



EMPOWER
GENERATION

EMPOWER GENERATION

EMPOWERING WOMEN TO POWER THE WORLD

2015 ANNUAL REPORT



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OUR DISTRIBUTION NETWORK OF WOMEN-LED ENTERPRISES



A MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDERS

Dear Friends,

The beginning of 2015 started with much promise, and we were looking forward to doubling our existing network of CEOs, empowering more women, and bringing clean energy access to Nepal.

We conducted a call for applications for potential entrepreneurs in February, reaching 364 women. In April, we conducted our capacity building workshop, selecting seven women with the most entrepreneurial spirit to join our distribution network as CEOs of their own companies.

The 2015 Earthquakes

However, on April 25th, our plans changed. Nepal was hit with a massive 7.8 magnitude earthquake and a second major earthquake occurred on May 12th. As a result, about 8,300 people died, nearly 18,000 were injured, and an estimated 2.8 million were displaced. Many of the women in our network lost their homes. Although CEO Kala Khatiwada lost her home, she did not lose her generous spirit. Immediately after the earthquake hit, Kala visited a father caring for his small child in a tent, while grieving over the loss of his wife and daughter. Kala donated a free solar light from her business to this family and many more families devastated by the earthquake.

Inspired by Kala's actions, Empower Generation built upon our existing in-country presence and strong distribution network to launch Project Sol: an earthquake response project, which provided free solar products and water filters to communities hit by the earthquake. Thanks to the incredible outpouring of support from technology partners, institutional and individual donors, we were able to donate 10,995 solar lights, mobile chargers and home systems across 15 districts, reaching 72,343 survivors.

Looking Ahead

While we were able to provide immediate solar relief in the aftermath of the earthquake, the rest of the re-building efforts are continuing slowly in Nepal. Empower Generation is focusing on building a stronger, more resilient Nepal by continuing to expand our distribution network bringing sustainable, clean power to more remote communities. Looking to 2016, we plan to increase the number of women CEOs in our

distribution network by 25 percent, empowering more women to power the world and providing clean energy access to the energy poor. We also plan to conduct a market survey for our pilot project for pay-as-you-go solar home systems in Dhading, Gorkha, and Sindhupalchowk Districts. Selling home systems will provide an additional revenue stream to our network and offer more power to customers.

Thank You

Our work would not be possible without the incredible efforts of our staff, solar CEOs, and sales agents who work tirelessly to carry out our mission, even in the face of a crises—thank you! We would also like to thank our supporters, volunteers, and partners who have worked with us throughout the year, helping women in our network earn income and respect by becoming CEOs of their own businesses, providing a brighter future for their communities.

Warmly,



Anya Cherneff

Anya Cherneff
Executive Director



Bennett Cohen

Bennett Cohen
Board Chairperson



Sita Adhikari

Sita Adhikari
Country Director



OUR STORY

Empower Generation was founded in 2011 by Anya Cherneff, Bennett Cohen, and Sita Adhikari. Anya was looking to offer sustainable employment to women otherwise vulnerable to slavery while Bennett was thinking about how to enable the widespread adoption of clean energy in developing countries.

When Anya and Bennett met Sita in Nepal, together, they identified a tremendous opportunity to create a gender and energy paradigm shift by empowering women to become clean energy entrepreneurs.

OUR MISSION

Empower Generation empowers women to distribute clean energy solutions in their rural communities. We do this by providing training and loans to women who want to start their own businesses, selling clean energy products.

OUR VISION

FOR THE WORLD:

We envision a world where women lead their communities out of energy poverty, where human dignity for all and environmental sustainability are universal values.

FOR OUR ORGANIZATION:

By creating local economic opportunity for women, Empower Generation is focused on becoming Asia's leading clean energy distribution network.

OUR VALUE

Women working in our network are empowered by earning a higher income, building their self-confidence, and gaining respect, while providing their communities with much-needed energy solutions that enable families to work and study, and make their homes cleaner and safer.


OUR STRUCTURE

We are a social enterprise hybrid organization registered in the U.S. and Nepal. We profitably distribute clean energy, and educate our sales force and customer base with grants and donations.

U.S.



EMPOWER GENERATION
LLC
Limited Liability Company



EMPOWER GENERATION
501c(3)
Federal Tax Exempt Nonprofit

NEPAL



KALPAVRIKSHA
GREATER GOODS
For Profit Affiliate
Solar Light Distributor

Energy Society Nepal
Sister NGO
Enterprise Incubator/Market Creator

OUR APPROACH

Our approach serves to address several problems, resulting from extreme poverty. This includes developing sustainable livelihoods for rural women, vulnerable to human trafficking and other forms of exploitation; and providing clean energy access to the world's poor, reducing the number of people reliant on expensive and dangerous household fuels like kerosene and firewood.

THE PROBLEMS

Developing a sustainable employment model for vulnerable women in Nepal who have little opportunities to advance

Improving access to clean energy: the poorest 20% of the world's populations pay over 20% of the global lighting bill and receive only 1% of the benefits

Decreasing the number of people exposed to poisonous fumes from expensive and inefficient fuel sources such as firewood and kerosene—Reliance on these fuels keep people in energy poverty

