



User-Centred
Energy Systems



Empowering all. Gender in policy and implementation for achieving transitions to sustainable energy

2nd Task status update to the Users TCP meeting Exco meeting 26-29 April 2021

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Contents

Summary.....	2
Status report and objectives.....	2
Activities for the past six months	2
Participating countries	3
Sweden	3
Netherlands.....	4
Austria	4
UK	4
Ireland	4
Australia	5
US	5
India	5
Task activities October 2020- April 2021	6
Objectives for the next six months	6
Upcoming Task events	7
Finance	7
Matters for the Ex-co.....	7

Summary

The UsersTCP Task *Empowering all. Gender in policy and implementation for achieving transitions to sustainable energy* is an international collaboration gathering experts on gender and energy use. While the past years have seen a focus on gender issues in energy research, there continues to be a gap between findings of current research and the practices of energy policy making, implementation and technological design. This gap leads to inefficient and excluding policies as well as technical solutions being formulated and implemented. It further hinders upscaling of energy transition solutions due to a narrow scope of users and solutions being envisioned and implemented, leading to the exclusion of a large group of users. In this task, we will gather the state-of-the-art research of gender and energy use and find best practices while also developing ways to counter organizational and institutional inertias and to design inclusive, just and efficient technologies. For policy makers and regulators, this will deliver cases and policy briefs outlining and assessing the main inertias hindering the formulation and implementation of gender aware policy and technical interventions in different cultural and institutional contexts.

The Task will offer workshops to aid with reformulation and implementation of existing energy policies, as well as tools to counter the cultural inertias within the energy field. We will further provide a database with cases of best practices. For businesses, we will provide collaborative design work and educational material on how to use gender research to inform design of more efficient and including technology, including models for engaging users in design, templates for gathering data on energy use, and technology interventions to enable broad energy transitions. For researchers, the Task will offer opportunity to fill knowledge gaps as well as contribute to the practical implementation of gender and energy research on a global scale. The Task will also offer a collaborative platform with business and government, and a global community of researchers.

Status report and objectives

Activities for the past six months

Since fall 2020, four new tenders for participation in the Task have been held in Austria, Ireland, the UK and Sweden. Three of these tenders, in Sweden, Austria and the UK are finished, and two new research groups have joined the Task. The Irish tender is still being evaluated. The Swedish tender result means that there will be funding from the SEA both for the Task Leader position and for research. Thus, a major revision of the original Task proposal that we flagged for at the last ExCo-meeting will not be needed.

This means that three groups (the Netherlands, Austria and the UK) have already started their research in the Task, and one group will be starting in April (Sweden). More details of research work are outlined under each country participating below. The Austrian Task members from ÖGUT are currently also the secretariat for the C3E, which means that we have an excellent connection to this TCP, which we think will lead to great synergies.

A launch event is currently being planned together with the Swedish Energy Agency. This event will be a bit delayed in relation to the original plan but will be held during the spring 2021. The group has held two meetings, one in December and one in February. In between these meetings, Task participants have already started collaborating on conference papers and panels. For example, three internal workshops have been held discussing the evaluation tool being formulated in subtask 2 in relation to Rwanda's energy policy, and these workshops ended in a paper being presented at a conference in Trento, as well as to significant development of the tool. Participants in the Task have also started collaborating on funding proposals, supporting each other through being part of advisory boards.

The Task has also supported the UsersTCP in the process of participation in the next OECD household survey. As decided at the last EXCO meeting, the UsersTCP will contribute financially to the survey, and Helene Ahlborg, subtask leader of subtask 1 in our task, has taken on, together with Sam Thomas, to represent the TCP in the expert group that will advise on the survey design. She has reached out to other tasks for input on this work and has held a workshop in order to formulate the kinds of questions and data we would need to include in the survey in order for it to be meaningful to us and to the TCP as a whole. The Task Leader has also set up collaboration tools for the Task during this period.

Participating countries

Below are the current states of participation in the different member countries.

Sweden

Sweden will fund the Task Leader, and cover the costs related to that work and administration. The Task Leader will coordinate the Task, and support the work of NEs in other countries, as well as take on the responsibility of coordinating and creating the final deliverables. As a result of a Tender held in February, Anna Åberg has been appointed as Task Leader for the whole task period. In the same tender, the group from Chalmers were awarded research funding within all three subtasks, and this research will start in April. Below are the participating researchers. Except for the Chalmers Technical University, the group includes designers from Boid, a daughter company of Chalmers focusing on technology design. This funding also includes a communicator that will support us with a newsletter, and, later on, with communicating our deliverables.

Task Participants:

- Anna Åberg, Chalmers University of Technology (Task Manager)
- Helene Ahlborg, Chalmers University of Technology (Subtask leader 1)
- Olufolahan Osunmuyiwa, Chalmers University of Technology (NE subtask 1)
- Martin Hultman, Chalmers University of Technology (Ne subtask 2)
- Anna Engström, Boid (NE subtask 3)
- Katharina Mehr, Boid (NE subtask 3)
- Helene Johansson, Chalmers Industrial Energy (Communications)

The Netherlands

The Netherlands have funded two NEs to do research work in subtask 2 and one NE for subtask 3. The NEs in subtask 2 have also taken on subtask leadership for that task. Their research work has started with the development of the evaluation tool that will be one of the deliverables for subtask 2, through arranging three workshops (mentioned above). The workshops were arranged together with Helene Ahlborg and her research group from subtask 1, thus ensuring knowledge transfer between the subtasks.

