

Webinar Series

February – March, 2023

# MULTIDIMENSIONAL IMPACT OF **IMPROVED ENERGY ACCESS**

Exploring the nexus between  
**women empowerment** through  
improved clean modern energy



## - INTERPRETATION



ESPAÑOL

FRANÇAIS

عربي

يرجى تحديد "برتغالي" للاستماع  
إلى المترجم الفوري باللغة العربية

## - MATERIALS AVAILABLE IN:

[https://hedera.online/en/webinars/energy\\_access.html](https://hedera.online/en/webinars/energy_access.html)

## - CONNECT WITH OTHERS:



## - MUTE YOUR MIC 😊







Needs assessment in Burundi by ILOFEM

© HEDERA

**Understanding the needs at client level with detailed and comprehensive assessments**

**Efficient tools for data collection and reporting**

**Empower institutions to set up and monitor their green finance programs**





# MULTIDIMENSIONAL IMPACT OF IMPROVED ENERGY ACCESS



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Feb – March 2023

*Live translations into Spanish, French, and Arabic*





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**February 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Host**

**Rebecca Rhodes**  
Senior Project Manager  
**GOGLA**

**Nathyeli Acuña Castillo**  
Gender Specialist  
**ESMAP**  
Energy Sector Management Assistance Program

**March 1<sup>st</sup>**

**Dr. Natalia Realpe Carrillo**  
CEO  
**HEDERA**

**March 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Gina Rodolico**  
Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist  
**UN CDF**

**March 29<sup>th</sup>**

**Dr. Zewdy Gebremedhin**  
AgriFinance Team Leader  
**giz**  
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH



**HEDERA**

WEBINAR SERIES: MULTIDIMENSIONAL IMPACT OF IMPROVED ENERGY ACCESS



**Nathyeli Acuña**



Ask Women about their needs.

Keep in mind their context.

Keep them safe.

Audits and transparency are important.

- Understand and address **access** to finances gap
- Microfinance should be a mean not a goal.
- Women entrepreneurs should be included in value chains.
- Reaching out to women considering their characteristics as clients.
- Innovate! – Technology is key!



*Mar 1, 2023*

## **MESSAGES FOR THE FINANCIAL INCLUSION SECTOR**



WEBINAR SERIES: MULTIDIMENSIONAL IMPACT OF IMPROVED ENERGY ACCESS

Empowering Women & Youth in the Energy Access Supply Chain

Wednesday, March 15, 2023



# MULTIDIMENSIONAL IMPACT OF IMPROVED ENERGY ACCESS



Gina Rodolico

Speaker



# WEBINAR EMPOWERING WOMEN & YOUTH IN THE ENERGY ACCESS SUPPLY CHAIN

GINA RODOLICO



## Empowering Women & Youth in the Energy Access Supply Chain



Gina Rodolico

Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist



## GINA RODOLICO

### UNCDF Consultant: Clean Energy Investment Due Diligence and Portfolio Monitoring Specialist in Africa

- Supported UNCDF's Clean Energy Challenge Funds in Uganda since 2015
- Assisted in defining the portfolio's social, financial and environmental indicators to track and aggregate results across UNCDF's Clean Energy portfolio.
- Transferred lessons learned from the Uganda Challenge Funds to Burkina Faso and DR Congo Challenge Funds.

1992-2012 a founding team of the US non-profit E+Co, an international sustainable investment company whose mission was to support clean energy enterprises delivering reliable, affordable energy in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Held numerous positions Final position was Chief Operating Officer and Director of Innovations with extensive travel to over 30 countries managing company business, building a pipeline of entrepreneurs, and facilitating business activity in Africa, Asia, & Latin America.

Launched a first-time carbon finance program to monetize carbon offsets generated from energy enterprises in developing countries.





# AGENDA

- Introduction
- Summary of Familiar Stats
- Clean Energy Value Chain
- Case studies
- Resources

*Gender equality is the state in which all people, regardless of their gender, have equal rights, freedoms, conditions and opportunities. It does not mean that people – for example women and men – become the same, but rather that they have equal life chances and are valued equally. This applies not only to equality of opportunity but also to equality of impact and benefits arising from economic, social, cultural and political development – as well as opportunity to shape and influence those values, norms and systems.*

Sources: IUCN, WHO, IFAD



## UNCDF's Work on Energy Access

The UNCDF programme contributes to achieving SDG 7 on affordable and clean energy for all, and SDG 8 focusing on decent inclusive work, economic growth and, more specifically, financial inclusion. The Programme aims to improve access to clean energy finance for poor and low-income people.

By partnering with energy and financial service providers and offering capital, data analytics, capacity building and policy advocacy services in the off-grid energy finance markets, UNCDF CleanStart has scaled energy business models for cleaner, efficient and more effective sources of energy for poor people.

This work leverages The UNCDF strategy 'Leaving no one behind in the digital era' is based on over a decade of experience in digital finance in Africa, Asia and the Pacific.

## Our Vision:

To dramatically scale up energy financing for the poor through a market-based approach that builds on:

- validated financing business models
- commercialization of technologies and services that offer value to low-income consumers
- new learning about the energy access market, in particular consumers, through research and knowledge exchanges between market actors
- network of technical experts experienced in supporting energy access market development
- advocacy for market-wide changes, such as policies and standards

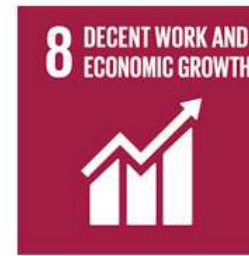


## Our Services:

- Investment in Innovative Solutions
- Technical Advisory Services
- Knowledge and learning
- Advocacy and Partnerships

## Our Value Add:

- Extensive experience in energy financing
- Market presence, knowledge, and networks
- Pipeline of investible enterprises
- Neutral market player
- Cross-sector synergies
- Strong bi-lateral relationships in country





# UNCDF CLEAN ENERGY ACCESS SPECIFIC INTERVENTIONS EMPOWERING WOMEN AND YOUTH

Empowering Women & Youth in  
the Energy Access Supply Chain

- Technical Assistance for proposal preparation, business strategy development and facilitating introductions to funders;
- Women & Youth job creation targets for grantees including recruiting training and retaining;
- Data collection on impacts: customers & jobs; and,
- Targeted research & funded pilot programmes to identify strategies to increase women working across the clean energy value chain.