OUR SOLUTIONS

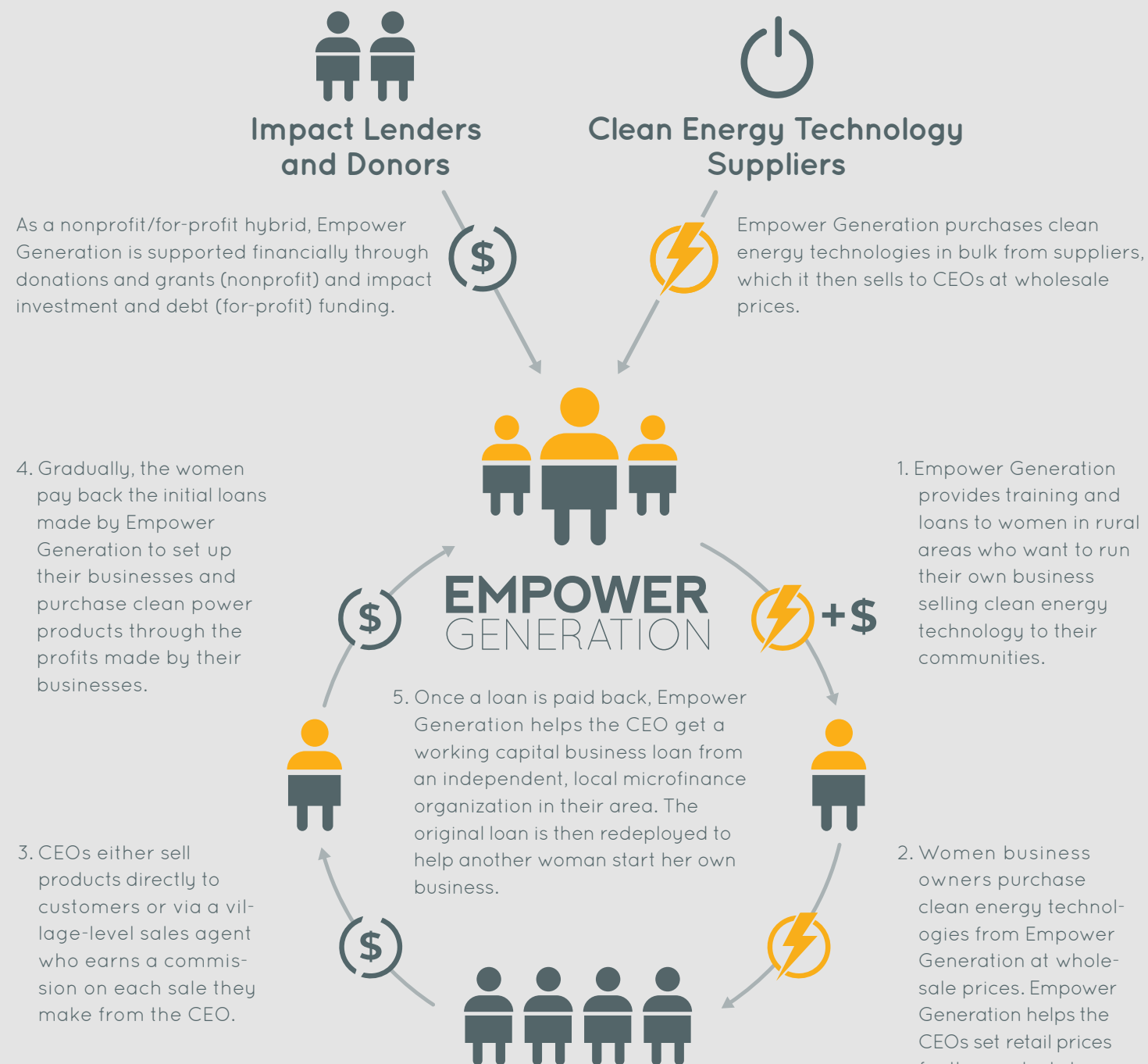
Empower rural women already serving as household energy managers to become solar CEOs. We provide finance, sales, management, and supply chain management trainings and mentorship as well as working capital to women who in turn run their own clean energy enterprise.

Provide clean energy access in rural Nepal through our distribution network of women-led enterprises, which sell solar energy products, a cheaper alternative to kerosene and other available alternatives in the long run. Scale-up our model to expand across Asia.

Our distribution network of women-led enterprises sells quality solar light products to remote communities. These products save customers' money and reduce their exposure to toxic fumes.

OUR MODEL

We empower women already serving as household energy managers to become solar CEOs. We make this happen by bringing together a number of stakeholders, including clean energy technology suppliers, impact lenders, and donors.



Credit: text and design of this business model by *Conscious Company Magazine*

MEET KALA KHATIWADA

CEO OF PRAGATI SAURYA URJAH
JOINED EMPOWER GENERATION IN 2015

IN RURAL KALLERI, located in Dhading District, there are no reliable energy sources and power cuts often occur for 10 hours at a time. People in the community turn to kerosene, candles, and wood fires as light sources—with negative implications such as health problems, decreased study times and shorter workdays.

Involved with local politics, Kala Khatiwada found that her passion lied in helping people and creating a difference in her community. At the age of 14, Kala had an arranged marriage, but soon after learned she was unable to bear children. In Nepal, there are societal and familial pressures on wives to bear children. Being unable to have children could lead a woman's husband to take a second wife or abandon or divorce her. With this in mind, Kala took matters into her own hands. She proactively searched and found a wife for her husband. She did this because she wanted to ensure that she got along well with her husband's second wife. Within this new family, the second wife was able to have two children, and Kala eventually gave birth to two daughters.

Struggling to pay the health expenses for her husband's heart problems, his second wife's arthritis, and youngest daughter's epilepsy, Kala needed to find a new source of income in addition to what she made from raising goats and farming. She was fascinated by the way solar lights glowed in the dark, as she had experienced the burden of power cuts and unreliable energy sources firsthand. When Empower Generation hosted a call for applications program at her home, Kala found that her passion for helping people aligned perfectly with Empower Generation's business model.

From her experience working with Empower Generation, Kala feels successful and confident,



knowing that her products are positively benefiting the people in her community.

Kala noticed that before, she did not usually speak to people while taking public transportation, but now she sees it as an opportunity and feels more comfortable talking to people, establishing a strong network of friends and potential clients, and educating them about the benefits of solar lights.

Kala's confidence also increased after customers told her that her products are reliable and well worth the investment. One of her customers, a well-known doctor in the district, was so thrilled with the product Kala sold him that he told all his patients that they should buy lights from her. With an increase in respect from her community and in income, she is now able to send all four of her family's children to a better school, and hopes that one day, they will be able to travel the world. Kala's goals are to continue to expand her business, send all four children to college, and become an important political figure in the Dhading District—ambitious goals for a woman who once called herself a "simple, uneducated woman."



