



SMART COMMUNITIES COALITION



2020 YEAR IN REVIEW

WELCOME MESSAGE:

2020 -- what can be said that hasn't been said already? It was a difficult year that tested us all; for many, our first real experience with a global crisis. Despite the overwhelming feeling of a standstill brought about by COVID-19, the pandemic did not hit the pause button on longstanding humanitarian challenges like forced displacement. Faced with a radical shift in how the community of humanitarian and development sector stakeholders address needs, the Smart Communities Coalition (SCC), too, made a conscious effort to adapt.

We moved to all digital engagements with our members, encouraging collaboration via webinars, matchmaking sessions, and one-on-one introductions. To help minimize disruptions on the ground, we compiled and disseminated a COVID-19 resources tracker with news, funding opportunities, and guidance. Ultimately, our goal has been to be as responsive to our members as possible, and we will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of these new modes of working with you.

This year saw our first round of SCC pilot projects come to a close. Even though the pandemic no doubt had an impact, we are thrilled with our results: hundreds of jobs created; thousands of products sold that bring clean, reliable energy to communities previously without access; companies engaged in sustainable service delivery to new customer segments. We were also able to celebrate a major milestone - the launch of the Smart Communities Coalition Innovation Fund (SCCIF) to catalyze and support programs that embrace the model of public-private co-design and co-implementation.

Now more than ever, we wish to underscore the importance of our three focus areas: energy, connectivity, and digital tools. Each on its own, but even more so together, ensures that the communities we serve have the tools and resources they need to withstand crises. Energy, connectivity, and digital tools have been lifelines during this pandemic -- the SCC has the capacity to furnish these tools for the forcibly displaced and the locals that host them, now and in the long-term. Now is the time to translate our potential into reality.



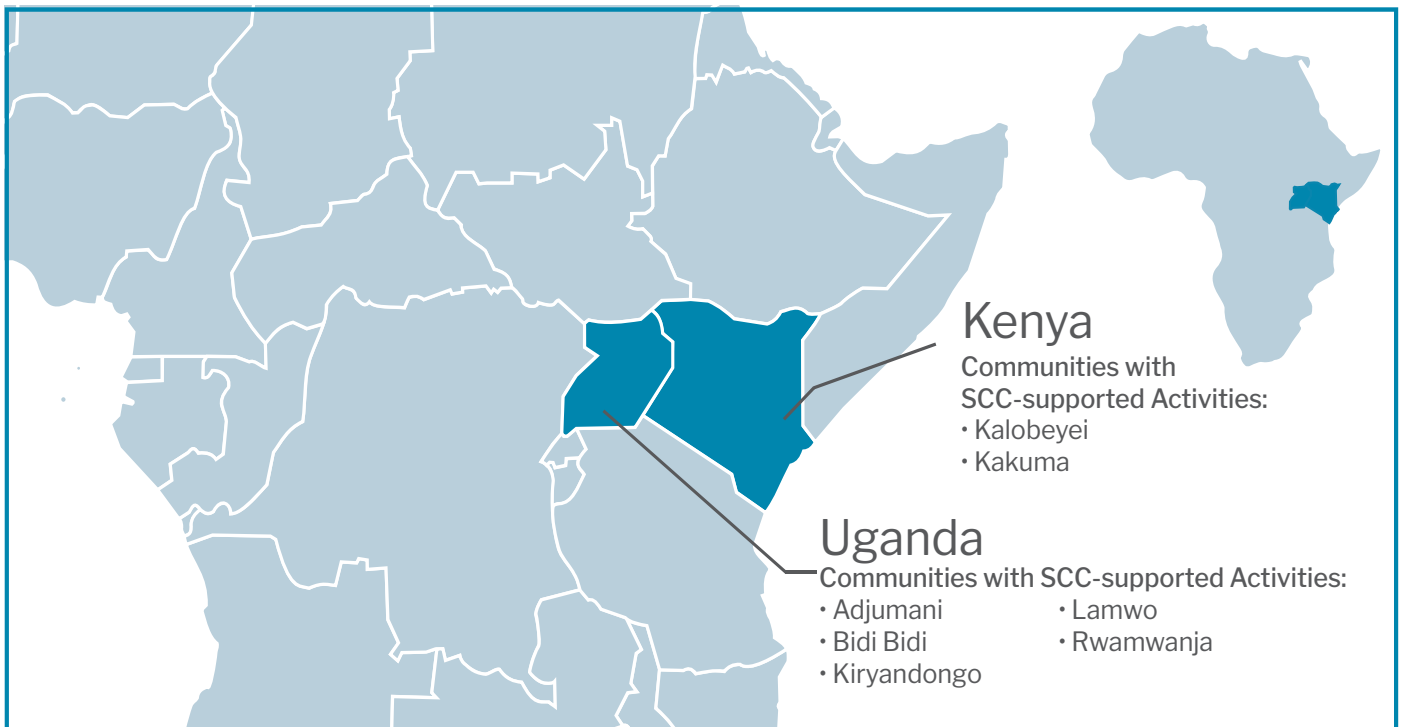
USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