## Overcoming gender biases through technical education



### Training Female Solar Technicians:

*Village Energy - one of the Energy Access partners through the Renewable Energy Challenge Fund(RECF) has used part of their grant to train 80 youth as solar technicians. 14 of these are women solar technicians.*







More women are studying and working in conservation than ever before. Robyn James, TNC’s director of gender and equity in the Asia-Pacific Region, examines how *institutional and cultural barriers still prevent many from participating in and leading conservation efforts. Removing those barriers is not only the ethical thing to do—it will make conservation work more effective than ever before.*

<https://www.nature.org/en-us/magazine/magazine-articles/women-in-conservation-robyn-james/>



# FAMILIAR STATS



**32%**

share of women in the renewable energy workforce

**22%**

share of women in oil and gas industry

## SIZE OF THE OPPORTUNITY



The renewable energy sector is estimated to **create nearly 29 million direct and indirect jobs** by 2050.<sup>1</sup>

**Women make up 48% of the global workforce.**

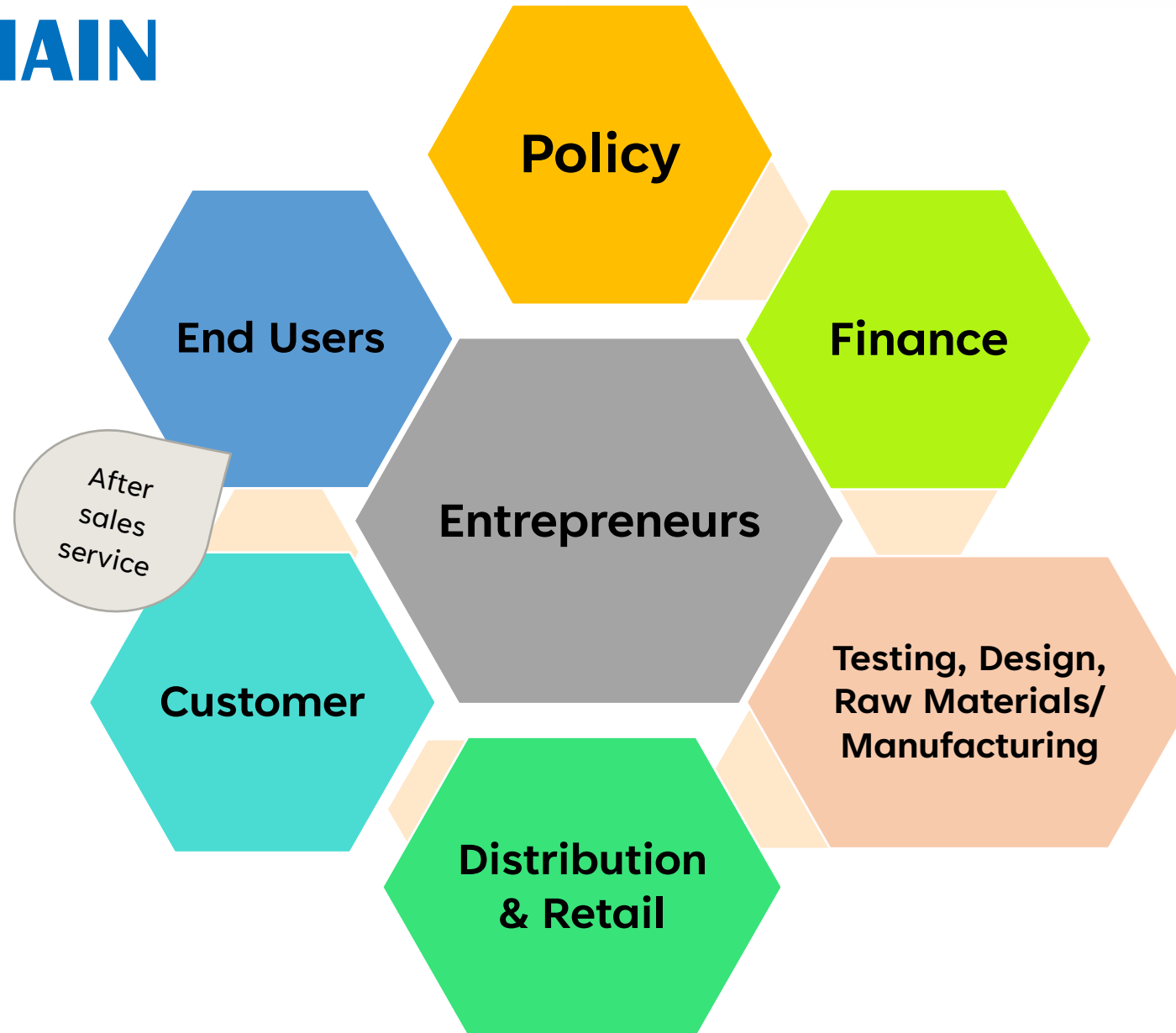


## A FEW OF THE BENEFITS TO HAVING MORE WOMEN IN THE CLEAN ENERGY SECTOR

- It is good business: businesses achieve higher revenues, market share and growth
  - Studies show women sales agents can outperform male agents and build effective relationships in communities
- Greater Innovation insights by women employees for women customers; targeted marketing, products and services
- Utilize the full potential of the work force



# ENERGY ACCESS VALUE CHAIN



Where do women and youth need increased representation in the energy access value chain?





