

Start of a Solar Power Generation Pilot Project in Unelectrified Rural Areas of Tanzania Aiming for 'Inclusive Sustainable Development' with local partners

UPDATER, Inc., headquartered in Setagaya, Tokyo, and led by CEO Eiji Oishi, has initiated a pilot project for solar power generation in the United Republic of Tanzania, Africa, named the "Pole Solar." This project leverages Tanzania's agricultural strengths and collaborates with local partners to foster business growth, aiming for sustainable development in the region as a whole. In the pilot project, a 20kW reused solar panel system has been transported from Japan and installed at a maize processing facility in a rural area, commencing the provision of electricity.



LEFT: Factory Owner: Egird, CENTER: Project Leader: Yuto Uno, RIGHT: Local Partner: Geoffrey

1. Background

Tanzania, located in East Africa, boasts a vast expanse of diverse landscapes and natural environment. Its economy is primarily driven by agriculture. In recent years, foreign investments have been on the rise in sectors such as mining, energy, tourism, and agriculture, positioning Tanzania as an emerging focus of attention, as noted in a survey by JETRO (※1).

However, Tanzania faces the challenge of a growing urban-rural divide. Approximately 36 million people live without access to reliable electricity (※2), leading to significant opportunity loss due to the lack of electrification and frequent power outages. On the other hand, Tanzania enjoys an abundant solar resource, with sunshine hours ranging from 2,800 to 3,500 hours per year (compared to Japan's national average of 1,978 hours), and solar radiation nearly double that of Japan. The country possesses substantial solar power potential. While solar power development is progressing across the African continent, the reality is that rural areas remain underserved, and the financial hurdles make it nearly impossible for individuals to install solar panels independently.

※1

Report of JETRO

https://www.jetro.go.jp/ext_images/Reports/01/491096dd64da47ff/20220041rev1.pdf

※2

Access to electricity (% of population) - Tanzania 39.9% (2020)

<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EG.ELC.ACCS.ZS?locations=TZ>

Population, total - Tanzania 61,740,518 (2020)

<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=TZ>

2. About Pole Solar

By installing solar panels in areas of rural Tanzania that suffer from a lack of electricity and frequent power outages, the Pole Solar aims to provide a stable supply of electricity, thereby establishing the foundation for local industries. Electrification will lead to economic revitalization, job creation, and an increase in people's purchasing power, creating a cycle that nurtures Tanzania's vital agriculture sector. Together with the local community, this initiative seeks to drive sustainable development.

In this pilot project, a 20kW solar panel system has been installed at a maize processing facility in the rural village of Iwindi, Mbeya Region. On-site power purchase agreements (PPAs) are executed to provide power. Reused solar panels were sourced in Japan and transported with the kind cooperation of Nippon Yusen Kaisha (NYK) Group. The installation was carried out in collaboration with a local solar construction company.



The factory currently has access to electricity, but frequent power outages prevent the milling machine from running consistently. While the wholesale price of corn is 19 cent/kg in its raw form, milling it raises the price to 35 cent/kg. This makes milling crucial for increasing the income of local farmers. As a result, even from areas more than 20 km away without electricity, maize is transported to this factory.

With stable operation of the milling machine, it is estimated that the daily production during the harvest season can reach 10 tons. Electrification not only enhances the factory's productivity and boosts farmers' income but also turns the factory into a hub where people gather. This allows it to serve as a training center and a place for community-building.

This initiative values its development alongside the local community and is being carried out in collaboration with local partners. Geoffrey, a local partner, is responsible for coordinating various activities on-site, including site selection and construction.

Local Partner : Geoffrey Yambayamba

Geoffrey lost his father in a traffic accident during his childhood, becoming the eldest of five siblings and taking on the role of providing for the family. He developed a strong awareness of the undervaluation of farmers in the face of the significant potential in Tanzanian agriculture. He is dedicated to addressing this issue by working on various aspects of agricultural production, processing, and distribution. He holds a hidden ambition to contribute to the country's future through educational initiatives, aspiring to create a better future for Tanzania.

In the future, the plan is to expand the initiative after the pilot project, extending it to all villages within one state and further expanding it to rural areas in 30 states.

3. Comment from the Project Leader of the "Pole Solar", Yuto Uno



I lived in four countries, including Tanzania, between the ages of 19 and 21. During that time, I encountered Tanzanians who acted not driven by money or success but for the happiness of their loved ones. I believed that there were 'clues to living happily' in the actions of these Tanzanians and aspired to start a business in Tanzania to spread such values in the world. These Tanzanian values align perfectly with UPDATER's goal of a 'face-to-face lifestyle.'

I believe that one person's passion can change the world. However, I also recognize that the power of one person

alone is limited, and the empathy and cooperation of many are necessary. Only with the support of many people have we been able to reach the starting line.

This initiative aims to confront and fundamentally address major social issues such as poverty, energy, and food. Developing countries are not just recipients of aid or objects of pity; they are partners in building a better world, and we are collaborating together. It will be a long journey, but as we gather more allies who want to make the world a better place, I hope to create a world where each individual can live more comfortably.

■Company Overview

UPDATER, Inc.

Located: Sun Towers Center Building 8F, 2-11-22 Sangenjaya, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo
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Established: May 2011

Services: Utilizing proprietary blockchain technology, we provide SX services to corporations and individuals.

- Climate Tech 'Minna Denryoku'

- Well-being Tech 'Minna Air'

- SDGs platform 'TADORI' etc.

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