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

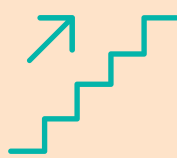


The SCC is actively looking to expand SCC activities beyond our target countries Kenya and Uganda. We are developing an Expansion Framework and list of indicators to consider prior to selecting a country.

OBJECTIVES



Increase efficiencies in camp and settlement management and service delivery



Empower forcibly displaced individuals to provide for themselves and their families

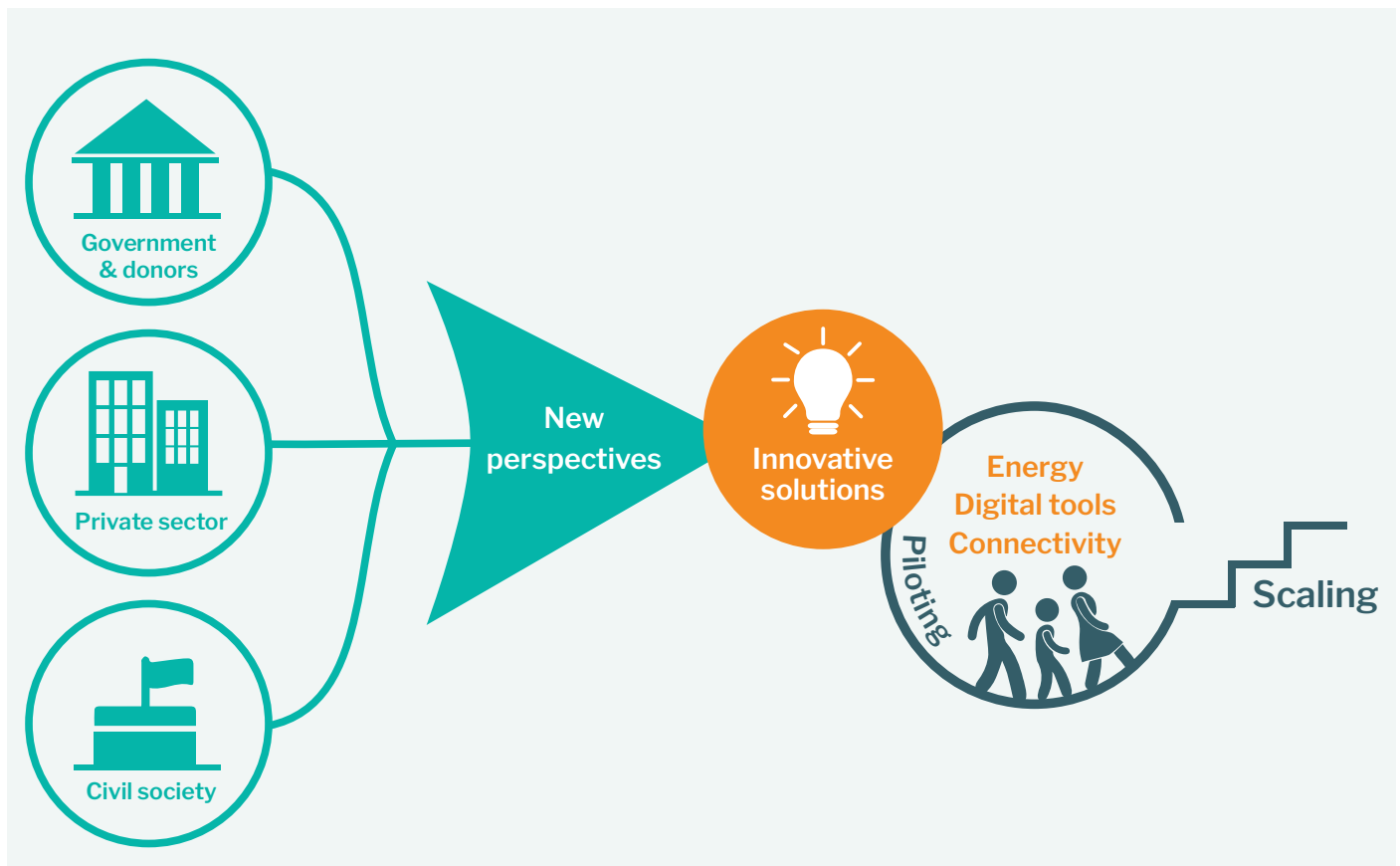


Equitably address the needs of host community members in and around targeted settlements



Improve stability in conflict-afflicted regions

METHODOLOGIES



PRINCIPLES

To increase coordination in order to improve service delivery to forcibly displaced and host communities

To implement activities (tools, investment projects, etc.) that empower through improved economic growth opportunities

To provide greater value for communities that host the forcibly displaced through new approaches to economic and social integration

To enable United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that manage the humanitarian response with increased efficiencies thus stretching their funding for greater impact

PILLARS



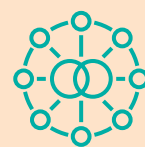
Energy

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

2020 RESULTS

In 2020, the first set of SCC pilots concluded, including the Uganda De-Risking PAYGO Solar Home Systems and Digital Agents for Energy+ project. At a glance, our results include:

- Beneficiaries
 - **1,155** with new or improved access to connectivity
 - **11,547** with new or improved access to energy
 - **775** with new or improved access to digital tools
- **73,612** USD in savings for beneficiaries
- **2,279** jobs created
- **4,729** clean energy products sold
- **7,124** kWh (kilowatt-hour) of clean energy generated

EXPECTED RESULTS IN 2021

- Close of U.S. African Development Foundation energy access projects, helmed by local entrepreneurs in Kenya and Uganda
- Launch of SCC Innovation Fund's inaugural programs in Kenya and Uganda
