

ELECTRICIENS SANS FRONTIÈRES (ie. Electricians without borders) A FRENCH NGO RECEIVES “UN GLOBAL CLIMATE ACTION AWARD”!

As part of New York's Climate Week, the Momentum for Change initiative at UN Climate Change shines a light on actions that are contributing to combat climate change and in the effort to tackle our most pressing social and environmental issues all around the globe. Today, French NGO Electriciens sans frontières (ie. “Electricians without borders”) was announced as one of the winners of the 2019 Award, for its actions in 2018 on the island of Dominica.



FOR THE ISLAND OF DOMINICA, A NEEDED STRATEGY TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Category-5 storm Hurricane Maria made landfall on 18 September 2017 on the small island of Dominica, thrashing the country with extreme winds and rain. The storm left its entire population, 72,000 people, 90% of whom live in coastal villages, without electricity and water, and left up to 20 000 buildings, health clinics, schools, damaged or completely destroyed. Climate change has highly increased such extreme weather events and the devastating consequences of the hurricane on the country's vital infrastructure urged Dominica's prime minister, in an allocation to the UN, to transform Dominica into the first climate resilient Small Island Developing State. The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Energy reached out to Electriciens sans frontières for its expertise.

AN INNOVATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION TO POWER HEALTH CENTERS

The project led by Electriciens sans frontières aims at **providing health centers with an independent power supply, allowing them to maintain their operational treatment capacities during natural disasters**. In December of 2018, the NGO's expert volunteers supervised the installation of **stand alone solar kits** on the roofs of six health centers.

Harnessing solar energy helps decarbonize the island's energy mix and **reduce its environmental footprint**. Improving resilience in a Small Island Developing State also means improving local finances: solar energy power supplies contribute to **reducing functioning costs for the Health Ministry**, usually highly dependent on the price of oil and imported energy, notably by injecting surplus energy into the national grid. The **stand alone kits are climate resilient**: not reliant on the grid, they allow the centers to function autonomously, with a battery capacity of 3 days without sun. Specific technology was chosen for the panels to be easily removable they can be stored during the storm and re-installed after.

This partnership between an NGO specialized in access to energy, two local ministries engaged in a strategy to fight climate change, and a local private sector eager to develop its expertise of renewable energy, is **an example to follow of what can be done to answer today's issues, both for the environment and for development**.



Discover the project in images in the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VdUZluSDLi0>

CONTINUING THE FIGHT IN FAVOR OF UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO CLEAN ENERGY

Following the success of these pilot installations, the project is already being replicated on community centers throughout the island and could be extended to 6 other health centers with the appropriate funds. It could easily be scaled to other island states facing similar challenges, such as Haiti.

As one of the laureates of the UN Climate Change Award 2019, our Electricians without borders are invited to present their actions during the next international Climate Conference, “COP25”, happening in December in Santiago, Chile.

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Electriciens sans frontières, French international NGO and registered charity has been fighting since 1986 against inequalities of access to electricity and water throughout the world. With the support of our 1300 volunteers and through partnerships with local actors, we make access to electricity a lever for human and economic development.

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