Solar power boosts food security and forest protection in Gambia

Photo: Dodo ry

Project duration: 12 months

In 2024, EKOenergy granted €26,000 from its Climate Fund to the Finnish NGO Dodo ry in partnership with the Gambian organisation Freedom from Hunger Campaign (FFHC). This contribution supported solar installations in the Lower River Region of Gambia, improving rural electrification, forest management, water access, and women`s livelihoods.

Many parts of rural Gambia don't have access to the electricity grid, and even when there is a connection, it's unreliable. This affects people's daily lives and work in many ways. For example, at the forest stations in Dumbutu, Manduar, Bureng, and Soma, the lack of electricity hindered access to water (e.g. for the tree nurseries) and the use of electric devices, needed for communication, GPS monitoring, and reporting. In the village of Jiffarong, women farmers from the Tesito vegetable garden faced high post-harvest losses due to the unavailability of cool storage and processing facilities. This situation limited income, nutrition, and market access.

To address these challenges, Dodo ry and FFHC installed solar systems at four forest stations and a new food processing/cool storage station in Jiffarong. In total, the systems count 27 solar panels (7,425 Wp) and 12 batteries: 3 panels, 825 Wp in Dumbutu; 5 panels, 1,375 Wp in Manduar; 4 panels, 1,100 Wp in Bureng; 6 panels, 1,650 Wp in Soma; and 9 panels, 2,475 Wp in Jiffaring. In Jiffaring, they also installed dryers, blenders, a fridge and fans.

Twenty forestry officers (18 men, 2 women) received training in installation and maintenance. Additionally, 90 women farmers from Jiffarong received training in food processing and maintenance of the installation and other devices.

At the forest stations, the solar energy now powers boreholes, ensuring a reliable water supply. Access to reliable energy also enables forestry staff to conduct data collection, planning, and reporting more efficiently. About 21,500 people living around the stations benefit from improved water access and from the station's role as a local training and coordination point for forest restoration activities. In Jiffarong, solar energy now facilitates the preservation food products, improving the food security for thousands.

National broadcaster GRTS radio and various newspapers covered the results.

The project has enhanced environmental management, ensured reliable water supply, and strengthened livelihoods for women farmers and their households. These outcomes contribute directly to UN Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG 2 (Zero hunger), SDG 6 (Clean water and sanitation), SDG 7 (Affordable and clean energy), SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth), and SDG 13 (Climate action). The project also shows that solar power contributes to achieving Gambia's national development priorities.

We acknowledge everyone involved, with special thanks to EKOenergy sellers and users – your support makes such resilience-building initiatives possible.

EKOenergy's Climate Fund

- Focus on energy poverty and multiple Sustainable Development Goals
- New projects annually in low- and middle-income countries
- Projects run and monitored by trusted NGOs
- Selected through a transparent process
- In 2025, EKOenergy approved grants for 16 new projects
- All EKOenergy users contribute 0.10 € / MWh to the Climate Fund

EKOenergy - the global ecolabel for renewable energy

EKOenergy is the global ecolabel for energy (electricity, gas, heat and cold). We are a non-profit initiative working to fight climate change, protect biodiversity and realise the Sustainable Development Goals.

Energy with the EKOenergy ecolabel fulfils additional sustainability criteria. Through our ecolabel we also raise money for our Climate Fund, which is used to finance new renewable energy projects in low- and middle-income countries.

EKOenergy's network of authorised sellers makes EKOenergy-labelled energy easily available in over 80 countries worldwide. Many consumers of EKOenergy-labelled energy choose to use our ecolabel on their website or products to demonstrate their commitment to a 100% renewable and sustainable world.

EKOenergy users include large international businesses such as Microsoft, SAP, Pampers, Mercedes-Benz, SCHOTT and the Iliad Group, as well as cities, public organisations and individual households.

Sustainability criteria: additional value for our planet

	EKOenergy	Other renewable energy	Grid mix
Recommended by environmental organisations	✓	?	-
Extra criteria to minimise the impact of energy production on nature. For example, hydropower installations with fish passes and wind turbines outside important bird areas	✓	?	-
Renewable energy tracked by EACs, such as GOs and I-RECs (In line with Greenhouse Gas Protocol Scope 2 Guidance)	✓	✓	-
Contributes to renewable energy projects in developing countries, advancing the realisation of multiple Sustainable Development Goals	✓	-	-
Available and recognised worldwide	✓	-	-
Supports the promotion of a transition to renewable energy worldwide	✓	-	-

Endorsed by global standards

EKOenergy is recommended by many international environmental standards such as CDP, the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, Greenkey for hotels and LEED-certification for buildings.

"A growing number of hotels in Europe have already switched to EKOenergy and include the EKOenergy logo in their communication with their guests. Follow their lead and go the extra mile."

"Ecolabels are a way for companies to do more with their purchases. EKOenergy, mentioned by the GHG Protocol Scope 2 Guidance, is such an option: it is a mark of quality which comes on top of tracking certificates."

"EKOenergy represents the best available option for the sustainable and additional consumption of renewable electricity within Europe."