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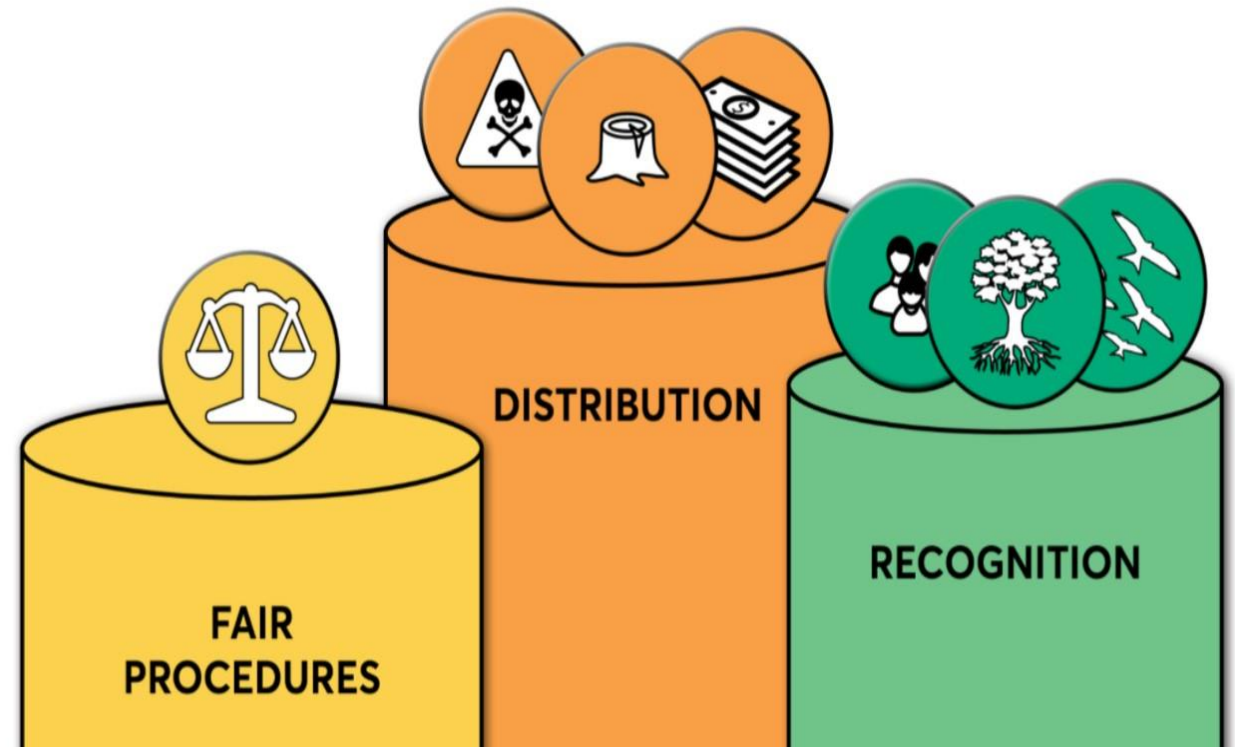


Gender in the energy transition: Focus on electricity consumption and production

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Gender-In Webinar
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Incorporating an energy justice approach



The low-carbon energy transition and gender

- The dominant focus on technology and economic aspects tend to exclude other narratives (care work, indigenous populations, environment, security)
- Women and men use energy services (e.g. transport) differently
- Energy sector development and employment often reflect historical inequality (colonisation, indigenous populations, gender, structural violence)
- Energy transition provide opportunities for gender equality (e.g. decentralised energy), but can easily reproduce marginalisation (e.g. women have less resources to pay for new services and to relocate in land conflicts)
- Gender inequality in energy/transport related political representation and bureaucracy



Uttar Pradesh, India. Photo Credit: Karina Standal

Women were excluded from working in the local micro-grids in UP rural India in a Norwegian-Indian development project. The reason given was that “women lack education” and “women are not interested in technology”. The project partners emphasised how energy brings women’s empowerment due to new resources in the home. The project was later abandoned as the social context in India was seen as too challenging for such projects (Standal 2018)

How will the energy transition consumers electricity practices?

