



# SMART COMMUNITIES COALITION



# 2019 YEAR IN REVIEW

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The group of us had the opportunity to meet at the first Global Refugee Forum, speaking on a SCC-convened panel that contemplated the potential for cross-sector partnerships to enable better outcomes for the displaced -- migrants, refugees, internally displaced persons -- and the communities that host them.

Indeed, the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) compels the international community to better address the needs of refugees and host communities, and the private sector has a key role to play. Companies are well-positioned to deliver many essential services – energy, water, connectivity, etc. – sustainably to communities at large, and yet there are few examples of genuine public and private collaboration in the humanitarian sector. The Smart Communities Coalition was established to facilitate collaborations between companies, NGOs, United Nations agencies, and others to spur co-design and co-implementation of transformative programs – both through innovative partnerships and strategic technology deployments.

As SCC members, we are focused on *how* we do things differently – not *why*. Understanding UNHCR’s mandate to protect refugees, forcibly displaced communities, and stateless people, not every project has – or will have – a private sector-led or market-based angle. Those who are vulnerable and in need of protection should be able to rely upon the humanitarian imperative. That said, in protracted contexts or where entrepreneurial activity and markets are vibrant, there needs to be a shift in the nature of the service provider. Working with the private sector to design interventions intended for longer term viability can stretch limited public sector funding and bring to bear new - badly-needed - service delivery models.

When looking to engage companies in humanitarian settings, it is important to focus on outcomes and identify appropriate means to de-risk public-private models. The private sector should not be viewed solely as a source of funding for there is mutual benefit to be gained in recognizing and valuing each other’s strengths and contributions. The SCC is the forum to create, develop and implement these cutting-edge partnerships.

We are excited by the SCC’s achievements in 2019 -- pilots moving toward implementation, new collaboration among members, formalized governance structures to encourage such collaboration, plus new members and new geographies -- and look forward to what we can collectively achieve in 2020.

**Jo Cochrane** - Vice President, Social Performance, Shell

**Anthony Kituuka** - Executive Director, Equity Bank Uganda

**Vasco Hamisi** - Chief Executive Officer, Okapi Green

**Paul Musser** - Senior Vice President, Humanitarian & Development, Mastercard

**Simon O’Connell** - Executive Director, Mercy Corps Europe



*SCC session at GRF 2019: "When Sectors Meet: The Promise of Public-Private Partnerships"*  
Left to Right: Jo Cochrane, Paul Musser, Simon O’Connell, Katrina Pielli, Anthony Kituuka, Not pictured: Vasco Hamisi (via video)

Cover photo (top to bottom, left to right): Aber Betty with her solar home system in Kiryandongo; UNHCR photo of Kakuma; USADF grantee, Peter Momo (right), co-founder of Solar Freeze operating in Kakuma; a solar powered freezer in Kakuma; BrightLife shop in Kiryandongo; photo of women accessing digital tools with support from the Norwegian Refugee Council in Dadaab.

## SMART COMMUNITIES COALITION AT A GLANCE

The Smart Communities Coalition (SCC) is a public-private effort seeking to transform the operating model in the humanitarian and development context. Co-chaired by Mastercard and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the SCC organizes and mobilizes stakeholders according to their core strengths to address three fundamental pillars – energy, connectivity, and digital tools. We seek to enable innovative, sustainable approaches to the delivery of basic services, creating hope and economic opportunity for the forcibly displaced and the communities that host them.

