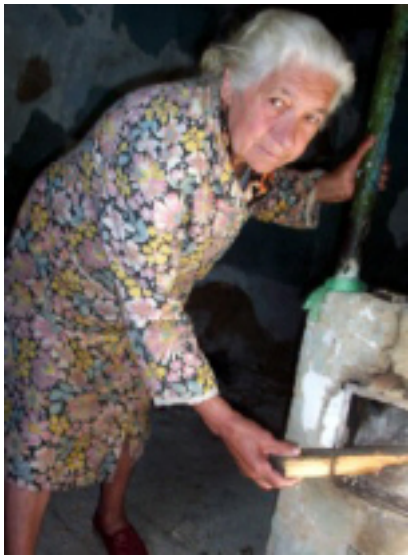
This DFID funded research project conducted in Albania, Moldova and Kyrgzstan sought to identify the implications of government reform of the energy sector on the urban poor with a view to influencing policy to mitigate against any ill effects.

Findings include:

- The greatest impact of higher energy costs will be upon health
- The impact will not be greatest among the poorest as they already use some alternative fuels
- Responses of the poor are constrained by accommodation type and local fuel markets



As part of the part of the energy rich Soviet Union all three countries had enjoyed a stable energy supply as part of a wider grid and had thus become very electricity dependant in their lifestyles. Since the fall of communism however this grid has been steadily crumbling leading to many nations embarking upon reforms that while necessary will almost certainly lead to increases in cost and/or reductions in supply.

This research, using a variety of techniques, sought to establish to what extent the poor will be harder hit by these changes, what coping strategies they expected to adopt and what options were open to them. The main findings included:

The recommendations developed are of great value to all governments and private utility companies planning any form of reform.

The summary report is available to read here: Impact Of The Withdrawal Of Modern Energy On The Urban Poor - Summary

The full report is available to read on the project website www.gamos.org.uk/energy/r8147