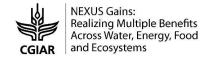


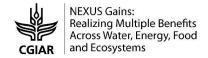
Can Energy Interventions Empower Women? Insights and Learnings from Bihar

Neha Durga Shrishti Mishra





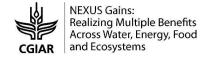
- Energy is a critical tool for of development
- Energy poverty impacts women more, given the existing structural inequities
- Root cause lack of 'Capability' Agency and Resources
- New technology tend to adopt these inequities and bypass any structural change until supported by polices which incentivize behavior change at individual, collective and social level
- Can energy as a tool be leveraged for improving 'Capability' of women?
- What are the limitations?



Objectives & Methodology

- To document energy interventions aimed at having gender positive outcomes
- The role of energy in bringing a positive change in women's livelihoods
 [What energy interventions can do and how in improving the resources (Income) and agency of women]
- What are the limitations of the using energy as a tool for empowering women?
 [What energy interventions cannot do?]
- Secondary Search Database of energy interventions (excluding cooking interventions)
- Typology of Interventions
- Geography and cases were selected
- Case studies have been developed





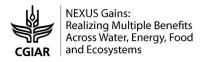
Typology of Cases (Total 50 CASES

— Intersection of Energy and Gender)



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Gender and Energy Interventions



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SEWA

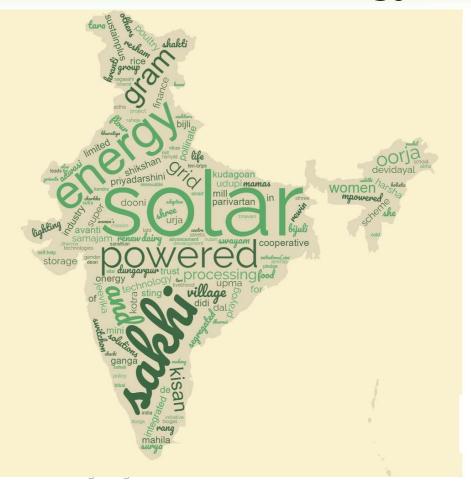
Powering Livelihands

CSTEP

The Rockefeller Foundation

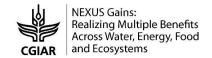
PURPOSE

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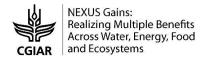


Selection of Cases



- Geographical Focus Bihar
- Soft focus on farm activities, Field Partners AKRSPI, JEEViKA
- Fieldwork in Samastipur and Gaya

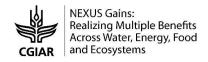
Name of Case	Category of Case	Location, Promoters	Key Highlights
Solar Irrigation SHGs	Asset transfer to Local Institution	Samastipur , AKRSPI , Axis Bank	Dedicated Group (Single SHGs) Mix Group
JWIRES – SOLAR MART	Skilling, Entrepreneurship supported with Institution building and support	Gaya , JEEVIKA	Community owned company Promote Solar Ecosystem in Bihar Women entrepreneurs through Solar Mart
Urja Sakhi	Entrepreneurship	Gaya , SSP	Support women retailers : Solar Products & Organic Farming
Maize Sheller , Biogas System, BLDC Fans, IDES , Solar Chulah, Subjee Cooler	Asset Transfer	Samastipur (AKRSPI) , Gaya (EESL, JEEVIKA, TERI, IIT Bombay)	Different Products



Findings - Resources

Name of Case	Implementer Focus	Improvement in Resource (Income improvement)	Improved Convenience
Solar Irrigation SHGs	Tech > Women	Insignificant	Significant
JWIRES - Solar Mart	Women > Tech	Significant	
Urja Sakhi	Women > Tech	Insignificant	
Maize Sheller	Women > Tech	Significant	Significant
Biogas System	Tech > Women	Insignificant	Negative Change
BLDC Fans	Tech > Women	No Change	No Change
IDES	Tech > Women	Significant	
Solar Chulah	Tech > Women	No Change	No Change
Subjee Cooler	Tech > Women	Significant	Significant

Findings - Agency



Name of Case	Say over productive resources	Control over income	Independent Movement	Time Use	Leadership
Solar Irrigation SHGs	Increased	No	Insignificant	Work Increased	Skewed change
JWIRES - Solar Mart	Increased	No	Significant	Work increased	Significant
Urja Sakhi	Nil	No	Insignificant	No Change	No Change
Maize Sheller	Increased	No	Insignificant	Work Decreased	No Change
Biogas System	No change	No	nil	Workload Increased	dnil
BLDC Fans	nil	nil	No change	No change	No change
IDES	Increased	No	Significant	No Change	Significant
Solar Chulah	<mark>nil</mark>	nil	nil	nil	nil
Subjee Cooler	Increased	No	Increased		

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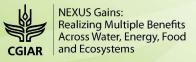
Key Findings

- Design question: Energy as a mean or as an end?
- Difficult to maintain a balance between technology and gender objectives; often one takes precedence over the other
- Product-Participant conundrum
- Impact of changes in resources income improvement is insignificant to change the HH dynamics or capital/asset redistribution

What "Energy Interventions" can do?

- Reduce input cost for a "Viable Business" SIP SHGs, Subjee Cooler,
- Skilling, Training, Entrepreneurship "Employment Opportunity"-IDES
- Reduce barriers for other household members to participate in activities impact labour division? But who is trained to operate these products? **Reinforces inequity**?
- Increase **leisure time** for women? TUS shows the extra time gained is spent in HH only, especially on unpaid care

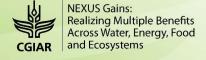




What Energy Interventions Cannot Deliver?

- Women Empowerment needs structural changes; Powerful structural changes – Property Rights, Political Rights-Women's Reservation Bill
- Empowerment cannot happen locally and needs systematic institutional support (then also not guaranteed); Agency can be developed locally, only to a limited extent without structural/policy support
- Maize sheller does not incentivize men to share the burden, it reduces participation barriers by making the activity easy/convenient
- Accessible and affordable energy can improve the viability and hence income generation – not necessarily control over that income





Some more insights... Energy as an enabler

Bank Sakhi

- Participants are women They earn significantly via commission for extending banking services
- Beneficiary are women They have easy access to basic services near their homes and without any intimidating financial processes
- Reduced barriers to access formal banking services

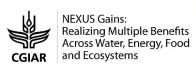
E-Rikshaw

- 100 percent driven by men, 90 percent used by women
- Significantly improved rural mobility among women
- Reduced their dependency on men for accessing health, education and other basic services



Empowerment is like obscenity, you don't know how to define it but you know it when you see it (Rappaport cited in Shetty, 1991:8) from Kabeer 1999)

"I like the term empowerment because no one has defined it clearly yet; so it gives us a breathing space to work it out in action terms before we have to pin ourselves down to what it means. I will continue using it until I am sure it does not describe what we are doing (NGO activist cited in Batliwala" (1993:48) (from Kabeer 1999)



Thank you