THE CHALLENGE
Most poor communities in rural Zimbabwe have no reliable electricity supply. It means that health services cannot carry out night time treatments. Families have no choice but to use dangerous, inefficient kerosene lamps to light their homes; while farmers struggle to power processing facilities and run home-based industries so that their produce can fetch better prices.

HOW YOU CAN HELP
By introducing affordable solar energy you’ll help transform an entire community. Your support will train local technicians and entrepreneurs to maintain and supply the equipment. Solar panels will help provide water and power to a local health clinic and school. And farmers will have access to an agricultural business centre and their homes will have safe lighting, enabling families to run businesses and to study.
BACKGROUND

Government plans to provide electricity to rural areas of Zimbabwe have stalled since the country’s economic meltdown in 2000. Almost three-quarters of rural families struggle to get by day-to-day. In Gutu district, Masvingo province, 63 per cent of the population does not have any access to electricity, and many continue to use candles or kerosene for indoor lighting. Kerosene lamps in particular have significant drawbacks: kerosene is expensive and presents significant health risks to households that use it. Farmers, who have benefited from improved yields thanks to Oxfam’s Ruti Dam irrigation project, are currently prevented from taking the next step to increase the value of their produce. They are forced to undertake time-consuming, hand-processing of rice and other crops. The variable quality of the finished product reduces prices and demand. Health care and education are also basic; clinics cannot keep vaccines without refrigeration and children are expected to do their homework by candlelight.

Oxfam’s work to provide electricity will bring many benefits and could save lives. Together with your support, Oxfam can work with families to transform their communities.

THE PROJECT

This three-year project builds on the successes of Oxfam’s work in Gutu district over the last eight years: providing irrigation, increasing crop yields and quadrupling incomes for the poorest farmers. The current project supports poor and vulnerable households to generate their own income and produce their own food. With the assistance of local schools, businesses, government authorities, solar technology providers and a partner NGO, we will install solar-powered electrical systems in a health clinic, and a secondary school, and support take-up of solar energy systems and spin-off industries to help improve life for thousands of people. This project will also develop an agri-business centre, where farmers can use processing and storage facilities to help them to add value to their produce and fetch better prices at market.

PROJECT AIMS

> Enhance education and health provision in rural areas by equipping a school and a clinic with solar-powered electricity.
> Increase incomes and productivity by introducing renewable energy solutions for home and farm-based businesses and establishing a village savings and loans scheme.
> Improve living conditions by enabling an entire community to access a cleaner, more affordable, and more sustainable source of energy.

ZIMBABWE PROFILE

Population: 13.0 million

Development: 173 (of 187) on the HDI

GDP per capita: £5500 (UK: £35,155)

Life expectancy at birth: 51 years (UK: 80.1 years)

Population vulnerable to poverty: 24%

Electricity consumption per capita: 884 kWh (UK: 5,689kWh)

Sources:
2 Toxicoepidemiology in Zimbabwe: admissions resulting from exposure to paraffin (kerosene), Tagorey et al. 2008.

£6,260
FULLY EQUIP AN AGRI-BUSINESS CENTRE

△ Farmers in Gutu district prepare their fields to grow corn. Hundreds of farming families will benefit from training, equipment and facilities at the nearby agri-business centre.

△ Henry Pedzai Murikutiko, is a member of the irrigation management committee and is one of those to have benefited from a solar home system. “I am proud to have lighting in my house and I feel that I stand out as somebody who has achieved a great feat. This has motivated me to work harder on the irrigation scheme and achieve more.”
ACTIVITIES

POWER A RURAL SCHOOL AND HEALTH CLINIC:
> Install solar panels and a power unit in a secondary school to provide lighting, battery charging and at least one computer and overhead projector to enhance learning.
> Install solar panels and power units in a health clinic to provide lighting, vaccine refrigeration and water pumping.

IMPROVE SUPPORT TO AGRICULTURAL BUSINESSES THROUGH FACILITIES FOR SMALL-SCALE FARMERS:
> Equip one agri-business centre with crates, tools and three solar chargers to enable welding, sewing and other activities.
> Train 15 people in community-based planning and leadership and 20 people in management and maintenance of solar technology, at least half of all trainees will be women. Training includes planning development of the energy facilities and technical training on solar energy, electrics and solar product installation, care and maintenance, and financial management.
> Provide refresher training to the business management committee running the business centre and produce support materials.

