0:00:00.0 XXXX: Consent, that you're happy to do this, but also that you will send the actual consent form after the interview. So that's just for the record. Excellent. So my first question is really, can you start by telling me a little bit about your current role and the kind of position in the organization that you work for, and how you got to be in that role.

0:00:27.2 XXXX: So let me say that I used to wear two hats, but now I am focusing more on one hat at the moment. So my presentation, I will try to focus more on the energy work that I've been involved in. So in 2013, I had a chance to attend a global power shift conference that was held in XXXX. It was organized by XXXX, which brought about 500 young people from different parts of the world for training on climate change. So that was the first time I got to know this massive number of young people doing different climate actions. So we were seven from Ghana that went for that particular conference. So we came back and then we said, why don't we form a movement to sustain this campaign or this initiative. So that led to the formation of XXXX. So our whole campaign or idea was that we were going to embark on different campaign activities, geared towards carbon reduction. So that was, the thrust of our campaign.

0:02:00.6 XXXX: So the movement was made up of individuals and organizations who believe in our course. Prior to that I have my own NGO, or I had my own NGO, known as the XXXX, where I am the executive coordinator. And then when we formed XXXX, again, I became the national coordinator. So that's why I was saying that I was wearing two hats, my own NGO and also leading the XXXX campaign movement. So that was how come we... That triggered our work in the energy sector. So in 2015, the government of Ghana officially announced plans to build a coal plant, which triggered a massive campaign from January 2016 all the way to October 2016 when the Minister of Environment officially announced at a press conference that the government of Ghana is no longer going to build a coal plant, that we can't actually build a coal plant because it's inconsistent with our commitment to the Paris Climate Agreement. So that was one of the major things we did fighting the coal establishment in Ghana. And then so after that announcement, what we have been doing is that we have consistently been advocating promoting renewable energies in Ghana, because once we were campaigning against the coal plant from 2013 all the way to 2016, we had a key message that, "XXXX."

0:03:33.8 XXXX: Because for us, we believe renewable energy offers more opportunities as compared to coal. So while the government has announced that they are not going to build a coal plant, so we saw it more as an opportunity to further strength our campaign in terms of renewable energy. So we started going to communities, interviewing people who were already using renewable energy, to get their stories, as a way to amplify the benefits of renewable energy. Recently... So one of the main reasons we were doing that is to support the effort of government, because for us, once there is demand, because once the public gets to know about renewable energy, they would be interested to know what it is. They may be interested to buy, you know, renewable energy. So once that happens, it will trigger the demand side. So once there is demand for renewable energy, it becomes an incentive for the private sector and even government to invest more into renewable energy. So that was more like our contribution to the promotion of renewable energy in Ghana. So we were doing that consistently from 2016 even to 2019.

0:04:42.0 XXXX: In 2019 we took a different dimension where we selected five district assemblies in Ghana, more like a pilot study, to help them mainstream renewable energy into their respective middle-term development plans, because every assembly is supposed to have its own plan. So we engaged five of them to help them mainstream, to consciously make provision for renewable energy. So the whole idea was to, One, do a pilot study to influence renewable energy at a local level, and possibly based on the experience we get, we will now upscale that particular initiative. So that was one of the key things we did in 2019, and then so that led us to 2020. So because of the COVID, we had to truncate a lot of physical meetings, so we continued with a lot of social media campaigns talking about renewable energy, wind energy, solar energy, biofuel. So we kept creating the euphoria around renewable energy, given the fact that, in February 2019, the government of Ghana came out with a renewable energy master plan, which provides a blueprint how we intend to upscale renewable energy between 2015 to 2030. So what we were doing was basically to amplify that particular idea and support the cause of government through awareness creation.

0:06:13.6 XXXX: So we have formed, actually a movement known as a XXXX. So the whole campaign is basically to create more awareness on renewable... So these are some of the things we are doing in our small way as young people to pursue or push the renewable energy agenda. Because our basic... Our main... One of the key underlining factor is that, we want to create more awareness or for government to develop more renewable energy so that there will be little incentive or need to even consider going fossil fuel, I mean if there is a need for it, because once we have enough energy from renewable energy there will be no need to invest into fossil fuel. So that was one of the underlying purposes of our on-going campaign, so in a nutshell, that's just to give an overview.

0:06:58.7 Ann: Yeah, yeah...

