



# Annual Report 2021

# About the Signify Foundation

The Signify Foundation is an independent, non-profit organization, primarily funded by Signify NV. Our mission is to enable underserved communities to access the benefits of sustainable lighting.

The Foundation's core activities support the supply of energy-efficient lighting to populations where access to the grid is either limited or nonexistent. We promote a participatory approach through which recipients can maintain sustainable interventions. Our primary aim is to support local capacity development, particularly targeting women and youth. From technology manufacturers, logistics and distribution agencies to financing partners, training institutions and other donors,

the Signify Foundation's choice of partners aligns with our objective to enable market-based ecosystems where the local need for light can be met through local supply.

The Signify Foundation employs Signify's expertise to help develop and provide accessible, sustainable lighting systems that have a meaningful impact on people's lives. Our projects and partnerships directly contribute to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular to SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), and SDG 13 (Climate Action).



@signify foundation

Registered charity in the Netherlands (ANBI), RSIN number 857684553.

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# Message from the Board

**In its fifth year of operations, the Signify Foundation remains committed to enabling access to the benefits of sustainable lighting for underserved communities.**

With global emissions rising at unprecedented levels and energy prices around the globe reaching all-time highs, it is now more urgent than ever that the world commits to bolder targets to tackle the climate challenge. At the same time, energy poverty that results from no or limited access to electricity remains significant, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. The 2021 Tracking SDG 7 report on energy progress forecasts that to achieve universal access to electricity, the annual access rate must triple from 1.3 percent to at least 3 percent between now and 2030.

How do we close the energy gap? To answer this question we must ask ourselves, "Do we already have effective models across the value chain to scale up energy access?" For example, is existing technology for energy access designed and made customer centric, addressing the energy needs and affordability level for people living at the base of the pyramid? Do we have proven and effective distribution models that reach this population without relying on subsidies in the long run? Also importantly, what are the social dimensions that we should take into consideration to bring people along?

The answers to these questions may lie in between existing models or completely new solutions. We must keep an open mind while maintaining a sharp focus on finding these answers.

Meanwhile, we remain hopeful that our collaborative approaches will bear fruit in closing the energy gap. In recent years we have witnessed significant progress made by our partners and sector actors in financial inclusion, technology innovation and livelihood development. Some of these are described in this report.

The same applies to the humanitarian context. Public-private partnerships bring innovation to tackle protection, sanitation, and healthcare challenges, with a level of efficiency we have never seen before.

On this journey, we must acknowledge that sustainable energy goals are only achieved when gender inclusiveness is attained. Towards the end of the year, we welcomed our new Board member Maloe de Reuver from Plan International, who is now helping us in further strengthening our gender insights across different interventions.

Going forward, we continue to hold ourselves accountable for enabling the off-grid sector to step up its efforts in the hardest to reach communities. We call for further collaboration with co-visionaries and value-chain partners to jointly triple the electricity access rate effectively and sustainably.

The Signify Foundation Board



Harry Verhaar  
Chair of the Board



Pieter de Haan  
Board Member



Stanley Anyetei  
Board Member



Maloe de Reuver  
Board Member



# Looking back and forward

Global economic recovery continues to gather pace, yet many countries and communities are still facing tremendous challenges. In 2021, the Signify Foundation's social impact focus has been on building recovery and resilience for underserved communities by enabling access to light and livelihood development. Lighting interventions designed in collaboration with local groups and aid agencies have made a positive impact on communities, providing better access to health care, essential services, sport, and productivity.

While the pandemic has drawn attention to the importance and urgency of building infrastructure in off-grid regions, it also slowed down the progress projected for achieving universal energy access. In 2021, we have seen continued supply chain disruption and increase in cost of goods sold, coupled with even less consistent income levels for many off-grid households. Also, large scale energy projects for off-grid health centers tend to prefer well established organizations, which are often internationally-based solar companies. This makes it harder for local suppliers to catch up on their path to profitability.

In recent years, we have mainly supported two major types of interventions: direct product placement/installation and competency build-up for last-mile distribution. Direct product placement (related to Lighting Lives and

Humanitarian Lighting projects) is a relatively straightforward model. Yet it requires the right products to be provided, complemented by sufficient user training and maintenance. Supporting competency build-up (Lighting Entrepreneurs and Ecosystems Building projects) is more complicated. Our support has been mainly focusing on providing working capital and training support to solar start-ups. Yet success can only be achieved when the right products are made available at the right price for people living off the grid, with customer financing and services in place. Further, supporting locally-owned companies is key for long-lasting economic-social development in our focus regions. We've made progress over the past two years, yet still need to raise our ambition level to achieve the effect we really want to see. This requires us to reflect on our approach to tackle this systemic injustice.

There is no silver bullet to address energy poverty. Problems often seem easier from a distance, and realities beat theories. We need to constantly confront ourselves with realities and understand the complexity with patience and an open mind.

As we look to the future, our focus will be on increasing impact on closing the energy gap. This requires us to further sharpen our insights on the energy landscape in off-grid regions, and focus our strategy on serving hard to reach

communities. Meanwhile, we'll further mature our evaluation and impact assessment mechanism and continue collaborating with our peers and partners.

The projects you will read about in the following pages are made possible with the support of our partners and Signify colleagues across the world. The smile of a health worker, the joy of children given the right conditions to play and learn, and the moment the life of a female solar agent changes forever, make each of us feel truly privileged to be part of this important work.

