0:00:00.0 Speaker 1: So you're recording for whose voice, me or you?

0:00:03.1 Speaker 2: Both of us.

0:00:03.8 Speaker 1: What is it that I said?

0:00:08.0 Speaker 2: Don't worry, if there is anything that you don't want to say, don't say it. Just a brief about the research that we are doing, we are doing this in partnership with Leeds University in the UK. And so we are trying to assess what's the level of gender equity in Ghana when it comes to energy access. Is it just benefiting men or is it... Energy access is it also... Is it equally distributed between men and women? And if it is not, who benefits more? Who makes most of the decisions? And then, how can we make certain improvements? We will start by you introducing yourself, I've already introduced myself.

0:00:52.1 S1: If I will understand what you are saying, you want to say, is there equality between man and woman?

0:01:02.6 S2: Yes.

0:01:03.1 S1: Okay. That is the whole thing?

0:01:06.5 S2: Yes. Because it's coming from the perspective that we've realized these days the voices of women are sometimes not taken into account as much as men. When it comes to... Especially when it comes to decision-making. In most cases... I'm not saying for now... In energy sector, we are now trying to assess it. But in most cases, we see that it's usually the men who are always in front, making all the decisions. We're trying to assess and see whether it's the same in the energy sector or is it evenly distributed, equally distributed between men and women. We'll start by... I've already introduced myself, so if you could briefly introduce yourself.

0:01:55.5 S1: I will just mention my name.

0:01:58.9 S2: Okay. Yeah, right. Your name?

0:02:02.0 S1: My name is XXXX.

0:02:02.1 S2: XXXX.

0:02:02.2 S1: XXXX.

0:02:05.2 S2: XXXX. Okay. So XXXX XXXX. When it comes to energy access in Ghana, are there any government policies that you think is benefiting your business right now?

0:02:19.0 S1: For that one, I may not say that government has anything that is benefit our business as an individual. Because when you look at Ghana here, we don't have anything like that. If you are doing your business... Before maybe you can say you have something in common with the government that would benefit, maybe you have an incorporation with the government. But as a private sector here, there's no way. You do it yourself, you go in. If there is anything that you have to buy, you go in to the government to buy from them. If there is any discount, then they will give to you. But to say any benefit is there, I don't think so. But once you're a Ghanaian, you're in Ghana there, we're all benefiting from what the government will introduce or will bring out.

0:03:12.4 S2: Okay. In terms of equity or equality between men and women in the Ghanaian context, would you say there is a level of equity between men and women? How would you describe the relationship?

0:03:30.7 S1: Okay. When it comes to Ghana here, I may say women, we are benefiting small. Not small, most. Because I remember from the time of President JJ Rawlings. He said that, "What man can do, woman can also do." From that time, and he was just forcing the parents to send their girl children to school. And from that time, I may say that women, we're also coming in power. And now women are coming into power. In Ghana here, in Ghana. Even though men are taking the lead, they are leading still, in everything. But I think it's okay for women for now, from the time of President Rawlings. That is what I can say about him.

0:04:14.9 S2: If I understand you, that education policy is actually what made women to become empowered...

0:04:23.1 S1: To become more empowered today in Ghana. Here in Ghana, I may say that because I'm a Ghanaian. I'm in Ghana, I've not travelled anywhere. But for Ghana here, now women, we are benefiting most. Not all, but most. Because now women also... We have a lot of men in parliament and there are a lot of women in ministry, so I think it's helping. It's helping. Now, every Ghanaian woman, most of Ghanaian women are educated.

0:04:57.9 S2: Okay. That's a very good observation. We've done a lot of interviews but I've never seen... I've never heard anybody make reference to the education aspect, as one of the policies that has... I think that's very good.

0:05:12.3 S1: Most of them, most. I may say maybe if we have 100%, we may have 70% of women...

0:05:17.8 S2: Who are educated?

0:05:19.2 S1: Educated. Yes.

0:05:19.6 S2: That's great. That's a significant improvement. Would you say that has improved the equity or equality of women being able to get access to electricity? That education level, has it improved women's ability to access electricity?

0:05:40.1 S1: To access electricity? Okay. For electricity, that's why I always... For this man, I will always mention his name. Rawlings, I will always mention his name, President Rawlings. I will always mention his name, because I remember that I was very young girl, that I remember that Rawlings was... He was trying to bring electricity to everywhere in Ghana here. I can remember that that time we were in [0:06:06.2] \_\_\_\_ area, where we were there and we would see the electricity it's direct from Akosombo, it was very interesting. And that day, the whole town or I may say, the whole city was just...

