



**Towards a just, healthy and  
sustainable world**

wecf is now called women engage for a common future

# **Women in Energy Cooperatives: Advancing Gender Equality the Cooperative Way**

Katharina Habersbrunner

Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF)

May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017, Çanakkale



# Cooperatives' principles



- Voluntary and open membership
- Joint ownership and democratic control
- Autonomy and Independence
- Capacity-building, empowerment and information
- Cooperatives are learning organizations
- Cooperation among cooperatives
- Concern for community: active and locally based bottom-up dynamic

**Powerful vehicle for social inclusion and political, economic empowerment**

# Gender and cooperatives



**“Shared influence and responsibilities are the key to cooperative excellence”**

*(ICA-resolution on Gender Equality in Cooperatives)*

- Democratic processes require shared decision-making between women and men
- Contribution towards gender equality by expanding women’s opportunities to participate in local economies
- Strong links between women’s cooperative involvement and poverty reduction

**5** GENDER  
EQUALITY



## **Global obligations for gender equality**

- SDGs: N° 5 and cross-sectional function
- Lima-Work-Programme on Gender

# Cooperatives' contribution



## How Cooperatives Contribute to Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment

### *Economic empowerment*

Equal access to paid work

Transition opportunities to the formal economy through cooperation

Access to business capital, financing, and market places

Access to opportunities to gain skills and knowledge for economic activity

Economic development in rural areas

### *Improved work conditions*

Fair and adequate earnings / equal pay for equal value of work

Decent work in safe working conditions

Collective bargaining power

Increased levels of participatory democracy in the workplace

### *Social empowerment*

Learning opportunities such as technical skills improvement and management training

Affordable and accessible goods and services

Improved self-esteem and confidence

# Women engaged in cooperatives



- **Health:** addressing maternal and infant care
- **Education:** Development of scholarship programs
- **Credits:** Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies (SACCOS) allow access to fund/capital
- **Work:** ensuring fair wages and reduce exploitation.
- **Agriculture:** farmers share use of tools and machinery
- **Consumer:** using economy of scale
- **Energy and agriculture:** producing energy with biomass
- **Energy:** women become producers, installers and beneficiaries: whole value chain

