NEW ENERGY NEXUS Philippines

‘People are turning to solar’

Surveying Philippines’ Rooftop Solar Installers

BRIEFING PAPER
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Energy price shocks are driving a surge in demand for rooftop solar in the Philippines, but installers are struggling to keep up.

Executive Summary

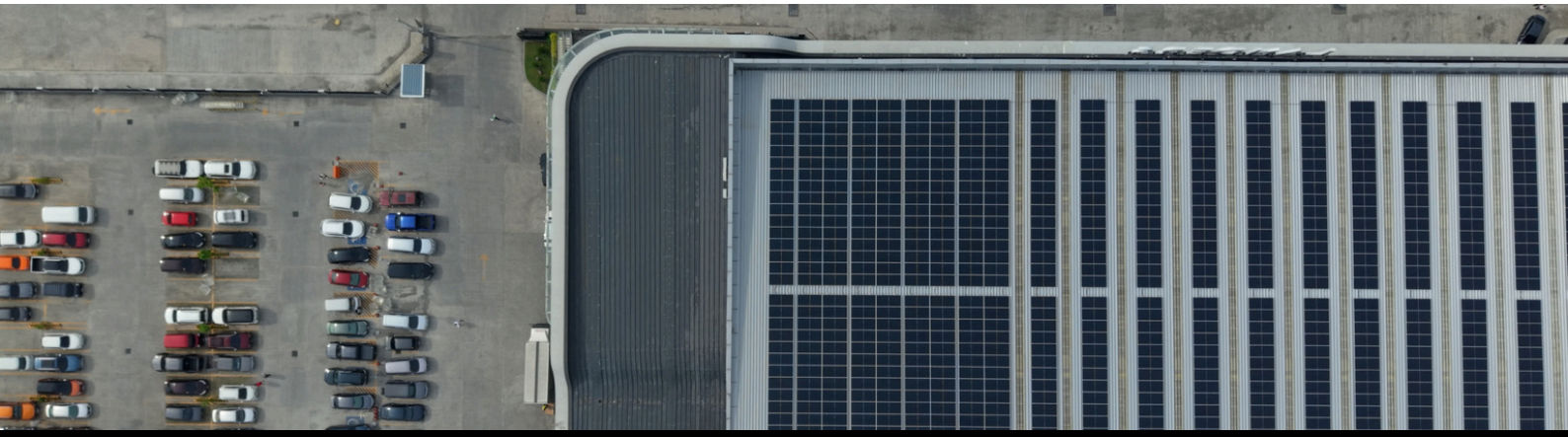
New Energy Nexus (NEX) Philippines is a non-profit organization supporting solar installers, entrepreneurs, and training partners across the country, including some of the country's first provincial-level trade associations. In response to the current oil and gas crisis, we conducted a rapid survey of small- to medium-sized rooftop solar companies, primarily serving residential customers with some commercial projects, to understand how rising fuel and electricity prices are affecting installation activity. The findings provide a real-time snapshot of current market conditions on the ground.

Installers report a sharp rise in inquiries as households and businesses look to cut exposure to rising electricity costs. Installations are increasing more slowly, held back by supply shortages, price volatility, and limited workforce capacity. The constraint is not demand; the system is not positioned to absorb a shock of this magnitude.

Context

The Philippines imports virtually all of its oil, and its electricity rates are among the highest in Southeast Asia. Every fuel price spike is transmitted directly into household power bills and business operating costs. What is different about the current moment is the response: rather than waiting for government programs, Filipino households and businesses are turning to local solar installers on their own initiative.

This is happening against a backdrop of significant latent potential. Rooftop solar installations nationwide are estimated at approximately 1,846 MW against a total rooftop potential of around 106,000 MW. The country has set national targets of 35% renewable energy in its power mix by 2030 and 50% by 2040. The demand signal from this crisis is real; the question is whether the market can deliver.



‘Panic mode’ as demand surges

Across the 20 firms surveyed, total weekly customer inquiries rose from 114 before the crisis to 456 now. The typical installer went from handling around three inquiries per week to roughly 16, an average increase of 582% and roughly a sixfold jump from the pre-crisis baseline.

The individual figures behind that average are striking. Metrogreen in Bulacan/Pampanga went from two inquiries per week to 80, a 3,900% increase. Sonnelink in Pangasinan went from 50 to 120. 10K GDC in Bohol jumped from two to 30 per week. EcoSolutions, serving Manila and nearby provinces, reports calls jumping from roughly one per hour to four per hour. One alumni installer in the network reports 23 inquiries weekly, partly fueled by the GSIS solar loan program layered on top of oil price anxiety. These are not outliers concentrated in one region. They span all three island groups.

> ***“People are in panic mode. Making them come to us installers instead of us coming to them.”***
> **— Solar installer from Imus Cavite**
>
> ***"The demand for solar and EVs now has skyrocketed due to some people's anxiety of increasing fuel cost brought by the Iran gulf crisis. Most of those that owned EVs have finally decided to also install rooftop solar systems so their fuel will be free. There's a shortage of solar equipments especially solar hybrid inverters."***
> **— Archimedes Flores, DA Green Power Consultancy, Cebu**

Installations are rising, but being throttled by supply

Actual installations are also up, but substantially less so. Across comparable responses, weekly installations rose from 29.5 to 68.6, an average increase of 170%. The typical installer moved from about one installation per week to roughly three.