- Dissemination of lessons learned from the Digital Agents for Energy+ pilot in Kakuma and Kalobeyei, Kenya, featuring SCC members Norwegian Refugee Council, International Trade Centre, Total Energies, and Mastercard
- Targeted matchmaking activities to facilitate partnership between SCC members

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MEMBERS AND COLLABORATORS



ORGANIZATIONAL PROGRESS

Funding a new approach to service delivery

The SCC launched the SCCIF in 2020 to advance and accelerate public-private co-design and co-implementation of programs in the humanitarian context. Managed by [EnDev](#) with funding from [USAID Power Africa](#), the SCCIF's first window focused on access to modern energy services. The SCCIF is designed to encourage entrepreneurs, companies, social enterprises, microfinance institutions, NGOs and consortiums to propose new ideas to expand their delivery chains and bring innovative solutions to displaced populations.

The call for proposals opened in September, and the SCC held a matchmaking webinar and follow-up with members to assist potential applicants. In January 2021, the SCCIF announced the winners! Awardees will implement activities directly benefiting nearly 3,500 households across Kenya and Uganda. See [here](#) for more information.

- [EleQtra](#) will deploy off-grid workspaces in the Arua and Lamwo settlements in Uganda to provide access to “pay-as-you-use” appliances.
- Moban Savings and Credit Cooperative Society, [BiziSol](#) and [OffGridBox](#) will establish a solar-powered solution providing clean and affordable energy, drinking water and connectivity, in the Nakivale refugee settlement in Uganda.
- [PHB Development](#), Yelekeni Farmers’ SACCO, [BrightLife](#) and [UltraTech](#) will develop a solar-powered hatchery and individual solar home systems for small-scale poultry farming in Kiryandongo, Uganda.
- [Solar E-Cycles](#), [Strathmore University](#) and [OFGEN Solar](#) will launch an e-mobility solution in the Kakuma-Kalobeyei area in Kenya using solar-powered electric bicycles.

The SCC looks forward to supporting these grantees as they begin activities in 2021, and identify new partners to fund future rounds of the SCCIF.

