



Announcing the second Sparknet conference:

Topic: Policies for Sustainable Household Energy in Southern and Eastern Africa

Date: February/March 2005

How to participate:

Sign up online at www.sparknet.info (select 'online conferences'), or email Grant Ballard-Tremeer on <grant@ecoharmony.com>

The conference is 100% online using email and a conference website.

More information and updates can be found on the Sparknet website www.sparknet.info

Conference 1: Household energy scenarios September 27–October 8 2004

This e-conference focused on the key areas of health, gender and household energy within the Sparknet countries; Uganda, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Zambia, Mozambique and South Africa. Each member of Sparknet presented papers looking at worst case, business-as-usual, best case, the Southern partners within their countries, and the Northern partners within their specialisms of health, gender and forestry.

Email discussions followed incorporating ideas from around 140 e-mail participants where these issues were discussed in detail.

Key areas included:

- Which groups are most affected by changes in economic growth and regional co-operation? – does it impact on health, cleaner fuels, such as tariffs, or cross-border deforestation? What are the gender dimension to these changes?
- Will changes lead to more rural migration? What impacts will this on the key areas? Could urban planning or legislation reduce some of the problems? – how?
- Will people be forced to move back down the energy ladder to more polluting fuels
- What is the role of energy in moving people out of poverty? Health effects of changes in fuel access or cost – indoor air pollution, transport costs; how are they affected by gender?
- What financial policies should be adopted? – improved supply chains for fuel? - subsidies on improved cooking / lighting products? – micro-credit? Are these appropriate for women? How can one factor-in women's time when looking at fuel choice?
- How could education reduce the impacts of a worsening situation? What policy action could lead to improved regional information-sharing? What are the best ways to 'package' this information?
- Are women represented in decision-making at policy and household level?
- How are the use, production, provision and distribution of energy services organised? Will a change in energy affect how it is used and the person who decides? – and who benefits?
- Will fuelwood and charcoal remain the dominant sources of

household energy source? How will more market based approaches affect low-income households? – should action be taken to mitigate the associated risks?

- What environmental issues are important to men? – and to women? Are these the same? How can we alleviate the barriers to fuel switching to cleaner fuels – for cooking? – for lighting? – for labour saving? especially for the very poor
- Which regions are characterised by acute firewood scarcity? What policies would be needed to trigger areas with a surplus to supply those with a deficit? – could they be mapped and policies agreed? Is natural forest management an option?
- What are the direct causes leading to deforestation, both nationally and regionally?
- What policies can be introduced to make fuelwood utilisation more efficient?
- Does the 'cost' of fuel gathering reflect the replacement cost?

All documents from the conference, including presentations and proceedings are available on the Sparknet website under the conference section: <http://lists.sparknet.info/wws/info/conference>