

PRESS RELEASE

Solar Television Raises Off-Grid Political Engagement

- 90% of new solar television owners are more politically aware
- 89% have changed opinion of politics since getting solar television

5 July 2017, Nairobi, Kenya... New off-grid solar television owners are feeling more politically engaged in the 2017 elections and their opinions on politics have changed since acquiring their systems. These are some of the findings of *Tuned in*, a report launched today by M-KOPA that looks at the role of solar television in the off-grid economy.

The report includes research conducted with off-grid homes in Kenya, who have recently acquired a solar television for the first time. It shows that 90% of new off-grid television owners in Kenya feel that they are more politically aware since getting their systems.

Pauline Githugu, Director for External Affairs, M-KOPA says, “New solar television owners feel a new level of confidence and social inclusion and this is driving civic engagement. Off-grid homes with radio, smartphones and television will now have access to almost all of the information channels that their civic leaders use.”

89% of people living off-grid report that their opinion of politics has changed since getting solar television. This opinion change is driven by three main factors; the ability to get information first hand, television images helping to judge individuals and generally being more politically informed.

The research shows that new off-grid solar television owners are forming certain perceptions of individuals they see on television. 80% of people say that they have better perceptions of politicians since getting their solar television.

Githugu says, “We know that news and education is the leading reason for off grid homes getting a solar television. It is clear that television news is giving off-grid citizens a new perspective on big moments in the political process, as well as the individuals involved.”

Solar televisions are driving advances in off-grid homes. The research shows that for these homes, the leading lifestyle improvement is being more informed on current affairs. A much smaller number of homes say that the leading lifestyle benefit is bringing entertainment into the home.

Millions of Kenyans are still off-grid and unable to access the country’s dominant visual information source – television – in their own homes.

Jesse Moore CEO and Co-Founder, M-KOPA says, “Television still has a vital role to play in helping Kenya strengthen its information-intensive social and economic systems. The growth of solar television and smartphones will see millions more Kenyans being included in information society. By the end of this year, M-KOPA alone will be providing information access to over a million people through our smartphones and televisions.”



To date, M-KOPA has connected over 500,000 homes in East Africa to affordable, safe and clean energy. Its customers access lighting, phone charging, radio and TV on daily mobile money payment plans that are less than the average cost of kerosene.

Customers who complete their payment plans are upgrading their lives with access to more assets for information access. The company has sold well over 170,000 upgrade products to date - including over 100,000 solar televisions and Internet-connected smartphones.

To download a copy of *Tuned In*, please go to <http://www.m-kopa.com/television-and-civic-engagement-in-off-grid-society/>

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Notes to Editors:

About M-KOPA

M-KOPA is the world's leading 'pay-as-you-go' energy provider to off grid homes. The company has developed a better way to provide affordable, safe and clean energy to millions of people living off the grid. Thanks to the sun's rays and mobile technology, customers can light up their homes, charge their phones and tune into the radio and TV. They can do all this at the flick of a switch and for less than they used to spend on kerosene.

For more information visit: www.m-kopa.com.