

Solar start-up helps power refugee camps in Syria

December 19 2013



Credit: Omar Alkhani

A start-up supported by Climate-KIC, the EU's main climate innovation initiative, is helping to supply Syrian refugees with solar-based light and power this winter.

Access to light and power is critical for [refugees](#) in Syria, where seven million are estimated to have fled their homes because of the [civil war](#).

Pocket-sized solar powered devices can provide immediate assistance as well as long-term relief and can enable survivors to see after dark and to charge their phones to connect with family members and loved ones elsewhere.

Climate-KIC start-up Solease – a Dutch company which offers [solar panels](#) for a fixed monthly fee – collaborates on a new initiative to supply refugees in Syria with these devices.

WakaWaka, a producer of pocket-sized solar powered lamps and battery cells has recently launched a 'buy one, give one' campaign whereby they are donating one pocket-sized solar phone charger and light to Syrian refugees for every unit they sell.

Solease has purchased 50 solar-powered phone chargers and lights as part of its own sustainable strategy. With an estimated impact of five persons per device this could benefit 250 refugees. Solease will hand-out its WakaWaka devices to private households who become Solease clients before February 2014.

Fast growing start-up

Solease, winner of the Dutch edition of the Climate-KIC Venture Competition in 2012 and one of the competitors at the Climate-KIC Innovation Festival in Bologna, is one of the fastest growing Climate-KIC start-ups in the Netherlands.

Within its hassle-free lease model, Solease purchases the [solar system](#), has it installed and takes care of long-term finance, insurance, monitoring and repairs.



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Crowdfunding

WakaWaka initially launched its products on crowdfunding website [Kickstarter.com](https://www.kickstarter.com) in 2012.

The Netherlands-based company has partnered with the International Rescue Committee and the Dutch Refugee Organisation to provide crisis aid to fleeing Syrian citizens.

Over 25.000 WakaWaka Powers have already been provided. This enables more than an estimated 100.000 refugees to safely see, study, move about, cook, read and gather after darkness, without the risk of tent fires due to the use of kerosene lights.

The [solar-powered](#) devices also allow them to charge their phones and connect with other [family members](#) and loved ones caught in the horrors of the civil war.

Provided by Climate-KIC

Citation: Solar start-up helps power refugee camps in Syria (2013, December 19) retrieved 7 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2013-12-solar-start-up-power-refugee-syria.html>

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