

Webinar Q&A list

Topic

Strengthening the case for mini-grids in Africa: Session #3: Advancing climate objectives and sustainable development goals through mini-grids and rural electrification

Question no.	Question	Answer(s)	Additional answers / Comments
1	Why do they say solar-hybrid should be used?	live answered	
2	Examples of solar hybrids in relation to climate objectives and the impact on the cost of connects considering the challenge of affordability on the cost of investment?	Thank you for your question! Do you mean, what is the cost of solar-based MGs?	
3	What is the LCoE of the solar-hybrid mini-grids?	live answered	
4	Are there any reports detailing the creation of employment/economic impact of REIPPPP? Please send to martyn@microgenrenewables.com thanks	http://www.gsb.uct.ac.za/files/PPIAFReport.pdf https://www.cobenefits.info/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/COBENEFITS_SA_Prosperty_Executive-Report_190322.pdf	
5	Most of the Mini-Grids in Africa are funded largely by private actors. How public funding can be deployed to deliver the needed benefits at reasonable cost to avoid public funding being allocated to private firms outside Africa?	live answered	
6	How do I gain an internship opportunity in Sustainable energy access sector. I'm a female studying Renewable energy.	Depends on the sector where you'd like to be involved. Companies, governments, international organisations, consultancies, NOOs all offer internship. Best is to check their websites for open positions - or send them an email to inquire.	I agree with the first comment - first you should try to define the sector and type of organisation you are interested in, then either look for open positions or send a speculative application (enquiry). In the first step, you could look to see if there is a women in energy network in your country or region - this would expand your network and your understanding of what kinds of positions exist. GWNEN is a global network. Awedi network is operating in Africa (http://awedinetwork.com/about-us).
7	Is there a list of the LEDs Mini-Grid CoP membership available by any chance?	Yes there is and I am happy to share this with you. Kindly drop me a line on josh@southsouthnorth.org	
8	Concern is, wont the cost of solar hybrid solution go up and pose a challenge of affordability?	Why would the cost go up? past trends were all in one direction: down. I can say a few words about current and projected costs.	
9	Who do you see stepping up in the PUE field when it comes to financing instruments?	live answered	That's an interesting question. ofc depends somewhat on the specific market environment; but overall, I think there's definitely a stronger role for governments - including as convening actors, as well as in specific policy/regulatory measures, such as tax exemptions or guarantees; also for donors, especially those that are already operating in a given country - I hear from policy makers that it's often difficult to convince those donors engaged in energy programmes to extend their focus.
10	Just a comment for Leva: Not PUE is important, the private sector must also think of solutions of stimulating economic activities in the project area so as to increase their affordability level, in turn it will make the beneficiaries to invest in productive use equipment and increase revenue collection for the plant.	While the level of consumption (and therefore affordability) is very important to developers, the question is whether it's their role and whether they have the capacity to appropriately support demand-creating activities.	
11	Rift Valley Power - how do you think Covid-19 will impact your company's revenues?	live answered	Not so much at the end customer side, but with regards to close new SPPAs (gov. processes/decision making seems to have slowed down.
12	Amazing Tariffs! What was the grant/equity/debt ratio here?	live answered	
13	Great Job RVE. Heavy investment so far has been carried out in SHP and wind is work in progress. Have you tried exploring the use of Solar energy? What is the solar potential for the Communities you have worked in so far?	live answered	Not yet, we are in the „mist belt“ (good for tea) but for solar power is not ideal
14	How far do Rift Valley invest in energy efficient appliances?	live answered	... we don't "invest" into appliances - we offer microloans, then customers decide themselves which appliance they want to buy.
15	How are you planning to maintain these mini grids in the long term?	live answered	
16	Could you please develop a bit more what this « appliance training » for young people would consist of?	live answered	... basically some business/vocational training services on how to finance and use an appliance, start a small business and earn money with it ... we cant do this ourselves, but plan to work with a specialised NGO (Rural Development Organisation) which is based in our network area
17	What would be the ideal approach to PUE in rural areas where there is a challenge of affordability?	There is no one ideal approach... If you mean affordability of PUE equipment, various measures could be applied. Governments can provide guarantees for loans for PUE equipment, which would likely improve the lending conditions; an exemption of VAT for high-quality PUE equipment is another possible option; so is an establishment of a special fund to support PUE equipment purchases; yet another approach is to create PUE zones, where equipment is shared.	
18	What is clear and has made your projects profitable is a clear policy framework. Can these be replicable in other parts of Africa? Do you think?	... the policy (SPPA) framework was /is indeed favourable for private investors, but implementation of SPPAs has slowed down last but not least as feed-in tariffs came down considerably over the last years	
19	Is SSN involved with the Mini-Grids Partnership (MGP - Secretariat at SEforAll/ARE)? How does the AMG Community of Practice link with the MGP?	Yes, through the AMG-CoP we work closely on information sharing with the MGP. In the past year we have collaborated with Ms Ruchi Soni. We have also collaborated on a joint funding proposal	

Question no.	Question	Answer(s)	Additional answers / Comments
20	Is anyone involved with mini-grids in Malawi? We're planning an intervention there, but good to co-ordinate (possibly partner?) before we take this any further. I'm on Dean.Cooper@practicalaction.org.uk if you're interested to discuss.	We know MG developers in Malawi and would love to support PA wherever we can - we have partnered with colleagues of yours on a SEforALL report.	
21	Anyone working with the humanitarian sector in providing energy solutions? I am interested to involve myself further, I am on rehemakimulu22@gmail.com	Yes we are involved in working with the humanitarian sector in providing energy solutions for health centres in Uganda- refugee areas. frank.heemskerk@telenet.be	
22	Does Africa LEDS provide guidance on carbon credits and climate finance for use for clean cooking? My desire is to see every rural family dignified with clean options but on my own I cannot manage.	We do offer TA support through our network of experts. Please could you send us an email to africasecretariat@ledsgp.org	
23	How would you see the relevance and ability of enabling and increasing productive use in villages where mini-grids are planned (especially in smaller rural villages)? What are your recommended methods to increase productive use?	This was already addressed in the main presentation. To recap, the key recommendation is to advocate for governments to take a more holistic cross-sectoral approach in their strategies and programmes - e.g. integrating electrification and rural development planning. This would allow to fully take into account the needs and opportunities that exist. In terms of specific aspects that PUE-strengthening programmes should focus on, once again, it has to be a holistic approach of targetting (a) knowledge and capacity development of existing and potential entrepreneurs; (b) access to PUE equipment (including aspects of access to finance, affordability and quality), as well as (c) infrastructure development and value chain strengthening. In addressing these measures, it's important that governments assess the capacity of private developers to support these aspects, as well as support them in their efforts. e.g. public actors could mobilise partnerships to develop options for access to finance for PUE - providing guarantees for loans is one example currently applied in some countries.	
24	Mini-grid developers are often looking to increase power demand over time for achieving an economically viable business case. How does this contradict with the usually low ability to pay and what business models do you use/know of for ensuring that households can pay for the electricity and at the same time the mini-grid developer is able to run a profitable business?	In most cases it has to come from a combination of private household customers and PUE customers - a balance and subsidisation between the two is commonly applied.	