### FOCUS GEOGRAPHIES



### PILLARS



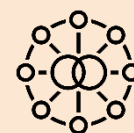
#### Energy

Access to energy enables better livelihoods, enhances personal safety, and reinforces regional stability



#### Connectivity

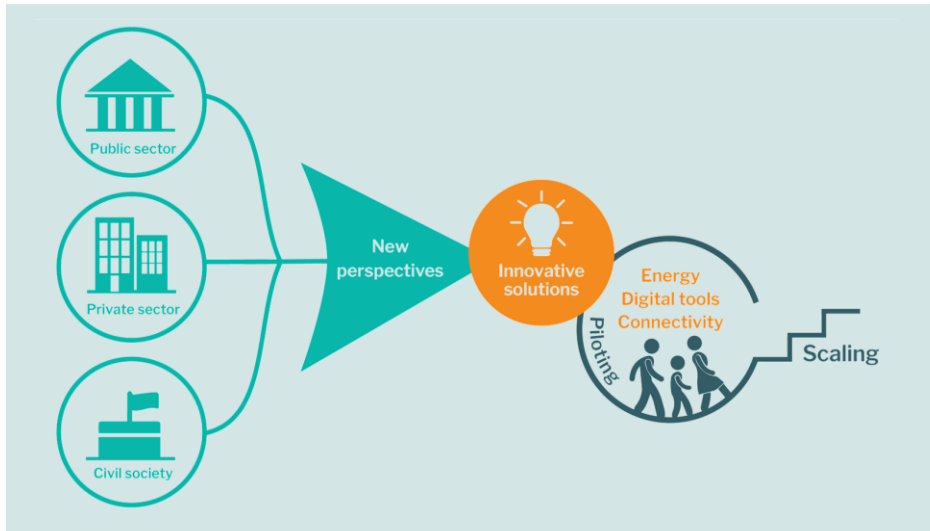
Mobile phone and internet access offer critical information and connection to family support networks



#### Digital Tools

Digital tools create new education, training, livelihood and information opportunities

METHODOLOGY	PRINCIPLES
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- Employ an “ecosystem” approach to technology deployment
- Build public-private models
- Integrate existing efforts and refugee response frameworks

### OBJECTIVES

- Increase efficiencies in camp management and service delivery
- Empower forcibly displaced individuals to provide for themselves and their families
- Equitably address the needs of host community members in and around targeted settlements
- Improve stability in conflict afflicted regions

### EXPECTED RESULTS IN 2020

- The Digital Agents for Energy+ pilot will **select and train 7 small businesses and 30 youth entrepreneurs** to initiate sales of clean energy products in Kakuma, Kenya.
- SCC will monitor and evaluate ongoing sales by [BrightLife](#), [Fenix International](#), and [SolarNow](#) for the **Uganda PAYGO De-risking Grants** pilot, which aims to reach at least 10,000 forcibly displaced and host community members through quality energy products. SCC will package and share learnings to inform future market-based interventions.
- Led by DanChurchAid (DCA), the SCC will publish a unique **assessment of drivers, barriers and solutions to financial inclusion for those in Bidi Bidi, Uganda and Kakuma and Kalobeyei, Kenya**. Informed by the assessment, the SCC will design and deliver new interventions to advance financial inclusion.
- Start of new pilots led by SCC members in Uganda and Kenya including finalizing a **micro-grid model for productive use, digital tools for SACCOs, a new education initiative, and CE3+ model deployment**.
- SCC members implementing new activities in **Latin America** through the **BetterTogether/JuntosEsMejor Challenge**.
- Implementation of the **SCC Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Strategy** to capture the impact of SCC activities and share success stories.

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MEMBERS AND COLLABORATORS



## ORGANIZATIONAL PROGRESS

Throughout 2019, the SCC has placed increasing importance on more frequent structured engagements for members. This includes quarterly, in-person member meetings in Kenya and Uganda and regular, thematic “Pillar Calls”, allowing for opportunities to identify and strengthen collaborations and enable deep technical learning. These engagements have fostered new bilateral collaborations between members who highlight the role of SCC in creating these linkages.

### Growing our Numbers

We are pleased to announce that 16 new members joined the SCC in 2019, bringing the coalition to over 50+ organizations! Our newest members include Developing World Markets, Digital Opportunity Trust (DOT), EDP Renewables, Equity Bank, Every1Mobile, International Rescue Committee Kenya (IRC Kenya), Shell International, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and United Nations Sustainable Energy for All (UN SEforAll). Staying true to SCC’s “ecosystem” approach for technology deployment and partnership development, each new member brings exciting new capabilities to the coalition.



