Expanding energy access through women’s economic empowerment

ENERGIA’s WE programme, 2014 – 2017
Empowering 3,000 women led MSEs to deliver energy products and services to 2,000,000 consumers in four years.
Why a women’s economic empowerment programme?

- **REACH**
  Women’s enterprises can play a crucial role in scaling up energy access

- **SCALE**
  Women are the world’s third largest ‘emerging market’, after China and India

- **IMPACT**
  Investing in women’s economic empowerment sets a path towards gender equality, poverty reduction and inclusive economic empowerment
ENERGIA’s Women’s Economic Empowerment programme

• Scales up proven business models that strengthen capacity of women led MSEs to deliver energy services
• Provides funding and technical support to partner organisations in Africa and Asia
• In collaboration with NGOs and social enterprises
• In Bhutan, Indonesia, Kenya, Nepal, Nigeria, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Tanzania and Uganda
Core elements to advance in the global agenda for gender equality and universal energy access

- Empower women to compete in energy markets
- Build institutional capacity to implement WE approach
- Scale up energy access for the last mile

hosted by: ENERGIA

INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON GENDER AND SUSTAINABLE ENERGY
An integrated enterprise support package addressing specific bottlenecks to growth

Issues addressed

• Scale of operations/growth
• Access to finance
• Limited links to markets
• Time poverty and mobility
• Awareness/information

Strategies to tackle the issues

• Recruit-train-mentor
• Customized solutions based on local needs and context
• Capacity building (business, technical, leadership, agency)
• Access to finance (loan guarantee funds, microcredit)
• Marketing and distribution
• Overcome cultural barriers
• Building partnerships (local, national, private sector etc.)
Strategies at work: A few examples
Recruit- Train-Mentor
Sustained mentoring support to entrepreneurs, Indonesia.
Partner: Kopernik

- **Recruitment to Wonder Women program**
- **Trainings** on technology, financial literacy, marketing, and leadership to start their journey using technology sales as a tool
- **Run a technology sales business** that brings benefits to households and community
- **With continuous support and mentoring**, skilled and confident participants expand their business. High performers achieve Gold Star* status
- Participants grow empowered, enjoy improved lives, and have become a positive influencer for others

- **Baseline surveys**
- **Post-training test**
- **Routine communication & monthly monitoring**
- **Follow-up surveys**
Financing and distribution/Access to finance

Partnership with the private sector

Partner: GVEP

- Memorandum of Understanding between GVEP and TOTAL Awango to deliver 36,000 Lighting Africa certified solar lamps (+ mobile phone charging) in 2 years with a 2 year warranty
- 75 women enterprises sell the solar products, reaching 155,000 consumers at marketing events
- Sale on credit: 25% up-front paid by entrepreneurs and 75% to be paid within 60 days
- Average profits for entrepreneur: US$ 1.53 per lamp for S20 models; US$ 4.59 for S300 model
- GVEP Guarantee Fund = 100% of the 75% on credit
Marketing and distribution
Marketing campaigns, Kenya
Partner: Practical Action

- Engaging county governments
- Location, using weekly marketing sheds
- Promotion, through friends and relatives (downlines), social media
- Pricing, based on costing, tracking of profits
- Branding, product quality, packaging, guarantees
- Market identification tools (PMSD)
Building partnerships
Contributing to national energy and development goals, Nepal.
Partner: CRT/N

- Women led ICS programme contributes directly to the national cookstoves programme and the Government’s commitment to make all Nepali homes smoke-free by 2017
- Works with the village and district level local governments
- Combined with a nationwide campaign to raise awareness on women, energy and health
- Establishing a distribution channel for ICS in remote rural districts
Fostering women’s leadership
Building sisterhood support in Uganda, Tanzania and Nigeria.
Partner: Solar Sister

- Weekly Sisterhood gatherings provide training and peer support platforms
- Leadership woven into *overall training platform*
- Building diversified partnerships with schools, local savings groups, and clinics and building local leaders
Tracking results: Spheres of empowerment

- Results Assessment Framework to track results at multiple levels
- Use of tablets and mobile phones for data collection

Community
- Participation in community
- Employment
- Change agent

Household
- Asset ownership
- Financial security
- Bargaining power
- Decision making

Personal
- Income and profits
- Knowledge & skill set
- Self-esteem
- Well being
Early results

• Working with 2,697 women entrepreneurs in nine countries (31 December 2015)
• Over 380,000 consumers reached with clean energy access (31 December 2015)
• Technical, business development and empowerment modules and handbooks developed for implementing institutions
• Women entrepreneurs assisted to set concrete, time bound goals
• Customized, one to one mentorship
• Strategic partnerships with TOTAL Senegal and Nepali Government amongst others
Emerging lessons: The added value of the WE approach

• The business model is able to reach geographies the proverbial ‘last mile’, complementing the private sector efforts.

• The WE model capitalises on the latent resource of women micro and small entrepreneurs.

• Women play a central role in supply chain, as trusted users and promoters of household and energy products.
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• The model maximizes development gains through partnerships and linkages.

• An integral approach, not only technology or finance. Customization, finance facilitation, and continued mentorship are key.

• Successful strategies and results at the ground local level for advocating at national and international levels.
Going to scale: Action areas

• Build capacities of local organizations to roll out WE programmes
• Expand Women’s Access to Finance.
• Develop enabling policies through national women’s machineries
• Reform the business environment for women
• Building the capacity of women’s associations and parliamentarians to contribute to advocacy for policy reforms
• Engage with climate finance instruments for resource allocation
Women can be the key to scaling energy access, as asset creators, employers and innovators.