



Guatemala city microgrid energy storage

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A California-based microgrid and digital control technology firm has been ...

Today New Sun Road announces the successful installation of ten Stellar Integrated Systems (IS) in ten days. These solar-powered microgrids are 3 to 5 kW each and provide enough electricity and internet to reliably power digital community centers in the Guatemalan highlands. Despite remote distances, heavy rain and dirt roads, good project collaboration and optimized system design meant that on-site installation time was cut in half. This milestone demonstrates the rapid-deploy, plug-and-play benefits of Stellar IS, for the hardest-to-reach communities.

These cloud-controlled systems use IoT technology to provide electricity and WiFi which is the foundation for digital literacy programs designed for, and run by, women in the communities. Cooperating with the local municipalities of Cobán, San Pedro Carchí, Tukurí, and Panzós, the Stellar Ixq-Saq'el (SIS) Centers will serve more than 1,000 women and girls in the Alta Verapaz region in the first year. Digital access will increase economic opportunities by providing internet connectivity and training for the whole community.

Digital Literacy Program members with the Stellar IS in Nimlajacoc, Guatemala

"As climate change intensifies, pushing some of the most vulnerable communities into migration, we need to deploy renewables-based microgrids quickly to meet the challenges. Stellar systems provide resilient power and connectivity that these women need for their families. We must support their aspirations at scale, fast," explained Jalel Sager, CEO and Co-Founder of New Sun Road. "That's why we're so pleased to have completely outpaced even our best-case scenario. It's difficult for a single team to even visit these 10 remote villages in 10 days, let alone install 10 microgrids in that time."

These centers were made possible by a DAI-Digital Frontiers grant provided by Microsoft and USAID, and in partnership with Nations Women (UN Women), Mercy Corps, World Food Program (WFP), Plan International and Club Rotario de la Asunción de Guatemala; to engage the communities, define the programs and deliver results.

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From January 25-28, CLDP conducted a microgrid energy assessment in Guatemala City and Quiché, Guatemala. While in Guatemala City, CLDP met with key energy stakeholders including distribution and



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transmission companies, the Association of Renewable Energy Generators, and a private company providing solar energy kits for single homes as well as isolated systems for larger consumers. In these meetings, CLDP sought to gauge interest from the private sector in microgrids as well as analyze the barriers to catalyzing private financing into this sector. For this project, CLDP will provide technical assistance on developing legal and regulatory frameworks to incentivize the use of microgrids to the governments of both Guatemala and Honduras.

Guatemala, in contrast to Honduras, presents a mature energy market. Guatemala's energy generation exceeds demand, and approximately 60% of generation comes from renewable sources. On Feb. 27-28, the CLDP delegation traveled outside of Guatemala City to visit the Xacbal hydroelectric power plant, one of the largest in Guatemala. Despite an installed capacity of 94MW, however, many of the rural communities surrounding the dam have no access to the energy generated there. In fact, around 10% of homes in Guatemala are not connected to the national grid.

Funding from this project comes from the Department of State as part of the U.S. Strategy for Engagement in Central America, a bipartisan, multi-year U.S. government plan promoting institutional reforms and addressing developmental challenges in the region. This project is one of three that CLDP is implementing in the region in support of the Strategy's aim to protect American citizens by addressing the security, governance, and economic drivers of illegal immigration and illicit trafficking, while increasing opportunities for U.S. and other businesses.

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