

“POWER AFRICA” & PARTNER COUNTRY ENERGY IN THE NEWS

December 14, 2014 – January 10, 2015

Article Summaries & Full Clips

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IN THE NEWS: Featured Partner Country Energy News

December 14, 2014 – January 10, 2015

POWER AFRICA, AFRICA & REGIONAL NEWS

[Power Africa: Harnessing the Power of the Private Sector to Transform Our Development Efforts](#)

January 9 | *Brookings Institution*

Power Africa Coordinator Andrew Herscowitz contributes a blog entry to as part of the 2014 Brookings Blum Roundtable, an annual event where experts discuss big ideas to tackle development challenges in the world's most impoverished states.

[Africa: Grand East, Central, Southern Africa Power Project Signed](#)

December 16 | *Tanzania Daily News*

Tanzania, Kenya and Zambia have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to facilitate a transmission project to connect the power grids of the three countries, in a move that would see the Eastern and Southern African power pools linked.

[Africa's Largest Wind Power Project Achieves Full Financial Close](#)

December 22 | *Capital FM*

Following the financial close of Lake Turkana Wind Power Project (LTWP), the first disbursement of funds pursuant to the financing

agreements signed in March 2014 has been received.

[Africa: Renewable Energy - the Untold Story of an African Revolution](#)

December 13 | *Inter Press Service*

Africa is experiencing a revolution towards cleaner energy through renewable energy but the story has hardly been told to the world, says Achim Steiner, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

[Africa: Solar power drives renewable energy investment boom in 2014](#)

January 9 | *The Guardian*

Global investment in clean energy jumped 16% in 2014, boosted by fast-growing solar power in the US and China. Solar, whose costs have plummeted in recent years, attracted over half the total funding for the first time. The new figures, from Bloomberg New Energy Finance (BNEF), show \$310bn (£205bn) was ploughed into green energy last year, just short of the record \$317bn in 2011. However, as green energy gets ever cheaper, the money invested in 2014 bought almost double the clean electricity capacity than in 2011.

LIBERIA

[Eco-Lighting Helps Battered Monrovia See Beyond Ebola](#)

December 23 | *All Africa*

As Liberia gets back to doing business, Liberia Energy Network (LEN) hopes to grow into a powerful force for 'lighting Liberia' – and an example of the contribution renewable solar energy can make to Africa's cities and beyond.

[Hydro Project Set for 2016](#)

January 7 | *Inquirer*

The completion of the much-publicized Mount Coffee Hydro Power Project has been extended to next year as disclosed by President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. President Sirleaf has attributed the extension of the project to the spread of the deadly Ebola virus that has claimed over thousands of lives in Liberia.

[Hydro, Health, Road Top Recovery Agenda](#)

January 5 | *The Inquirer*

The Government of Liberia (GOL) is preparing for the aftermath of the health crisis by targeted critical areas of interest for investment to resuscitate the shattered economy as the country prepares for post-Ebola recovery era.

[Improved Power Supply to Monrovia Soon, LEC Pledges](#)

December 28 | *Liberian Observer*

The Liberia Electricity Corporation says that maintenance work has begun on its power supply generators which provide electricity for residents of Monrovia and its environs.

GHANA

[Ghana Banks on Solar Energy to Avert Crisis](#)

January 6 | CAJ News Africa

Ghana is turning to solar energy to avert the incessant power crisis. This follows the installation of photovoltaic solar systems to more than 150 schools drawn from 98 districts of the country.

KENYA

[Kenya to Sell Cheaper Power to Rwanda in 2015](#)

December 14 | East African Business Week

Next year Kenya has agreed to sell power to Rwanda and help ease growing demand for electricity but at lower costs. Recently Kenya added 140MW from the officially launched second phase of the Olkaria Geothermal plant. Costs for consumers are expected to be cut by 30% and Rwanda will also benefit.

[Geothermal Top Power Source for Kenya](#)

December 16 | The Star

Kenya's geothermal power generation touched a fresh high in October, topping the country's power mix and signalling relief for electricity consumers. Data show geothermal generated was 339.4 million units (kilowatt-

hours), a record in Kenya's history.

[Kenya Power Forecasts Kh15 Billion Profit](#)

January 5 | CAJ News Africa

Kenya Power, the energy utility, is convinced it will record a Sh15 billion pre-tax profit in the 2014/2015 financial year, a senior official has said. The company, which in the past 22 years had not given its shareholders the highest return, would seek to break the new ground by making the profit.

[New Project to Boost Electricity Supply in Nyeri](#)

January 5 | The Star

A local power company plans to start producing electricity from wind, solar and water sources to boost energy supply in Nyeri and its environs. Power Technology Solutions Limited has written a notification to the Energy ministry of its intention to generate power in three new sites in Nyeri county.

[Thermal Power Generation Halts to Four-Year Lows](#)

January 7 | The Star

Generation of diesel-fuelled thermal electricity slowed to a 53-month low in November as more geothermal power flowed into the national grid and as hydro-electricity improved. A total of 121.53 million kilowatt-hours (units) of thermal electricity were generated in the month, a sharp drop from the peak of 295.89 million units produced by emergency generators in

May.

NIGERIA

[Nigeria Signs Pacts With Private Sector to Boost Power Supply](#)

December 18 | This Day

The federal government has signed three different agreements with private sector operators to generate about 1700 megawatts (MW) of electricity to boost electricity supply in the country.

[World Bank Promises U.S.\\$1.75 Billion for Power](#)

December 23 | Daily Trust

The World Bank has pledged US\$1.75 billion over the next four years to support the Nigeria Power Sector Reform. The Bank's Country Energy Task Team Leader for Nigeria, Mr. Eric Fernstrom disclosed this at a capacity building programme on Post-Privatisation Monitoring for the Power Sector jointly organised by the World Bank and the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE).

[NERC - CBN, Nigerian Banks Willing to Invest in Electricity Transmission](#)

December 30 | This Day

The Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) has revealed that the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) is willing to lead a banking industry-inspired investment in Nigeria's weak and underfunded electricity transmission network, provided the government is willing to make the needed

changes in the management of the transmission network.

TANZANIA

[Solar Power Project a Success As 840 Villages Connected](#)

December 19 | Tanzania Daily News

The PV Generator solar power project aimed at addressing electricity supply in rural areas has been a success as 840 households in Kongwa, Uyui and Mlele have benefitted. Project Coordinator from the Ministry of Energy and Minerals, Mr Styden Rwebangila, said in Dar es Salaam that the pilot power connection projects include fixing the generators, which use solar power and supply it to the households. He said the project, which is at the pilot stage; one PV Generator has the capacity to produce 15-kilowatt of electricity that can

be supplied to 60 households and social services.

[45 Villages in Mara to Get Electricity](#)

December 25 | Tanzania Daily News

As part of the government's rural electrification plan, a total of 45 villages in Mara Region will be connected to power through the Rural Energy Agency (REA), it has been announced.

The announcement was made by the Minister of Energy and Minerals, Prof Sospeter Muhongo, who is on a six-day tour of the region to inspect implementation of the second phase of rural electrification projects undertaken by REA and Tanzania Electric Supply Company (Tanesco).

[New Electricity Plan Aims At Lower Tariff](#)

December 23 | Tanzania Daily News

ENERGY and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority (EWURA) has drafted a model Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) for prospective investors in the electricity sector amid hopes that if approved the document will drastically lower the prices of electricity to final consumers.

[Villagers Challenged On Economic Use of Power](#)

December 30 | Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)

POWER distribution under the Rural Energy Agency (REA) can help end poverty in Tanzania if people make good use of the opportunity for economic gains, Energy and Minerals Minister, Prof Sospeter Muhongo, has said.

