**CONFIDENTIAL**

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Interviewer(s):

Respondent(s):

**INT: So just to give you a brief background of the project, so we are doing this project as more of a research project on equitable energy access and gender mainstreaming. So we are trying to look at the current state of energy access in Ghana, and what are the sort of policies that are influencing this energy access, and how can we mainstream gender equity into energy access in Ghana. So we are doing this in partnership with Angela Ruskin University and Leeds Beckett University, all in the UK. So if you could give me a brief background of yourself and your organisation, and then what energy issues that you're currently working on? I know you mentioned earlier about the oil and gas, so if you could tell us more about that project, and how you are also going about it.**

RES: Oh yes, okay. Is the topic energy access?

**INT: Yes please.**

RES: Access to energy by the individuals, both genders, is it?

**INT: Yes please.**

RES: Yes, energy access in Ghana -

**INT: For now, if you could give me a brief background of yourself, your organisation, and the project that you are working on.**

RES: Okay, yes. You know my name already, [unclear 00:02:05] say it again?

**INT: That will be great. [Laughs]**

RES: [Laughs] Yes, I'm XXXX [unclear 00:02:13]. I'm the XXXX of XXXX. We are into the equitable exploitation of our natural resources for the benefit of society. Equitable exploitation of our natural resources [s/l extending 00:03:04] a fair share of the natural resources for Ghana.

**INT: How long have you been working with the XXXX?**

RES: Yes, this is the XXXX, it’s an offspring of XXXX and Security, and we started our campaign with XXXXto adopt [unclear 00:03:55] and fair distribution of income generated [s/l thereof 00:04:02] between Ghanaians and foreigners [unclear 00:04:09]. That’s where we started from, and then along the line we decided to break off from the Institute on the [s/l regards 00:04:29] of policy, [unclear 00:04:33] policy [unclear 00:04:34] of [unclear 00:04:39] on regards of policy [over talking 00:04:42] moral issues. So we decided to form the Centre for XXXX when we realised that the [unclear 00:05:00] one of the pristine ecosystem, [unclear 00:05:17] ecosystem that is almost [unclear 00:05:21] and [unclear 00:05:25], and you know the [s/l Southern 00:05:29] water [s/l regime 00:05:30], or South East Ghana, South Eastern Ghana, comprising of the lower water estuary [unclear 00:05:44] generated at an international [unclear 00:05:54] site.

**INT: [Unclear 00:05:54] site, yes.**

RES: So we realised this area [unclear 00:05:59] open for oil exploration, so we decided to form the XXXX, to advocate ideas the exploration [unclear 00:06:16] we realised that the South Eastern portion of Ghana comprises of [unclear 00:06:26] to the [unclear 00:06:31] water, which is [unclear 00:06:35] site has an alternative use, [s/l which 00:06:42] would be more sustainable to - or sustainable against - what do you call it? - oil exploration. Oil exploration [unclear 00:06:55] 20 years, 30 years, the place would be destroyed.

**INT: So when it comes to energy issues, you are specifically working on oil and gas exploration -**

RES: Oil and gas exploration, but we have an idea about solar, and then - how do you call it? - [unclear 00:07:32]. So at the moment, for example, [unclear 00:07:38] we have [s/l a kind of 00:07:43] energy generation plant, which is going on at the moment there. At the same time, that area I'm talking about has the greatest potential for generation of wind power, because the force there is [unclear 00:08:20] to be harnessed for generation of electricity, or energy. So we have an idea about that too.

**INT: So if I understand, in summary, you are working to ensure sustainable energy, energy access and energy use?**

RES: Yes, sustainable energy use, and for the protection of the environment.

