



Brighten Haiti to Add Solar Energy to 109 Schools in Haiti

Bringing power and light to areas in Haiti without electricity for the first time

HILLSBORO, OR, August 24, 2021 - Brighten Haiti is pleased to announce the largest deployment of solar to schools in Haiti's history. Beginning January 2022, Brighten Haiti will begin installing solar energy systems on 109 schools in rural Haiti.

Less than 700 miles from Miami, Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Fewer than 35% of Haitian schools have access to basic electricity. Schools are run without lights, fans to keep classrooms cool, computers, tablets, or copiers. Dramatically underserving local populations, schools without electricity provide limited benefits to a 21st century population. And as a recent [UNESCO study](#) showed, "low levels of education and acquisition of that education can hinder economic prosperity, which would, in turn, slow down poverty reduction." Education is a clear path out of poverty.



Residents in the Durissy area working to rebuild their road.

Each rural school will receive a 6kW PV system. Furnishing schools with independent, off-grid solar systems will provide electricity enough to power a computer lab, high efficiency lights, fans, and a few additional devices. With the systems offering self-sufficient electricity, schools will not be tied to the inconsistency of an intermittent power grid, assuming power is available in the area served.

In light of the [7.2 earthquake, followed closely by tropical storm Grace](#), that hit an already vulnerable Haiti, the need for rural off-grid solar systems has come into even more stark relief. A PV system on a local school can provide the surrounding area with a source of electricity when an area is cut off by disaster.

In 2019, prior to founding Brighten Haiti, Kevin Keene had the privilege of helping install solar at the rural school in Durissy, Haiti, bringing electricity to the school for the first time.



Durissy School in Haiti with PV system installed in 2019 by Twende Solar and PV modules donated by Heliene.



Students at the Durissy School ready to learn. They now have access to lights, fans, and will soon have a fully functional computer lab complete with Wikipedia, Kahn Academy and 2,300 books all in Haitian Creole, French, English and Spanish.

“We have been able to make contact with people in the Durissy area after the earthquake. The bridge to their area is out. Thankfully they have access to independent electricity for lighting and refrigeration,” said Kevin. “It shows us just how important these systems are beyond the impressive impacts to education.”

Brighten Haiti has created a bridge between areas in need in Haiti and the US solar industry. Through the organization’s [Solar Re-USE program](#) and partnerships with the solar supply chain, paired with Brighten Haiti’s successful solar apprenticeships, the organization is able to provide both training and significantly reduced cost solar PV systems to schools.

“I’m thrilled that we have found a way to install PV systems for schools in Haiti at a fifth the typical cost. The generosity of our solar partners has made it possible to install a 6kW off-grid system for about \$6,000, where we would normally see that same system installed at about \$30,000. That’s \$1 per watt, installed.

And we are able to provide installation training giving people access to solar jobs after the training is complete,” said Kevin.

To date, Brighten Haiti has worked with several US solar companies to ship nearly 4,000 PV modules to Haiti. However, the need for solar equipment far outstrips what has been donated to Brighten Haiti. To meet the organization’s ambitious goal of 109 solar systems, Brighten Haiti is actively looking for additional resources and partners to procure solar modules and balance of system equipment at 75% of normal pricing. Business and individuals can get involved by donating equipment or by sponsoring one or more schools. For more information, or to sponsor a school, interested parties can reach out via the Brighten Haiti website at www.brightenhaiti.org.



About Brighten Haiti

Brighten Haiti couples solar energy with education to bring a strong path for economic development in Haiti. By providing solar to rural schools, clinics, and orphanages as well as training programs to sell and install solar, the organization is creating a sustainable model for education now and a future path to jobs. A 501c3 nonprofit, Brighten Haiti is always looking for people who want to get involved. “Men anpil, chay pa lou.” – Haitian proverb meaning “but many, load not heavy.” www.brightenhaiti.org

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