

Start N'Light – rural electrification in Sierra Leone

August 2019

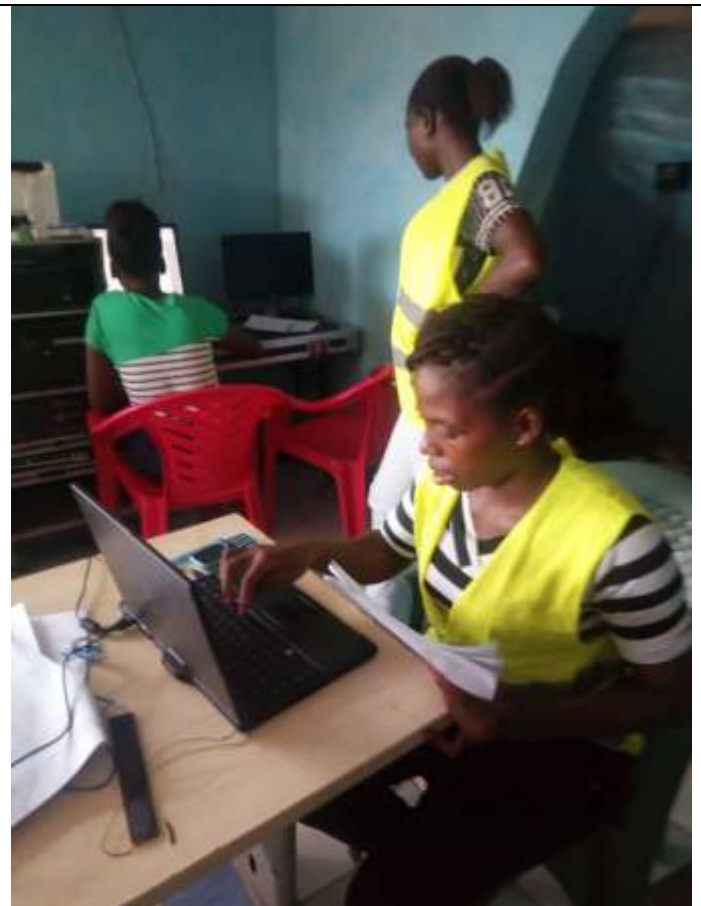
The first year of the Start N'Light project in Karene District will officially end in September. That is when the final reports to the funding partners (UNDP and Hand in Hand Funds) for the pilot-phase are due.

But of course the project activities are continuous. Thus the next classes of solar engineering and computer literacy have already started in the last week of July.



August is the height of the rainy season in Sierra Leone. All farmer families are busy planting crops therefore the intensive training started now with only 6 students who can afford to spend the whole day at the training centre.

The students learn how to operate the devices in the field and collect data that they process later on the computer. When the rainy season is coming towards an end more students will join the class.



Meanwhile the field work has to continue. A power line from the terminal to the ca. 12 km distant households in Kamakwie has to be installed. Poles are rammed into the ground and the students also help with that.



Back at the centre learning results and the processed data is presented and discussed among the students



The whole day training of course includes shared meals. The young women and men are tremendously thankful for the opportunity to take part in the intensive training.



During his latest site visit Mohamed Jah, the manager and founder of Start N'Light, inspects a paddy rice field that has been planted at the beginning of the rainy season..



This land was provided by thankful farmers to the project for testing irrigation methods and different crops. During rainy season this land is irregularly flooded and therefore rice is the most suitable crop to plant then.

What has rice with solar energy to do? The team behind Start N'Light have realized from the beginning that agriculture which is the people's base of living and the consumption of energy is inseparably connected. Therefore some experts in the team deal with crop cultivation, and not merely with solar powered irrigation systems. In science they call it the Food Water Energy Nexus.

