

# **Best Practices in Mainstreaming Gender in Energy Value Chains**

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# About Practical Action



- An international development agency working with poor communities to help them choose and use technology to improve their lives today and in generations to come-Africa, Asia and Latin America
- **Programmes:** Universal Access to Energy; Food Security, Agriculture and Disaster Risk Reduction; Access to Urban Services
- Integrated into our work is a commitment to climate change adaptation and mitigation, Market Systems Development, gender equity and communicating our learning and knowledge through our Practical Answers Programme.

# About Practical Action



- Practical Action Consulting- replicates knowledge and practices generated from programmes and external assignments to partners

## Approaches

- Participatory Technology Development
- Gender analysis and gender mainstreaming;
- Enterprise development and market analysis- Participatory Market Systems Development (PMSD)
- Policy advocacy and influencing

# Issues encountered while working with women entrepreneurs



## ICS, briquettes and solar value chains

- Low mobility for women due to their gender roles hence less access to markets
- Many women lack equipment for production compared to men e.g. in briquette production
- Women lack collateral for financing hence difficult to get credit to grow energy businesses
- Even when interventions are implemented e.g. BDS & technology training, women find it difficult to participate fully due to time constraints/reproductive gender roles

# Issues working with women

PRACTICAL ACTION  
Technology challenging poverty



## cont'd....

- Women mainly at the low end of the ICS value chains that are labour and energy intensive and low paying
- Women's businesses mainly part time and ad hoc
- Low survival rate for women owned business
- Small size of businesses
- Women lack confidence as entrepreneurs

# Our gender mainstreaming strategies /interventions



To increase effective participation of women as entrepreneurs, Practical Action has been employing the following strategies :

- Prepared Gender Action Plans to address the identified challenges and increase women's participation (previous)
- Current strategy is to implement a programme that addresses (1) challenges experienced by WEs while at the same time (2) lobbying and advocating for WEE using lessons from the programme

# WEEK programme



- **Currently:** Women in Energy Enterprises in Kenya (WEEK) project -(ENERGIA supported):  
**Targets:** 730 WE and 364200 beneficiaries
- Programme was designed as a response to the challenges experienced working with women as described earlier
- Therefore project targets women owned energy enterprises only or those co-owned with spouses but women are involved in decision making
- targeting micro and small enterprises along value chains

# WEEK Prog. cont'd...



## Interventions include:

- Baseline to establish potential WEs in target counties and needs
- Recruitment and profiling
- Entrepreneur categorisation
- Incorporation of Agency and Leadership modules alongside BDS and technology training to build self esteem
- Needs assessments carried out to customise training to individual needs



# WEEK interventions cont'd...



- PMSD to understand the market actors and linkages-enables entrepreneurs to appreciate the scope of market beyond their retail/production shops
- Market development support to increase sales and boost skills and confidence
- Customised mentoring including empowerment and leadership
- User awareness to increase sales

# Interventions cont'd...



- Training venues closer to where women's businesses are operated and flexible training hours
- Encouraging WEs to be accompanied by their spouses during open air market campaigns
- Training of staff in Agency based entrepreneurship with support from Johns Hopkins & WinRock International
- Review of training materials to incorporate agency empowerment and leadership etc.

# Advocacy for Gender and Energy in Kenya



- An advocacy component of the WEEK programme supporting Women Economic Empowerment (WEE)
- Runs parallel to the WEEK project to promote WEE
- Uses the voices of the women entrepreneurs to tell their story and change the practices of others including governments at national and county level, donors, CSOs and the community to recognise the critical role women can play in delivering sustainable energy e.g. **the case of Josephine at the SE4All Forum in New York**