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MPALE SOLAR POWER MINI GRID

MAXIMIZING HOUSEHOLD
INCOMES WITH SOLAR POWER

“OUR TRANSFORMATIVE PRESENCE IN MPALE”

- Electricity was brought to the village of Mpale nearly 50 years after it was established as a village. Prosper Magali, the Project Manager at **Ensol** a private sector company says the idea of developing the Mpale 45KW solar mini grid was to connect rural communities with electricity noting the challenges of energy distribution to remote areas.
- In three years of implementation, there are numerous accomplishments providing entrepreneurial opportunities to youth and women in small shops, salons, barbershops, carpentry etc. Connectivity is currently at 256 households of which 50 are SMEs – an increase from 50 homes in 2017.
- “Without financial support from UNCDF, we couldn’t be here today, UNCDF exposed Ensol to other sources of funds from different energy investors such as REA and Power Africa.”
- ***“Thus, with a little aid, a local innovation has not only helped solve local challenges but has also set an example to others.***



“We have established a unique and efficient Energy Daily Allowance (EDA) payment system which allows users to purchase electricity according to their needs.”

“GENDER IS AN IMAGINARY BARRIER”

- As the sole breadwinner, Nusra Mpale village Hussein Mahonge 41, and mother of 5 is a small business owner who runs a restaurant in Mpale village now earns more than TZS150,000 (USD 65) per month. She says, “Since I was connected to electricity, I have more time to dedicate to my business and have extended my hours from 18:00 to 22:00pm.”
- “I am assured of what my children are going to eat, I can take them to school, buy them uniforms, books and other school materials. My daughter will be joining secondary school next year and my plan is to take her to private school. I am also planning to open another business in future. The electricity has opened up my understanding on doing business despite the fact that I did not go to school.”
- When I heard about electricity, I thought of doing cooking business that I could have otherwise never afforded. I managed to open a restaurant which has so far sustained the needs of my family. Nusra is proud of her achievements as she is one of the few women in the village with a sound and profitable business.



“THE STORY OF AN AMBITIOUS AND MULTI-TALENTED MAN IN MPALE VILLAGE”

- Mahamudu Athuman, 60 years of age and a father of 4 acknowledges that *electricity has changed the way he does carpentry work. Electricity has mechanized and upgraded his carpentry skills and increased his productivity. As a result, his income has increased, and the life of his family has improved.*
- “Before the introduction of electricity I was using manual tools, compared to the modern ones I am using now which has expanded my capacity thus attracting more customers’. In future Mahamudu plans to purchase more efficient electrical tools
- “This project has changed the lives of many villagers including myself and has become a catalyst for development to every member of the community. With electricity the social interaction has increased, among other things, we can now watch football, drama series, and listen to news and school programs. Mpale has changed a lot and now the night resembles the daytime”.



‘The night resembles the day time.’ – Mahamudu Athuman.

“SECURING A FUTURE FOR MY FAMILY”

- Before electricity became available, 33-year-old Juma Fanyanyi was not earning enough money to support his family and make ends meet. A father of two, Juma now owns a compressor services shop. The presence of power has enabled him to earn a daily income which ranges from TZS 10 – 15,000 (USD 4-6); which is above average daily earnings.
- He is the only person in the village engaged in these services.



EXTENDED WORKING HOURS THROUGH ENERGY

- Mariam Abedi aged 18 completed her secondary education in 2019. She now works at her uncle's shop selling household goods and provides mobile phone charging services to villagers. She says her uncle is able to earn extra income because of a refrigerator that enables him to sell cold soft drinks.
- “Electricity is very important to us, as we are now able to extend our working hours from 1800 to 2100 every day.’



