



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**11<sup>th</sup> Hour Project Grants \$500K to Rebuild Haiti with Renewable Energy**  
*Climate Change Program Funds Solar Electrification for Partners In Health Clinics*

**Washington, DC – April 29** – The Solar Electric Light Fund (SELF) today announced that the 11<sup>th</sup> Hour Project of Palo Alto, Calif., has awarded SELF a \$500,000 grant to support the solar electrification of seven health clinics for Partners In Health (PIH) in Haiti. The clinics, operated by Zanmi Lasante (ZL), are located in the remote mountain highlands of Haiti and do not have access to the electric grid. In the aftermath of the January earthquake in Port-au-Prince, the health care facilities have been increasingly vulnerable to the unstable supply of diesel fuel needed to operate their generators.

PIH Executive Director Ophelia Dahl said: “With electricity knocked out around Haiti, surgeons were forced to operate on patients using flashlights. Laboratory and diagnostic equipment were rendered useless. Electric water pumps were nonfunctional. Gas generators helped fill the gap. But finding fuel quickly became difficult, and gas that could be found carried price tags as high as \$20 a gallon in the days following the earthquake. Many of our clinics powered by gas generators came uncomfortably close to running out of fuel.” As PIH moves from short-term relief efforts to long-term recovery and rebuilding work, finding sustainable ways to power hospitals has become a priority.

SELF installed the first 10 kW hybrid diesel system for ZL at the Boucan Carré clinic in September 2009. In response to the recent disaster, PIH has asked SELF to accelerate the timeline to provide solar energy systems to the nine remaining PIH/ZL-run clinics in the program. Robert Freling, SELF’s executive director, said: “We were very pleased to have been chosen by the 11th Hour Project as a grant recipient. This generous support comes at a crucial moment when Haiti, struggling to rebuild its infrastructure, has an opportunity to get it right with renewable energy.”

The solar electrification projects will play a key role in PIH’s three-year recovery and rebuilding plan. The plan includes, among other elements, continuing urgent medical and surgical care operations for earthquake survivors at the PIH/ZL facilities in the Central Plateau and Artibonite Departments; expanding capacity for specialty clinical services needed to care for earthquake survivors; and building and renovating public health infrastructure. Speaking last month at Harvard Medical School, PIH co-founder Dr. Paul Farmer said: “While this rebuilding creates unprecedented challenges, it also provides opportunities for real change...So the diagnosis is: natural disaster in a setting of great and longstanding privation...Haiti needs to build back better and stronger than before. This, then, should be the treatment plan.”

To complete the solar installations for the first five of the nine remaining health clinics, SELF must raise approximately \$1 million. A portion of this funding is coming from in-kind donations of solar panels, batteries and other system components. Richard LaRue, SELF’s development director, said: “We’re nearly there, thanks in large measure to the 11<sup>th</sup> Hour Project. Its generous grant put us on the fast track for getting the equipment—much of which has been donated in an equally generous response from solar industry leaders—up and running sooner than any of us could have hoped.”

Joe Sciortino, executive director of The Schmidt Family Foundation, which sponsors The 11th Hour Project, said: “We are honored to support the electrification of five priority clinics and to strengthen two additional scheduled installations. Given the enormity of the crisis on the ground, we see this project as an opportunity to build not only a clean, renewable energy supply, but also a sense of hope for the Haitian people that a brighter future might arise from such tragedy.”

The 11th Hour Project supports transformative efforts to mitigate the impacts of climate change, bringing new voices and ideas to the forefront. It works in partnership with innovative organizations such as Green for All, a group working to lift communities out of poverty by creating jobs in the emerging green economy; and The Regeneration Project, which deepens the connection between ecology and faith within religious communities.

“Climate change causes a shortage of natural resources, which causes a shortage of food and water, and this affects the population,” said Amy Rao, president of The 11th Hour Project. “I’m an environmentalist because I am a humanitarian, and if we wait long enough, there will be no humanity left.”

SELF is a Washington, DC-based nonprofit working to combat climate change and reduce energy poverty by bringing solar power and wireless Internet access to remote rural villages in the developing world. SELF has pioneered innovative applications of solar power for drip irrigation in Benin, telemedicine in the Amazon rainforest, vaccine refrigeration in Rwanda, online distance learning in South Africa, and microenterprise development in Nigeria. These successful pilot projects culminated in SELF’s whole-village approach, or Solar Integrated Development model. Since 1990, SELF has completed projects in 20 countries, making it a leader among non-governmental organizations in realizing practical and cost-effective alternative energy solutions for rural villagers.

### **About The 11<sup>th</sup> Hour Project**

The 11th Hour Project’s mission is to promote a fuller understanding of the impact of human activity within the web of interdependent living systems. It connects organizations with good information on how to develop a more responsible relationship with the world’s water, energy and food resources. Grants are directed towards organizations and programs that achieve these goals. For more information, please visit [www.11thhourproject.org](http://www.11thhourproject.org).

### **About SELF**

The Solar Electric Light Fund (SELF) is a Washington, DC-based nonprofit organization working to end global poverty by bringing solar power and Internet access to the world’s poorest people in remote rural areas. SELF utilizes clean, renewable electricity to reduce greenhouse emissions while improving the health, education and welfare of the two billion people living in energy poverty. Since its founding in 1990, SELF has launched sustainable projects in 20 countries, including Benin, Brazil, China, Haiti, India, Nepal, Nigeria, Rwanda, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe. For more information, please visit [www.self.org](http://www.self.org).

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