Yue Cui  
Director



# Highlights

In 2021, through our executed projects and programs

**950,000+**

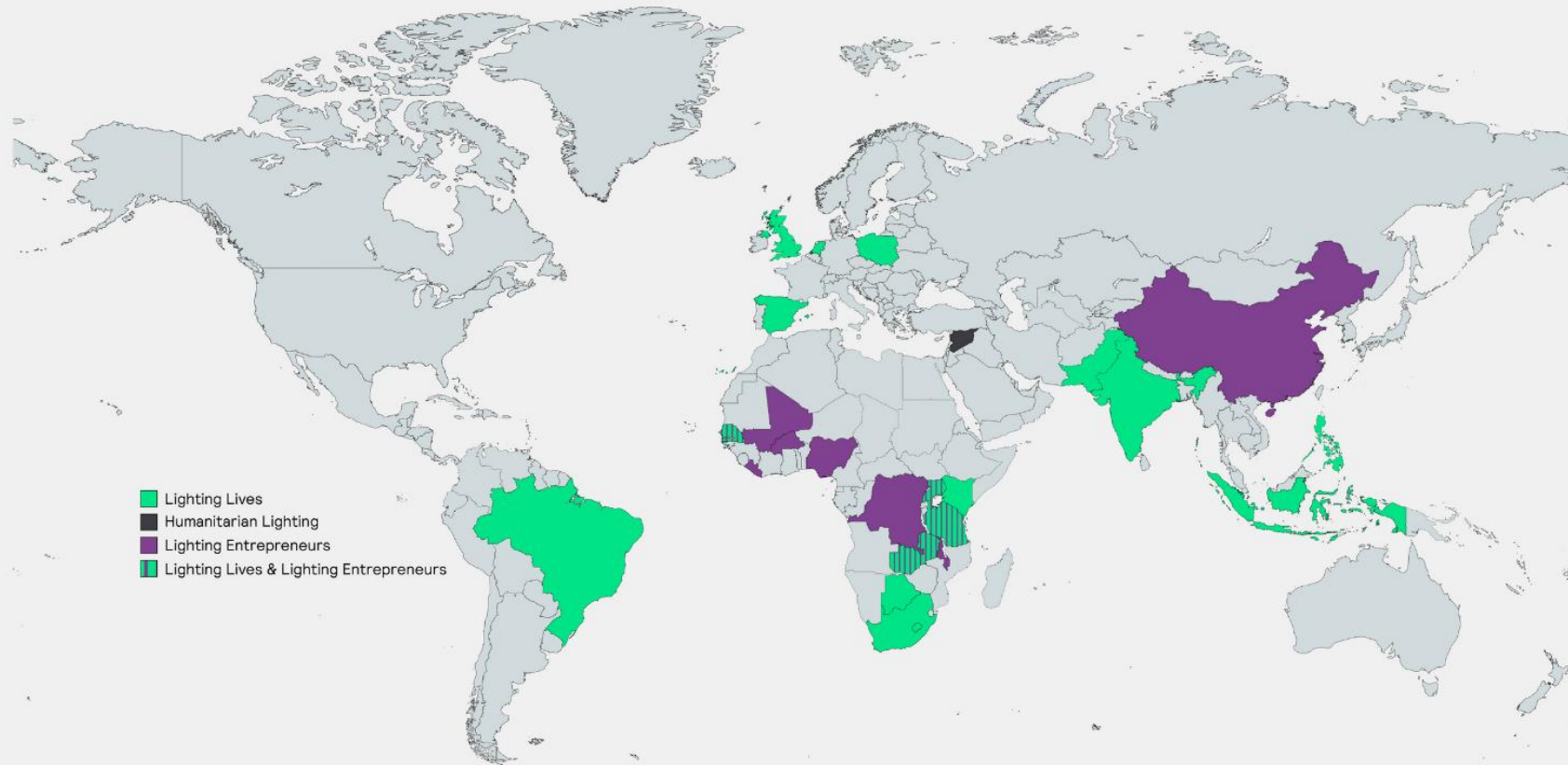
Lives were lit

**2,000+**

Entrepreneurs were supported

**23**

Projects were executed



# Highlights

# Our Focus




**01 Lighting Lives**

Enabling access to relevant, affordable and sustainable lighting technology for off-grid and partial grid communities to help extend the productive day.



**02 Lighting Entrepreneurs**

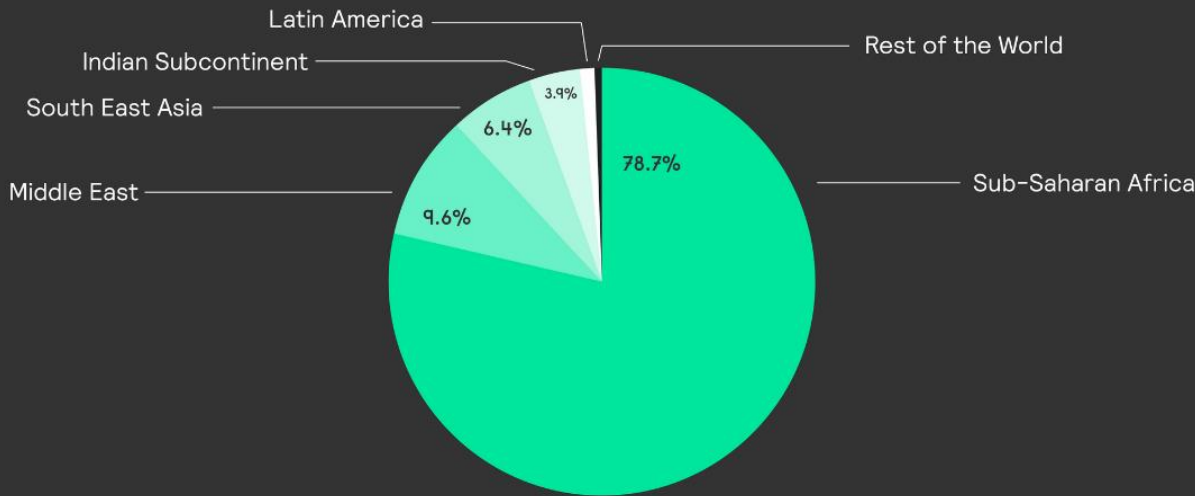
Better lighting stimulates productivity and entrepreneurship. However, Lighting Lives can only have a long-term impact if communities have the skills to operate and maintain the lighting installation provided.



**03 Humanitarian Lighting**

When a humanitarian crisis strikes, light is critical in delivering emergency assistance. Without adequate illumination, aid workers cannot deliver care or supplies after nightfall. Light doesn't just assist relief efforts – it saves lives.

## Continued Focus on Off-grid Regions



Funding allocation per geography in 2021

## Access to light as an enabler for Sustainable Development Goals





# Access to Light

**Universal access to sustainable energy is a fundamental element of the Signify Foundation's inclusive ambition. For communities underserved by the grid, access to affordable and high-quality energy and lighting solutions improves lives at a local level, while accelerating global efforts to address climate change.**

**Access to light, underpinned by access to affordable and clean energy, is a key enabler in providing fundamental services to diverse aspects of human life – education, gender equality, livelihood and income generation, community development, and climate action.**



## Lighting Lives

The Lighting Lives program enables access to the use of clean-technology-based lighting systems that address the entire spectrum of lighting needs within a community.

The Signify Foundation supports a diverse array of sustainable projects. From pico solar lamps and solar home systems to mini-grids and solar street lighting, energy access products and services do not merely constitute a straightforward, one-off product donation and installation, but exist as a means to an end. Villages are safer, livelihoods opportunities are enhanced, economic development is greater, and quality of life is raised.

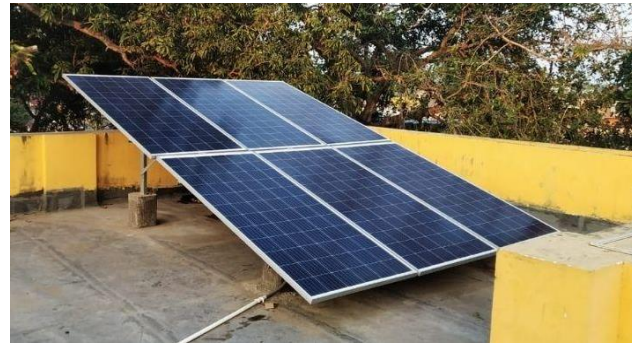
## Lighting up Health Centers, India

In India, Primary Health Centers (PHCs) represent the first tier of the healthcare system, providing a range of essential outpatient services to people living in rural, suburban, and hard-to-reach areas. Each PHC provides care for 20-30,000 people from nearby rural villages, including delivering an average of 30-50 infants per month. Recently, PHCs have also played a vital role in managing the COVID-19 pandemic and promoting and delivering vaccinations.



Delivering these life-saving services requires energy for lighting, refrigerators and fans. However, one in every two PHCs in India suffers from an intermittent power supply. Most centers have been entirely dependent on unstable grid and diesel generators as

power backup. As well as the environmental impact of burning diesel, this system has caused a series of operational challenges for the PHCs. For example, there is no supply of diesel to remote villages during monsoons.