# SPECIFIC ENTRY POINTS FOR WOMEN AND YOUTH



- Policy/Decision-Makers



- Enterprise Owners and/or Senior Management Roles



- Employees and Commission-Based Agents across all jobs



Distributors, Retailers, and Micro-Entrepreneurs



- Customers/End Users



## Full-time Employment

- Perceptions that women are less suited for technical roles.
- Companies struggle to identify and reach appropriate women candidates for such roles.
- Training requirements & lack of resources to cover this
- Lack of inclusive policies & practices.
- Rigid work schedules and travel requirements.

## Commission-based sales roles, field logistics:

- Travelling to wide geographical and remote areas.
- Reliance on motorcycles to travel
- Extended time away from home
- Social norms/attitudes

## Barriers for women in distribution roles

- Access to capital
- Lack of knowledge of record keeping, business management & financial management and stock control & loss.



# BARRIERS WOMEN FACE

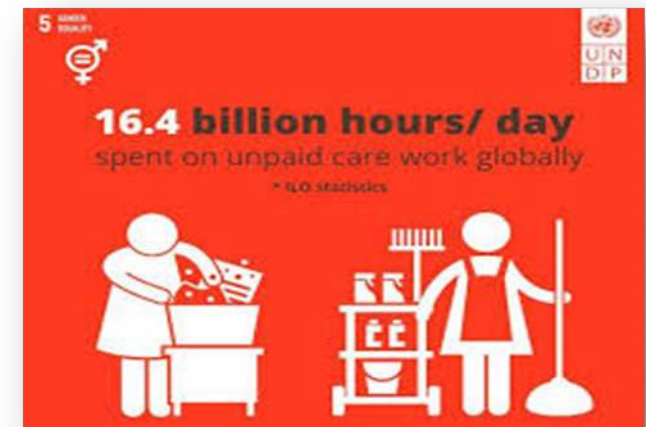
## Leadership positions

- Perceptions and attitudes from the reporters, partners, and clients on their competence and ability to deliver.
- Recruitment options to find appropriate women candidates for the roles.
- Lack of mentors to support their growth into the roles.
- Increased job demands resulting from career growth.



## Clean Energy Start-Up

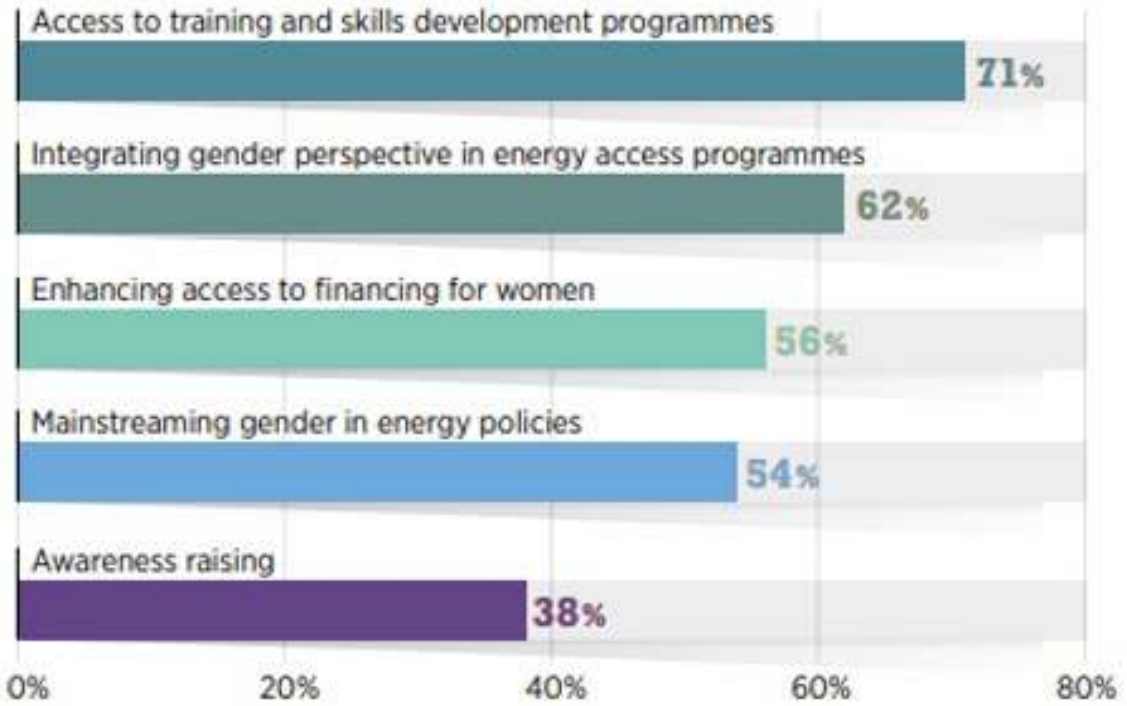
- Lack of capital
- Lack of networks
- Gaps in business skills: Lack of knowledge/ information/ awareness on pertinent business areas such as record keeping, proposal writing, financing opportunities, technology options, etc.
- Lack of capacity to carry out R&D.



# OVERCOMING BARRIERS FOR WOMEN AND YOUTH



**Figure ES.4** Measures to improve women's engagement in deploying renewables for energy access



Source: IRENA online gender survey, 2018.

