Social Norms and Attitudes in Access to Energy

Govind Kelkar
Policy, Law & Practice in Energy Access

❖ Social Norms and attitudes have a powerful influence that are reflected in formal structures and in its informal rules of day-to-day practice
❖ Emerging economies and continued norms and policy and practice about:
  • Women’s economic dependency on men
  • Lack of right to decision making
  • Limits to women’s mobility
  • Lack of Recognition of women’s work and contributions
  • Inaccess to land/property, new technology, modern energy infrastructure and services
❖ Nevertheless, there are policy and legal changes but slow implementation. Why?
Policy Changes for Women’s Right to Modern Energy Services

❖ Policy change for clean cooking energy: Subsidised LPG connections in women’s names
❖ Higher subsidies for women farmers for ownership of farm machinery by women
❖ Why these policy changes? What are the drivers?
  • Factoring gender in energy development
  • The role of feminist ideas through national and international research
  • Civil society’s engagement with the state
  • Feminist advocacy on the importance of energy access
  • Role of citizens and elites e.g. Give it up campaign
Impact of Policy Change on Social Norms

Our research, we noted the change through:

❖ Women’s unmediated asset ownership rights to land, house, energy equipment and new technology
❖ Organising and self-organising of women
❖ Training/capacity development in new knowledge, financial skills and new technology
❖ Policy change that addresses gendered norms e.g. HSAA 2005, Ujjwala 2016, Agriculture Policy for Higher Subsidies.

In conclusion:

❖ The complexity of social norms and doxa of attitudes can be addressed through:
  • National and trans-national dialogues on the need for change in social norms
  • Research and research-based advocacy on gender justice
  • Conscious, concerted efforts towards a gender responsive shift in policy and practice
  • Energy infrastructure, recognition of women’s work in production and social reproduction for betterment, equality and dignity of all, as SDG principle “leaving no one behind”.