



Empower Generation Executive Summary

Over thirty percent of households in Nepal lack access to electricity. Most families utilize kerosene, candles, and traditional biomass to light their homes, cook food, and study. With Nepal's unemployment rate at forty-six percent, economic opportunity is limited, especially for women who comprise ninety percent of the paid and unpaid agricultural labor force. Through the sale of reliable and affordable solar lanterns and energy systems, Empower Generation seeks to promote women's economic empowerment by eradicating energy poverty through autonomous, women-lead clean energy businesses.

To document Empower Generation's social impact in the context of Nepal, we conducted over 50 semi-structured qualitative interviews with women entrepreneurs, their husbands, sales agents, and customers across eight districts: Bardiya, Chitwan, Dhading, Dhanusha, Kailali, Nawalparasi, Sarlahi, and Siraha. Interviews were conducted with the use of an interview script and a translator. The interview questions were designed to foster discussion among women entrepreneurs about their personal history, the socio-economic impact of their entrepreneurial experience, and their future aspirations. During our eight weeks in the field, we took over two thousand photos and filmed seven women entrepreneurs.

Through our research, our data highlighted key patterns of Empower Generation's ability to foster power and agency among women, stimulate independent income generation, and provide effective technical training and support. Women entrepreneurs express an increase in their sense of power and agency on individual, familial, and community levels. Empower Generation allows women entrepreneurs to develop their business acumen through training and support, leading to more confidence in public speaking and conviction in voicing their opinions in local politics. Income generation through sales also increases women's agency by dismantling women's dependence on their husband or family for economic support.

We have crafted three deliverables with the intention of expanding Empower Generation's presence and to provide investment opportunity. The Monitoring and Evaluation report will document the socio-economic impact that Empower Generation's program has on its entrepreneurs, sales agents, and customers. Through the videos, potential investors or partners can watch what the women entrepreneurs have gained through working with Empower Generation. The annual report profiles will create a more personal connection with the women entrepreneurs, sales agents, and customers and the personal and economic effects solar lights have had on their lives.





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In order to continue to expand Empower Generation, we recommend that Empower Generation: (1) increase its diversity of products; (2) maintain a larger inventory and teach entrepreneurs and sales agents to make basic repairs to circumvent import issues and delays relating to warranty replacement; (3) administer surveys to communities and customers in order to better understand consumer needs and desires; and (4) conduct research and analysis to determine the viability of instituting a pay-as-you-go system in rural communities for use with larger home solar systems.



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