Project Summary

Project Background
Meeting the energy needs of refugees and other persons of concern (POCs) is a cross cutting issue to UNHCR, however energy interventions in UNHCR operations were limited in the past and did not satisfy the energy needs of refugees. Without access to energy, women and children may have to spend hours searching for firewood, risking their personal safety and taking time away from educational or livelihood activities. Without light or electricity, students cannot study in the evening and establishments such as medical and training centres can’t refrigerate lifesaving medication or power computers.
Given the wide-ranging impacts of energy provision, and the potential it holds for education and self-reliance, UNHCR was seeking to enhance its energy services through renewable energy (RE). The IKEA Foundation launched the Brighter Lives for Refugee campaign, which shall help fund UNHCR’s RE Programme in Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Jordan.

Project Objectives
UNHCR’s RE Programme started with a planning phase, which involved baseline assessments and renewable energy feasibility studies to inform the subsequent implementation phase.
The objective of the collaboration between UNHCR and INTEGRATION was to develop indicators which were then used to set a baseline on energy access in selected refugee camps in Bangladesh (Cox Bazar), Ethiopia (Dollo Ado) and Jordan (Azraq). Feasibility study was built on the results and explored potential energy interventions. This provided an adequate understanding of the current situation regarding overall energy access in UNHCR camps as well as to plan and implement energy interventions for PoCs. Cross-cutting issues closely relating to energy and its potential impact were included in the planning phase such as livelihoods, shelter and education.

Project Results
The project created an evidence base to inform the implementation phase of the Programme, including the development of context-specific energy strategies in the targeted operations. It achieved impact within UNHCR’s strategic planning as well as in the field, where new projects and activities could be commended. Building on the improved understanding of the energy use and supply challenges in refugee settings, concrete projects were commenced by UNHCR - including a cooking fuel intervention in Dollo Ado/Ethiopia and the development of a 10 MW solar photovoltaic plant in Azraq/Jordan).

Services Provided
• Desk Review:
  Lessons learned and recommendations from former experiences in RE programming and implementation related to energy in off-grid and humanitarian settings were assembled and analysed and a synthesis report comprising the existing know-how developed.
• Development of energy indicators:
  Indicators on sustainable energy were tested modified and agreed upon (incl. key performance indicators);
• Baseline survey:
  Established three baseline assessments through focus group discussions, key informant interviews and a representative HH sample on energy demand/ use in refugee and host communities, at both the household level (cooking, lighting, household appliances) and institutionally (e.g. communal lighting, water pumping, electricity for medical centers, schools and small enterprises); conducted data collection and analysis (including cooking performance tests); identified the energy preferences of the refugee and host communities;
• Feasibility Study:
  Assessment of availability and sustainability of energy sources and technology available locally and regionally; evaluation of sustainable renewable energy solutions; mapping exercise of technologies and partners; cost-benefit analysis; facilities and provision of recommendations.

Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Jordan
Assessment of Renewable Energy Options in Refugee Camps

Client
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Duration
15/10/2014 - 31/12/2017

Personnel
• 1 international STE (4 PM, team leader)
• 6 international STE (7 PM, energy and socio-economic experts)
• 9 national STE (7 PM, energy and socio-economic experts)