*“UNHCR is pleased to collaborate with the Smart Communities Coalition, a public-private partnership to transform refugee settlements into digitally-connected communities. Led by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and Mastercard, the coalition brings together more than fifty organizations dedicated to providing internet and mobile connectivity, access to clean, efficient energy, and digital financial tools for communities in Kenya and Uganda, and to later bring similar services to other refugee hosting countries around the world.” - UNHCR*

*“The SCC provides a valuable platform to partner, learn and validate assumptions – it’s only through learning from each other that we can ensure our actions address the most critical needs of vulnerable groups in a sustainable and viable way.” – Shell International*



*“At Digital Opportunity Trust, we greatly value the SCC ecosystem approach to partnerships, and our shared vision of putting young women at the center of inclusive growth within refugee and settlement communities. We look forward to working alongside SCC partners to mobilize the voice, leadership and innovation of young women by empowering them with digital skills and helping them to progress social impact ideas through digital technology.” - DOT*



*Participants at 2019 SCC Annual Meeting in Nairobi, Kenya (SCC)*

To build on the momentum of growing member collaboration, we will continue to support more frequent, structured engagements of members through in-person meetings, calls, and online tools.

We are always on the lookout for dynamic organizations who wish to join the SCC and contribute their strengths to better serve the forcibly displaced and their host communities. Do not hesitate to reach out to the SCC team with your recommendations.

## Shaping the Coalition

In the past year, SCC has enlisted members to take on more meaningful roles in shaping the coalition. These committees provide strategic, operational and tactical guidance to shape and steer the SCC.

	Advisory Committee	Steering Committee
<b>Purpose</b>	To advise the SCC on its strategic direction.	To advise on the operational and tactical activities of the SCC.
<b>Members</b>	Chatham House, Fenix International, Mercy Corps, Microsoft, Shell International, and UNITAR/Global Plan of Action.	Accenture Development Partnerships, DanChurchAid, FINCA International, Norwegian Refugee Council, Response Innovation Lab, and UNHCR Uganda.

## Tracking our Progress

A Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) strategy is essential for orienting the diverse mix of stakeholders in the SCC around a shared vision of success and providing a framework for collecting data to understand the value of the SCC and its impact on displaced and host communities. SCC's MEL Strategy, developed by member Moonshot Global with input from the SCC Steering Committee, seeks to promote SCC's commitment to being adaptive to capture learnings in a way that enables replication and scale. The MEL strategy will come into force in 2020.

## Sharing Funding Opportunities

Dedicated funding for activities aligned with SCC is key to rapidly implementing effective solution delivery. The SCC is building a new tracker to be launched in 2020 to highlight current grants and other funding opportunities relevant to SCC members. This resource will be updated and shared on a monthly basis.



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Kakuma Camp in Kenya (UNHCR)

## Raising the Profile of the SCC

The SCC was an important contributor to the Global Refugee Forum (GRF), held in December 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland. The GRF showcased high-level, substantive pledges and contributions and the exchange of good practices. The SCC participated in the GRF in four ways:

- Announced pledges by over 35 members to contribute to the GRF advancing energy, connectivity and digital tools for displaced persons and the communities that host them. These pledges represent multi-national and local private sector organizations such as Accenture Development Partners, BRCK, EDP Renewables and Microsoft, as well as international NGOs and local not-for-profit organizations, such as Mercy Corps, Norwegian Refugee Council, and Response Innovation Lab.
- Served as a co-sponsor of the GRF Energy and Infrastructure track, providing insights and perspectives into the track's priorities and sessions.
- Signaled its support to the UNHCR Clean Energy Challenge, which, as far as possible, will pursue 'market-based' approaches working to build sustainable private sector solutions. The Challenge goal of *90% of refugee settlements and nearby host communities having access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy by 2030* well aligns with SCC efforts.
- Hosted "When Sectors Meet: The Promise of Public-Private Partnerships" featuring SCC members Equity Bank, Mastercard, Mercy Corps and Shell International, as well as Okapi Green, a refugee-owned enterprise advancing energy and connectivity solutions enabled by the SCC (small grants from U.S. Africa Development Foundation and EDP Renewables) in Kakuma. The panelists shared insights into meaningful cross-sector partnerships that better address the needs of the displaced and the communities that host them.