**INT: So when we talk about equitable energy access, how would you describe it?**

RES: At the moment, the energy access in the country has not been equitable [over talking 00:09:18] access [unclear 00:09:21] equitable, but it all depends on distribution, and then the ability to - what do you call it? - [s/l extend 00:09:34] power to your house and pay. So we say energy access has actually improved a lot during the PNDC era [over talking 00:09:55] -

**INT: That’s from the 1990s?**

RES: [00:09:57] Yes, 1990s, energy access actually improved, and then [unclear 00:10:06] if we travel round the country, as we - we've done a lot of travel around the South Eastern part of Ghana, and realised that almost a whole lot of villages or small, small towns have power, so that you realise that women [unclear 00:10:35] seamstresses, sewing, have electric sewing machines [over talking 00:10:44]. [Unclear 00:10:46] when we come to gender, what I’ll say is, the women in the rural areas have been able to access power to sell - what do you call it? - soft drinks, [unclear 00:11:07] - how do you call it? - to power their electric sewing machines. So I would say that in that respect, access to energy [unclear 00:11:25] in the South Eastern part of Ghana has actually improved.

**INT: Just on the gender issue, how would you describe gender equity in energy access?**

RES: Yes, that’s right, gender equity, that is the thing, male and female isn’t it?

**INT: Yes, exactly.**

RES: That’s what I described, that what we have realised, or what we have noticed on our [s/l rounds 00:12:03] in the [unclear 00:12:05] South Eastern part of Ghana, we see electricity in almost every local corner. We see women who run very small [unclear 00:12:19] shops, have electricity extended into them for their trade. So I would say it has actually - gender has benefited both ways, both male and female.

**INT: Okay, but if you look at the specifically in the - I mean, the gender distribution, or the women’s level of access, would you say there are differences between rich women and then poorer women, or rural women and urban women, in terms of their access to energy?**

RES: Yes. When you come to the women, those women who have access to energy to run their small, small shops, you really find that from the way they dress [unclear 00:13:32] you realise that they are more affluent, which is an indication that they might be a little more educated, they have some financial [s/l muscle 00:13:49] to be able to extend power to their small, small [s/l kiosks 00:13:55], and the - what do you call it? - small, small kiosks or shops, to run their small, small business. So I would say the trades, both male and female, what we have discovered is there seems to be almost an equal distribution between both genders. That’s what we have realised when we have toured almost the South Eastern part of Ghana, which has been our project area, and then [unclear 00:14:36] when you come to the big towns, [s/l formerly 00:14:41] you realise that even in the slums areas where people live in [unclear 00:14:50], [s/l formerly 00:14:51] there used to be no electricity, but now when you go to the slum areas, you realise that the [unclear 00:15:01] 20 to 30 [unclear 00:15:05] in that area have been able to install electricity in their [unclear 00:15:11]. They all, they come together, and then extend power to where they live, and then they have a common meter, they all, at the end of the month, they contribute to pay, depending upon whether [unclear 00:15:34] if you have a fridge, television, or [unclear 00:15:42]. So you have a rate to pay, [unclear 00:15:46] light and then the electric fridge freezer or [s/l fridge 00:15:50], you have the rate to pay. So I would say even in the slum areas, in the big towns, they have [unclear 00:16:00] got access to electricity by - especially by the lower class of the society who live in this [unclear 00:16:14] in the slum areas. But now where I live, you have about three or four plots of land which people have rented out to [unclear 00:16:31], and they are able to contribute, to contribute power [unclear 00:16:39] to extend power [unclear 00:16:42] to their [unclear 00:16:43 - 00:16:50]. So I would say that from my observations, and then on my [s/l rounds 00:16:59], I've realised that power distribution between gender access, irrespective of whether it’s male or female, is becoming equitable.

**INT: In terms of benefit, between men and women, who do you think benefit the more? Like, when power or energy infrastructure is provided, who do you think benefit the most? Is it men or women?**

RES: It’s very difficult to say men or anything, it’s very difficult to say that, because accessibility depends on location, accessibility to power depends on location of the place. That’s why now, I say what we have observed in the slum areas, where the [unclear 00:18:11] are, they come together, no matter how far - if the [unclear 00:18:22] about two - [unclear 00:18:26] two poles away from the main line, [unclear 00:18:32] as much as possible, both men and women come together to contribute to extend the power to their [unclear 00:18:42].