To support the PHCs with uninterrupted power supply, Signify Foundation partnered with RDO Trust and FINISH Society to install 2.5Kw solar power plants with battery backup in 18 centers in Bihar & Jharkhand State of India. LED lights and fans were also installed in critical and high usage areas like emergency rooms, labor rooms, and laboratories. Outside, flood lights were installed to create a safe and illuminated passage for visitors to access the health center after sunset. Cloud-based remote monitoring systems were placed to monitor and analyze the system performance remotely and ensure reliability.

*"This is a 24/7 center. We cover about 140,000 people in 53 remote villages and carry out approximately 100 operations daily. We have a backup generator for power cuts, but it was not reliable or affordable - sometimes causing serious issues during our operations. Now with the solar systems, we are very confident we can carry out uninterrupted treatment for our patients."*

Dr. Avinash Kumar, Medical Officer in charge at the Community Health Centre in Thawe, Gopalganj, Bihar

*"At our center, about 125 to 150 babies are delivered each month. At times, we have been forced to use mobile torches during power cuts. A power cut during a sensitive delivery can be fatal. The uninterrupted energy and light source has freed us from this concern. It is also very helpful for mothers who are breastfeeding."*

Sweta Priyadarshi, Staff Nurse



## Light for farming and community life: a story from Naledi Village, South Africa

The Signify Foundation, Signify South Africa, and Earthrise Trust have supported 2,000 people in Naledi, Franshoek and Nebo, South Africa, through installing solar-powered outdoor lighting.

The three remote villages in the Ficksburg district in the Eastern Free State had lacked basic services including outdoor and street lighting. As part of the Lighting Lives program, the Signify Foundation worked with the Earthrise Trust and the Village Committee to install Philips

Sunstay and Philips Solar Floodlights in entrance roads to the villages, dark open fields, health centers, schools, and public areas.

This intervention provides not just light, but increases safety, productivity and overall quality of life. The project allows the residents- particularly older adults, women, and children- to socialize, work and move around the villages in safety, and to respond quickly and effectively to any emergencies at night. It is now possible to continue productive work after sunset, enabling evening rotational shifts, harvests after sunset, and evening access to pack-houses. And away from the workplace, it allows everyone - men and women, old and young - to enjoy the inter-village soccer contests that are a popular pastime for the community.





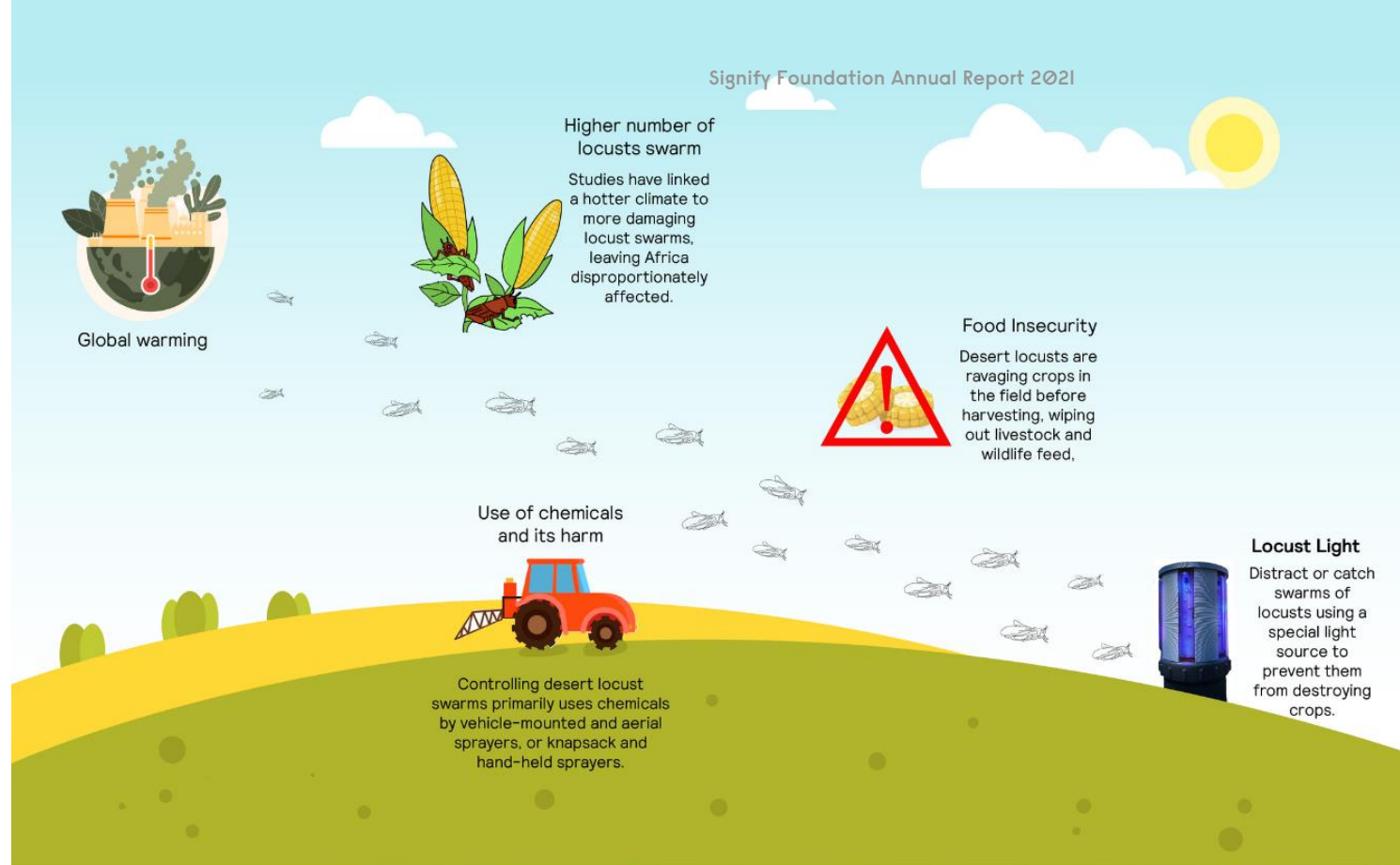
## Locust Lighting Pilot Project

Technological innovation has enormous power to catalyze social impact and empower underserved communities. However, the solutions and implementation that work in developed countries may not always flourish similarly elsewhere. As such, it is essential to co-create with local communities to propagate solutions that are both effective and sensitive to the context.

In Kenya and South Africa, locust infestations regularly threaten vital food supplies. This is predicted to become an increasing problem as climate change creates conditions for the insects to thrive. With the aid of a special Ultraviolet-A light source, it is possible to catch or distract the locusts, preventing the destruction of crops, grasslands, and trees. Further, the locusts themselves can form a protein-rich raw material for food production.

With the conceptual solution in hand, Signify specialists worked with local research institutions and the Signify Foundation to initiate a pilot to collect data from field tests.

Based on the outcomes, the team will then amend the solution to work more holistically, potentially targeting other pest species.



*"Local support is essential and we are lucky to have this in the form of my local colleagues, who have been instrumental in understanding the challenge and gathering insights on the ground. The biggest learning moment was that together we can make things happen and together make a contribution to a serious challenge facing nations around the globe. Lighting can play an important role in areas we do not yet know so this dialogue and exploration is crucial."*

**Jaap Schuurin, Customer Learning Lead,  
Signify Netherlands**



### Key learnings from Lighting Lives projects

- Innovation is essential to address off-grid challenges.
- Energy and lighting solutions provided to people should directly address their pain points and needs, in the context they live in.