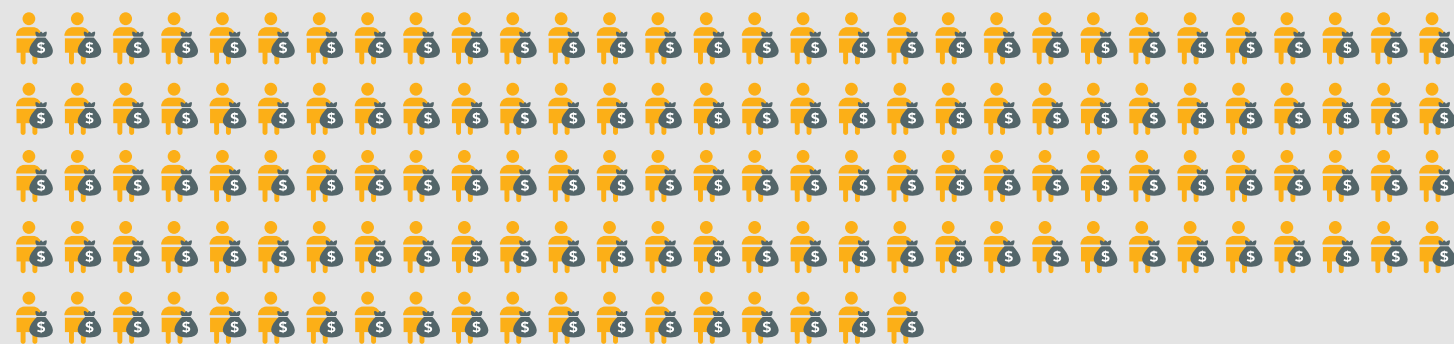
OUR IMPACT

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



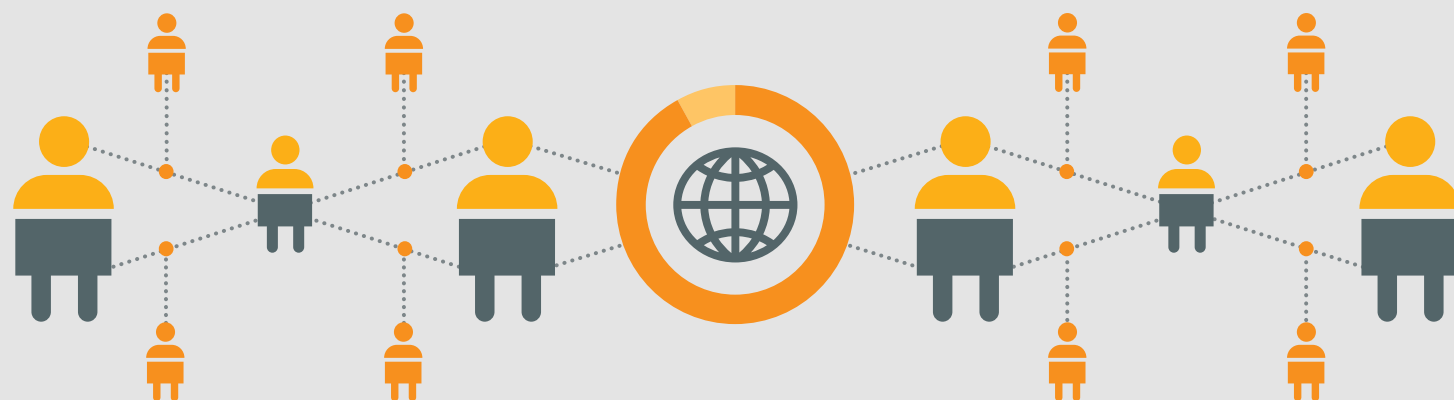
12 WOMEN-LED BUSINESSES

distributing clean energy services



139 INDIVIDUALS

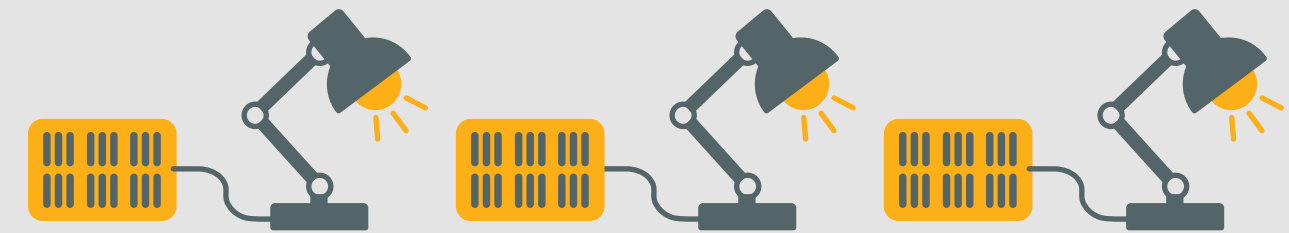
have earned income working for businesses in our network



92% OF WOMEN-LED BUSINESSES

remain active in our network

ENERGY ACCESS AND ENVIRONMENT



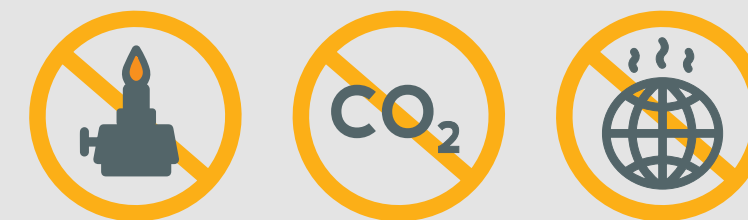
39,143 CLEAN ENERGY UNITS

distributed



199,923 PEOPLE

with cleaner, safer, light and power



7,379.34 TONS

of CO₂ displaced



USD \$1.95 MILLION

in energy savings

MEET URMILA CHAUDHARY

SALES AGENT FOR NAVA URJAH
JOINED IN 2014

FROM THE JUNGLE VILLAGE JHAN

JHANTPUN, Urmila Chaudhary travels by foot for three hours to Kailali District with solar lights on her back. With the determination to provide a better life for herself, Urmila proclaims the trek is well worth the confidence and extra income she has gained. As a sales agent for solar CEO Yam Pokhrel of Nava Urjah, she is the ideal businesswoman with the drive and enthusiasm to persuade and successfully sell solar lights to teachers, students, and farmers in neighboring communities. But the trek to her success was no easy feat.

Kailali District has one of the lowest education rates for girls in Nepal, and many families see school as a financial burden. This was the case with Urmila, who was constantly criticized by her family after failing her high school exit exam. She was told that she was not smart or worthy enough, and that she was a burden on her family. With the passing of her father, she was left to help her mother provide for her two brothers, aunt, and uncle. They all voiced that her place was at home, helping with household activities and making money to support them. Eventually, Urmila made the decision to drop out of school. She started to work odd jobs that paid her daily; and during the harvest season, she would cut corn for a meager income. She thought that this was the best her life could ever be.

As part of the STEM Program—a £1.7 million UK Department for International Development (DFID) funded, Mercy Corps implemented program, working to “Support the Education of Marginalized Girls in Kailali District,” Sita Adhikari, Empower Generation’s Nepal Country Director, began recruiting girls who had dropped out of school to work as solar sales agents. Urmila heard about

the program and eagerly reached out to Sita for an interview. After being selected, she received five days of business skills and sales training where she learned about pitching to customers, customer service, and solar products.

With the new skills she learned, Urmila went door-to-door, convincing community members about the reliability, portability, and durability of solar lights. Though some customers would pester her with many questions about the product, she learned from Empower Generation’s training how to answer all of them.

Eventually, customers were so happy with their products that respect for her grew, and people started approaching her to buy solar lights, without her having to pitch to them. With her strong performance, her employer Yam commented that she sees herself in Urmila. Urmila uses the income she earns selling solar lights to pay for her high school exit exam test prep classes, so she can finally receive her high school diploma. She also uses it for household expenses to help her family. Urmila has noticed she has gained more respect in her household, and no longer has to ask her mother for permission to leave her home. The new sense of freedom brings her much joy and hope for the future, and she wants to become a CEO just like Yam. She admires how Yam motivates her sales agents and provides them with honest advice and guidance, so they can succeed. Urmila hopes to pass her high school exit exam soon, so that she can continue her studies, open her own small business and be an inspiration to young girls.