- New practices/division of labour: Energy **efficiency and flexible** electricity consumption, changes in **transport**
- Constantly **new technologies** to deal with (automation, monitoring, ICT security)
- Opportunities to participate as an **energy producer** (own facility / ownership in energy society)
- New **market structures and regulations** (incl. price changes)

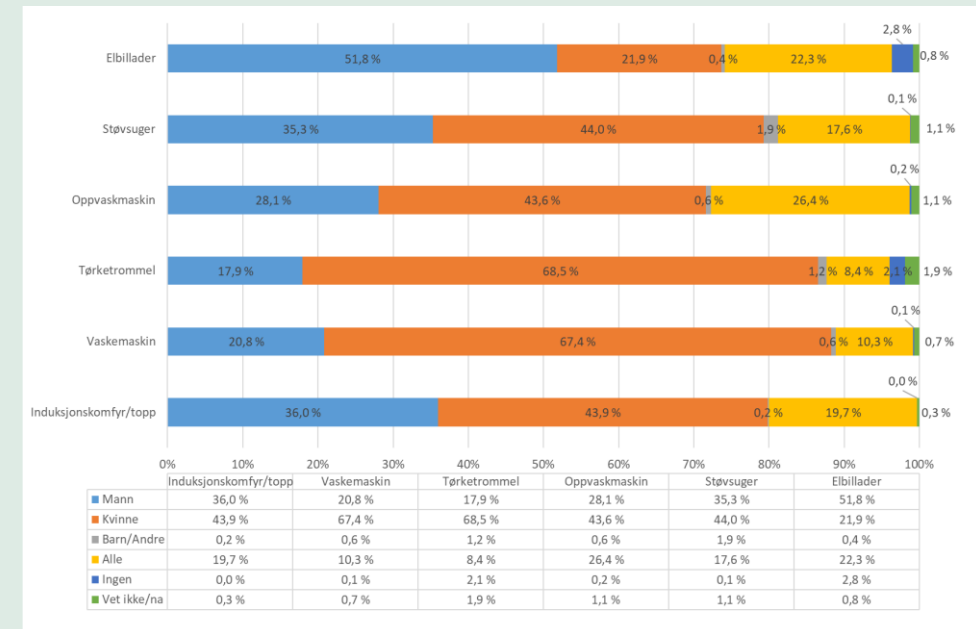
In his ultimate imagined state, Resource Man is interested in his own energy data, understands it, and wants to use it to change the way he uses energy. He is both in control of his energy consumption and assigns this control to technologies to manage on his behalf (Strengers 2013).



Some points from the Norwegian context: Electricity consumption practices in the home

- The division of labor in the home follows gender roles
- Family composition shapes energy consumption
- Biological differences related to comfort temperature
- Small differences in whether one is concerned with one's own consumption, but a clear predominance of men who check consumption often
- Little difference in who has problems paying their electricity bill*

Overview use of electric appliances in the home (n=1000)



