0:00:02.2 Speaker 1: Would you like us to start over? Would you like us to start over?

0:00:05.3 Speaker 2: No, well, we can just continue so... I stopped the recording, so it's not a problem, so we can just... So we don't have to go over old ground. I was also saying to XXXX, if the situation gets really bad and you want to reschedule, we could also do that, but we can just continue and see what happens if you like.

0:00:27.4 S1: I'm also just concerned about the quality of the interview for you.

0:00:32.2 S2: It's okay, so my side of the sound is actually not so bad. I think it's probably more disturbing for you than it is for us actually.

0:00:44.1 S1: Okay, if that works for you. The days are very busy, so I don't want to keep rescheduling. I don't have to reschedule. Yeah, so let's do it.

0:00:49.5 S2: Okay, alright, so let's continue. So we touched a little bit on you sort of working predominantly with cook stoves and my next question was, what does gender equity in energy access mean to you?

0:01:05.4 S1: Okay. So first and foremost, gender is a mainstream thing for us at XXXX. In all our activities we have some sort of focus on making sure that both sides of the gender pendulum are featured well, that there is opportunity to ensure that neither side of the gender balance is left out. So that is a background I want to come from. And so in the same way when we are talking about access, energy access, we make sure that we get both sides of the balance to actively... And with some sort of equal opportunity or giving equal opportunities to either side to participate and make sure that whatever intervention is there, that we are pushing, they can actively take advantage of that. So... Yes, if we are looking at... I already gave you an example of how, when we talk about cook stoves, for instance, you're not just talking about households getting stoves to cook with or clean fuels to use, but we are looking at how the various categories of end users, I mean, the end user largely is the woman, so you make sure that the design and whatever things that come with payment plans and things like that are done with some sort of consideration for this side of the gender.

0:03:28.3 S1: So yes, I think it's about making sure that you provide the right platforms or opportunities for the people, the various sides of the gender to take advantage of whatever interventions there are towards providing access, energy access, to end users. Basically.

0:03:47.5 S2: Yeah, and so maybe just building on from that, how do you think gender affects the way energy is used at a household level? So you already talked a little bit about cooking being predominantly female, sort of the end user being women, are there other examples of that?

0:04:08.2 S1: Can you take the first part... You want to know how gender... How gender...

0:04:12.6 S2: How does the gender affect the way that energy is used at a household level?

0:04:19.2 S1: Okay. So, yes, we talked... Once again we talked about the household use of cook stoves. You would see that when it comes to the purchasing power, for instance, you'd see that lies mostly in the hands of the man because usually in our part of the world, it's the man who is the head of the home and decides how money is spent or how budget is allocated. So in that respect, the decision-making is mostly in the hands of the man, that is the situation we have now. But when it comes to the use, on the other hand, it's the woman who determines which stove they think is more useful or which is better suited to them. So...

[background conversation]

0:05:42.4 S2: Yeah. [laughter] Which... XXXX, actually I think already answers some of those questions below around do men and women participate equally in decision making about energy access and also...

0:06:00.0 Speaker 3: The recording is still on.

0:06:01.8 S2: Yeah, yeah, I know, I know, I know, I know.

0:06:07.8 S1: Okay, so I think you have to do some editing.

[background conversation]

0:06:13.6 S1: You may have to do some editing of your video at some point.

0:06:17.0 S2: No worry. We're getting somebody else to transcribe, so it's fine.

0:06:20.7 S1: So yes. I don't know if I was able to conclude, but yes, that is the impact of what the effect of gender... The man makes the decision in terms of the purchasing power, the woman decides what she thinks is the... But of course there is still that, should I say, compromise between what the woman thinks is the best because once cost is involved, the "budget-holder", in quotes, of the home also has... So there is that kind of effect, or let me say impact, quite some level of impact. And that is also why if you're talking about equity, then you could also consider payment plans that with the woman's, should I say, even if they're not earning so much, they don't have to go to their husband, for instance, to say, okay, I need money to buy this much worth of a stove. If it's something quite manageable in terms of the payment plan, they should be able to out of their own income. This is a typical household. There are variations in terms of the demographics. If you are talking about urban households the dynamics might be a little bit different compared to rural, but in the mix, you'd usually find this kind of gender interplay.