### Impact of Lighting Lives projects

- Upgraded environments for learning, health care and essential services.
- Enhanced safety and security, especially for women and girls.
- Unlocked opportunities for community engagement and productive activities.







## Lighting Entrepreneurs

Lighting Lives can only have a long-term impact if the capacity of last-mile distribution, installation and maintenance is retained in the communities. We aim to stimulate lighting entrepreneurship and livelihood development through training and working capital.

Training provides a foundation for development, the groundwork on which social and economic wellbeing is built. Interventions enabling access to light can only be sustainable when technological, operational and maintenance know-how remains within local communities as part of a larger participatory approach.

The Signify Foundation supports this knowledge ecosystem with programs that provide essential business and technical skills to increase longevity of lighting interventions, enable income-generating activities, and develop and strengthen channels of last mile distribution and services.

Additionally, we provide working capital to solar start-ups whose key barriers to growth are a lack of access to adequate financial services and networks. With the

working capital we provide, the companies and entrepreneurs we support are able to purchase short term inventory and raw materials in a timely way, or bridge other short-term financial requirements.

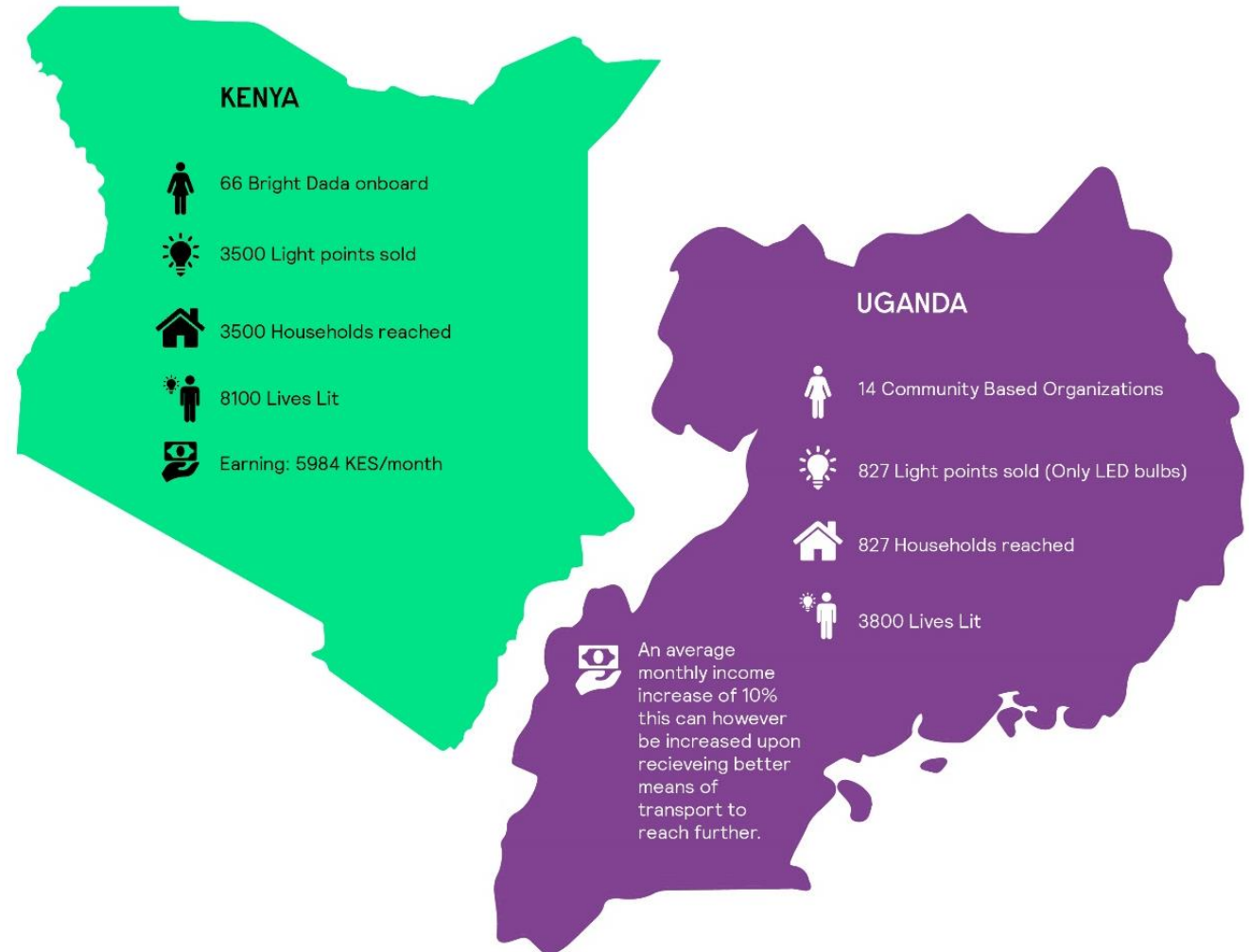
Our working capital support is typically structured as a recoverable grant facility. The amount is to be paid back in tranches or in full after the partner has achieved the desired milestones. This strategy supports efficient business operations in the short term, but also enables our partners to build up their credit history to unlock potential to access further financing.

## Bright Dada: stimulating women entrepreneurship in the lighting sector

For the last two years, the Signify Foundation has supported the Bright Dada program in its aim to build a successful women-led distribution model for clean technology products in hard to access areas in East Africa.

In Kenya, the Bright Dadas (or “bright sisters” in Swahili) consolidate demand for lights from small retail shops and end customers in neighboring villages. The following day, they gather stock from their Bright Dada hub and deliver their sales. In Uganda, the program works with existing Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) that are close to end customers, to serve their needs for clean energy and lighting.

In both programs, the key focus is on coaching and mentoring. Bright Dada in Kenya and the Enlight Institute in Uganda both make sure the Bright Dadas get business training during onboarding and mentoring in the period after.

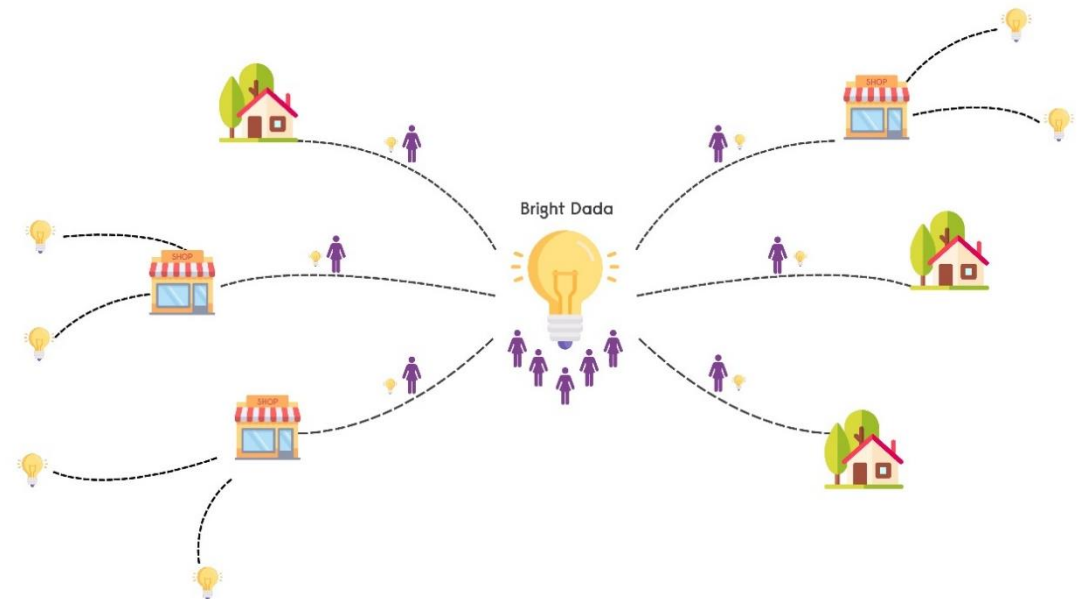






Bright Dada Kenya has trained six Bright Dadas and 60 women who support the Dadas to gather lighting needs in their villages. One of the challenges they face comes from counterfeit products, which erode trust in clean energy and lighting products. This is addressed through training and community sensitization activities.