**INT: So when that electricity is provided, does it benefit women more than men, or men benefit more than women?**

RES: I cannot [over talking 00:18:56] that, because most of the time, in those areas, you find both men and women living together, you find both men and women living together. You hardly find a woman without a man [unclear 00:19:20]. So if I want to say the intrinsic value or the intrinsic value, it’s the women [s/l who 00:19:43] gain a lot. Why? Because sometimes they're able to, or their husbands are able to afford a small fridge-freezer or a [unclear 00:20:00], which - they sell ice water to make a living, they - how do you call it? - they store their little - their food that they can afford for [unclear 00:20:15]. So it helps the women not to go to the market so often. So that’s what I'm referring to as intrinsic, or [unclear 00:20:26] value.

**INT: So in terms of decision making, in terms of how to use the electricity, what kind of energy to use, whether it’s wood fuel or gas, who do you think is usually in charge of those decisions? Is it men or women, if you take at the household level?**

RES: Well, at the household level, it’s the women who are in charge. It’s the women who are in charge of - yes, for example, if they have to make [unclear 00:21:18] soup, they realise that it is cheaper to use charcoal, or charcoal and gas, but they might have the gas, more gas to - but they realise that then they have to make a [unclear 00:21:37] soup, they have to use [unclear 00:21:41] soup or cooking of beans, they have to use - the women make decision to use charcoal, and then use the charcoal to make the soup or cook the beans. But when it comes to heating, they use gas.

**INT: So these are based on your observations in your project area, right?**

RES: Yes, these are my observations on my rounds [unclear 00:22:10], yes.

**INT: So talking about the role of women, to what extent does your organisation, to what extent do you factor gender equity into your work? Do you usually consider gender equity as an important aspect of -**

RES: Yes, we do. For example, in the South Eastern part of Ghana, where we are mostly concentrated, women are the most vulnerable people of the society, who depend a lot on the natural resources of the environment to make a living.

**INT: Okay, so you always factor their need into your work?**

RES: Yes, we do.

**INT: So how effective has that been? Has it improved the livelihoods of these women?**

RES: Since we have been advocating ideas [unclear 00:23:36] oil and gas in that area in the South Eastern part of Ghana, we realised that the women are more understanding and conscious of the impact [unclear 00:23:59] will have on them, and [unclear 00:24:02] realise at our social gatherings, [unclear 00:24:06] women contribute and understand the issue more than the men.

**INT: That’s great. Okay, so let’s talk a little bit about policy issues. Do you think Ghana’s energy policies are gender-sensitive?**

RES: [Pause] This is a very tricky question.

**INT: [Laughs] Let me put it this way, so you talked about during the PNDC era, we saw a lot of the expansion in energy access through the rural electrification programme or policies.**

RES: Yes.

**INT: We've also seen some renewable energy policies, we've seen oil and gas exploration and exploitation increase, and we've seen a national agenda in these directions. But do you think in these considerations, government usually take into account the needs of women in developing these policies, whether it’s electricity, or oil and gas, or charcoal, or any of these policies?**

RES: [Unclear 00:25:24] realise and can notice, and when government is taking decision on, they actually consider women in their policy decision. Their policy [unclear 00:25:42] and overall to embrace everybody. So if they're extending electricity, they want to extend electricity [unclear 00:25:55]. They think about everybody, and not gender [unclear 00:26:04]. That’s what I have noticed.

**INT: Do you think it’s important for us to consider - for government to consider the needs of women when developing these policies?**

RES: The needs of women, what are the needs of women? That’s the question. The needs of women in terms of energy, [unclear 00:26:37] the house, cooking, and then apply energy to their trade, if they have a small shop, and they're a seamstress, they can use the electric sewing machines and all that. So honestly I do not see or realise government taking into consideration women only in their policy direction. Yes, it’s just an omnibus policy they make with the realisation that it will benefit both sexes, or both genders. That’s what I have realised.

**INT: But do you think such policymaking has got some barriers?**

RES: The barrier would be, or the limiting factor -

**INT: If I'm to rephrase, are there any gaps you see with this approach to policymaking, this holistic approach?**

RES: No, I don’t see any gaps. If the policy is omnibus, it’s for the benefit of both genders, for male and females. But when it comes to accessibility, it depends on your financial [s/l muscle 00:28:43] [unclear 00:28:46] your financial muscle, to be able to reap from the omnibus policy put forward by government. That’s the way I see it.