IN THE NEWS - Full Clips

December 14, 2014 – January 10, 2015

Table of Contents

POWER AFRICA, AFRICA & REGIONAL NEWS

- Power Africa: Harnessing the Power of the Private Sector to Transform Our Development Efforts | January 9 | Brookings Institution
- Africa: Grand East, Central, Southern Africa Power Project Signed | December 16 | Tanzania Daily News
- Africa's Largest Wind Power Project Achieves Full Financial Close | December 22 | Capital FM
- Africa: Renewable Energy - the Untold Story of an African Revolution | December 13 | Inter Press Service
- Africa: Solar power drives renewable energy investment boom in 2014 | Environment | January 9 | The Guardian

LIBERIA

- Liberia: Eco-Lighting Helps Battered Monrovia See Beyond Ebola | December 23 | All Africa
- Liberia: Hydro Project Set for 2016 | January 7 | Inquirer
- Liberia: Hydro, Health, Road Top Recovery Agenda | January 5 | The Inquirer
- Liberia: Improved Power Supply to Monrovia Soon, LEC Pledges | December 28 | Liberian Observer

GHANA

- Ghana: Ghana Banks on Solar Energy to Avert Crisis | January 6 | CAJ News Africa

KENYA

- Kenya to Sell Cheaper Power to Rwanda in 2015 | December 14 | East African Business Week
- Kenya: Geothermal Top Power Source for Kenya | December 16 | The Star
- Kenya Power Forecasts Kh15 Billion Profit | January 5 | CAJ News Africa
- Kenya: New Project to Boost Electricity Supply in Nyeri | January 5 | The Star
- Kenya: Thermal Power Generation Halts to Four-Year Lows | January 7 | The Star

NIGERIA

- Nigeria Signs Pacts With Private Sector to Boost Power Supply | December 18 | This Day
- Nigeria: World Bank Promises U.S.\$1.75 Billion for Power | December 23 | Daily Trust
- Nigeria: NERC - CBN, Nigerian Banks Willing to Invest in Electricity Transmission | December 30 | This Day

TANZANIA

- Tanzania: Solar Power Project a Success As 840 Villages Connected | December 19 | Tanzania Daily News
- Tanzania: 45 Villages in Mara to Get Electricity | December 25 | Tanzania Daily News

- Tanzania: New Electricity Plan Aims At Lower Tariff | December 23 | Tanzania Daily News
- Tanzania: Villagers Challenged On Economic Use of Power | December 30 | Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)

Power Africa: Harnessing the Power of the Private Sector to Transform Our Development Efforts | January 9 | Brookings Institution

Source URL: <http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/up-front/posts/2015/01/09-private-sector-transform-development-efforts-herscowitz>

Editor's Note: *This blog is written as part of the 2014 Brookings Blum Roundtable, an annual event where experts discuss big ideas to tackle development challenges in the world's most impoverished states. The Roundtable's [new post-conference report](#) and other materials can be found at www.brookings.edu/bbr.*

Just a few years ago, it would have been very uncommon to find an official from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) or any other development organization sitting in the New York offices of a multi-billion dollar private equity firm brainstorming ideas of how the U.S. government and the private sector could work together to bring electricity to millions of people. Of course, USAID and other international organizations and NGOs have spent years trying to court companies and to tap into corporate social responsibility budgets to support development efforts across the globe.

Initially, many people were merely content when a mining company or garment factory built a school in the local community in which it was operating. Then, development experts worked with companies where their profit-making goals overlapped with USAID development goals to invest in training teachers or creating business centers where community members could learn new skills and get access to financing.

But today, the worlds of finance and development have merged in an unprecedented way. As showcased during the U.S.-hosted African Leaders Summit in August 2014, President Obama's Power Africa initiative has attracted more than \$20 billion in private sector commitments to light up sub-Saharan Africa, a commitment that will create millions of jobs in the U.S. and abroad as well as help lift entire nations out of poverty. Business leaders sat side-by-side with development leaders.

Energy is one of the key constraints to economic growth in Africa, and only the private sector has the sufficient resources to build the necessary infrastructure. And private companies—banks, solar lantern companies, gas turbine manufacturers, smart meter producers, pension funds, and private equity firms—need to work with development organizations and host government partners in smart ways to mitigate the many risks associated with energy projects if deals are to stay on track.

Power Africa serves as a prime example of how many partners, including 12 U.S. government agencies, the World Bank Group, the African Development Bank, the government of Sweden, the African Union Commission, and the United Nations, along with our partner governments, can come

together to pool resources and tools and to align goals and efforts to drive private sector investment. The Power Africa team regularly meets in New York, Stockholm, London, Dubai, Johannesburg, Lagos, Nairobi and elsewhere with institutional investors who collectively have trillions of dollars of assets under management. We discuss how their investments will drive economic growth in the places that need it the most.

Our African partners are now looking less for the high-priced expert, who comes into a country to opine on what reforms a country may need to drive development. Rather, they want the deals themselves to drive the development.

Local politicians know that if they want to break ground on projects and flip switches, which will win them voters, they need to make the tough reforms that will attract investment. Financing firms know that they are competing for a limited number of “bankable” deals in sub-Saharan Africa, and they must roll up their sleeves and work outside of their comfort zone if they do not want to miss out. Institutional investors worldwide are turning to frontier markets for higher rates of return than what they are earning on their European investments. Development officials are striving to show how the taxpayer money they are trusted to spend helps people in an immediate and measurable way.

In the coming year, development officials and private financiers will spend even more time together as the appetite for new infrastructure investments in frontier markets expands. An area to watch closely is how the many risks associated with infrastructure deals might be reallocated in new and innovative ways to move deals forward. We may see the private sector developing insurance products to mitigate risks associated with new sectors and new markets such as geothermal drilling in East Africa. Donors may start to seed development capital funds to de-risk deals at the earliest stages so that more deals can become bankable more quickly.

The role that development institutions play in driving infrastructure development is being redefined, and the Power Africa partners are excited to be driving this new model for development.

Africa: Grand East, Central, Southern Africa Power Project Signed | December 16 | Tanzania Daily News

Source: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201412160839.html>

TANZANIA, Kenya and Zambia have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to facilitate a transmission project to connect the power grids of the three countries, in a move that would see the Eastern and Southern African power pools linked.

Dubbed the ZTK (Zambia, Tanzania and Kenya) inter connector, the project's total cost is estimated at around 860 million US dollars (over 1.5trn/-), according to research by Ernst & Young in 2013.

Energy and Minerals Minister Sospeter Muhongo said the project would enable the three countries to sell power to each other at tariffs lower than 10 US cents per unit.

"We have signed an MoU for the construction of Kv 400 transmission line. The project will be implemented in phases between 2016 and 2018.

"Upon completion of the project, we will do away with emergency power producers who are currently selling its electricity at between US cents 30 and 55 per unit," Professor Muhongo remarked.

The project will pave way for the establishment of the electricity interconnector that will create a platform for importation and exportation of power among the three countries.

"The project will enable the three countries to sell power to each other and this will alleviate power outages and also generate revenue from the export of electricity," Zambia's Minister of Mines, Energy and Water Development Christopher Yaluma was quoted saying last month.

It will involve the construction of over 1,600 kilometres of power transmission line to link the three countries and will facilitate trade in power and reduce average energy production costs.

Africa's Largest Wind Power Project Achieves Full Financial Close | December 22 | Capital FM

Source: <http://www.capitalfm.co.ke/business/2014/12/africas-largest-wind-power-project-achieves-full-financial-close/>

Nairobi — Following the financial close of Lake Turkana Wind Power Project (LTWP), the first disbursement of funds pursuant to the financing agreements signed in March 2014 has been received.

The Sh70 billion project is the largest single wind power project to be constructed in Africa and is to date, the largest private investment in the history of Kenya and the most complex and challenging project financing undertaken in the renewable energy space in sub-Saharan Africa.

The project is a key deliverable under the Government's commitment to scaling up electricity generation to 5,000MW and is a flagship project within the Vision 2030 program.

"Reaching this important milestone today caps a year of major achievements by LTWP," said , LTWP's Board Chairman Mugo Kibati. "This includes signing the financing agreements in March, issuing notice to proceed by KETRACO to the transmission line construction contractor in August, financial close of the LTWP equity partners in September, as well as notices to proceed to LTWP's contractors in October."

The LTWP project is expected to provide cost effective renewable power to the Kenyan consumer and will comprise approximately 20% of Kenya's currently installed generating capacity.