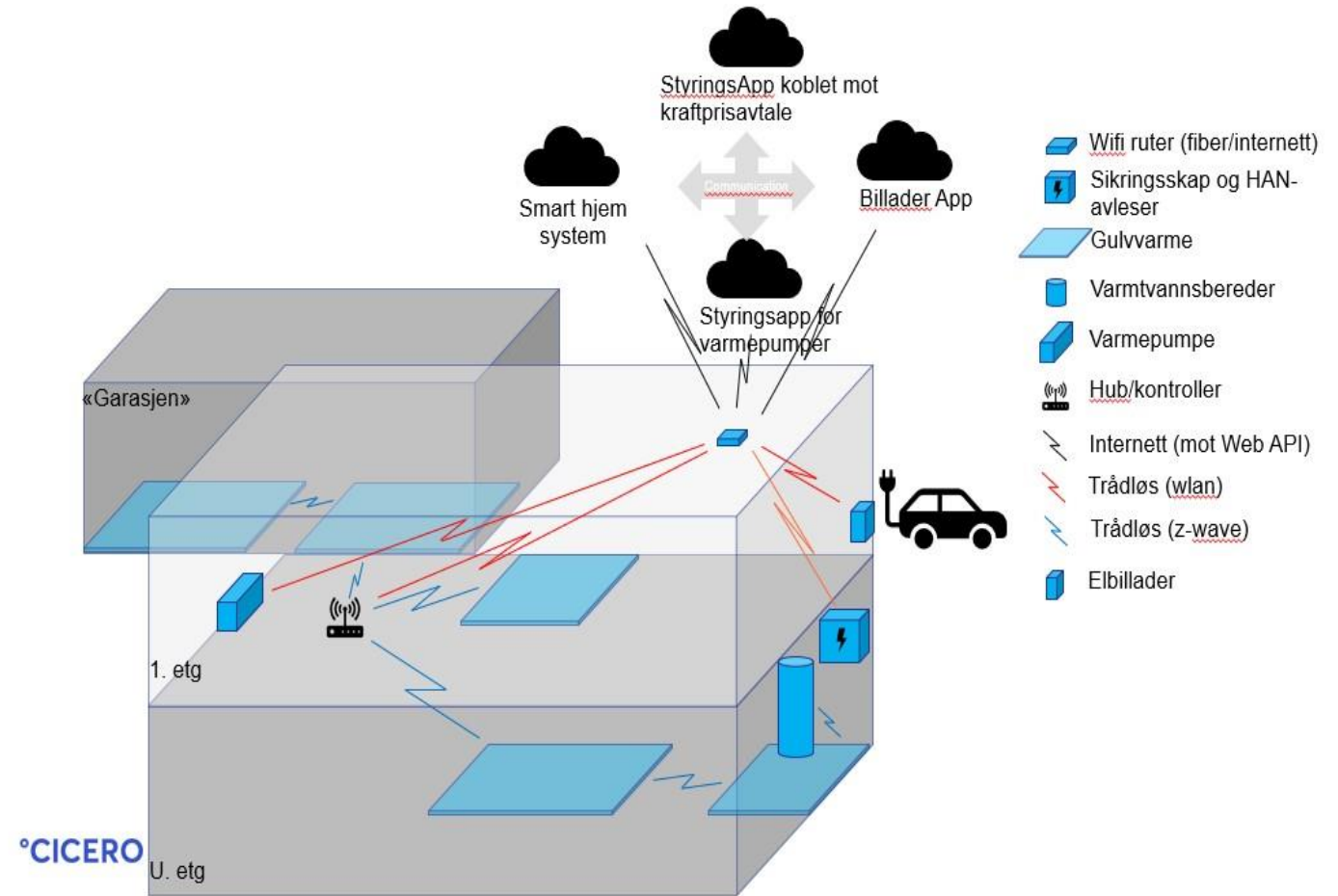


Norwegian households and flexible electricity consumption

- Clear predominance of men who have heard about the introduction of new grid tariffs
- Men consider access to information about their own consumption to be slightly better
- Men are more willing to invest in new technology to change electricity use
- Men are more willing to make larger financial investments in energy technology

An example from an engineer...

- Requires work, knowledge and interest (and money!)
- Electricity use is a family project, but instruments are based on individualistic economic thinking



Citizen energy production in Europe: Decision-making and practices

- Couples make the decision together – men take the initiative and drive the process
- Most are motivated by the environment and economy, but technological interest is important for many men
- Men have more networks to draw on in the process
- Women change their practices – daytime housework
- In the media and advertising and among those interviewed, solar energy production is considered environmentally friendly, modern and masculine
- Prosumers are often middle class, living in detached houses, men and have relevant/higher education

Hvorfor er kjønn viktig i det grønne skiftet?

Energi politikk står ut forskjellig på kvinner og menn, fordi økonomiske ressurser, utdannelse og yrkesbakgrunn er ujevnt fordelt mellom kjønnene og fordi i mange sammenhenger gjør kjønnsroller at kvinner har mindre beslutningsmakt enn menn.

Menn sjekker produksjonen av solenergi



Kvinner tar seg av skittentøyet



Kilde: Engaging men and women in energy production in Norway and the United Kingdom: The significance of social practices and gender relations, Standal, Talevi og Westskog 2019

Når jeg skal sette over vaskemaskinen sjekker jeg først og hvis vi ikke produserer nok [solstrøm] så venter jeg litt og ser om det blir sol senere. Eller vanligvis vet jeg om det blir godt vær for jeg sjekker værmeldingen (Kvinnelig plusskunde, Norge)

Men are always going to be interested in technology. You get some men together and they're like; I've got micro inverters and I've got this brand of solar panels. I think women would be more; I'm doing my bit for the planet and maybe enjoy being able to put the washing machine on without using any electricity

(male prosumer UK. Ref: Standal, Talevi and Westskog 2019: 4)





Moss Community Energy Launch, DIY Solar Panel Workshop with Demand Energy Equality. Credit: Flickr, 10 10

Will community energy deliver on inclusion and justice?

- EU policy focuses on renewable energy communities and imposes guidelines on Member States to facilitate
- Potential opportunities for economic, social and environmental benefits for local communities - redistribution
- Can contribute to the inclusion of more groups as active participants in the transition (ownership, decision-making, recognition)
- Can be tailored to local needs in the transition

What research perspectives do we need in the future?

- Understanding of 'end users' (norms/values, opportunities, decision-making processes)
 - Understanding of who and what is recognised and included - and distributional effects
 - Generational aspects - young people's energy practices
- Theoretical perspectives that promote society, people, culture, intersectionality
- Interdisciplinary studies that integrate holistic perspectives and local dimensions (power relations, everyday life, local communities)





Thank you!

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