

NEW ENERGY NEXUS

UGANDA

IMPACT REPORT 2020

About New Energy Nexus

VISION

An abundant world with 100% clean energy for 100% of the population, in the shortest time possible.

PROBLEM

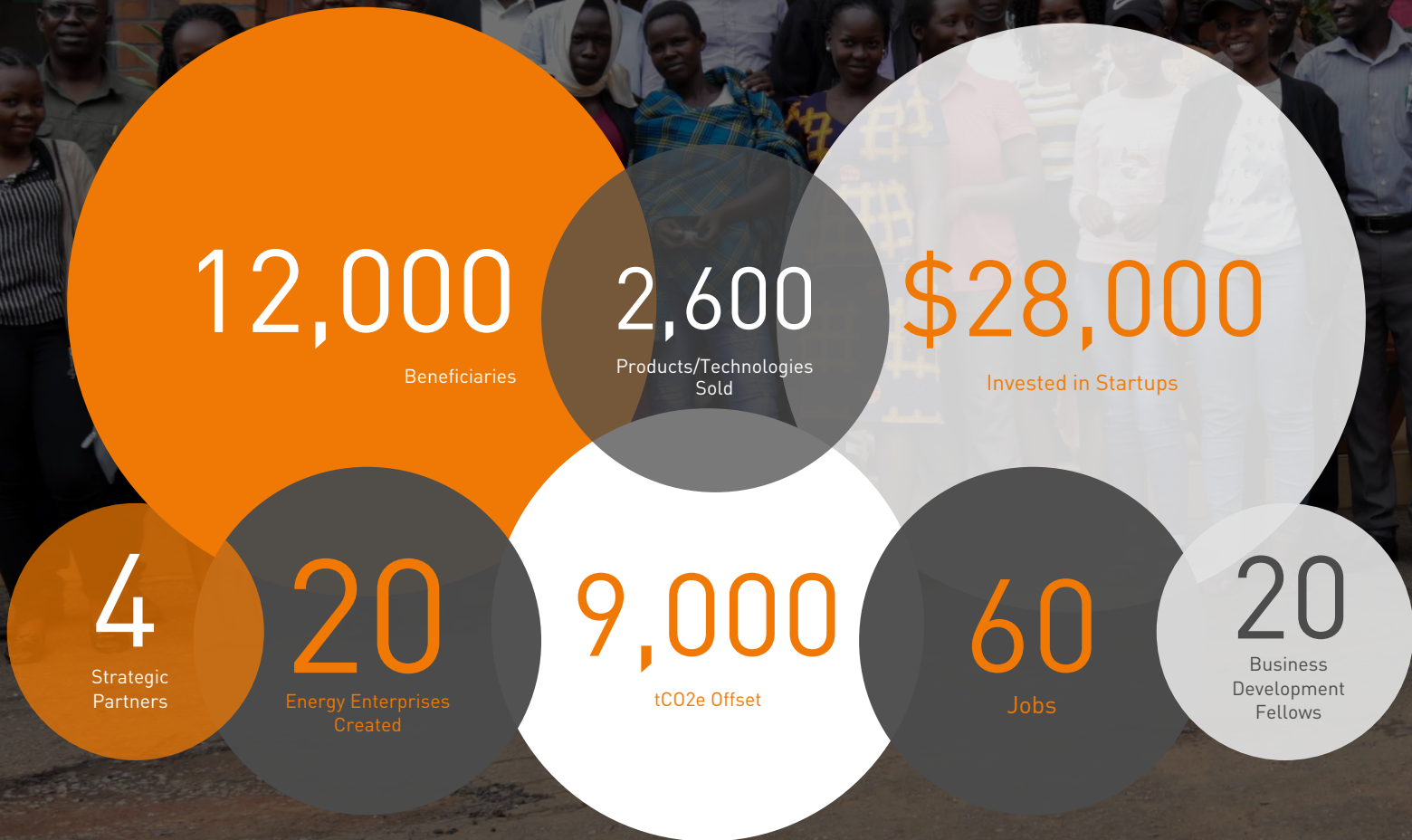
There are not enough diverse and thriving clean energy entrepreneurs to match the scale of the clean energy transition in Uganda.

MISSION

New Energy Nexus aims to support diverse entrepreneurs to drive innovation and build equity into the global clean energy economy



New Energy Nexus Uganda's Enventure Program in Numbers 2020





Question & Answer

with **Penny Mbabazu Atuhaire**

Director of Strategic Partnership,
New Energy Nexus Uganda

What Problem Does New Energy Nexus Uganda Exist To Address?

Over 72% of Uganda's population lacks access to modern energy. This percentage of people is mostly composed of rural households in the lastmile. Energy demand is met primarily through tree biomass which increases a need for deforestation. It is also the rural communities that are experiencing today's wrath of global climate change. This problem is further compounded by a gap in lastmile distribution for cleantech products like solar and cookstoves. Solutions exist but do not reach rural communities owing to long distances and limited purchasing power. For the enterprises that are reaching these communities, there is a significant gap in support.

What Is New Energy Nexus Uganda Current Strategy To Address The Problem?

