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GRID Alternatives launches Mexico initiative with solar installation for Baja California Orphanage

First project brings lower energy bills, more resources to help children in the border region

OAKLAND, CA, November 28, 2017 — GRID Alternatives, a national leader in making solar power and job training accessible to underserved communities, today announced the launch of an initiative to bring its solar program to communities in need in neighboring Mexico. In October, staff from GRID Alternatives' San Diego affiliate and [International Program](#) successfully completed the nonprofit's first Mexico project, travelling across the border to install a no-cost solar electric system benefiting children at a Baja, California orphanage.

The project, a partnership with GETCHARGEDUP and Corazón de Vida, will lower energy costs by up to 90 percent for the *Casa Hogar Ebenezer*, freeing up an average of \$500 each month to help support the 35 displaced and orphaned children who live there. The project also provided hands-on solar installation training for 23 students of the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California

"Despite the border between us, communities in San Diego and Mexico share the same opportunity to power better lives through solar energy," says Gustavo Valdez, Mexico Project Coordinator for GRID Alternatives. "For the kids who live at *Casa Hogar Ebenezer*, these solar panels mean less money spent on energy bills and more resources available for everything from school supplies to clothes."

Casa Hogar Ebenezer is one of 10 orphanages supported by Corazón de Vida, an Irvine-based nonprofit organization assisting orphaned and abandoned children in Baja California, Mexico. Panels for the project were donated by GETCHARGEDUP, which has also partnered with GRID Alternatives San Diego to provide job training to refugee youth.

"We usually don't get [cash] donations," remarked Eva Duarte, who runs the orphanage with her husband, Pastor Freddy Duarte. She noted that donations usually come in the form of food, appliances, clothes and toys for the children. "This new system will allow us to save actual money from the [energy] bill and put it where it's needed most."

With this first project complete, GRID Alternatives is continuing to work with partners on both sides of the border to identify high-need projects and raise funds. GRID's Mexico initiative

adds a third country to GRID Alternatives' International Program, which also works with communities in Nicaragua and Nepal to improve lives through solar power.

ABOUT GRID ALTERNATIVES

GRID Alternatives is an international nonprofit organization that makes renewable energy technology and job training accessible to underserved communities. GRID brings together community partners, volunteers and job trainees to implement solar power and energy efficiency for low-income families, providing energy cost savings, hands-on installation experience, and a source of clean, local energy that benefits everyone. GRID Alternatives has nine regional offices and affiliates serving California, Colorado, the mid-Atlantic region, and Tribal communities nationwide. Our international program also provides solar to communities in Nicaragua, Nepal and Mexico. For more information, visit

www.gridalternatives.org.