



## **ENGIE Energy Access and Energy Web Announce DeFi Crowdfunding Platform to Help Scale Solar, Mini Grids in Sub-Saharan Africa**

**Zug, Switzerland and Berlin, Germany—17 June 2021**—Today nonprofit Energy Web and [ENGIE Energy Access](#)—one of the leading off-grid, Pay-As-You-Go (PAYG) solar and mini-grid solutions providers in Africa—announced a partnership to accelerate energy access in sub-Saharan Africa through a decentralized finance (DeFi) crowdfunding platform. The DeFi application will be built on the open-source Energy Web tech stack and enable investors to provide microloans that support clean energy deployment.

In 2019, an estimated [580 million people](#) in sub-Saharan Africa remained off grid and in the dark, accounting for three-quarters of the global population without electricity access. After years of steady declines since 2013, that number has risen in 2020 due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Thus rapid deployment of solar home systems (SHSs) and clean energy mini-grids is a crucial humanitarian cause that supports health, quality of life, and economic growth in off-grid regions of the subcontinent.

ENGIE Energy Access integrates and unites ENGIE's solar home system companies, Fenix International and ENGIE Mobisol, as well as its mini-grids provider, ENGIE PowerCorner, under one entity and one name. "To date, ENGIE Energy Access has served over 1 million customers and 6 million people in 9 countries throughout sub-Saharan Africa. The new DeFi platform in partnership with Energy Web will help ENGIE Energy Access deploy more solar faster, by directly tackling a key challenge: [access to low-cost financing](#), comments Gillian-Alexandre Huart, CEO of ENGIE Energy access".

"We're excited to bring crypto-based decentralized finance to rural electrification in Africa," said Stefan Zelazny, Head of Software and IT at ENGIE Energy Access and previously CIO at ENGIE Mobisol. "We believe this can accelerate much-needed clean energy deployment throughout the region by connecting impact-oriented investors with unbanked rural customers. Combining the technology that remotely connects and controls our Solar-Home-Systems with the Energy Web Chain will result in the first smart asset-backed NFT where asset use can be controlled via the chain."

The first phase of this initiative will focus on integrating the Energy Web software tech stack with ENGIE's platform to further promote rural electrification in Africa. The crowdfunding platform to be developed by Energy Web will allow micro-investors to finance the installation of clean energy assets by staking Energy Web Tokens (EWT), the native token of the Energy Web Chain, in



exchange for a fixed interest rate. This setup will unlock capital from the global cryptocurrency market, bringing a significant new source of capital to clean energy deployment in Africa. To help mitigate the risk for everybody involved, the Community Fund of Energy Web will back this first phase of the platform. Giving people in Africa access to new green electricity solutions utilizing the Energy Web DOS is a great first use case for the Community Fund.

In the second phase, Energy Web will work together with ENGIE Energy Access to give a unique decentralized identifier (DID) to each one of the home appliances and rooftop solar deployed by ENGIE. This way, one can directly add credits to the appliances owned by locals to support their access to electricity and its services.

“Creating positive impact in people's lives is one of our core principles at Energy Web. But the global energy transition must also reach those who don't yet have access to electricity,” explained Energy Web's Walter Kok. “We are happy that ENGIE—one of the biggest energy players in the world and one of the founding members of the Energy Web Chain—has embraced the Energy Web technology stack to support such an important mission.”

### **About ENGIE Energy Access**

ENGIE Energy Access is the leading Pay-As-You-Go (PAYGo) and mini-grids solutions provider in Africa, with a mission to deliver affordable, reliable and sustainable energy solutions and life-changing services with exceptional customer experience. The company is a result of the integration of Fenix International, ENGIE Mobisol and ENGIE PowerCorner; and develops innovative, off-grid solar solutions for homes, public services and businesses, enabling customers and distribution partners access to clean, affordable energy. The PAYGo solar home systems are financed through affordable installments from \$0.14 per day and the mini-grids foster economic development by enabling electrical productive use and triggering business opportunities for entrepreneurs in rural communities. With over 1,700 employees, operations in nine countries across Africa (Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia), over 1 million customers and 6 million lives impacted so far, ENGIE Energy Access aims to remain the leading clean energy company, serving millions of customers across Africa by 2025.

For more, please visit <https://engie-energyaccess.com/>.

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### **About Energy Web**

Energy Web is a global, member-driven nonprofit accelerating the low-carbon, customer-centric energy transition by unleashing the potential of open-source, digital technologies. We enable any energy asset, owned by any customer, to participate in any energy market. The Energy Web Chain — the world's first enterprise-grade, public blockchain tailored to the energy sector — anchors our tech stack. The Energy Web ecosystem comprises leading utilities, grid operators, renewable energy developers, corporate energy buyers, IoT / telecom leaders, and others.

For more, please visit <https://energyweb.org>.

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