

23rd September 2021

Partners set to substantially scale access to solar-powered irrigation solutions

Dakar, Senegal: Following a successful pilot project, InfraCo Africa, part of the Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG), has signed a Shareholders' Agreement and a Loan Agreement with Bonergie Irrigation SAS (Bonergie Irrigation) to continue supporting the scale up of the project. Under the new agreements, InfraCo Africa will hold a large minority shareholding in Bonergie Irrigation, committing an additional US\$2.4 million to substantially scale up farmers' access to high quality irrigation systems in Senegal.

It has long been recognised that reliance upon rain-fed agriculture exposes Senegal's farmers to the effects of climate change on temperature and rainfall patterns.¹ In 2019, InfraCo Africa joined with solar equipment specialist Bonergie Senegal to establish Bonergie Irrigation, a local Special Purpose Vehicle, to pilot the implementation of over 100 high quality Solar Powered Irrigation Systems (SPIS).

InfraCo Africa's CEO, Gilles Vaes, said of today's announcement: ***"We are excited to continue working with our partners at Bonergie Irrigation to substantially scale up our offering to farmers in Senegal. Access to solar-powered irrigation systems will replace existing diesel pumps, providing farmers with a more sustainable solution to addressing the linked challenges of climate change and food security."***

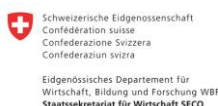
The agreements signed today will see the commissioning, sale, installation and maintenance of at least 2,000 further pumps over the next three years. In response to feedback from the pilot, the project will also roll out over 500 drip irrigation systems (DIS) which are designed to optimise efficiency of irrigation whilst also protecting groundwater sources from over-abstraction. The systems come in a range of sizes to suit each farmer's needs with hire purchase financing available to spread the cost, making the systems more affordable.

"Bonergie Irrigation SAS is very proud that InfraCo Africa has decided to develop a close partnership with us as a shareholder", says Gabriele Schwarz, CEO of Bonergie Irrigation SAS. ***"Their tremendous experience will help us to supply a minimum of 2000 pumps and 500 drip irrigation systems to rural farmers in a sustainable way. The nexus of Water-Energy-Food is one of the main topics for the coming years and Bonergie Irrigation SAS and InfraCo Africa are in a perfect position to develop this market in Senegal."***

It is anticipated that Phase II of the Bonergie Irrigation project will be completed by the end of 2023 with InfraCo Africa continuing to support the project as a shareholder.

-ENDS-

InfraCo Africa is supported by



Notes for Editors:

- In Senegal, agriculture accounts for over 30% of jobs.ⁱⁱ
- Up to 16% of Senegal's GDP is linked to the agriculture sector.ⁱⁱⁱ
- As part of the Government of Senegal's wider commitment to delivering 100% electrification by 2030,^{iv} it has been identified that the country has high levels of solar irradiation.^v
- Where they have been adopted to date, pumps used by farmers to extract ground water for irrigation are largely fuelled by diesel, with fuel and pump maintenance accounting for a significant proportion of farmer's operational costs.
- The pilot project – Bonergie Irrigation I - exceeded the anticipated target of 100 SPIS sales during 2020 despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic with 124 pumps installed.
- InfraCo Africa brings irrigation sector experience to the project through its [Chanyanya I & II](#) and [Chiansi Irrigation](#) projects in Zambia, as well as its off-grid solar expertise.
- InfraCo Africa has supported the growth of Bonergie Irrigation's business, sharing its Health, Safety, Environmental and Social expertise and, with the support of PIDG TA, providing independent financial advisory services to the company.
- Bonergie Irrigation is committed to the communities in which it operates, with four local hubs serving 14 regions. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, InfraCo Africa, with funding from PIDG TA, supported Bonergie Senegal to [electrify six medical facilities](#) in the Louga region and to supply PPE and handwashing facilities.
- Find out more about the Bonergie Irrigation project here: <https://infracoafrica.com/project/bonergie-irrigation-i-ii/>

The Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG) is an innovative infrastructure project developer and investor which mobilises private investment in sustainable and inclusive infrastructure in sub-Saharan Africa and south and south-east Asia. PIDG investments promote socio-economic development within a just transition to net zero emissions, combat poverty and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). PIDG delivers its ambition in line with its values of opportunity, accountability, safety, integrity and impact. Since 2002, PIDG has supported 171 infrastructure projects to financial close which provided an estimated 217 million people with access to new or improved infrastructure. PIDG is funded by the governments of the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Australia, Sweden, Germany and the IFC www.pidg.org

InfraCo Africa: InfraCo Africa is part of the Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG). InfraCo Africa seeks to alleviate poverty by mobilising private investment into high-quality infrastructure projects in sub-Saharan Africa's poorest countries. It addresses the risks and costs of early-stage project development: funding teams of experienced developers and providing risk capital to those projects which need the financial commitment and leverage that InfraCo Africa can bring. InfraCo Africa is funded by the governments of the United Kingdom (through FCDO), the Netherlands (through DGIS) and Switzerland (through SECO). For more information please visit: www.infracoafrica.com

Bonergie Senegal: Established in Senegal in 2010, Bonergie enables people in West Africa to access energy for productive use for small and medium sized companies. The focus is on Agriculture, for which Bonergie provides solutions like Solar Water pumps and efficient irrigation systems, cold chain solutions and Solar dryers for the transformation of products. Bonergie installs also classical solar electrifications which helps the SME's to run their business more profitable. Bonergie stands for high quality of all our products and components as well as in a network of technicians who ensure the steady operation of all systems. To find out more visit: <https://www.bonergie.com/en/>

For further information please contact:

Lorna McNae

Communications Manager, InfraCo Africa

lmcnae@infracoafrica.com

i

https://www.climatelinks.org/sites/default/files/asset/document/senegal_adaptation_fact_sheet_jan2012.pdf

ii <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.AGR.EMPL.ZS?locations=SN>

iii <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.AGR.TOTL.ZS?locations=SN>

iv <https://www.se4all-africa.org/seforall-in-africa/country-data/senegal/>

v <https://globalsolaratlas.info/?c=14.477234,-14.49646,7&s=14.594216,-14.301553>