Supporting last Mile Women Energy Entrepreneurship

Presenter: Dr. Linda Davis, PhD

“Women Empowerment and Entrepreneurial Development in the Rural Context: The Role of Renewable Energy”

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“In entrepreneurship, women don’t need handouts. Women should be engaged because it makes sense for business. We want to make sure that we have strong evidence that demonstrates the catalytic role women can play.”

Wanjira Mathai
Who we are....
Energia is an international network established in 1996 with a mission to create an institutional base for mainstreaming gender equality and women’s empowerment into the energy sector in developing countries.
Where we work....
Energia works in in 18 countries with 36 partner organisations

Bangladesh, Germany, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malawi, Nepal, Nigeria, Norway, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Switzerland, Tanzania, The Netherlands, United Kingdom, United States
Empower women to compete in energy markets

Build institutional capacity to implement WE approach

Scale up energy access for the last mile

Empower women to compete in energy markets

How we work....

Energia works with women who are engaged in large numbers last mile markets
Why work with women?

Women’s distribution network well positioned to reach last mile markets that conventional private sector actors find difficult to penetrate.

- Women outsell men cookstoves sellers by nearly 3 to 1. (GACC, 2015)
- Women reinvest 90% of their income into their families and communities, (men only 30 – 40%). (Borges, 2007)
- 70 hours saved by women with improved cookstoves annually. (Practical Action, 2015)

Women as users and household energy managers determine use and adoption.
Challenges of our work
Several factors hinder the growth prospects of women’s energy enterprises

Limited access to financial and business services affects the growth of rural women’s businesses.

Barriers to education, training and information translate into weaker business skills and low confidence.

Women’s businesses are largely informal, and hence are left out of extension and business development services.

Discriminatory laws, regulations and social norms prevent women from starting and consolidating viable businesses.
ENERGIA Women’s Economic Empowerment Programme
A tried and tested program approach
The WEE programme used a demand-and-supply side approach

- Women led MSEs set up and run sustainable energy businesses.
- Women in existing businesses gain from improved energy services.
- Poor populations gain access to clean energy products and services.

When women are economically empowered, their households and communities benefit.
So, how are we doing?
The WEE programme has reached over 2.9 million households to date

4153 women engaged in the WEE Programme

5311 people employed by women entrepreneurs

663,097 quality energy products sold
Which strategies have worked?

We seek to use integrated entry points and key strategies to address significant gaps across the value chain to prioritize women’s entrepreneurship.
1. Employment and Entrepreneurship

- Support women as their own bosses
- Focus on sectors / value chains where women dominate
- Leverage existing networks & practices
2. Supply Chains and Financing

FINANCE:
Design financing mechanisms with a gender focus

PRIORITIZE:
Analyze market with WEE opportunities in mind

INCLUDE:
Build an inclusive value chain
“Making the technologies **available** is one thing, but making them **accessible** is where success really lies.”

*Wanjira Mathai*
3. Capacity building and skills training

Support
- Business Development
- Customer skills

Train
- In management
- In leadership

Prioritize
- Women in technical training
- Across the value chain

Best Practice
“As President Obama has noted, women are powerhouse entrepreneurs. Women reinvest income into their families and communities. A woman who runs her own business is more likely to send her kids to school and less likely to become a victim of violence.”

Bob Godec – Former US Ambassador to Kenya
Communication, Information & Monitoring

Women must be involved in analysis monitoring & evaluation of their successes and challenges

- Engage all stakeholders and use participatory methods
- Document the evidence base
Our theory of change

Women catalyze change throughout the community by increasing energy access.
Resources

https://www.energia.org/

Gender in the transition to sustainable energy for all: From evidence to inclusive policies

Supporting last-mile women energy entrepreneurs: What works and what does not
Other Resources

www.wpwwpowerhub.org

Best practice principles that underscore success in clean energy entrepreneurship.

- **Focus on Women**
  - Strong bias in engaging women to achieve greater market share.

- **Community Presence**
  - Physical locations to build trust within neighbourhoods.

- **Product Availability**
  - Established distribution chains to prevent stock outs.

- **Quality Certified Products**
  - Provision of products that are backed by a warranty.

- **Access to Finance**
  - Variety of pay options to address affordability.

- **Coaching & Mentorship**
  - Continuous entrepreneur training to ensure business sustainability.

- **Women’s Networks**
  - Engagement of existing associations to support adoption.

- **Technology Innovation**
  - Integration of emerging trends to scale adoption.
Other Resources

www.wpowerhub.org

Essential measures required to accelerate women’s involvement in clean energy entrepreneurship.

- **Awareness**
  of entrepreneurship opportunities and household energy alternatives.

- **Accessible**
  entrepreneurship opportunities and clean energy products.

- **Affordable**
  capital for entrepreneurs and flexible pay options.

- **Aspirational**
  entrepreneurship opportunities providing a dignified livelihood.

- **Agency**
  to address cultural barriers for women entrepreneurs.

- **Advocacy**
  to support clean energy policies.

- **Association**
  across women’s networks at all income levels.

- **Acceptable**
  products that consider cultural preferences.
So, what have we learned so far....?

Key lessons from ENERGIA WEE programme

1. **COMMITMENT:** Setting up a comprehensive WEE programme requires time, commitment and core resources.

2. **PARTNERSHIP:** When programming, aggregating efforts is important.

3. **FINANCE:** Access to capital is critical, but must be accompanied by a combination of other measures.

4. **SUPPORT:** An enabling environment is as important as direct support to the entrepreneurs.

5. **INTEGRATION:** An ecosystems approach is central to women’s enterprise development
Where do we go from here?

Going to scale: Action Areas

- Enabling policies environment
- Reform the business environment for women
- Building capacity of women’s associations and parliamentarians
- Scale up WE centric business models
- Engage with climate finance instruments
- Expand women’s access to finance
If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together.

African Proverb
THANK YOU!

https://www.energia.org
“Bringing clean energy access to the grassroots is the great work of our time, and women as champions of clean energy and climate action are the real heroines of this great work.”

Wanjira Mathai
The Global Energy Challenge

1.2 billion people lack access to electricity.  
WEO, 2016

2.7 billion people rely on inefficient cooking and heating practices.  
WEO, 2016

Up to 5 hours/day spent by women collecting fuel for cooking.  
GACC, 2015

4.3 million people die from illnesses attributable to indoor air pollution.  
WHO, 2016

50% of pneumonia deaths in children under age 5 are attributed to indoor air pollution.  
WHO, 2016

Over 36,000 girls between the ages of 10-14 die from lower respiratory infections often attributed to indoor air pollution.  
WHO, 2017

25% of all black carbon arises from inefficient cooking and lighting.  
WHO, 2016
The African Energy Challenge

Over 630 million Africans lack access to electricity.
*WEO, 2016*

Over 790 million Africans rely on inefficient cooking and heating practices.
*WEO, 2016*

600,000 Africans die annually from household air pollution.
*APP, 2015*

Nearly 50% of deaths from household air pollution in Africa are children under the age 5.
*APP, 2015*

USD 232 billion: The estimated economic cost of premature deaths from household air pollution in 2013.
*OECD, 2016*

2-4% of Africa’s GDP is lost annually due to energy-sector bottlenecks and power shortages.
*APP, 2015*