Playbooks

In the interest of sharing lessons learned and best practices, the SCC Secretariat will develop Pilot Playbooks upon the conclusion of an SCC activity. These playbooks, to be hosted on the [SCC website](#), will summarize the pilot, capture stories from the field, outline what worked and what did not, and suggest opportunities for scale up. The first playbook will feature the “De-risking Pay-As-You-Go (PAYGO) Solar Home Systems in Uganda Refugee Settlements” project which wrapped up in June 2020.

Digital engagement in response to COVID-19

With travel restrictions in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the SCC quickly pivoted to organizing all-digital webinars and other engagements with partners in East Africa, Europe, and the United States. These included new member webinars to formally introduce the coalition’s



newest entrants, a COVID-19 response matchmaking webinar, and various matchmaking and consultation calls with members.

The SCC also produced and regularly updated a COVID-19 resources tracker that shared news, funding opportunities, guidance, and other updates relevant to service delivery in displacement settings in Kenya and Uganda.

In order to keep members informed of coalition activities and updates, the SCC published quarterly newsletters that shared updates on coalition growth, pilot and bilateral collaboration activities, and funding opportunities. These were complemented by shorter monthly email updates.

Growing the coalition

In 2020, the SCC gained 13 new members, bringing our total up to 66. These members offer a wealth of experience, both within the humanitarian and development sector and outside of it, further diversifying the skills and expertise of the coalition:

- Bechtel.org
- BFA Global
- d.light
- Farm from a Box
- Geo Gecko
- Gravity
- iamtheCODE
- KadAfrica
- Kambasco Technologies
- Opportunity International
- PHB Development
- Raising Gabdho Foundation (RGF)
- SOURCE

“RGF [Raising Gabdho Foundation] joined the SCC because we wanted to access to contacts and shared wealth of resources and expertise. On our own we are limited with how much we can do, but in a community, we have access to a pool of knowledge, resources and support.”

- Raising Gabdho Foundation

“Opportunity International is a microfinance organization, and the humanitarian sector is a largely new area for us. We recognize the potential for impact, as well as the potential for harm with such a vulnerable group. Joining SCC is helping us link to innovators and partners in the sector, and guide on best practice which will help us forge pathways in this emerging public private space.”

- Opportunity International

Participants in Kampala, Uganda for 2020 SCC Annual Meeting in February 2020



Coalition governance

In the past year, the SCC's Advisory and Steering Committees met on a quarterly basis to provide strategic, operational and tactical guidance to shape and steer the SCC.

	Advisory Committee	Steering Committee
Purpose	Advise on SCC's strategic direction	Advise on SCC's operational and tactical activities
Members		
Key takeaways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared ideas for expansion of SCC Secretariat and defining indicators for measuring success Advised on cross-pilot analysis framework and development of pilot playbooks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasized effective matchmaking and private sector engagement methods Validated SCC's approach to coordinating matchmaking for COVID-19 response

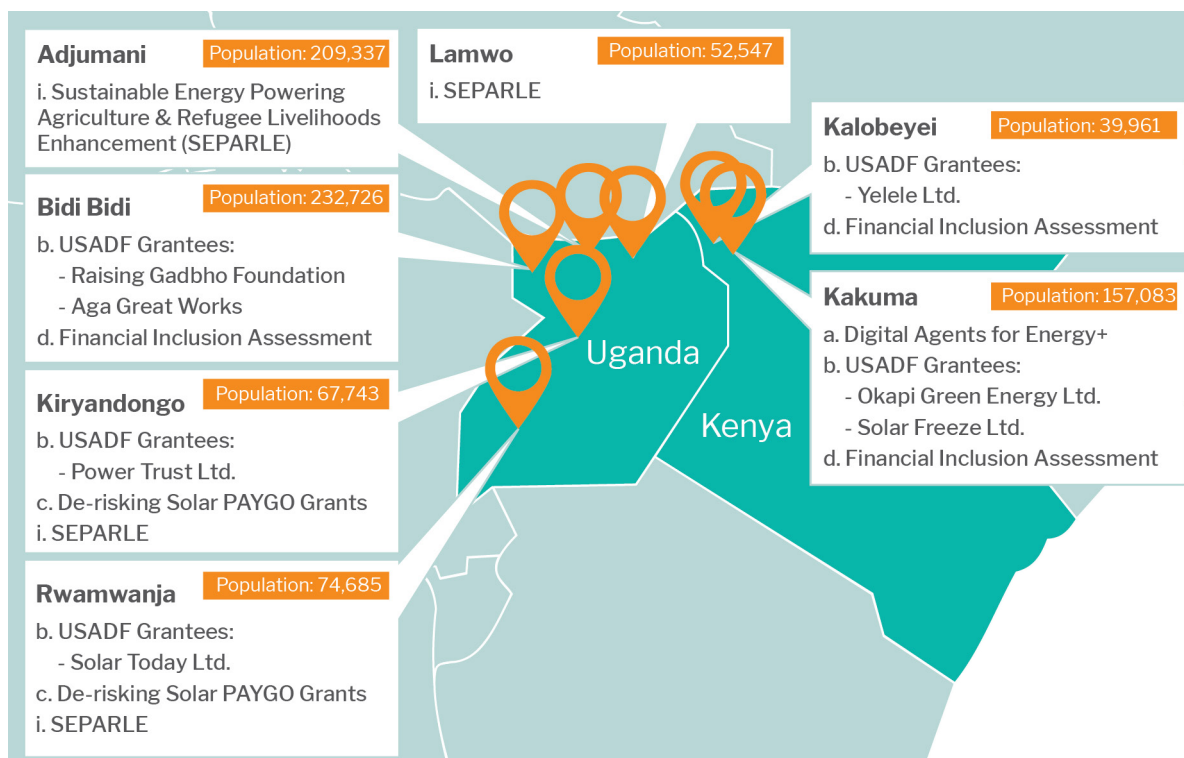
Supporting service delivery in Latin America