PROJECT SOL: EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE

After the devastating 2015 earthquakes in Nepal, Empower Generation modified its plans for the year in order to respond to the crisis, providing much needed, immediate relief.

The Crisis: Two Natural Disasters in Two Months

On April 25, 2015, a 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck Nepal and a second major earthquake occurred on May 12, 2015. Its epicenter was at Barpak, Gorkha, near Kathmandu. The earthquakes caused approximately 8,300 deaths, injured nearly 18,000 people, and displaced an estimated 2.8 million. A United Nations report stated, "that more than eight million people (which is more than one-fourth of Nepal's population) were affected by the event and its aftermath."¹

Global Response and Domestic Challenges

Nepal declared a national emergency and called on the international community for aid. Large amounts of money were raised and many recovery programs were set up. However, several factors strained the emergency response, including the scope of the disaster, the remoteness of the affected villages, and the shortage of vehicles to transport supplies. In addition, the Nepalese government was overwhelmed with properly managing the disaster response. Relief supplies were piled up on the airport tarmac for months. Now, over a year later, over 600,000 people continue to live in unsafe or temporary housing.² Government factions have not agreed on how to spend the \$4.1 billion in aid for reconstruction pledged by donor agencies and foreign governments and has been slow to disburse funds to those in need.

Our Response – Project Sol

Inspired by entrepreneur Kala Khatiwada who donated solar lights from her business' stock to families in need,

Empower Generation donated the inventory we had in Nepal when the earthquakes struck, leveraged our international and national distribution channels to overcome the distribution issues facing many other international aid efforts, and launched an international campaign to fund the donation of solar lights, mobile chargers, solar home systems and water filters. In many instances, our distribution network, which is embedded in several remote communities, was the first to reach remote villages devastated by the earthquake and its aftershocks.

Bringing Light and Communication

We distributed high quality solar lights, mobile phone chargers, water filters and basic supplies such as water, food, tarps, and blankets to earthquake victims in Dhadhing, Gorkha, Nuwakot, Nawalparasi, Kathmandu, Kaski, and Sindhupachowk Districts. The lights we provided replaced the unhealthy and highly flammable kerosene alternatives, aided in search and rescue efforts, and deterred thefts and attacks on women and children at night. Mobile phone chargers helped survivors stay in touch with their loved ones and relayed emergency communications. In addition, in partnership with the SolarCity GivePower Foundation, we donated solar home systems to 660 schools.

In the aftermath of the earthquakes, we were able to make an impact by doing what we have always done—supporting women-led businesses that distribute clean energy to families who need it most. This crisis has proved even more that empowering local people to lead solutions brings a long-term positive change, and we are determined to continue empowering more and more women to power the world.

LED BY WOMEN IN NEPAL

DISTRICTS WE REACHED



HIGH QUALITY SOLAR PRODUCTS



Reliable light to replace unhealthy and flammable kerosene in tents and temporary shelters



Mobile charging to stay connected with loved ones and relay emergency communications



Bright light for women to move around after dark and deter theft

OUR LOCAL, WOMEN-LED DISTRIBUTION NETWORK acted quickly, bringing solar lights and phone chargers to remote villages where they were immediately put to use aiding the search and rescue efforts, and caring for the injured and the displaced.

10,995 solar lights, mobile chargers and home systems distributed across 15 districts



LOCAL SERVICE replacement warranties provided by trained, local representatives to create sustainable market demand



72,343 SURVIVORS REACHED with clean, safe light, and power to help rebuild a more resilient Nepal



45 WOMEN AND GIRLS trained to join our network of business leaders and sales agents

THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS
Project Sol distributed free solar products to help survivors of the devastating earthquakes recover and rebuild.

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

We reached over 70,000 victims of the earthquakes, but we did not do this alone. We would like to give a special thanks to our Project Sol partners. Thank you for your support!

Kalpavriksha Greater Goods (KGG), Kopernik, BBOX, d.light, Kadi Energy, Omidyar Network, Rebuild With Sun (Alyssa Newman and Gham Power), and SolarCity GivePower Foundation

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Nepal-earthquake-of-2015>

² <http://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2016/04/nepals-earthquakes-one-year-later/479772/>



MEET BASANTI CHAUDHARY AND LAXMI CHAUDHARY

CO-CEOS OF NAMUNA
SOURYA URJAH

JOINED EMPOWER GENERATION IN 2014

IN THE LUSCIOUS GREEN LANDS OF DHANGADHI, the capital city of Kailali District, found in the flattest farming region of Western Nepal, Basanti and Laxmi started a joint business selling solar products in their respective communities. Before meeting each other at a business skills training program hosted by Empower Generation, they both had very different careers. Basanti owned a beauty stall selling cosmetic products while also taking care of her son, husband, and 16 other relatives that stay at her home. With her son growing older and developing a love for the game of cricket, Basanti wanted a way to support and encourage her son's passion. Laxmi worked as a seamstress and owned her own tailor shop attached to her home. With her husband unemployed, Laxmi was the sole income provider for her household of three, and like Basanti, wanted a stable livelihood. With the support and guidance from Empower Generation, they decided that by working as a partnership, they could earn more money rather than competing in the same area.

With a large region to cover, Basanti and Laxmi meet every month and use their complementary skills to contribute to their partnership. From the start, Laxmi enjoyed the responsibility of handling the finances, and both were responsible for recruiting sales agents. Together, they decide how much inventory to order and split the products evenly to sell to their communities.

When a problem arises Basanti and Laxmi work together and inspire and motivate each other. For example, one of their sales agents was having a difficult time talking to customers, and Laxmi was

having trouble motivating her. Laxmi discussed the problem with Basanti, who took the sales agent aside and gave her a pep talk and valuable sales tips. When Laxmi saw how Basanti motivated the young girl, she felt inspired to use Basanti's approach to motivate their other sales agents. Basanti and Laxmi want to continue to grow as a partnership and expand their business to other districts near Dhangadhi.

With the support of Empower Generation, as part of the STEM Program, a £1.7 million UK Department for International Development (DFID) funded, Mercy Corps implemented program to improve the lives of marginalized girls in Kailali, Basanti and Laxmi hired ten more sales agents for their business— young girls who were unable to complete high school due to a number of factors such as financial constraints, unsupportive families, and early marriage.