0:07:52.4 S2: That's really insightful and actually already answered several questions. So when then some new infrastructure or technologies are provided or introduced, what's then the difference between men and women in terms of who benefits?

0:08:13.5 S1: Okay. I think it's both ways, depending on how you want to look at it. If you introduced... So I bought a stove about four years ago, the Phillips stove. It's an advanced biomass stove. By that, what it means is that it has... It's a gasifier stove. It's powered by a fan, so it makes cooking faster and more convenient. This stove can cook about... The various tests that we conducted, it should be able to cook about half the time a regular let's say biomass stove would take, and it gives the convenience of not having to sit by and manually fanning the cook stove. For such a stove, when I bought it, I bought it because I think it would make work in the house less tedious for my wife. She can save time doing other things whilst her food is cooking, without much attention to it. Number two, it compliments our other stove, LPG stove. I mean, traditionally or on the average, every house has more than one cook-stove. Yes, that's on the average, you'll usually find an LPG stove.

0:09:56.5 S1: But most of the time you might also find a biomass stove. So that complementarity is another benefit, which benefits both my wife and I because then it helps both of us to save time. So I wouldn't say it's used just one side, but mostly the woman, right? The woman mostly, more than the man because usually, once again, by culture, it is our women who cook a lot. If the guy wants to cook it's maybe for fun or to help, but we expect the women to usually cook. So I think when new technologies are introduced, it benefits both ways, but more so the female or the woman. Even if it's a girl, it still comes down to the same thing. So yes, that's what I think.

0:10:52.1 S2: Yeah, and I suppose you... Thinking about different groups of women, do they access kind of energy differently? I mean we can continue with the example of cook stoves. So I'm thinking about if there's different groups of women and how they benefit from energy access, is there a difference, for example, between older and younger women, different income groups, rural versus urban, or other differentiations between groups of women?

0:11:24.9 S1: Yes, I think there is. There is. If you... Let's take it broadly from let's say rural and urban side of the discussion. Rural folks usually use wood fuel mostly for their cooking activities, so that involves going to gather sticks or let's say wood that can be used as firewood or wood fuel. So that will take a bit of time and some labor trying to go out there to go and gather this kind of firewood or sticks to come and cook with. If you bring the same scenario to the urban, they usually cook with LPG...

0:12:34.6 S1: Women in the urban parts of town will usually go for LPG, which is less cumbersome, in terms of access. You just have to pick your cylinder and go to the LPG filling station, get it filed, put it in your car or get a car and off you go, with very little manual labor or input there. So from that broad angle of even rural and urban, you see that those in rural usually put in a lot of labor to get access to the fuel, and then when it comes to cooking, usually it's the same, because the one who is cooking using firewood or a firewood stove has to give more attention to the stove than that person who's using a LPG stove to cook. In terms of if you take another category such as income levels, I think those with more purchasing or higher purchasing power are able to... They are usually the early adopters, if I can use that. They are usually the early adopters of new technology or innovation because they can afford. On the other hand, those with low purchasing power have to rely on other people or they have to rely on some sort of payment plan that will suit them before they have to now consider purchasing. And in some cases, or in most cases, if the price is quite beyond their income levels then they could opt against getting those kind of new technology. So, yes, there is some kind of different levels in terms of the dynamics that come to play in accessing energy across different demographics.

0:14:57.9 S2: Yeah, that's useful. And then in terms of your own work, you already touched on that kind of gender plays a big role in your own work on energy access, how effective do you feel that sort of the efforts towards gender equity have been in your work and perhaps in the work that you see in Ghana?

0:15:22.0 S1: Sorry, could you help me take that again? I lost out a bit.

