



The Voice of the **Off-Grid Solar Energy** Industry

GOGLA
Arthur van Schendelstraat 500A
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The Netherlands
www.gogla.org

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An Open Letter from GOGLA to Governments in Response to the COVID-19 Crisis

GOGLA is the global association for the off-grid solar energy industry representing 180 members operating in over 40 countries. Its mission is to help its members build sustainable markets, delivering quality, affordable products and services to as many households, businesses and communities as possible across the developing world.

Our members provide essential services to households and businesses who have no, or only limited grid electricity access, particularly in rural and remote communities. Globally, the sector supports 420 million users with access to necessary and affordable energy services.

I write to you on behalf of our members and staff, to stand with you during this challenging time, as you look to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. As an industry, we are exploring how we can support your efforts to keep our communities and households safe and resilient through the necessary response measures that we all must support and undertake. In this regard, we note the following:

- 1) Our members operate through extensive networks, and as such, it is vital that they act responsibly in assisting to halt the spread of the virus. **GOGLA has developed** guidance for our members on best-practice operations and **recommending members to adhere to the guidelines** provided by the relevant ministry, as well as from the World Health Organization. This guidance can be found [here](#).
- 2) Official, accurate and timely information to citizens is essential to tackling this crisis. In many communities, especially those in remote areas, **off-grid solar products enable access to reliable information**, through powering radios, televisions and mobile phones. We are therefore encouraging our members to consider their services as a critical component of the national response and to endeavor to keep their services running in compliance with the government measures. As lock-down scenarios are explored, we are **encouraging members to coordinate with governments as to ensure ongoing, technical and customer support to off-grid customers**. We also **appeal to governments to consider this provision of ongoing technical and customer support for off-grid products as an essential service**.
- 3) There could be opportunities to **collaborate with our members in sharing both information and essential health supplies to isolated and remote areas**. Many of our members have established reliable supply chains to transport goods from cities to various remote communities, as well as networks to share information, technical support,



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satellite TV content and so on. We are encouraging our members to think practically about how we as an industry can positively contribute to national health efforts.

As the current crisis stabilizes in the intermediate to longer term, we encourage governments to continue to engage with GOGLA, its members and the industry as a whole to expand our collaboration in striving to achieve SDG7, sustainable energy for all. We are confident that the importance of ensuring universal access to affordable, quality modern energy products and services particularly for all off-grid communities will only become increasingly important through this crisis and into the future.

Please do not hesitate to reach me and my team should you wish to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Koen Peters

GOGLA, Executive Director

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