The Juntos Es Mejor/Better Together Challenge, hosted by USAID and the Inter-American Development Bank, made several rounds of awards to innovators developing solutions to support displaced Venezuelans and host communities throughout Latin America. As an Operational Partner, the SCC circulated the opportunity with members working in Latin America and assisted a few organizations with their applications. As of January 2021, the Challenge will focus efforts on supporting current grantees. Learn more about selected grantees [here](#).



The BetterTogether Challenge aims to crowdsource ideas around the world to support Venezuelans and host communities affected by the migration.

2020 PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



SCC Pilots and bilateral collaborations:

a. Digital Agents for Energy+

Pillars	Members	Time period
Energy and Digital Tools	International Trade Centre (ITC), Mastercard, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), and Total Energies	2018 - 2021

Overview: The multi-SCC Member program was created to train refugees and native-born Kenyans living in Kakuma and Kalobeyei as sales agents for solar energy products. In 2020, the agents and wholesalers were remotely trained on Mastercard’s Digital Agents platform and Total Energies products. In addition, project participants received entrepreneurship training and ad hoc business mentorship delivered by ITC. Despite delays in implementation due to COVID-19, the Digital Agents project delivered products from Total Energies, and recorded in the Mastercard Digital Agents platform.

2020 Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) highlights:

- 47 solar energy products were sold worth 71,000 KES (Kenyan Shilling)
- 21 agents were trained and hired by wholesalers
- 10 agents conducted sales on behalf of five wholesalers



b. United States African Development Foundation (USADF) Grantees

Pillars	Members	Time period
Energy, Connectivity, Digital Tools	USAID/Power Africa and EDP Renewables	2019 - present

Each USADF grantee received funding from USADF and SCC through a special window. As with other pilots, the USADF entrepreneurs encountered challenges related to COVID-19, however for the most part all entrepreneurs have made progress in 2020. See below for their pilot overview:

Overview:

Okapi Green Energy Limited (Kenya): Okapi Green Energy limited installed a 20kW mini-grid, of which 12kW (kilowatt) was funded by USADF and the 8kW upscale funded by EDP. As a result, more businesses have been established, and the existing ones upscaled creating more job opportunities for the forcibly displaced in Kakuma. Although the internet market in the country was severely affected by COVID-19 with many businesses installing internet systems, Okapi eventually procured, installed, and commissioned the wifi mesh equipment under the program WIFI CONNECT, further enabling communication, online learning, and online trade for over 200 households in Kakuma 3.