## Geographic Expansion to Latin America



*BetterTogether/JuntosEsMejor Challenge (MyriamB)*

Venezuela is currently experiencing an unprecedented, political and socioeconomic crisis. Devastating hyperinflation has led to severe food and health care shortages, driving millions of people out of the country. The outflow of Venezuelans into neighboring South American and Caribbean countries has seriously strained the delivery of basic services, infrastructure and international relations.

The BetterTogether/JuntosEsMejor Challenge was launched in October 2019 by USAID and the Inter-American Development Bank to recognize and support best practices solutions for mitigating political, humanitarian and economic impacts on Venezuelan

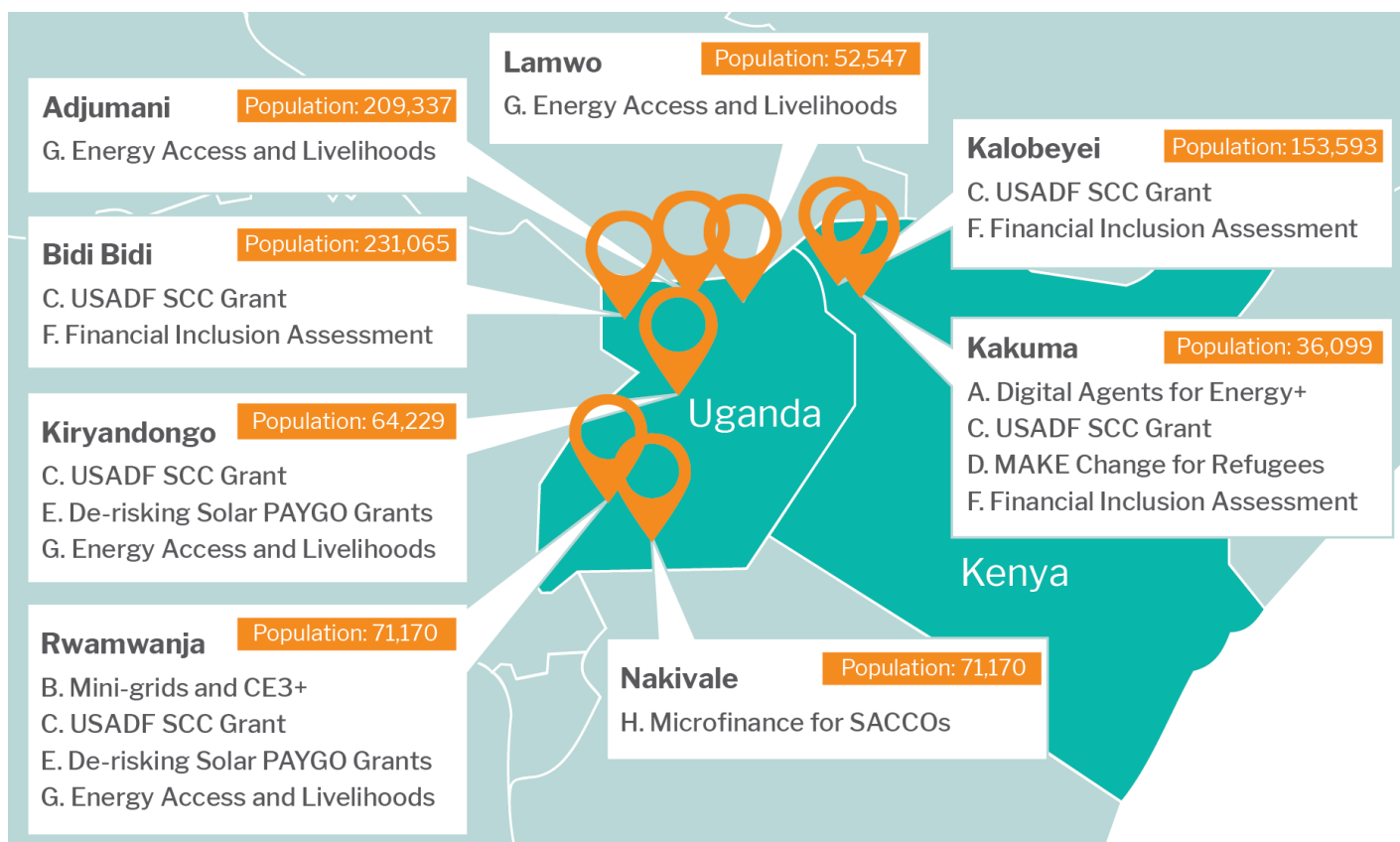
migrants and their host communities. The SCC is an Operational Partner of the Challenge, and where appropriate, it will convene members for co-design and implementation of sustainable interventions in the region; provide technical expertise on energy, connectivity, and digital tools proposals; and update the membership on Challenge progress.