[chuckle]

0:15:28.1 S2: How effective do you feel that the effort towards gender equity have been in your work and in work more broadly in Ghana?

0:15:45.5 S1: Okay. Yes, so in all our project we structure, we try to find space to play the gender equity sort of card. Or let me say, yeah, that kind of interest, we always try to do. And so how that has been useful, for instance, is as an organisation which courts the support of donors, this kind of positioning has put us in a good state because the world over gender matters is gaining grounds, and if anybody is gonna give you money to run a program, they will see how you are going to be inclusive gender-wise. So I would say, on a abroad organizational level, these are some benefits we've seen. In terms of how it has also been beneficial, we have also now seen the interest of women groups in our activities. Hitherto, or let me say some years back, if you made a call for, let's say, entrepreneurs, to present a business plan or a proposal for support, you would find a few, very, very few females showing interest, but with the focus on gender equity, there are times we even put out calls targeted at women. And this in some way encourages the women, encourages them to put in an application. Whenever we put out a call, we emphasize the fact that women applicants shall be given some sort of, should I say, consideration, these are all ways to just encourage them to [0:18:31.4] \_\_\_\_.

0:18:31.5 S1: So it has increased. On the previous project, I worked on we sought to do about 30% of females. And I think we were able to achieve that and more. We got more females applying to be supported and actually getting support from the project. So it has also gotten more females to be interested in the entrepreneurial ecosystem, for instance. On a global level, I think women are being empowered. The women feel... It's unfortunate anytime we talk about gender, we mention women because it looks like they are on the lower end of the gender balance. So when we talk about gender, we talk about women. Women are getting empowered. They feel they also can participate, and I have to say, we've had special programs for women on some of our programs. We have things like... How do you call that? There was this special initiative just to cater for female entrepreneurs amongst the lot that we get. And you see that they're also getting better at what they are doing, okay. So apart from inclusion or participation, they are also becoming better at whatever they are doing... Yeah.

0:20:07.0 S2: Yeah, that sounds pretty good. I see what you were saying earlier around this capacity building. And so one thing [0:20:20.6] \_\_\_\_... I'm just thinking in terms of energy equity, that in the context of Ghana, do you think that there are, do you think that energy access policies are gender sensitive?

0:20:42.2 S1: I wouldn't say that emphatically. How would you say that emphatically? I think... So... Stop what you're doing. I know that generally there is a talk of empowering the girl child and kind of pushing... Give me a second.

[background conversation]

0:21:13.4 S2: Yeah, sure.

[pause]

0:22:18.1 S1: Hi. I'm back. So you were talking about policies regarding gender equity in terms of energy access and what? Policy-wise and...

0:22:28.8 S2: Yeah. Energy access and policies in Ghana, and whether or not they're gender sensitive, and if not, kind of what the gaps are in your opinion?

0:22:41.2 S1: Yeah. The policies and the various plans that I have seen so far, the critical one being the renewable energy masterplan, for instance. I haven't seen very dedicated focus on gender matters. There is some sort of effort to mention that as much as possible people of all classes, which will include women also, but to have a plan that is actually targeted at how to achieve this particular intervention is not clear cut. So I think there is some sort of interest, but there is not much in terms of a plan or a roadmap towards achieving the same. The policies have make some sort of mention or not direct mention but an implied mention that it should be inclusive of all group of people, but I think when it comes the roadmap, there is not much. Yeah, there is not much. So if you are talking about policy you are looking at it from the government side of things, right?

0:24:18.8 S2: Yeah.

0:24:19.9 S1: So that is what I can say, but I know within organisations, for instance, from where I work, I know there is a deliberate effort to actually get things like this done to make sure that there is the supply. I remember, we on the previous project, we actually got an intern whose work was actually... And I could refer you, I could refer you, if you are interested, I could refer you to her. I think she did a brilliant work. Yeah. She did a very... XXXX, yeah. XXXX did a very fantastic work on how gender should be given attention, so I could refer you to discuss that, but that is on the organizational level. In terms of the government policies, there is not much I can talk to you in terms of their roadmap to achieving equitable energy access or something like that.