SUPPORT COMMUNITIES TO TAKE UP SOLAR-POWERED LIGHTING:
> Provide 225 solar lanterns and 48 home solar systems to the village savings committee, for purchase by scheme members, providing them with power for lighting, education and home-based industries. Loan repayments will be used to develop energy services further and enable more people to purchase their own lanterns.
> Train communities to establish and run a village savings and loans scheme, to enable members to purchase solar power systems for their homes.
> Conduct energy exhibitions in the targeted communities with suppliers and manufacturers of sustainable energy products to raise awareness of solar energy, wood-saving stoves and other sustainable energy technologies.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Results will be measured against the project baseline through regular monitoring, reviews and community feedback. Key indicators include: farmers’ take up of agri-business centre services; number of solar lanterns purchased through the savings scheme; rise in community investments through the savings scheme; increases in productive night time hours; and the number of local entrepreneurs with improved income resulting from providing or installing solar products.

IMPACT

AS A RESULT OF THIS PROJECT, WE EXPECT:
> Solar lighting and solar home systems will improve health and living conditions by providing a smoke-free, portable, accessible, low-cost alternative to traditional fuels.
> Community members will increase productivity and income of home-based businesses through access to domestic solar power and loan schemes.
> Local farmers will be able to increase the value of their produce and reduce waste through access to processing, packaging, and storage facilities for their crops and through training and advice on business management.
> Gomba secondary school will be able to provide evening classes, computer training and a more conducive environment for learning.
> Magombedze clinic in Ward 12, Gutu district, will be able to provide lighting, refrigerate vaccines, and access piped water, providing better health care to the local community and enabling potentially life-saving night time maternity services.

£11,250 PROVIDE 225 SOLAR LANTERNS TO A COMMUNITY SAVINGS AND LOAN COMMITTEE

£24,250 SOLAR POWER INSTALLATIONS AT A SCHOOL AND A CLINIC

Members of the Ruti irrigation scheme meet to receive solar lanterns, which they purchased through the revolving fund.

Children and adults will benefit from improvements to Gomba secondary school in Gutu district, which will receive lighting and electricity for the first time this year. The school will be able to offer evening classes in reading, writing and mathematics to adults, giving them the skills to improve their incomes and become more involved in community decisions.

£11,250

Provide 225 solar lanterns to a community savings and loan committee.

£24,250

Solar power installations at a school and a clinic.

 practical Action, an international organisation that specialises in the use of technology to address poverty will provide advice and technical support to this project.

www.oxfam.org.uk/direct
WHO WILL BENEFIT?
> New agricultural facilities will directly benefit 450 farming households near the agri-business centre. Electricity in homes and solar lanterns will provide lighting for 273 households. Lighting, IT equipment and battery charging facilities will benefit 480 school children from Gomba secondary school.
> Indirectly, 19,200 people will benefit from improvements to Gomba secondary school, the agri-business centre’s services and facilities, and the local community health clinic’s vaccines, lighting and piped water.

SUSTAINABILITY
The project works with local people to develop the management structures and practical skills to enable communities to take on the management of the agri-business centre. We have also helped establish links with government and solar technology suppliers to ensure the availability of spare parts as well as continued support and engagement. The savings and loan scheme will ensure that there is money available for fitting more homes with solar power systems as well as paying for future maintenance and training.

THE BUDGET

**TOTAL £170,000**

- **Improve support to agricultural business through facilities for small-scale farmers**: £37,531
- **Power a rural school and a health clinic**: £24,250
- **Project management, monitoring and evaluation**: £42,514
- **Support communities to take up solar-powered lighting**: £65,705

OXFAM PROJECTS DIRECT

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IPAVISHE’S STORY

Ipaishe Masvingise is head of a household that includes her elderly mother, sisters, children and an adopted orphan. Ipaishe has benefited from, and is marketing co-ordinator for, the Ruti Irrigation Scheme.

“Life used to be very tough and we never dreamt that there would be electricity here since the national grid lines are about 20 kilometres away from my house. We used to rely on candles and paraffin lamps and biogas for lighting. In most cases children could not study after school since there was not enough light for reading. Deforestation would have increased as well as health risks from using paraffin-powered lamps.

“This tough life would have continued had Oxfam not helped to fund the electricity project in this remote area. Today, we have solar lamps which only need sunlight and we are able to use the light for many hours after sunset.”

Solar-powered lighting and electricity was also installed in Masvingise village, allowing families to listen to the radio in their free time.

“Now I enjoy my life and I can spend a lot of time together with my family after sunset.”

COUNTRIES NEEDING YOUR SUPPORT: ANGOLA > ARMENIA > BANGLADESH > CAMBODIA > CHAD > HAITI > KENYA > LIBERIA > MALAWI > NEPAL > NIGER > NICARAGUA > PAKISTAN > OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY > RWANDA > SRI LANKA > SOUTH SUDAN > UNITED KINGDOM > ZIMBABWE