The LTWP consortium is comprised of KP&P Africa B.V. and Aldwych International as co-developers and investors, and Finnish Fund for Industrial Cooperation Ltd (Finn Fund), Industrial Fund for Developing Countries (IFU), Norwegian Investment Fund for Developing Countries (Norfund), Vestas Eastern Africa (VEAL) and Sandpiper as investors. Aldwych Turkana Ltd, an affiliate of Aldwych International, will oversee construction and operations of the project on behalf of LTWP.

The support, interaction and uplifting of local communities is a high priority for LTWP.

As such, LTWP adopted a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Program which will be implemented by the Winds of Change Foundation (a wholly owned subsidiary of LTWP).

This foundation aims to uplift local communities through programs such as the CHAT HIV awareness campaign, water, sanitation, electrification, sustainable development of agriculture as well as the education of boys and girls. Initially, activities will be concentrated around the wind farm communities (Loyangalani, Korrr and Laisamis divisions, with South Horr).

CSR activities will gradually expand to the wider project area.

Africa: Renewable Energy - the Untold Story of an African Revolution | December 13 | Inter Press Service

Source URL: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201412151670.html>

By Wambi Michael

Lima — Africa is experiencing a revolution towards cleaner energy through renewable energy but the story has hardly been told to the world, says Achim Steiner, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Steiner, who had been advocating for renewable energy at the U.N. Climate Change Conference in Lima, said Africa is on the right path toward a low carbon footprint by tapping into its plentiful renewable resources - hydro, geothermal, solar and wind.

"There is a revolution going on in the continent of Africa and the world is not noticing it. You can go to Egypt, Ethiopia Kenya, Namibia, and Mozambique. I think we will see renewable energy being the answer to Africa's energy problems in the next fifteen years," Steiner said in an interview with IPS. Sharing the example of the UNEP headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, Steiner told IPS that the decision was taken that "if UNEP is going to be centred with its offices in the African continent on the Equator, there can be reason why we are not using renewable energy. So we installed photovoltaic panels on our roof which we share with UN Habitat, 1200 people, and we produce 750,000 kilowatt hours of electricity every year, that is enough for the entire building to operate."

He noted that although it will take UNEP between eight and 10 years to pay off the installation, UNEP will have over 13 years of electricity without paying monthly or annual power bills. "It is the best business proposition that a U.N. body has ever made in terms of paying for electricity for a building," he said.

According to Steiner, the "revolution" is already happening in East Africa, especially in Kenya and Ethiopia which are both targeting renewable energy, especially geothermal energy.

"Kenya plans to triple its electricity generation up to about 6000 megawatts in the next five years. More than 90 percent of the planned power is to come from geothermal, solar and wind power," he said.

"If you are in Africa and decide to exploit your wind, solar and geothermal resources, you will get yourself freedom from the global energy markets, and you will connect the majority of your people without waiting for thirty years until the power lines cross every corner of the country" - Achim Steiner, UNEP Executive Director

Kenya currently runs a geothermal power development corporation which invites tenders from private investors bid and is establishing a wind power firm likely to be the largest in Africa with a capacity of 350 megawatts of power under a public-private partnership.

In Ethiopia, expansion of the Aluto-Langano geothermal power plant will increase geothermal generation capacity from the current 7 MW to 70 MW. The expansion project is being financed by the Ethiopian government (10 million dollars), a 12 million dollar grant from the Government of Japan, and a 13 million dollar loan from the World Bank.

Renewable energy has costs but also benefits

Phillip Hauser, Vice President of GDF Suez Energy Latin America, told IPS that geothermal power is a good option for countries in Africa with that potential, but it comes with risks.

"It is very site-dependent. There can be geothermal projects that are relatively cost efficient and there are others that are relatively expensive. It is a bit like the oil and gas industry. You have to find the resource and you have to develop the resource. Sometimes you might drill and you don't find anything - that is lost investment," Hauser told IPS.

Steiner admitted that like any other investment, renewable energy has some limitations, including the need for upfront initial capital and the cost of technology, but he said that countries with good renewable energy policies would attract the necessary private investments.

"We are moving in a direction where Africa will not have to live in a global fuel market in which one day you have to pay 120 dollars for a barrel of crude oil, then the next day you get it at 80 dollars and before you know it, it is doubled," he said.

"So if you are in Africa and decide to exploit your wind, solar and geothermal resources, you will get yourself freedom from the global energy markets, and you will connect the majority of your people without waiting for thirty years until the power lines cross every corner of the country," Steiner added.

A recent assessment by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) of Africa's renewable energy future found that solar and wind power potential existed in at least 21 countries, and biomass power potential in at least 14 countries.

The agency, which supports countries in their transition to a sustainable energy future, has yet to provide a list of countries with geothermal power potential but almost all the countries around the Great Rift Valley in south-eastern Africa - Uganda, Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania among others - have already identified geothermal sites, with Kenya being the first to use a geothermal site to add power to its grid.

IRENA Director-General Adnan Z. Amin told IPS that the agency's studies shows that not only can renewable energy meet the world's rising demand, but it can do so more cheaply, while contributing

to limiting global warming to under 2 degrees Celsius - the widely-cited tipping point in the climate change debate.

He said the good news in Africa is that apart from the resources that exist, there is a growing body of knowledge across African expert institutions that would help the continent to exploit its virgin renewable energy potential.

What is needed now, he explained, is for countries in Africa to develop the economic case for those resources supported by targeted government policies to help developers and financiers get projects off the ground.

The IRENA assessment found that in 2010, African countries imported 18 billion dollars' worth of oil - more than the entire amount they received in foreign aid - while oil subsidies in Africa cost an estimated 50 billion dollars every year.

New financing models for renewable energy

According to Amin, renewable energy technologies are now the most economical solution for off-grid and mini-grid electrification in remote areas, as well as for grid extension in some cases of centralised grid supply.

He argued that rapid technological progress, combined with falling costs, a better understanding of financial risk and a growing appreciation of wider benefits mean that renewable energy would increasingly be the solution to Africa's energy problem.

In this context, Africa could take on new financing models that "de-risk" investments in order to lower the cost of capital, which has historically been a major barrier to investment in renewable energy, and one such model would include encouragement for green bonds.

"Green bonds are the recent innovation for renewable energy investments," said Amin. "Last year we reached about 14 billion dollars, this year there is an estimate of about 40 billion, and next year there is an estimate of about 100 billion dollars in green finance through green bonds. Why doesn't Africa take advantage of those?" he asked.

During the conference in Lima, activist groups have been urging an end to dependence on fossil fuel- and nuclear-powered energy systems, calling for investment and policies geared toward building clean, sustainable, community-based energy solutions.

"We urgently need to decrease our energy consumption and push for a just transition to community-controlled renewable energy if we are to avoid devastating climate change," said Susann Scherbarth, a climate justice and energy campaigner with Friends of the Earth Europe.

Godwin Ojo, Executive Director of Friends of the Earth Nigeria, told IPS that "we urgently need a transition to clean energy in developing countries and one of the best incentives is globally funded feed-in tariffs for renewable energy."

He said policies that support feed-in tariffs and decentralized power sources should be embraced by both the most- and the least-developed nations.

Backed by a new [discussion paper](#) on a 'global renewable energy support programme' from the [What Next Forum](#), activists called for decentralised energy systems - including small-scale wind, solar, biomass mini-grids communities that are not necessarily connected to a national electricity transmission grid.

- Edited by Phil Harris

Africa: Solar power drives renewable energy investment boom in 2014 | Environment | January 9 | The Guardian

Source: <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/jan/09/solar-power-drives-renewable-energy-investment-boom-2014>

Global investment in [clean energy](#) jumped 16% in 2014, boosted by fast-growing solar power in the US and China. Solar, whose costs have plummeted in recent years, attracted over half the total funding for the first time.

The green energy market has been gloomy in recent years and the rise in investment is the first since 2011. But despite strong growth in most regions, only a series of large offshore wind farms stopped Europe going into reverse, while the Australian government's antipathy to renewables saw investment there tumble by 35%.

The [new figures, from Bloomberg New Energy Finance](#) (BNEF), show \$310bn (£205bn) was ploughed into green energy last year, just short of the record \$317bn in 2011. However, as green energy gets ever cheaper, the money invested in 2014 bought almost double the clean electricity capacity than in 2011.