Both programs aim to add transport, most likely bicycles, into the business model, so Dadas can increase their monthly income by reducing public transportation costs and increase their impact by reaching more people. COVID-19 slowed down a number of activities during 2019 and 2020. Now, teams in both Kenya and Uganda are eagerly catching up and are positively looking forwards to further developing the programs – Kenya by adding another distribution hub in Busia region, and Uganda by adding and training another 15 CBOs.





## Increasing access to solar energy with Munyax Eco

In 2021, the Foundation supported Munyax Eco, a solar distribution company that is locally owned and woman-led. The company specializes in the distribution of solar energy, selling and installing affordable products for households in Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Our support specifically focusses on the capacity building for Munyax's last mile distribution, consisting of a grant for training more women agents, and a recoverable grant as working capital to enable growth.

Munyax Eco is also receiving funding support and technical assistance from others, such as Opes Fund. As funders, we regularly exchange thoughts on the growth enablers for the company. We believe collaboration amongst funders is an important approach for companies to receive holistic support, and for funders to jointly enable energy access more effectively.

*"I grew up in Rwanda as a refugee. As a child, we didn't have access to electricity at all. It was a challenge for us to study in the evening. I came back to my country to see how I can provide electricity for my brothers and sisters who are still living with the same challenges.*

*We have been lucky to have the support of the Signify Foundation. They financially supported us to buy stock in order to provide solar home systems to people in rural areas. We did well, we started our activities, and people are happy since we provide them with electricity.*

*I firmly believe in women empowerment. At Munyax Eco, we also train women for last-mile distribution. We provide not only technical training but also sales and marketing training. By continuing our partnership with the Signify Foundation, we can have even more impact by scaling up our footprint in our country and in Africa."*

**Francine Munyaneza, the founder and CEO of Munyax Eco**



## Supporting women entrepreneurship in Senegal with ElleSolaire

Women are the primary energy managers in their households in rural Senegal. They are thus best placed to promote the benefits of renewable energy solutions in their rural communities and within their extensive social networks via their women's Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA).

ElleSolaire's mission is to create empowerment opportunities for women in West Africa through clean energy entrepreneurship and community-based capacity building in partnership with women's VSLA in response to two issues:

- Gender inequalities and the lack of opportunities that women in West Africa, especially in rural communities, face.
- Energy poverty affecting 200 million people in West Africa.

For more than fifty years, Senegal has experienced rates of economic growth close to the rate of population growth. These circumstances have not permitted a sustainable reduction in poverty, particularly in rural communities.

In a survey completed in January 2021 amongst ElleSolaire VSLA's women entrepreneurs, there was strong evidence of the negative impacts of COVID-19 on their economic and mental health. 100% of women reported a reduction in both the income-generating opportunities for their VSLA and revenues generated since the start of COVID-19.

The Women Saving 4 Resilience project, co-supported by the Signify Foundation with a grant for training and working capital, scales ElleSolaire's unique women-VSLA-led model in Senegal, harnessing the innate capacities of its women entrepreneurs to co-create pathways towards self-reliance, professional inclusion, resilience against shocks, and sustainable energy poverty alleviation. Through this project, ElleSolaire envisions increasing accessibility of life-changing solar technologies through its women entrepreneur distribution network.

To sustain the efforts of capacity building and gender empowerment, ElleSolaire launched the ElleSolaire Academy - the first certified solar entrepreneurship training for marginalized women in rural Senegal. Our partnership aims to train and certify over 60 women who will then start their entrepreneurship journey.

*"We have already learned a lot with ElleSolaire: how to sell the products and install them. They also introduced us to marketing. I like my status as a woman entrepreneur. I am in control of my own choices and there have been a lot of positive changes in many facets of my life. I am proud of what I have accomplished and my goal is to continue on this path."*

**Seynabou Faye, ElleSolaire Women Entrepreneur**



\*Source: Brut Senegal Interview  
[https://www.facebook.com/watch/?extid=WA-UNK-UNK-UNK-IO5\\_GK0T-GK1C&v=2932443817086245](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?extid=WA-UNK-UNK-UNK-IO5_GK0T-GK1C&v=2932443817086245)  
 (Translated from French)



## Enabling job opportunities in Uganda with FLIP Africa

In Uganda, 90% of youth is unemployed, under employed or insecurely employed. The pandemic has further complicated this pre-existing human capital gap.

FLIP Africa is piloting a disruptive approach that makes short term contractual-based work, a viable alternative to full-time work. Via a digital platform, verified companies and contractors can easily search for opportunities that match their skills and interests.

The Signify Foundation supported FLIP Africa with a grant capital, aiming to expand the scope of their work into the solar and lighting industry. As the country develops, the human capital needs for electricians also increase. On the other hand, people who have received lighting technical and business skills training can now have more income generation opportunities and job choices - essential to close the education loop.

Overall, we aim to expand dignified work opportunities for youth in the solar and lighting industry and to build professional profiles for their future career growth. Since June 2021, 107 youths have found jobs via the

FLIP platform, of which 31 in the solar Industry.


*"My experience with the traditional way of applying for jobs in Uganda was that it is overly complicated and often yields no results. By subscribing to FLIP, it is easier to get a job since most employers connect with FLIP for quality candidates. It is also easier to negotiate payments through FLIP. The future is bright for me with all the connections that I've made through this platform. The work experience I've gained is very important for my personal development."*

**Henry Kaye Ddamba, a solar technician and an active contractor on the FLIP platform**




### How It Works

I AM LOOKING FOR TALENT    I AM LOOKING FOR WORK




**Build a Professional Profile**

Create a profile that captures your true abilities and potential, including a video pitch, ratings, and testimonials from previous jobs, training, certificates, and key achievements. Download and print your profile for free!




**Work Opportunities Come to You**

Instantly receive notifications of relevant jobs on your mobile phone. Choose which jobs you take, how often, and for how much.



**Safe & Convenient Payment**

Get paid within 7 days of successful completion of the job. FLIP secures payment from the company in advance to ensure full and fair payment on your behalf.



BF

## Unlock your business potential.

Find the expertise your business needs to grow, quickly and affordably.  
No hassle, guaranteed.