0:07:01.7 XXXX: Of where we have come, yes.

0:07:01.8 XXXX: Yeah, and so just to sum things up, so there's kind of, you said as having your own kind of youth-based NGO, and then getting involved in the climate campaigning sphere, if you like, those two things are united together. And so there's a level of doing both grass roots, awareness raising as well as policy advocacy, is that right? Yeah.

0:07:26.1 XXXX: Absolutely. Absolutely.

0:07:30.1 XXXX: So, in terms of... How would you, just in a sentence, how would you... What would you say your current role is?

0:07:36.4 XXXX: In my organization or as an advocate?

0:07:42.8 XXXX: In your... Either, both. Give us both.

0:07:48.0 XXXX: Okay. I see myself more as a climate change activist and a renewable energy advocate.

0:07:53.7 XXXX: Okay.

0:07:56.0 XXXX: Yeah, so basically...

0:07:56.9 Ann: Yeah, okay. I like that, between the two. And in terms of your... The current kind of priorities of what you're doing, as we talked a bit about the background, but what's the emphasis now and going forward?

0:08:15.0 XXXX: OkayXXXX, I mentioned that we have Renewable Energy Masterplan in Ghana which we are currently creating awareness around and supporting government in actually investing more into the renewable energy processes. Also, we are aware that there's an effort to review Renewable Energy Act which we are keenly also following and tracking to see where we can make input in that regard. Again, the government of Ghana has received readiness funding from the Green Climate Fund to develop a National Adaptation Plan for the next two years. So as part of the deliverables, the Environmental Protection Agency has formed five working groups, we call it a Cross-sectoral Policy Group, so we have one for infrastructure, one for the private sector, there's one on health, there's one on disaster risk and so just five of them.

0:09:27.1 XXXX: So, for the infrastructure component also contains energy, transport, energy, etcetera. So... Again as part of our advocacy, the Environmental Protection Agency or the Project Management Team, has gratefully made provision for youth representation in each of these five technical working groups, so it's a way to have youth role or youth influence or participate in the process, so that's there when it comes to our National Adaptation Plan. Again, the government of Ghana is also in the process of reviewing or updating our Nationally Determined Contributions, which every five years, climate agreement, parties have the right to review and update. The update should have been done last year in November, but because we were in a political season, we were going through our... Going for our elections, so it was... It's been postponed to this year.

0:10:22.3 XXXX: Hopefully by the end of the first quarter of this year we should have our revised NDCs. Again we are also actively involved in the process because energy features prominently in our NDCs. So, those are some of the current stuff we are currently engaged in, and to be able to make process very concrete, especially from the youth perspective, we are currently being supported by the French Embassy, because my organization XXXX also runs... Has a bigger platform, called The XXXX, so the French Embassy is supporting us to build the capacity of our members, the young people on Ghana XXXX and NDC processes so they can participate effectively and efficiently in the process. So we've done phase one, which ended last year, so we're now running phase two of the project, and the phase two primarily is to develop a youth strategy for climate action in Ghana. So, the idea is that we young people are now going to develop our own strategy to determine how government and other state actors must engage the young people, when it comes to the issue of climate change. We don't want to see a situation where policy makers would decide for young people, but they must decide with young people, so to create that... To bridge that particular gap between decision makers and policy makers, when it comes to youth engagement. Those are the kind of things we are currently involved in.

0:11:50.7 Ann: Okay, great. Moving on, what does equitable energy access mean to you?

0:11:58.2 XXXX: Well, that's a very loaded question. It's a...

[laughter]

0:12:07.9 XXXX: Well, for me I think that it's...

[pause]

0:12:24.7 XXXX: Okay. Can you hear me?

0:12:24.8 XXXX: Yeah, You're back? You're back, yeah. You just started, you said, "For me... " and then you just cut out briefly and I was like, no.

0:12:31.9 XXXX: I was wondering what was happening?

0:12:35.9 XXXX: Gives you an opportunity to revise your answer.

[laughter]

0:12:41.3 XXXX: Yeah, yeah, okay. [chuckle] So equitable energy is about making energy available, accessible to everybody, the vulnerable, the poor, people with disability, that nobody should left behind. The whole idea is that at least everybody must have access, that's how I understand it, equitably, at least people must have it, the way they want it. In terms of the quantity, in terms of the... What do you call it? The capacity, that is my understanding for equitable energy.