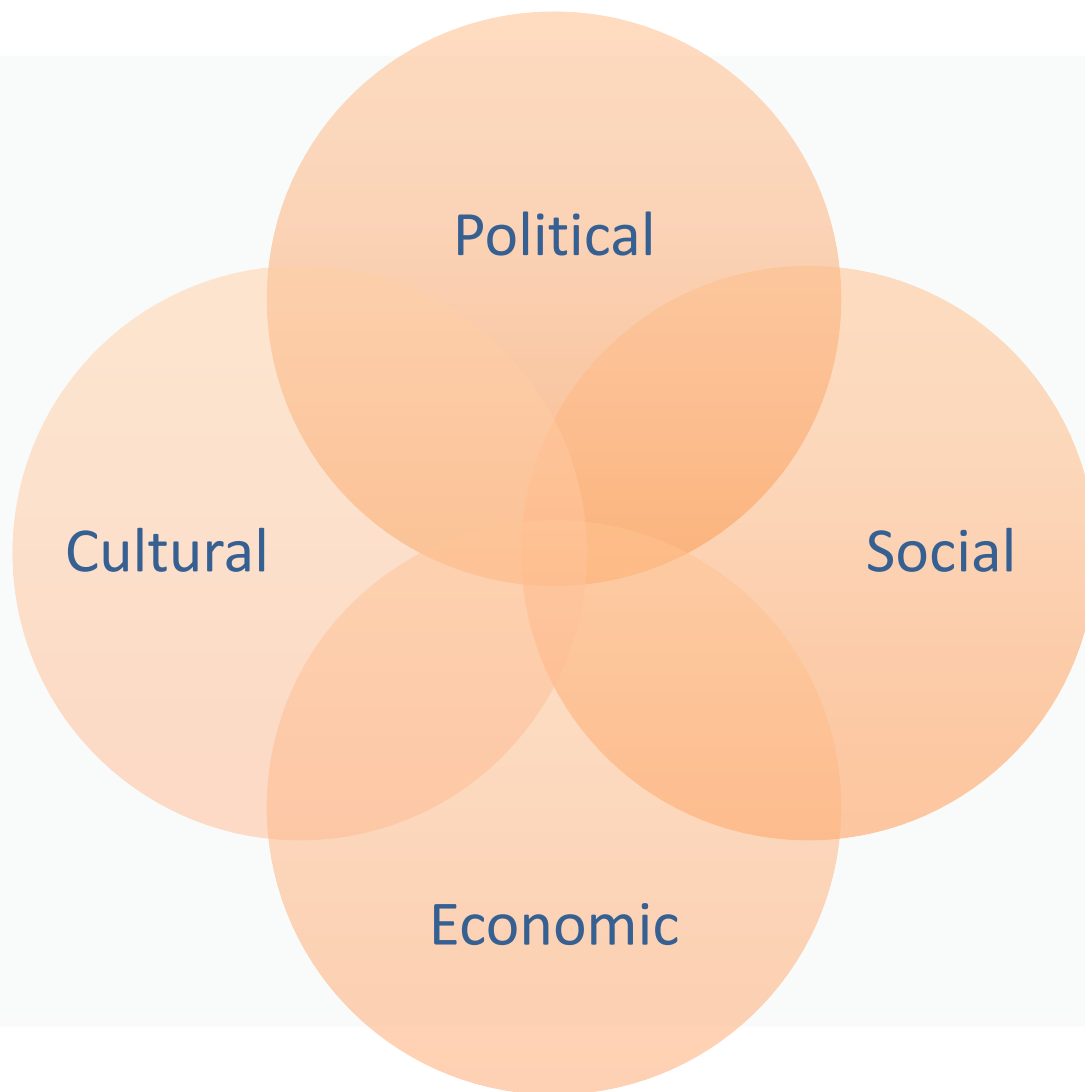
# Women and energy

- Women as **energy managers**
- Unpaid & unappreciated workload
- Lack of awareness on inequalities
- Inadequate structures for women's participation



# Women and energy

## Dimensions



# Women and energy



- Energy poverty has gender dimensions
  - No access to affordable and safe energy
  - Indoor pollution affects mostly health of women/children
  - Low income households live in less energy efficient houses
- Energy services and programs can promote women's skills and employment
  - Women are still not represented equally in energy leadership positions
- Energy policies and programs need to be gender sensitive
  - Women are most primary energy managers but not decision makers