Together, Basanti and Laxmi aim to support their sales agents to sell more products, so that these young, vulnerable women can gain economic independence and inspire them to pursue their dream careers. Through their experience working as solar co-CEOs, They have not only grown close as friends and partners but have also become economically empowered. Because of the extra income they have earned, Basanti and Laxmi can help pay for their sons' schooling and provide for their households in a way they never could before.



INNOVATION

We are constantly looking for creative and new ways to improve and enhance our existing model. While providing improved energy access through portable solar lights and mobile chargers meets an immediate need, we aim to increase energy access further through the sale of solar home systems that can power efficient appliances (e.g. lights, fans, televisions). The price of home systems is the biggest barrier to potential customers, so we are also looking at different financing options.

PAY-AS-YOU-GO SOLAR HOME SYSTEM PILOT

Initial Pilot

In December 2014, we launched a mini pilot project with Pabitra Aryal, CEO of Tri Urjah in Bardiya District. The pilot ran until February 2015. It gave us important information and brought up challenges that face the current energy market in Nepal. We learned that the home system product we tested was not meeting customers' needs, pricing determines market demand, customers prefer making a down payment rather than paying in incremental credit installments, and the market is competitive with many cheap but low quality products available.

Mobile Money

Mobile money allows customers to pay via their mobile devices rather than with cash. Using mobile payment not only offers a secure payment mechanism compared to cash but also allows our customers who are located in remote areas to make payments for the larger home systems that they purchase on a pay-as-you-go basis. A customer can make their payments at a fraction of the cost compared to traditional methods where each time they make a payment, they have to travel far to pay a sales agent in-person. Thus, mobile payment allows prospective customers greater access to finance and clean energy technology. We are partnering with Hello Paisa and eSewa, mobile money companies in Nepal, to provide a convenient and secure method of payment to our customers.

In June 2015, Empower Generation signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Hello Paisa. They will help us launch the Pay-As-You-Go business model through their mobile money platform. Selling home systems and using the mobile money platform will provide our CEOs an additional source of revenue, as they will become mobile money agents and support Hello Paisa's existing network of 844 agents, ATMs and bank branches across Nepal. Concurrently, our network of businesses will leverage Hello Paisa's agent network to scale up their business offerings and services.

CLEAN ENERGY FUNDS

Part of our solution to enable Nepal's poorest people to afford clean energy is to explore offering innovative financing options to customers. Clean Energy Funds are seeded within existing microcredit organizations, servicing Empower Generation's customer base, and are administered directly by cooperative staff. Once Empower Generation recoups the principle investment, all interest collected from the loans are reinvested to sustain the funds. We monitor and report on the funds annually and use the information to assess what types of credit offerings are best for our clean energy customers.

Border Multipurpose Cooperative

Border Multipurpose Cooperative (BMC) is located in Kalika-7, Bardiya District. The cooperative is a sales agent for Pabitra Ayala, CEO of Tri Urjah. In November 2014, Empower Generation loaned USD \$1,000 to BMC for a period of 3.5 years. The cooperative offers six-month loans to its members to purchase clean energy products. In 2015, BMC purchased 52 lights from Tri Urjah and re-sold them to its members. In 2015, BMC's average repayment rate was 100 percent.

Gaida Community Tourism Cooperative

Established in 2012, Gaida Community Tourism Cooperative (GCTC) is located in Sauraha, Chitwan and is the sister organization of Sauraha Community Library. Sauraha Community Library works with Kalpavriksha Greater Goods (KGG), as a sales agent where the commission earned through selling renewable products goes towards the operation of the library. GCTC provides loans at an eight percent interest rate, which is low compared to others available. From 2012 to 2013, Empower Generation loaned USD \$1,300 to GCTC. In 2015, the average repayment rate was 100 percent, and we expect full repayment of the funding by 2016.

Partners are integral to our work, and collaboration is one of the keys to unlocking long-term, effective change for women and clean energy in Nepal. We are proud to work with the following organizations to further our mission to empower women to power the world!

KOPERNIK SERVING THE LAST MILE Kopernik is a nonprofit organization, based in Indonesia, which distributes low-cost technologies to recipients in less-developed countries. Post earthquake, Kopernik funded the solar lights Empower Generation distributed in Dhading and Nuwakot Districts. Kopernik also provided the funds for us to identify, train, and support new entrepreneur Dipika Silwal, CEO of Dipika Enterprise in Chitwan. Dipika comes from a poor, uneducated family. She was motivated to start her business to help her disabled elder sister. Kopernik's generous support has helped Dipika start her own business, manage a network of village-level sales agents, and acquire new products.

MercyCorps Mercy Corps works to alleviate suffering, poverty, and oppression by helping people build secure, productive, and just communities.

UKaid from the British people UK Aid, also known as The UK Department for International Development (DFID), leads the United Kingdom's work to end extreme poverty by creating jobs, unlocking the potential of girls and women, and helping to save lives when humanitarian emergencies hit.

Empower Generation is an implementation partner of the STEM Program – a £1.7 million DFID funded, Mercy Corps Nepal implemented program, working to “Support the Education of Marginalized Girls in



Kailali District.” Empower Generation's goals for the project are to make solar lights accessible, improving girls' study times and learning outcomes, and to train out-of-school girls in business skills with the goal of improving their lives. With Mercy Corps Nepal and UK Aid's support Empower Generation cultivated four new entrepreneurs in 2014: Basanti Chaudhary and Laxmi Chaudhary Co-CEOs of Namuna Sourya Urjah, Yam Pokhrel CEO of Nava Urjah Center, and Mina Chaudhary CEO of Ishakarika Urjah Trade Center. In 2015, we sold 985 lights to the STEM Program's target community, trained 19 schoolgirls to become sales agents, and provided business skills training to 35 marginalized girls.

Sunny Side Up Sunny Side Up is a foundation that supports sustainable energy projects in developing countries through crowdfunding. Empower Generation held a call for applications for potential new entrepreneurs in February 2015. We trained the finalists, and Sunny Side Up mentored them.

Selecting six of the 13 finalists, Empower Generation provided additional training and Sunny Side Up invested in the six new entrepreneurs, giving them capital to buy their first inventory of products. New entrepreneurs will pay the funds back, and the money will be used for future entrepreneurs' first inventory.

GSBI The Global Social Benefit Institute Accelerator program at the Miller Center for Social Entrepreneurship at Santa Clara University prepares trailblazing social enterprises to scale—especially those working on advancing women or building resistance to climate change. GSBI Accelerator provided quality, in-depth mentoring delivered by Silicon Valley business executives to Empower Generation. GSBI mentors coached, educated, and encouraged Empower Generation for ten months, greatly improving every aspect of our organization.

