



Miller Center

for Social Entrepreneurship

REVISED DECEMBER 10, 2018

Name of social enterprise: Solar Sister

Mission: Solar Sister envisions a brighter world powered by women entrepreneurs. In sub-Saharan Africa, where more than 600 million people have no access to electricity and over 700 million must rely on harmful fuels, it's women who bear the huge burden of this energy poverty and who disproportionately shoulder the harmful effects of climate change. Solar Sister believes women are a key part of the solution to the clean energy challenge.

Webpage: <http://www.solarsister.org>

GSBI (2011) business plan presentation:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fhxHWS4EveE> but see Solar Sister's

Youtube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/solarsistervideo>

Location(s) of research: Tanzania

The challenge: Solar Sister is collaborating with Miller Center's [Scale Out initiative](#) to expand its reach and impact to new countries and locations. Solar Sister has asked for recommendations to guide its in-country partnership strategies with local institutions to reach rural female customers.

Background: Miller Center placed Global Social Benefit Fellows with Solar Sister in 2012, 2013, 2015, and 2016. The 2016 project was supervised by [Dr. Leslie Gray](#) of the Department of Environmental Studies and Sciences. She directed field research and was the lead author of "[Turning on the Lights: Transcending Energy Poverty through the Power of Women Entrepreneurs](#)" and "[The Power of Small-Scale Solar: Gender, Energy Poverty and Entrepreneurship in Tanzania.](#)" In 2018, Miller Center began partnering with congregations of Catholic Sisters in East Africa, who might serve as on-the-ground partners for Solar Sister.

Action research deliverables:

1. A guide to partnering with local, community-based organizations, including faith communities, to reach new rural communities with solar energy products.
2. A feasibility study of partnering with congregations of Catholic Sisters.

Student skills needed: social science data collection and analysis, multicultural competencies, excellent writing skills.

Keywords: Gender and sustainable development, rural economic development, Tanzania culture and history, last mile distribution, distributed solar energy products, strategic partnerships.