



Press Release

GE Africa, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the U.S African Development Foundation

GE, USADF and USAID Announce 22 African Innovators as Winners of Power Africa Off-Grid Energy Challenge

- Winners from Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria and Tanzania will receive grants of up to \$100,000 each
- Renewable power projects, including wind, solar, hydro-electric and biogas, will provide 3.4 MW of new electricity to rural communities across sub-Saharan Africa
- The Challenge is part of the broader Power Africa initiative, which aims to provide electricity access to 20 million households and businesses

NEW YORK - September 25, 2014 – GE Africa (NYSE: GE) and the United States African Development Foundation (USADF) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) today announced 22 winners in the second round of their [Power Africa Off-Grid Energy Challenge](#). Selected from nearly 300 applicants, each winner will receive a grant of up to \$100,000 to support the deployment of off-grid solutions that put renewable resources to work to power increased economic activity.

The Off-Grid Challenge, funded by USADF, USAID and GE Africa, promotes innovative solutions that develop, scale-up or extend the use of proven technologies for off-grid energy – increasing access to reliable, affordable, and sustainable power. According to the International Energy Agency, only 12.9 percent of rural communities in sub-Saharan Africa have access to electricity, compared to 64.2 percent in urban areas.

“The high quality of submissions we have received throughout the Off-Grid Energy Challenge is a testament to the incredible innovation and entrepreneurship that is happening across the continent,” said president and CEO of GE Africa, Jay Ireland. “GE has a rich history in Africa that spans more than 100 years and we are very pleased to be a part of this Challenge to help identify and accelerate projects that will help Africans to compete in the global economy.”

The winning projects include 14 solar developments, six biogas generation projects, one wind turbine system and a small hydroelectricity power plant. The focus of these projects is on delivering more power for commercial activities, including agriculture production and processing, off-farm businesses, and commercial enterprises.

The Off-Grid Energy Challenge is a part of [Power Africa](#), the White House-led initiative to drive growth by increasing access to reliable, affordable, and sustainable power and by helping to ensure responsible, transparent and effective management of energy resources. The initiative aims to add more than 30,000 megawatts (MW) of cleaner, more efficient electricity generation capacity in sub-Saharan Africa as well as increase electricity access by adding 60 million new home and business connections.

The President and CEO of the USADF Shari Berenbach said, “We have been impressed by the broad range of innovative strategies that African entrepreneurs are developing to tackle local energy challenges. Access to power is critical to spur economic growth and each winning project in this Challenge will help bring electricity to communities who have lived without reliable power. We have already seen significant impact in the first phase of this Challenge and we’re excited to help the next 22 winners realize their goals.”

Andy Herscowitz, USAID and Coordinator for Power Africa, said, "These 22 winners exemplify what Power Africa is all about: multiple U.S. Government agencies and other partners working together with the private sector to increase electricity access in sub-Saharan Africa. Although less than a year and a half old, Power Africa and its partners are making progress in alleviating energy poverty challenges in sub-Saharan Africa. President Obama recently announced a renewed commitment to Power Africa with additional resources so we look forward to increasing our efforts across all of sub-Saharan Africa in the months to come."

The 22 projects announced today build on the progress and impact realized by the [first round of winners](#), announced late last year. For the Green Village Electricity Project, a 2013 winner from Nigeria, the grant has enabled the project to grow from 140 homes to powering an entire community in Nigeria. They eventually plan to power 24 rural communities in Nigeria using their solar technology.

Ifeanyi Orajaka, founding partner of Green Village Electricity project, recently said, "The impact of this grant has been immeasurable, both to our organization and Nigeria. We have been able to expand our off-grid project to bring power to more people. And, the recognition of being a Challenge winner has attracted the attention of other potential investors."

For more information on applying to the Off-Grid Energy Challenge, entrepreneurs and innovators can contact OffGridChallenge@usadf.gov.

About GE

GE (NYSE: GE) works on things that matter. The best people and the best technologies taking on the toughest challenges. Finding solutions in energy, health and home, transportation and finance. Building, powering, moving and curing the world. Not just imagining. Doing. GE works. For more information, visit the company's website at www.ge.com.

ABOUT USADF

U.S. African Development Foundation (USADF), a public corporation in the U.S. federal government, funds African enterprises, cooperatives and community-based organizations to build capacity and expand economic activities. In 17 countries with over 350 project grants, USADF is benefiting more than a million and a half Africans. USADF operates as the only US agency exclusively centered on an African-led, grassroots development model to encourage shared prosperity.

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