PARTNERSHIPS

MEET JAYRAM CHAUDHARY

SALES AGENT FOR
GRAMEEN URJAH

JOINED IN 2014

EVERY WEDNESDAY IN THE EASTERN REGION OF SIRAHA, Jayram Chaudhary helps his wife, Lalita, CEO of Grameen Urjah, sell solar lights at the local night market. With large, bustling crowds, Jayram stops people and describes the benefits of solar products. He starts by dropping the portable d.light s20 model in front of the crowd and describes the durability of the product. Then he goes on to enamor them with a bonus: the lights all have a two-year warranty—and offers Lalita's business card to interested customers. Seen as the ideal sales agent, Jayram was not always this supportive.

When Lalita first started her business, Jayram was apprehensive about his wife working outside the home, interacting with other men. He was also concerned about Empower Generation's commitment to Lalita. Many international and regional organizations come into their community and leave with empty promises of help, or provide trainings that do not result in actual income generation or create any lasting impact. But as time went on, Jayram noticed that Empower Generation followed up with telephone calls, invitations to attend trainings, and at-home visits.

Jayram's excitement grew, and as a local government employee, he felt that he could sell to his co-workers and other government officials. As a sales agent, he has expanded his customer base from professional contacts to farmers in the area. One customer praised Jayram and Lalita for saving his mango business. The solar lights he purchased scared off would-be thieves that had previously hid under the darkness of night.

As Lalita's business continues to grow, Jayram advises and supports Lalita's idea to expand to neighboring districts: Okhaldhunga, Saptari, Solu, and Udayapur. Together, Lalita and Jayram wrote a radio jingle, and Jayram rode his motorbike down to the radio station and paid for the ad to be played during primetime. The radio jingle has proven to be a great success, and Lalita has received a lot of solar light requests from people who heard it. Though Jayram was initially hesitant and unsupportive of his wife starting her own business with Empower Generation, he is now proud of his wife and her business and supports her growth and independence. Jayram has been empowered to become a supporter of women in business, through the opportunity to work with and watch his wife Lalita flourish.



YEAR IN REVIEW

FEBRUARY

- 12 call for application programs for potential entrepreneurs (364 women reached)
- Empower Generation joins Santa Clara University's Miller Center for Social Entrepreneurship's Global Social Benefit Institute's (GSBI) accelerator cohort
- Sales promotions for network businesses [Grameen Urjah](#) and [Ujyalo Mithila](#)
- Concluded mini pilot of solar home systems in Bardiya District

MARCH

- Empower Generation [featured in Tech in Asia](#)

APRIL

- Phase I of Project Sol earthquake relief distribution
- [Kalpavriksha Greater Goods \(KGG\)](#), Empower Generation's wholesale distributor in Nepal, starts coordinating with international organizations such as Oxfam and Save the Children to facilitate earthquake relief efforts
- Anya Cherneff, Executive Director, named one of [10 young leaders changing the face of Europe by Effect](#)

MAY

- Phase I of Project Sol earthquake relief distribution
- Empower Generation [featured in a Fox6 Now article](#)

JUNE

- Phase I of Project Sol earthquake relief distribution
- Signed MOU with Hello Paisa
- Blog [post in Huffington Post](#)
- Sales promotion for [Tri Urjah](#), [Grameen Urjah](#), and [Ujyalo Mithila](#)

JULY

- Phase II of Project Sol earthquake relief distribution
- Solar CEOs Kala Khatiwada, Manju Paudel, and Urmila Baral register their businesses: [Pragati Saurya Urjah](#), [Manju Solar Enterprise](#), and [Tejilo Saurya Urjah](#) and join our network
- Empower Generation [featured in an article on CNN.com](#)
- Sales and marketing training for [Nanda Bhauju Saurya Urjah](#), [Pragati Saurya Urjah](#) and [Manju Solar Enterprise](#)

AUGUST

- Phase II of Project Sol earthquake relief distribution
- Led Kopernik earthquake relief trip with [Pragati Saurya Urjah](#)—Distributed 88 solar lights
- Solar Co-CEOs OM Kumari Chaudhary and Tulasa Pathak register their business [Nanda Bhauju Saurya Urjah](#) and join our network
- Empower Generation pitched at the GSBI Showcase

SEPTEMBER

- Phase II of Project Sol earthquake relief distribution
- Led Solar City GivePower Foundation earthquake relief trip
- Sales promotion for [Pragati Saurya Urjah](#)

OCTOBER

- Phase III of Project Sol earthquake relief distribution
- Empower Generation pitched at Harvard Business School's Angels Group
- Provided refresher trainings for our solar CEOs in Chitwan and Kailali Districts

NOVEMBER

- Phase III of Project Sol earthquake relief distribution
- Led Kopernik earthquake relief trip with [Manju Solar Enterprise](#)—Distributed 64 solar lights
- Our work highlighted in the Youth Action campaign

DECEMBER

- Phase III of Project Sol earthquake relief distribution
- From April to December, [KGG](#) sells over 35,000 solar lights to international organizations for free distribution for earthquake relief efforts
- [KGG](#) establishes its brand as a wholesale distribution company in Nepal
- Empower Generation [featured in Devex Impact article](#)
- Sales and marketing training for [Namuna Sourya Urjah](#), [Nava Urjah Centre](#) and [Isharika Urjah Trade Center](#)
- Sales promotions for [Nava Urjah Center](#), [Isharika Urjah Trade Center](#), and [Nanda Bhauju Saurya Urjah](#)
- Provided refresher training to our CEOs in Sarlahi District



MEET RAMDULARI CHAUDHARI

CUSTOMER OF NAMUNA
SOURYA URJAH



AS A MOTHER, SHOPKEEPER, AND FARMER in Kailali District, located in the Western region of Nepal, Ramdulari was frustrated with the traditional solutions used to combat the power cuts in her district. Battery-powered lanterns were delicate and overpriced, flashlights required frequent change of expensive batteries, and rechargeable lights were not viable because the grid power was always down. Ramdulari was forced to rely on kerosene lanterns to light her home and the fumes in her house made it difficult to breathe, and her children complained about irritated eyes while studying. One day while she was tending her cornfield with a flashlight at night, she noticed that her neighbor was holding a portable

light that shined incredibly bright. Curious about the light, she asked what it was and learned about the new technology: portable solar lights. She asked where to purchase the product and discovered that the local seamstress, Laxmi Chaudhary, CEO of Namuna Sourya Urjah, was selling reliable solar products with a warranty. Ramdulari decided it was finally time to switch to a practical solution that could benefit her household.

After visiting Laxmi, Ramdulari decided to purchase the most portable light offered, as her whole family could use it for different purposes. She uses it to do housework and to watch for snakes while tending the fields at night. Ramdulari's children use the portable light to study. When Ramdulari's children are not using the light, she uses it at her shop.