*In 2019, Accenture Development Partnerships also agreed to join the JuntosEsMejor challenge. As an Operational Partner, ADP will provide mentorship assistance to selected proposals, serve as judges on relevant calls or applications based on thematic areas, and network with Challenge partners and innovators at events.*

The [Challenge's funding window](#) is now open, accepting applications for solutions related to social cohesion and community, productivity, critical services and finance. Watch SCC Members UNHCR, World Vision, and Alight tell you more about the opportunity [here!](#)



## 2019 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS



Source: UNHCR

## Pilot Status Updates

### A. Digital Agents for Energy+: Small business and entrepreneurs as last-mile distributors for clean energy products

**Pillars:** Energy and digital tools

**Members:** BioLite, International Trade Centre (ITC), Mastercard, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), and Total Access to Energy

**Status:** A unique collaboration of stakeholders across public, private and non-government sectors that will select and train 7 small businesses and 30 youth entrepreneurs (Digital Agents) to sell clean energy products in Kakuma and Kalobeyei. SCC members received funding from TRANSFORM, a joint initiative of DFID and Unilever, to fund the project. Agent and wholesaler selection are complete, with training on the Digital Agents platform to be conducted by the end of Q1 2020. Sales of energy products to begin shortly thereafter.

*“By working with the SCC, ITC had the chance to collaborate with new partners from across the private and humanitarian sectors to co-create a pilot project that has launched in the Kakuma camp in Kenya. Together with other partners in the pilot group, ITC developed new ways of coordinating work across various perspectives, locations and sectors. By pooling each actor’s respective expertise, the pilot group is able to deliver the right support to test new approaches to provide refugees with access to energy solutions and income generating opportunities.”*

– **Katherine Schlinder**, International Consultant at Refugee Employment and Skills Initiative, ITC

**B. Rwamwanja Mini-grids and Connectivity, Electricity, and Education for Entrepreneurship (CE3+): Clean energy-powered mini-grids and agri-business hub paired with Internet infrastructure**

**Pillars:** Energy and connectivity

**Members:** Accenture, Energy Peace Partners, The Lutheran World Federation, Mandulis Energy, NetHope, USAID/Power Africa, and USAID/Uganda

**Status:** Tender documents for three mini-grids in the Rwamwanja and the surrounding host community were approved by the Ugandan government and issued by USAID Power Africa. The group is awaiting the tender results to move into implementation in 2020. Pending the results, Mandulis Energy and Accenture are exploring the opportunity to develop a final design for the CE3+ model. The model seeks to establish entrepreneurial hubs that provide improved, market-based energy and digital tools services with potential for replication in new settlements and host communities such as Rhino Camp.