POST A JOB
FIND WORK



### Key learnings from Lighting Entrepreneur projects

- Capacity building, working capital and an enabling environment are key to success for an entrepreneur.
- Embedding gender inclusiveness in energy access projects is essential to achieve a sustainable energy future for all. Project design should use a gender lens to better understand how each part of the project – from training content to distribution models and community sensitization – impacts men and women differently and what should be done to assure equal access and opportunities for both genders.

### Impact of Lighting Entrepreneurs projects

- Increased capacity for solar last-mile distribution.
- Increased livelihood opportunities for people who do not have access to formal employment.
- Progress on gender inclusive jobs and income generating opportunities.
- Long term impact on social and economic development in communities.





## Humanitarian Lighting

When a humanitarian crisis impacts energy supply, either through political conflict, natural disaster, or global health crises, infrastructures must be repaired quickly. Sustainable and reliable lighting leads to increased general security, personal dignity and basic comfort in living spaces, including administrative, outdoor, and common areas like schools, playgrounds, places of worship, and health centers.



## Empowering and protecting Syrian women and girls with solar lights

More than ten years after the civil war started, Syria still deals with one of the world's most complex humanitarian crises, characterized by persisting high levels of displacement and widespread destruction of infrastructure, including homes, schools, health facilities, water and electricity supply, and irrigation systems.

One of the striking issues of this crisis is the continued gender-based impact, with women and adolescent girls paying a high price for harmful and discriminatory gender norms, including gender-based violence.

UNFPA assessed Internally Displaced People (IDPs) sites, including camps and temporary shelters, and found that lack of adequate lighting at facilities and in public spaces, long distances to the facilities as well as the lack of privacy, and the fear of physical and sexual violence on the way to water, sanitation and health care facilities or even at home, are significant concerns for girls and women.

During 2020 and 2021, the Signify Foundation made a product donation of 11,000 portable solar lights to UNFPA, which were distributed to households across Homs, Hama, Lattakia, Tartous, and rural Damascus. The selection criteria were jointly decided by UNFPA and the

Syrian Family Planning Association in Duma and Empowerment Center for Women in Damascus, prioritizing women, children, elderly people and people with disabilities.

*We suffer from permanent power outages and we are often afraid at night. This light is very useful as it will help me and all mothers to take care of our children at night. It is also important for the elderly people because it will help them move around in the house at night without any fear."*

Om Kareem, resident of Duma in rural Damascus

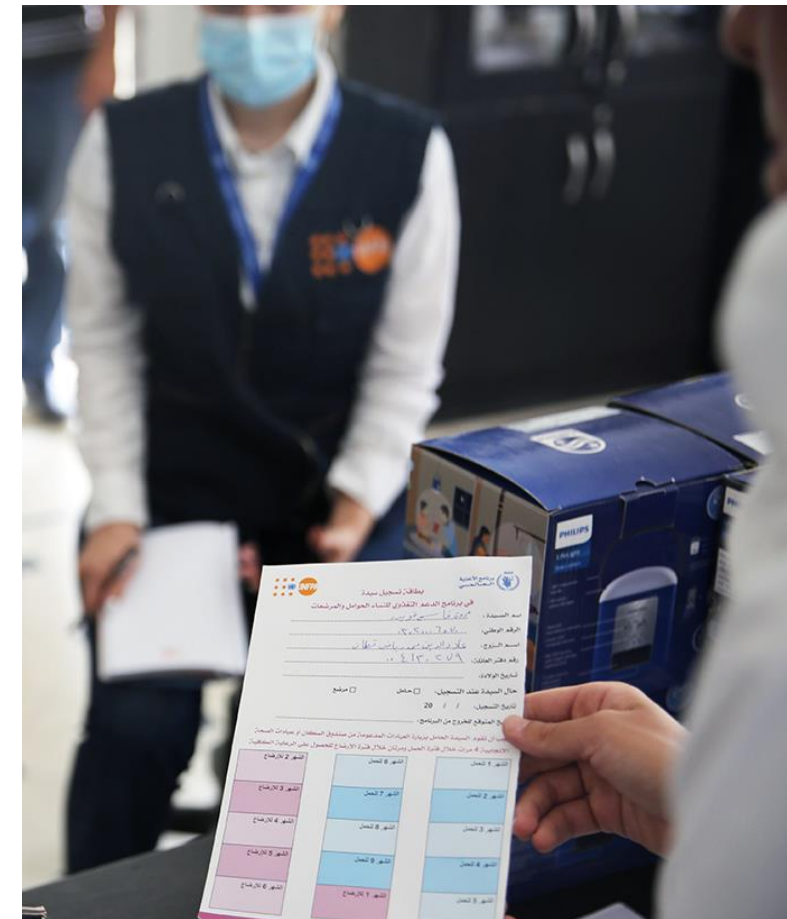
*"We were previously depending on sulphur and wax [for lighting] which is expensive and unsafe, and it gets harder when you have children and a sick husband. Most of our homes are partially demolished, and we face a lot of difficulties while we go out at night. These lamps will help me, my children and my injured husband to go out at night and feel safe,"*

Om Omar, a mother of 9 children, who had to leave her house for 4 years and then returned to Kafer Battna in the Damascus countryside

These lights were also provided to Reproductive Health Clinics and Women and Girls Safe Spaces supported by UNFPA. During the distribution, these centers organized

awareness sessions on gender-based violence, family planning, antenatal and postnatal care, COVID-19, menstrual hygiene management, and on how these lamps can support women and girls in their daily lives.

This project illustrates the value that energy and lighting solutions have in a humanitarian context. It also shows the unique power that partnerships between UN agencies and corporate foundations can provide by combining an enabling technology with in-depth community reach and commitment.





## Humanitarian lighting: insights from Rhino Refugee Settlement, Uganda

One of the Signify Foundation's largest humanitarian projects is the work with the Rhino Refugee Settlement in Uganda, in partnership with the Danish Refugee Council. Between 2019 and 2021, we provided solar indoor and outdoor lights to communal spaces and health centers. The expected outcomes of this project were originally two-fold: enhancing safety and security at the camp and host communities and developing livelihood opportunities for women and youths. The pandemic added a third priority to the project in 2021– fulfilling the lighting needs of health centers and essential services<sup>1</sup>.

In 2022, we hired a consultant from Design Health to conduct a site visit to evaluate the project. The insights gathered from the camp and host communities are extremely valuable. We are sharing these insights as our learnings here may be relevant for future projects of a similar nature.

<sup>1</sup> For more information – <https://www.signify.com/global/our-company/blog/people/support-rhino-camp-uganda>

### 1. Public lighting for protection

The solar streetlights were well received by the community and were all functioning a year after installation. However, we found out that some critical locations that require lighting at the Settlement are still in the dark. These are typically places where gender-based violence occur – for example, near water wells. In the future, we insist that partners should follow participatory assessment for prioritization to make sure that the lighting needs of the most vulnerable people are placed at the center of the Intention. This should include, as much as possible, people such as refugee women, girls and boys, in order to identify together with them possible protection risks that they may face, priorities and channelize the intervention toward a solution which matches their needs.

Tools are already available to trigger the refugee's involvement during the phases of the intervention, the participatory assessment tool<sup>2</sup> for example which “should be used throughout the programming cycle to structure dialogue with refugees on implementation, monitoring and evaluation of services and protection assistance”.

<sup>2</sup> UNHCR. (2006). The UNHCR Tool for Participatory Assessment in Operations.