EARNING ADDITIONAL INCOME WITH ELECTRICITY

- Shop owner Tarik Hassan recalls the difficulty he experienced with farming; ‘there was a time I lost a huge amount of the harvest due to bad weather. I couldn’t start a family because I didn’t have enough income to meet the family’s needs. In 2018 after selling my crops I invested in a small shop.’ At 27, he is now a father of 2 and says the income he receives from the shop brings him peace of mind as he is able to easily support his family.
- Tarik has extended his working hours from 0800am in to 22:00 every day. He says, “With electricity I can work longer hours and I’ve been able to buy a flour milling machine – I plan to begin milling services before the end of this year.

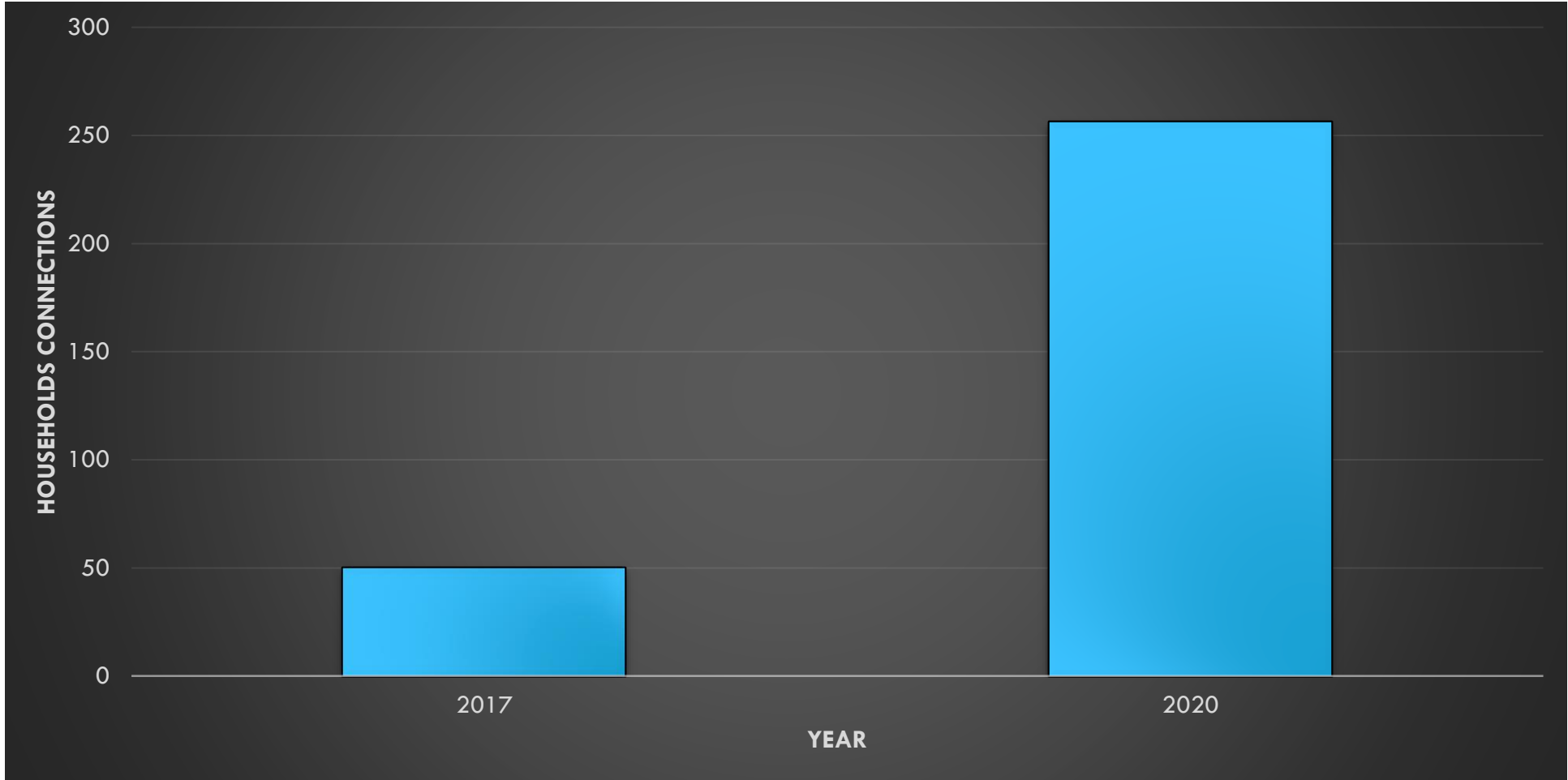


“CREATING NEW OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH ENERGY”