The light helps her easily make change for her customers and display her array of products after dark. Ramdulari feels that she finally has peace of mind. This one little, portable light has allowed Ramdulari and her family to safely work and study in their home without worrying about fumes or a fire outbreak, a common occurrence with kerosene lights.

MEET MANOJ POKHREL

CUSTOMER OF NAVA URJAH



AS A YOUNG WORKING COLLEGE STUDENT, Manoj Pokhrel was looking for an affordable, reliable, and portable source of light. In his search, he heard from fellow students that Yam Pokhrel, CEO of Nava Urjah, a well-respected social worker in his community, had started her own business selling quality solar lights. Manoj was initially apprehensive about the product, as he did not have enough money and heard that many other solar lights sold in marketplaces were defective. After meeting with Yam and learning that the product offered the reliability he was looking for in addition to a two-year warranty, he eagerly persuaded his parents to help him pay for a d.light s20 model light.

Before his purchase, Manoj had struggled for many years with kerosene lamps. He noticed that after a few hours of studying, he experienced difficulty breathing and irritated eyes from the fumes. In addition, pests and bugs, attracted to kerosene, would bite him while he tried to complete his homework. He tried using a rechargeable light instead, but it would run out of charge and would turn off within two hours of use. Charging it constantly increased his family's monthly electricity bill. Manoj believed that the lack of adequate light for studying led him to fail his English course.

Since purchasing the s20, Manoj has been able to study every night with no hassle and his family is saving money on kerosene and electricity every month. He has had enough light to get good studying in and successfully passed his English course earlier this year.

As an eager business student at Tri Bhuwan University, Manoj hopes to one day visit America and make enough money to support his family. The problems associated with energy poverty are now obsolete for Manoj, and he is able to devote the necessary time to complete his studies. Manoj has used the solar lanterns for over two years and believes that it has contributed to his academic success. His wish is that one day, all students in Nepal will have the opportunity to study with solar lamps because it has changed his life.

LOOKING AHEAD

We continue to strategize on how best to fulfill our mission of empowering women to distribute clean energy solutions in their rural communities. Specifically, we are offering additional energy saving products to our distribution network and examining how best we can expand our network across Asia, providing a greater impact on women's empowerment and economic development and energy access in the region.

Short-Term Plans (2016 to 2017)

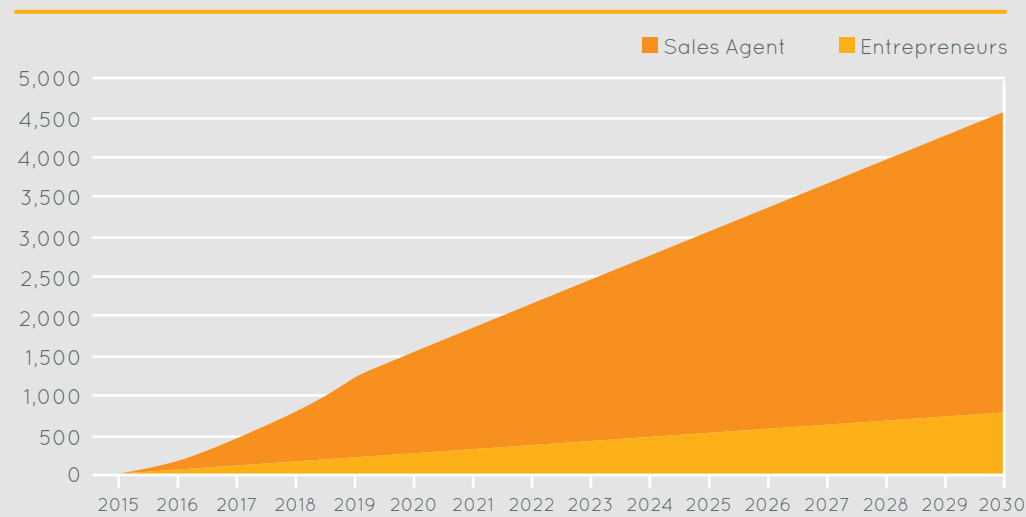
In the short-term, we are launching the pay-as-you-go solar home systems pilot throughout our network, providing a higher income stream to our solar CEOs. We are also adding cookstoves to our product mix. In 2017, we will launch a scoping mission to Myanmar, where we plan to expand to next.

Long-Term Plans (2017 to 2023)

We will expand our network of businesses, cultivating solar CEOs and sales agents, increasing their incomes, and providing families with a cleaner, safer, and more reliable access to energy in key Asian markets: Myanmar, India, Bangladesh, and Indonesia.

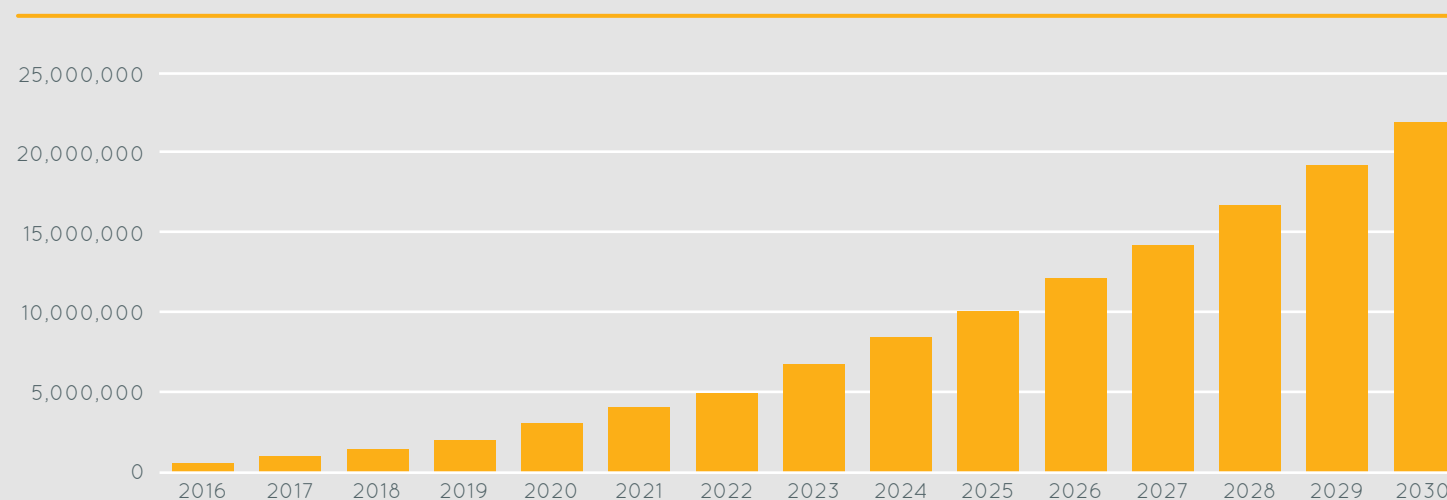
PROJECTED GROWTH & IMPACT

Women Employed (000's)



