

Press release

Lusaka, 13 June 2018

Off-Grid Investor Forum convenes national and international stakeholders to increase access to clean energy in Zambia

Lusaka, 13 June 2018 – In Zambia, 31% of the population has access to electricity. Clean off-grid energy solutions can strongly boost the efforts already undertaken by the Government of Zambia to reach its target of 51% rural electricity access by 2030.

With this in mind, the [Zambia Off-grid Investor Forum](#) on 12-13 June 2018 organised by the Alliance for Rural Electrification (ARE) and the Global Off-Grid Lighting Association (GOGLA), with the support of the Zambia's Rural Electrification Authority, the Africa–EU Renewable Energy Cooperation Programme (RECP) and the European Union funded Increased Access to Electricity & Renewable Energy Production (IAEREP) project, convened 240 financiers, developers, public authorities and international development partners from 40 countries to build partnerships around off-grid energy solutions in Zambia.

The Forum featured presentations by international experts on the latest developments and opportunities in the Zambia off-grid renewables market as well as introductions to various upcoming international support programmes.

Marcus Wiemann, Executive Director, ARE: *"Off-grid renewable energy solutions are central to electrify rural areas in Sub-Saharan Africa and Zambia is a prime example because of its low population density and high renewable energy potential. This is, why ARE with its 150+ Members works in the framework built by SDG7 and SEforALL as its Proud Partner to support sustainable development for rural communities in Zambia with off-grid renewables. To facilitate B2B exchanges is a very helpful instrument to step forward together."*

Koen Peters, Executive Director, GOGLA: *"The Zambia Off-Grid Investor Forum is a fantastic opportunity to show that public funding can help kickstart the development of a vibrant and sustainable off-grid solar market. A number of GOGLA Members are already operating in the country as more and more Zambians opt for standalone solar solutions for reliable and immediate energy access. If the Zambian Government continues to create a favourable regulatory environment, off-grid solar companies will be able to change the lives of hundreds of thousands of Zambians."*

Participants were additionally informed about upcoming financial support instruments to help projects reach financial close, with specific focus on the [ElectriFI](#) Country Window Zambia and the IAEREP Grant Facility.

Pastor Geoffrey Musonda, CEO, Rural Electrification Authority: *"The development of appropriate financing instruments is one way to address the barriers and risks that presently hold back private investment. The recently signed financing agreement with the European Union in November 2016 is one such example. This project which is titled "Increased Access*

to Electricity and Renewable Energy Production (IAEREP)” will help support the Zambia energy sector through an investment worth EUR 40 million.”

In his opening remarks, **H.E. Alessandro Mariani, Ambassador of the European Union to Zambia** stated: *"Aligned with sector priorities set out in the 7th National Development Plan, the Zambia-EU Partnership for 'Energising Zambia' intends to attract private sector investment through a combination of traditional and innovative financial instruments, for both on-grid and off-grid investments. This Forum is a real opportunity to present upcoming opportunities and ensure that feedback from sector stakeholders positively contributes to future investments in the off-grid space in Zambia."*

In total more than 230 B2B meetings were held in the RECP B2B match-making sessions on day 2 of the event, which offered participants the chance to organise structured bilateral meetings to identify business opportunities and potential partners in the Zambia off-grid markets.

Michael Franz, Team Leader, RECP: *"The strong participation in the conference and the engaged discussions that I could see throughout demonstrate that the off-grid sector in Zambia is already moving, and that there is a lot of further potential. It was our pleasure to support the partners in this event, and we are looking forward to continue and if desired to further build our support to increase investments in Zambia."*

Finally, two side-events were held: a **"Policy Makers' Roundtable on Decentralised Renewable Energy in Africa"** by the Africa-EU Energy Partnership (AEEP) and a workshop on **"Local energy communities in Africa: to foster the deployment of decentralised green energy"** organised by the European Renewable Energies Federation (EREF).

For more information, please visit: <https://zambia-off-grid-investor-forum.b2match.io/>

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