



BETTER ENERGY • BETTER COMMUNITIES

June 2016



The Overview

Village Energy is boosting access, affordability, and trust in solar energy by building a **solar technician and retail shop network** to fix and sell solar products in rural Uganda. We **recruit and train** young men and women as **technicians and entrepreneurs**, setting them up as franchisees with their own branded repair & sales shop. These shops are supplemented by a network of **phone-charging micro-entrepreneurs** equipped with Village Energy-branded Pay-As-You-Go systems who can act as brand ambassadors and commission-based sales agents in even more remote areas.

1.

Access

Physical retail shop located in sub-county trading center. **Branded micro-entrepreneurs** expand presence into surrounding areas.

2.

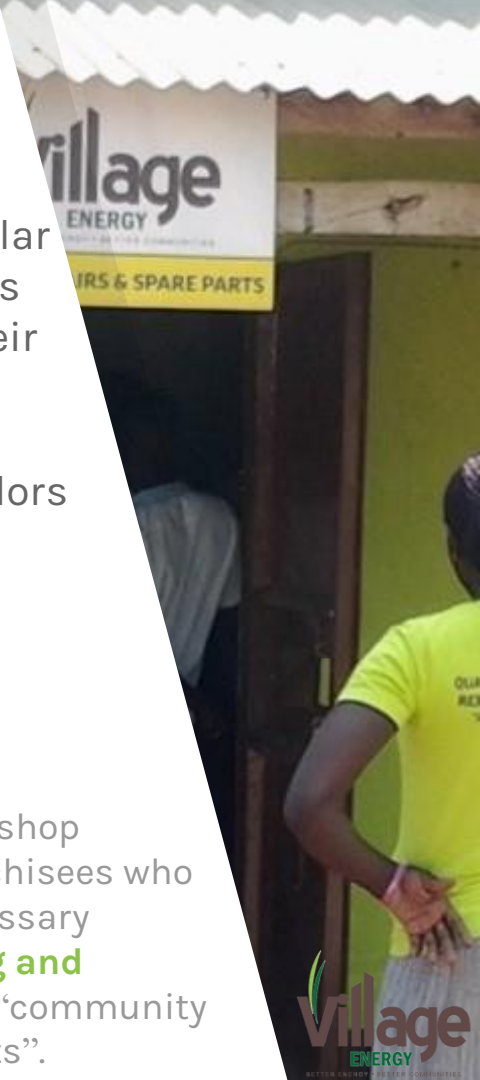
Affordability

Pay-As-You-Go solar products and partnerships with **local micro-savings groups** provide consumer financing options.

3.

Trust

Locally-recruited shop managers & franchisees who are given the necessary **technical training and support** to be the “community based solar experts”.



The Problem in Rural Areas

- ✓ An abundance of **low-quality solar products** are sold by **untrained hawkers** or **transient salespeople**.
- ✓ **Sub-par technical expertise** and **lack of user education** leads to **bad installations/maintenance** & **user-caused breakdowns**.
- ✓ The **lack of nearby servicing options** means many broken solar products/systems **never get repaired or replaced**, even when covered under warranty by reputable companies.

The result is a **breakdown in trust** in solar within rural communities.



“The most trusted person in the village isn’t who sells you the best product, but **who can fix it** when it breaks.”



Our Value Proposition

For Schools
> Training/Employment for graduates



For Manufacturers
> Product Distribution
> Onsite Repairs



For Households
> Lanterns/Systems
> Parts & Repairs



For Micro-Entrepreneurs
> Financing & Training
> Income from phone charging and lantern sales



For Businesses
> Custom installations
> Maintenance/Serviceing



The Revenue Streams

- 1. Solar Product Sales:** Lanterns, home systems, and individual components sold through cash sales, Pay As You Go, and partnerships with local SACCOs (Savings and Credit Cooperatives).
- 2. Custom Installations & Maintenance:** Working with health clinics, schools, guesthouses, micro-grid operators, and other businesses/institutions.
- 3. Product Repairs:** Contract with manufacturers to become the authorized provider of in-warranty and out-of-warranty repairs.
- 4. Micro-Entrepreneurs:** Setting up women with Pay-As-You-Go solar systems to enable income generation, which they can use to pay down the cost of the system and fully own after 1 year.