2020 MEL highlights:

- Amount of energy installed: 20 kW
- Total number of beneficiaries with new or improved access to energy: 199 (40% male, 60% female)
- Estimated amount of savings per year (USD): \$21,240
- Number of beneficiaries creating additional income: 24 (17 male, 7 female)
- Number of jobs created: 48 (29 male, 19 female)



Solar Freeze Limited (Kenya): Solar Freeze is selling solar-powered refrigeration units and due to the COVID-19 pandemic Solar Freeze experienced an increase in demand and inquiries on the freezers for fresh produce and products due to strained supply. Solar Freeze provided skills training on practical installation of solar panels, cabling, fitting of circuit utilities such as bulbs, inverters, charge controllers and batteries. Program participants also learned how to install, maintain, and repair freezers.

2020 MEL highlights:

- Number of beneficiaries creating additional income: 18 (11 male, 7 female)
- Number of skills trainings provided: 16 (10 male, 6 female)

Power Trust (Uganda): Power Trust is promoting the use of productive solar energy and completed the delivery and construction of five business hubs in Kiryandongo, made up of 40 foot freight containers. Three hubs serve designated areas within the refugee settlement and two hubs in the host community. These solar-powered business hubs support income generating activities such as a retail shop, barber shop, and a solar mill.

2020 MEL highlights:

- Number of beneficiaries with new or improved access to connectivity: 450 (40% male, 60% female)
- Estimated amount of savings per year (in USD): \$12,821
- Number of beneficiaries creating additional income: 32 (6 male, 26 female)
- Number of skills trainings provided: 100 (30 male, 70 female)



Solar Today (Uganda) provides affordable solar for businesses owned by refugees in Rwamwanja resettlement camp and host communities of Kamwenge district. Solar Today completed over 93 solar PV installations for small businesses in Rwamwanja through their USADF-SCC-supported pilot “Remote-controlled solar systems for refugees and host community businesses.”

2020 MEL highlights:

- Number of beneficiaries with new or improved access to energy: 114 (74% male, 26% female)
- Estimated amount of savings per year (in USD): \$20,000
- Number of skills trainings provided: 200 (110 male, 90 female)

Other USADF Grantees:

Yelee Limited installed a 7.2 kW solar mini-grid in Kalobeyei settlement and connected 50 businesses and households. Productive use equipment such as freezers have already been purchased by some businesses in anticipation of power supply.

Raising Gabdho Foundation engaged community leaders in Bidi Bidi settlement to collect data on demographics, income levels, availability of energy for cooking and lighting, willingness to pay, and other factors, to understand the energy needs of the forcibly displaced.

Aga Great Works provided access to affordable solar products to both nationals and the forcibly displaced in Yumbe.

c. De-risking PAYGO Solar Home Systems (SHS) in Uganda Refugee Settlements

Pillars	Members	Time period
Energy	USAID/Power Africa, Engie Energy Access (formerly Fenix International), BrightLife (by FINCA International) and Energy4Impact	2019 - 2020

Overview: The grant to de-risk market entry of PAYGO SHS sales in the forcibly displaced and host community markets of Rwamwanja and Kiryandongo concluded on May 31. The three grantees, BrightLife, Fenix International (now ENGIE Energy Access), and SolarNow, will continue to distribute products and productively engage community members as sales agents, although sales have been impacted by government restrictions put in place to address COVID-19. Green Powered Technology was the implementing partner on the pilot and disseminated key learnings through a webinar and report [here](#).

2020 MEL highlights:

- Number of jobs created: 285¹
- 81% male, 19% female
- 14% refugees, 86% host community member
- Number of products sold: 4,137 (344 business, 3706 households)
- Percentage of products sold to refugees: 22%

d. Financial Inclusion Working Group

Pillars	Members	Time period
Digital Tools	DanChurchAid, Developing World Markets, FINCA Uganda, FSD Africa, FSD Uganda, GSMA, Mercy Corps, NetHope, Norwegian Refugee Council, USAID, and World Vision	2019 - present

Overview: Led by DanChurchAid, the working group finalized its formal assessment of drivers, barriers, and solutions for financial inclusion across five settlements in Uganda and Kenya. A SCC-facing webinar on the assessment pulled in 60+ participants and generated a high level of interest within the membership to develop new projects (full webinar presentation and final report [here](#)). Toward this goal, DanChurchAid has engaged cash working groups in both Uganda and Kenya with the Assessment’s findings. The Working group meets regularly and seeks to launch its first project in 2021. If you are interested in joining the working group, please reach out to the [SCC Secretariat](#).

