



# SUNPOWER AFRIQUE

[WWW.SUNPOWERAFRIQUE.ORG](http://WWW.SUNPOWERAFRIQUE.ORG)

## Overview of SunPower Afrique

Incorporated in 2008, SunPower Afrique is a startup non-profit organization aiming to power Microfinance Institutions in West Africa with solar energy. We believe that microfinance is one of the world's most effective strategies to fight poverty; however, in West Africa, its growth 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.

## Partners and Actors

SunPower Afrique will engage MFIs in West Africa and SunPower Builders, a US-based solar energy provider that will volunteer technical expertise. The pilot will work with FECECAV, an MFI based in Kpalimé, Togo. FECECAV serves over 10,000 clients in Southern Togo and is an active and rapidly growing member of Togo's microfinance community. We will also work with Togo's National Microfinance Committee and Professional Association of MFIs to promote national strategies, which include ambitious information technology goals. Other actors include a qualified team of electrical technicians on the ground, chosen for their knowledge and focus on renewable energy.

## Purpose and Mission

SunPower Afrique's objective is to provide reliable and renewable solar power to microfinance institutions (MFIs) in West Africa, allowing them to fight poverty more efficiently by enhancing services and achieving development goals.

With consistent electricity, MFIs can streamline operations to better manage and disburse loans, reduce overhead, maintain access to financial software programs, implement a centralized information management system and communicate with microfinance communities worldwide.

In addition, SunPower Afrique will create a 'Solar Loan Program' that allows MFI clients access to loans and trained local workers to install small-scale solar energy systems to increase the capacity of small businesses.

### **Problems and Issues Addressed**

SunPower Afrique's solar energy projects offer a solution to the problem of insufficient and inconsistent electricity for West African MFIs and their clients' businesses, one of the largest obstacles to their operational self-sufficiency and constraining both development and impact in the region.

Power can be used as primary power at rural sites and as a supplement to unreliable grid power in electrified areas.

Additionally, SunPower Afrique's programs will begin to address problems of unemployment and slow economic development in many African countries by hiring and training local installers and allowing for infrastructure growth through consistent power.