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## Surat, India:

# Rooftop Solar Panels

## Model: Enabling Innovation

Surat's rooftop solar programme created a **model for solar panel installation** in India. Today there are more than 400 solar panel vendors and 45,000 households with rooftop solar panels installed in the city.

## THE CHALLENGE

With the largest diamond polishing industry in the world and one of India's fastest growing cities, Surat needed a way to drive **renewable energy** projects and **energy efficiency** at large scales.

## HOW IT WORKS

The city created a web portal and app for households to apply to install rooftop solar panels, and offered them a 30% subsidy.

Meanwhile, potential vendors - from small enterprises to large companies - could apply through simple tenders to join the programme, receive training, and access this market.

Playing the role of a **facilitator** between businesses and households, the city government also **promoted the programme** more broadly, including the training of university students to go door-to-door. The city assisted at least one resident per neighbourhood to install the panels, following a 'seeing is believing' strategy.

The model was so successful that in 2017 the state government of Gujarat adopted Surat's system and began to manage requests across the state.
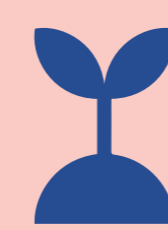
## LESSONS

Cities can drive initiatives by **creating an economy** where businesses and customers can interact. In doing so, tools should be simple and user-friendly. Surat created a favourable enabling environment and streamlined the process for both applicants and vendors.

Creating the system is one part, **awareness raising and broad buy-in** is equally necessary to make it work. Exploring diverse strategies such as door-to-door and neighbourhood showcasing can help in substantially improving new and clean technology adoption.