Country	Start Year
Nepal	2012
Myanmar	2017
India (North)	2019
Bangladesh	2021
Indonesia	2023

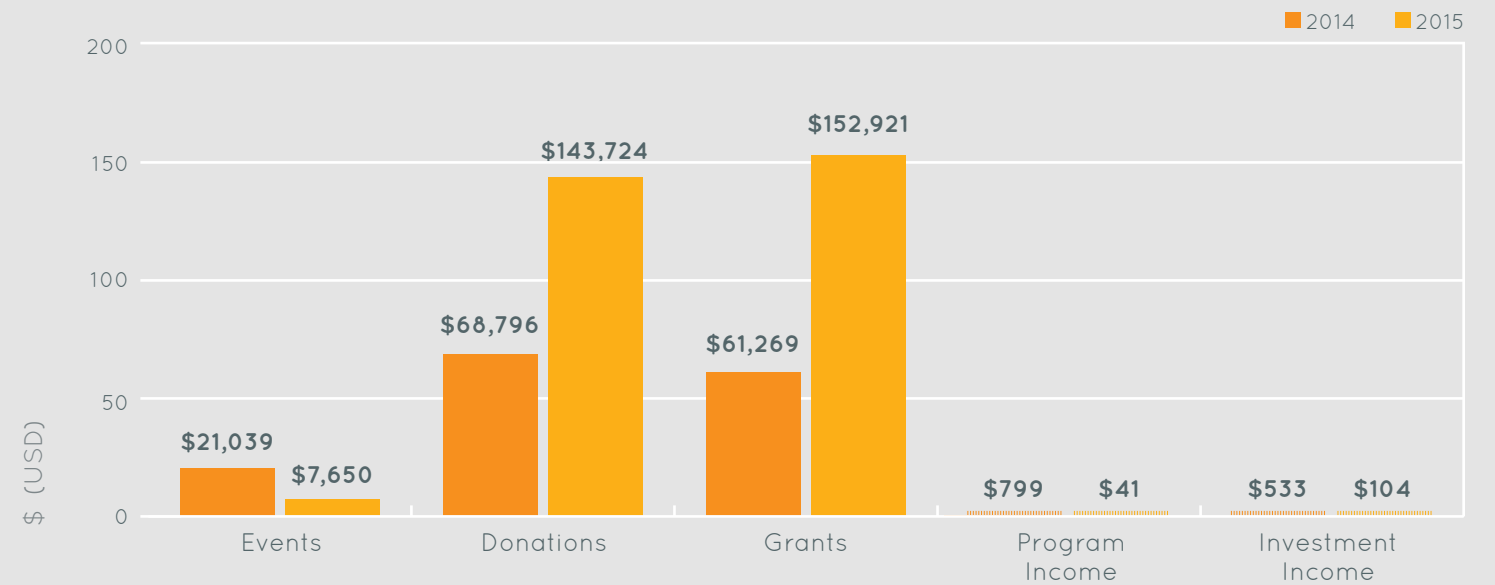
People Impacted - Cumulative



FINANCIALS

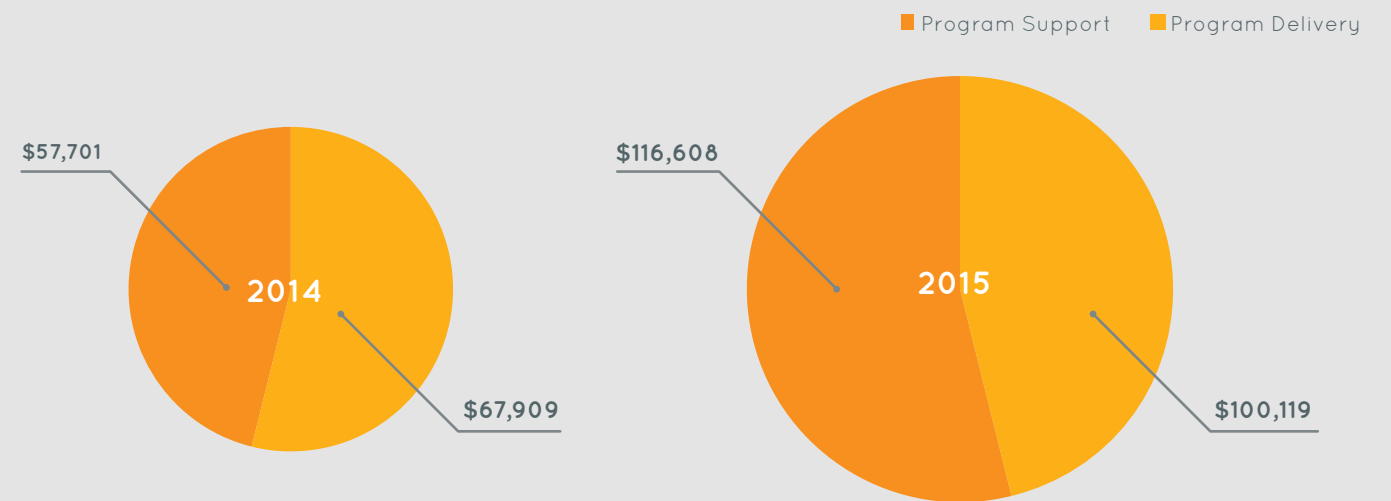
Empower Generation is a registered 501c(3) U.S. nonprofit organization. For more financial details, view our 2015 Form 990 filed with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service on our website. Financial details include income sources, expense breakdowns, net assets, and program and operational costs in Nepal.

Sources of Income



In 2015, we increased our donations and grants by over 50 percent. The increase in donations and grants were a result of the outpouring of support by individuals and organizations in the aftermath of the devastating 2015 earthquakes in Nepal.

2014 and 2015 Expenses



In addition to conducting our regular program of support for our eight existing CEOs and bringing on four new businesses in 2015, we donated 10,995 solar lights, mobile chargers, and home systems in earthquake relief, reaching 72,343 survivors.

SUPPORTERS

Our work would not be possible without the extraordinary support of our donors and volunteers. Thank you for your financial contribution, advice, and time and for rallying around the people of Nepal in their darkest hour. Without you, we would not be able to empower women to power the world!

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We welcome any feedback on our report via:
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The Miller Center helps social entrepreneurs across the world address the problems of poverty, empower women, and build resilience to climate change. The Global Social Benefit Fellowship provides a comprehensive program of mentored, field-based study and action research within the Miller Center's worldwide network of social entrepreneurs.



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