



AWARENESS,  
COMMUNICATION  
AND SENSITISATION

FINANCING

# Solar Solutions for Refugees and Host Communities

## SUMMARY

Country	Uganda
Implementer	ZOA International Uganda
Co-implementer	ZOA International GmbH
Target groups	Refugees and hosting communities
Duration	05/2022 – 07/2023
Type of energy use	Electrification

ZOA informs the potential customers about the advantages of owning their own solar systems and payment options such as “pay as you go” or other credit-based financing available on the market. Further, farmers can benefit by receiving partial funding within the framework of grants. A second focus of the project is the development of a market for solar PV systems. To do this, the project employs shopkeepers and retailers to act as intermediaries between solar PV companies and the saving groups. Through trainings, they gain an understanding of the technology involved and thus are able to stimulate community interest in solar-powered products and solar PV systems. Finally, the project trains young adults with prior technical experience, so that they can provide repair services for the advertised solar systems.

## CHALLENGE

Uganda is host to 1.5 million refugees from the neighbouring countries of Burundi, D.R. Congo, Eritrea, Rwanda, Somalia, and South Sudan among others. These refugees often have no access to clean energy and need to rely on fuel material and devices that can be harmful to their health or the environment, such as candles, paraffin, and disposable batteries, which are also very expensive. Several humanitarian actors are trying to solve this problem by distributing different solar-powered products free of charge. However, this is not a sustainable long-term solution as there are not nearly enough goods for everyone and it is not financially feasible as the associated acquisition and logistical costs are very high.

## IMPACT LOGIC

The project combines supply- and demand-oriented measures. To stimulate demand, access to potential customers of solar-powered products in the refugee shelters is organised through the 330 established saving groups. Those take on the role of a trustee for the individual savers and potential customers. Meanwhile,

## INNOVATIVE PROJECT ELEMENTS

Besides the involvement of the saving groups and the project focus on refugees and their hosting communities, the most innovative element are individual village agents. They act as an intermediary group between the solar companies and the target group, through the direct cooperation with the saving groups instead of with individuals. This aims at reducing the failure rate of the “pay as you go” systems. In addition, village agents receive specialised training related to solar products including minor operation, maintenance and brand awareness. These measures ensure the sustainability of the project as the village agents are valuable to solar companies in creating a market among saving group members and bridging the supply gap.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

[www.gruene-buergerenergie.org](http://www.gruene-buergerenergie.org)