

MINI-GRIDS PARTNERSHIP

Bringing together partners to build a stronger clean energy mini-grids sector

NEWSLETTER

February 2018



UPDATE ON UK DFID SUPPORT TO THE MINI-GRIDS SECTOR IN AFRICA

By: Steven Hunt, DFID

Last year saw a significant shift in DFID support to the emergence of a thriving mini-grids sector in Africa. Originally, the Green Mini-Grids Africa initiative focused primarily on Kenya and Tanzania along with regional cooperation, however, this has now grown to a multi-country effort using various financing and technical tools, involving a wider range of partners and programs. While the efforts to unlock the potential of mini-grids to accelerate energy access in Kenya and Tanzania continue, there is also active UK aid support to the mini-grids sector through bilateral programs in Sierra Leone, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Mozambique, as well as via several international partnerships.

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PARTNERING FOR PROGRESS

When development agencies work together, they achieve what they cannot alone

Summary by: Carbon Trust, GIZ and Winrock International

Article by: Chris Warren, Winrock International Nigeria is a strong example of what coordination among donors and local institutions can bring in terms of multiplying impact and catalysing different skill sets. The European Union and German-funded Nigerian Energy Support Programme (NESP) implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) with the Federal Ministry of Power, Works and Housing (FMPWH) and the USAID-funded Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP) established a collaboration on supporting the development of the mini-grid market in Nigeria. This collaboration allowed the partners to overcome difficult economic conditions and combine their respective technical and financial expertise to support the deployment of off-grid solar mini-grid projects by selected local private developers. The partnership showed that when donors work together they can multiply the impact of their interventions, and has since extended to the development of high-quality training programs to educate the solar installers, mini grid designers and other professionals Nigeria will need for its renewable energy sector to take off. The success of this collaboration has led to a further €30m contribution from the European Union and the German Government for the second phase of NESP, which started in January 2018. This comes on the heels of a \$40m loan from the World Bank for mini-grid development, continuing the trend of donor coordination.

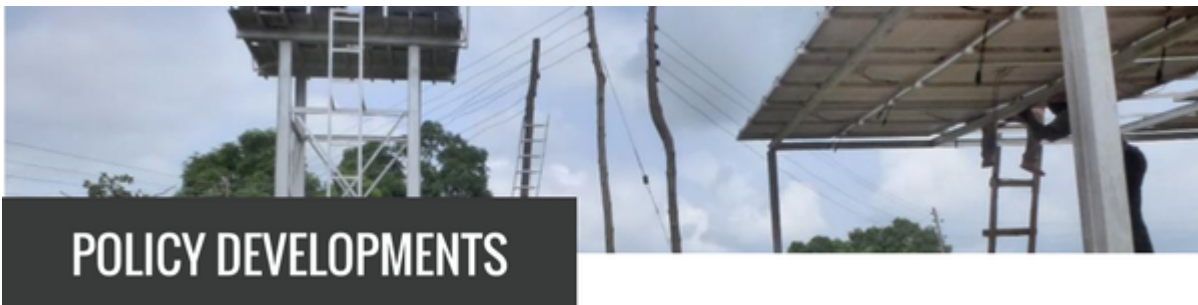
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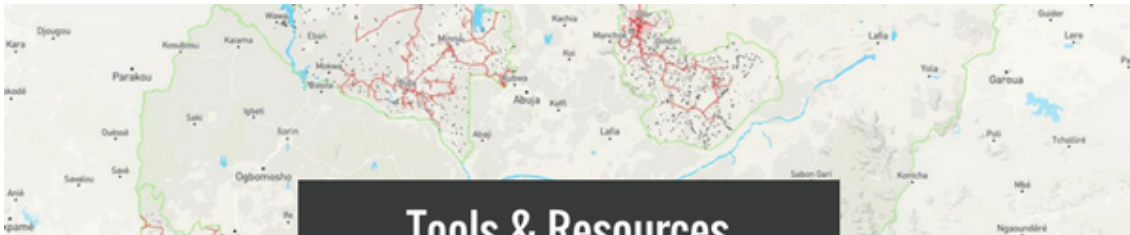
BEYOND LIGHTING: PROMOTING ANCHOR LOAD AGRIBUSINESS TO BUILD MINI-GRIDS IN INDIA

By: Sudeshna Mukherjee & Rebecca Symington, Mlinda Foundation

Working with rural and tribal communities in Jharkhand, India, the Mlinda Foundation is promoting sustainable livelihoods and increasing local incomes by incubating agribusinesses to serve as anchor loads while training local youth to repair and maintain the mini-grid systems. As of this month, they have electrified 13 villages and plan on increasing to additional four villages each quarter. Learn more about the success and challenges, as well as the greenhouse gas reductions that the Mlinda Foundation has seen from this innovative business model. [Read More](#)



- **GREEN MINI-GRID MARKET DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME PHASE 2**
The next phase the GMG MDP will focus on is increasing visibility of the programme within the GMG and development communities, and how to facilitate more and stronger partnerships. Additionally, it will examine the ability to develop a Results Based Financing (RBF) fund for Green Mini-Grids. [Read More](#)
- **PRACTICAL GUIDE TO THE REGULATORY TREATMENT OF MINI-GRIDS**
USAID in partnership with the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners developed a guide with concrete guidance and practical tools for developing a clean, enabling regulatory framework for mini-grid development. [Read More](#)
- **DRIVING MICRO-GRID STANDARDIZATION**
While the engineering principles for micro-grids are well established, the lack of uniform standards, coupled with quality and safety concerns, creates a false perception that they are high-risk investments. To meet Power Africa and IEA's estimates of electrification through micro-grids, significant scale-up in financing is needed. To address this concern, Power Africa partnered with the U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) to create the *Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) for Mini-grids*. [Read More](#)



Tools & Resources

USE GIS TO FIND YOUR MINI-GRID SITE

The Nigerian Energy Support Programme (NESP) has supported Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Power, Works and Housing (FMPWH) in developing a GIS-based search engine, the "Mini-grid Finder". The Mini-grid Finder is an online tool that was built primarily to help mini-grid developers in identifying viable sites for off-grid solar mini-grids in Nigeria. [Learn More](#)

LAUNCH OF THE OFF-GRID CLEAN ENERGY FACILITY IN BENIN

The Millennium Challenge Account (MCA)-Benin II is pleased to announce the upcoming launch of the first request for applications for the Off Grid Clean Energy Facility in Benin. The Off Grid Clean Energy Facility, or OCEF, is a challenge fund which provides grant financing to proven, sustainable off-grid clean energy projects via four windows. The first request for applications for the OCEF will launch on February 22, 2018 and will close on May 22, 2018. [Learn More](#)

EVENTS

**4th ARE Energy Access
Investment Forum**
March 13-15
Sicily, Italy

4th AFRICA MINI-GRIDS SUMMIT
March 21-22
Nairobi, Kenya

**SUSTAINABLE ENERGY FOR ALL
FORUM**
May 2-3
Lisbon, Portugal

VIENNA ENERGY FORUM
May 14-16
Vienna, Austria

MINI-GRIDS PARTNERSHIP

The Mini-Grids Partnership brings together mini-grid financiers, developers, facilitators and policymakers to share information, ideas and shape policy to help move the clean energy mini-grids market forward.

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