**C. United States African Development Foundation (USADF) SCC Grants: Local entrepreneurs to provide integrated services for energy, connectivity, and digital tools**

**Pillars:** Energy, connectivity, and digital tools

**Members:** USAID/Power Africa and EDP Renewables

**Status:** Through a special SCC grant window with USAID/Power Africa, USADF enabled support for local entrepreneurs to address energy access gaps in targeted forcibly displaced and host communities in Kenya and Uganda, while leveraging internet and digital technology to improve the quality and scale of their services. These include:

Uganda	Kenya
<b>Aga Great Works</b> is installing a mini grid in Yumbe District in Uganda, near the Bidi Bidi settlement. The goal of the project is to provide safe and reliable energy at an affordable cost.	<b>Okapi Green Energy</b> (also received funding from EDP Renewables to expand a minigrid) aims to increase access to quality, affordable, and reliable electricity in the community of Kakuma, a refugee settlement in northern Kenya, through the installation of a solar mini-grid to supply electricity for small businesses, community centers, and individual households. Okapi Energy will sell electricity to end users using smart meters, to enable the users to only pay for power they have consumed. In addition, Okapi Green intends to install a Wi-Fi mesh network to help boost productivity of the businesses being reached.
<b>Power Trust</b> is promoting the use of productive solar energy through the creation of five business hubs in Kiryandongo and Bweyale refugee camps.	
<b>Raising Gabdho Foundation</b> is providing a variety of sustainable energy solutions for residents of refugee settlements and host communities, to allow people to choose and engage in preferred energy solutions for lighting, cooking fuel, and energy productive use.	
<b>Solar Today</b> is supporting trained youth in Rwamwanja refugee settlement to create small businesses using solar energy. Businesses include hair salons, internet centers, and phone charging stations.	
	<b>Solar Freeze</b> is selling solar-powered refrigeration units. Solar Freeze intends to develop an innovative Pay-As-You-Store model, and also train young women and youth in the repair, maintenance and operation of the solar units.
	<b>Yelele</b> is installing a solar minigrid to sell electricity to households and businesses in Kalobeyi settlement and host community in northern Kenya. Households and businesses will pay for electricity via smart meters.

#### **D. MAKE Change for Refugees: Integrated mini-grid development**

**Pillars:** Energy

**Members:** Chatham House, Energy4Impact, and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

**Status:** Energy 4 Impact led the creation of an assessment of potential microgrid opportunities in Turkana County, inclusive of Kakuma, which allowed stakeholders to understand off-grid energy opportunities in the area. Energising Development (EnDev) is now implementing a results-based financing (RBF) facility for mini-grids to power households, social infrastructure, and small and medium-sized enterprises in 9 villages in Turkana County including a Kalobeyei settlement. Moving forward, GIZ GmbH plans on extending a mini-grid solution to two settlement villages in Kalobeyei.

#### **E. Uganda De-Risking Pay-As-You-Go (PAYGO) Solar Home Systems Grants: Commercially viable solar home system deployment**

**Pillars:** Energy and digital tools

**Members:** USAID/Power Africa, Fenix International, and FINCA International

**Status:** In May 2019, USAID/Power Africa competitively awarded grants for targeted PAYGO sales in Rwamwanja and Kiryandongo to three solar home system (SHS) companies: BrightLife, Fenix International, and SolarNow. Sales are now underway with all three companies having opened storefronts and hired forcibly displaced and host community members as sales agents. Green Powered Technology is the implementing partner for the project. In 2019, over 2,400 SHS were sold and over 130 individuals hired; the companies are working toward a goal of at least 10,000 sales.

