

## Somaliland australia solar power

In the city of Burao, like in other areas of Somaliland, electricity is one of the most expensive commodities. Electricity is provided by a number of private companies, using generators that consume a lot of fuel, making electricity one of the biggest challenges to both development and investment as people struggle with high electricity bills.

Before the solar panels provided steady electricity, many patients were at risk. “I remember one night as we had an emergency and a patient was being operated on, but in the middle of the operation, there was a sudden power cut,” says Hassan Rooble, a nurse at Burao Hospital. “It was horrific; I thought the patient was going to die. It was so dark and all the machines stopped. We did not have a generator and even if we did there was no fuel. The doctor had to leave the wound open and only began stitching it once the electricity was back on,” he said.

“We used to spend a lot of money on electricity that we simply did not have,” said Hassan Ismail, the hospital administrator at the Burao General Hospital. “Even after a 50% discount (for public service), we used to pay \$6000 USD per month just for electricity. Because treatment at the hospital is almost free of charge, the Local Municipality used to cover some of the electric costs and sometimes we used to ask local businessmen and companies for help when we couldn’t pay the difference,” said Ismail.

The solar power system brought huge cost savings for the hospitals on their electricity bills. The project has reduced the electricity expense of Burao Hospital from \$6000 per month to just \$1500, allowing the hospital to use the saved amount in its other essential areas. It also provides continuous and reliable electricity without fear of power cuts in the middle of operations. The solar power system includes a remote monitoring system to provide real time information to monitor the system and keep it running.

Such interventions have been welcomed by Somaliland authorities. Somaliland’s Minister of Health Dr Suleiman Isse Ahmed thanked UNDP and the government of Japan, which funded this project, for continuing to support the Somali people. UNDP helps Somali government institutions deliver the social services required by the Somali people. After the installation of the solar panels in Burao Hospital, the Ministry of Health and the government asked UNDP’s assistance in installing more solar power in some health posts, IDP camps, police stations and other important areas.

UNDP’s Environment Project has been working with local government to ensure that Somali men and women benefit equally from improved natural resource management and sustainable sources of energy. UNDP strives to extend its gender-responsive and conflict-sensitive support for the sustainable management of environment. This means developing institutional capacities to implement environment and disasters management policies and promote sustainable energy options.



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To ensure the sustainable use of natural resources and protection of the environment, UNDP draws on its institutional knowledge and expertise to improve awareness about the adverse impacts of climate change, enhance national capacities for sustainable management of natural resources, implement best environmental management practices that benefit Somalis (men and women) and demonstrate innovative renewable energy and energy efficient solutions.

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