mentioned is because I wanted to see can you please tell me more about specific energy access issues that you walk on and you've mentioned some things about your access to energy program but I just some specific programs you want to talk about the one that still resonate in my own head is actually yes, so, do have any specific ones?

Participant: Sure. So as I mentioned before, I'm responsible for the training I'm specifically of access to energy but it's still the same thing Department that since I sure it has been 15 that we went from five effects which may be project identification project to now hundred really managed to put in place a system where we work with, we're here to provide them the technical support. A lot of partners and system integrators have gone into that space in order to venture into that socially responsible business, but it's also a real business opportunity to them so as part of XXXX we're here to really provide them. All of the required equipment is technical support and to really follow them all the way. So that's a real reflection of our sustainability principle in the business. So it was not about just doing one or two lighting of Nigeria projects, but it was really about putting in place a social business initiatives that would really almost follow its own cost of life after that initial push and structure has been given so on the electrocution part actually electric we've done we've done very well in setting a pace actually we've worked closely with regulation agency so NERC with the REA as well so which way reusing XXXX almost as a best practice in order to also adopt the policy for so we hold, I believe a very strong place in that in that electrification space now with respect to training programs that I'm directly responsible for the objective day is really to identify first of all institutions that we can support and how do we support them So we them with a curriculum in energy program that is really linked to what they do so it can be solar like I mentioned electrical installation. They can be also a little bit of a little bit more advanced or for higher courses, but we will also reinforce longer courses and we also work strongly with universities as well. So where it's not only curriculum and the training program for one then it's obviously going to be on the equipment as well. We really strong. We are strong Advocates of practical training and not simply teaching at students but teaching to students ensuring that the concepts well mustards and ensuring that they actually practice because when you have students working on fuel such as electrical Installations solar installation as well. They're not closing the training to then teach another student teach another group that actually going to practice and you can ask them to really have understood the knowledge without them having been able to really practice make their mistakes ensuring that the really fly to safety precautions etc. yeah within the space of their training course. So I've mentioned I've mentioned a program. I've mentioned the equipment and the third aspect of supports that we provide training of trainers. So we have it obviously very strong expertise in energy management automation and software so we are into solar as well, therefore, it's only it's only normal that as we equipped institutions with trainers not the trainer, with equipment with a proper program. We also empower the trainers to be able to deliver that program up to the standards that is required. So we would assess them on a regular basis and we would also at times even involve the stuff of XXXX to give teachers missions in order to share their specific expertise with our training institutions and in this side electric is a company that's extremely business on gender equality diversity as well and really encouraging girls in stem.

CF: I'm going to go to I'm sorry I'm going to get into that issue It looks more but there is something you have which I find interesting which I find interesting that I don't want to miss you talk about your work particularly with people in the policy space you talk about REA you talked about and NERC, these are important people so we look at the policy context what sort of policy context shape their walks in terms of a male or female look at current issues and developments in policies at states and national level I mean, how do they affect all of these things ship here were they kind of work you do?

Participant: Okay, so I would have to be really be very honest. I wouldn't be the best person to go into detail in that space simply because it's not my scope So I want to also ensure that the information that I give to you is accurate what I can share with you is that they were initially a lot of barriers to entry in the electrification space and with the watch I said electric with so let's say that we were at the forefront of working with specific system integrators inside the electrification space providing the technical support and having success stories to showcase like the one that you just mentioned that enables us to be used as a best practice and eventually to see a reduction in the barriers to entry. So the electrification space now is a lot more is it a lot more accessible, so that's why I'm going to talk in generic terms and that's purposefully because I can only speak of what I know and you know..

CF: That's just fine.

Participant: Yes. We have an expression coordinators project managers etc. that can go into more detail in that space but one thing is for sure is that we were at the forefront of the big change in the education space, that has been five, six years ago yeah,

CF: so I got to the second pass now, which has to do with understanding the issues really now from your own perspective what does equitable energy access mean to you?

Participant: So do you mean gender equitable exactly?

CF: So okay I can link it with the second one what does gender equity in energy access also means to you. So from my point of view more generic what does equitable energy access mean portable more specific now with regards to gender what does this mean to you?