The gap between a 582% inquiry surge and a 170% installation increase is the central tension in this data. Demand is running far ahead of what the market can physically deliver, and the constraint is not consumer hesitation, not labor, and not financing. It is components. SPARC Solar in Albay reports zero installations despite a 150% increase in inquiries: they simply have no supplies. 10K GDC in Bohol has 22 confirmed installation projects sitting in a queue it cannot fulfill. Air Wireless Internet Services reports inquiries up from 3 to 10 per week, but actual installations: none. No materials.

The Philippines is not failing to generate interest in solar. It is failing to convert that interest into installed systems because the supply chain was not built to absorb a demand shock of this size.

What's holding the market back

Installers operating independently across the archipelago describe the same five constraints in near-identical terms:

1 **Supply chain collapse.** Every respondent flagged stockouts and long lead times as their primary challenge. Multiple installers independently allege that larger distributors are buying up components in bulk ahead of further price increases and reselling at a premium, leaving small operators with nothing. One respondent reported material price increases of 30 to 100% on specific items. NEX's broader research has consistently identified supply chain fragility and the absence of long-term inventory arrangements as a critical barrier for small and mid-sized installers. The current crisis has made it acute.

2 **Price volatility.** Equipment costs are shifting weekly, sometimes within the timeframe of preparing a customer quote. As one installer put it: "Pabago-bago presyo, mahirap mag-quote confidently /"Prices fluctuate, it's hard to quote confidently." This uncertainty undermines both installer confidence and the customer financing arrangements that are already the sector's biggest structural constraint.

3 **Workforce limits.** Solar installation requires real supervised experience: roughly six months for a lead electrician, two to three installations for an engineer to work independently. Demand has grown faster than training pipelines can accommodate. As 10K GDC in Bohol noted: "Dahil sa biglang pagtaas ng demand, mahirap makahanap ng skilled workers." (Because of the sudden rise in demand, it's hard to find skilled workers.) This cannot be resolved in weeks.

4 **Logistics costs**. Higher diesel prices are hitting installers twice: transporting materials to job sites, and conducting the site visits required before installation. True North, operating across Tacloban, Ormoc, and Calbayog, flagged transportation as a compounding burden. Some installers are now charging for visits previously offered free.

5 **Market quality erosion**. Rising demand has drawn a wave of inexperienced new entrants offering lower prices without the technical capacity to deliver reliable systems. Respondents describe clients shopping quotes to copy and undercut, scammers, and growing consumer distrust. The absence of mandatory installation standards becomes a consumer protection issue when demand spikes sharply and unqualified entrants flood in.

What this means and what needs to happen

The Philippines has one of the largest untapped rooftop solar opportunities in Southeast Asia, and this crisis has made clear that consumer demand is not the barrier. The gaps are structural: supply chains, financing, and a workforce that takes months to build. Closing them is a policy task as much as a market one:

Expand financing.
Consumer and installer access to rooftop solar financing remains the sector's most persistent constraint. Supplier credit lines, inventory financing, and simplified loan products for households and small businesses would help convert the current wave of interest into completed projects.

Streamline permitting and net metering.
Faster, more predictable grid connection and net metering processes would reduce friction that disproportionately affects small installers and their customers.

Stabilize supply chains.
The distribution practices that multiple installers are flagging as potentially anticompetitive warrant scrutiny from the Department of Energy and the Philippines Competition Commission. Working with the industry to build long-term supply arrangements would give installers the certainty to fulfill confirmed orders.

Set and enforce installation standards.
Clear, mandatory standards would protect consumers from unqualified operators entering the market and preserve the trust that the solar sector depends on for long-term growth.

Brenda Valerio, Country Director, New Energy Nexus Philippines:

"Our survey shows a significant gap between inquiry surge and actual installation growth. The constraint isn't demand, it's everything on the supply and execution side. The fuel crisis created a demand shock that the supply chain wasn't positioned to absorb."

“The Philippines has set targets of 35% renewable energy by 2030 and 50% by 2040. But targets don’t build rooftop solar. Installers are already sitting on confirmed orders they can’t fulfill because materials aren’t there. That gap between ambition and delivery should be setting off alarm bells for policymakers”

"Regulators need to look hard at what's happening in the components supply chain. We're hearing from installers across three island groups that larger distributors are buying up inventory ahead of price increases and reselling at a premium. That's not a market functioning well. It's a market being gamed at the worst possible time."

"Three things would make a real difference quickly. Get financing products to households and small businesses — the demand is there but the ability to pay upfront isn't. Fix the net metering process, because right now it's slow enough to kill sales that have already been made. And set mandatory installation standards before the rush of new entrants does lasting damage to consumer trust. The IEA sees the Philippines as a regional leader in this transition. Whether that actually happens is a policy question as much as a market one."

Our Methodology

NEX Philippines conducted this rapid survey in April 2026. Of 24 total responses, 20 firms provided sufficient data for before-and-after comparison on inquiries and 17 on installations. Respondents are distributed solar installers serving household and business customers across approximately 17 provinces and metropolitan areas spanning Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao.

This is a real-time pulse from NEX Philippines' network, not a nationally representative market study. It does not capture total installed capacity in megawatts or formally segment residential from commercial systems. Percentage figures should be read as indicative of magnitude rather than precise statistics. Despite these limitations, the consistency of responses, with the same challenges described independently by firms operating from Pangasinan to Davao, provides a credible snapshot of current market conditions.

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