



**SOLAR SISTER:**

# **Gender Mainstreaming Case Study**





**Solar Sister trains and supports women to deliver clean energy directly to homes in rural African communities.**

We provide essential services and training that enable women entrepreneurs to build sustainable businesses in their own communities.





**Solar Sister has built a network of over 5,000 clean energy businesses in last-mile communities in sub-Saharan Africa, providing light and energy to over 2 million people.**

Clean energy lights homes and livelihoods, improves children's education outcomes and creates a safer and healthier home.



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**Gender mainstreaming is built into the core of the program – not just an add-on.**

From the outset, Solar Sister has recognized that women are essential to creating a strong distribution network in last mile communities.

Women entrepreneurs tap into their established social networks of family, friends, neighbors. They are not just beneficiaries of our program, they are the key participants driving impact.





**Gender mainstreaming is both deliberate and intentional. It is baked into the design of everything we do and every decision we make.**

It is even in our name, “Solar Sister”, which signals to women that this business is meant *for them*.

The business model allows for women to fit it into their already busy lives, as opposed to traditional jobs that would require set times and days of effort.





**Program design: Trainings are held at times convenient for women, by women, with women.**

Especially because 'technology' is often considered men's domain, allowing women to ask questions, be vulnerable and learn with groups of other women gives them space to be bold.





**Feminist values of equality are practiced throughout the company and create a culture of inclusiveness.**

Solar Sister was founded by a woman, the majority of board members are women, and the majority of the executive team are women.

We also welcome the men who are very much part of the team at every level of the organization and in the entrepreneurs' businesses, and find that they share our feminist values.





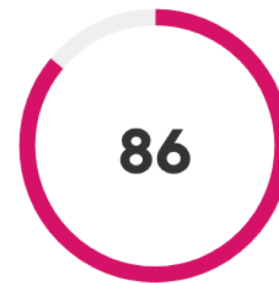
**Data driven results are disaggregated by gender to inform policies, practices and advocacy.**

Solar Sister is data driven and collects all data using gender disaggregated methods in monitoring and evaluation.

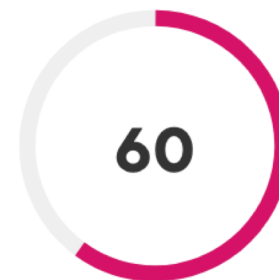


## Demographics

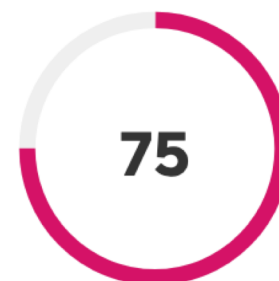
We work with African women living in off-grid, often rural communities. The majority of our entrepreneurs are farmers, others are small business owners and professionals working in health and education sector. While our focus is on women, we also work with committed allies, our Solar Brothers!



% entrepreneurs are women



% of entrepreneurs living with no grid connection



% customers live in rural, last mile communities





**Communication is an art of both listening well, communicating clearly, and providing a platform for new voices to be heard.**

Solar Sister practices deep listening to understand the challenges the women entrepreneurs face as well as their aspirations. We provide opportunities for them to share their stories and become advocates on their own behalf.





**“Solar Sister training helped me increase my income – taught me about customer care, how to save and the importance of building trust.”**

**- Hilaria, Solar Sister**