0:13:12.7 XXXX: Yeah, adding to that, what does gender equity in energy access mean to you?

0:13:22.1 XXXX: Okay, in terms of gender, I think that they must again, when you talk about gender, talking about the women, men, children, boys and girls each all of them must also have access to energy, looking at the gender dynamics, when it comes to women, when it comes to men, when it comes to children, they may use energy for different purposes, but whatever they need energy for, they should be able to have access to the energy, to use energy for what... For their internal purpose. That is my understanding with gender, equitable energy.

0:14:04.0 XXXX: Do you think that gender affects the way that energy is used at a household level in Ghana?

0:14:11.0 XXXX: I would say...

[pause]

0:14:15.1 XXXX: Oooh, it's cutting out. [chuckle] Now you are back. Okay, okay, this isn't gonna be a fun game. [chuckle]

0:14:34.5 XXXX: Okay. I would say yes, but I'm not too sure if there's been any conscious effort to really look at that at the home, because if you ask me, I would say that, yes, in a household women use a lot of energy, because of their roles they play at home, but usually, I don't think much effort or emphasis has been placed on it, but I think that is also important. And it will help women function effectively. For example, over the period, women do a lot of washing at home, especially when it comes to Africa, they take out... They have to wash their husband's clothes, their children's clothes. Now if for example there is a need to have a washing machine, that could also make work easier for the wife, the housewife. Now, in the name of technology, we have, what do you call it, microwaves, stoves and other... Those are energy facilities, in which, perhaps is making work easier or enhancing the work of mothers at home. That is how I will say that, yes.

0:15:41.1 XXXX: Yeah, that's useful. And then do you feel that different groups of women benefit from access to energy, differently for example, I'm thinking, women in rural areas versus urban areas, or older women versus younger women, you talked about energy facilities like gadgets and things like that, and do you think there's a difference between different groups of women in Ghana?

0:16:07.3 XXXX: There's a huge difference. Usually, it has to do with social status or social class, because women, career women, one, are able to afford, because usually it's an issue of affordability, once they can afford to buy all those gadgets, then they buy them to make life easy for them, because they are career women and they need more time to work, as compared to the women in the rural areas who may find it very difficult to purchase these items, even if they have money to purchase these items, they can't also guaranty energy availability, because not every woman in the community or rural areas has access to electricity.

0:16:51.8 XXXX: Again, one other issue has to do with the issue of cultural dynamics, which makes change a bit difficult, even if... There are some woman that even if you buy them washing machine, they will still prefer to go to the riverside and wash, because it's a cultural setting. And women usually would want to go to a riverside together as women, so they can wash and have a conversation, once they are washing they are having... They're chatting. And that's the only chance they get to communicate among themselves, because when she goes home, she has to go and cook for the husband, take care of the children and all that. So that's cultural setting, it's something that they don't want to do away with, so you can even buy them washing machine, but they will leave it at home and still go and wash at the riverside. [chuckle] Those are some of the dynamics that influences how women want to use energy.

0:17:44.7 XXXX: Yeah, I think that's really insightful. That's really useful. So, the three things, the affordability, the affordability having the money, but not being able to actually access the power to run things, and then maybe not actually wanting to, because it's the time for yourself. Yeah, I think it's really interesting. When new energy infrastructure or technologies such as washing machines and things like that become available or are provided, what's the difference between men and women in terms of who benefits?

0:18:21.0 XXXX: I think that in terms of benefits, I would say women benefit more, in terms of the time duration, and ideally if she has to spend about two or three hours to wash, now the washing machine will do their job, so it will save them some time to do other things. So that is a direct benefit to the women. To a large extent also it also benefits the man in the house, even though, it's also likely to bring about an unintended consequence, the issue of who is going to pay the bill? So, yes it's making work easy, it's making work faster, but it's going to also increase the electricity bill. So if you are not careful the husband will get angry and upset, and disconnect the washing machine, and say let's go back to the traditional way of washing. So you measure the benefit against the other consequences, the other side of it, but on the whole, I think it benefits the women more, it gives them more time to do other things. Yes.

0:19:28.0 XXXX: I think that nicely links to the next question, which is, do men and women participate equally in decision-making about energy access?