Note: The respondents were asked to select three key measures to improve women's engagement in deploying renewables for energy access. The percentages represent the share of respondents who selected a specific measure as one of their top three.

**71%**  
of respondents highlighted that access to training and skills development should be a top priority

| Barriers                          | Solutions  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Cultural Norms                    | Mainstream gender in policies                                      |
| Lack of Skills                    | Design women-based training programs: skills, business, leadership |
| Lack of Gender-Sensitive Policies | Awareness raising  |
| Lack of Mentorship                | Enhance access to financing  |
|                                   | Develop Women Mentor Network                                       |



# OVERCOMING BARRIERS FOR WOMEN AND YOUTH

- Access to and encouragement to build skills needed in the sector. Create unbiased application process.
- Support and train entrepreneurs to become technically competent in all business positions as well as skills to be investment ready with business plans and bankable proposals.
- Build awareness through schools on career opportunities; create a young generation of clean energy knowledge people.
- Commitment from top level stakeholders including business owners.
- Develop/adopt flexible, family-friendly work environments.
- Work with influencers, advocate for policy changes.
- Invest in research to support women and youth in developing and marketing quality products.
- Data collection, qualitative case studies, dissemination of results.

## Sustainable Energy Sector Opportunity

Fairly new sector, harness green energy's values, lead in inclusive practices

Create a more productive, innovative, skilled workforce





Let's meet  
some  
enterprises  
embracing  
gender equity



4kW Custom PV system designed to power lighting for the entire market, including streetlights.

**Village**  
ENERGY  
COMMUNITY SOLAR EXPERTS





# UNCDF FUNDED A PROGRAM TO RECRUIT FEMALE AGENTS

## Pilot Program Objectives

- Improve employee diversity
- Achieve a workplace with better gender diversity
- Create more employment opportunities for women
- Identify best practices to share with other companies

## Pilot Strategy

- Existing agents were offered a cash incentive to refer a female candidate & upon on-boarding, the referring agent was given a cash bonus.
- To encourage quality referrals, mentoring and recruiting of female candidates, additional incentives were given to the recruiter for the next 6 months once a sales target was met.



"I joined Engie in May 2021. I got to know about this opportunity through a friend, called Kambugu Yusuf, who works with the company as a sales agent. As a senior six leaver, working with Engie has enabled me to get managerial skills and selling skills. I have earned money that has helped me to provide for my family and avail my personal basic needs and I am now saving money for my tuition at campus. I 100% recommend my fellow ladies to join Engie in order to improve their standards of living.

**-Jesca Namuyomba**





Simoshi Ltd., a woman owned institutional and household improved cookstove company, finalized packing carbon offsets for sale through the United Nations Carbon Offset platform.

Simoshi has packaged over 9,000 tonnes of offsets. (<https://offset.climateutralnow.org/institutional-improved-cookstoves-for-schools-and-institutions-in-uganda>).

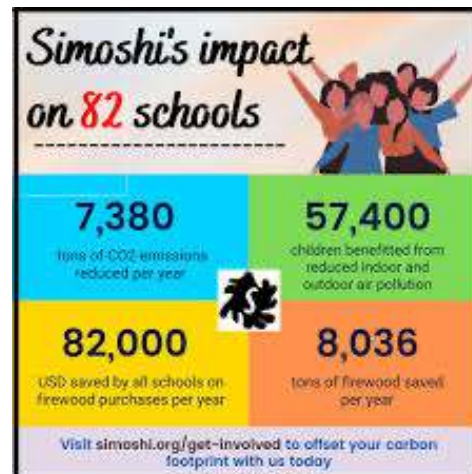
The revenues generated from carbon offsets cover the cookstove maintenance costs for the schools.



Simoshi's institutional improved cookstoves results in:

- a school saving US\$1,000 on firewood per year and reduces 90 tones of CO2 each year
- Cooks enjoy a smoke free kitchen and students have a smoke free environment

Simoshi maintains all stoves annually and uses the school parent network to promote household cookstoves.



# SIMOSHI

**Gold Standard**  
Climate Security & Sustainable Development

CDM and Gold Standard high quality carbon credits verified against 9 Sustainable Development Goals

**17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS**





# RAISING GABDHO FOUNDATION: PROVIDING JOBS AND IMPROVED COOKSTOVES TO REFUGEES

Raising Gabdho Foundation (RGF), a woman owned, and Ugandan led business, provides energy to low-income urban populations and informal settlements including refugee settlements. RGF works with an urban refugee community centers by providing improved cookstove and briquette production, sales training and jobs for youth refugees.



- RGF has:
- Organized a for-profit Company, ZEEED Energy
  - Hired 5 new staff and 5 agents.
  - Opened 7 micro-retailers, mostly women and 3 outlets
  - Automated Briquette processing; ZEEED produces a month's worth of briquettes in one day
  - Sold 5,607 improved cookstoves and 893 tonnes of briquettes.





# Green Heat Uganda Limited, Uganda

Alternative fuels for clean cooking in rural communities

Green Heat



As of December 2022, Green Heat

-Sold **764 biogas units** and **3,900 tonnes** of briquettes (exceeding the project target of 400 biogas units & 1,420 tonnes of briquettes).

-Trained over **120 women sales agents** who sell briquettes in market stalls around Kampala and Wakiso districts.

-Trained over **100 youth** as construction masons.

-Secured over **\$475,000 in loans and guarantees** from local financial institutions.



