

GOGLA Industry Opinion on Consumer Protection

Background

Off-grid solar companies offer a strong value proposition to consumers and the sector is delivering significant and measurable social, economic and environmental impacts. On the other hand, consumers are exposed to product, finance and service risks that need to be managed in order to protect consumer rights and safeguard the positive impacts. As the industry seeks to build and expand, it is essential to ensure that growth objectives remain fully aligned with consumer interests to retain the full confidence of consumers, investors, governments and other stakeholders.

To this end, GOGLA developed the [Consumer Protection Code](#) for the off-grid solar sector. The Consumer Protection Code consists of a set of six Principles – 1. Transparency, 2. Responsible Sales and Pricing, 3. Good Consumer Service, 4. Good Product Quality, 5. Personal Data Privacy, and 6. Fair and Respectful Treatment – and a self-assessment framework. This enables companies to measure, demonstrate and improve their practices, and provide investors and other stakeholders with a framework to promote good practice.

The Consumer Protection Code is of relevance to all providers of off-grid solar products and / or services, including but not limited to the different product categories (pico PV and SHS) and business models (cash sales, PAYG, fee-for-service and third-party finance).

GOGLA Industry Opinion

GOGLA and its members are committed to consumer protection. It is our firm belief that off-grid solar consumers should have access to good quality products and services, transparent information, responsible prices and selling practices, be treated respectfully, and have their personal data protected. The Consumer Protection Code defines the minimum standards of practice consumers should expect from an off-grid solar company and demonstrates the commitment that GOGLA members have made to protecting the interests of their consumers. GOGLA and its members are convinced that widespread industry action on consumer protection is required to mitigate sector risks and accelerate responsible market growth.

Recommended Action

GOGLA recommends all off-grid solar companies to make a Commitment to the Consumer Protection Code. A Commitment signifies that the provider embodies the Consumer Protection Principles in its treatment of consumers. The Principles are the minimum standards of practice consumers should expect from the provider.



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Making a Commitment is an important milestone in ensuring consumer protection, though only part of the process. GOGLA recommends that companies conduct a self-assessment using the Indicators in order to measure and track consumer protection practices within daily operations.

GOGLA recommends investors and other stakeholders to make an Endorsement of the Code. Endorsement of the Consumer Protection Code signifies that the organization aligns internal practices with the Consumer Protection Principles and / or supports off-grid solar providers to fulfil the minimum standards of practice in their treatment of customers.

We recommend any other stakeholder interested in promoting consumer protection to use the GOGLA Consumer Protection Code as a starting point and coordinate closely with GOGLA on its use.