Solar PV Training in the Pacific Islands

Funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and led by Arizona State University (ASU) in close partnership with the University of the South Pacific (USP), the VOCTEC program provides education on solar photovoltaic (PV) energy technology to the Pacific Islands region. To ensure the sustainability of the program, VOCTEC collaborates with educational institutions and other organizations to build local capacity (train-the-trainer model) to support off-grid solar PV equipment installation, operation and maintenance.

Quick facts:
- 33 educators trained
- Over 100 technicians trained
- 5 regional training centers started
- Partnerships established with 11 local institutions
- 80% increase in technicians' skills and knowledge
- 34 mobile training toolkits distributed
- Use of virtual training material to support learning
- High acceptance of women participation

“The Pacific region (like many other developing countries) is littered with non-functional solar PV lighting systems which could have been saved by basic maintenance and troubleshooting. USP has joined hands with ASU's excellent VOCTEC programme to produce a cadre of solar technicians. This initiative will surely help increased access to clean energy to people living in remote islands and other off-grid areas.”

Learn more: http://voctec.asu.edu/pacific
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Pacific Island Nations face a number of barriers to clean energy development. Of the twelve countries in the Pacific Islands region, five are classified by the United Nations as ‘least developed’ countries, and all have limited financial resources. Development of human capacity for grid-connected and off-grid solar PV must also overcome the economies of scale problem that the islands face as they struggle to support multiple specialized training programs. In order to provide this institutional support, the VOCTEC team identified Fiji as the training hub for the USAID project in the Pacific region.

What is VOCTEC?

The "Vocational Training and Education for Clean Energy" (VOCTEC) program, under the leadership of Arizona State University (ASU), is a 5 year global program funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). VOCTEC aims to improve the sustainability of renewable energy infrastructure and investments in developing countries by increasing awareness, knowledge and capacity of local stakeholders, primarily in decentralized clean energy technologies.