



First solar burundi

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This will only take a second!

President of Burundi Évariste Ndayishimiye officially inaugurated a solar power plant near the country's capital on Tuesday together with the CEO of the renewable energy company Gigawatt Global. The solar field, which is in Mubuga in the central Gitega province, has provided more than 10% of Burundi's electricity since becoming operational two years ago.

At the inauguration, President Ndayishimiye and Gigawatt Global CEO Yosef Abramowitz discussed plans to increase the solar field's generating capacity, hoping to double the amount of energy it produces.

The solar field was constructed between January 2020 and October 2021 by Gigawatt Global's local subsidiary Gigawatt Global Burundi SA. The multinational effort was Burundi's first substantial energy generation project in over three decades, and the 7.5-megawatt solar field is the country's first utility-scale solar power station.

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Abramowitz told The Media Line that the project's success proves that solar energy is a viable solution for developing countries. "We wanted to show the world that clean energy is not just for rich countries, but it can be for all people, and it can bring social and economic development," he said.

Abramowitz grew up between Israel and America. After moving to Kibbutz Ketura in southern Israel in 2006, he co-founded the Arava Power Company, one of Israel's first solar energy companies.

People from all over the world, especially Africa, reached out to Abramowitz after he founded the company, asking him how to bring solar power to their countries. "So, we started Gigawatt Global to take our know-how and technology and bring it to sub-Saharan Africa," Abramowitz said.

After succeeding in Rwanda, the leaders of Gigawatt Global decided to bring solar energy to Burundi, which, according to the Human Development Index, is one of the least-developed countries on the planet.

"Everyone said: that's going to be impossible, you cannot do it in Burundi, there are so many different reasons," Abramowitz said.

The project has succeeded financially as well. According to Abramowitz, the cost of constructing the field was \$15 million. "And I'm pleased to say that the government is meeting its financial obligations, which is why



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we're going to invest more and expand the solar field," he said.

Abramowitz said that Gigawatt Global allows investors to do good and make financial gains. "They just have to be a bit more patient" than they would if they were investing in a company without a social conscience, he said.

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