

Sustainable Development and Gender Equality: a Post-2015 Perspective

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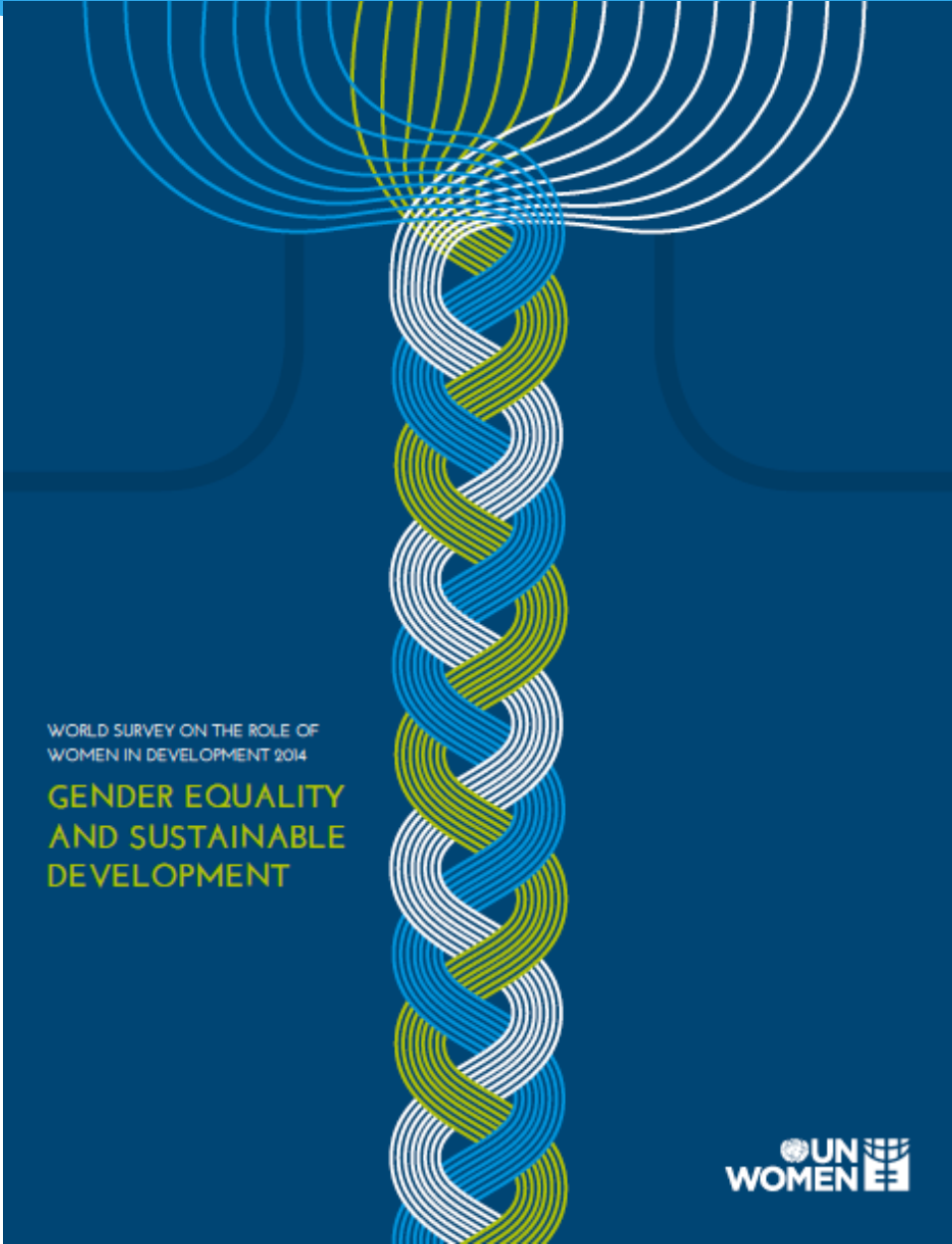
What is to be sustained and for whom?

SD today is framed by “planetary boundaries” ideas. Global concepts dominate discourse but may not help us with local / regional choices.

Sustainability in practice requires making choices among desirable goals

ARGUMENT:

1. SD with less inequality takes us straight to poverty and gender
2. Sustainable development for poor people is acutely local and regional
3. Gender Equality = capability enhancement for women & poor (Sen 1985, Nussbaum 2000)



WORLD SURVEY ON THE ROLE OF
WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT 2014

**GENDER EQUALITY
AND SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT**



Priority sectors for “sustainable development” with explicit commitment to gender equality & poverty alleviation

- * Safe domestic water
 - * Clean & accessible sanitation
 - * Clean(er) cookstoves
 - * Basic electricity services
-
- * All have technological core (though tech alone can't take investments to transformative scale)
 - * All are “mundane” (Kammen and Dove 1997)

Why choose these 4 domains?