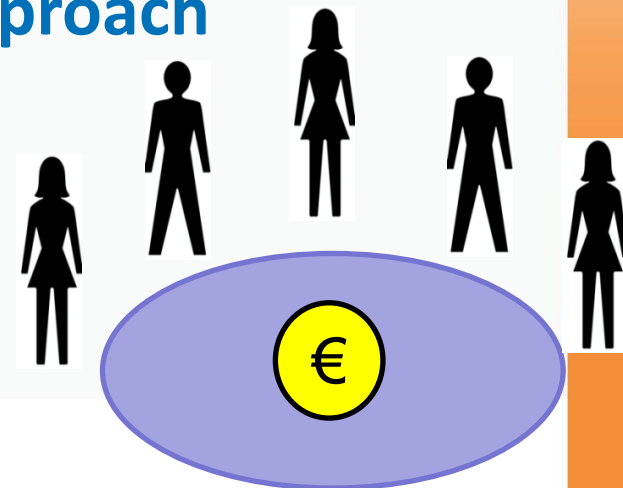


# Gender-just energy cooperatives



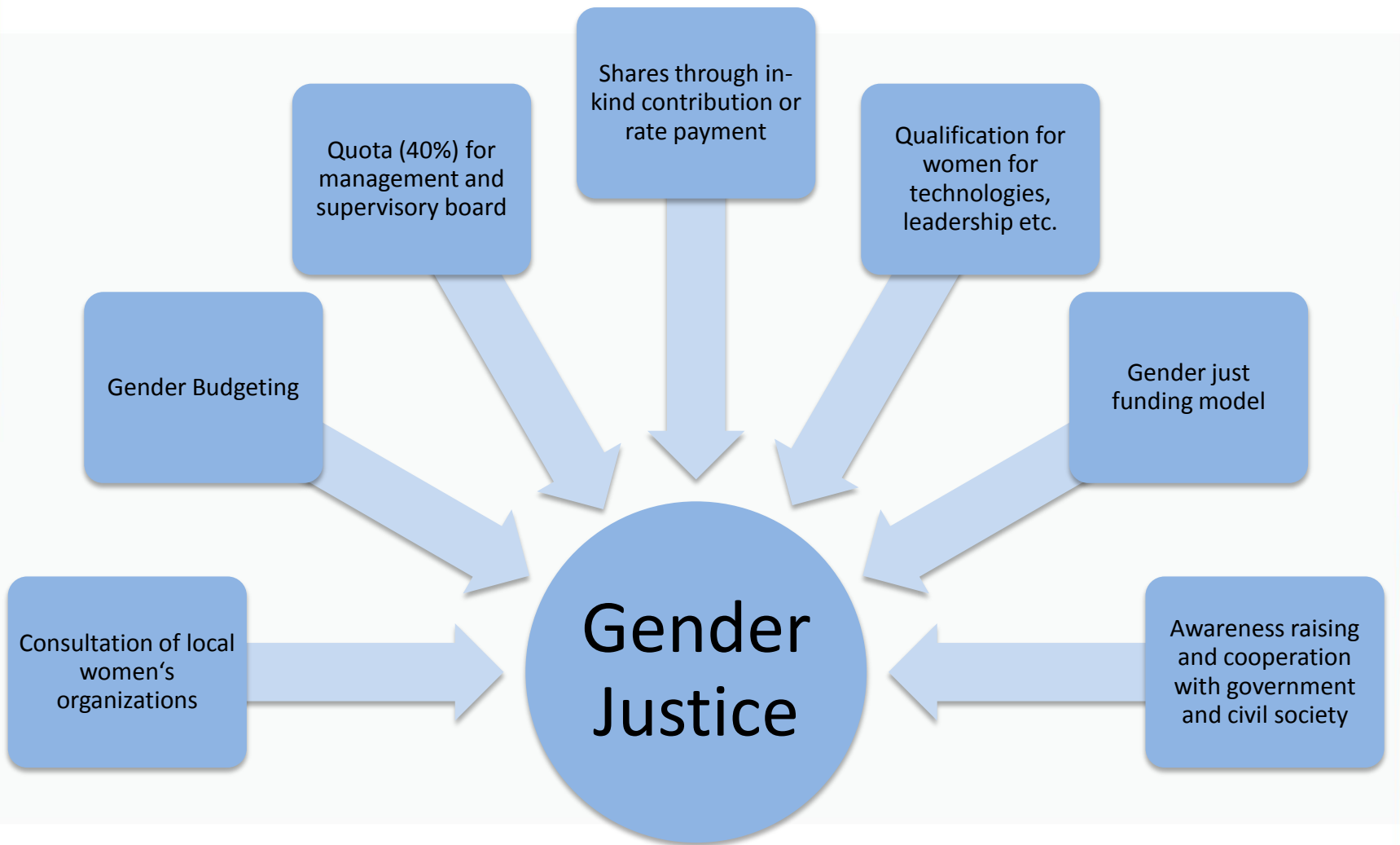
- Equal access to women in whole energy value chain: technologies, jobs, funding, dividend
- Reduce workload: save cost and time
- Provides control over energy production and consumption
- Foster women's empowerment & leadership
- Engage for cooperative gender and energy policy

→ **Beneficiary and people-centred approach** pays particular attention to **small-scale and community-based actions, where women are over-represented**

