

## Background



# Exploring Factors that Enhance & restrict Women's Empowerment through 'Electrification' – EFEWEE

- > How may electricity make a difference?
  - ➤ Not only interested in measuring impacts of electricity but how and why this happens
  - ➤ Focus on conditions to explain why electricity produces a given set of gendered effects
- Comparing centralised grid & decentralised electricity systems
- **>** 2015-18;
- 🕨 India, Kenya & Nepal





## Research framework EFEWEE 4 conditional factors



**4** Policy, regulations, financing schemes & role of international actors



- 1 Socio-cultural & material context
- **2** Design of electricity system
- **3** Process of implementation, management, staffing & ownership

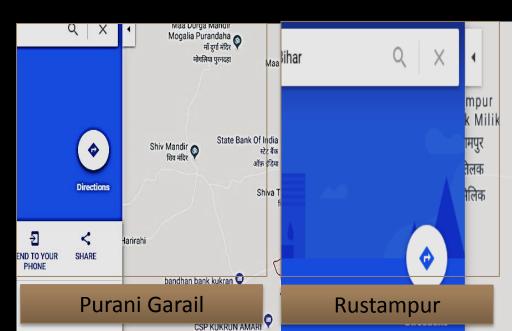


## Case study - Bihar

#### Study area features

- Purani Garail and Rustumpur in Purnia district
- Underdeveloped
  - Low per capita income , high incidence of poverty
  - Stagnant agriculture driven many male members out of the village in search of productive opportunities
- Discriminatory norms
  - Sex ratio 918 females per 1000 males
  - Female literacy 52% as against 65% male literacy
- Electricity TIER 1
  - Off-grid Solar Home System
  - Poor grid connections





### JEEViKA — TERI initiative

JEEViKA – Promoting Self Help Groups (SHGs) and building capacity to enable women to access credit and services

Initiated by Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society (BRLPS)



#### JEEViKA – TERI (LaBL) Collaboration

Solar Home Systems (20 Wp)

- 2 luminaries (2 W)
- 1 mobile port
- 1 Improved cook stove
- Battery, panel, charge controller
- Total cost Rs 4500 (upfront cost Rs 500)

Inclusion of women as target beneficiaries

Receive a clean energy loan – Energy SecurityCredit



Women - **Custodians** of the energy system

## Unbundling the Energy – Empowerment Nexus

How does ownership of energy systems affect gender equality and and empowerment through the distribution of differentiated benefits to men and women?



How sensitive are such interventions to the socio-cultural and institutional contexts?

How does ownership of energy system by women aid in changing gender relations within the household and beyond?

## **Gendered Uses and Outcomes**



How is access gendered at home?

## Ownership based model - Woman subscriber and connection owner

 Though decision for purchase was taken in consultation with men at home

#### **Placement of lights**

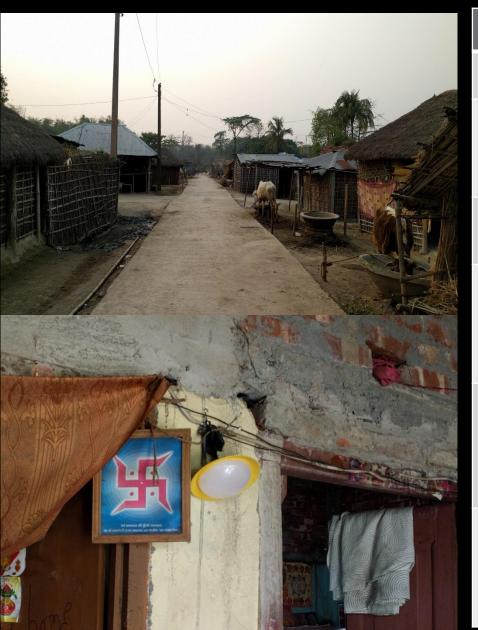
- Every household had light in the kitchen
- Kitchen was part of the living room which had light

#### **Decision making**

- Jointly decided
- Technician/installer also tends to suggest

**Uses -** basic lighting + mobile charging (5-6 hrs/day)

## Gendered uses and outcomes



#### **Gendered outcomes**

#### Better illumination and visibility

#### Improved cooking routines

- Light in the kitchen
- Cleaner house

#### Increased safety, security and mobility

#### Convenience

 Opportunity to hold marriages and festivals for longer hours in the evening

#### **Productive opportunities**

 Convenient to manage business (petty shops/grocery shops ) due to better illumination

#### Increased leisure time

Extra hours in the evening- used for socialising

## Gendered uses and outcomes



#### Gendered outcomes

#### **Mobile phones**

- Increased connectivity friends and relatives
- Convenience of mobile charging at home
- Earlier men used to get it charged from the village market - Women were not comfortable travelling to the nearby market and had to rely on men and boys

Mobile usually purchased or received as gift by men but accessible to the women in the household

#### Health

 Reduced incidences of eye and respiratory diseases due to reduced exposure to kerosene soot

#### **Education**

- Children get more time to study after dark
- Better lighting to study after dark
- Helped women to monitor children while they studied

Though no evidence of improved results due to poor quality of education in schools

## Gendered uses and outcomes





Role and participation of women in supply

#### JEEViKA – TERI approach

 Provided opportunities for women to be trained as technicians, skill development, vocational training

But culturally and socially not acceptable due to masculine label attached to electricity/technology related jobs

Did not participate in installation of the system (very few - helped in erecting poles along with men)

## Unbundling the electricity-empowerment linkages



Undoubtedly
electricity which is
reliable and
affordable has
provided life
enhancing benefits
as well as ownership
by women



JEEViKA provided microfinance at the doorstep for women and provided them a platform to express themselves freely

How to link the benefits to larger issues of **equity and empowerment** such as freedom to pursue higher education of girls, or gaining increased power to make decisions within household and beyond?

 How does access to mobile affect women's access to information and communication outside of the community and also their role in public domain? Electricity at home enabled the children to study. Yet, girls pursuing higher education was not encouraged and the priority for parents was to get the girls married to the groom of their choice

Role of women in public domain minimum – Poor participation in panchayat meetings

Women address their husbands as "Mallik"

Arrival of male child is celebrated with pomp and show

Major decision making within the household and community still taken by men. Women decision making power restricted to patriarchal systems – cooking and managing the households

Use of mobiles mainly for entertainment and connecting with family and friends

The "protective" behaviour of parents suggests gender norms that undervalue girls' capacity to think and manage their lives

JEEViKA – TERI
program has given
women an opportunity
to take decisions
regarding the purchase
and ownership of
energy systems

Aided in increasing the bargaining power within the household Drops of water make the mighty ocean

JEEViKA has provided not only credit facilities but a common platform to voice their needs requirements and concerns

Important steps towards empowerment

in gender relations takes time and hinge on more inputs

## Thank You!!

Visit us at <a href="https://www.efewee.org">www.efewee.org</a>



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