Participant: So when we talk about equitable energy access from my perspective. We looking at the drive to ensure that anyone wherever we are so whether we are the grandma in the village looking to connect with her children on the either in the city or who knows maybe a broad or whether we are in the midst mid manager of a local organization or whether we are in the senior manager of an international organization that we all have the same access to energy that for me is equitable access to energy now it we should not assume that it is normal for an entrepreneur looking to start a business to be set back only by the cost of running a diesel generator in order to be able to ensure power to run his business or her business, so this for me is equitable access to energy the moment that we provide everybody the opportunity to go into whatever it is that they have ongoing at the moment whether it is a student needing to study at night when I did an entrepreneur going try struggling to keep afloat in the business Industries trying to keep the operations the cost of operations down, we should all have aspire, I would say to operating environment where access to electricity would not be a challenge, that's not currently the case. So we work hard to ensure that this becomes the case. We're still far off if you ask me in Nigeria, so now if you ask me about gender equitable access to energy, I have a keen interest in women development build site development only because I believe that in Africa in general in Nigeria of my experiences. Well, we are very backwards in terms of providing females with the same opportunities only in the fulfillment of the potential but also easier in a household, if we compel the females to only be aspiring to getting a husband and being, going from be independent on their fathers to being becoming dependent on their husbands and calling this achievement in in life. Then we really never going to see women progress and this is why we get involved in so many programs in order to make sure that we get the best out of women without wanting to be to stereotypical. I really believe that it's the different mindsets generally which women operate and it's a very complementary to the approach that men have to work to problem resolutions by example. So the more diversity you have in leadership the better it is and therefore first bring it back down to your question and around tender equitable access to energy. It means that you would also create programs that would enable the main be of course more knowledgeable in the practices either it can be engineering skills or even vocational skills around the technical education in energy.

CF: interesting! Interesting!! Now, let me ask the next one really, how is demand for energy determined and how does your organization come to understand consumer needs?

Participant: How is demand for energy determined?

CF: Yeah. So for example is it's based on any existing statistics or governments report. Although the organization conducts its own surveys research on the ground and if so for example, what's criteria is included and is gender considered in this?

Participant: Okay, so let's address the first question. I believe that it's almost like a fact it's almost like a fact in today's world. I mean it's not electric is digital company in order to have access to digital you need to have access to energy in order to do virtually everything that this modern world has to provide today you need to have access to electricity know the rates at which people need to have access to energy obviously will vary from whether we are an industry to whether we are not prepared whether we are but everybody needs like it and everybody needs everybody would be at least a lot more would function a lot easier with a steady supply of energy. So if the questions are related to the voltage that is required in order to know the amount of energy to provide I would say that XXXX's focus is not on the generation of energy apart from that bit that is solar, our focus is really on the management of energy. So all of the tools the equipment digitally enabled or not, but everything that would enable us make our energy consumption more efficient more sustainable greener and therefore you would have in there not just your Transformer the even at the at the smallest the smallest level of equipment for example when we look at the wiring devices that produce the see that we also have Smart switches you have motion sensors, present sensors, that would enable one to sense. Well that would sense and enable one to save energy by ensuring that the light is often. There's nobody in the room for example so it can be as simple as that to more complex building management systems that ensure that If the say that all of the variants that you have in in a building for example the cooling aspect the lighting aspect are all carefully optimized to be to provide just the right level of energy that is needed and to ensure that there's no wastage anywhere. So this is where side electric smokers would be not necessarily in calculating how much how many megawatts are needed in order to address the whole energy in population. But more in, we have this amount of energy available. We have this energy that is available. How do we then managed IT to improve its quality and ensure that none of it is wasted not only to save costs for end users and customers but also to ensure that we also create a sustainable future for our children. So we have put the development perspective in terms of the future of the Arts of the environmental approach but also the development of people and simply being able to reduce costs and helping organizations. Also be more profitable process the first part of the question, right Yeah, okay, now the second part is where does gender come into play here?.