Task participants:

- Marielle Feenstra, University of Twente (Subtask leader subtask 2)
- Joy Clancy, University of Twente (Subtask leader subtask 2)
- Sylvia Breukers, Duneworks (NE subtask 3)

Austria

The Austrian tender was won by a research group at ÖGUT, that is also currently the secretariat for the C3E. This allows us to form synergies with them. The group has just started their research and is currently developing a fact sheet for technology development, as a deliverable for subtask 3. The group will do research within all three subtasks over the project time.

Task participants

- Beatrix Hausner, ÖGUT (NE subtask 1,2 and 3)
- Elif Gül, ÖGUT (NE subtask 1, 2 and 3)

UK

The UK has formalised their participation in the Task through a tender held at the end of 2020. The winners of the UK tender is a group from the Carbon Trust. The UK group started their research in February and are currently working on a literature review on gender, race and social inclusion in relation to net zero transitions, due in April.

Task participants:

- Kate Hooper, Carbon Trust (NE subtask 1 and 2)
- Lucy Fellingham, Carbon Trust (NE subtask 1 and 2)
- Joy Clancy, University of Twente (NE subtask 1 and 2)

Ireland

Ireland has held a tender, and we are waiting for the final evaluation decision.

Possible task participants

- Breffni Lennon, University College Cork
- Niall Dunphy, University College Cork

Australia

Australian NE's can participate in the Task, although without funding from the Australian TCP member. Currently one researcher is interested in joining subtask 3. Since the Task is now beginning to take a clearer form, we are currently discussing the scope and subject of her participation, relating to the other work that will be done in subtask 3.

Task participant:

- Reihana Mohideen, University of Melbourne.

US

US NE's can participate in the Task, although without funding from the US TCP member. We are still in touch with researchers that are interested in participating, but whose funding and work situations have changed during the past year due to the pandemic. We will continue to stay in touch with these researchers to find ways of fitting them into the Task over time.

Possible participants:

- Cara Daggett, Virginia Tech.
- Shannon Bell, Virginia Tech.
- Christine Labuski, Virginia Tech.
- Victoria Healey, National Renewable Energy Laboratory, Washington

India

Indian participation in the Task will be depending on Indian membership of the TCP being confirmed.

Task activities October 2020- April 2021

- December 11, Task meeting 1
- December 15, Workshop 1 on Rwandan Energy Policy
- January 20, Workshop 2 on Rwandan Energy Policy
- February 3, Workshop 3 on Rwandan Energy Policy
- February 11, Presentation Energy & Society Conference (Trento/online) "integrating gender into energy policy design: the Rwandan approach" Marielle Feenstra (presenting), Joy Clancy, Helene Ahlborg, Sumuel John Unsworth, Sylvere Hategekimana
- February 12, Task meeting 2
- April 14, Subtask 3 meeting

Covid-impacts

Since most of our research work has not yet started, so far the project has been affected by Covid mostly in term of logistics (everything has been done online), and in terms of changed situations for some participants, especially those from the US, who are less likely to be able to participate on the foreseen level.

Regarding our research work, the Covid pandemic will impact our data to a large extent, and we will need to include this in all our analysis regarding energy use and behaviour pertaining to social categories, which is our interest. There is a clear intersection of our issues and Covid related issues concerning for example work from home, vulnerable groups, possibilities of travel etc. We will be taking this into account.

In terms of future work, the biggest impact on our research practice will likely be connected to field work. We have planned field work in subtask 1, and this will of course be dependent on the possibilities to travel and interact with communities and actors.. Currently, we have decided to move the field work planned for this autumn to spring 2022, and we hope that travel will be easier then.

Covid will also affect our first task workshop at Chalmers, which will likely be a hybrid workshop.

Objectives for the next six months

As mentioned, due to delays the launch event has not yet taken place, but it will take place during the spring. We will also organise a UsersTCP academy webinar on May 12. The first stage of work during spring 2021 will include research reviews as well as developing assessment frameworks and tool kits for policy makers. The first review from the UK group is due on April 18. The assessment framework developed by Marielle Feenstra will be presented at the Academy webinar on May 12. A technical fact sheet for technology developers is being developed by the Austrian group and is due sometime during Q2.

Research review work will start also in the Swedish research groups from April. This gathered work will lay the basis for case studies of best practices and tech development, assessments of current energy policies, development of policy suggestions, and tool kits for policy makers and technology developers in the later stages of the Task. In addition to our task and subtask meetings, we are planning research exchange meetings that are specifically for identifying synergies between the research groups and commenting on each other's work.

During the spring and early fall, we will gather the review work done by the task participants in order to collectively write a scoping study report, coordinated by Helene Ahlborg, due at the end of the year. In September, the Task will hold its first large task workshop, gathering and presenting the work done by researchers during the spring and summer. In view of the results so far, we will discuss the knowledge gaps as well as examples of best practices that we have found and use that material in order to finetune our case study work, which will be starting from September. During this period, we will also take on the employment procedure for a Swedish post-doc who will work full time in the project. From the fall, this post-doc will also be carrying out work on method related to the OECD household survey during Q3 and Q4. Helene Ahlborg will continue to liaise with the OECD survey actors and support the post-doc in this work.

Planned Task events coming 6 months

- Regular Task meetings (recurring)
- UsersTCP academy webinar (May 12, 15:00 CET)
- Launch meeting (Last week of May)
- Participation in C3E workshop on Stream 1 on Data collection (Q2)
- Research exchange meeting (Q2)
- Employment of a post-doctoral student at Chalmers University of Technology (September 1)
- Subtask 1 workshop arranged by Chalmers University of Technology (Q3, probably early September)
- First results Austrian workshop arranged by ÖGUT (Q3)
- Themed breakfast talk arranged by ÖGUT (Q3)

Finance

The task work will be based on a 100% task share arrangement.

Matters for the Ex-co

Recommend the ExCo to approve the Task Status Update Report.