

Newsletter 05/16 Smart Solar Off-Grid for La Gracia

Sunday, 13th of March, three weeks after the official announcement of the Smart Solar Off-Grid Project, a public information meeting for the La Gracia villagers was held by Mr. Tillett amongst other representatives from the Ministry of Energy in Belize and SESB.



Most of the households were present, when Silvan and Nadja from SESB explained the Smart Solar Off-Grid concept, it's opportunities, but also it's limits.



They outlined the importance of the village support in this pilot project, as their village solar system will serve as proof of concept for other remote communities. Nadja and Silvan answered the different questions of the villagers concerning the system capacity, the operation model and the do's and don'ts when living with an off-grid solar system.



Mr. Deon Kelly, a representative from Ministry of Energy, talked about the government responsibility and commitment to electrify all the villages in Belize. He explained the impacts and opportunities that a basic electricity supply can bring to their community and declared the full support of this pilot project.



SESB created a banner to represent all the supporters of the project. These banners - here lying on the SESB show system - will be put on the Smart Solar Off-Grid container.



A few days later, SESB broke ground and began to set the concrete foundations. The SESB crew is now getting additional hands-on support from two villagers. They are employed by SESB during the course of the project and will be performing construction duties, painting and fencing amongst others.



Friday, 15th of April, the 40' container was delivered and a crane placed it on the previously built foundations.



It requires a precise eye, a strong crane and an experienced operator.



After the container was set, the painting started inside. The white color ensures a bright working space.



Because of the school building nearby, a fence has been constructed to protect the kids from the high voltage installations and also to secure the core equipment of the solar system.



Now everything is prepared for the installation of the Smart Solar Off-Grid. This week, the solar panels have been delivered to the port of Belize and are now awaiting installation.



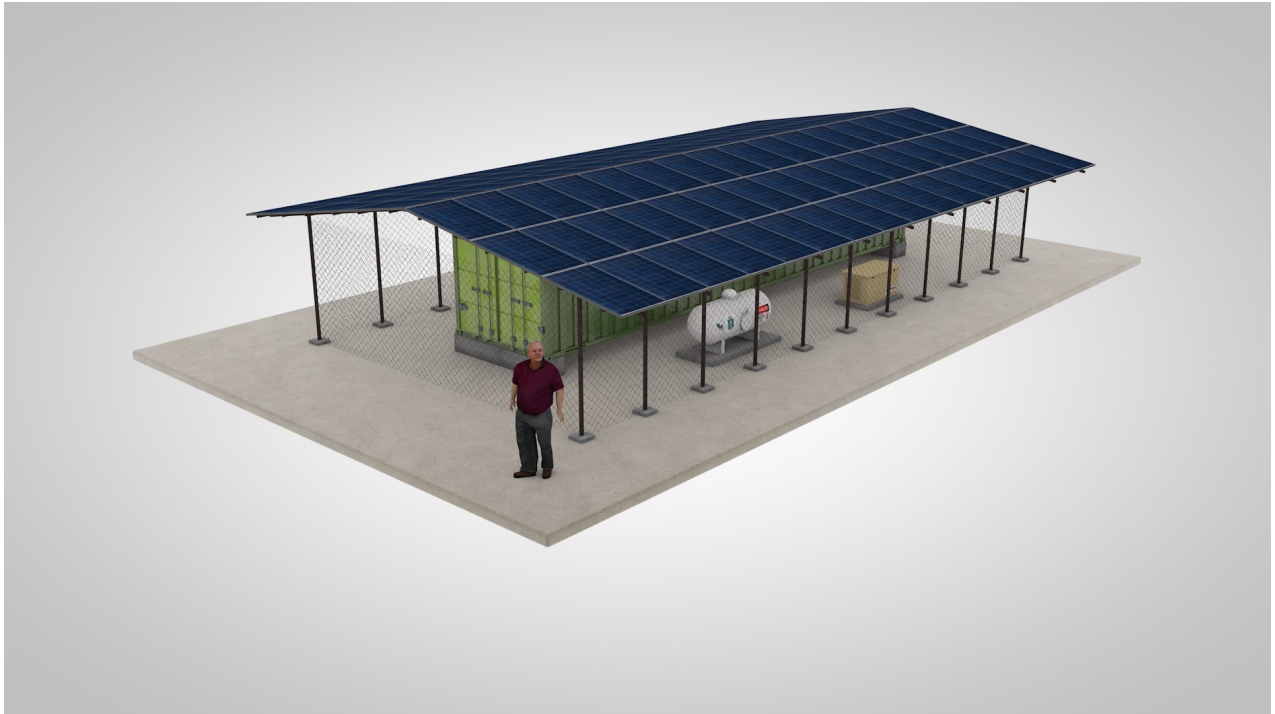
The outside of the container was getting a face lift as well.



The basic racking for the solar panels has been mounted.



The new system layout contains 96 solar panels.



The batteries, the battery inverters and the solar inverters will be arranged inside the container, along one wall. This is to ensure the best possible working conditions for the solar equipment.



All our partners mentioned above make this project possible. We thank all of our project partners for their support, especially the Rotary Clubs of Bad Ragaz (CH) and Vaduz (LI) who even took the special effort of starting a global grant request to support the Smart Solar Off-Grid for La Gracia.

Smart Solar Off-Grid for La Gracia powered by

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ZENNA also developed the updated presentation video of the Smart Solar Off-Grid. The movie is available online on vimeo:

[vimeo https://vimeo.com/145614639](https://vimeo.com/145614639)

ZENNA's Smart Solar Off-Grid for La Gracia Project is also displayed online on the REPIC-platform of the Swiss federal offices SECO, SDC and SFOE:

<http://www.repic.ch/repic-en/projects/ongoing-projects/photovoltaics/zenna-belize/>