The Onboarding Model

RECRUIT

Working in rural areas with local community leaders and vocational institutes to identify and recruit young men and women with at least basic technical/science coursework.



TRAIN

Two-week training in solar technology and sales with third party testing/certification. Top performing candidates are hired as employees with the eventual opportunity to spin off as franchisees.



SETUP

Scouting and setting up retail shop locations in the sub-county trading center, with branding, equipment and inventory, and business launch marketing.



SUPPLY

Setting up on-going supply chain of products and spare parts with rigorous quality testing, along with implementation of a CRM and inventory-tracking mobile platform.



SUPPORT

Ongoing marketing and community outreach efforts, customer satisfaction measurement and monitoring, and subcontracting maintenance/warranty servicing contracts.



Our Advantage

“Community Based Solar Experts” providing greater access, trust and affordability through:

1.

Technical Expertise

Scalable training curriculum, with an emphasis on opportunities for women.

2.

Local Presence

Physical shop in the village, run by locally-recruited and technically-trained manager.

3.

Last-Mile Supply Chain

Diverse range of high quality products and parts, from small lanterns to large custom systems.

4.

Quick Service Delivery

Enabled by the local presence of technical expertise and spare parts.

5.

Diverse Service Offerings

Serving both household and commercial markets allows for more affordable pricing across the board.

6.

Customer Financing

PayGo-enabled products and partnerships with SACCOs (Savings & Credit Cooperatives).

EOY 2018 Targets



150 shops & franchisees

Selected from **600 recruits trained and certified** with solar technical and sales skills, of which **>50% are female**.



1200 micro-entrepreneurs

Earning sustainable incomes through phone charging and as commission-based sales agents.



100,000 products/systems

Sold, installed or repaired, thus expanding or re-enabling energy access to **500,000** people.

The Timeline

2014 Technician Experiment: Trained 9 existing radio/phone repairmen in Soroti to provide solar repairs and purchase spare parts from Village Energy.

Spring 2015 Franchisee Experiment: Trained and set up 6 franchisees in Kumi: 4 phone/radio repairmen, and 2 female vocational school graduates.

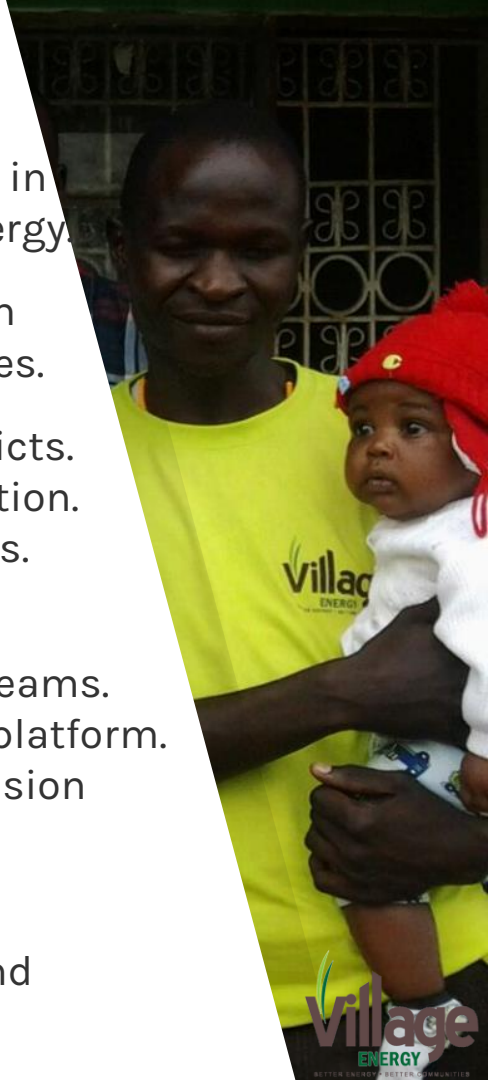
Winter 2015 Pilot Launch: 12 employee-run shops in Soroti/Pallisa Districts.