## Green Heat:

- Produces and distributes briquettes through women sales agents; trains agents on sales, entrepreneurship and book-keeping.
- Constructs biogas systems; trains youth as masons





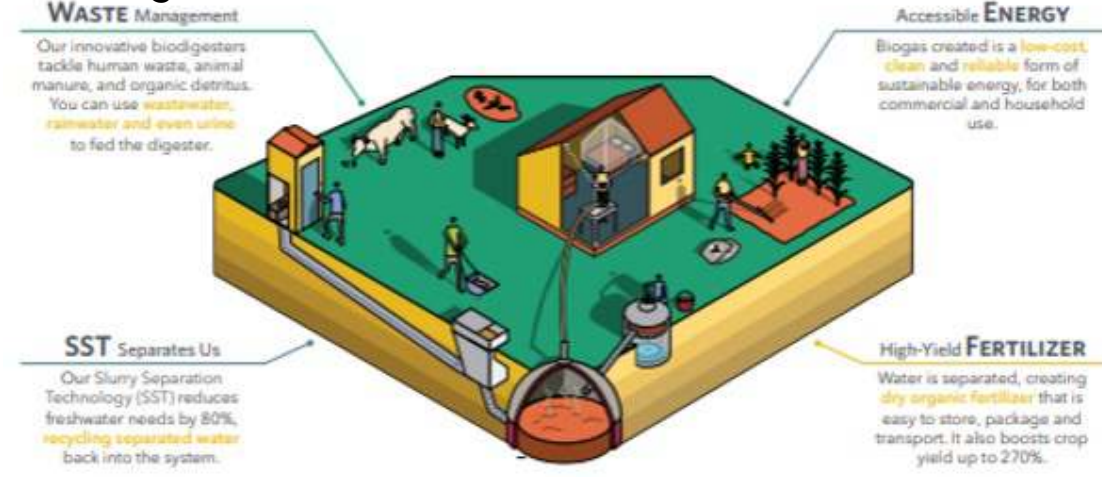
# YOUTH AND WOMEN TRAINING

- 3 Biogas digester Building Process .....
- 3.1 Digester siting .....
- 3.2 Marking the outlay for the digester at the chosen site .....
- 3.3 Delivery of building materials on site .....
- 3.4 Pegging and then excavation works .....
- 3.5 The Reference line .....
- 3.6 Construction of super structure wall .....
- 3.7 Backfilling .....
- 3.8 Construction of the outlet channel .....
- 3.9 Weak Ring.....
- 3.10 Strong Ring .....
- 3.11 Biogas storage dome construction .....
- 3.12 Construction of expansion chamber .....
- 3.13 Feeding chamber .....
- 3.14 Slurry separation unit.....

- 4. Briquette – Training Women Sales Agents .....
- 4.1 Training activities included .....
- 4.1.1 Green Heat Product Awareness – Practical Session .....
- 4.1.2 Saving of profits from sales .....
- 4.1.3 Book keeping .....
- 4.1.4 Cash management.....
- 4.1.5 Inventory .....
- 4.1.6 Account Payable and how to management Accounts Payables.....

## Technical Training

### WASTE, ENERGY & FERTILIZER Solutions



Sales Report for Quarter 2 2020

| Peri-Urban Location | Name of Agent     | Code | Active | Delivered in Q2 2020 (Bags) | Delivery in Q2 2020 (kg) | Value of Sales | Cash collected | Outstanding Payment |
|---------------------|-------------------|------|--------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Kireka              | Nalweyiso Mary    | C001 | YES    | 5                           | 500                      | 250,000        | 200,000        | (1,300,000)         |
| Wampeewo            | Rashidah Nakato   | C002 | YES    | 3                           | 300                      | 150,000        | 200,000        | (1,002,000)         |
| Kitagobwa           | Kiwumulo Christne | C003 | YES    | 5                           | 500                      | 250,000        | 200,000        | (1,380,000)         |
| Kitagobwa           | Maama Baliyeke    | C004 | YES    | 1                           | 100                      | 50,000         | 100,000        | (750,000)           |
| Mattuga             | Namuswe Eunice    | C005 | YES    | 3                           | 300                      | 150,000        | 200,000        | (850,000)           |
| Matuuga             | Nabasumba Vanessa | C006 | YES    | 10                          | 1,000                    | 500,000        | 300,000        | (1,410,000)         |
| Mattuga             | Nakitende Hellen  | C007 | YES    | 2                           | 200                      | 100,000        | 100,000        | (811,000)           |
| Matuuga             | Magret Nantubwe   | C008 | YES    | 2                           | 200                      | 100,000        | 100,000        | (1,702,000)         |
| Kireka              | Kengozi Immy      | C009 | YES    | 2                           | 200                      | 100,000        | 100,000        | (1,356,000)         |
| Wampeewo            | Sauda Nakadi      | C010 | YES    | 2                           | 200                      | 100,000        | 100,000        | (1,420,000)         |
| Kitagobwa           | Nakaye Hadijah    | C011 | YES    | 10                          | 1,000                    | 500,000        | 100,000        | (1,850,000)         |





**SINGLE BURNER ( Without Solar system)**

- > 2yrs reusable rocks
- > Charging cable
- > Blowing fans
- > Heat regulator

0702920729 / 0776920729  
www.ecostoves.org

EcoGroup (EG): As of December 2022, woman-owned EcoGroup sold over 30,000 Cookstoves and Eco Solar kits supported by UNCDF initial funding. Since project inception, it has hired 82 full time staff, 126 part-time staff, 32 agents and opened 38 sales outlets.

EG has signed over 40 Memorandum of Understanding to recruit organizations and members for sales and distribution.

In addition to UNCDF grant funds, EG has raised financing from **UNCDF's Least Developed Country Investment Platform (LDC-IP)**.