**INT: So I know you already talked about women having equal access or a fair access to energy, but do you also think there are certain things that we can do, or government can do, to mainstream gender equity into our energy policies?**

RES: No, gender equity, it’s - [unclear 00:29:34] some of the policies we adopt, this country does not discriminate against gender. So when you come to issues like the utilities, when it comes to [unclear 00:29:54] water, electricity, which are very important, government policy does not discriminate anybody. [00:30:08] But what I see as a limitation to individuals is financial, yes, it’s financial, it’s financial of the individual, to be able to access energy, it’s all financial, [unclear 00:30:36] financial.

**INT: So would you say in formulating these policies, government should take into account people’s financial abilities? Do you think that is something that we need to address, a gap that needs to be addressed?**

RES: No, I don’t think [unclear 00:30:53] they have to say, if you are a politician [unclear 00:31:01] something like, if you are a woman who wanted to access energy or power to your house, [unclear 00:31:09] -

**INT: [Laughs]**

RES: - [unclear 00:31:14], it will not actually work properly, [unclear 00:31:22].

**INT: Okay, that’s great. So at the national level, how balanced would you say is the gender representation, say at the ministries, at the cabinet level or the parliamentary level, even at the district level, do you see an equal gender representation at these decision-making levels?**

RES: In respect of energy?

**INT: In respect of energy.**

RES: Not - I don’t see - [unclear 00:32:05] more men, more men are involved in the decision making at the top level, but when it comes to the lower level, [unclear 00:32:23] electricity [unclear 00:32:26], you see women at the lower level, but [unclear 00:32:33] both in the lower level at district. But when it comes to the higher level, the [unclear 00:32:46] which involve decision making, requires some amount of technical knowledge, the men are more determinant than the women.

**INT: So probably the last two questions on finance specifically. So we know there are certain mechanisms, especially for renewable energy, solar, wind, and others, like, we have certain national financial tools. There is also the Green Climate Fund and other financial institutions that are providing, I mean, loans and subgrants. Do you think these financial instruments are gender-sensitive?**

RES: [Unclear 00:33:49] -

**INT: You don’t - yes. [Laughs]**

RES: That’s again very difficult [s/l to answer this 00:33:56] at our level, because what I've observed is, women are not as engineering conscious as men. So when it comes to that level, the person must have technical knowledge and an engineering background to know, let’s say, how solar energy power is generated. But when it comes to wind, the person must know what type of wind turbines [unclear 00:34:54] to install. So it is a highly technical [unclear 00:34:58] you find less women [unclear 00:35:02] men who are involved at this level, probably you might not find even one woman in the top echelon of [unclear 00:35:21] who is [unclear 00:35:26] generation of [unclear 00:35:31] type of energy.

**INT: You talked about sustainable energy earlier, and one other thing that we are looking at is energy transition. So we know that Ghana is still a bit more dependent, is getting more and more dependent on oil and gas, yes, natural gas, LPG. Do you see - but we also see in the rural area, the majority of people still depend on wood fuels, on charcoal.**

RES: [s/l Exactly 00:36:10].

**INT: Do you see any transition from these non-sustainable sources to more renewable sources? If you take, like, the last 10 years, have you seen any improvement?**

RES: Yes, there have been a lot of improvements in that respect. When this - how do you call it? - vaporisation of the use of, let’s say, [s/l distribution 00:36:48] of LPG was made - formerly it was the big oil [unclear 00:37:01] country had monopoly, so the use of especially LPG for domestic use was only limited to the urban and the very urban areas. [Unclear 00:37:32] the liberalisation where gas stations have been allowed to set up across the country. Yes, LPG, the use of LPG has actually improved, has actually improved in the rural areas. But the problem is the issue of safety, a lot of people fear the use of gas in the rural areas, [unclear 00:38:12] the ability to access the capital for the purchase of the initial equipment, let’s say gas bottles or a small gas cooker, has been a problem to those in the rural areas. But most of the rural areas still depend on charcoal, and then wood fuel. You’d be surprised that even in the urban areas, the charcoal trade - yes, especially charcoal - is really booming, because a lot of people are very sceptical about the use of gas. They fear the use of gas. So the charcoal business, wood fuel business is still booming in the urban areas, because most people use it, especially - even in the affluent homes too, they use the charcoal.