0:06:19.3 S2: Excited.

0:06:21.0 S1: Excited. Yeah from that man time, everywhere, most of Ghanaians we have electricity. The man sent electricity into even the villages. Most of the villages are now having lights.

0:06:33.6 S2: Electricity?

0:06:35.1 S1: Yes. I think whether man or women, we're all enjoying it.

0:06:40.3 S2: Okay. You wouldn't say it benefits women more than men or it benefits men...

0:06:45.1 S1: No, no, no, no. I may not say that. I may not say that it benefits women more than men. No, it's equality.

0:06:47.5 S2: Okay.

0:07:00.6 S1: Because I have never seen someone say because I'm a woman leading this town, because of that, we don't have electricity. No, no, no, no, I've never heard that.

0:07:01.4 S2: Okay, but you talked about the level of education, but apart from that, do you think that maybe the differences in women's income levels or their age also affect their ability to access electricity, 'cause you talked about about 70% of women being educated which means there're still about 30% who are not that educated? Do these things have any effect on women's ability to access electricity?

0:07:31.3 S1: For that area, because of lack of education they don't have the access to electricity there, no, it's never true, it's never like that. That's why I'm saying that from that man, that president's time, everybody is having electricity. Everybody is having electricity.

0:07:49.4 S2: Okay. Both men and women.

0:07:50.5 S1: All of us, whether you are educated or you're not educated, you enjoy electricity.

0:07:56.3 S2: Let's take infrastructure for instance. Like you mentioned Rawlings, extending electricity to many other communities. Sometimes we also see street lights being provided. When this infrastructure is provided, whether it's street lights for instance, do you think it benefits women more than men or men benefit more than women?

0:08:19.4 S1: For the street light?

0:08:19.7 S2: Yes. For instance?

0:08:24.4 S1: For instance, I may say, women we benefit more than men. Why am I saying that, because of the hawkers.

0:08:31.3 S2: Those who sell at the roadside.

0:08:32.4 S1: Who sell. Sometimes the kinkin sellers, you see that sometimes we used to sell kinkin in the night and [0:08:38.1] \_\_\_\_, so I may say women benefit from the street light more than the men.

0:08:43.9 S2: I think that men also sell.

0:08:45.4 S1: Yeah, men also sell, but you will see them selling shoes and those things but that one, if it is night, they don't sell in the night, but it seems like, nowadays both. That's I'm saying that, not men nor women, we are all enjoying the electricity, but if it's say, you can say margin, I may women, but they have it...

0:09:02.1 S2: Women benefit more.

0:09:03.0 S1: But we are all enjoying because for example when you go to like Lapas and Aseko, the men they don't sleep at night, because of this street light, they used to sell...

0:09:17.6 S2: There also. Okay.

0:09:18.8 S1: So we're all enjoying. Both, both men and women, so I don't think that other side is benefiting more from the...

0:09:23.8 S2: Let's talk about decision-making. Let's say at the household level, who usually make most of the decisions when it comes to how much electricity do we buy, what do we use the electricity for?

0:09:38.7 S1: That one, I may say, it's men.

0:09:42.0 S2: It's the men who make the decisions, mostly.

0:09:42.0 S1: Because most of men, they pay the electricity, they pay for all the facilities in the house. Electricity and the water, so I may say men. Men are the people who decide that we will buy maybe...

0:09:58.4 S2: This amount for this month.

0:09:58.6 S1: This amount this month. I will say it's the men.

0:09:58.7 S2: Okay, how about energy for cooking, like wood fuel, gas and others, who make the decisions about those ones?

0:10:08.8 S1: For gas and wood fuel, but that one it's the women, because it's not the man who is cooking, so I know that if I fill the gas, maybe full... This... How do you call it? Cylinder, it takes me for about one month or two months, but you the man, you may not know, so it's me. Though it's you who is giving the money out, but it's me, but it's me who is telling you that let's do it like this. So when it comes to that, it's the women.

0:10:38.2 S2: But if you take it to the community level, who usually make the decisions, if you take, let's say Adenta community, we want to provide street lights, is it men who usually make the decision or is...