"The investment bounce back in 2014 exceeded our expectations," said Michael Liebreich, chairman of BNEF's advisory board. "Solar was the biggest single contributor, thanks to the huge improvements in its cost-competitiveness over the last five years."

Solar investment rose by 25% in 2014, while wind power rose 11% to comprise a third of all investment. [Energy](#) efficiency and electric vehicles rose 10%, including the \$2.3bn Tesla Motors raised. But amid concerns over how green they actually are, biofuels investment fell 7% and biomass and incinerator projects attracted 10% less finance.

China was the clear national leader, with investment rising 32% to \$90bn, with the US second, up 8% to \$52bn, and Japan up 12% to \$41bn. Canada, Brazil and India all saw significant rises too, to about \$9bn. But in Europe, despite the flurry in offshore wind, investment edged just 1% higher to \$66bn. In both the UK and Germany, investment rose 3% to about \$15bn, while France jumped up 25% to \$7bn, in part due to Europe's biggest ever solar photovoltaic plant, the 300MW Cestas project.

Among the mega solar and onshore wind projects financed in 2014 were the \$1bn Setouchi solar project in Japan, the \$1bn Xina Solar One plant in South Africa, and the \$860m Lake Turkana wind project in Kenya. There were also seven mega offshore wind projects, including the \$2.6bn Dudgeon project in UK waters and the \$3.8bn Gemini array off the Netherlands, which is the most valuable

renewable energy investment ever made, excluding hydro-electric dams. Rooftop solar also had a strong year, up 34% to \$74bn.

The falling price of oil has had little effect on clean energy investment, said Liebreich: “2014 was too early to see any noticeable effect on investment, and anyway the impact of cheaper crude will be felt much more in road transport than in electricity generation.”

“The figures show that renewable energy is increasingly cost-competitive, with solar in particular rapidly approaching parity with fossil-fuel generation. They suggest also that investors are growing weary of increasingly volatile fossil fuel markets,” said Richard Black, director of the [Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit](#).

“Some developing countries have increased low-carbon investment hugely – a staggering 88% in the case of Brazil – and there is a danger that the UK, with its restrictive planning regulations for renewables, will find itself increasingly swimming against the global tide,” Black said.

“It’s encouraging to see the smart money in the world’s economic powerhouses is betting on clean energy,” said Doug Parr, Greenpeace UK’s chief scientist. “The only disappointment is that, save for offshore wind, the UK and the EU are now lagging behind. For all the whinging about UK ‘going it alone’ on clean energy, it is increasingly clear that the bigger economic risk is being left behind as the low-carbon jobs go where political leaders show genuine commitment to a clean energy future.”

Liberia: Eco-Lighting Helps Battered Monrovia See Beyond Ebola | December 23 | All Africa

Source URL: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201412231644.html>

By Boakai Fofana

Monrovia — In a shop near the heart of the densely packed West Point neighborhood in Liberia's capital that was quarantined in August to slow the spread of Ebola, retiree Abubakar K. Sherif is hard at work

Around the Waterside, one of Monrovia's largest markets, drivers are constantly honking to make a path through the multitudes clogging the road. Street hawkers scream their wares, while marketers try to claim the attention of passersby.

Amid the chaos on Mechlin street, one of the interlinking thoroughfares of the market, the [Liberian Energy Network](#) (LEN) has its Monrovia office, which also doubles as the point of sales. Inside, boxes of solar panel lights are stacked on the floor. Sherif, LEN's president, sits behind one of two desks in an office shared by assistants. A man who looks to be in his early twenties sits at the only visible computer..

With the help of an all-Liberian staff, Sherif, a former ministry of internal affairs official, presides over the sales and distribution of products that literally spread light during a very dark time. Before images of West Point during the height of the Ebola crisis were splashed across screens worldwide, Sherif's

organization had sent 5000 solar-powered lights around the country in 2014, with a goal of doubling that number by year's end.

Only 1.5 percent of Liberia's people have access to electricity, so even projects that start small can make a measurable difference. And flexible, nimble innovators can address needs that larger operators cannot.

Among the unusual uses of LEN's lights is by fishermen, who take their small boats out into Monrovia's rough ocean currents before dawn and after dusk, when catches are better.

James Logan, a 25-year-old high school graduate, chaired the fishermen association at Banjor Beach, a section of coastline in a western suburb of Monrovia. Trudging through the sand to reach the gathering of fishermen and canoes is made to look effortless by market women, chattering as they advance towards towards the boats, toting pans to carry the fish they come to buy.

Logan was put in charge of distributing LEN's solar panel lights amongst the fishermen. "With the help of the lights," he said, "We can go far and stay longer time over water. The more you stay there, the more you catch."

In a neighborhood and a city with protein deficiencies and not enough jobs, more fish mean more revenue – for both the fishermen who catch them and for the market women who buy from them and sell the fish to the public.

Enhanced safety the lights provide is also a welcome benefit. A middle-aged fisherman, James Arthur, has been navigating the tumbling waters off Monrovia's coast for 15 years. "When we are about to put nets in the water," he says, "we use the lights to see – and it keeps us safe from ships and whatsoever thing is passing around."

Supplying such needs was interrupted when Ebola struck the Liberian capital. Staff at LEN were unable to work in August. The neighborhood was cordoned off and movement in and out was limited to health workers, security forces and humanitarian workers distributing food.

When the quarantine was lifted, LEN operations rapidly geared up again. The enterprise decided to focus temporarily on helping to fight Ebola. Within weeks it had distributed over 300 solar powered lamps to health workers caring for Ebola patients.

That help could be literally lifesaving, as the lack of electricity has hampered the response to the deadly virus – partly by restricting vision after dark in the already shadowed treatment centers, where even daylight is limited. Giving health workers a way to see what they are doing, even when electricity is unavailable, not only helps them provide continual care but also protects staff.

Despite the diversion in operations, Sherif remains committed to the goal of making Liberia the first country in the world to generate a majority of its lighting from solar power.

It's an ambitious plan in a nation that only recently restored some of the grid power that was completely destroyed during over two decades of conflict – and even that is generated by diesel fuel. But in addition to being dirty, diesel has become costlier and scarcer since shipping companies began avoiding Liberia's ports due to Ebola fears.

In 2012, the year after it was formed, LEN worked with the international NGO [Save the Children](#) to provide solar lights to its 150 clinics in Liberia, as well as solar lanterns to the group's nurse/midwives around the country. In June, just before Ebola interrupted LEN operations, the group was tapped as the only Liberian organization to be part of the U.S. Power Africa Initiative, "Beyond the Grid", for private sector participants.

Even before Ebola struck, renewable energy sources seemed a smart approach for Liberia. The country has a vast potential for renewable energy generation. Six main rivers have the possibility of powering over a dozen hydro plants. Wind power could be viable in a number of areas, and wave power could be a future source of energy, due to Liberia's strong offshore currents.

In January President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf attended a ceremony [breaking ground on the Mt. Coffee hydroelectric project](#), designed to restore a facility destroyed in the early 1990s. Funders for the U.S.\$230 million project included the European Investment Bank and the European Central Bank.

In March, the government announced plans to develop another hydro project in Lofa County in the country's far north, near the border with Guinea.

But while large-scale projects take time and large investments to develop, small community-based generation can help. In February President Johnson Sirleaf visited Lofa County, where she dedicated a micro-hydro power plant.

She told an enthusiastic, cheering crowd that newly available electricity could help them develop small, revenue-generating businesses, such as ice-making and mills for processing locally grown rice. The president mentioned ice making, cold water, and rice mill processing as examples for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) could invest in, to greatly transform their lives. Cooperating to establish businesses could lead to more and more small and medium sized enterprises, she said.

"Do not just use this electricity to dance at night under light, the president said. "It's your opportunity to make use of what you have been blessed with, and the only way you can help government fight poverty is by getting involved in the fight. This is why the hydro has been built here."

She also paid tribute to Gary Duncan, a former Peace Corps volunteer in Liberia, who had experimented with a 30-kilowatt plant that served the local community. Volunteers were withdrawn from Liberia after civil war spread in the late 1980s, and the local generating plant was destroyed, like almost all infrastructure across the country, from giant dams to small bridges.