- * immediate and directly impact local environments
- * backbone of a decent life
- * the poor and (poor) women suffer disproportionately from their absence



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These 4 domains directly impact “gateway” capabilities...

... *Especially* for lowest quintile

1. Female under-five mortality ratio (in HDI)
2. Female-to-male secondary school enrolment ratio (in HDI) (Saith & Harriss-White 1999; Unterhalter 2013)
3. Unpaid “care” work performed by women & girls (not in HDI) (Budelender 2010)

Priority sectors for “sustainable development” with explicit commitment to gender equality & poverty alleviation

- * Safe water
- * Safe & private sanitation
- * Clean(er) cookstoves / clean fuels
- * Basic electricity services

- * All have technological core but need social ecosystem for transformative scale
- * All are “mundane” (Kammen and Dove 1997)

Sanitation: everybody goes to the toilet

“Improved” sanitation = facilities that are safe to use, & that safely remove pathogenic waste from the body

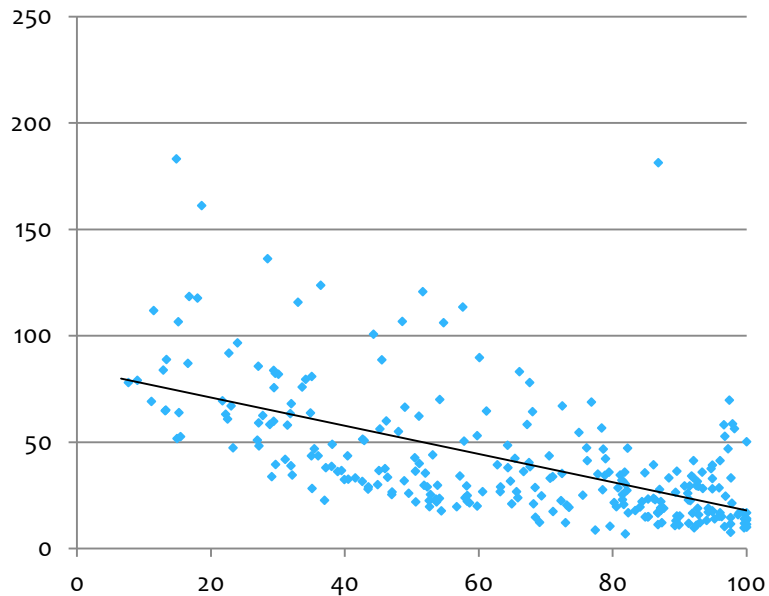


Sanitation & women's capabilities

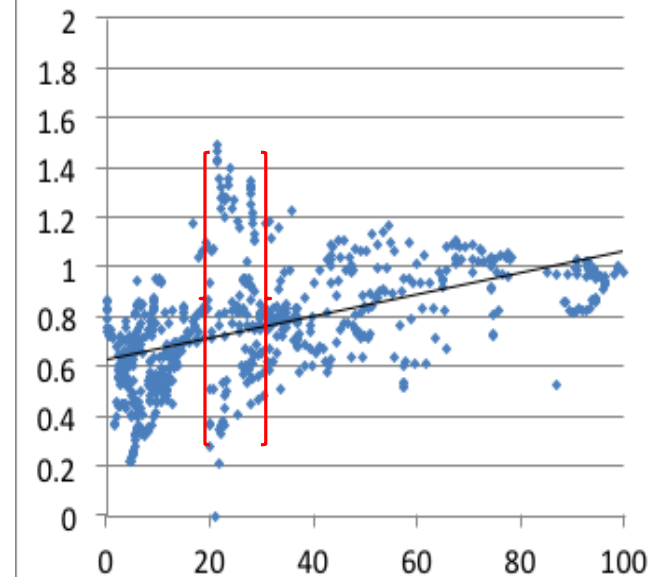
U5FM

F/M secondary enrolment

Rural Sanit'n Access vs. Under-Five Female Mortality (\$1,000 < \$5,000)



Rural Sanit'n Access vs. 2ry Female Enrolment Ratio (GDPpc < \$1,000)



Sanitation: “sustainable” investments

New approaches -- CLTS (mainly but not all rural); pay-per-use in urban centers – appear “win-win”

BUT

CLTS depends on unpaid labor
(and little attention to disposal)

AND

Pay-per-use is not gender-equal



Electricity: everybody needs to see in the dark

To read, to work, to cook,
to charge cell phones, to go
to the loo at night...

