



## **Phanes Group's Solar Incubator returns in search of promising sub-Saharan Africa solar projects**

- *The initiative rewards solar PV developers with commercial and technical expertise to help bring their project to fruition*
- *Applications are open now, with the winner(s) announced at the Unlocking Solar Capital: Africa 2019 conference in Dakar, Senegal*

**United Arab Emirates, Dubai – 31 July, 2019:** Phanes Group, an international end-to-end solar provider headquartered in Dubai, UAE, is once again on the hunt for promising solar photovoltaic (PV) projects to support in sub-Saharan Africa, as the company relaunches its Solar Incubator program. Now in its third consecutive year, the competition continues towards its goal of electrifying more communities for a sustainable future.

With over 600 million people lacking access to electricity in sub-Saharan Africa, the need for sustainable, affordable and commercially viable energy sources – such as solar PV – is undeniable. In the sub-Saharan region, a lack of energy access also remains a key barrier to economic and social progress. Phanes Group's Solar Incubator was initiated in 2017 to tackle the issue head-on, fostering local innovation and investment by providing local solar PV developers with the funding and commercial and technical knowledge they otherwise couldn't access. In 2018, that access to expertise was awarded to Senegalese engineer and innovator Mbaye Hadj.

"I had been working on my solar farm idea since July 2018, but these projects require a lot of intricate know-how, financial expertise, and funding – some of which I lacked," noted Hadj. "The guidance of Phanes Group and its partners will allow us to finally bring our project to life, so we can feed power to Senegal's national electricity company. By achieving this we'll help the local economy to grow, which so far has been held back by a lack of electricity," he added.

Hadj's triumph came at the *2018 Unlocking Solar Capital: Africa* conference, where he presented his proposal for a 30-megawatt solar farm in his hometown of Gossas, Senegal. Evaluation panel members were inspired by his desire to electrify schools, healthcare centers, and other critical services that are today in decline due to a lack of dependable power. Bettering applications from over 20 countries, Hadj also drew interest for his passion, knowledge, and heavy involvement in the region.

With the 2019 Solar Incubator open for entries, Phanes Group and its partners hope to see similar dynamism and community-focused concepts from this year's applicants. Shortlisted developers



will be invited to present their concept at Solarplaza's Unlocking Solar Capital: Africa 2019 conference, held in Dakar, Senegal from October 16 to 17.

"Through our work across sub-Saharan Africa, we've met many individuals and organizations who possess great solar PV project ideas for their community but lack access to the necessary support and expertise to realize them," commented **Martin Haupts, CEO, Phanes Group**. "We launched the Solar Incubator program in 2017 to identify the very best of these projects, and reduce the knowledge and funding gap they face in a collaborative way. We hope to once again enable participants to bring lasting positive change to the community around them," added Haupts.

"The return of the Solar Incubator program spells great news for passionate solar PV developers who have the vision and on-ground knowledge but not necessarily the broader project-wide expertise," commented **Edwin Koot, Solarplaza**. "Financial viability is a fundamental part of any successful solar PV project, and we hope that our continued partnership will provide that all important commercial strength, alongside a breadth of technical knowledge."

To support the vision and ambition of more innovators like Mbaye Hadj, Phanes Group is encouraging eligible solar PV developers to apply for the third annual Solar Incubator program, held under the theme, "**Your Project, Our Expertise, For a Sustainable Future**".

Before the deadline of **04 September, 2019** interested candidates should submit their applications via email to [incubator@phanesgroup.com](mailto:incubator@phanesgroup.com). More information can be found at [www.phanesgroup.com/incubator](http://www.phanesgroup.com/incubator), or at the Unlocking Solar Capital Africa conference website: [africa.unlockingsolarcapital.com/solar-incubator](http://africa.unlockingsolarcapital.com/solar-incubator)

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### **More About Phanes Group**

Phanes Group is an end-to-end solar provider based in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, and operating across Africa, the Middle East, the CIS region and Central Asia. We take a holistic approach to solar, uniting the competencies and expertise necessary to oversee and deliver the entire solar project value chain. From project selection and development, to construction and financing, to asset management and monetization, we unlock value through our integrated approach.

Phanes Group has a growing portfolio of solar investments and developments spanning multiple geographies, with a distinct focus on new markets - especially "MENA plus" (Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia) and sub-Saharan Africa. The company is currently delivering the Middle East's largest distributed solar project (the DP World Solar Power Programme) and has delivered Phase I of the largest



solar project in the Caribbean (Monte Plata). It is approaching financial close on a 47 MW project in Malawi and has begun development on a pipeline of 400 MW across three countries in Central Asia.

To date, Phanes Group's global clean power contribution is in excess of 100 MW, with a further 2.5 GW under development or at the planning stage globally. Phanes Group has a dedicated asset construction division, Oryx Solar System Solutions LLC, delivering Phanes Group's projects as well as offering Operations & Maintenance (O&M) services.

Phanes Group also has satellite offices in Nigeria and Kazakhstan.

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#### **About Unlocking Solar Capital Africa 2019**

Africa is quickly becoming one of the most significant regions in the global expansion of the solar PV industry. Unlocking Solar Capital Africa 2019 will bring together hundreds of representatives from development banks, investment funds, solar developers, IPPs, EPCs & other solar stakeholders to engage in extensive discussions to solve Africa's solar energy funding gap - and get projects realized. This 3<sup>rd</sup> edition will take place on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of October 2019 in Dakar, Senegal.

For more information regarding the program, attendees, and registrations, visit [africa.unlockingsolarcapital.com](http://africa.unlockingsolarcapital.com)