Sherif, the LEN president, says that it was another Peace Corps volunteer from the pre-war era, Rich Fahey, who helped to make the solar light initiative a reality. Sherif and Fahey became friends and Sherif even traveled to the United States to visit Fehey and his wife.

"Rich came back after the war, Sherif says, "and was shocked at the darkness he saw. He went back to the States and resigned his job as an environmental lawyer."

Fehey returned to Liberia to explore ways to help. The idea the friends agreed upon was solar lighting. A project could get a quick start with minimal capital and grow from there.

The initiators believed renewable energy offered more than convenience day-to-day. As a LEN statement says, "access to basic light and power is critical if Liberians are to be able to break the cycle of poverty, which is the root cause of past civil wars and the current health crisis."

LEN was established as entrepreneurial not-for-profit organization. It isn't in business to make a large profit for its owners, but it does aim to generate profits to maintain and expand the enterprise.

LEN benefited from the establishment in 2010 of [Liberia's Rural Renewable Energy Agency](#) (RREA), an independent agency of the government. Sherif says LEN was invited as one of several retailers to help import and distribute lights. "So with the support of the World Bank," he says. "RREA started bringing in lights and selling them to us at the factory price."

Sherif says the main customers were expected to be people in rural areas, and the process of selling low-cost lighting in the countryside went well. But city people also wanted and needed the lights, so LEN began to cater to them as well.

As critical as power can be in a rural area, it may be even more for immediately transformative for urban dwellers. Cities without electricity are not only dysfunctional. Traffic, population density and urban slums combine to make darkness dangerous. So LEN found a ready market for its lighting.

One of the biggest customers is the largest labor union in Liberia – the Firestone Agricultural & Workers Union, Fawul.

In Harbel, on the outskirts of Monrovia, [Firestone Natural Rubber Company](#) began operating in 1926 as part of the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company – a U.S. firm that was bought by Japan's Bridgestone Corporation in 1988.

After Liberia's wars ended, the company renewed operations, working to restore the world's largest rubber plantation so it could again grow and harvest the product needed for tires.

Fawul has 7000 members working as rubber tappers on the one million acre Firestone Plantation.

"About ninety-five percent of the plantation doesn't have electricity," says Sherif. "So through the workers union, we sell to them at a minimum cost. The lights are portable and easily carried anywhere you are traveling. They are better than kerosene lamps and candles, and they are safer and cleaner."

Even low-cost lights make a dent in a worker's budget. With help from LEN, Fawul members can buy the lights on installments that are deducted from their pay, so that every member can afford the purchase.

Logan of the fishermen's association says the solar lights have helped his associates in many ways, too. "Before, they used to go fishing at night and can't see their way," he says, "and sometimes when they looking for things in the canoe, they will have to check until their hands can feel it. But with the lights, their work is faster."

Fewer working hours means more time to use the lighting. "The lights have a 12-hour lifespan," Logan says. "So when the fishermen come back from sea, they can also use the lights in their

homes. Even when the rain is falling, we can still use the lights. For me I also use the light at night for study."

On a day when a reporter came calling, Beauty Kpehe was waiting and hoping for the catch to come in, so that she could buy some and sell them at the market. "I depend on fishing to educate my children and to take care of my family in the home," says the mother of nine. Nearby shanty houses, where most of the fishermen live, their corrugated roofs secured against the wind by large stones, appear to have recently taken a hit by the advancing ocean, as did Cece Beach, a popular resort which was wiped away by the sea on the other side of Banjo.

Despite the mist from the roaring ocean, the handcrafted canoes start to come into view as they approach. The fishy odor grows stronger. Some women, Kpehe among them, had come ahead, their colorful African fabrics glowing in the sweltering sun. She sat pensively, her chin resting in her right palm, hoping she can buy enough fish to take to market, as children play under the watchful eyes of older women.

The more fish the fishermen can catch, the more Kpehe can buy, so she hopes the waters have not been too rough for the creaking canoes to do well. "Some days I buy up to five thousand (Liberian) dollars," (about 60 U.S. dollars) Kpehe says. When I make a good profit, I buy food for the children and save the balance." Everyone who depends on these waters for a livelihood is grateful for the renewable lighting LEN supplies.

As Liberia gets back to doing business, LEN hopes to grow into a powerful force for 'lighting Liberia' – and an example of the contribution renewable solar energy can make to Africa's cities and beyond.

Liberia: Hydro Project Set for 2016 | January 7 | Inquirer

Source URL: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201501081100.html>

By Morrison O.g Sayon

The completion of the much-publicized Mount Coffee Hydro Power Project has been extended to next year as disclosed by President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. President Sirleaf has attributed the extension of the project to the spread of the deadly Ebola virus that has claimed over thousands of lives in Liberia.

Earlier, the Government of Liberia had set the completion of the Mount Coffee Hydro Project to December 25, 2015. But President Sirleaf said the Ebola epidemic stalled every project in the country including the Hydro project coupled with the departure of major investors and contractors.

The Liberian leader however, assured that a 38MW power plant will be operational to provide electricity to the citizens and that the government is doing everything possible to ensure that the entire country is provided electricity in the shortest possible time.

One of Liberia's major problems is the provision of electricity. Experts say the rehabilitation of the Mt. Coffee Hydro Power Plant will serve as a major boost to the pouring in of investors in the country and key to a booming economy.

Liberians have waited for electricity since the ascendancy of President Johnson-Sirleaf though the President has continuously promised them of 'small light today, big light tomorrow'. The citizens are yet to see the big light as the government's tenure is dwindling to a vanishing point.

The small light critics say is yet to be seen in full as all of the street lights are off while residents only receive current once a day. But President has however, promised that the hydro project is on course and will definitely be completed in 2016 less than 12 months from now.

Liberia: Hydro, Health, Road Top Recovery Agenda | January 5 | The Inquirer

Source URL: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201501052143.html>

As news of a significant decline in the number of Ebola cases in Liberia, the scar of the damage inflicted by this deadly outbreak on the Liberian economy and key sectors of growth still remains indelible. As such, the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning says the, the Government of Liberia (GOL) is preparing for the aftermath of the health crisis by targeted critical areas of interest for investment to resuscitate the shattered economy as the country prepares for post-Ebola recovery era.

Cognizant of an already volatile economy, the MFDP stresses that all is being done to ensure microeconomic stability, the provision of basic social services, and key infrastructure development projects including power, ports and roads remain on track.

Coincidentally, a recent World Bank Group, the Liberia Institute for Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS) and the Gallup Organization survey shows massive decline in the real sector of the economy, with self-employed and wage workers the hardest hit, while the agriculture sector is beginning to see returns to work as the harvest approaches.

Those targeted areas with the potential of accelerating the country's post-Ebola recovery process according to a Finance and Development Planning Ministry's press release include rebuilding the health system, reopening of schools, rehabilitation of the hydro and the bringing additional electricity on line, continuing the construction of more roads across the country, rehabilitation of the airport and investing in agriculture and the domestic private sector.

As part of the recovery process, the Liberian Government has directed its focus on the re-opening of schools across the country.

Toward this end, the MFDP has already established a US\$1 million fund to assist the sector in getting ready for operations.

"The Ministry of Finance & Development Planning assures our citizens and development partners that every measure is being taken to maintain macroeconomic stability, as well as effective management of the economy during this difficult period in our country," the MFDP release said.

The Liberian Government believes that maintaining a private sector investment goal that ensures that more Liberians have access to finance and participate in the nation's economic recovery programs is paramount.

According to the press release, for the first half of the fiscal year ended 31 December 2014, the Government generated approximately US\$298 million in revenue. Of this amount, US\$209 million was generated from domestic sources (tax and non-tax revenues) while US\$89 million came from external sources (Grants & Borrowing) as a result extensive negotiations with multilateral and bilateral partners.

In spite of the positive indications of reduction in cases, the Liberian Government was, during the same fiscal period, able to spend more than US\$35 million on healthcare services including US\$9 million on Ebola Response and US\$6 million for the restoration of basic health care services across the country even though the economy was severely challenged as a result of the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD).

