What does it take to create Women Entrepreneurs based on productive use of energy technologies?
Approach A

- Women as manufacturer/assembler and/or seller/provider of energy product/service
  - TIDE (improved cookstoves): Technology, training, hand-holding, access to market
  - TIDE (trade in solar devices): Technology, training, hand-holding, access to market
  - NACEUN (women electricians): Training, hand-holding, access to market
  - SEWA (supply of solar energy products and Sarai Cooking System – partnership with SELCO): Training, finance, access to market
  - UBOMUS (providing battery charging service, sale of energy products): Training, finance, access to market
  - S3IDF (access to finance): Possible solution to one of the problems faced by women entrepreneurs as a subset of any other small/micro enterprise.
Approach B

- Women as users of energy product/service to enhance their incomes
  - TIDE (food processing): Technology, training, hand-holding, access to market
  - SEWA (use of solar energy and Sarai Cooking System for improved productivity): Finance, access to market
  - Priyadarshini Mahila Samajam (solar drying of food products, partnership with AIWC): Training, hand-holding, access to market
  - S3IDF (access to finance): Possible solution to one of the problems faced by women entrepreneurs as a subset of any other small/micro enterprise.
What is needed?

- Technologies:
  - Linked with ‘traditional’ roles of women (food processing, cookstoves) - easier
  - Totally new areas that have yet to fall into any gender roles (solar products, charging stations) – relatively easier
  - Traditionally perceived as men’s arena (electrical/electronic assembly and service) – difficult, but can be done

- Training
  - Technology training needs to be supplemented with leadership/confidence building inputs (e.g. TIDE, NACEUN)
  - Identification of ‘right’ candidates with entrepreneurial DNA is important (e.g., TIDE, NACEUN)
What is needed?

• Hand-holding
  – More support needed compared to men entrepreneurs
  – Women entrepreneurs generally take longer to spin off than men entrepreneurs

• Access to Market
  – Limitations on mobility due to social, cultural, familial pressures
  – Lack of confidence
  – Societal outlook towards women entrepreneurs (e.g., a woman electrician gets paid less than a man doing the same work)
  – Readymade market (e.g. SEWA)
What is needed?

• Finance
  – Grant funding can give initial impetus, but commercial finance has to come in at some stage
  – Financial instruments like those of S3IDF can be supportive in accessing commercial finance
  – Banker’s perception is based on risk assessment, which in turn is measured on ‘conventional’ (and therefore gender biased) criteria
  – Bankers’ ‘technology illiteracy’ is a big hurdle
  – Special financial packages can be created (e.g., SEWA’s subsidy + low interest loan)

• Enabling policies
  – Policies like Kutumbshree in India, or IDCOL in Bangladesh give a good impetus for scale up/replication for broader impact
Main Points for Wiser Road Map

• Provide support to energy-technology-entrepreneurship sector for gender mainstreaming in projects (advisory role)
  – To carry out SWOT analysis of involving women at different levels
  – To examine project objectives and implementation plans through a gender lens, and make appropriate adjustments

• Need assessment from gender lens, and then involve technology providers to address the specific need – WISER’s own ‘model’ projects

• Provide platform for experience sharing, tools sharing and technology exchange in the region, for replication of ‘model’ projects (either own or identified in the region)

• Documenting specifically ‘financing’ success stories in the region