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Monday, November 25, 2024, Lusaka, Zambia - World Vision Zambia, with support from World Vision United States, Private Donors and Chikwa Parish, has handed over a 58-kilowatt Solar Micro-Grid in the Manga community under the Chikwa WASH-Energy Project to the Zambian Government through the Ministry of Energy and Manga Community in Chama district. This marked a significant step towards addressing energy and water challenges in rural Zambia.

The \$682,471 project (approximately ZMW 18.5 million) aims to tackle the current water and energy deficit, worsened by the recent El Nino droughts that have strained Zambia's energy and water sectors. The Solar Micro-Grid, one of four planned under the project, directly supports World Vision Zambia's goal to improve the well-being of 1.5 million children by 2025.

Speaking during the event, World Vision Zambia National Director Marc Nosbach said the Manga Solar Micro Grid would improve the health and overall well-being of 5,762 people.

"This Solar Micro-Grid ensures that the Manga Health Care Facility operates efficiently, creating a safe and dignified environment for patients and staff," said Mr. Nosbach. "Expectant mothers will now give birth in a safe, dignified environment with reliable lighting and Health workers will have well-lit spaces to perform their critical work, even at night."

"This Solar Micro-Grid aligns with Sustainable Development Goals #6 and #7, focusing on clean water and sanitation, and affordable, clean energy for all," said the World Vision Zambia National Director. "This development further enables communities to engage in income-generating activities through gardening and small businesses will now have the much-needed power to grow with consistent water supply for irrigation, increasing agricultural yields and reducing dependency on rain-fed farming. This ensures year-round farming and sustained source of income."

Minister of Energy Nkhuwa said, "We at the Ministry of Energy believe that we should employ the private sector's creativity and investment in order to achieve our electrification targets. It is therefore with delight that I attend this event, and I will continue to extend my support to those working towards bringing power to Zambia."

AMDA's CEO Aaron Leopold said "We are extraordinarily happy to launch the Zambia chapter of AMDA at the commissioning of one of our members' sites. Our mission is to provide government, donor and investor partners with the data, evidence and guidance needed to help better support the scaling of the sector to deliver for rural communities across Africa. And Zambia's government and donor partners are exemplary of the type of support and collaboration needed to end energy poverty across all of Africa."

Several sessions during last week's Africa Energy Forum (AEF) depicted the dynamics of solar energy development in Zambia that is currently taking the form of mini grids as well as larger projects via the scaling solar program.

Zambia's solar sector has attracted global attention due to the very low costs of electricity procured via the first round of the so-called scaling solar program in 2015.

Last week, Zambia also attracted attention mainly because of the publication of the names of 12 firms whose bids pre-qualified under the second round of the scaling solar program. pv magazine has gathered the latest information concerning all portions of the country's solar sector.

Scaling solar projects Regarding the PV projects qualified under the first round of the scaling solar program in Zambia, a member of the International Finance Corporation (IFC) told pv magazine that two projects totalling 75 MW will reach financial close by the end of the summer.

In February, Zambia's Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) signed a new agreement with the IFC to develop up to 500 MW of renewable energy through two to four projects. The second round of the scaling solar program that shortlisted successful bidders last week concerns the first 180 MW of solar PV capacity out of the total 500 MW of capacity agreed to be developed.

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