

SAKHALA AND MATHIOYA



Location
Kenya

PROJECT SUMMARY

Two proposed run-of-river hydropower plants in rural Kenya will provide a total installed capacity of nearly 10MW, with far-reaching benefits.

Under plans by rural utility developer, Virunga Power, the 6MW Sakhala plant will be built on the Nzoia River in western Kenya, while the 4MW Mathioya plant will be on the Mathioya South River in the central region.

The projects are both being developed under Kenya's Small-Scale Renewable Energy Feed-in-Tariff programme, and once built will be among the country's first - and largest - privately developed grid-connected small hydropower installations.

Community support, as well as co-ownership and long-term benefits to the community (through new electrification to rural households in surrounding areas) are all central to the Nairobi-based developer's business model, and both hydro projects will be developed in collaboration with local community organisations.

The plants are expected to create 30 jobs when operational, and hundreds more during construction. Direct community ownership and governance participation will ensure dividends and other long-term and sustainable socio-economic benefits flow to local rural communities.

Completion of the projects will have a strong demonstration effect within Kenya and across the East African region, not merely in terms of successful grid-connected small hydropower development, but also as a model for developing such projects in partnership with communities.

Virunga Power's approach, which seeks to develop financeable projects with both direct and indirect benefits to local communities, is innovative, sustainable, and also highly replicable.

AT A GLANCE

Technology

Run-of-river hydro



Project type

Greenfield, grid-connected

Offtaker

Kenya Power

KPIs



Greenhouse gas emissions avoided: 23,000 tCO₂e per year



People with improved or first-time energy access: 292,437



Jobs created: 300 during construction, 30 during operation



Installed capacity: 9.7MW

FUNDING STRUCTURE

Contracted date

30 June 2016

Lending type

Development capital

REPP funding

USD \$751,000

"With REPP's support, Virunga Power is able to accelerate the development of impactful rural energy projects and expects to deliver long-lasting, highly beneficial, and sustainable infrastructure to our Kenyan community partners."

Brian Kelly, Founder and MD, Virunga Power