How do energy policies accelerate sustainable transitions? Unpacking the policy transfer process in the case of GETFiT Uganda

Energy policies play an important role in accelerating 'sustainable transitions' by enabling and incentivizing investment in electricity generation from renewable sources. Key policies such as feed-in tariffs, tradable permits and auctions were pioneered in OECD nations, notably within the European Union, and in recent years have been the subject of donor-funded projects to transfer such policies to lower-income countries. However, within the wider transition studies literature, there is a lack of detailed understanding regarding the process of how this policy transfer takes place in the renewable energy sector. Our research addresses this gap by analyzing the micro-politics and actor-strategies by which the GETFiT program was implemented in Uganda. In particular, we focus on the interplay of transnational and national actors in pursuit of specific policy objectives. Informed by case study method and qualitative research, we employ theoretical perspectives, archival data sources and semi-structured interviews to adapt the policy transfer framework to the agency perspective of policy translation. We find that transnational influences, resource flows, local embeddedness, and institutional resilience are all necessary prerequisites for a coherent policy outcome. Moreover, this study opens up an avenue of research into co-creation processes and relational perspectives in sustainability transitions.

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