SunCulture

Critical transitions:

Stronger Rural Livelihoods

Innovation: Shared services/Fintech

Geographic focus: Africa

$: n/a

SunCulture is a technology company aiming to empower and increase smallholder farmer's yields through the development, financing and sale of off-the-grid solar-powered water pumps.

Many smallholder farmers in Africa are relying on expensive diesel-powered or unreliable and labour-intensive manual irrigation techniques for their crops. Powered by solar energy, SunCulture's irrigation systems significantly reduce farmers' operating costs. SunCulture has a wide variety of products ranging from basic solar-powered water pumps, solar-powered irrigation system (including Africa's first commercial solar-powered product), and a "ClimateSmart Battery" irrigation systems that also powers a household's lights, charges phones and has an optional TV power supply add-on.[136] Additionally, SunCulture is offering business advice to smallholder farmers and offers "pay-as-you-go" financing, enabling smallholder farmers to close the financing gap to acquiring the irrigation systems.[137]

So far, SunCulture has been a success, with farmers reporting increases of up to three times usual crop yields where new irrigation systems are installed, significant cost reductions when SunCulture's systems replace fuel-powered water pumps, and a significant labour reduction where they replace manually operated wells. SunCulture currently operates out of Nairobi, Kenya and serves the African market. The company vision is to expand globally, targeting the 500+ million smallholder farming households around the world.[138]

Stakeholders:

USAID; SNV; PG Impact Investments; EEP Africa; Energy Access Ventures; REEEP; Shell Foundation; EDF; Microsoft; GSMA; MIT

Status:

Operational