CF: Yeah. So if I add links to the next one really how equitable is energy access as community and how soon levels in terms of gender equity

Participant: Okay, so how equitable is the energy access in Nigeria? Yeah today not enough. That's my take anyways, it definitely not enough in the sense that we don't all have the same access to power. Some people would see the light go and my not even realized only because of the super-efficient solar solutions inverters that they would have in their house equipped with the solar panel that with end a huge number of batteries that will be able to take up all of the all of the loads that is required to permit the house to function the normal way and they might not even know that the lag it has gone come back, but then you have the majority of the people that would eventually stay with no light because let's face it when we do don't live in an equitable Society Nigeria. The people that I just described represent one or two percent of the population at most of the people would eventually wait for the night to come back, so if you're a small entrepreneur and you don't have the means to have a small generator, then your activity will just stop there until the light comebacks comes back. So yes in terms of access to energy definitely not enough equity there. How does that relate to gender? So if I take for example, the mom the stay-at-home mom that is responsible the wealth of the kids something as simple as a fan that keeps operating in the night would definitely help in preventing the child from catching malaria, for example, and the consequent Health Care fees in order to treat that child with the medication hospital bills etc. and that can be as simple as simple as that. It also means that when we talk about women and family planning so I'm not going to quote expressly, I cannot remember who were the authors, that when you don’t have light, you are most likely to create more babies and the truth is, yes, because and the reasoning is actually quite logical because if life stops activity stops at the point when it gets dark because there's no light then it means that you have more husbands and wives at home that I just simply waiting for the light to come back in the dark in a room originally, If you would definitely find a correlation with the family activity the number of children in the house and that impacts the Family household size of family.

CF: So in fact that is interesting, I'm sorry to cut, how does gender affects the way energy is used in in the household level now.

Participant: It depends on which kind of household we're talking about so if it is a household where the women had the opportunity to be educated and to and to have a certain level of activity, then the need not be the same as a woman that might be a literate and that would be really principally on the in the house all day long, the second stereotypical profile and see that your needs might be might be quite low. It might be just having a little fun or having the light potentially, access to water whether it is pumped or not. Then if you move up, let's say hi the ladder of resources and the woman is actually not empowered to have any other form of activity than staying in the house and probably key in a TV dealer for those that can afford it and you're not really going to get the most out of out of what can be done by this woman. Now if you from the ghetto, so I mean from an early age already seek to inspire girls, young women to seek more than simply just staying in the house but any first of all, the level of consumption of always going to be a lot less within the household but not only did they go would be empowered to actually achieve a lot more but obviously to also generate an income for the household which would enable which would be a name in enabler as well to how much how much research going to be a quiet now.

CF: Interesting! Interesting!! So two different groups of women benefits from access to energy differently for example, does energy use or access differ among older and younger women income groups. For example are they based in communities or ethnic or cultural group. So for example cities the sources Villages younger versus older women and men, do you see that variation?

Participant: Of course, but again, there's a there's a real profiling that we need to be done with the type of women that you would have in the cities, but if you take the middle income and all the middle class family in Nigeria is possible that by now you would have a number of times you would have a TV in the house married and have a washing machine. You would have a Fridge as well, so all these elements that will consume a certain amount of power then if you go to the rural communities with less resources available from that equation, you take away the fridge you take away the TV my detail or not and you take away let's say all of the extras that would come into what you would have in a city in a city dweller if you want so It means that to most of the time let's say that the knees in the rural communities, we are going to be much more basic for women in the those setups and women in cities….

CF: Interesting and they're so…

Participant: and therefore if I make this is why in XXXX models of electrification projects the cost per the cost of a kilowatt is actually more expensive than what could have been provided by the utility, the truth is that the villagers would still end up paying less because the energy consumptions is actually quite very low so they don't need that much site and actually willing to pay extra in order to have light constantly.

CF: interesting! Interesting!! So this is very simple but not so simple what's Key Energy infrastructure is the organization involved in providing?

Participant: The Key Energy infrastructure that we are involved in providing. So without going too technical about it I'm going to take a question from two angles. So if we're looking at the off completely off grid space then in terms of solutions that are provided by XXXX you would have the ability to construct a whole mini grid, so that would not be generated by what called fossil fuels you can have you can create a whole new Mini Grid in and of this Village that is functioning with just solar energy and storage. So that's one type of infrastructure then in between. So in an environment, that's not of great, but doesn't have constant to constant access to light what the power supply is not entirely reliable, you'd be more looking at a hybrid type of infrastructure where the inverter would be receiving power not just from the not just from the sun but would also store the power that has come from the power source from the utility and at the same time would use the power from the generator in order to in order to sustain the energy in the home so in cities we find ourselves much more in, I mean in grid-tied community we find ourselves much more in a hybrid model where the objective is one to ensure that the power supply is not discontinued and truth of how to manage the costs of using only a generator system.