0:10:52.9 S1: Yes, it's the men because it's the assembly men and the MPs. So that's the men because... That's why I'm saying that even though the men are still leading but the women, we are coming, because when you look at, when you go inside into the politics and look at the MPs, most of the MPs, they are men. Most of them are men. So when it comes to decision in public meeting, it's the men.

0:11:19.9 S2: But do you sometimes see women participating at the community, at the national level?

0:11:25.0 S1: A lot, a lot, a lot, a lot, in Ghana here, a lot. But now the women too they have put themselves inside the politics very very very well. Because this man, the president, JJ Rawlings said, what man can do, woman can also do. So which we have tried it and we have seen that it's true, what man can do, woman can also do. So these days, the women we are coming, we are coming.

0:11:52.4 S2: Oh, okay. The women are coming.

0:11:54.0 S1: Yeah, we are coming very hard. We are coming, we're trying, because now the women are also trying when it comes to political side.

0:12:04.1 S2: In terms of that level of participation, if you take the MPs or even the assembly men, do you say... How would you distribute it in terms of percentage? Who constitute the majority of percentage?

0:12:19.2 S1: So I may say men because we go inside parliament, we will see that the men are still plenty than the women, so men. Yeah.

0:12:35.1 S2: But do you also think there is a difference between urban women and rural women in terms of access to electricity? Or is it the same... Do they have the same access?

0:12:50.5 S1: We are all having the same access of using... Is it not about the using... No, we're all having the same access. The urban and the rural, nobody is cheating each other, we're all electricity.

0:12:58.3 S2: So in terms of your... In distributing the... In selling out the electricity, is there any aspect aspect of it that you consider like women more than men, is there any gender consideration?

0:13:19.3 S1: No, no, no, no.

0:13:19.4 S2: No gender. Okay. But do you think Ghana's energy policies, they favour... They are gender sensitive? Do they favour women or do they favour men in terms of our energy policy? For instance, recently there was the PDS issue where government wanted to privatize the electricity and during the COVID era too, government introduced a policy that they wanted to pay the electricity for, was it three months or so for some households. Do you think some of these policies, they consider the need... Government consider the needs of women or they just introduced the policies...

0:14:05.7 S1: No, they just introduced, they didn't considered the needs of women.

0:14:06.8 S2: Okay.

0:14:06.9 S1: In Ghana here, we don't have anything like that. That when it comes to something for benefit we say because women... No, no, no, no. Women should enjoy it more than the men, no. This is inequality. Everything is unequal.

0:14:17.0 S2: Okay. But do you think government should, in terms of some of these policies, they should... There is a need for us to consider the specific needs of women in any way. For instance, you mentioned earlier that in a household level, when it comes to cooking, it's usually the women who are in charge, they know how much to use and all of that. The man would just give you the money without knowing whether it will be enough or not, they just give you the money and you have to decide. Do you think in terms of that area, government can do something that would help the women?

0:14:57.1 S1: No one there.

0:14:58.1 S2: You are not?

0:15:00.7 S1: I'm not sure.

0:15:00.8 S2: Oh, okay.

0:15:03.4 S1: I'm not sure. [chuckle] I'm not sure in this one, no, no, no, no. I'm not sure.

0:15:09.7 S2: Okay. Alright.

0:15:12.5 S1: I'm not sure, the Ghana government can do that.

0:15:15.2 S2: Oh, Okay. But let's talk about gaps in general, in terms of electricity provision, energy provision, are there any gaps that you see that you think the government can address?

0:15:27.3 S1: The gaps like?

0:15:28.1 S2: Any problems that exist that you think government should address.

0:15:36.8 S1: What I would say is about, now the electricity is increasing.

0:15:39.7 S2: Okay.

0:15:40.1 S1: It's increasing, the tariff is increasing very high. It's like first, before we entered into the COVID, I've realized it's expensive. Like when you buy, maybe 50 Ghana, it will take you for about one month. It depends on your this thing that you are using. It can take you for one month. Those who are buying the 100, it would take them for one month. But these days, maybe I'm saying is, those who are buying the 50 is now taking them, sometimes it's taking them four days, sometimes one week. So, it's far, the difference is very far. Because if I can buy 50 Ghana and I use it for maybe one month. And now I'm buying 50 Ghana and I'm using it for one week.

0:16:24.4 S2: Okay, yeah. There is a big gap in that...

0:16:31.8 S1: It's a very, very big gap.

0:16:33.2 S2: But that gap do you think it affects women more than men, or...

0:16:34.8 S1: It's affecting both.

