

Leave no one behind

Why Gender, Diversity and Social Inclusion Matter for Urban Energy Communities

First insights from EWW4Energiewende and GENDER4POWER.

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Dipl.-Ing.ⁱⁿ Dr.ⁱⁿ Bente Knoll



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Bente Knoll

- Landscape planning (master) and transport and traffic planning (PhD)
- **Gender & diversity expert** and consultant
- Founder and managing director of B-NK GmbH (independent research institute, management consultancy; gender and diversity expertise)
- B-NK is engaged in research and consulting processes within ecological, economic, social dimensions of sustainability
- Located in Vienna; projects in Austria, Europe, and Central Asia
- Lecturer at various Austrian universities (gender studies in engineering)

bente.knoll@b-nk.at

+43 676 6461015

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/benteknoll/>

<https://www.b-nk.at/>

<https://uebersicht.b-nk.at/>



Urban energy communities: the usual focus

- photovoltaic potential
- legal and regulatory constraints
- ownership complexity
- investment needs
- economic feasibility

But who is at risk of being left behind?

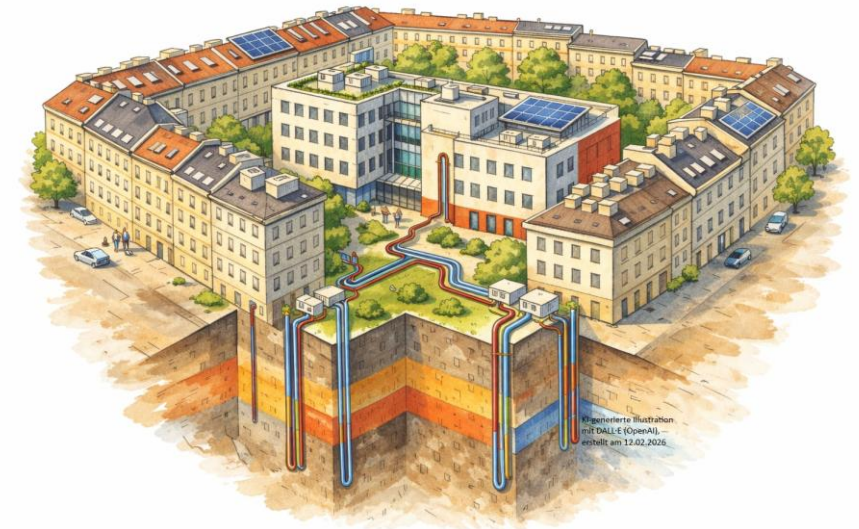
- energy transition does not affect everyone equally
- participation is not automatically accessible
- vulnerability is socially shaped
- inclusion must be designed

Vulnerability is multidimensional

- low income
- insecure housing
- poor building performance
- health-related challenges
- care responsibilities
- language barriers
- migration-related barriers
- unequal access to information and decision-making

Combining technical and social analysis

- 7 EWW properties in Vienna
- feasibility of renewable expansion and RECs
- technical, social and organisational barriers: stakeholder interviews
- co-creation processes with owners and residents
- site-specific implementation roadmaps



EWW4Energiewende

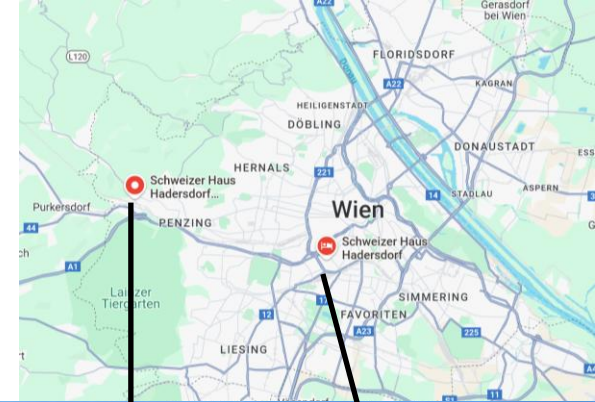
Schweizer Haus Hadersdorf: inclusion in practice

- therapeutic facility for people with addiction disorders
- vulnerable to energy poverty
- tailored energy literacy activities
- special focus: training of multipliers
- trusted institution as intermediary

SHH

SCHWEIZER HAUS HADERSDORF

Shareholder: Evangelischer
Waisensorgungsverein Wien;
Wobes – Verein zur
Wohnraumbeschaffung



GENDER4POWER



Participation grows through trust and translation

- workshops on energy-saving and climate topics
- everyday relevance instead of abstract information
- training multipliers
- trusted people make complex issues accessible
- inclusion scales through social infrastructure

Everyday energy literacy matters



- reading an electricity bill
- linking energy use to daily routines
- confidence in dealing with institutions
- women with migrant backgrounds
- practical empowerment



Gender and diversity as implementation logic

- not side issues
- differentiated target-group analysis:
 - who has which barriers?
 - who has which resources?
 - who has room to act? –
- gender mainstreaming as strategy

Conclusion

1. Technical feasibility is necessary, but not sufficient.
2. Vulnerability must be understood intersectionally.
3. Energy literacy and multipliers matter.
4. Social institutions are key bridge-builders.
5. Inclusion must be designed from the beginning.

If we truly want to leave no one behind, we must treat gender and diversity as core dimensions of implementation.



Managing Director at B-NK GmbH

B-NK works on gender and diversity aspects in planning, environment, sustainability, technology, and engineering. B-NK GmbH develops action-oriented, practical solutions together with its clients.

Dipl.-Ing.ⁱⁿ Dr.ⁱⁿ Bente Knoll

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Bente Knoll is also university Lecturer at TU Wien and BOKU university and holds courses on Gender Studies in Engineering

I would be more than happy to provide further advice and expertise on gender and diversity (in research).