Kabul microgrid development

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Lack of sustainable and affordable electricity has been a significant challenge for the Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) operating in the area and the main barrier to expanding their activities. In addition to being very expensive, the use of diesel generators has resulted in air pollution and health problems for the local residents. Due to lack of electricity, children have not able to study at night.

The Afghanistan Sustainable Energy for Rural Development (ASERD) project, under which the mini-grid has been constructed, is aligned with the Government of Afghanistan"s priorities. It is a flagship project of the MRRD and UNDP Afghanistan and is financially supported by the Republic of Korea and UNDP Afghanistan.

H.E. Popal Habibi, MRRD Deputy Minister, said that "electricity not only lightens your houses but is also a foundational stone for other development interventions. We hope that the electricity will add to the beauty of this attractive valley and will contribute to a prosperous life for the local residents and to achieving economic self-reliance."

The mini-grid has a robust operation and maintenance mechanism ensuring people have reliable access to electricity. This project is expected to provide electricity to approximately 18,000 people (about 3,000 households) and more than 80 small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Access will extend to health clinics, mosques, madrassas (religious schools) and schools in the project area.

"As in the rest of the world, there is a great demand for energy in Afghanistan: be it rural residents, business-people, utilities, hospital, schools or irrigation," said H.E. Choi Tae-Ho, Ambassador of Republic of Korea.

"Afghanistan has extremely low access to energy," he added, "which in turn harms the economy, people"s livelihoods, business, health and education. We are proud to mention that today with financial support of Republic of Korea, financial and technical support of UNDP and MRRD we are inaugurating the first Hybrid Mini-Grid of Solar and Hydro in Dare Noor District of Nangarhar province."

"Access to affordable and reliable electricity will provide equitable economic growth, lighting, health benefits, access to up-to-date information and connection to the world. It also helps improve peoples" living standards and business environment through the productive use of electricity," added Ms. Surayo Buzurukova, UNDP Afghanistan"s Deputy Resident Representative.

ASERD plans to develop additional renewable energy mini-grids. In addition, it intends to develop policies, best practices and guidelines for encouraging decentralized, renewable energy access to fulfill thermal and electrical energy demand in rural Afghanistan.

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The second edition of the Transformative Chronicles book is about Afghanistan"s journey of resilience and hope. This volume, part of the UNDP ABADEI initiative,...

An innovative solar mini-grids project will lay the foundations for Afghanistan"s mini-grids market, with the aim of helping the country to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions while tackling rural energy poverty and supporting a green recovery amid the COVID-19 crisis.

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) approved funding of around $17.2 million for the project with a total budget of $21.4 million, which will be implemented by the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development and co-financed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as well as the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD).

Renewable energy mini-grids are independent energy systems that operate outside of the national electricity grid. As renewables equipment becomes cheaper and disruptive digital technologies more accessible, mini-grids have garnered a lot of interest from public and private actors as a solution to bridge the energy access gap in areas where expanding the national grid would be too costly or challenging.

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