

ASPIRE 1.5MW Solar Installation at Hulhumale 1000 Housing Units Project: Feedback Survey



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Introduction: Background

Accelerating Sustainable Private Investment in Renewable Energy (ASPIRE) is part of the Maldives Scaling-Up Renewable Energy Program (SREP). ASPIRE program aims to encourage involvement of private parties in the renewable energy sector of the Maldives. It initially involves subprojects offering 4MW of PV installation in public buildings in the Male' region. The first phase of the project that involves 1.5MW of PV installations in social housing units in Hulhumale'. The first phase of the project will be implemented by Hulhumale Renewable Energy Company Pvt Ltd a subsidiary formed by China Machinery Engineering Corporation (CMEC) and Graess Solartechnik Schwiz.SA (Switzerland).

The roof and other common areas of these social housing units are owned by the Housing Development Corporation (HDC). A roof lease agreement was signed between the investor and HDC to this effect, leasing the roof for the project period that is 20 years.

Even though the tenants are not the owners of the roof, to follow good practice as per the social safeguards standards of the World Bank, the blocks on which to install the solar PV were selected initially also based on consultation undertaken on the site. In this regard, coordinating with Project Management Unit (PMU) of Ministry of Environment and Energy (MEE), HDC sent letters to all the tenants in the 1000 housing units with 2 week notice given to lodge any complaints, concerns and objections that the tenants may have regarding the project. A total of 09 letters of objection were received by HDC, these letters were shared with PMU. It was decided to meet individually with tenants who raised issues and objections regarding the project, to identify, understand and address their concerns. A joint field visit to the flats of tenants who objected were made on 09th March 2016. For tenants who could not be met on 09th March 2016 and who prefer meeting in Male', a meeting was arranged on 10th March 2016 at MEE to meet the remaining tenants individually. The main reason highlighted by the majority of the tenants were the issue of the need of the tenants to undertake routine maintenance and the fear that installation of the panels may exaggerate the issues. All the blocks on which the tenants complained were rejected from the project and used as a site selection criteria. Thus, the 33 blocks selected for the project are those blocks from which no complaints from any of the tenants were received during the initial consultation round.

Moreover, to address the tenant concern two independent assessments were undertaken, one by the project and the other by the investor, to determine whether the roofs are of a condition to support the solar PV. A visual assessment and a structural engineering assessment was undertaken. Both independent studies yielded the same result, i.e. the roofs and the building are of a condition which

can support the solar PV and the project is not likely to cause any significant negative impacts to the buildings.

As per the requirements of the ESMP (check page 6), information leaflets, together with Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) flow chart and a detailed construction schedule was prepared and distributed to all the tenants of the selected blocks. Since it was 1.5 years since the initial consultation, as per the suggestion of the World Bank it was decided to go one step further from this requirement. Thus, two additional means were utilized when undertaking to provide information to tenants and to attain tenant views. One method was to send text messages to all the tenants asking them to respond and the other was to visit the households particularly focusing on the top floors door to door, to provide project information and to clarify any doubts. No major concerns were raised by the tenants during these surveys, the tenants required only minor clarifications.

Work has now been completed in 20 blocks. The consultation plan for the sub-project identifies a feedback survey during construction phase. This report presents the outcomes of this feedback survey.

Methodology

The methodology adopted for the survey was to undertake a telephone interview. In this regard, first the list of tenants were divided and categorized into top floor tenants. Random sampling was undertaken using Microsoft excel 'rand' feature. The first 30 tenants from the random sample were selected for the telephone survey. 14 of the 30 selected picked up the phone and participated in the survey. The rest did not pick the phone or the number was no longer in use.

An open ended question was, what are your views on the installation process? Did you experience any disturbance from the construction work force? Based on the answer to these questions, If not mentioned in the answers, the tenants were further enquired about noise disturbance and working during night time.

The list of the tenants consulted are provided in Annex-1. All surveys were undertaken on 05th February 2018.

Outcomes of the Survey

Of the 14 that were surveyed only one tenant highlighted an issue. In this regard, this tenant highlighted that a screen was not used near the toilets where the scaffolding was installed and thus

complained about privacy. The procedure followed by the contractor is to put a screen towards the window prior to work commencing. The aggrieved highlighted that screens were used in other blocks however not in the block of his residence. Thus, this issue has been immediately brought to the attention of the contractor.

