

Commercial microgrids kiev

Energy decentralization is one of the priority tasks for transforming Ukraine's energy system, with the aim of strengthening energy sustainability and the security of electricity supply to consumers. This is foreseen at the level of strategic planning both for the near future, in particular for preparing for the heating season, and for the further development of the energy industry in the long term.

In general, community energy efficiency and renewable energy sources (RES) development vary greatly depending on the region and the level of organization in the communities themselves. However, a steady trend towards increasing energy efficiency and RES development over the previous five years can be noted. The decentralization reform, the creation of communities as administrative-territorial units, and, accordingly, the decentralization of funding significantly impacted this.

This means that effective microgrid models in Ukraine can be spread only when the concept of "smart grids" is simultaneously implemented. Renewable energies and local microgrids also offer benefits, such as economic opportunities and job creation for communities in rural areas, by opening up new sources of income.

In our new report, "Challenges and opportunities for the development of distributed generation and microgrids in communities", you can read about the technical aspects of the introduction of microgrids, recommendations for communities planning the development of microgrids at the municipal level, and issues that should be considered when developing the concept of creating a microgrid.

"We have to do something," Will Heegaard, operations manager for Footprint Project -- a nonprofit that provides solar microgrids and other emergency power systems to disaster areas -- told Paul Shmotolokha just hours after Russia launched its invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24.

Heegaard and Shmotolokha -- a Ukrainian-American and CEO of New Use Energy -- are no strangers to disaster. New Use Energy provides solar microgrids, solar headlamps, humanitarian aid and other products to regions hit by hurricanes and other crises, often supplying emergency power systems to Footprint Project. With the help of New Use Energy and others, Footprint Project has jumped into action to provide solar generators for communities affected by Hurricane Ida, for desperate Texans during the state's February 2021 deep freeze and other crises.

They got to work developing a coalition of non-profit, government and corporate partners. Global Empowerment Mission and SmartAid, both global relief organizations, stepped up to bolster the effort, and Shmotolokha's friends and family in the region offered critical insight into needs on the ground.

That morning, the pair developed a plan to send solar microgrids to Ukrainian hospitals and emergency power



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equipment to a refugee camp in neighboring Moldova. In these areas, grid power is generally not available because of the war's devastation. (PowerOutage has begun tracking grid outages in Ukraine.) Gas- and diesel-fired generators are being used as backup power, spewing pollution and noise. What's more, it's difficult and dangerous to acquire fuels for the backup generators, said Shmotolokha.

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