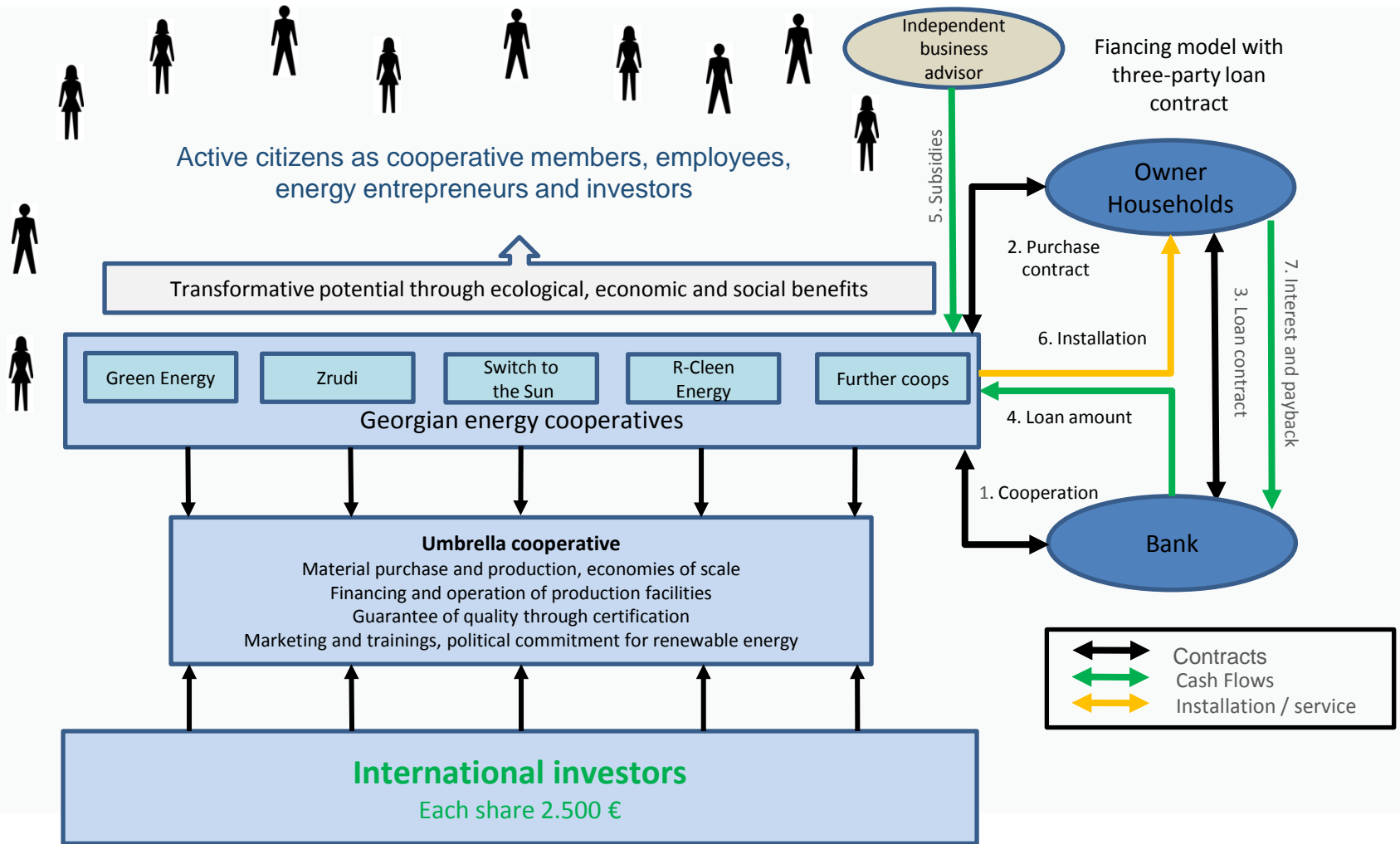


# Clear gender strategies

for equal participation of women and men



# Georgian energy cooperative



# Energy access is catalyst for development



Access to energy

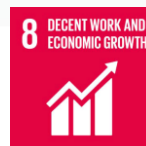
Access to finance

Capacity building

Sustainable business

Policy support

- Reduced energy poverty
- Access to sustainable energy
- Less inequalities
- Decent work
- Sustainable economic growth
- Innovation
- Improved infrastructure
- Reduced costs and effort
- More comfort, better health
- Less GHG emissions
- Legal framework renewable energy
- Social and cultural change





**Towards a just, healthy and  
sustainable world**

wecf is now called women engage for a common future

Questions or comments?

**Thank you for your attention!**

[katharina.habersbrunner@wecf.org](mailto:katharina.habersbrunner@wecf.org)

[www.wecf.eu](http://www.wecf.eu)

Twitter: [#WECEF\\_INT](https://twitter.com/WECEF_INT)



Questions or comments?



*Thank you for your attention!*  
*[katharina.habersbrunner@wecf.org](mailto:katharina.habersbrunner@wecf.org)*

Global horizontal irradiation

Turkey



Average annual sum (4/2004 - 3/2010)