**INT: So would you say, from your perspective, Ghana, or the government of Ghana, is committed to ensuring sustainable energy transition? [00:40:00]**

RES: Oh yes, they say they are.

**INT: [Laughs]**

RES: They say they are, but we don’t actually [unclear 00:40:16] our policymakers, they make a lot of promises which are not fulfilled. [Unclear 00:40:32] So at the moment they say they are committed to making sure every home has power, access to power, but what is happening is, the cost is prohibitive too, when - if you're able to, let’s say, connect power to your house or to your [unclear 00:41:11], you find the rates, the cost, the rate is very high. It tends [unclear 00:41:19] the level of income [unclear 00:41:24]. Most often they will tell you that electricity is cheaper than the neighbouring countries, but the level of income [unclear 00:41:41]. Now, for example - I’ll give you an example. To export energy to our neighbouring countries, the cost of generation in Ghana is higher than the cost of generation in our neighbouring countries, do you see?

**INT: Yes.**

RES: The cost of generation per kilowatt of power in Ghana is higher than in Ivory Coast and Togo and Guinea. So what we do here is, we have to reduce our [unclear 00:42:30] price to them to be compatible with what rate is, what they have in their country, before we can export. [s/l That’s 00:42:46] what we are doing.

**INT: That’s great. Okay, so I think these are the questions I had. I don’t know if you have any other comments you would want to add, something that you think we need to consider in this research? So we've talked a little bit about equitable access, we've talked about the gender distribution, we've talked about the decision making, and then we've also talked about the policy level, the policy sensitivity to gender. We've talked a little bit about the existing gaps and barriers. Is there anything that you think we need to consider when we are talking about energy access in Ghana?**

RES: [Unclear 00:43:40] I've already said it. The energy access, the limitation factor to individual is financial, it’s mostly financial. Yes, it’s mostly financial, and then the government policies, government policies, which is also financial. The power generators who come and say, “We need to increase our [s/l distance 00:44:23],” government is saying, “No, you cannot increase this,” and a whole lot of policies around it. Everything is revolving around money. The accessibility of energy [unclear 00:44:43] is money. The generation of the power distribution is also money. But the policies [unclear 00:45:03] discriminate between the gender. Policies omnibus [unclear 00:45:11] discriminate against gender. So the ability to access, this all depends on money and location, the location [unclear 00:45:28] individuals in a particular location can [unclear 00:45:33] to bring power to their place. It is the government that has to [unclear 00:45:41] power to that place, whereby this - where the location is. Then the individuals, depending on their financial muscle, will be able to access the power into their [unclear 00:45:55] homes. This is where inequality comes in. That’s where inequality comes in between the genders, [unclear 00:46:09] the men who have the muscle to be able to access the power [unclear 00:46:20] let’s say, to women.

**INT: And you think that is also specifically because men have more economic power than women?**

RES: Oh, that’s right, yes.

**INT: But do you think there is also a cultural element in that?**

RES: No - cultural element?

**INT: Yes, do you think our culture somehow limits women’s ability to -**

RES: To acquire work?

**INT: Yes, get involved in decision making.**

RES: [Unclear 00:47:06] decision making [unclear 00:47:08] depends on your level of education. [Unclear 00:47:20]

**INT: Okay, XXXX, thank you very much.**

RES: You are welcome.

**INT: Thank you very much for your time. This is still an ongoing research, so we are still interviewing a number of people in Ghana, but I’ll keep you updated on progress, and also if there is any publication material from the research, I’ll also share with you, so that you also have access to it.**

RES: Thank you, I’d be grateful. [Unclear 00:47:54]

**Audio ends: [00:48:06]**