# Microgrid economics paramaribo

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PARAMARIBO, April 14 (Xinhua) -- Nestled deep within the embrace of the Amazon rainforest lies Botopasi village, right in the heart of Suriname. Getting there from the capital city of Paramaribo takes five and a half hours -- two and a half hours by car and another three by boat along the Suriname River.

Besides the underdeveloped transportation infrastructure, villagers in the region were also unable to connect to the national electricity grid, thus lacking a continuous power supply for long periods of time. The diesel fuel provided by the government only generates a five-hour electricity supply per day.

Having stable access to electricity had been a wish of Botopasi villagers for long, but the absence of electricity and other inconveniences have compelled many of them to relocate to the capital in recent years, resulting in a decline in the village"s population.

In 2019, Suriname"s Ministry of Natural Resources signed an agreement with Power Construction Corporation of China (Power China), hoping to jointly solve the electricity problem for villagers in this area.

Suriname"s Minister of Natural Resources David Abiamofo said the rural microgrid photovoltaic project is in line with the country"s energy strategy and has improved the lives of people in disadvantaged inland areas.

Currently, Suriname is one of the three carbon-negative countries in the world, Abiamofo said. "Our goal is to make sure that our footprint becomes increasingly ecological."

After studying more than 10 villages, Xiong Zekun, project manager of Power China of Surinam Villages Micro-grid Solar Project, and his team presented a plan to build photovoltaic stations and install transmission lines in each village, forming a microgrid in each region.

Following the approval of the plan by the Surinamese government, Power China began construction. Six months later, it delivered the first phase of the project, the Goejaba microgrid, in 2020, which has since supplied the village with uninterrupted electricity.

Xiong recalled the night when the first phase of the project was inaugurated. "After turning on the lights and leaving the station, I passed by a house and saw a child studying under a lit lamp. This scene made me feel that all the efforts for this project were worth it," he said.

The successful operation of the first phase of the project has prompted the government of Suriname to authorize Power China to build microgrids in more villages. In October 2021, the second phase of the project was officially launched.

The village of Botopasi, where the camp for the second phase of Power China"s project is located, is one of the nine villages set to benefit from the five complexes of the second phase. Once completed, these complexes will provide uninterrupted clean energy to more than 3,000 residents.

Born and raised in the village of Botopasi, Harry Wens Potter has been assisting the Power China team as an interpreter since the beginning of the second phase. "I love working to help Chinese company communicate with people from my village because electricity is so important for us," Potter told Xinhua.