“Hard-to-Reach” energy users and the trouble with terminology

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HTR in non-energy spaces

- Health
- Social services
- Education
- Employment
- Social media
- Sports

- Gender
- Age
- Parents and families
- ‘Vulnerable’ populations
  - minorities
  - formerly incarcerated
  - homeless(ness)
  - immigrants and refugees
  - sex workers
HTR in **energy** spaces

- Low-income

- Otherwise “vulnerable”
  - energy poor
  - mentally or physically disabled
  - PoC, indigenous, immigrants
  - very young or very old
  - geographically remote

**Terminology/definitions: Key findings**

TO A MUCH LESSER DEGREE
Our definition of HTR energy users

“In this Task, a hard-to-reach energy user is an energy user from the residential or commercial sectors who uses any type of energy or fuel, and who is typically either hard-to-reach physically, underserved, or hard to engage or motivate in behaviour change, energy efficiency and demand response interventions that are intended to serve our mutual needs.”
Gap Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Psychographics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vast majority = low income (but doesn’t necessarily mean HTR or vulnerable)</td>
<td>A major opportunity?</td>
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<tr>
<td>High-income largely overlooked to date</td>
<td>Largely based on assumptions e.g. “they don’t care about their bills”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Limited focus on geography: rural and urban Interesting intersectionalities re age &amp; gender</td>
<td>Provides insights overlooked by demographics</td>
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<td>Non-English speakers</td>
<td>Relations (e.g. Social Relations, UK), Values, Attitudes, Interests, Lifestyles</td>
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<td><strong>Biggest gaps: gender, race, age</strong></td>
<td><strong>Biggest gaps: Listening to the actually audiences, needs assessments</strong></td>
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“Energy demand is no exception: how we consume energy is shaped by relationships of conflict, consensus, collaboration, companionship, solidarity and oppression with our fellow human beings.”

(Hargreaves & Middlemiss, 2020)
Our definition of HTR energy users

Major criticisms

- Failure to acknowledge (spatial) heterogeneity
- Poor diversity in terms of those designing schemes and interventions
- Dominant focus on low-income (being ‘the problem’)
- Beyond demographic data/approaches
- Accounting for compounding vulnerabilities
- The bigger issues/picture e.g. structural, systemic racism?
Q1: What data do we need to better understand the **demographics** of HTR users?

Q2. What data do we need to better understand the **psychographics** of HTR users?

Q3. **Who** do we need to be collecting this data (i.e., actors, organisations, institutions)?