The remaining two complaints were regarding installation of the inverter and the workers not cleaning the area after the work. However both these individuals also highlighted that this is only a minor issue and that the construction activities were undertaken without much disturbance or nuisance to tenants. This complaint has also been forwarded to HREC both through telephone and in writing through email (Annex-2).

None of the tenants surveyed highlighted any disturbance with regards to noise. All highlighted that work is finished at 06:00 pm as per the ESMP. Most tenants were very happy at the way work has been undertaken and the progress of work. Thus, overall from a social perspective there is no major concerns from the tenants regarding project implementation.

In addition to this proactive survey, only one complaint has so far been received through the GRM system. The issue was again in relation to the screens. The complaint was received on January 15th anonymously by HDC not through the grievance hotline provided but through personal contact with an HDC employee. The tenant did not want to make an issue of it as the time tenant went to the washroom coincided with the time the contractor went to the roof to put up the screens. Following this complaint HREC has been informed to ensure that all toilet windows are closed prior to going to the roof for installation of screens. This was communicated both through telephone and through email (Annex-3).

Conclusion

Overall considering the scale of the project and direct contact with the community, no major issues were identified through the feedback survey. The mitigation measures undertaken and early and continued communication with tenants means that overall the tenants of the 1000 housing units are happy at the way work is undertaken through the project.

Appendix B: List of Consulted Tenants

#	Flat Number	Block Number	Name
1	3-02	107	Ahmed Rameez
2	3-03	103	Mohamed Nazeer Ibrahim
3	3-04	94	Mohamed Riyaz
4	3-02	83	Dhiyana Shareef
5	3-02	95	Mariyam Waheedha
6	3-02	109	Aminath Shaahidhaa
7	3-01	83	Adam Azeem
8	3-04	83	Fathimath Suneetha Mohamed
9	3-01	102	Mohamed Haleem
10	3-02	102	Abdul Rauoof Ibrahim
11	3-06	86	Mohamed Luthufee
12	3-01	94	Mohamed Riyaz
13	3-02	89	Mohamed Rafeeu
14	3-04	104	Ahmed Afeef

Appendix B: Communication with HREC regarding complaints received during feedback survey

1 of 1,007

Move to inbox

More

1:04 PM (22 hours ago)

Construction Survey Issues Identified

Hamidhaan Zuhair <hamidhaan.zuhair@environment.gov.mv>
to LI, Akram, Nuzhaath, Maumoon, Hassan, mujthaba

Dear LI,

As highlighted to you today over the telephone, a phone survey was undertaken with some top floor residents of the blocks in which work has been completed. The following issues were identified:

1. A tenant complained that screen was not used in block 102, and that twice when the residents were in toilet people went up the scaffolding.
2. Two tenants complained that when installing inverters, following work the area was not cleaned so the tenants themselves had to do it.

Regardless of these issues, most tenants contacted were very happy of the manner in which work has been undertaken and highlighted as such. No major disturbance were felt by most of the tenants contacted. Please ensure these issues are addressed in future works.

Best Regards,

Appendix C: Communication with HREC regarding Grievance Received by HDC

The screenshot shows an email client interface with the following content:

Search: andyleeckck%4@yahoo.com/15076a07ed94fc31

Address: andyleeckck@yahoo.com

Subject: A complaint received regarding the ongoing solar installation 1000 housing units

Date: Jan 15

From: Hamdhaan Zuhair <hamdhaan.zuhair@environment.gov.mv>
to: L.I. Zhang, Akram, Nuzhath, Maumoon, mujtaba

Dear Li,

As indicated to you yesterday over the telephone, a complaint was received by HDC this Saturday 13th January 2017, in relation to the solar PV installation at 1000 housing unit. As you know scaffolding is on the side where there are some toilet windows, to address this issue the contractor has been installing screens. It seems that in one of the buildings while the workers went up to install the screens one window was open and a resident was using the washroom at the time. He felt uncomfortable and reported this issue to HDC on Saturday.

Thus, we advise you to ensure that all windows are closed before going up to install the screens. Despite this complaint, overall I would like to highlight that we are very happy at the way the construction is being managed, as we have not received any major complaints.

Best Regards,

Ahmed Mujtaba
to me, LGiang-CHEC, Zhang, Akram, Nuzhath, Maumoon

Dear Hamdhan and all,

Thank you for letting us know about the complaint.

We will take immediate actions to prevent such incidents in the future and will try to complete the project without the second such complaint.

Kind Regards,

Ahmed Mujtaba
HP: +960-56888836

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