2020 MEL highlights:

- Number of focus discussion groups (FDGs) formed: 15
- Number of respondents interviewed in FDGs: 281
- Number of stakeholders or partner agency representatives interviewed: 32



Progress on SCC-facilitated partnerships

e. Farm from a Box (FFAB) and Bechtel.org (2020 - present): After connecting during the New Member Webinar, FFAB engaged with the team at Bechtel.org to streamline their product design for quantity and scale. Bechtel.org has examined FFAB’s core design

¹These jobs are divided between salaried and commission-based staff. As the project has now concluded, grantees are no longer asked to report updates.

to ensure optimal performance and efficiency. They are also helping Farm from a Box determine the most affordable, easy-to-deploy, ruggedized solar racking system to secure the 21 kW array that powers their new 10-acre farm system.

- f. **GSMA and FSD Africa (2018 - 2020):** These two members came together through an SCC event and are working on advocacy for mobile money in Uganda. More specifically, they seek to address the issues revolving around SIM card registration for the forcibly displaced to enable access to mobile money.
- g. **GSMA and World Vision (2020 - present):** Both SCC members met at the 2018 SCC Annual Meeting, and since then have been working together to digitise village savings and loan assistance groups in Kenya. Their proposal is now with the Central Bank of Kenya for approval.
- h. **Kambasco Technologies and Equity Bank (2020 - present):** Introduced to each other in November 2020 by the SCC, Kambasco Technologies and Equity Bank Uganda signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to develop an automated credit assessment tool to enable last mile distributors to predict their customers' creditworthiness. The MoU was instrumental for Kambasco's successful achievement of a grant from the Global Distributors Collective Innovation Challenge.
- i. **Mandulis Energy, UNHCR Uganda, and Lutheran World Federation (2019 - present):** In 2020, the Sustainable Energy Powering Agriculture Livelihoods Enhancement (SEPARLE) project was awarded funding of CAD 250,000 from Creating Hope in Conflict: A Humanitarian Grand Challenge, for which the project partners are exploring additional funding options to supplement deployment of capital, and cater to COVID-19 related budget changes. Following the installation of a briquettes factory in Nwoya, the implementing partners seek to ramp up production of briquettes for clean cooking using a clean energy-powered agro-processing solution, targeting an output of 3,000 tons of briquettes per year, or 6,000 tons over the 2-year project period.

STORIES FROM THE FIELD

USADF grantee beneficiaries

Solar Freeze, Kenya: As part of their trial phase, Solar Freeze installed a solar freezer at Kakuma Medical Clinic in Kakuma town, serving thousands of forcibly displaced and host community members. Francia Ledakan, a doctor at Kakuma Medical Clinic gives his testimonial below on how the community benefits from the solar freezer:



Delivery of solar freezer at Kakuma Medical Clinic

We were struggling to offer services due to inconsistent power supply. Occasionally, we would lose supplies such as vaccines, injectables, laboratory reagents, and other drugs due to lack of power. This freezer is also helping us charge our batteries enabling us to access reliable light to deal with emergencies at night. We do not have to run our generator as often and that means we are saving a lot; before, we would consume over five liters of petrol per day, but now we spend less than one. The flexible payment plan makes the freezers very affordable and we plan to buy another one soon.

Okapi Green Energy, Kenya: In 2015, Bitisho jointly with her husband, decided to open a small computer shop and branded it as El-Shadai Studio, which now specializes in selling movies, phones, and computer accessories. With a stable and reliable power supply from Okapi Green Energy, Bitisho was able to expand her business, purchasing a refrigerator to sell cold drinks to her customers, setting up additional computers to meet demand and launching an M-Pesa money transfer business.



Bitisho working in her cyber cafe powered by Okapi Green Energy electricity



Bitisho and her child watching the news

As Bitisho puts it: "I'm very pleased with the current power supply safety and reliability, am no longer worried about the safety of my work equipment." Back in 2017, an incident with a faulty generator power connection resulted in the loss of property, and this suppressed business growth as many were reluctant to invest in such a risky environment. With reliable power, Bitisho's social life has also been improved with increased education possibilities as she also studies short courses offered by local vocational schools and can study during night time.