## 2. Solar kiosks for income generation

The aim of the project was to install outdoor lights in vulnerable public areas and build Energy Kiosks for Youth Groups to generate an income through rental of solar lanterns and charging mobile phones. We learned that the groups received insufficient technical assistance and training in the start-up phase and did not have the knowledge or support to realize the full potential of the system. Nevertheless, the youth group managed to make use of the kiosks for other types of businesses, mainly for community entertainment and events. In the future, we will put in place on-going training support for such projects and a signed-off coordination and communication plan with partners involved - to ensure continuous technical support and project sustainability.

## 3. Solar indoor lighting for health centers and essential services

We learned that the solar lanterns provide useful supplemental light to support healthcare personnel, to light up their paths and for use of the latrines, but they are not sufficient substitutes for clinical operations requiring specific lighting solutions: hands-free, directed clinical lighting. This insight helps us to reflect that an outside-in and people centric approach is much required during the project design phase. Moreover, solar lights installed in dark spots in the health centers, base camps, protection houses and police stations have a significant contribution in providing physical protection of workers and patients against harmful reptiles and other dangerous animals at night. A more detailed report of the findings will be shared later this year on the Signify Foundation Insight Portal.





### Key learnings from Humanitarian Lighting projects

- Like Lighting Lives projects, solutions provided should directly address the needs of people – extensive stakeholder engagement is vital to understand who to prioritize, what technologies are required, and how impact can be sustained.
- On-site project evaluation brings us closer to ground realities and helps us reflect and improve.

### Impact of Humanitarian Lighting projects

- Enhanced safety and security, especially for women and girls.
- Improved quality of life for refugee communities by providing better access to health care and essential services.
- Livelihood development for both refugee and host communities.





# Lighting the Ecosystem

In the past five years, we've worked with our partners to bring light and opportunities to people who aspire to create a brighter future. The impact of lighting lives is made long lasting through investment rather than aid. We support the development of market ecosystems where lighting becomes part of the economic and livelihood stimulation and empowers youth and women to upskill and shine.

The Signify Foundation aims to extend our impact across the entire value chain, partnering with institutions that enable clean energy distribution to the last mile. In this value chain, access to finance plays a critical role in unlocking growth potential for solar start-ups, and yet presents a significant gap in the solar sector. For this reason, we support institutions that provide innovative finance to the 'missing middle' and local companies, as a holistic approach to accelerate energy access.





## Enabling access to finance for locally owned solar companies with Charm Impact

Company founders who focus on their home markets have invaluable, contextual market knowledge that allows them to create innovative businesses with a low-cost base. However, locally led and owned companies often face challenges in accessing international investment capital. In Kenya, for example, only 6 percent of the startups that received more than USD 1,000,000 in 2019 were led by local founders. Local companies within the energy ecosystem have generally been financially excluded from accessing international investment capital.

In 2021, the Signify Foundation provided a first loss grant facility to Charm Impact, to support a blended finance lending model that would catalyze the investment in 5 loans to early-stage, local companies in Sub-Saharan Africa. These companies primarily focus on last-mile distribution of solar energy for off-grid households and for productive use.

To date, these companies have received in total more than EUR 300,000 in loans from Charm Impact as working capital. Some have already repaid the first tranche, a great way to demonstrate credit history to pave the way for accessing further capital.

This program has a crucial role to play in supporting early-stage, local entrepreneurs, nurturing their growth commercially to get them to the stage where they are eligible for the investment mandates of larger investors. The revolving grant capital from Signify Foundation acts as a buffer for investors, incentivizing them to make investments in riskier products.



*“As a local start up in Malawi, we visited various finance institutions. None of them accepted our business plan because we did not have collateral and the financials alone could not convince them to support our work. Charm Impact's financing support has helped our business to scale up, create more jobs, impact more people with productive use energy technologies and increase in revenues”*

Admore Chiumia, CEO & Founder of Green Impact, company supported by Charm Impact





## D-REC Initiative

Since 2021, the Signify Foundation has been supporting with a grant and technical assistance the D-REC initiative, led by South Pole and Positive.Capital Partners and supported by multiple partners. The initiative will create a new market instrument for distributed renewable energy (DRE). This helps channel investment from leading global corporations into impactful DRE projects in emerging markets. The instrument, called a DRE Certificate (D-REC), is expected to be widely adopted by the market and will support local renewable energy project developers and entrepreneurs to engage in the global climate markets. The end objective is to reduce energy poverty, including access to light, in underprivileged and underserved communities across Sub-Saharan Africa and other developing regions.

So far, the D-REC Initiative has developed the D-REC's structure and mechanism, including the development of the technical platform and infrastructure, launched a corporate

Donor funds like ours have helped to establish the basic infrastructure underpinning the initiative, which will be self-sustaining once the first D-RECs are sold. Further, the expertise, ideas, and partnerships that have been unlocked through in-kind contributions from D-REC partners have carried immense value in developing DRE standards, advocacy, market development, technology platform development, and exploring financial structures. That is how, alongside financial support, Signify Foundation is bringing valuable expertise, knowledge and networks to the D-REC Initiative.

More information is available on:

<https://www.d-recs.energy/>





### Key learnings from Ecosystem Building projects

- First-loss models within the energy access ecosystem primarily focused on creating protection for investors. Future models need to consider better ways of using this funding to support borrowers.
- The demand for capital from early stage, local founders significantly outstrip the supply.
- The ability to build a commercial track record demonstrably helps early stage, local founders focus on their pathway to profitability and sustainable unit economics.

### Impact of Ecosystem Building projects

- Solar start-ups are better able to sustainably scale up their operations and impact.
- A healthy ecosystem for solar companies to have access to finance at different growth stages.



# Financial Statements

## Balance sheet as at December 31

(in euros after result appropriation)

	Note	2020	2021
<b>Current assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	1	2,520,479	2,167,468
<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>2,520,479</b>	<b>2,167,468</b>
<b>Total assets</b>			
		<b>2,520,479</b>	<b>2,167,468</b>
<b>Equity</b>			
Other reserves	2	1,404,997	1,156,137
<b>Total equity</b>		<b>1,404,997</b>	<b>1,156,137</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Accrued expenses	3	1,115,482	1,011,330
<b>Total current liabilities</b>		<b>1,115,482</b>	<b>1,011,330</b>
<b>Total equity and liabilities</b>			
		<b>2,520,479</b>	<b>2,167,468</b>

## Statement of contributions and expenses

(in euros)

	Note	2020	2021
<b>Contribution from Signify</b>			
	4	2,100,000	1,800,000
Other contributions		65,033	37,029
<b>Total contributions</b>		<b>2,165,033</b>	<b>1,837,029</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Donations	5	(3,105,280)	(2,077,776)
Other expenses	6	(9,218)	(5,435)
Financial expenses	7	(2,413)	(2,678)
<b>Total expenses</b>		<b>(3,116,911)</b>	<b>(2,085,889)</b>
<b>Result</b>			
		<b>(951,878)</b>	<b>(248,860)</b>



## Notes to the Balance sheet and the Statement of contributions and expenses

### General

Stichting Signify Foundation is registered at the Dutch Chamber of Commerce with number 69001464 as a foundation under Dutch law. Its legal address is Basisweg 10, 1034 AP Amsterdam.

### Financial reporting period

These financial statements cover the year 2021 which ended December 31, 2021. The comparative figures cover the year 2020, which started on January 1, 2020 and ended December 31, 2020.

### Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Guideline for annual reporting 640 'Non-profit organizations' of the Dutch Accounting Standards Board (RJ640).

### Going concern

These financial statements have been prepared on the basis of the going concern assumption.

### Basis of measurement

The financial statements have been prepared on a historical cost basis. Unless stated otherwise, assets and liabilities are shown at nominal value. Valuation takes place at nominal value less any provision deemed necessary.

### Accounting policies

#### General

An asset is recognized in the balance sheet when it is probable that the expected future economic benefits that are attributable to the asset will flow to the entity and the cost of the asset can be measured reliably. A liability is recognized in the balance sheet when it is expected to result in an outflow of the entity's own resources and the amount of the liability can be measured reliably.

Contributions are recognized in the Statement of contributions and expenses when the amount can be determined in a reliable manner and collection of the related contribution to be received is probable. Contributions and expenses are allocated to the period to which they relate.

#### Use of estimates

The preparation of the financial statements requires the Board of Signify Foundation to

make judgments, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of accounting principles and reported amounts of assets, liabilities and contributions and expenses. Actual results may differ from these estimates. The estimates and underlying assumptions are continuously reviewed. The impact of revised estimates is reflected in the period in which the estimate is revised.

#### Functional and presentation currency

The financial statements are presented in euros, which is the Foundation's functional currency, and have been rounded to the nearest euros. Transactions denominated in foreign currency are translated into euros at the exchange rate applying on the transaction date. Exchange differences resulting from the settlement of monetary items or resulting from the translation of monetary items denominated in foreign currency are recognized in the Statement of contributions and expenses in the period in which they arise.

Due to rounding, amounts may not add up to totals provided.

#### Receivables

Receivables are measured at initial recognition at fair value. After initial recognition, the assets are measured at

amortized cost using the effective interest method, less a value allowance. The allowance is determined by individual assessment of the receivables by applying the expected loss model, which utilizes historical collection data and forward-looking estimates.

### Current liabilities

At initial recognition, accrued expenses are measured at fair value. After initial recognition, the liabilities are measured at amortized cost using the effective interest method.

### Other reserves

Other reserves consist of the results of the previous years as well as the current year.

## Notes to the Balance sheet

### 1. Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents relate to the current account balances and are available without restrictions.

### 2. Equity

The movements in Other reserves are shown below:

	2020	2021
Opening balance	2,356,875	1,404,997
Result	(951,878)	(248,860)
<b>Other reserves</b>	<b>1,404,997</b>	<b>1,156,137</b>

### 3. Accrued expenses

Accrued expenses reflect the amounts related to projects that have been approved by the Board and communicated to the beneficiary but for which payments will materialize in the following year(s).

Accruals related to:	2020	2021
Lighting Lives projects	519,295	534,524
Lighting Entrepreneurs projects	100,993	30,000
Humanitarian Lighting projects	211,445	343,168
Ecosystem building projects	263,749	103,638
Other accruals	20,000	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,115,482</b>	<b>1,011,330</b>

The accruals for Lighting lives projects in 2021 of EUR 534,524 (2020: EUR 519,295), Lighting Entrepreneurs projects of EUR 30,000 (2020: EUR 100,993), and Humanitarian Lighting projects of EUR 343,168 (2020: EUR 211,445), relate to projects in, amongst others, Africa, Southeast Asia and Latin America.

The accrual for Ecosystem building projects of EUR 103,639 (2020: EUR 263,749) relates to capacity building projects for last-mile distribution, including our long term programs such as *WeSolve*<sup>3</sup> in Tanzania and *Bright Dada*<sup>4</sup> in Uganda and Kenya. In 2020, the other accruals of EUR 20,000 relates to a solar waste management pilot that Signify Foundation supports.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.signify.com/global/our-company/blog/csr/we-solve-unique-partnership-that-creates-jobs-for-women-and-breaks-barriers-to-clean-energy-in-tanzania>

<sup>4</sup> More information on Bright Dada program can be found in 2020 annual report

<https://www.assets.signify.com/is/content/Signify/Assets/signify/global/20210621-signify-foundation-report-2020.pdf>



## Notes to the Statement of contributions and expenses

### 4. Contributions

In 2021, the Signify Foundation received a contribution of EUR 1,800,000 from Signify, lower to the amount received in 2020 of EUR 2,100,000. The funding was made in three instalments received in April, July, and October. In November 2021, Signify agreed to contribute to Signify Foundation an amount of EUR 1,000,000 in 2022.

In March 2022, in a response to the humanitarian relief needs in Ukraine, the Signify Foundation requested additional funding from Signify to provide immediate relief and medium-long term developmental support to Ukraine and neighboring countries, for a provisional maximum amount of EUR 800,000. An amount of EUR 300,000 was already received as an additional funding.

### 5. Donations

Donations are recognized as an expense in the year the commitment has been approved by the Board and communicated to the beneficiary of the donation. Included in the donations of 2021 is an amount of EUR 788,445 that potentially can be recovered by

Signify Foundation during 2022 and 2023 if the beneficiaries are able to meet certain conditions.

In 2020, an amount of EUR 449,735 was included in donations that could potentially be recovered by Signify Foundation. In 2021, an amount of EUR 108,178 was repaid to the Foundation related to recoverable donations issued in previous years after the beneficiaries were able to meet certain conditions.

Donations related to:	2020	2021
Lighting Lives projects	1,056,042	519,166
Lighting Entrepreneurs projects	981,864	41,576
Humanitarian Lighting projects	735,241	281,770
Ecosystem building projects	332,134	1,256,264
Other donations	0	(21,000)
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,105,280</b>	<b>2,077,776</b>

Donations fall within the category of the foundation's three-pillar focus (Lighting lives, Lighting entrepreneurs and Humanitarian lighting) potentially here as well as Ecosystem building programs.

### 6. Other expenses

Other expenses in 2021 of EUR 5,435 (2020: EUR 9,218) relate to consultancy and travel costs.

### 7. Financial expenses

Financial expenses in 2021 of EUR 2,678 (2020: EUR 2,413) relate to bank costs and the cost of foreign currency conversion.

### 8. Personnel

In 2021 and 2020, Signify Foundation employed one part-time contingent worker based in Uganda. Signify Foundation's operational team consists of employees of Signify who are seconded to the Foundation. Their salaries and expenses are paid by Signify. The Board members of Signify Foundation receive no remuneration for their duties, any expenses incurred are reimbursed by the Foundation.

Signify Foundation also receives human resource functional support from Signify, mainly in the areas of legal, finance, internal audit, communications, in-country CSR champions and skill-based volunteers on specific projects

## 9. Subsequent events

In March 5, 2022, in its first immediate relief response on the war in Ukraine, the Foundation sent portable lights for mobile hospitals to the western Ukraine city of Lviv to support the emergency efforts of the Ukrainian Ministry of Health. The Foundation has made a commitment to support further in goods and funding for immediate and medium-long term developmental efforts in Ukraine and its neighboring countries in 2022 and beyond.

There are no other subsequent events to report.

May 18, 2022

### **Board of Management**

Harry Verhaar  
Pieter de Haan  
Stanley Anyetei  
Maloe de Reuver





# Colophon

## Signify Foundation

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[www.signify.com/global/our-company/signify-foundation](http://www.signify.com/global/our-company/signify-foundation)

<https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/signify-foundation/>

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