Women’s Program

What we do

Empowering women with the marketable skills and knowledge to be competitive and confident decision makers, technicians, and educators in the solar electric (PV) industry.

Empower women in technical fields

Solar energy technical training

www.RemoteEnergy.org
Two Global Challenges

1. Nearly 1 billion people are living without electricity, 50% of whom reside in Sub-Saharan Africa. An estimated 70% are women.

2. Access to energy and the education of women are recognized as essential for lifting communities out of poverty, yet there is a critical lack of women being trained in technical trades.

How We Address These Challenges

Solar energy is the most economical way for remote communities without access to large electrical grids to power essential utilities and dramatically improve their quality of life. Remote Energy provides the technical training to enable community members to take charge of their energy future. Moreover, in a technical field where women are underrepresented, Remote Energy offers both co-ed and women’s-only courses taught by professional women instructors. Our research shows that women prefer to attend technical classes when they are taught and attended only by women. Through our educational programs, we not only transfer valuable knowledge and skills, but also break down the barriers and stereotypes that prevent women from accessing technical education and bolster women’s voices in decisions about energy within their communities. It takes just a few women who have gained these valuable technical skills to inspire others to follow, transforming the role and leadership potential of women throughout these communities.

Our Unique Expertise

Remote Energy is uniquely positioned to offer solar technical trainings with specific expertise in the design, installation, and maintenance of PV systems. Our professional, female instructors have been teaching women’s-only solar electric classes for over 20 years and have partnered with organizations worldwide to develop and implement customized training programs for all types of students. Through our years of curriculum development and training experience, we have the necessary tools to create capacity building programs that are culturally relevant as well as site and equipment specific.
Scaling the Impact
Graduates Teach and Mentor More Women

Women in Sustainable Energy & Entrepreneurship (WISEE)
This Kenyan women-run capacity building organization was conceived in 2015 during a women-only class taught by Carol Weis and is a core partner for Remote Energy Women’s Program. **Graduates have taught 70+ people** since this class and **mentored 10 women to pass the Kenya solar license exam.**

Expanding Lives empowers young women in West Africa to be leaders in their communities and partnered with Remote Energy to conduct a solar class in 2018. Two of the Nigerian graduates returned home with a small solar lighting system for their unelectrified school. This system has been used by the young women to study for university exams, and **graduates of the program have taught 40+ other girls about solar.** In 2019, an all-stars team has been selected to do a more rigorous training with Remote Energy.

Pilot locations include Uganda, Kenya, Pine Ridge Reservation, Haiti, and Tanzania

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Our Three-Year Goals

The Remote Energy Women’s Program helps women trainers excel in developing solar training programs for their region. We train and support women leaders in the renewable energy field to achieve their goals.

Train women technicians to fill solar jobs

There are millions of jobs expected in the renewable energy sector in the next 10 years. Our established women’s trainer program will have exponential results teaching women to pivot into the growing green economy.

Mentor women solar instructors

entering the field to gain technical and teaching skills. We expect to increase the number of women who are at the front of the room to promote long-term mentorships and role models for the future generation of women coming into the field.

Create networking opportunities

for women trainers to share skills and educational tips with their peers.

Develop networks of local organizations

that build over time to address other barriers for women in soft skills development, tool use and acquirement, entrepreneur skills, and job placement.

As these goals come into focus, we are able to achieve our larger vision of a gender-balanced solar industry where women are recognized for their significant role enhancing the industry.
The Importance of Women-only Trainings

Women use the majority of energy in the world, from cooking to pumping water to agricultural processing, and women’s work often goes unpaid and therefore unrecognized. When women are trained in the installation and maintenance of renewable technologies, the projects are more sustainable. Solar technology can ease women’s workload, allowing more time for education and income-earning activities.

Women are extremely underrepresented in the renewable energy workforce, and largely do not attend co-ed technical trainings. Women interact differently in a women-only class. Many women have stated that they feel less intimidated to use new tools and learn a technical subject with other women. In a women-only class, women get more involved in the hands-on portions of the class, where they would have tended to be more apprehensive in a mixed gender training.

Carol Weis
Remote Energy Co-founder
Carol Weis works as a solar electric instructor and consultant in the US and internationally teaching co-ed and women-only classes. She is an IREC Certified Master PV Trainer and has her PV Installer Certification with the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners.

“"The most powerful model to set for emerging women's leadership is one that defies gender stereotypes while also bringing sustainable power to communities"

Her journey to become an advocate for women’s leadership in the solar industry parallels the journey of most women breaking into fields long dominated by men. When she decided to learn the electrical trade as a route to access the solar industry, the path was not without barriers. Finding other women in the field as mentors was a challenge. Demonstrating her competence and finding her first few jobs required stamina and resilience.

It was a woman master electrician mentor and the first all-women’s solar training class that helped her develop confidence in this trade. Sharing stories among other women about the common barriers was both empowering and inspiring. These life experiences have formed the basis of Remote Energy’s women’s program.
Remote Energy Solar Program Development

Remote Energy’s team of experienced, multilingual, solar installers, electricians, and PV trainers specialize in technical capacity building programs and PV system implementation. Together, we have conducted training activities in more than 25 countries worldwide, in Africa, the Caribbean, Latin American, and Asia.

Remote Energy’s philosophy focuses on using local stakeholder’s knowledge of the growing market, combined with a knowledge of international industry trends, to make regional specific trainings which address local applications and regionally distributed equipment. The change agents are the local educators, installers, distributors, policy makers, and national industry association members. Their fingers are on the pulse of their market, and we work to facilitate their expertise to create or expand a training program that specifically address their market.

What we offer:

- RE will collaborate with local partners to create high technical standards and training methodologies that ensure that women’s training programs focus on the best design, installation, and maintenance practices in the local market. Specific attention will be given to instructional methods, technical information transferred, and the evaluation of students during and after training.
- RE will co-teach and act as a mentor for select instructors. This will assure the quality of their instructors and the on-going consistency of their training program. It will also provide methods and opportunity for new instructors to co-teach with seasoned instructors.

What we look for in a partner:

- Bring local knowledge and experience to increase the relevance of the design and delivery of trainings.
- Host and coordinate logistics for local classes.
- Help identify potential women trainees to participate in the program.
- Provide long-term mentorship to new women trainees in the industry and assist women to get jobs in the workforce.

Empowering women and bringing much needed electricity to rural communities.