0:19:42.2 XXXX: When it comes to decision making... Again, it also depends, it depends on the rural setting or the urban setting. Because increasingly, our culture is still strong, cultural values, our socio-cultural, what do you call it, norms are still very strong, to the extent that even some men, irrespective of the fact that they are educated, they are well to do, their wives are also educated, and well to do, they still feel that whatever the say as a man is final. The wife is not supposed to challenge or give divergent view, so that nuance is still there. But I think that at the urban centre, increasingly, women are beginning to have voice, they are also able to share their views... So, we're getting there, we haven't gotten there yet, but I want to believe that over time, we'll get to a point where they can freely share their views and their concerns, and the men will also be happy to hear them out. But to a large extent, usually when the man speaks, it's like a judge has spoken, so... The supreme court speaks when the man speaks. [chuckle]

0:21:01.9 XXXX: Which again links to what you said earlier about the budgetary decision, so the woman has a washing machine, but if the financing comes... Yeah, okay.

0:21:14.7 XXXX: Yes. Yeah, so if the woman, for example, can afford and pay, the man may not have an issue. But if at the end, he's the one paying, he may use that as a bargaining chip that, "Look, it's way beyond my budget, so let's reconsider." So that also affects the decision making process at homes.

0:21:32.7 XXXX: So in your own work, obviously, which is very much focused on... So using power, I mean around climate, to what extent does gender equity factor in your work on energy access, and if you also like, in your work on climate adaptation, mitigation more broadly?

0:21:53.6 XXXX: Yeah, so for us, we are also very conscious in terms of... Looking at it from the... When it comes to gender related issues, so whatever we do, we try to see the direct or indirect effect on women particularly. So even, for us, as a youth group, whenever we are organizing our meetings and our conferences we consciously make provision for more females to be part of the process. Because we believe that the more we have more young ladies participating, over time, they will become more inclined and to be able to play the role that they ought to play in the near future. And then so, that is even for us as a core group of young people. But there are times that we also go out, in our own way, to communities to engage women why they must shift from the use of old cooking mechanism to the use of clean cooking stoves, because of the benefits that clean cooking stoves has as against relying on their old way of cooking. So for us, we from time, value gender very, very seriously in our work...

0:23:04.3 XXXX: And what do you think, how effective that's been so far, thinking about the last five or so years?

0:23:10.5 XXXX: Well, yes, it's been very effective... For us, we think that it has to do with the approach, or the strategy, because once you are able to convince a woman that, "Okay, using this option has far more benefit than this option," and it makes sense to her, certainly, she will go for your... What you're proposing. And once you have one woman who is convinced, it becomes very easy for her also to inform her peers or other women in society or in a community, and then you'll start having some effect or impact among women in a community, so that's the approach that we are adopting, one step at a time, little by little, yeah.

0:23:53.4 XXXX: So the women almost like become the ambassadors, yeah.

0:23:57.3 XXXX: Absolutely, because they can tell their story better than we coming from the urban areas, yes.

0:24:02.6 XXXX: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, a man coming and telling... Yeah, [chuckle] yeah... How can... What do you think, how gender equity... You've already touched on this, but just to elaborate, how can gender equity in energy access be improved at, I suppose, maybe local and national level? 'Cause earlier on, you talked a little bit about the district level, but also as of national level.

0:24:32.0 XXXX: Okay, one of the missing points that I have realized is that we... More often than not, the policy makers or decision makers make choices on behalf of women, because if you have an idea or a plan or a policy that's supposed to benefit women... So globalization talks about leaving no one behind, so why should we leave the women behind in all these processes? So I think that one of the ways to demonstrate is that we should learn to carry these women along, they must be their own champions, they must be their own voice at the local level and more importantly at the national level, because normally, you can hear there's a national stakeholders' conference on clean energy or clean cooking stoves, and then the women in the village are not part of the meeting. So, I'm not too sure what kind of decision that they are taking... Making choices on behalf of women, I think, does not demonstrate gender equity or gender mainstreaming. So I think the women themselves, must be the front... They must carry the... You just have to guide them, so they can lead their own process and lead their own change. And then you can now use that as a case that yes, the women are driving their own change and then we capture evidence of gender, what do you call it? Equality.

0:25:54.5 XXXX: Yeah, okay. Yeah, and maybe... So imagining for a second, that policy isn't an issue, and finance isn't an issue. What, in your view, would be best practice for achieving gender equity in energy access?