- ▶ New training and onboarding model with independent testing/certification.
- ▶ Skill specialization, with a master technician for each district of 6 shops.
- ▶ Launching of micro-entrepreneur pilot: 24 girls aged 16-19.

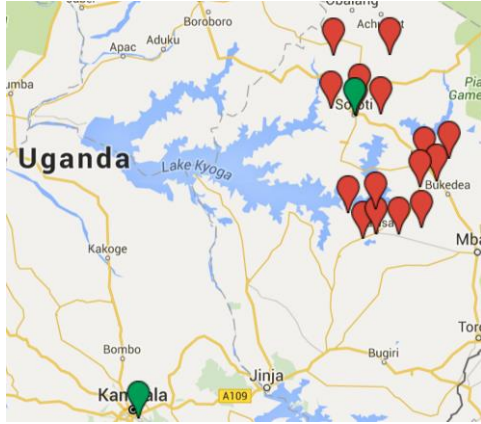
2016 (Current) Pilot Expansion: Refine operations and grow revenue streams.

- ▶ Implement customer financing options, field agent program, and data platform.
- ▶ Develop and launch traveling solar training academy for network expansion and ongoing support.
- ▶ Expansion to 3 more districts by EOY 2016.

2017/2018 National and Regional Expansion: Expand across Uganda and eventually to other East African markets.



Current Status: June 2016



10 Active Shops, >50% Female: 10 employee-run shops in Soroti and Pallisa Districts and 1 franchisee in Kumi District. 6 of 10 shop managers are young women aged 17-30.

Sales & Installations: Hundreds of sales and installations since December, all of which are cash sales.

24 Phone-Charging Girl Micro-entrepreneurs: Launched pilot in March with girls aged 16-19. Looking at new products and services for them to offer to boost income, such as selling sanitary pads and airtime.

SACCO Partnership: Launching pilot program where local SACCO members take out low-interest, guaranteed loans to buy solar products from us at upfront price.

May Technician Training: Successfully conducted a week-long training with 11 participants, including 4 women, who each paid \$15 (\$9 for women). The graduates now have the opportunity to become commission-based field agents.

Next Steps

Achieve Operational Profitability:

1. **Customer Financing:** Seeking PayGo partners for solar home systems.
2. **Bulk Purchasing:** Securing better supplier pricing to increase margins.
3. **Sales/Marketing Strategies:** Test and scale the right mix of tactics and strategies to help field team strive for and achieve sales targets.
4. **Larger Installations:** Build pre-packaged solutions and manage deal pipeline.
5. **Micro-Ent Management:** Supporting our micro-entrepreneurs to achieve sustainable income streams.

Lay Ground work for Scaling

1. **Training Academy:** Key for building an effective field agent and staff network.
2. **Repair Services:** Negotiating servicing partner contracts with manufacturers.
3. **Data Platforms:** Developing CRM and inventory tracking apps for field team.
4. **Product Sourcing:** Focus on products that boost income generation for the end user.

The Team



Abu Musuuza, Co-Founder & CEO

Abu co-founded Village Energy in 2009 after 6 years with Ashoka East Africa to manufacture solar systems, before pivoting to the current model in 2014. He is a native Ugandan and an Acumen, Ashoka and Echoing Green fellow.



Jay Patel Partner & VP Business Development

After 5 years at Google, Jay moved to Uganda to join Village Energy in 2015, bringing extensive experience in sales, marketing, operations, and partnerships. Jay is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania.



Joshua Mawerere Director of Sales



Giuseppe Gregu Chief Technical Officer



Ania Zuzek Training Academy Director



Peter Ojangole Regional Manager



Sammy Senyonga Chief Technician



Elizabeth Alinda Operations Manager

Awards & Fellowships

2015

Africa Winner, SEED Awards [link](#)

SPRING Accelerator [link](#)

Echoing Green Climate Fellowship [link](#)

Finalist, UN Powering the Future Grant [link](#)

2014

Ashoka Fellowship [link](#)

Unreasonable Institute East Africa [link](#)

For more information on investment, partnership, job & other opportunities, email jay@villageenergyuganda.com

Thank You!