Ranked as one of the most entrepreneurial countries in the world, we are riding on this wave to address the energy access challenge. For six years now, our ENventure Program has been creating sustainable energy enterprises and kiosks across the country. We do this through business incubation for Community Based Organizations (CBOs) which are homegrown nonprofit registered groups addressing various social challenges that hinder economic development. As our staple agents of change, we deploy a business startup toolkit comprising clean energy stock loans, financing, training, mentorship, and bookkeeping technology to the CBO.

What Were The Major Achievements Of 2020?

- Amid a pandemic and its resulting lockdowns, we onboarded 20 CBO energy enterprises in 2020 and tailored our support specifically to strengthen their selling skills against decreased purchasing power.
- Furthermore, we still recorded increasing uptake in the months following the lift of the shutdown. In total, over 2,600 units of cookstoves, solar and briquettes were dispatched.
- Extending our program into a refugee settlement for the first time. We helped form a grassroots cooperative run by a team of refugees in BidiBidi refugee settlement to distribute household clean energy products.
- Built new partnerships with [Engie Equatorial](#), [Signify Foundation](#), [Response Innovation Lab](#), Sobecki Foundation and the JAC Trust.
- Recognized by the Ashden Awards amongst some of the world's most practical and scalable low carbon innovators in last-mile distribution. We came up as **runner up of the Ashden Award** for System Innovation for Energy Access.

How Can Others Join You In Accelerating The Clean Energy Transition In The Uganda?

As we work to execute our 2021 plans of extending our work to more refugee settlements and supporting more women-led enterprises to increase the uptake of clean energy technologies, we need more like-minded partners whose mission is aligned to what we do to achieve this. We now understand that women can be such a powerful tool for development and we need to support them to run successful enterprises than ever before. Because when women have access to financing, technology and the networks they need to run successful businesses, they can lift themselves and their families out of poverty.

What Are You Focusing On In 2021?

- We will start working with another agent of change, Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs), self-managed groups that help the poorest households manage their money more efficiently.
- We will put women at the forefront of energy access in Uganda. We know that empowering women economically leads to greater ripple effects for families and communities. To achieve this we are focusing on supporting women to overcome challenges in maximising their potential, such as financing, business skills and confidence.
- All enterprises will be enrolled on our bookkeeping dashboard, also known as ENvision, a data tracking system to enable last mile clean energy entrepreneurs to record sales data and track inventories more efficiently.
- We have made commendable progress in running a successful pilot in Bidi Bidi refugee settlement to create energy kiosks and in the next few months, we are extending our reach to Kiryandongo refugee settlement.

New Energy Nexus Uganda Program: Energy Access for Refugees

2020 started off as a precarious year. Clean energy access was in decline and the COVID-19 impact was in full force. While different local economies suffered the plight, another group often behind, refugees, felt it more. Refugees in Uganda today make up 1.4 million people. Much like the outreach work we have done over the last five years across Uganda to create over 100 energy enterprises, this experience guided our entry into Refugee settlements.

The energy access challenge is three layered:

- 93% of the 1.4 million people lack access to clean energy and rely on tree biomass for cooking
- 'Lastmile' distribution for cleantech is limited. Technologies exist but suppliers shy away because of the low purchasing power
- Lack of local enterprises, which is our expertise

Through a valuable partnership with the Response Innovation Lab and JAC Trust, we are setting out to bring stimulation to demand and supply for cleantech. We created an energy enterprise in Bidibidi refugee settlement that serves residents in Village 14 and 16.

Read the [full article](#) to find out more

To date, they have:



Sold over
800 products



Reached
4,000 people



Meet a Clean Energy Innovator: Rural Family Care (RFCare)

Mission:

To be a leading organization **empowering women and Youth** through social business in the Rwenzori Highlands Region. RFCare focuses on **increasing access to clean energy technologies** through creating awareness on clean cooking and training of youth on **improved cookstove installation and repair**.

RFCARE retails clean energy technologies particularly improved cook stoves, briquettes, and water filters to increase access to safe drinking water. The products are primarily sold through organized community groups like Women's Groups and Village Savings and Loan Associations, and this is done through cash or flexible payments.

Through New Energy Nexus' ENVentures program, RFCare received **support** in:

- Business startup loan – RFCare was a recipient of a seed loan of USD2,000 which they used to launch their business. As of 2020, they have grown through the ranks to qualify for our ENVenture Growth Accelerator loan fund.
- Capacity building– RFCare's team was a participant in one of our trainings which they say has improved how they conduct market surveys ahead of any product launch.
- Bookkeeping– RFCare is able to properly track their sales and expenses thanks in part to their use of our ENVision bookkeeping dashboard.

RFCare **progress** during the ENVentures program:

- They have cemented strong credibility among other energy access value chain actors in their district of Kasese opening up opportunities, most notably two contracts to supply improved cookstoves for an organization.
- As a result, they have retained four full time staff and multiple part time field agents.

So far, RFCare has:



1,800
Clean Cookstoves Sold



9,000
beneficiaries



RFCare has been able to work with communities in hard-to-reach areas in Kasese District, due the business Loans accessed from New Energy Nexus Uganda. The elderly are proudly cooking with an improved cook stove.

Biira Imelda Co-founder of RFCare



For more information about New Energy Nexus,
please contact us by email:

penny.mbabazi@newenergynexus.com