0:26:08.0 XXXX: Policy is not issue, finance is not an issue? [chuckle] Well... So okay... So again I think that the most important thing that having women to take charge, for me that's the most important thing, the women must take charge of their own because they understand themselves better, they understand their issues better. So they should be allowed to make those choices. Then we can only guide and provide the support from behind. So, in all my gender work, I used to work for an international NGO at the gender focal point, and I've seen some of these dynamics play out in the village setting and all that, so because usually they're left behind and it's because of social setting. They are always in the kitchen, they're always cooking, their men must decide, even when there is a family meeting, the woman can not speak, so that has eaten up into our National Development process that it doesn't find a woman a space. So I think that aside policy, aside money, let's see the women leading the process, to bring about the change that we all expect.

0:27:21.2 XXXX: Yeah, okay, that's great. I think we only have a few more questions which are more and sort of the energy transition if you like and in Ghana more broadly. Do you think that... Yeah, do you think that the government of Ghana is committed to the energy transition, to transition to renewables.

0:27:39.2 XXXX: Well, commitment. Having worked with the government for some time now, I think I will say commitment comes in two ways. One, having a policy to demonstrate that and two, putting in place the necessary investment plan. Because in our part of the world it is very easy to have beautiful policies, beautiful plans, well written, well documented, properly researched, but if there is no money to implement, then it's as good as nothing.

0:28:16.0 XXXX: So in terms of policy, yes, we have the document. We have Renewable Energy Master Plan between 2015 and 2030. So yes, that document, it means government is committed, but the other side is we need to put in money to actualize that particular plan. If the money is not coming, then the issue of commitment now also comes in. Somehow, in the... In our indices, the energy sector is one of the unconditional, what do you call it, commitment or obligations, or no sorry, it's conditional. That means that we need support from donor partners to be able to implement our energy plan. So that means if we don't get support, we cannot implement that. So that now becomes an issue for us as a country. So, from where I sit, I think that government have shown commitment by bringing out a blueprint and a nice plan and all that but we must have sound financial commitment. That okay, "We are putting this amount of money in place, to have that transition happen." But until that happens, I will not say we're fully, we're fully fully committed to that. But it is important to highlight an issue, and I think the Environmental Protection Agency has mentioned that in a couple of meetings, but that communication has not been properly publicized. Over the years, Ghana was depending on the Akosombo dam for...

0:29:54.5 XXXX: Yeah.

0:29:54.9 XXXX: Our energy transition, for our energy demand. But since population increase and private sector expansion and all that, that became inadequate. So there was a need to expand or have other sources of energy. So, now we have thermal plants, which we use crude oil to power, to generate more additional energy, to support the Akosombo dam, aside other micro or mini grids we have in other places across the country for those off-land... Those who are off-grid.

0:30:29.7 XXXX: Yeah.

0:30:30.4 XXXX: So now the argument is, we use crude oil to power our thermal plants and crude oil also emits carbon, increasing... Causing... Leading to carbon climate change. Now the government of Ghana is saying that, "Ever since we started producing oil in commercial quantities from 2010, we now have gas, which is usually a by-product of oil exploration. So instead of flaring the gas to create more pollution or more... Releasing more gas into the atmosphere, then there is a need to harvest or harness this gas to power our thermal plant." So the argument is that the use of gas to power our thermal plant even though it emits carbon, the emission is lower as compared to crude oil. So yes, it is still fossil fuel, but the argument is that, okay we have made some small progress, so that progress must also be captured.

0:31:30.0 XXXX: Interesting.

0:31:32.1 XXXX: Yeah, so now government is putting in place the gas infrastructure to use gas to power our thermal plant, so that's the argument, so you can't say okay stop fossil fuel. So the argument is okay, we were using crude oil, but we're now using gas. So gas is better than crude oil. Then we over time, we'll now shift fully to renewable energy. So it's good to track the process and look at the milestones that we have checked as a nation. So if that is what to look at, then I'll say that at least we're making progress from crude oil to gas and then possibly in the near future, we're going more into renewable energy. So for that process, I'll say that we're... Government is showing some high level of commitment.

0:32:15.8 XXXX: Okay.

