

Suva solar pv

UNDP Resident Representative, Levan Bouadze, Her Excellency Smt. Padmaja, the High Commissioner of India in the Republic of Fiji, Sanaka Samarasinha, the United Nations Resident Coordinator, and Ambassador Solo Mara, the Secretary General, Pacific Islands Development Forum, after the signing. (Photo: UNDP)

Suva, Fiji - A regional initiative signed in Suva this week will see Solar Photovoltaic (PV) systems installed on buildings of national significance. The Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Pacific Office in Fiji and the United Nations Resident Coordinator, MCO Office based in Fiji have endorsed the multi-country project for the Solarisation of Head of State Residences in PIDF member countries through the India-UN Development Partnership Fund.

The funding from the Government of India is valued at US\$1.2m and is aimed at empowering government leaders in PIDF member states in their advocacy role for clean energy and climate action. This role is now more important as new global threats posed by pandemics like COVID-19 exacerbate the ongoing impacts of climate change on the most vulnerable nations, particularly in Pacific Island Countries (PICs). The devastation brought by TC Harold to Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, and Tonga reiterates this point clearly.

"It adds value in helping Pacific Islands and Timor Leste address a key development priority which is a need/quest for investment in renewable energy and enhancing resilience in the face of climate change," said the UNDP Pacific Office in Fiji Resident Representative, Levan Bouadze in his opening remarks.

The Secretary General of PIDF, Ambassador Solo Mara also highlighted in his remarks that this multi-country project is an example of a whole-of-society approach, specifically a multi stakeholder partnership, with partners from the public and private sectors, as well as civil society.

The PIDF's strategic approach to partnership is guided by its mandate to foster multi-stakeholder engagement focused on the comparative advantages of South-South Cooperation and aimed at developing inter-regional and intra-regional Small Island Developing States (SIDS) partnerships to benefit the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and climate-resilience in the Pacific Islands.

This multi-country project is an example of a whole-of-society approach, specifically a multi stakeholder partnership, with partners from the public and private sectors, as well as civil society partners of the PIDF, such as the Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (PIANGO). The PIDF acknowledges and thank the Government of India for this incredible support and commends UNDP's genuine partnership and look forward to working in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders towards the effective implementation of this very important project.

Signing by Sanaka Samarasinha, the United Nations Resident Coordinator and Ambassador Solo Mara, the

Secretary General, Pacific Islands Development Forum. UNDP Resident Representative, Levan Bouadze and her Excellency Smt. Padmaja, the High Commissioner of India in the Republic of Fiji standing in the background. (Photo: UNDP)

The multiple partners are also reflected in the funding of this project. The government of India will provide US\$400,000 via the India-UN Development Partnership Fund and US\$700,000 via the India-UN Development Partnership Fund Commonwealth Window. The private sector company Solaria has pro bono contributed solar PV panel's equivalent to an estimated total of US\$90,000 (US\$7,500 x 12 solar PV systems). PIDF and SHOS in-kind contribution are equivalent to an estimated total of US\$120,000 towards the public awareness campaigns (US\$10,000 x 12 solar PV systems).

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