

Example from Grameen Shakti: Involvement of Communities and Women

Involvement of the community is vital for the successful operation of Grameen Shakti (GS). From the beginning GS sought to give local communities control over solar installations in their areas. It worked with teachers, community leaders and elected officials who explained the benefits of the solar home systems to the people they lead and represent. Another aspect of the local involvement is the manufacture, repair and maintenance of solar accessories close to the communities that are being served, by people who are familiar with their needs.

GS has always focused on involving women with its various programs. For instance, women from user families have been trained as technicians by GS staff so that they can take care of their systems. GS feels that it is more viable to train women than men as the men are in jobs outside their homes. Also, women technicians would find it easier to enter user homes when the only occupants are women and men are outside working. GS has also nurtured women empowerment by giving them the opportunity to earn their livings through business ventures such as solar powered mobile phones, home based poultry, handicraft businesses etc.