0:16:37.5 S2: Everybody.

0:16:37.6 S1: Yes.

0:16:38.1 S2: Okay. So what would you suggest the government should do about that tariffs?

0:16:48.4 S1: That one, if the government can come in, maybe if the electricity people cannot do anything about it, then government can come in and then take maybe half of it for the country and the citizens also each we can take maybe half. So that the burden would get small. Because maybe the ECG they may say that they could not do anything about it. But government at least... Maybe, I'm not saying it should, because I don't know much about Ghana's economy. So I may say maybe... Maybe it can do something.

0:17:25.4 S2: Maybe it can do something... Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's understandable. Okay. If there were no financial constraints or policy challenges, what would you want to see women do in terms of the electricity sector?

0:17:43.9 S1: You say the what?

0:17:45.1 S2: If there were no any challenges, what would you want to see women do in the energy sector or electricity sector? How would you want to see women participating?

0:18:00.1 S1: For example, what I'm saying that the tariff was raised up.

0:18:02.7 S2: Yeah.

0:18:03.3 S1: Maybe women can rise up and say that, "Oh now the tariffs are raised up, government should do something about it."

0:18:09.9 S2: Okay.

0:18:10.7 S1: That is what maybe we can say. But once the thing has become a general thing. Both men and women... Women cannot just stand up and just talk about it and say... Because we are not alone paying, because when we going into some family, women doesn't pay electricity at all, it's the men that are taking that burden. The water, that's what I'm saying... The water and the ECG, most of the Ghanaian houses it's the men that take... Women cannot just stand up and say that, this and that and that. But what we can... Unless [0:18:44.9] \_\_\_\_.

0:18:45.0 S2: Okay. Do you think that it's a cultural thing or it's a financial challenge that men make the decisions, men take charge of the payment, do you think it is more to do with women's lack of finance, or is it the culture that dictates?

0:19:04.5 S1: I may say it is the culture because, see... That's why I said president Rawlings came to change that thing. By the time, because the time we were coming, they taught us that it's the man, as the head of the family. Men are the head of the family, so because of that, that let men take that all... How do you call it? That responsibility, upon themselves. To the time now women... What men can do, women can also do. Now it's like, it's as if the thing has become an equality because, now men can pay for electricity, women also can pay for the electricity. Because most of the families... I may say most of the families now Ghanaian world, if a man is going to marry a woman, and the woman is not working, he doesn't want to marry the woman. Because he say, "The woman cannot help me." For taking care of his house, so now all the men are looking for women...

0:20:08.7 S2: Who are educated?

0:20:09.5 S1: Who are educated or who are working.

0:20:12.0 S2: Who are working.

0:20:12.7 S1: So that when they're married to them they can help them in their responsibility. So now I may say that the responsibilities that the men are taking, the women also are taking it. But it seems like that one it has hide. The reason... It's not hide automatically. But the reason I'm saying that that one has hide because we know the man is the head of the family. When the women is taking that responsibility, it doesn't come out, unless the woman who would say it's me. Unless the woman herself come out and say it's me who is taking the responsibility in the house. That one is not possible that a woman would just stand up and just say... Unless maybe there is some issue that is going on in the family before you will see the woman coming out saying that, "I am taking the responsibility in the house."

0:21:09.4 S2: Okay. That's very, very interesting. I've never really looked at it from that specific cultural perspective. Yeah, I always thought, if the woman has the money and she'll be able to do it, she can be the head of the family.

0:21:29.9 S1: Sure. She can be the head of the family.

0:21:33.5 S2: Yeah?

0:21:34.1 S1: She can be the head of the family but not... How do I say it? Naturally. It's not naturally. Though she can be the head of the family but it can never be naturally. I may say is... Should I say temporal or something like that. Because when the woman is taking the responsibility in the house. This is just when it comes to a time, the woman will start complaining. She will start complaining. "It's me alone who is doing that, and this, and that, and that and that." But when a man is taking care of the family, there is no complaint. Complaint doesn't come out much. You will not hear that because he knows that it is his responsibility to take care of his house. Because if he's going to marry the woman, that is what they told him, that "It is written in the bible, bible said that a man would take his wife and they go somewhere and they become one body or something like that." It's not a woman who would go and take a man, it's the man. No matter what when the woman is taking care, she can never be the head. She can never.

0:21:43.9 S2: Okay.

0:22:42.9 S1: No, no, no, no. Your taking care or taking the responsibility in the house does not make you a head of the family. No, it's not written like that. It's not written like that.