0:25:25.5 S2: Yeah, it's useful to understand that there's a sort of difference between the NGO sector [0:25:31.5] \_\_\_\_ What do you think needs to happen to improve gender equity when it comes energy access in Ghana?

0:25:50.4 S1: Okay, so I think some work... But once again, this is coming from the private sector, this is already happening. Making ambassadors or let me say... Ambassadors for some of the energy access things. Once again I will refer to cook stoves, because that's where I play a lot. For instance, we have the what's her name, the current second lady of Ghana, being a brand ambassador for cook stoves, I think. I have to double-check that, but last year or two she was a brand ambassador. I have to be sure if she's still doing that. So, yes I think, on of the ways, something like this, making women champions in terms of promoting energy access, putting them at the forefront of promotion and advocacy, but also, when it comes to things like designing or the hardware.

0:27:20.6 S1: So that's an area that usually you don't find women. It's usually they are at the end where... When you talk about marketing, you'll find women in marketing, but when it comes to less producing or production, usually that's left to men to do. But I think if we want to make sure that women also have equitable access, I mean everything that is about it suits them as well, then you should get them in the earlier stages of the production, get more women trained in production. So that even if they can influence the kind of design that are churned out and things like that. So yes, these are a few things. Make women the champions of... Ambassadorial roles or let me say promotion and advocacy but also get them involved in other parts of the value chain or the supply chain, and also maybe something more broadly, financially empower women. If women have the purchasing power, they could also easily adapt technologies without having to depend so much on their husbands. I don't know, but that's a discussion for another day, but it's something... That's one way to get to the end. If the women are financially independent themselves, they can also make the decisions. But that's also a cultural matter, so I don't know how that would play. [chuckle]

0:29:06.7 S2: Well, it links to what you said before, if you include women in the value chain, not just as end-users, but also as users, then you potentially are doing that. Yeah. And then I guess just imagining that sort of policy and finance are not constraining this, so yes, imagining that no policy or financial constraints are a problem, what in your view would be the best practice for achieving gender equity in energy access?

0:29:41.0 S1: Sorry, so the line got interrupted.

0:29:43.9 S2: Imagining no policy or financial constraint for the moment, what in your view would be the best practice for achieving gender equity in energy access?

0:29:53.3 S1: Kindly can you say that again?

0:29:56.5 S2: Yeah, imagine that there are no policy or financial constraints for the moment, what in your view would be the best practice for achieving gender equity in energy access? A different way of putting that is perhaps what would gender equity in energy access look like in an ideal world?

0:30:21.6 S1: So that would mean getting women to be... Okay, getting... [chuckle] Getting all sides of the gender balance being in the play or in the mix of the supply chain, right from production or even conceptualization. Having them to be part of conceptualization, having them to be part of designing and production, having both sides or all sides of the gender balance claim pivotal roles across all the supply chains. And also, giving either sides or both sides equal opportunity in terms of purchasing power, that kind of financial independence to be able to make their own decisions without having to rely on the other. [chuckle] What do you think, so? I think, yeah, so that would be an ideal. Yeah, all sides being in the mix, playing pivotal roles, having the right to make inputs towards how we should structure things, yeah. And being able to make decisions independent of the other, of the other person, yeah.

0:32:10.9 S2: Just a few questions at the end. Are you there?

0:32:13.3 S1: I'm here.

0:32:16.9 S2: I'm just wondering how easy is it to get data on gender in your energy access work?

0:32:36.4 S1: It's not something that you easily come across. Yes, it's not something that you easily come across. At one point, we were preparing to launch the call, and I wanted to see how many women groups or networks we could reach and to encourage them to be part of the call and things like that, and it was quite a challenge. Yeah. So getting data on gender-related matters, it's not something that comes across easily. You have to actually be on the ground yourself. You have to go places and fall on referrals and go to... But to sit on your desktop, for instance, and just access information, just make a few calls to institutions to get data is not something you easily get.