In addition to this, efforts were exerted to ensure that the operations of Government continued unimpeded, including regular salary payments to active civil servants and non-essential staffs who were requested to stay home due to the crisis, US\$106 million was expended on salaries and compensation related items. It was a decision of the President and the Government that in order to minimize the livelihood impact of the Ebola crisis, non-essential staff and all civil servants continue to receive their income to purchase basic food and other supplies.

The MFDP also reports that in addition to expenses on healthcare, other critical sectors still received support: Security (US\$35 million); education (US\$28 million); energy (US\$6 million); infrastructure (US\$27.7 million), senatorial elections (US\$9.5 million) among others.

As part of measures to accelerate economic recovery, the MFDP says it has provided special support for Agricultural investment (US\$2 million) and Private Sector development (US\$1 million). These programs have already been established and fully funded.

The MFDP averred that it is looking forward to working with key institutions like the Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA), the Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the second half of the fiscal year begins.

Through this partnership, the Ministry hopes to intensify its revenue generation and fund raising efforts in ensuring that the required resources are available to fund the rebuilding of key social services infrastructures and our overall development agenda.

The Ministry therefore counts on all Liberians and partners for their support and cooperation in meeting these targets during this very challenging period in our country's history.

Liberia: Improved Power Supply to Monrovia Soon, LEC Pledges | December 28 | Liberian Observer

Source URL: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201412292570.html>

The Liberia Electricity Corporation says that maintenance work has begun on its power supply generators which provide electricity for residents of Monrovia and its environs.

Work began last Monday after spare parts for several generators which broke down at the height of the Ebola crisis arrived over the weekend to boost LEC's power generation capacity, a press release quoting the LEC management said.

The management gave the assurance that its engineers and technicians are working aggressively to ensure the restoration of improved power supply within a reasonable time.

The LEC commended the public for their continued understanding of the company's challenges and is calling on them to exercise patience as the company is doing everything possible to ensure that customers receive improved electricity supply.

The recent load shedding has been attributed to the breakdown of 11 of the 22 Mega Watts of the high speed generators which were installed between 2006 and 2010, the management said, adding that the generators have outlived their life span as they were only meant to be used for up to five years after the civil war.

The LEC management noted, however, that the solution to the energy needs of Liberia rests in the completion of the three Heavy Fuel Oil plants totaling 38 Megawatts of power, the Mount Coffee Hydropower Plant as well as other rural projects such as the Cross Border, Transco CLSG and WAPP among others, that will provide sustainable electricity to the people of Liberia.

Construction works on these projects were suspended indefinitely in late July after engineers and expatriate technicians left the country due to the outbreak of the deadly Ebola virus.

The first 10 Megawatts HFO being constructed through a friendship grant from the Japanese government was due to have been commissioned on December 15 this year. But the project came to a standstill in July during the installation of the engines when the deadly Ebola virus broke out.

Ghana: Ghana Banks on Solar Energy to Avert Crisis | January 6 | CAJ News Africa

Source URL: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201501061074.html>

By Russell Adadevoh

Accra — GHANA is turning to solar energy to avert the incessant power crisis.

This follows the installation of photovoltaic solar systems to more than 150 schools drawn from 98 districts of the country.

The sole purpose is to ensure power outages do not disturb classes.

The project is a conjunction among a Danish firm, dubbed Johs Gram-Hanssen A/S and Ghana Energy Development and Access Project (GEDAP) as well as local independent power producers.

This includes Best Solar and Solar Stand Alone Power Systems and Rechargeable Lanterns.

Although the local energy utility could not reveal the cost of the whole exercise, which is expected to end in March, information gathered by/CAJ News Ghana Bureau/ suggest the World Bank funds the renewable energy solution.

Speaking at a ceremony, a consultant from Asia-Pacific Energy Group, Peter Konings, said renewable energy was ideal for Ghana considering the abundant sun.

"Solar is the future. The World Bank and the government can provide the money and facilities but if you don't have properly trained technicians, your systems will lack proper maintenance," Konings said.

Several community people who spoke to /CAJ News /said they were excited by the latest development.

"Gone are the days when village students could do their home work or studies using candles sometimes experiencing power outages due to erratic electricity supply," said Morgan Appiah, a village head.

Solar energy is said to be clean, cheap and easy to use.

Kenya to Sell Cheaper Power to Rwanda in 2015 | December 14 | East African Business Week

Source URL: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201412160312.html>

Nairobi — Next year Kenya has agreed to sell power to Rwanda and help ease growing demand for electricity but at lower costs.

Recently Kenya added 140MW from the officially launched second phase of the Olkaria Geothermal plant. Costs for consumers are expected to be cut by 30% and Rwanda will also benefit.

Power trade deals within the region have been previously hampered by lack of sufficient transmission infrastructure.

Under the Power Purchase Agreement signed, Kenya will charge 12 US cents per kilowatt hour for the electricity sold to Rwanda while Uganda, through which the transmission line will pass, will impose a wheeling charge of 2.08 US cents.

Uganda Electricity Transmission Company CEO Eriasi Kiyemba said, "Because of weak interconnection at the time we could not help each other and had to turn to expensive power."

Kenya: Geothermal Top Power Source for Kenya | December 16 | The Star

Source URL: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201412160858.html>

By James Waithaka

Kenya's geothermal power generation touched a fresh high in October, topping the country's power mix and signalling relief for electricity consumers.

Data show geothermal generated was 339.4 million units (kilowatt-hours), a record in Kenya's history.

This equalled 43.8 per cent of the energy mix in the month, ahead of hydro at 36 per cent (279.02 million KWh) and thermal at 20.2 per cent (156.66 million units).

Hydro, geothermal and thermal are the country's three largest power sources, as most mini-grids such as small hydros, wind and co-generation are operated off the national grid.

Thermal, which is diesel-fuelled making it more expensive, touched a 16-month low in the month in terms of units generated, and was at a more than 22-month low as a composition of total power generated.

October was the third time this year that geothermal generation outpaced hydro and thermal. The first being in July at 257.71 million units (33.8 per cent), followed by September at 293.26 million units or 39.9 per cent.

Increased geothermal generation signals lower fuel cost charges on power bills - domestic and commercial - as more diesel generators are rested. The cost of geothermal power is estimated at \$0.09 (Sh8.15) per unit, compared to \$0.31 (Sh28.06) per unit for thermal.

Kenya Power data availed yesterday show geothermal could comprise above 50 per cent of total electricity generated this month, having contributed 52.4 per cent of total electricity to the grid on Friday, 52.3 per cent on Saturday and 55.2 per cent on Sunday.

In an earlier interview, Kenya Power managing director Ben Chumo told the Star that the focus on energy sources currently is two-prong; to save on costs and avail cheaper power, while reducing over-reliance on hydro generation.

"About 50 per cent of our 1,600MW generation capacity is rain-dependent. We must look at this to avoid energy crisis as the economy grows and as hydrology changes," he said.

In a 2013 research paper on Kenya's energy sector, Dalberg Global Development Advisors said investments in geothermal have more advantages as "it is renewable, has near-zero carbon emissions, extremely reliable (unlike hydro), can be used for baseload power (unlike wind), and has low operating costs".

Lower fuel prices in the global markets also portend a reduction in the fuel cost charge, but this is an unsustainable variant without increased generation from other sources.

Costly thermal power is usually turned on as emergency electricity to bridge shortfalls in hydro, which is weather-dependent. However, Kenya has for long been unable to shake off the bottleneck.

State-owned KenGen runs three thermal power stations: Kipevu Diesel Plant, Kipevu Gas Turbine and Nairobi South Gas Turbine. Independent power producers running thermal generators include the Aga Khan-owned Tsavo Power, Rabai Power, IberAfrica and British firm Aggreko.<http://allafrica.com/stories/201412190941.html>

Kenya Power Forecasts Kh15 Billion Profit | January 5 | CAJ News Africa

Source URL: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201501051006.html>

By Maria Marachia

Nairobi — KENYA Power, the energy utility, is convinced it will record a Sh15 billion pre-tax profit in the 2014/2015 financial year, a senior official has said.

The company, which in the past 22 years had not given its shareholders the highest return, would seek to break the new ground by making the profit.