Solar Today, Uganda: Run by Mr. and Mrs. Nyesiga Deus, St Mary's Drug Shop near Rwamwanja settlement provides basic medicines to the settlement residents as well as the host community. The pharmacy used to close at 6pm and therefore any client arriving after sunset would have to wait until the following day to be served. Through the USADF supported grant to Solar Today Uganda Limited, the Nyesiga received a 150Wp solar system to provide lighting around the pharmacy, which is adjacent to their home, allowing them to see clients after dark. Nyesiga explains:

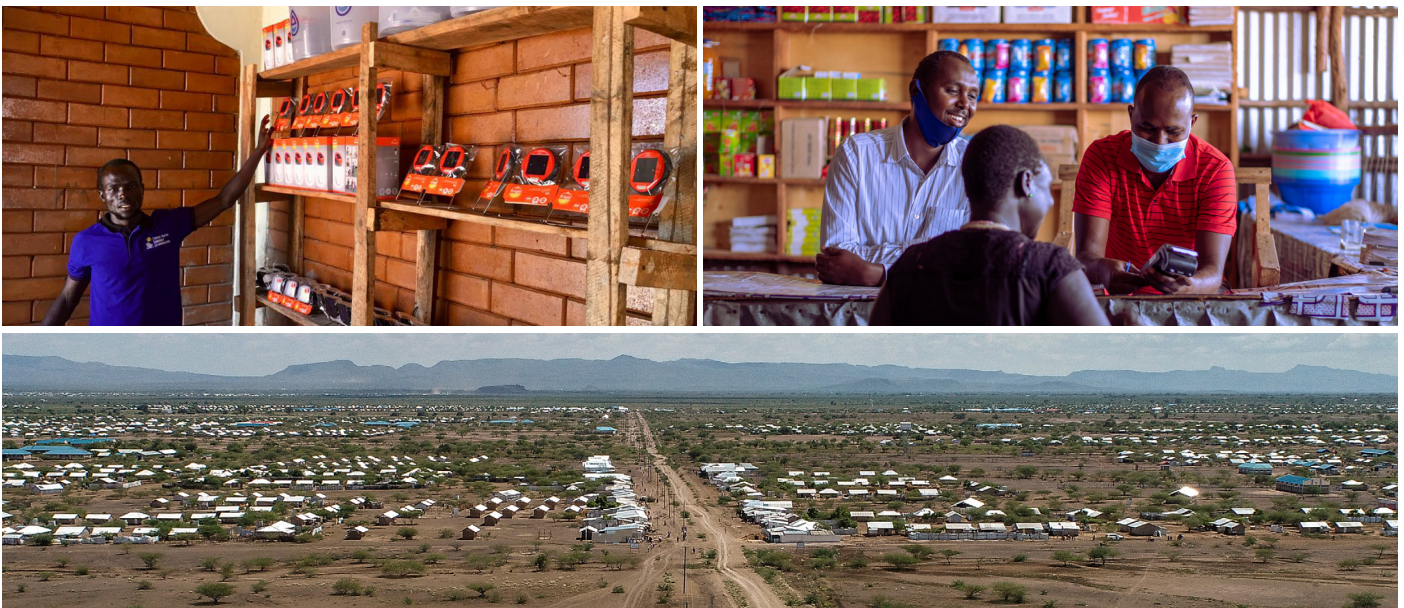


Mr. and Mrs. Nyesiga Deus's drug shop now benefiting from a 150Wp solar system

"As sickness knows no time limitations, we are now able to operate and serve customers across the night for we have reliable power. This has improved our business as well as our service to our customers".

LOOKING FORWARD

- **New funding:** The SCC is actively engaging donors for a second round of funding for the SCC Innovation Fund! The intent is for the next window to include all three pillars. SCC members are invited to begin brainstorming collaboration efforts on new or existing projects, expanding our impact on-the-ground. If you are a donor and would like to know more about the SCCIF, please contact the Secretariat.
- **Digital Heatmap:** Many thanks to SCC member Accenture Development Partnerships (Accenture) who continues to update the SCC member heatmap - a comprehensive look at the operations and core competencies of the SCC network. This year they are enhancing the format by digitizing the content to make it more interactive and facilitate more use. If your organization would like to offer ideas on improving the heatmap or provide other support, please contact the Secretariat.
- **Join us!** The SCC is always searching for new members to join the coalition's diverse network. If you are operating in refugee settlements or host communities in Kenya or Uganda in any of the pillar areas and share a desire to form innovative partnerships for service delivery, please contact the Secretariat. SCC member benefits include access to the SCC's network and knowledge resources, matchmaking opportunities, and relevant updates!



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