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Globeleq, a London-based independent power producer, said in a press release this week that it started commercial operations on Sept. 12 at its 19 MWp Cuamba solar PV and 7 MWh energy storage plant in northern Mozambique.

Source Energia, an energy developer, and Mozambique"s national utility, Electricidade de Mo?ambique (EDM), are also partners in what is touted to be the country"s first utility-scale solar and energy storage plant.

According to the press release, there is a 25-year power purchase agreement for the plant in Cuamba, a district in northern Mozambique, to supply energy to EDM. The existing Cuamba substation was also recently upgraded to allow the "smooth integration" of solar energy onto the grid, according to the statement.

The Emerging Africa Infrastructure Fund - an organization that encourages private infrastructure investment in developing countries - provided roughly $19 million in debt funding to get the $36 million project off the ground. BII Plus, the technical assistance facility of British International Investment, also awarded a $1 million grant, and the Private Infrastructure Development Group provided a $7 million grant to support affordable tariffs, fund grid upgrades, and implement an energy storage system for EDM.

A Globeleq spokesperson told pv magazine that the plant, which commenced development in 2017, was not part of a tender but was "awarded directly" by the country"s Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources. The spokesperson did not disclose the levelized cost of energy (LCOE). "But [we] can say it is in line with regional benchmarks," the person said.

"This is the third large-scale solar plant in Mozambique and the second that has had the support of the United Kingdom and the Kingdom of Norway, two long-time friend and partner countries," he said. "We expect to build more renewable projects like this and look forward to initiating the Namaacha project - the first wind project in our country."

Mozambique recorded 108 MW of installed PV capacity at the end of 2022, according to the most recent figures published by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). The African country is claimed to have untapped “power generation potential,” with access to underused coal, hydro, gas, wind and solar energy resources.

Despite this, it was reported in 2017 that only one-quarter of the country"s population had access to electricity. Aging transmission and distribution networks and unfavorable market conditions act as barriers to the country reaching its renewable energy generation potential.

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