### Organized Local Women

Given EcoGroup's stove is fuelled with volcanic rock, EG secured the rock resources by negotiating with the Municipality for a long-term lease and has organized a group of local women into a business to split and assess the quality of the rocks. EG pays the women and to promote the stoves in the regions, EG provides stoves and subtracts a minimal payment from the rocks delivered to repay the stove costs. EG even provides all the equipment the women need to do their work.

To further ensure product quality, EG will begin producing the ceramic liners for the stoves.





Electrical engineering student who is sponsored by Aptech Africa and working on her degree

This is part of a CSR initiative by Aptech, who are cognizant of the shortage of women in STEM and are working to build a gender-inclusive pipeline for their workforce as well as supporting women.

Has rotated through various roles through the company while they fund her studies

Encountered resistance from customers, partly due to price and partly due to their skepticism of a young woman student selling a complex agricultural implement. Due to prevailing gender norms, they did not expect a young woman to have technic knowledge and aptitude.

Heard customer feedback about safety concerns and starting mechanism and relayed those concerns to management

Currently working as a technician

Installs solar systems and products

Also does some sales of simple products like lanterns at expos

Impact





Has learned hard and soft skills at Aptech

Aspires to design and market solar systems and be a successful sales engineer



Judith's Journey



|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
|    |    |  |
| ENG. GHIRMAY ABRAHAM<br>GROUP CHAIRMAN & CEO  | METKEL ZERAI<br>CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  | LAURA CORCORAN<br>CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER   |
|  |  | 3 of 5 Senior Managers are women  |
| DISHA PARKEH<br>CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER   | ENG. ANNA KARUGABA<br>CHIEF TECHNICAL OFFICER  |   |



# IN THEIR OWN WORDS...



"I only blame you for not advertising extensively, I would have saved a lot of money all these years' I have been marketing this product and I have been cooking for my friends to show how it works. We save a lot of charcoal money. We used to buy a sack every 3 weeks that is 90,000 UGX, now charcoal dust sack costing 15,999 lasts me almost 2 months."

Previous cooking system used:  
Ordinary Jiko cookstove

"I started using the BM stove in March and ever since then have been able to prepare my customary meals in more quantities as compared to when I was using the ordinary jiko stove without a ceramic inside. The stove is durable, emits enough heat to prepare meals, and saves fuel. I used to use charcoal of 15,000/= (fifteen thousand shillings) a day and currently, with the BM stove, I use charcoal of 4000/= (four thousand shillings) only. The BM Stove has upgraded my services and changed my life."



End Users

Customers

Micro Entrepreneurs

## Green Heat Uganda

### Alternative fuels for clean cooking are empowering women

Nankya has been a Green Heat (GH)'s client for over 6 years with operational biogas for domestic cooking. She came to learn about biogas through a friend who later referred her to GH for technical assistance in biogas installation. Nankya has since then been able to save on her cooking fuel and converted all her domestic organic waste to cooking gas. Nankya has not encountered any challenges so far because of her continuous zeal and hard work to taking care of the biogas system.

"One of my greatest benefit has been waste management. The organic fertilizer I get led me to start commercial and subsistence farming. From this farming, I have managed to sustain my home and pay tuition for my school going children. Cooking has been interesting with no smoke and timely meals."

Rachel\* is a small retailer and a domestic customer who started out as a GH supplier of raw materials. The GH field team frequently collected biochar (raw material for making briquettes) from her and that is how she got to learn about our briquettes. Since she was initially selling charcoal, she became interested in the briquettes and got curious about how they work. On her first try, she was surprised at how long they cooked without adding any charcoal. Since then, she began using GH briquettes. One of her greatest benefit is the ability to save on fuel when using briquettes.

"I use the ash from the briquettes as a fertilizer for my tomato garden."

Not only does Rachel use the briquettes to prepare her meals, but she also now expanded her variety of products sold to include briquettes at her stall. The impact of the briquettes has created such a ripple effect that most of her customers prefer briquettes to charcoal because of the slow burning, smoke free and affordability.



\*Real names are not used.







# Women as Builders OF THE ECONOMY



Unlocking  
Public and Private  
Finance for  
the Poor



## Access to Employment

The Renewable Energy Challenge Fund portfolio partners have **created 425 fulltime and part time jobs and onboarded 1,503 active sales agents.**



## SME Capacity Building

Towards the end of 2020, the Energy Access program **facilitated a capacity building and training bootcamp for 10 Energy companies** which included financial literacy, procurement and negotiation, management and leadership plus governance among others.



## Knowledge Sharing and Access to Finance

In a bid to support Ugandan financial institutions to appreciate and co-opt innovative financing mechanisms for PayGo Energy companies, **the Energy Access Program facilitated a receiveables training bootcamp.**



## Trained Solar technicians

Village Energy - one of the Energy Access partners through the Renewable Energy Challenge Fund (RECF) has used part of their grant to



# UNCDF MONITORING AND EVALUATION

## Quarterly Reporting Components:

- Narrative Report
- Key Performance Indicator Aggregate Report; customized indicators for partner, as needed
- Financial Expense Report and funds raised
- Quarterly Progress Meeting(s)

## Annually

- Annual Signed Audit Financial Statement
- Customer Stories
- Client Protection Principles

## Disbursement and Milestone Reporting

- Staff Targets: recruitment, training, & retention
- Sales Results
- Awareness Building Activities
- Community engagement, association partnerships
- Growth plans

## Empowering Women & Youth in the Energy Access Supply Chain

More Needs to be done to collect data across the ecosystem of stakeholders on:

- quality of jobs and job benefits
- skill development opportunities
- economic impact
- social awareness/acceptance: perceptions, beliefs, attitudes
- policies
- capacity building outcomes
- financial: capital raised, revenue, cash flow, ROI, growth & sustainability