0:22:52.5 S2: Speaking specifically in that cultural context, in some other discussions that we've had with other people, there is this notion that even though women may have the capacity but they still don't... We are still not giving women the position at the national level in the ministerial...

0:23:18.4 S1: No, no, no, no, no, no. Because even Ghana here, if a women stand up right now and say I want to be a president, it's going to be very difficult.

0:23:26.5 S2: It is going to be?

0:23:27.7 S1: Very difficult.

0:23:28.6 S2: Okay.

0:23:29.4 S1: To be a president, like a woman say, "I want to be a president. Vote for me." For now, it's going to be something very difficult because even the country the... How do I say? The Ghanaians would cry would think that, Ah [0:23:43.3] \_\_\_\_. You understand me? How would you allow a woman to come and take... It's going, it will be...

0:23:53.3 S2: Very difficult.

0:23:56.1 S1: Very difficult. Something to be... Unless, maybe God...

0:24:08.2 S2: [laughter] Unless God intervenes.

0:24:08.3 S1: Yes. Unless God intervenes. But for the vice president, a woman can do. Attorney General, a woman can do. But even Attorney General, I think once, a woman has been Attorney General in Ghana here, if I'm not mistaken.

0:24:24.7 S2: Yeah, I think so.

0:24:25.4 S1: Yeah, it was once. Look at all the history, only once a woman has been Attorney General. Why? If a woman can be a president, we can have woman Attorney General, woman, woman, woman for now.

0:24:37.1 S2: Would you want to see women in some of these positions more?

0:24:46.3 S1: Very, very. I want a woman come to be a president.

0:24:48.7 S2: Okay.

0:24:49.0 S1: I want a woman to be a president but last time I was saying something to a friend and we were all laughing. I was saying that, does she know the reason why the world has become difficult? And he said "No." And I said, "Because now women have money than men. That is why." [laughter] We are all laughing. And he said, "Why is it that if women have money than men, it makes the world difficult?" And I said, "If a man has money, he can marry about four or five or women. Addition to girlfriends and those at home. He spreads out the money. But if a woman has money, I can't go for two men. I will only keep it inside my house, within myself. It makes the world difficult."

0:25:20.8 S2: Very difficult. I understand you.

0:25:37.7 S1: Because the money is not spreaded out.

0:25:40.1 S2: The money is not going out.

0:25:40.8 S1: Yes. You just let the men, because now women they have money. Look at the cars that they are riding, women have money. Though man they have the money, but women have money, I tell you. The women have the money. So that's why the world...

0:25:57.8 S2: That's very interesting.

0:25:58.8 S1: If a woman become president, though it's good, it's nice, I like it, as a woman, I may like it. In some ways, Ghana is going to be very difficult. Because it's not easy for a woman... We think before we use our money. We think before we use our money, we don't just stand up and use the money. If a man come and say, "Madam president, this and that we want... " The woman would just sit down and say, "Is this one going to benefit us? If we will not benefit, we will not do it. If this one is going to benefit, if we will not benefit, then we will not do it." In some ways it's going to be challenging.

0:26:41.5 S2: Challenging. Yeah. Okay. I understand. What do you think can be done to get women into Energy Commission, for instance, the Executive Director of Energy Commission, for instance, being a woman. What can we do to enhance women's growth...

0:27:00.2 S1: Yes. You see women, sometimes they fear. The fear also worries us that as I'm going to be a head over all these men. Fear is one of our problem. If the men can encourage the women the more, that you can do it. You can do it. Once you're educated, once you have an opinion or an idea about it, you can do it. If the encouragements grows more, I think we can do more than this one. Please, I'm coming now.

0:27:35.2 S2: Okay, these are all the questions that we have.

0:27:36.1 S1: So you have finished your questions?

0:27:37.5 S2: Yes.

0:27:40.9 S1: We need to be encouraged more, even though we have come a lot but there's more for us to be done in the side of the women.

0:27:55.2 S2: Okay. Thank you very much for your time, thank you very much for your insights. I really appreciate it. Maybe later I will be coming around for us to talk more.

0:28:02.1 S1: Okay.

0:28:02.5 S2: About how to distribute the money... Redistribute the money to the men so that the world become nice again. To not be challenging again.

0:28:12.1 S1: Anymore.

0:28:13.4 S2: Thank you very much.

0:28:14.5 S1: You are welcome.