

Kira Costanza

Solar Energy + Microfinance

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Summary

SunPower Afrique is a startup non-profit organization aiming to connect West African Microfinance Institutions and their clients to solar energy. The growth of microfinance, one of the world's most effective strategies to fight poverty, is significantly constrained due to a lack of consistent access to electricity.

SunPower Afrique aims, through a pragmatic partnership between solar expertise and field experience with MFIs, to not only support existing microfinance structures and clients, but also to create jobs and to stimulate economic development in a new industry of solar system sales, distribution and installation.

SunPower Afrique will pilot its projects and focus efforts in Togo, West Africa. SunPower Afrique see a strong market for solar energy in Togo, due to its proximity to the equator, relative political stability, and small geographical size. Togo is uniquely positioned to take advantage of solar power to solve its energy crisis, and become a model for the region.

Experience

Executive Director of SunPower Afrique & Director of External Relations at SunPower Builders May 2008 - Present (11 months)

After working with as a Kiva Microfinance Fellow in Togo, West Africa in the spring, I have started a business to connect microfinance insitutions to solar energy systems.

www.sunpowerafrique.org

Fellow, West Africa at Kiva Microfunds

March 2008 - June 2008 (4 months)

Supported Kiva's microfinance partner, FECECAV in Togo, West Africa. Trained employees on Kiva policies and streamlined webpositing processes, visited clients in the field for assessment, wrote updates on progress of Kiva microfinance clients for web publication, supported FECECAV operations as needed. Began work on SunPower Afrique solar initiative.

Events Coordinator at International Peace Academy

February 2007 - February 2008 (1 year 1 month)

Africa Program and Development Intern at International Crisis Group

September 2006 - January 2007 (5 months)

Education

McGill University

2002 - 2006

Interests

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[Contact Kira on LinkedIn](#)