



# GREEN MINI GRID FACILITY | KENYA

## POWERING PEOPLE

# LIGHTING RURAL KENYA

## Inclusive Electrification in Busia County



The Africa Progress Panel in its 2015 report illustrated Africa's massive and urgent energy needs. The traditional way of expanding energy access – increasing electricity generation capacity and extending the grid – is still vital and laudable. However, the International Energy Agency (IEA) estimates that 140 million people in Africa will gain access to electricity through mini-grids. This would require the installation of 4,000 to 8,000 mini-grids a year for the next 25 years.

Kenya's energy sector is dynamic characterized by aggressive grid extension plans and a vibrant off-grid solar market. However, the country's dispersed population presents challenges for electrification. To bridge this gap home solar energy systems have become particularly popular. Moreover, there is greater investment in building mini grids to power remote populations.

The Green Mini Grid Facility Kenya (GMG Facility) is providing technical assistance, output based connection grants, and milestone capital investment grants to mini-grid developers in Kenya. The mini grids will provide reliable power, improve income, spur women empowerment as well as provide opportunities for consistent income for youth.

The GMG Facility has to date provided grants to three mini grid developers with a target of reaching over 60,000 people through household and small business connections.

After receiving technical assistance from the GMG Facility for demand assessment and financial business model support, RVE.Sol has

been awarded a grant to scale their 8.5 kW mini grid site in Sidonge, Busia County. This grant will provide capital to scale the electrification efforts to 15 villages in the County resulting in approximately 2000 connections.

### Consistent incomes for the youth

A stone's throw away from the Sidonge mini grid facility, Frederick Ojiambo is busy in his barbershop, on this day he has many clients waiting to get a haircut.

As he trims a customer's hair, "...My friends and I used to walk for ten kilometres to the nearest town centre, Funyula to get our hair cut. This gave me an idea to start this barbershop which is doing quite well."

Frederick who prior to opening his barbershop was working as a casual labourer on farms, now

makes an average of KSh.38,400 a month and spends KSh.1,100 on electricity. With this barbershop, Frederick now has a more consistent monthly income.

Frederick is slowly becoming an icon in his community as he has shown other youth that they too, with the provision of electricity, can start businesses and make some money for themselves and their families. Consequently, a number of businesses owned and run by the youth such as video halls and phone charging have come up in Sidonge.

This young entrepreneur is not resting on his laurels; he plans to venture into chicken rearing. "In the near future I see myself being a large chicken farmer, as I see myself having a large incubator to rear lots of chicken thanks to the power I can get from this mini grid."



Frederick trims the hair of a customer at his mini-grid powered barbershop in Sidonge

## Spurring women empowerment



RVE.Sol trained potential women entrepreneurs in Sidonge on productive uses of energy

Milsa Okochi runs a fruit juice business in Sidonge village. Before venturing into this business, Milsa who is a mother of 10 was a stay-at-home mum who used to assist her husband on their farm.

After the setting up of the Sidonge mini-grid facility, RVE.Sol came to the realisation that very few women had set up businesses (as compared to men and youth). It was then that Milsa and other women from Sidonge were identified and consequently

trained on productive use of energy and entrepreneurship.

Armed with new skills and knowledge, Milsa purchased a blender at a cost of KSh.12,000 from which she makes a profit of KSh.3,000 every week. She pays KSh.500 for electricity every month, which she says is affordable as she shares her premises with another lady who sells chips.

"My children are really proud of my business.

Some even follow me to the shop (especially the younger ones) to see what I do and are quite keen to see the work that Mummy does. I have a son who has just cleared high school and has been so encouraged that he comes to help me make juice as he saves for his own business...he might soon be my competition."

With the increase in income, Milsa and her friends have recently started a table banking scheme where they put aside money each month. This has helped them carry out regular saving and pump capital into their individual businesses. The table banking group consists of 30 women who contribute KSh.200 every month.

"I would like to urge other women to go into business as this power (from the mini grid) is cheap. You will be able to supplement your family income. I can now purchase household items such as salt and sugar with ease and can even pay for some of the school fees for our children. With money in the home life becomes easier and you see a lot of happiness," Milsa advises.

## MORE ABOUT THE GMG FACILITY

The Agence Française de Développement (AFD) is implementing the Green Mini Grid Facility Kenya (GMG Facility). Initially conceived and funded by DFID, the programme provides grants and technical assistance for promoting private sector mini grid development in Kenya. AFD secured additional funding from the European Union – Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund in 2018. The objective of the facility is to catalyze investment in this lagging sector and provide renewable powered electrification to over 100,000 people in Kenya by 2020.

## OUR PARTNERS

### Funding Partners



Co-funded by the European Union  
Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund



### Implementing Partner



### Managing Entity



in association with



### Programme Committee



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