Record donation of £920,000 from Solarcentury launches a new era at SolarAid

Thursday 3 September, 2020

International solar developer Solarcentury gives 5% of net profit every year to SolarAid, a UK based international charity which exists to bring solar light and power to communities in Africa without access to electricity. This year, the donation has broken all previous records, and almost reached a million pounds. This news comes as SolarAid's founder steps down after 14 years as chair, handing the baton for the next phase to a new chair of the board.

Since 2006, SolarAid, through its social enterprise SunnyMoney, has distributed more than 2 million solar lights across the continent. Focussing on innovation and sustainability to reach the people furthest down on the energy access ladder, their work has measurably improved the lives of more than 10 million people.

John Keane, CEO of SolarAid, says "*This donation allows us to aim for big positive impacts at a time of particular dire stress on rural populations in Africa. The clock is ticking and the need to support rural populations access light and electricity to fight poverty, has never been greater. In a post-Covid world we are also looking to expand to new areas, to help power healthcare. This donation will further maximise the impact of this work. The team is incredibly grateful to Solarcentury*."

At the same time, green entrepreneur Jeremy Leggett, founder of both Solarcentury and SolarAid, has decided to step down as chair of the charity, to be replaced by Mirjana Skrba, Chief Operating Officer of The Carbon Tracker Initiative. She will work with SolarAid to plan and execute a new strategy for SolarAid's work in post-Covid Africa, built around the Solarcentury donation.

John Keane said, *"This time of big positive change is being matched with healthy change in the board. Though we are sad to say adieu to our founder, as he moves on to focus on his new project, we are very excited to be working with Mirjana as new chair. Her track record at the Carbon Tracker Initiative brings hugely relevant skills and experience to help reach our mission*."

Jeremy Leggett said, "*The Solarcentury donation gives SolarAid fresh opportunities, just at the time when they are most needed. This is a perfect time for fresh board leadership, and I know from working with Mirjana that I leave the governance in very safe hands. I am confident that she will partner with John as the standard-bearers for SolarAid to build a brighter future*."

Mirjana Skrba said, *"I want to thank Jeremy and the SolarAid team wholeheartedly for the opportunity and the trust they have placed in me. We live in a time of dire and growing threats, but we are also in a time of unique opportunities for positive system change. I hope that in my time as chair I can help the SolarAid teams provide much needed support to vulnerable communities living without access to light and electricity across Africa*."

Sarah Butler-Sloss, chair of the Trustees of Ashden said, *"It is thrilling to see Solarcentury and SolarAid, both past winners of Ashden Awards, doing so well, and linking commercial success in the developed world with generous funding of work in Africa that is helping achieve UN Sustainable Development Goal 7. This is the kind of green entrepreneurship we will need to see much more of if humankind is to defeat the climate crisis and rebuild sustainably after the Covid crisis. At Ashden, we congratulate Solarcentury and SolarAid on the exemplar they provide us. We wish Jeremy equal success in his new carbon-sink project, and are thrilled that someone of Mirjana's skills and experience has taken up the SolarAid governance baton for the vital next phase."*

Notes to editors

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Interview opportunities: John Keane, CEO, SolarAid. Jeremy Leggett, Founder of Solarcentury and SolarAid.

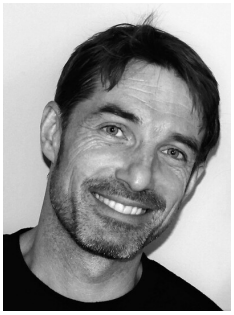
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SolarAid: Established in 2006, SolarAid is a UK based, international charity that combats poverty and climate change. Through its social enterprise, SunnyMoney, they are distributing solar lights to people living without electricity in Zambia in Malawi. http://solar-aid.org
@SolarAid

Solarcentury: Established in 1998, Solarcentury is a leading global solar power company that develops, constructs, owns and operates utility-scale solar and smart technology across Europe, Latin America and Africa.

Independent and headquartered in the UK, Solarcentury is known internationally for developing and building some of the largest utility-scale solar projects in the UK, the Netherlands, Spain, Kenya and Mexico, including pioneering projects such as the world's first solar bridge at Blackfriars Station in Central London.

Solarcentury's mission is to make a meaningful difference in the global fight against climate chaos by making solar power the dominant energy source worldwide. During Solarcentury's 22-year history the business has helped solar power become mainstream, and our projects have generated 6 billion kWh of clean electricity, saving over 1.7 million tonnes of CO2 emissions. https://www.solarcentury.com
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