#### **F. Financial Inclusion Assessment: Evaluation of opportunities to provide access to convenient, reliable, and affordable financial services**

**Pillars:** Digital tools

**Members:** DanChurchAid, Developing World Markets, FINCA Uganda, FSD Africa, FSD Uganda, GSMA, Mercy Corps, NetHope, Norwegian Refugee Council, USAID, and World Vision.

**Status:** Led by DanChurchAid, the working group recently embarked on a formal assessment of drivers, barriers and solutions for financial inclusion in Bidi Bidi and Kakuma and Kalobeyei. Working group members provided input to the final terms of reference with the final report to be released by Q3 2020.

#### **G. Energy Access and Livelihoods: Deploying clean energy-powered agricultural processing equipment**

**Pillars:** Energy

**Members:** Mandulis Energy, UNHCR Uganda, and Lutheran World Federation (LWF)

**Status:** Mandulis Energy is collaborating with UNHCR Uganda and LWF as part of broader energy access and livelihoods project in multiple refugee settlements in Uganda including: Adjumani, Lamwo, Kiryandongo, and Rwamwanja. Mandulis and UNHCR Uganda have installed a briquettes factory and are coordinating training of operators at the site in Olwiyo. Further, Mandulis and LWF recently collaborated on a funding proposal to the Humanitarian Grand Challenge Grant to deploy clean energy-powered agro-processing solutions to bolster productivity in rural and refugee communities in Uganda.

## H. **Microfinance for SACCOs: Partnering with a SACCO to offer micro-credits via a digital platform**

**Pillars:** Digital tools

**Members:** GSMA and Powah

**Status:** GSMA is working with Powah to engage Moban, a local refugee-led savings and credit cooperative (SACCO), in the Nakivale settlement in Uganda on a digital platform to offer micro-credit to refugee and host community members. The collaboration aims to address the gap in formal financing granted to refugees. After formalizing the project proposal, Powah and GSMA will hold a kick-off workshop to validate Moban's support for the project.

## SCC New Activities

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- A. **Policy Roundtables:** In 2019, the SCC helped organize Policy Roundtables in Kenya and Uganda, with SEforALL as the lead organizer. These roundtables were focused on the provision of sustainable energy for forcibly displaced and host communities tailored to the context and needs in each country. The roundtables were also co-organized by GIZ, UNHCR Uganda, the Uganda Ministry of Energy & Mineral Development, the Uganda Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and the East African Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (EACREEE). To ensure action is taken from these roundtables, the SCC is working through local partners and coordination mechanisms with additional roundtables envisioned.
- B. **Multi-stakeholder educational initiative:** As a result of SCC engagement, Convent Holdings is now working with Microsoft, Mastercard, EcoBank, and Koya Capital on a new, multi-stakeholder initiative focused on education. More information will be made available in 2020.
- C. **Digital tools for Village Savings and Loan Assistance groups (VSLAs) in Kenya:** At the 2018 SCC Annual Meeting, World Vision met fellow member GSMA. Together with DFID and Equitel/Equity Bank Kenya, they are aiming to engage 2,000 VSLA groups in Kenya with new digital tools. A mobile platform is currently being designed by Equitel, after which the project is planned to begin in 2020.
- D. **Advocacy for mobile money in Uganda:** FSD Africa met fellow member GSMA through an SCC engagement and together they are in conversation with the Government of Uganda on strengthening enabling environments for mobile money and entrepreneurship in refugee camps in the country.
- E. **Strengthening internal SCC pilot knowledge management:** Norwegian Refugee Council introduced fellow member Moonshot Global to the [Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative](#), elements of which were incorporated into SCC pilot knowledge management efforts in 2019 and the final SCC Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning strategy.
- F. **CE3+ model replication for greater socioeconomic productivity:** Mandulis Energy and Accenture are exploring collaborating to establish a CE3+ model to establish entrepreneurial hubs that provide improved, market-based energy and digital tools services in Rwamwanja. After collecting baseline data on energy demand and uses cases for digital tools, the Members plan on finalizing the pilot concept and start implementation in 2020.