CF: Interesting

Participant: Does that does that answer the question of inspiration struck?

CF: Yes.

Participant: Okay, and then that one as well, that would be really the I would call it the individual reading the pocket which is really access to some form of light that is actually made affordable for all of for a lot of residents a lot of users which are what we what we covered under the oh, sorry, I'm not supposed to mention the Run.

CF: Okay. No continue. I just remember your big bulb.

Participant: Big bulb is really access to energy, the new name of Big bulb is actually the external program. So that's what I had been talking about since what it has changed name a while back. Okay.

Participant: Big Bulb used to stand for business Innovation people at the bottom of the pyramid. It has been really renamed to access to energy which basically means the same thing for the first part for the big, but then we're really having a more inclusive perspective which are the bottom of the pyramid but not just bottom of the pyramid success to energy for all and finally. Yes. I was talking about making access to energy affordable for the population exactly as you mentioned and here you have this individual all the orange juice if I can better and better with a small solar panel that eventually the common person would be able to spend money on. So for example, when you're looking at a bigger solar solution in the house, you can be looking at 1 million of which is quite an e it capital expenditures. It's an initial investment that not everybody would be able to afford. However, when we really focus on the essential needs which are maybe like fans for a very small scale of a smaller scale apartment. Then you also have these solutions that would be starting from eighty thousand dollars. It was to represent a sacrifice or for the user, however for some users at this, for some users it is definitely within reach for some users to benefit from.

CF: Interesting! Interesting!! Which leads me to the next one really when new infrastructure and Technologies are provided what's in your own view are the differences between men and women in terms of who benefits?

Participant: Well, I would say that the differences would be whether buying power lies again, we're still in an environment where the by buying power in household lies a lot with men and where women needs to be a lot more meat. What women need to be a lot more dependent on the man's resources in order to in order to be able to even buy some items so we're not really in an environment where it is encouraged for, It is encouraged for so many actually said let me let me rephrase that in at least certain up to a certain level of exposure and income women might not know how empowered they can be to have their own buying power without the validation from a man then there's a certain level of education that women can reach where they can then be enabled to own their own money not have to always equalization and therefore have access to new technologies and Innovations.

CF: Interesting! Interesting!! No the next one do men and women participate equally in decision-making about energy access well,

Participant: I guess we were making progress after all the head of some of the institutions that we have in Nigeria now female so on a on a wider level, I think that this shows a great example as well as the leadership that women can have in the decision-making and even in the policy-making around access to energy now in households, I guess it still need to progress it all depends on the on the culture, and the socioeconomic status but I would say that only at the national level the fact that we have women in leadership is already a good sign that were occasional was that equality leadership now at the household level again, we need to look at the different socioeconomic status, but as the more women we empower basically the more we get to that stage of equity.

CF: Interesting! So let’s move now to the penultimate section where we look at policies and interventions know to what extent does gender factor in your work particularly on energy access and you've mentioned a few things like that before but to take it forward or you can measure something is don't you do was take it forward, how effective do you think that those efforts in your work towards gender equity have been how effective are they being?

Participant: Well, I believe that they've been highly effective the life of one the life of one girl or one young woman that has been inspired and Inspire so inspired and empowered so really go into an engineering course, for example of find a living for herself. Thanks to the next energy program is already a success. So we lay aside, the weight is translated into the way. We operate the access to energy program would be principally in this selection of our partners, so we will always seek as well as the other partners the ones that are specifically targeted at women development and empowerment one example is the work that we have done with the visual foundation for the past two or three years that are really focused in entirely in the development of girls in stem. So it's the whole mentoring the technical the technical expertise competency sharing. I from organizations like the electric by example and the promotion as well as of such programs of these women giving them the opportunity to go through University comeback have internships and basically be seen with the smartness.

CF: interesting! Interesting!! Now thinking beyond your specific work now, do you think energy access policies in our region, are they gender sensitive?

Participant: Energy access policies are gender sensitive?

CF: Do you think they are gender sensitive based on what we have currently current energy policies?

