

Torrent Power Ltd.: Illuminating Lives in Indian Urban Slums

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Abstract: Reforms in the Indian power sector, particularly since 2003 had made it viable for investment, for several private operators. The Indian Government was also progressively looking at its millennium goal of 'Power for All' and was finding ways to reach out to the whole country. In this context, the case aimed to discuss an interesting Public-Private Partnership Programme (PPP) where the Government, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), Donor Agencies joined hands with a private energy enterprise based in Ahmedabad – Torrent Power Limited (TPL) – to make electricity a happening thing in the urban slums of Ahmedabad. The unique experiment, using funding, legal modifications, education and training mode, sought to bring a socio-cultural and economic change in the lives of urban poor and to make a good business sense for TPL to save transmission and distribution losses due to theft by about 4.63 %. TPL has been aggressively eyeing business in other Indian States like Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh where electricity theft has been a perennial menace. It remained to be seen whether this PPP model could be successfully replicated across India or elsewhere to alleviate lives of urban poor living at the Bottom of Pyramid and capitalise on the huge consumer base or will the PPP be just another nebulous venture.