(Open) Kerosene & wick
lamps are unsafe; generate
black carbon & lung disease

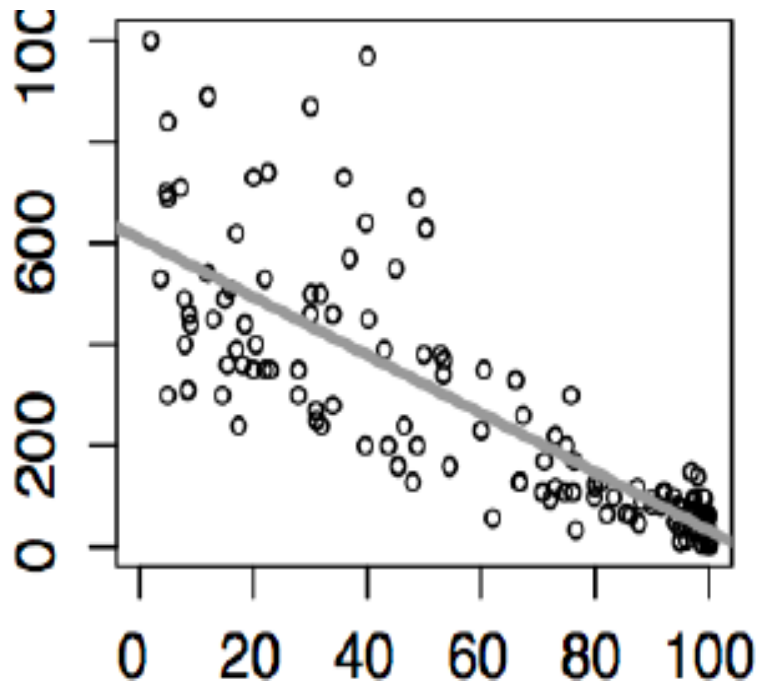
Electricity transforms lives.



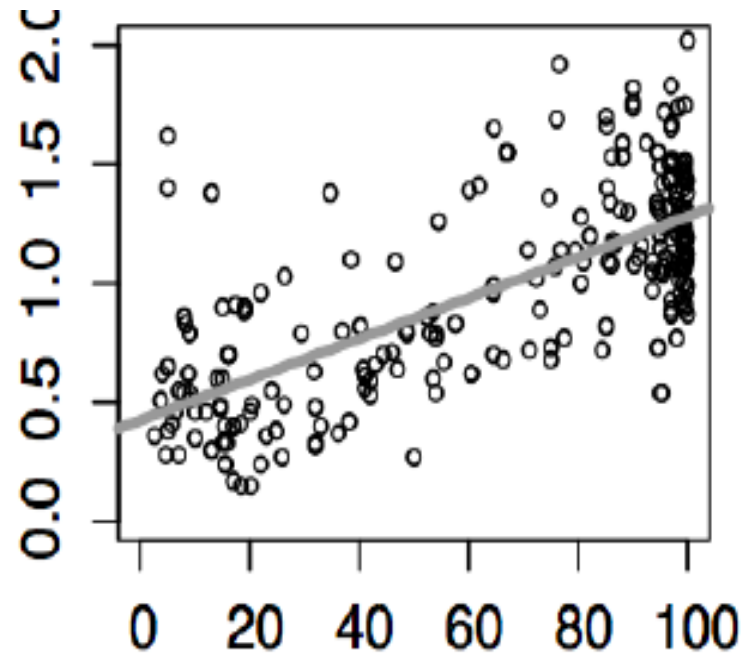
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Electricity & women's capabilities

MMR



F/M secondary enrolment



Electricity: “sustainable” investments

Modern electricity service provision is caught up in climate change discourse

Climate-gender “win-win” with renewables or off-grid lighting is correct -- BUT

A fan, 3 lights, and a TV for 5 hours for 1.4 b people = 1% added global electricity use at current consumption levels
(just a second: who uses these watts in the home?)

Health and capabilities case *much* stronger than climate case (for basic levels of service)

Sustainable development is about confronting tradeoffs (in the short term)

Therefore it must confront who is at the bargaining table, who pushes back on the state (and the private sector), who is at risk and who benefits – i.e. what is being sustained for whom?

“Win-win” just conceals the (short term) hard work needed to be on a gender-equal pathway. In the long term “win-win” is TOTALLY possible.

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