## Solar energy storage congo



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Not-for-profit GivePower Foundation, created by US firm SolarCity, has installed the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC) first minigrid using solar and battery storage at Virunga National Park.

The project, located at the UNESCO World Heritage site in the eastern part of the country, was made in collaboration with renewable energy firm Empowered by Light. Park rangers will be able to use the solar power at three sector posts to run security lights and radios for their wildlife conservation work. In the long-term, a local organisation known as the Virunga Alliance also plans to bring clean energy to the four million people who live within a day's walk of the park's borders.

GivePower Foundation was responsible for installation, engineering, design and training for the Virunga community. The project used battery storage technology from US firm Tesla to allow for 24-hour power usage.

The foundation has now launched its global programme to support the advancement of minigrids in the developing world, specifically using solar and battery storage technologies. More minigrid projects are also planned for Latin America and Africa, including two more sites in partnership with Empowered by Light expected to be online by the end of the year

All the new solar-powered grids will be applied to projects that impact education, water, health, food security, economic development, telecommunications and conservation.

London, 3 March 2023: Nuru SASU (Nuru), the company behind Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)"s first solar PV metrogrid, is on track to build 13.7MWp of isolated solar-hybrid grids by mid-2024 after securing an initial USD1.5 million from investors in a convertible note round ahead of the close of its Series B funding round.

Renewable Energy Performance Platform (REPP), Proparco, and E3 Capital have each decided to invest USD500k in Nuru, bridging a financing gap to bolster the company"s USD 25 million Series B equity fundraise. The residual funds will be invested by an impressive consortium of international investors at financial close. The raise will help to accelerate the implementation of three nationally strategic late-stage development projects in Goma, Kindu and Bunia, with an aggregate installed capacity of 13.7MWp.

REPP is funded by the UK"s Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and managed by Camco. Proparco is the private sector financing arm of Agence Fran?aise de D?veloppement Group (AFD Group), and E3 Capital is a leading investor in low-carbon early-stage companies.

According to the World Bank, approximately 19% of DRC"s population has access to electricity, making the

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Central African country one of the least electrified in the world. Making things worse, DRC"s grid power generation comes predominantly from hydropower plants, which are coming under mounting pressure due to a lack of maintenance and the increased incidence of drought due to climate change.

Nuru and its investors endeavor to aid in closing the energy access deficit while directly diversifying and decentralising DRC"s energy mix, thereby supporting DRC"s Strategic National Development Plan (SNDP 2019-2023) goal for increased renewable energy capacity.

To date, the company has installed 1.7MWp of operating capacity, providing commercial and industrial (C& I), retail and residential customers in large off-grid towns with reliable, affordable and clean electricity via solar PV installations (with battery storage and diesel back up) and isolated distribution networks.

In addition to the three late-stage development projects, Nuru has a further 35MWp in its current active pipeline, which it expects to be fully commissioned within the next three years. Once both phases have been completed, the company will be providing first-time clean energy access to over 230,000 people as well as approximately 5,300 C& I businesses and social and public institutions, most of whom currently rely on diesel gensets for their power.

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