Participant: Well, I believe that there are some that they're the same number of initiatives that are directed as supporting the goat side in the in the access to energy space, so in that sense, yes, we can say that they are they are gender sensitive then our focus still remains on providing reliable power for oh, so I believe that we need to take our priorities that advice in terms of access to energy policies, let's just add the very least ensure that power that access to energy is universal regardless of the class before we then start looking at access to energy for women, so we mentioned women in the household women in the professional space for really to me, It's about recalibrating to ensure that we give the same opportunities empowerment knowledge to women but it's not about placing women first in terms of access to energy because the truth is that we all need access to energy. So I see positive initiatives with figures to the Child Development and access to energy but we also partner with some organizations for example, like solar systems I really work towards the empowerment of women giving them the training and interventionist intrapreneurship skills that they need in order to be able to make a living support to the family and also growing competence in that space ever let's ensure that you have universal access to injectors.

CF: interesting! Interesting!! Do you think there are policy gaps around women energy access do you think there are particularly, I mean uncontrollable, even at International level do you think our policy gaps that we that should be looked into to help this whole situation?

Participant: Yes, I believe that if you are looking for a personal perspective now is a great time to be a woman actually. It's true in the sense that our rights are much more and made let's say made much more known to this is there's a whole lot more awareness towards abuse around women worldwide, Oh, by the way if you remain promoting women in promoting women's development, but most importantly oppresses are being called. So it's we're moving. We're definitely moving in the in the right direction. We have we have partnerships with at least three organizations or at least what one way or the other with three organizations that have benefited from funding specifically targeted at the empowerment of women, So in terms of policies, and yes, we need more and more but we're really on the right track

CF: Great! Now, we've talked enough about policies and things like that, but just in my for a moment that there are no policy or financial constraints what in your view would be the best practice for achieving gender equity and energy access particularly for our country, what other things are needed to achieve this?

Participant: In order to achieve gender equity in years in energy access so I would say

available support available support are investments into programs for women in in renewable energy, for example, so I talked about a networking system integrators a lot of them. They actually remain predominantly male. So in the education space a lot more still needs to be done in order to inspire women to move into the into the sphere of energy and renewable energy specifically to in terms of Investments as well. So I'm talking about funding that is specifically directed for women in business and in the in the energy business as well. So I believe that once we have more policies are directed at these then we would start seeing a lot more women playing in that space as well, obviously, I talked about policy investment policies education policies and awareness campaigns. Make sure that women whether they are in communities in rural areas or in cities currently no job, I wear of the possibilities that are made for them to grow in that space.

CF: Good! so we get to the last part of this our conversation now and they're just very few questions during the closing part. Is there anything you have not discussed on this topic that you would like to ask?

Participant: I've talked on all..

CF: I will like you talk, is there anything on financing that you want to add on finance in energy access for example, and how it should be properly gendered.

Participant: Okay, so that ties into what I mentioned around investment opportunities specifically directed at women in the in businesses that are linked to energy to the energy sector for example, so I believe that in there I know that they are that they are initiatives that have already been put in place which I strongly encourage us as a country to even put a greater emphasis on that this one there's even a Ministry that is women empowerment zone with your property education example, but that's really generic. It's not specific to energy to the energy sector. So I believe that the more you get those on the energy space and the more you improve on that on that goal of gender equality energy.

CF: So great. So I hope you will be available for follow of questions in case and neither is for that.

Participant: Sure, so feel free rights.

CF: Great. Nice to hear that, now is there anyone else you think I should be having this conversation with?

Participant: Yeah, so like I mentioned I was able to bring a number of insights on the on the training space. I would like to put you in touch with the XXXX Business Development coordinator, I don't know if you know how I could be able to touch even more on the aspect of electrification and policy. She's also a member of REAN..

CF: Renewable energy because I met with XXXX the other day, I was in Abuja the whole of last week, I met with XXXX and the others, I known XXXX for a while.

Participant: Yes.

CF: If you don’t mine, I will be very grateful. If you can if you can send me the contacts of this people. I mean just email them to me and I can follow up with them.

Participant: No problem about that.

CF: Great! Thank you so much. It's been nice having this conversation with you in fact, wow, and it's really been on time exactly want to thank you so much for this, definitely we'll keep in touch I sent you. The consent form its true You have said yes that's why we're having this conversation but essentially sign the consent from please kindly help me just put in your name and sign it on for me and send it back to me I really appreciate that. Thank you so much I'll be expecting the feedback from you and of course the context of this people and then enjoy your Christmas break..

Participant: Thank you XXXX and I wish you the same and I am working on the response right now.

CF: Great thank you and enjoy the rest of your day.