According to Kenya Power's Managing Director, Ben Chumo, the forecast was based on good performance by the power retailer in the last two fiscal years.

"Our profit has been rising because we are getting more customers and electricity supply has become more reliable. I will not be surprised if we make Sh15 billion at the end of this financial year," Chumo said.

Kenya Power had earlier on generated Sh10 billion in 2014 following another slight improvement of Sh6 billion before tax in the 2013 financial year, a development widely seen as a huge success by the corporate world in Kenya.

"The biggest growth area for our profits is unit sale to industrialists.

Unit sales grew above 10 per cent meaning the reliability of supply gave industrialists more time to manufacture," Chumo said.

He said among key drivers to Kenya Power to Sh15 billion forecast emanated from the Sh17 billion loan in November signed with Standard Chartered Bank for network upgrade.

Kenya: New Project to Boost Electricity Supply in Nyeri | January 5 | The Star

Source URL: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201501051025.html>

By Lola Okulo

A local power company plans to start producing electricity from wind, solar and water sources to boost energy supply in Nyeri and its environs.

Power Technology Solutions Limited has written a notification to the Energy ministry of its intention to generate power in three new sites in Nyeri county.

"It is notified to the general public that Power Technology Solutions Limited, a company incorporated in the republic of Kenya intends to apply for a power generation licence after sixty days of expiration of this notice," said part of the gazette notice published on Friday.

"The generation will be on different operating regimes including wind, solar and water."

The company has identified the three sites located in Gitugi and Kieni areas for the operations.

In 2008, the company sought licences to generate electricity from three sites in Othaya namely Chiga, Ihuririo and Itemeini areas.

Nyeri has numerous small scale industries and tea plantation-households that provide a ready market for more power capacity.

Kenya is looking to lower the cost of electricity by encouraging generation from green sources such as wind and solar to replace expensive diesel-generated power.

Last April, the government said it was ready to terminate long term contracts it held with Independent Power Producers who produce electricity from expensive resources.

Power Technology Solutions has not revealed how much electricity it intends to produce from the three new sites it will work from.

Last year, Kenya Electricity Generating Company finally connected the entire 280 megawatts of Olkaria geothermal power to the national grid, a move aimed at lowering cost of power in the country.

The Olkaria 280MW project comprises the 140MW Olkaria IV and the Olkaria I units 4 and 5 each with a capacity of 70MW.

The government plans to inject 5000MW of power to the national grid by 2017.

Kenya: Thermal Power Generation Halts to Four-Year Lows | January 7 | The Star

Source URL: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201501071211.html>

Generation of diesel-fuelled thermal electricity slowed to a 53-month low in November as more geothermal power flowed into the national grid and as hydro-electricity improved.

A total of 121.53 million kilowatt-hours (units) of thermal electricity were generated in the month, a sharp drop from the peak of 295.89 million units produced by emergency generators in May.

The last time thermal generation hovered around this level was in July 2010 at 124.45 million units, and 113.38 million KWh in the previous month.

Emergency power is more expensive as it is fuelled by diesel, which is imported, with costs recovered through the fuel cost charge in monthly and pre-paid electricity bills.

Thermal is being rested as more geothermal power comes onto the national grid, while improved hydrology has upped hydropower generation. A total of 322.17 million units of geothermal were produced in November, the third month in a row that the power source surpassed hydro (307.25 million units) and thermal.

Geothermal comprised 42.9 per cent of total electricity generated locally in the month, while hydro contributed 40.9 per cent and thermal 16.2 per cent. October marked the highest generation of geothermal power in the country's history with 339.4 million KWh.

It is expected that the more reliable and cheaper energy source will offer relief to manufacturers, businesses and households going forward.

Already, electricity costs for manufacturers declined by 9.5 per cent in the last quarter of 2014, according to the latest Producer Price Index. Further relief on consumer goods is expected from the falling crude oil prices in global markets, which saw prices of refined petroleum products drop by an average 4.2 per cent between October and December.

Nigeria Signs Pacts With Private Sector to Boost Power Supply | December 18 | This Day

Source URL: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201412190299.html>

The federal government has signed three different agreements with private sector operators to generate about 1700 megawatts (MW) of electricity to boost electricity supply in the country.

Speaking at the signing of the Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with Solius NGPC, Peoples Home Association and the Solar Force of Nigeria Limited on Tuesday in Abuja, the Minister of Power, Prof. Chinedu Nebo, stressed the willingness of the government to work with the private sector to generate power from renewable energy sources.

The minister assured the investors of government's commitment to improve power supply to Nigerians, especially the rural dwellers, who are largely deprived of electricity due to the demographic nature of the country.

He assured prospective investors of the administration's support and encouragement

"We will do all that is needed for you to come on board in the granting of licenses, Power Purchase Agreements (PPA), Environment Impact Assessment (EIA), among others," he said.

Nebo also assured the investors of government support in securing land, while the Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN) would readily deploy what they generate to the national grid, where applicable.

In his remarks, the Chairman of Solius Solution, Onu Eluwa, said his firm would establish a training school in Nigeria and that the company would provide 1,000MW into the national grid, but would begin with 100MW at locations to be determined by the Ministry of Power.

Nigeria: World Bank Promises U.S.\$1.75 Billion for Power | December 23 | Daily Trust

Source URL: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201412231066.html>

By Daniel Adugbo

The World Bank has pledged US\$1.75 billion over the next four years to support the Nigeria Power Sector Reform. The Bank's Country Energy Task Team Leader for Nigeria, Mr. Eric Fernstrom disclosed this at a capacity building programme on Post-Privatisation Monitoring for the Power Sector jointly organised by the World Bank and the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE).

Mr. Fernstrom said the \$1.75 billion was 25 percent of a total of US\$7 billion earmarked for Nigeria in the next four years.

A statement from the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE) said Fernstrom noted that the bank was greatly encouraged to offer the additional assistance to ensure that the reform objectives were realised as a result of the transparency exhibited in the transaction process and the robust post-reform measures put in place by the NCP/BPE.

The two-day workshop held at Ibom Golf Resort, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State sought to expose participants to the techniques, methods and information sources for effective Post Privatisation Monitoring and Evaluation of the PHCN successor power companies.

The workshop also attracted participants from critical sector stakeholders including the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC), Presidential Task Force on Power (PTFP), Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN), the Office of the Vice President.

Nigeria: NERC - CBN, Nigerian Banks Willing to Invest in Electricity Transmission | December 30 | This Day

Source URL: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201412300061.html>

By Chineme Okafor

Abuja — The Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) has revealed that the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) is willing to lead a banking industry-inspired investment in Nigeria's weak and underfunded electricity transmission network, provided the government is willing to make the needed changes in the management of the transmission network.

Chairman of NERC, Dr. Sam Amadi stated recently in Abuja that in view of the fact that the country's transmission network has remained a weak link in the electricity supply cycle, coupled with the government's seeming reliance on all mix of funding to strengthen the network, the CBN and banks in the country have indicated their preparedness to invest in the network.

Amadi noted that like its recent provision of intervention funds to mitigate the financial illiquidity experienced by the sector, the CBN and the banks are willing to intervene in the transmission network but that they want clarity from the government before such investment can be made.

"Really, transmission is a bottleneck but I think it is a simple bottleneck and what I think should be done is that from next year, the ministry of power should remove their hands from the transmission company, simply by allowing it have a board with clear directives. When people talk about investment in transmission, what they really want is clarity in transmission investment recovery; they want to see how much is the wheeling charge and if they invest in the transmission, will they be allowed to recover the money, they want to see a bankable framework and that simply means that the risks are not there whether you have a management contractor or government employees running the transmission company," Amadi said.

He explained further: "This idea of government looking for billions to make the transmission work does not make sense because the billions will be available if you clean up transmission and create a framework that is bankable; the CBN and Nigerian banks are willing to finance investments in that area if they are assured of returns on their investment."

Speaking on conditions upon which such investments could be made as well as NERC's preference for a restructured transmission network, Amadi said: "They want to see regulatory certainty and what we need to make that work is corporate governance; set up the board properly and let them work with clarity, secondly, long term plan, government can decide on the kind of structure it wants with

the transmission company. Government can either adopt a regionalised transmission system or it concessions it. These are policies that the president can pursue."