0:33:50.0 S2: Yeah. That's useful. And then I'm just thinking over the last kind of 10 years, in terms of shifts of how people use energy, have you seen a shift in terms of the energy sources that households use, in terms of heating, lighting or cooking, for example? Or have they largely stayed the same?

0:34:19.2 S1: Cooking, yes, let's start with cooking. So...

0:34:22.6 S2: Yeah, focus on cooking is fine because that's what we're working on.

0:34:27.9 S1: So successive governments have some focus on cleaner... There's always a focus on cleaner ways of cooking. So governments come up with interventions that seek to migrate or transition end users from one type of cooking technology to a cleaner way or a cleaner utility, and that's... I think there's been some sort of shift of people from, let's say, over-reliance on biomass based technologies to LPG, I mean technology as well. So you've seen, over the past 10 years, I think you see that curve for LPG usage has a kind of upward trend. That is not to say that people have completely abandoned the use of biomass based technologies, but you see, there are some sort of interest towards moving. And ultimately, that is where everybody would like to be moving to something more cleaner than what they use. So, yes, there is some kind of shift that you see. That's also because mostly there are government interventions to facilitate this. Currently, the government is pushing for the LPG cylinder recirculation program, which would even address a more critical challenge in terms of use of LPG, which is the lack of access to LPG.

0:36:31.5 S1: So usually, people have to travel long distances in the rural areas, for instance, to be able to purchase LPG, and then because of that, it has effected uptake of LPG. But now, the government has plans to come with this recirculation, cylinder recirculation model which will take away this kind of bottleneck. All people need to do is to just sit in their homes, cylinders will come by already filled and they can take, so they don't have to travel, when one gets their LPG. There is some kind of shift, this is largely influenced by government interventions, but also private sector also playing very critical roles.

0:37:18.7 S2: And so, I guess finally, would you then say that the government of Ghana is committed to an energy transition towards clean but also renewable energy?

0:37:35.7 S1: I think so. I think so. I think the government is doing... So when we talk about access as one thing, yes, and even if you look beyond clean cooking, I think the government has done even much more in the traditional or conventional energy access, so I mean lighting, for instance. I think the government of Ghana has done a quite extensively... In terms of how people should get access. So yes, there is commitment. We even think that there is less interest in terms of promoting some of the interventions we are looking at promoting, but the government has its own polices and has its own agenda, and they are doing much for whatever agenda they have, in terms of access. So yes, there's that kind of commitment.

0:38:36.1 S2: Yeah, I guess I'm just thinking that in terms of cooking stove or LPG, on the one hand, it's clean in the way that it doesn't have that sort of air pollution, indoor air pollution. On the other hand, it's not renewable.

0:38:50.1 S1: It's not green, yeah. So we think it should be something other than LPG, but the government also has their own, and it's still energy access. If you are talking about sustainable energy access it changes the discussion completely.

[laughter]

0:39:07.9 S2: Okay. Do you think the government is then committed to sustainable energy transition, in terms of... [laughter]

0:39:17.0 S1: I think they have less options to make a decision, the reason is that that the world over is trying to look to more sustainable ways of doing things. But I still think that they have... Government make decision based on number of things, and one of them could be the political will to make that decision. In terms of sustainable access, once again, if you go into the policy documents, you would see there is a lot of mention for want ensure that in the energy mix there is about 10% of renewable energy. This is even talking about, let's see, power generation, but you will see that in terms of the roadmap to get that done, you see there's very little commitment because it's maybe cost them less to promote the other conventional energy sources compared to doing something more green. That is a discussion I would say more tilted towards political will and economic factors, but I mean there is some sort of commitment. We in the private sector think there is less and they can really up that commitment. But there's some sort of commitment.

0:40:47.5 S2: And then is there anything that we didn't discuss that you would like to add before we finish?

[background conversation]

0:41:15.8 S1: Sorry. Anything? Anything? I'm just... I'm trying to see if can also put you on the spot and ask you something.