- Twalib Ramadhan is a 31 years old entrepreneur and owner of a small barbershop. He grew up in a traditional family that engaged in agricultural activities. He saved money to invest in the barbershop which provides him with additional income to support his family. As a father of two he says, “Everything has changed for me, I am now less frustrated because I know I have a hopeful future ahead me.”



HOUSEHOLD CONNECTIONS



“ELECTRICITY HAS MADE OUR LIVES MORE SECURE.”

- “At first our goals and dreams seemed hard to achieve, but we now have hope,” says Abdallah Mohamed Mdoe, Mpale Village Chairman.
- Abdallah remarks that the presence of power has improved their lives significantly; “the availability of electricity opened more business opportunities. There are grocery shops, TV houses and other SMEs. People’s incomes have increased which resulted in an increase of school registration for primary schools, as parents can now afford to buy books and uniforms for their children. Most notably, students can now study at night.”
- “Personally, my life has changed tremendously in terms of electricity expenses because the previous forms of energy were at a high cost. I believe in the coming years, our village will change, and more developments will come.



IMPROVED HEALTH SERVICES THROUGH SOLAR POWER

- Josepha Ngoti aged 29, a nurse from Mpale village dispensary says access to electricity has simplified her work and reduced their power costs by half switching from gas to solar power generation.
- “Now that there is a full-time electricity, patients receive their vaccinations in time”. She adds “Previously, when we ran out of gas for power generation, the vaccines would get destroyed and cause loss to the government and dispensary. Replacement of the gas cylinder was not a guarantee because of the rough terrain which made the roads to the nearest town impassable during the rainy season.



“A FIVEFOLD INCREASE IN MY INCOME”

- **“Women are in no way less capable than men as they can do anything if they are determined and committed” – Mwanahija Abdallah Nurdin**
- Mwanahija Abdallah Nurdin, is a 31 year old mother of two and owner of a women’s hair salon.
- As a new resident of Mpale, Mwanahija was looking for a way to supplement her income. She observed that women had to travel long distances for salon services noting that women from the area were keen on grooming and personal care. Mwanahija established the first and only salon in Mpale which services women from the surrounding wards.
- “With the income from the salon business, my family can now live a more satisfying life – my children are well fed, and I can also buy them school supplies. It has also provided me with some capital to start a farming business. My vision is to become a great entrepreneur with different branches all over the country”.