0:32:16.0 XXXX: And the good thing is that, even the private sector on their own are shifting to renewable energy because they have done their own cost benefit analysis, and they feel that if they're able to invest into renewable energy, it saves them some energy or some cost at the long run. One key example I found out myself early part of last two years, was that there is one shopping mall in Ghana developed by a private sector, I mean that mall is able to generate 1.5 megawatts, actually the shopping mall runs on solar energy 100%. And that was by a private sector developer, and I hear it is the largest in the subregion, the whole mall on solar energy, and they are thinking of doing a second... Another project in that regard. So we've seen the private sector on their own also shifting to renewable energy, so I think that the transition in Ghana is progressive.

0:33:19.5 XXXX: Okay, and then translating that into, I guess, how people use energy at a household level, do you then therefore think there's been a shift in the last 10 years in terms of the energy sources that households use for heating, lighting, cooling, etcetera?

0:33:38.2 XXXX: Yes, the truth is that we cannot stop using those gadgets because we need them in the households, but the good thing is that they're now becoming energy efficient, so they consume less as compared to the previous gadgets. That's why now if you want to go and buy a gadget you would be told to look at the one with the three star, the four star, or the five star, you know all these kind of things, to be sure that at least what you're buying is energy efficient. So yes you still have a fridge, you have a washing machine, you have your iron and all that, your ceiling fan, in fact I'm using a fridge, a solar fridge by one school in Ghana, they're developing a solar fridge. So we have these companies in Ghana who are also coming up with some of these products, solar fridge, because we can't stop using fridge, but innovations I guess are coming up to... So these are some of the ways by which you can use energy sustainably.

0:34:38.4 XXXX: Yeah. In that same sort of context over the last 10 years or so, and shifting energy consumption have you then therefore also seen a shift in the way that women consume energy? You talked about for example energy efficiency, are women for instance, buying more kind of energy efficient gadgets than they would have done before.

0:35:05.5 XXXX: Well, I would say just with an assumption that those gadgets are available and again usually it has to do with the issue of cost, affordability, because that's usually the key part. But one of the things that, for example, I know a colleague of mine who is into renewable stuff, he sells renewable energy like solar lamps to market women. We have a group of market women or night women who sell in the night. Traditionally, they use a form of, what do you call it? They use kerosene, they're lighting kerosene in the evening as light, to give them light to sell whatever they are selling every evening. But of course we also know the other consequence, the cost of buying the kerosene, and number two the smoke that emits from that also could lead to health consequences for the women. So he's now introducing to them solar lamp, that okay you can use your solar lamp in the evening, you don't need to buy kerosene, you don't need to suffer from air pollution, so this is a solar lamp which doesn't smoke, but the solar lamp is more expensive as compared to buying that small container to use kerosene in.

0:36:28.9 XXXX: So what he has done is, he has this book he has created for each customer, that they purchase the item but on credit basis so they pay over time. So the whole idea is that he wants to shift, move them from using these old fossil fuel to using solar lamp but they have to pay based on credit. So it's a gradual process, so yes, it is still a better option to go for it but the cost has always been an issue so if for example there is a credit facility for them, I'm sure they will embrace those new technologies.

0:37:05.8 XXXX: Yeah, interesting. And then I think just finally, in terms of data, available data, is it easy to find access... Yeah, is it easy to access data on gendered use of energy in Ghana?

0:37:31.8 XXXX: I'm not too sure if there has been any study on that, but I can check with the Energy Commission or the Ministry of Energy, if they have any study on that. For NGOs, I don't know maybe the only NGO that comes in mind is a coalition, The Ghana Alliance on Clean Cooking Stoves is a big alliance, they promote clean cooking stoves XXXX.

0:38:06.1 XXXX: Okay. That's useful. And then just at the very end. Is there anything that we haven't discussed that you would like to add?

0:38:17.0 XXXX: Well, I think that's it. But my only submission is that, there is high... Huge potential when it comes to energy transition, think about the Green Economy which promises clean environment, more jobs and all that. So some of us are looking forward to having a complete energy transition from fossil fuel to cleaner forms of energy, just to add my voice to the ongoing campaign.

0:38:51.3 XXXX: Okay. Thank you very much, that was really, really great, and then XXXX if you have anything else? I think we've covered the entire interview but...

