



How to design successful minigrids that meet the needs of rural communities

Access to electricity is a major issue in Tanzania – in rural areas, around 80% of households do not have access. As well as being an under-researched area, research often takes place in silos. Researchers tend to be based in the Global North, so there is an extractive nature to research that limits the impact it has on the ground. Thanks to funding from the Fuel Poverty Research network, we have been able to work with academics, NGOs, policy makers and minigrid practitioners in Tanzania to translate the findings of academic fieldwork into a helpful resource on designing minigrids for rural electrification.

Key messages

- Communities need to be included at early stages of policy making and project planning, particularly for sizing projects and deciding tariffs.
- Electrification projects should be joined up with other local development, such as improvements in transport and communication infrastructure, and healthcare and education services.
- This requires greater collaboration between minigrid developers, government bodies, non-governmental organisations and rural communities.
- There is a need for different approaches to financing. To be cost comparative with TANESCO (the national electricity provider), most minigrids need additional financial support. It is important that this is delivered in a way that fairly distributes the benefits.

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Resource available in English : <https://rb.gy/fecnp2> and Swahili : <https://rb.gy/wo0xs9>

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