

## ADJUSTING OPERATIONAL PRACTICES FOR OFF-GRID SOLAR COMPANIES

Lockdown and social distancing measures implemented in many countries to prevent the spread of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) have an immense impact on the business operations of off-grid solar companies in sub-Saharan Africa. This information sheet summarizes general guidance on how off-grid solar companies can potentially adjust their operations to mitigate the impact and disruptions caused by the pandemic and take advantage of possible opportunities.

### ADOPT ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT & PIVOT PRODUCTS

**Off-grid solar companies should assess and consider adjusting their current business models to adapt to the immediate impacts of the pandemic and prepare for the post-crisis period as needed.**

#### ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT PROCESSES:



- Identify key staff to form a crisis response team. Meet regularly and streamline decision-making processes to respond rapidly to the evolving situation.
- Reassess business model – including goals, budget, and targets – and adjust regularly for each market segment and geography.
- Collect relevant data to ensure lean and cost-effective operations are implemented across departments and smart decisions are made. *This may include an analysis of customers based on existing information or developing surveys that can be carried out by call center staff.*
- Explore plug-and-play and open access digital tools that can help provide guidance on improving analytical and decision-making capabilities and do not require a reliance on direct face-to-face interaction.

**For more information, refer to:**

Boston Consulting Group: <https://bcg01.egnyte.com/dl/q2jvgqEENN/>

#### ADJUSTING EXISTING & NEW PRODUCTS:



- Start targeting products to potential new customers, such as urban workers that have relocated to more rural areas or office workers working from home.
- Explore developing or facilitating the delivery of educational products to help customers access critical information about COVID-19, such as through their TVs, radios, and mobile phones.
- Consider developing alternative products for health-related uses, such as making face masks, supplying water for washing, and electrifying health facilities – particularly as new funding sources emerge.
- Use the lockdown period to fast-track research and development on new products so that these are ready to be launched once movement restrictions are lifted.

**For more information, refer to:**

Energy and Environment Partnership Trust Fund (EEP Africa): <https://eepefrica.org/how-to-covid-proof-companies/>

#### OTHER AREAS OF OPERATIONS:

- Explore more cost-effective marketing strategies such as ramping up use of social media to reduce customer acquisition costs.
- Consider partnering with local companies/distributors to optimize resources, access new customers, and offer new/more relevant products.



### STAY INFORMED & PREPARE FOR BOLD MOVES

**Off-grid solar companies may be able to look for new opportunities to adjust their business operations moving into new products and models of operations.**

- Develop innovative methods for gathering market intelligence, such as using sales teams to collect data from customers, distributors, and suppliers through remote outreach surveys.
- Continuously assess the situation in the country and region to help inform operational changes.
- Ensure appropriate internal and external capacity to respond to potential shifts in demand.
- Monitor consumer confidence and identify opportunities for introducing new products and operational models.



**For more information, refer to:**

Deloitte: <https://www2.deloitte.com/global/en/pages/about-deloitte/articles/the-heart-of-resilient-leadership.html>