

# Making the Future Brighter for Gadamshi

Winrock International

Improving Lives and Livelihoods Worldwide



Gadamshi mini-hydro project opening. The Gadamshi mini-hydro project now lights up the village.

**Today,  
Gadamshi  
enjoys a  
dependable  
electricity  
supply for  
lighting,  
cooking,  
charging cell  
phones, and  
so much  
more.**

**S**hortly after completing the project in Gadamshi, Georgia's Imedi TV ran a segment on the national evening news about the community and the impact of electrification on their lives. One of the village elders, Mr. Bichiko told reporters that his relatives who had already left the community recommend that he and his family sell their livestock and leave Gadamshi. With the assistance of USAID, the micro-hydro unit was installed, and although the electricity will take some getting used to, villagers now feel like they have a reason to stay. In exchange for receiving free electricity, villagers will only be responsible for maintaining the unit. The project was also a success for the local government who felt that this cooperative project would assist

in better integrating the minority and reassure them that peaceful development would be the only future for Gadamshi.

For nearly 16 years, the villagers have been literally cut off from the outside world leaving them with no landline phone connections and no access to daily television and radio broadcasting. Kerosene lamps and candles have been traditionally used for lighting while fuel wood is used for heating and cooking. As a consequence, the villagers have been unable to refrigerate their well-known organic meat and meat products, therefore limiting their economic potential. As a result, schools have been shut down and many people have already immigrated to more profitable areas of North Ossetia or even Russia. Electricity sufficient for simple household uses and refrigeration would be enough to secure earnings from selling Gadamshi goods to a larger market. A brighter future may be an incentive for young people to stay and help further develop their village.

Winrock's Rural Energy Program team initially considered approximately 40 communities to carry out projects centered on developing hydropower resources. After careful consideration, Gadamshi was identified as an ideal location for implementing the first of 11 projects planned for the first program year. Rural Energy Program elected to install two off-grid micro-hydropower

generators with a total capacity of 9 kW which would be sufficient for lighting and basic needs for the 17 households in the area. The micro-hydropower plant was completed under the assistance of a USAID grant, as well as local government contributions, such as labor and various materials. Stakeholders and community members attended the festive ribbon-cutting ceremony held on October 3, 2006, in Gadamshi and in accordance with Georgian traditions, the first toast was made to “peace.”



Construction at Gadamshi.



Gadamshi MHP before the Rural Energy Program.



Construction at Gadamshi consisted of laying 250 meters of penstock pipe, installing 2 prototype 4.5 kilowatt turbine-generators and 1,250 meters of power lines to connect the village households.

Winrock International is a nonprofit organization that works with people in the United States and around the world to empower the disadvantaged, increase economic opportunity, and sustain natural resources.