He however stated that going forward, NERC will effect certain structural changes in the Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN), with the separation of the Market and System Operators from the Transmission Service Provider (TSP).

"One thing is however clear from our regulatory angel, from next year, we are going to totally remove the System and Market Operators from the TCN so that they are independent companies and the System Operator will likely operate as a trust set up by the market participants to run their activities and government will not need to spend money on the operations of the SO because their budget will be factored into the tariff. We will leave the Transmission Service Provider to operate on its own and if we sanitise its operations very well, government does not need to put in any money there because private people will invest in it if there is regulatory certainty in what they do and so the clear thing really is to make decisions on the direction of the transmission system and allow the rules to work," he added.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201412220001.html>

Tanzania: Solar Power Project a Success As 840 Villages Connected | December 19 | Tanzania Daily News

Source URL: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201412190421.html>

THE PV Generator solar power project aimed at addressing electricity supply in rural areas has been a success as 840 households in Kongwa, Uyui and Mlele have benefitted.

Project Coordinator from the Ministry of Energy and Minerals, Mr Styden Rwebangila, said in Dar es Salaam that the pilot power connection projects include fixing the generators, which use solar power and supply it to the households.

He said the project, which is at the pilot stage; one PV Generator has the capacity to produce 15-kilowatt of electricity that can be supplied to 60 households and social services.

"The generators produce power and can be connected to small machines like milling, water pumps, welding and saw milling. Thus we are optimistic that they will help improve their welfare," Mr Rwebangila pointed out.

He added that the projects is intended to empower the public especially those in rural areas to initiate development projects for their economic progress.

According to the coordinator, the pilot project has benefitted ten villages of Lobilo, Ngutoto, Leganga and Silale in Kongwa District, Tura, Loya and Lutende in Uyui, while those who enjoy the project from Katavi Region are Ilunde, Nsenkwa and Mapili.

He revealed that when the project will be on its full course, it will not be limited to households only but would be extended to other social services centres like schools, health centres, worship houses and street lights.

Mr Rwebangila said since the generators will be widely spread, they will be in a position to generate more power -- and in so doing, benefit a majority of the people, especially those who do not fall within the national grid system.

Tanzania: 45 Villages in Mara to Get Electricity | December 25 | Tanzania Daily News

Source URL: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201412292668.html>

By Daily News Reporter

Musoma — AS part of the government's rural electrification plan, a total of 45 villages in Mara Region will be connected to power through the Rural Energy Agency (REA), it has been announced.

The announcement was made by the Minister of Energy and Minerals, Prof Sospeter Muhongo, who is on a six-day tour of the region to inspect implementation of the second phase of rural electrification projects undertaken by REA and Tanzania Electric Supply Company (Tanesco).

Prof Muhongo said by visiting the region the ministry was also working to find out the demand for power in Mara in villages that were left out during implementation of the first phase of the project.

The districts to be visited by the minister include Musoma Rural, Tarime, Rorya, Bunda and Serengeti. The ministry of energy and minerals has been working to supply power in phases to all regions and districts countrywide depending on the population and demand of power in respective areas.

"After completion of the first phase, we are now working on the second stage and the third phase will come into place when this stage is accomplished," the minister explained. He mentioned priority areas for power connections in rural areas as those with social amenities such as schools, health centres, churches and mosques as well village and ward offices and water supply projects.

"The aim is to improve provision of social services at these facilities and afterwards we will connect electricity to individuals. We want to improve the lives of our people through provision of electricity," Prof Muhongo said.

"For any country to improve its economy it must have reliable power supply and this is why the government is striving to distribute the energy to rural areas," he added.

He went on to note that through the energy rural folks will be able to invest in milling of cereals, processing of edible oil and refrigeration of food, among others and thus enable them to increase their incomes.

Speaking during the tour, the Village Chairperson of Bukabwa village, Mr Thomas Makwera, said villagers there have lacked electricity for many years and thus held back development projects.

He was, however, happy that the village will soon be connected to the energy as constructors are currently erecting poles to supply power.

An Engineer for DERM Electrical, the contractor implementing the project, Hussein Ayubu, said erection of poles and supply of power will be finalised by early February, next year.

Prof Muhongo urged the villagers to make use of the opportunity since power connection fees have been reduced to only 27,000/-.

Tanzania: New Electricity Plan Aims At Lower Tariff | December 23 | Tanzania Daily News

Source URL: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201412230829.html>

ENERGY and Water Utility Regulatory Authority (EWURA) Director General, Mr Felix Ngamlagosi, addresses a meeting of editors during which he outlined the responsibilities of the authority in Dar es Salaam on Monday. Looking on is the Chairman of Tanzania Editors Forum (TEF), Mr Absalom Kibanda. (Photo by Our Correspondent)

ENERGY and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority (EWURA) has drafted a model Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) for prospective investors in the electricity sector amid hopes that if approved the document will drastically lower the prices of electricity to final consumers.

"The model PPA addresses almost all pertinent issues in power contracts, leaving few areas for negotiations between TANESCO (Tanzania Electric Supply Company) and potential investors," EWURA Director General Felix Ngamlagosi said in Dar es Salaam.

Addressing editors from various media in the country, Mr Ngamlagosi said the document that covers major investments in gas, water, solar energy, geothermal, wind and coal sub-sectors was finalised on September 30, 2014 and has already been presented to the government.

The model document, however, leaves limited room for negotiations between Tanesco and prospective investors on issues related to size, location and applicable technology in the particular project.

Mr Ngamlagosi said the regulatory agency has already asked the government to issue a declaration, prohibiting potential investors from coming in the country with their own templates on the PPAs.

Tanesco has for many years been operating without own model PPA, relying on investors' templates, which are partly to blame for high power tariffs in the country.

"Tanesco has been receiving as many model PPAs as the number of investors it receives, this highly expensive in terms of time, cost and risks of negotiations," said Ewura boss.

He expressed optimism that with the approved model PPA, the reduced negotiation time, costs and risks will ultimately be reflected on the final prices of electricity.

The energy and water sectors' regulatory body has also introduced cap prices for electricity from solar, the technology that remains too expensive for the Tanzanian economy.

Mr Ngamlagosi said new power technologies like wind and solar, which are still under research, are expensive for developing countries like Tanzania, pointing out that the focus has to be on cheap sources of energy like natural gas and coal.

"As a country, some technologies are expensive; we better avoid them for the moment," Mr Ngamlagosi said, adding that the cap prices for electricity will help in screening out unnecessary and costly negotiations in power investments.

Tanzania: Villagers Challenged On Economic Use of Power | December 30 | Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)

Source URL: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201412300927.html>

By Mugini Jacob

Tarime — POWER distribution under the Rural Energy Agency (REA) can help end poverty in Tanzania if people make good use of the opportunity for economic gains, Energy and Minerals Minister, Prof Sospeter Muhongo, has said.

"We want to have Tanzania which is free from poverty in the next 10 years.

We are bringing electricity to improve social services. Get ready to use the power for economic gains," Prof Muhongo said when speaking to Surubi villagers in Komaswa ward, Tarime District, on Sunday.

The minister is on a week-long working tour of Mara Region where he is inspecting implementation of REA Phase II projects designed to connect 1,500 villages with electricity countrywide at the cost of 881bn/-.

About 49bn/- of the funds will be spent in Mara Region alone where dozens of villages will be connected to electricity. The minister urged the project contractor, Derm Electric, to speed up the work who, in turn, assured the minister that the villages have been connected by April 15, next year.

However, Prof Muhongo wanted the process to be fast-tracked so the villages could have power come March 15, next year, instead of April 15.

He also directed TANESCO officials to provide the villagers with mobile phones so they can be able to follow up on the connection process.

He further directed TANESCO officials to start providing power use education to the villagers. Under the project, connection fees will be only 27,000/-, according to the minister.

Residents of the villages thanked the minister, saying his presence in the ministry of Energy and Minerals had brought light and new hope to them "Prof Muhongo is really doing an impressive job to bring light to rural villages," Komswa ward councillor, Mr Sylvester Kisieri, said.

The minister was expected to continue with his tour in neighbouring Serengeti District yesterday.