Empowering Women & Youth in the Energy Access Supply Chain

# INTERVENTIONS ACROSS UNCDF

“  
EACH TIME A WOMAN  
STANDS UP FOR HERSELF  
SHE STANDS UP FOR  
ALL WOMEN.  
”  
- MAYA ANGELOU

“  
EACH TIME A WOMAN  
STANDS UP FOR HERSELF  
SHE STANDS UP FOR  
ALL WOMEN.  
”  
- MAYA ANGELOU



Integration with other programs within UNCDF

<https://www.uncdf.org/article/7983/i-am-a-digitally-empowered-woman-stories-of-women-championing-digital-solutions-to-uplift-their-communities-in-northern-uganda>

The screenshot shows the top portion of a web article. The header is orange with the title "I Am a Digitally Empowered Woman" in white. Below the title is the date "October 27, 2022" and a "NEWSLETTER SIGNUP" button. The author information is in a grey box: "Author: Rachael Kentenyngi, KM and Comms Specialis" with a "Follow @UNCDF" button. Below that is a "TAGS" section with "Uganda" and "Inclusive Digital Economy". The main text area is white and contains the article's introduction and first paragraph.

### Digital Solutions for Smallholder farmers - Lydia's story



UN Capital Development Fund  
4.26K subscribers

Subscribe

1 Like

Comment

Share

Download

More options

75 views Jun 22, 2022

Lydia, an agro-input dealer uses the same Akello Banker platform to sell agriculture inputs. This has opened her business to new markets. She is now able to serve many more customers some from as far as Bar Rwot, which is about 30Kms from Lira town..

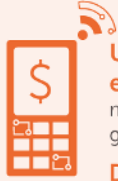
United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), with the support of the Sweden Development Agency (SIDA), is implementing the 'Leaving no one behind in the digital era' strategy that promotes inclusive digital economies. As part of this strategy, UNCDF aims to not only narrow the digital divide for women and girls, but also use technology to improve women's economic opportunities and drive the transformation of women into the builders of emerging digital economies.

While women's access to and usage of digital solutions particularly in rural communities is still significantly low, the journey to leave no one behind begins with one person – an individual woman, because like the adage goes, a journey of a thousand miles begins with one step.

This blog showcases some of the women that are driving the use of digital solutions in Northern Uganda to improve their livelihoods and their communities.



# Using a Digital Literacy Toolkit to Narrow the Digital Skills Gap for Women and Smallholder Farmers in Uganda



Using the digital community entrepreneur (DCE) model, we are closing the digital gap in rural Uganda.

DCEs are community champions (mostly women and youth) who earn commission on sale of digital products and services in hard to reach rural communities.

In 2019, DCEs recruited and trained **168,721** people to use new or improved digital services

 **25.9%** Women |  **74.1%** Men



As part of its digital strategy, UNCDF is implementing a two-year digital literacy skilling project in Uganda. In 2022, Hive Colab, as the implementing partner developed a digital literacy toolkit which it is piloting on the training of 90,000 women, youth and refugees in digital literacy and digital financial literacy skills in the districts of Abim, Gulu, Lira, and the two refugee host districts of Isingiro and Koboko.

<https://www.uncdf.org/article/8113/using-a-digital-literacy-toolkit-to-narrow-the-digital-skills-gap-for-women-and-smallholder-farmers-in-uganda>



Using the Local Government Excellence Fund UNCDF is supporting local governments to invest in economic infrastructure contributing to job creation and increased household income



Since 2019, five local governments have developed nine infrastructure projects including community markets, worth \$1,460, 605

