

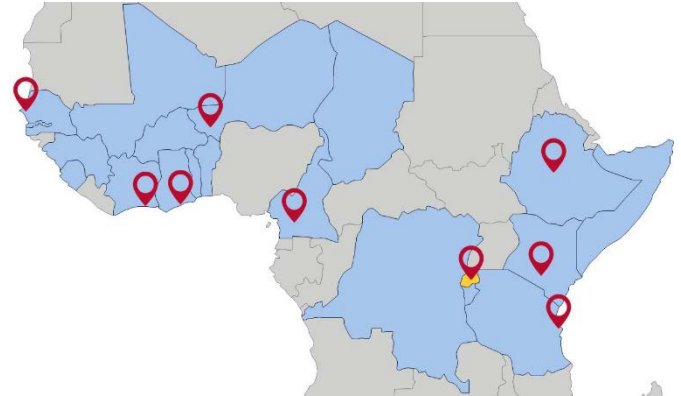


**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



## POWER AFRICA OFF-GRID PROJECT (PAOP) Rwanda

The market potential for off-grid energy solutions in Rwanda varies significantly by three key market segments: solar home systems (SHS), mini-grids, and solar pumping. The SHS market is relatively mature in Rwanda. Five major companies in total have sold more than 250,000 SHS, as well as many lanterns. Affordability is the biggest issue for the sector and has been causing SHS sales to drop. Although the SHS market is mature, the mini-grid sector is currently small. Mini-grid developers are ready to scale up in Rwanda, but limited funding and national electrification planning has stalled progress, though stakeholders are addressing the issue. Solar pumping also presents a viable opportunity for private sector engagement in the productive use of off-grid energy. Recent donor funding and engagement of suppliers, distributors, and end users has increased awareness of the potential in this market segment.



### PAOP ENGAGEMENT IN Rwanda

**Policy and Regulatory Engagement.** PAOP contributes to the improvement of regulatory and policy structures currently inhibiting growth of the off-grid market primarily through mapping. The team maps off-grid regulations, import duties, and taxes on renewable energy products as well as public and private stakeholders in the country's off-grid sector. PAOP has also been involved in revising mini-grid regulations and supports the implementation of a USAID-funded information system. For the sector more broadly, recommendations provided by PAOP during the development of the National Electrification Plan helps establish a more coordinated approach to the rollout of on-grid and off-grid electricity access in the country.

**Assessing Market Dynamics and Providing Intelligence.** To inform future activities, PAOP's off-grid market assessment in Rwanda maps ongoing and upcoming donor activities, existing market intelligence resources and services, market potential, the regulatory environment and the financial landscape. On a continual basis, PAOP will provide valuable insights to investors, companies, and donors to help the private sector increase access to electricity and inform and assist with the development of partnerships within the sector, including between U.S. businesses and local distributors and clients.

**Increasing Business Performance and Access to Finance.** PAOP engages in numerous activities to boost business performance and access to finance for off-grid companies in Rwanda. The team provides ongoing operational support to existing SHS companies as well as business advisory services and capacity building.

**Expanding Cross-Sectoral Integration.** To support the growth of cross-sectoral energy projects in Rwanda, PAOP is collaborating with USAID and other donor programs in sectors such as agriculture, health, water, and education. In addition, PAOP is engaging private sector



With partners like Mobisol, PAOP helps bring off-grid power solutions, such as SHS, to families. (Photo: Rachel Couch, Power Africa)

and other stakeholders working on the provision of energy services in refugee camps, including through a workshop organized jointly by Power Africa and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research.



A field of solar panels provided by Absolute Energy, a PAOP partner, helps to power a rural community in Rwanda. (Photo: Lawrence Lin, PAOP)

The USAID-funded Power Africa Off-grid Project (PAOP) provides technical assistance and targeted grant funding to support the development of Africa's off-grid SHS and mini-grid sectors. Through a team of resident technical advisors across East and West Africa, PAOP works with companies, investors, and governments to advance the role of the private sector in extending energy access while integrating gender considerations into all its work streams.

By offering broad-based market intelligence to investors/financiers to inform financial product design, advising governments on establishing supportive policy frameworks, and providing hands-on support to companies, PAOP is helping to build the off-grid market to accelerate private sector-led energy access. Specific focus areas:

- **Policy and Regulatory.** Enabling environment activities increase the ease of doing business and attract private sector partners to participate in the off-grid sector. PAOP supports the mini-grid and SHS sectors, as each of these sectors faces a different set of policy challenges. PAOP helps governments design and implement policy frameworks that are supportive of private sector off-grid solutions.
- **Market Intelligence.** To serve the off-grid sector more broadly, PAOP gathers and disseminates market intelligence to companies, investors and governments to inform them about the latest sector developments and support their making informed decisions.
- **Business Performance.** PAOP offers targeted interventions meant to improve sales and business performance of individual companies, providing deep operational support in areas such as C-suite recruiting, business model development, sales strategy, product sourcing and strategic partnerships. In every country, PAOP works to raise awareness of pay-as-you-go (PAYGO) models among microfinance institutions in addition to supporting other existing business models.
- **Access to Finance.** Off-grid companies require consistent access to financing. PAOP works with companies to raise equity or debt through executive coaching and pitch deck development, as well as supporting successful grant applications. The team also works directly with local financial institutions and investors to develop bankable pipelines and perform due diligence.
- **Cross-Sectoral Integration.** The links between energy and other sectors such as agriculture, health, and education, represent key opportunities for off-grid companies to reach new markets, develop new product lines, and multiply their impact. PAOP's Regional Advisors in both East and West Africa support companies and USAID missions to understand and execute opportunities for the integration of productive uses of energy into their businesses and activities.

## ABOUT PAOP

Started in November 2018, the Power Africa Off-grid Project (PAOP) is a four-year program to accelerate off-grid electrification across sub-Saharan Africa to support Power Africa's goals to double access. RTI International implements PAOP in collaboration with Fraym, Norton Rose Fulbright, Practical Action Consulting, and Tetra Tech.

## **ABOUT POWER AFRICA**

Power Africa is comprised of 12 U.S. Government agencies, over 145 private companies, and 18 bilateral and multilateral development partners to support sub-Saharan governments by working together to increase the number of people with access to power. Power Africa's goal is to achieve 30,000 MW of new generated power and 60 million new connections by 2030 to reach 300 million Africans.

## **CONTACT US**

LoveMore Seveni  
Senior Energy Advisor  
USAID Power Africa  
lseveni@usaid.gov

Miguel Franco  
Chief of Party  
Power Africa Off-grid Project  
mfrancobillini@PowerAfrica-

Carolina Barreto  
Senior Technical Advisor  
Power Africa Off-grid Project  
cabarreto@PowerAfrica-

[www.usaid.gov/powerafrica](http://www.usaid.gov/powerafrica) | [www.facebook.com/PowerAfrica](https://www.facebook.com/PowerAfrica) | [www.twitter.com/@PowerAfricaUS](https://www.twitter.com/@PowerAfricaUS)