0:39:03.3 XXXX: Yes. Thank you very much, XXXX, that was really really insightful. I think you touched on a lot of things that are very insightful and very useful for the study. I just... I think, I noted a number of things that I wanted to, I wanted us to come back to that [0:39:28.8] \_\_\_\_ in the discussion you covered it. So I wanted us to look at the energy transition in the context of the [0:39:38.3] \_\_\_\_ And whether you think there is a strong commitment from the side of government to actually use the NDCs or whether the NDCs could be an avenue for, should I say, effective energy transition because early... Later, you mentioned that we're seeing government placing more emphasis on the use of natural gas, but then again, I would like to know from your personal perspective, whether you think that constitutes an effective energy transition or whether you think there is potential for government to do more in the context of really shifting to renewables, like solar energy and other sources that are actually more environmentally friendly as opposed to making... Taking these small steps of moving towards natural gas. Do you think the NDCs could be an avenue for gas, should I say, shift?

0:40:51.4 XXXX: Yeah, thanks XXXX. So I believe, in fact, for us as XXXX and also advocates, I think that this presents an opportunity for us to push government to be more ambitious with the NDC's targets because they are now in the process of revising the NDCs so they are going to seek for views and opinions... In fact, EP has commenced that process already, so it will be good to... And now, if we think some of the targets are not too ambitious, we have the chance to raise those concerns for government to be more ambitious when it comes to energy transition in the NDCs. So I mentioned the issue of gas because there is this notion that sometimes we don't appreciate the government if it does something well. So that's the issue they have with NGOs, always lambasting government, always lambasting government, pushing government every time. So once they've done some little progress from crude oil to gas, they want us to say, "Oh, okay you have done, at least, you've done well."

0:41:57.2 XXXX: Yeah.

0:41:57.3 XXXX: "You've done well from moving from crude oil to natural gas. But we think that you can still do better by moving to renewable energy." So that is the discussion that we're having now. So I think it's fair. At least, from moving from crude oil to natural gas, it's fair to appreciate what they've done and then at the same time, say that okay, they can still do more by moving to renewable energy. The energy commission, according to the energy commission, in Ghana we have about 200 islands, most of them are off grid. So there's been some a program to give, to install solar mini grids in all those communities, for them to have access to electricity. So I think some of these interventions have to be captured to show that at least, government is also being responsive to the energy transition issue. So there are some fragmented interventions, here and there, but it would be good to capture that to showcase what the government is doing. And I'm happy that even the private sector is moving towards that because they are the engine of growth, wherever the private sector moves, usually government has no choice, because energy is very important. But funny enough, somewhere last year, I don't remember when exactly, the government of Ghana is thinking about developing a nuclear plant or building a nuclear plant.

0:43:23.8 XXXX: Yeah, go ahead, go ahead.

0:43:24.9 XXXX: So... Yeah, but I think it's an idea being still... Still being discussed, but there's not been a firm position on that, so... It's still within the... But I don't see it coming on actually, personally, but of course, it's important not to lose sight on some of these ideas coming up.

0:43:48.0 XXXX: I think... I'm... I keep recording because it was... It was interesting to have this bit of discussion at the end recorded, but... So, we can say the interview officially has finished, but just, yeah, for me there's a couple of points in there actually, which is learning from I suppose what's happening in the UK where there was a shift from coal to gas over the last few, what? Number of decades. And arguably, I think that the notion of gas as a bridging fuel is really dangerous because you build the infrastructure, then you continue to grow the infrastructure, and what's happened in the UK at a local grassroots level, is this... The government really trying to push for unconventional gas extraction to the point where decision-making power from local governments trying to speed up the planning process to the benefit of gas companies. We have had massive, massive protests, probably, what? The fracking industry hasn't really gone anywhere in the UK, due to those, and interestingly, there's a re-agenda dimension in that. The people on the front line fighting fracking in the UK are women, predominantly. Mothers, sisters, their daughters, all on the front line and being threatened with a legal action and having to go to court and all sorts of, you know? So I'm... I think that that notion of gas as a bridging fuel is problematic, not that he phrased it like that necessarily, but I think that with caution...

0:45:33.1 XXXX: And I guess then the other thing is, early on in the interview you talked about sort of, in a clean energy... And again, for me, talking to people in countries where women in particular in rural areas still use biomass as cooking fuels. That's quite interesting, whereas here in the UK, we talk about clean as in renewable, we don't talk about clean as in lower particulate matter when it comes to sort of cooking fuels and things like that. And I think that that tension between what is clean and part of the energy provision, and what is clean and isn't, that's quite interesting.