## STORIES FROM THE FIELD

The SCC represents a strategic and coordinated effort between public and private sector partners to work together on commercial solutions to humanitarian response that accelerate progress toward creating economic opportunities for some of the world's most vulnerable populations. Below we share select reflections on the impact of unique collaborations brought about by the SCC.

### Digital Agents for Energy+



“I expect to have experience in agency business model and also earn income through sale of solar products. I hope the products prices will be competitive and readily available to the refugee community as they will now not be ordering them from outside the camp.”

#### **Morisho Ndambwe Albert**

Congolese Refugee and Digital Agent based in Kakuma 3 camp

“The project will assist the community by ensuring there is enough lighting at homes especially for students who do their homework at night. As a business man, I expect to make profit through sale of the solar products through Digital Agents for Energy+ that will expand my business.”

#### **Abdi Hussein Noor**

Somali Refugee and Digital Agent in Kakuma 4 camp



“As a Digital Agent I want to be trained on business skills and also earn money that I can use to start my own business in future. I look forward to interact with the community and make a difference to other ladies in the camp.”

#### **Rita Brown**

Ugandan Refugee and Digital Agent in Kakuma 1 camp

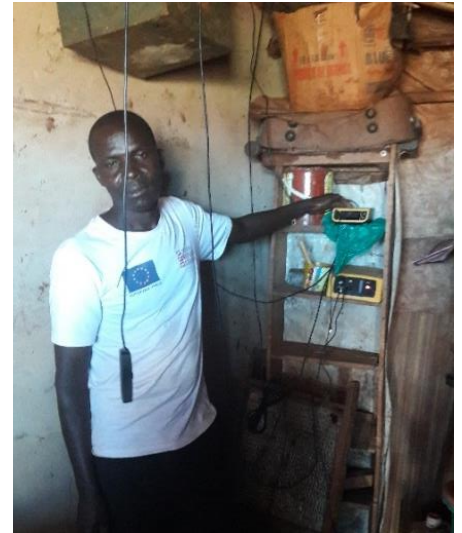
*Source: Norwegian Refugee Council*

## Uganda De-Risking PAYGO Solar Home System Grants



**Amita Rose**, a South-Sudanese refugee in Kiryandongo settlement and Vice Chairperson of her neighborhood council, purchased a BrightLife solar home system including three lights and mobile charging capability. The system is helping her save on energy fuel costs by nearly 600 UGX per day and enables her children to study in the evening. BrightLife is a subsidiary of SCC member FINCA.

**Robert Bwlyo**, a Kenyan refugee in Kiryandongo settlement, purchased a Fenix International Readypay Power system, including two light bulbs and mobile phone charging. Compared to his previous solar home system, his current one provides brighter light. He now has light to farm for longer into the evening and can charge phones for customers at 100 UGX per charge. His family now can make beds, wash, cook and read more during the night-time.



**Serbana Rubakale**, a refugee from the Democratic Republic of Congo who is now based in Rwamwanja, bought a 50 Wp SolarNow solar home system equipped with a television and mobile phone charging. With her television, she feels more knowledgeable about current events. In addition to selling rice for income, Serbana now charges phones at 200 UGX per phone. She is a local ambassador for SolarNow in her community.

*Source: USAID/Power Africa*

## LOOKING FORWARD

On World Refugee Day, the SCC published a [blog](#) that outlined our approach to date: narrow the scope; understand needs, identify gaps; implement. In order to make good on the promise that the SCC can facilitate effective collaboration among the public and private sectors to improve the delivery of vital services and enable better outcomes for the forcibly displaced and their host communities, 2020 must be the year of implementation. We are counting on you to poke and prod us to stay resolutely focused on action, and we will count on you to act. Together we can show that change – in the way we work, in the way we address needs, in the way we measure success – is possible.

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[www.smartcommunitiescoalition.org](http://www.smartcommunitiescoalition.org)