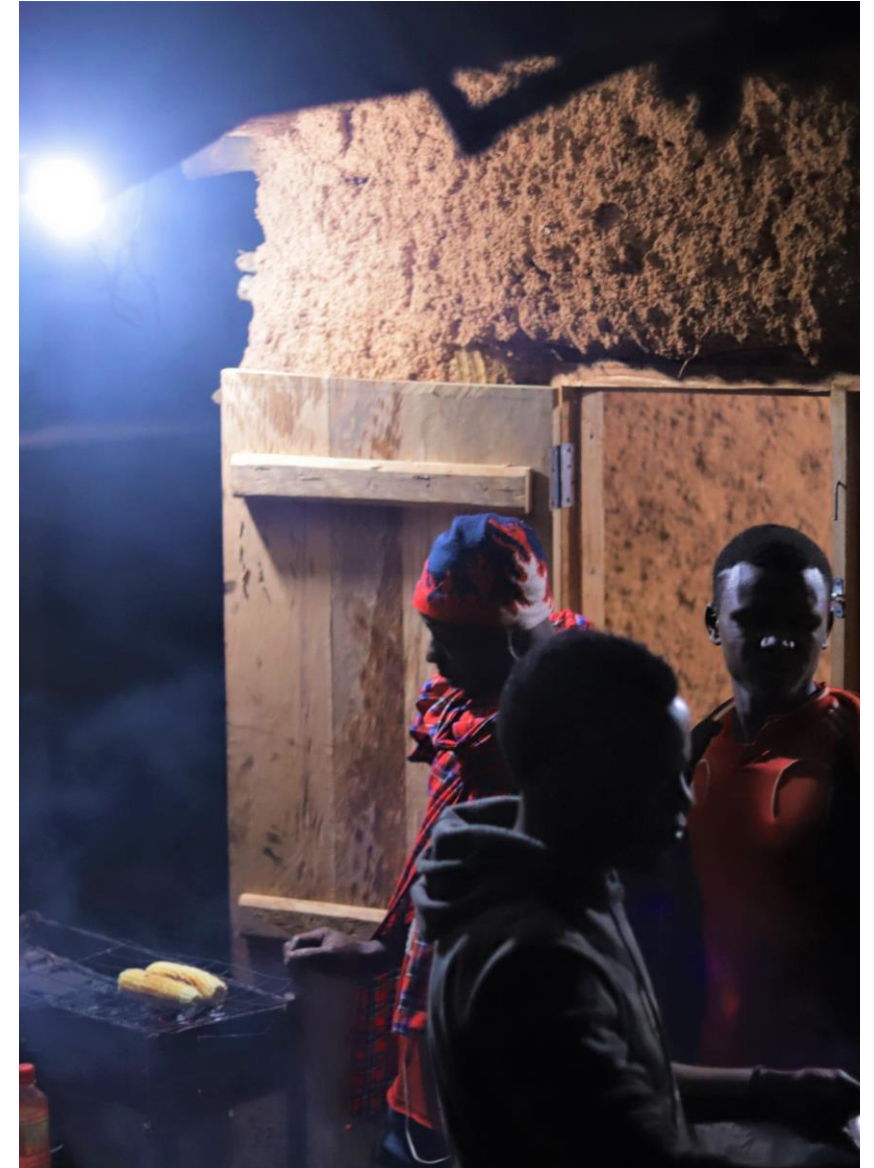
ENERGY IS KEY TO STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE

- A Form 3 student at Mali Secondary School in Mpale village, 16-year-old Amina Ismail remembers that before electricity she didn't have time to do her homework. She says, "It was very hard for me to use the kerosene lamp because it produces a lot of smoke which had a negative impact on my health." She adds, "sometimes my dad didn't have money to pay for kerosene which hindered my studying and affected my performance. I would often go to bed without finishing my homework."
- After the installation of electricity, I have enough time to study, participate in group work with my friends and adequately prepare for tests. Amina says that "my goal is to become a teacher so that I can provide an understanding and knowledge to kids from my village on the importance of education."



SUPPORTING YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP THROUGH ENERGY

- Juma Hassan is a 24-year-old who has applied himself to personal development and is involved in the potato chips business.
- He says, “unlike young people his age, the installation of power made him aware of the available opportunities.’ He notes the initial challenge he faced because his business was considered to be women’s work. ‘But soon after I started, I was able to see the fruits of my efforts.’
- In the afternoon I work as a laborer in different farms, but I dedicate time to my business in the evening. This is the impact of having access to electricity because I earn around TZS 5,000 (USD 2) daily which is beyond my expectations”.



SUPPORTING LOCAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ENERGY

- Mary Kiwenga is the Village Executive Officer of Mpale village in Korogwe District in Tanga. She says having electricity in their village has attracted different economic and social activities apart from the traditional farming.
- Mpale village has 3000 villagers. Before Mpale solar mini grid, the energy production was very low. Currently, people have access to electricity which simplifies their day to day activities but also increase their daily incomes. Due to the availability of reliable and affordable electricity new businesses have been established and children have enough time to study compared to previous years.





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