0:46:12.6 XXXX: Yeah. Okay, okay, okay, interesting. Wow, wow. Wow, that's quite interesting.

0:46:19.6 XXXX: XXXX, yeah, I also wanted just to get your views on... I think you touched a little bit on it, on clean cook stove. How do you see, if you could, let's say your perspective on it, how do you see its effectiveness in terms of addressing the gender energy challenges that we have, particularly in the rural area? How do you see the uptake or what are some of the... If you have been involved in some of these things, what are some of the challenges that you've seen and properly, how do you think it could be overcome?

0:47:11.9 XXXX: Okay, thanks XXXX, so I think that so far at least I've seen a couple of demonstrations of clean cooking stoves where they put a stove down, they set up the fire, you don't see any smoke, they have pellets, made from renewable stuff, biodegradable stuff and all that. So from what I heard, or what I've read, it appears that the women in the rural areas do increase this new idea, because it doesn't smoke, you do not have to be in the kitchen inhaling smoke all the time, which might lead to some cancer or some form of sickness for the woman over a long period of time. And so a clean cooking stove makes work easy for them and all that, but the major challenge is the affordability, because it is quite expensive for them to buy the stove. So, that has been the drawback, if you ask me. So, it is about how do we find a way to address that situation, unfortunately or... I don't know whether to say it's unfortunate.

0:48:17.0 XXXX: But the goal for Ghana is rather giving out, what do you call it, the cylinder and I think that giving out free cylinder and whatever it is, cooking cylinder. Maybe if you are giving us free, what do you call it, clean cooking stoves, that would have been better, as compared to gas. And the other advantage that apart from the health issue, it also addresses this deforestation issue, the deforestation, because people fell trees, or they cut down trees because they want wood for... As firewood and all that. So the clean cooking stove has other means of lighting up your stove without cutting down trees, so I think it has some other benefits, which once we're able to capture that very well, it makes a strong case why we must support more women with clean cooking stoves for them to... For their health and also for their well-being in those rural areas.

0:49:14.2 XXXX: Okay, are electric stoves or induction hobs kind of used in Ghana... In, like, urban areas, for example?

0:49:23.3 XXXX: Yes, there are electric stoves.

0:49:27.4 XXXX: Just normal electric stove but not induction?

0:49:29.5 XXXX: I'm not... Well, I'm sure there could be some in a few homes, but I've seen... But as the people are now using more gas as compared to the electric stoves. Yeah.

0:49:44.1 XXXX: Okay. That's it, I think. XXXX, do you have anything else to ask, add?

0:49:49.9 XXXX: No, I think that's it.

0:49:52.1 XXXX: Yeah, okay. But this is really great and I've been saying... We've been saying to some other interviewees that actually as part of the interview series that we're doing, we had planned to do a number of regional workshops, so the interviews are taking place in four different countries, and we had planned to do a workshop in Nigeria as well as one in Asia. But due to COVID, physically that's not going to happen. I think, I suspect that the project leader for the research will probably decide to do something online. If that happens, we will make sure that you're invited to participate if you want to...

0:50:33.6 XXXX: Okay, okay, I'll appreciate that. I'll appreciate.

0:50:36.8 XXXX: Okay, great. Thank you so much for your time. That was really great.

0:50:43.1 XXXX: Thank you, XXXX. Yeah, thanks. Right. Thanks, XXXX.

0:50:44.6 XXXX: Thank you very much, XXXX.

0:50:45.8 XXXX: Bye, bye, bye.

0:50:46.6 XXXX: I'll get us in touch XXXX for some further discussion.

0:50:48.6 XXXX: Yeah.

0:50:48.8 XXXX: That's fine, that's fine, that's fine, XXXX. Alright.

0:50:52.0 XXXX: Oh, yeah. And please send us your consent form as well, sorry.

0:50:56.1 XXXX: Okay, okay, okay, I will send it through some energy-efficient methodology.

0:51:03.4 XXXX: That's... Yeah.

[laughter]

0:51:07.9 XXXX: Excellent, energy-efficient and solar-powered.

0:51:12.5 XXXX: Yes, yes, yes, okay, bye.

0:51:15.9 XXXX: Okay, bye.