The community markets cater to over 800 vendors

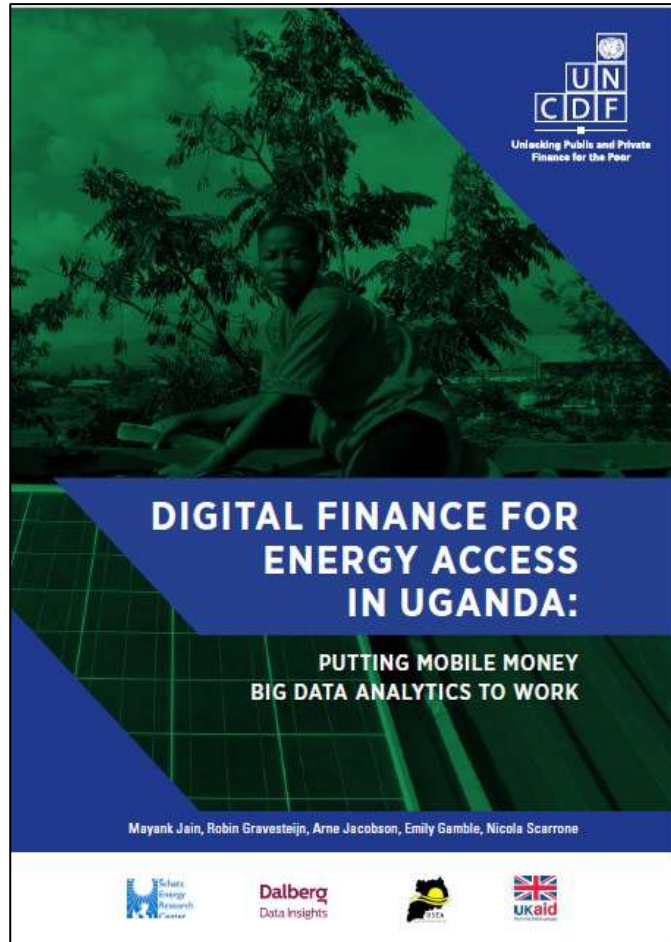
 **71%** Women

The construction works have created 119 local jobs

 **51%** Women



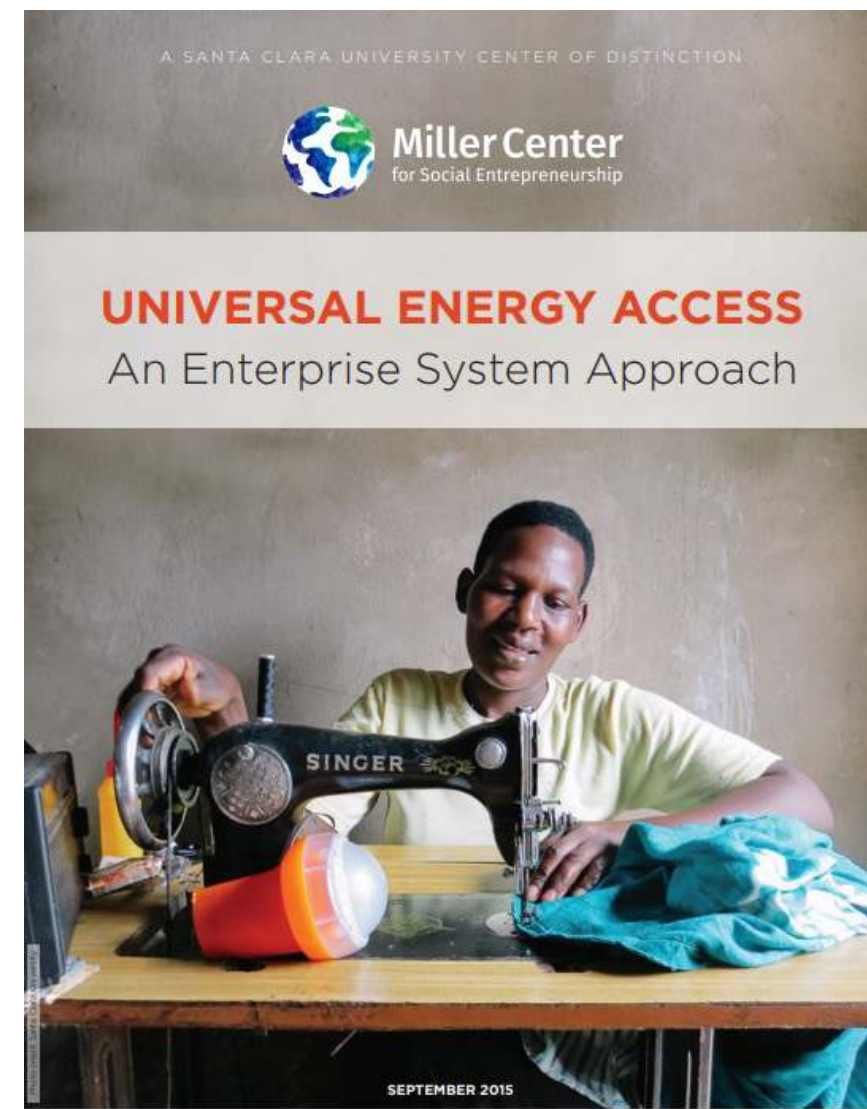
# PUBLICATIONS & RESOURCES



<https://www.unCDF.org/article/4913/infographic-digital-finance-for-energy-access-in-uganda>



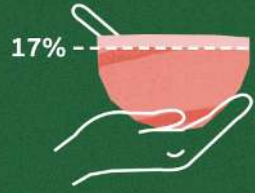
<https://unCDF-cleanstart-customer-stories.webflow.io/>



<https://www.millersocent.org/universal-energy-access/>



## RECOMMENDATIONS



If women had the same agricultural rights and resources as men, they could reduce world hunger by up to 17%.

**1. Enterprise and Transaction Building:** create a program to combine specialized recruiting (women & youth) and enterprise development services (EDS) plus technical assistance for proof of concept. An early-stage seed "patient" capital with an investment capital mechanism is needed to support the various stages of enterprise roll-out.

**2. System Reform:** identify systemic (gender) barriers in product design & distribution, as well as special needs to increase female participation (e.g., recognition of different time commitments than men, which may inhibit training schedules). Partner with active associations/groups (in the sector and in other sectors) to leverage experience to influence policies.

**3. Capacity Building:** throughout the value chain; it is critical we build capacity among finance, engineering and policy professionals. Again, we need to reach across sectors to leverage experiences and opportunities.

**4. Impact - Building on Success:** focus where success is occurring and continue to invest in success to realize scale; transfer lessons learned (good and bad). Wider dissemination of results is needed.





# THANK YOU

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Webinar Series

# MULTIDIMENSIONAL IMPACT OF IMPROVED ENERGY ACCESS

Webinar 4 of 4



**Dr. ZEWDY GEBREMEDHIN**

March 29, 3 – 4pm CET

**giz** Deutsche Gesellschaft  
für Internationale  
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

- How to identify energy access challenges in the humanitarian/refugee context within rural host communities, considering the unique challenges that refugees face due to forced migration and/or displacement in general, as well as specific challenges that women and girls face (case example- Ethiopia)?
- How can we ensure the gender perspective is considered in assessing energy needs for refugees and host communities – what should we keep in mind as donor groups and implementing partners?
- What are the current gaps for which implementing partners can work together to enhance access to improved and clean cooking technologies in these contexts of refugees/displacement?
- How can we promote gender considerations in designing energy access interventions and technologies via a participatory user-centered approach (UCD approach)?
- What considerations must be included to explore possible value chain entry points for productive use of energy for women and young girls?





CONNECT

Breakout Rooms