[laughter]

0:41:28.0 S2: It's fine.

0:41:31.6 S1: Yeah. So I think we've talked quite a bit about policy, right? I think that the discussion really started with policy. So then it tells you that the discussion is someway tilted towards the public sector. I don't know if I'm correct or we just started from policy, but we're also looking at private sector and their contribution because... Yeah, maybe I should just leave it as it is. What's the focus of this? Are we just looking at government interventions or public sector interventions?

0:42:12.3 S2: I think not necessarily. I think the focus is around gender and energy. And I think if we kind of... It depends what the overall study uncovers, which is actually focusing on four different countries. And I think, for me, it's really interesting to hear that, yeah, there might be policies for the roadmap setting, and if the private sector [0:42:37.0] \_\_\_\_ has the roadmap that public sector doesn't, then I think that's really interesting. And perhaps as researchers, we often have to write up outputs and it's like, "Ooh, we write a policy brief or something like that," but perhaps that's not the right way, perhaps we need to think about the outputs of this initial research in a way that actually targets action to where it will happen, which might not be the public sector, which could be the private sector. So I can't give you an answer of it's focused on one or the other at this stage because it just depends actually what the outcomes are, but I think that's really an interesting discussion for us to have.

0:43:30.1 S1: Okay, that's okay. I don't have much to ask further. I think it's an interesting study, and I'd be interested to know what the outcome of this research would be.

0:43:48.3 S2: Yeah.

0:43:48.3 S1: Yes, I'll be very interested in that.

0:43:55.5 S2: I'm sure we can share the findings, the write-up, the reports that are coming out of it, I'm sure we can share that with all the participants. Yeah, there is also... We were going to have one regional workshop in West Africa, but in Nigeria, but I think that probably won't happen because of COVID and so I wonder if we might end up...

0:44:16.7 S1: I don't think so. [laughter]

0:44:17.8 S2: Sorry.

0:44:17.9 S1: I don't think it will happen. I don't think that's gonna happen in these new circumstances.

0:44:21.0 S2: No, I don't think that's gonna happen, but I think there might therefore be something that happens like online, which would could actually include a broader group of participants...

0:44:30.0 S1: Yeah.

0:44:30.1 S2: So if that... If we do that instead, then I will let you know. I'm sure we'll invite everybody who was interviewed as well, so that might be a good forum to have further discussions, yeah. So I guess we have no additional questions, XXXX, I hope. [chuckle] We've covered everything. Thank you so much for your time and taking the time in a really busy schedule, but also in the... With having to look after your kids and stuff. And you know what? If you have a read through the content form and fill that in, and then you can send it back to us, that will be really appreciated, because we need it in order to be able to use the data ethically.

0:45:16.0 S1: That's fine, I'll share it. Hopefully, I don't get it lost in a few things, [chuckle] but I'll share it. I'll send and share it. And sorry for the interruptions. In the original plan, they should have been covered or taken care of by somebody else, but it ended up being me. [chuckle] So...

0:45:36.8 S2: Don't worry, don't worry.

0:45:40.2 S1: Yeah, so, it's... Yeah, so thank you for reaching out. And XXXX, I look forward to further correspondences in terms of what XXXXare doing. There are a few programs already running at the XXXX and if there are opportunities to collaborate, we could always talk to them, so.

[background conversation]

0:46:02.8 S3: That's great, thank you very much for making the time. I'm really happy with the insights you provided. As you know, XXXXwe have not considered into the private sector, I mean that collaboration with the private sector and [0:46:21.1] \_\_\_\_, so this was really a learning experience for me, thank you very much. I'll try and keep in touch so that if there's any possible collaboration on another activity, that will be great.

0:46:25.5 S2: Yeah.

0:46:25.7 S1: That's fine, that's fine.

0:46:29.4 S3: Thank you very much.

0:46:32.5 S1: Sure, thank you, XXXX.

0:46:34.2 S2: Alright, thank you very much.