

## Niamey solar panels

The government of Niger has been quick to start the Scaling Solar programme, which it signed up for only a few months ago with the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the World Bank Group's private sector financing arm. Niger's Ministry of Petroleum, Energy and Renewable Energies is launching a call for expressions of interest for the construction of a 50 MWp solar photovoltaic plant.

The plant will be built on the Gourou Banda plateau, near the Nigerien capital Niamey. The pre-qualification process will allow the selection of an independent power producer (IPP) to design, finance, build, install and commission the plant. In this transaction, IFC will act through IFC Advisory, its public-private partnership (PPP) transaction advisory services department. IFC Advisory will act as lead advisor.

IPPs interested in the Nigerien government's tender have until November 22nd, 2021 to apply. The government of Niger has joined the Scaling Solar programme implemented by the IFC, with the objective of acquiring 50 MWp of new installed capacity. The programme aims to encourage private companies to invest in solar, to provide power to the country's national grid, and to ensure rapid implementation (two years at most) of power projects, including through public-private partnerships (PPPs).

The Gourou Banda solar plant will contribute to Niger's energy policy. Niamey aims to produce 30% of its electricity from renewable sources by 2035. At the same time, the West African country wants to achieve universal access to electricity. At present, Niger has an installed capacity of 284 MW, all of which is generated from fossil fuels, according to Power Africa.

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DescriptionThe project is currently owned by Akuo Energy with a stake of 50%.Niamey Solar PV Park is a ground-mounted solar project which is spread over an area of 27 hectares.The project generates 53,000MWh electricity and supplies enough clean energy to power 70,000 households, offsetting 23,000t of carbon dioxide emissions (CO2) a year.The project consists of 55,608 modules.

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A French consortium featuring Akuo and Sagecom has built a 30 MW solar plant in Niger. The European Union, the French Development Bank and the government of Niger co-financed the installation.

The facility, which is located about 10 kilometers from the capital, Niamey, was developed as part of improving the city's electricity supply under the aegis of the national electricity company, Nigelec.

Production will hit 53 GWh in the first year and will be fed into the Nigelec network. The project secured EUR30 million. Nigelec said that the 55,608 polycrystalline modules were deployed on fixed structures.

In 2020, Niamey had an electrification rate of 92.95% according to figures from the national statistics institute. However, the city suffers from load shedding, despite the extension of thermal production capacities in 2017. At the national level, electrification increases to 15.72% in 2020, with a large disparity between rural areas and urban areas.

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