

POWERING AFRICA

Rwandans Unite to Power Villages

ON THE LAST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH, Rwandans set aside their daily routines to participate in Umuganda, a nation-wide volunteer day. They come together to help their neighbors in a variety of different ways: rebuilding a home, improving a road or cleaning up a neighborhood.



In the rural Musanze District, it is not only villagers who participate in these volunteer activities. Representatives from DC HydroPower, a Rwandan energy company and a USTDA partner, also join the group for Umuganda. They are committed, on every day of the month, to ensuring that the work they do has a positive impact on the community.

They bring that same commitment to their efforts to develop two run-of-the-river hydroelectric stations in the mountainous province, where less than a quarter of the population currently has energy access. Together, these stations are expected to generate 3.6 megawatts of new electricity — powering an estimated 20,000 homes in two villages. By bringing this power online, the project will stimulate the local economy and generate a variety of opportunities for the community.

In fact, it is already doing so. DC HydroPower provided a loan to a local metalworker named Sabin Ngirirabatanyurwa, who, according to them, has “a greater entrepreneurial spirit at age 64 than most 20 year olds.” Sabin used the loan to acquire the equipment he needed to build his own business. Ultimately, he was not only able to pay back the loan, he has helped DC HydroPower resolve issues at their project sites.

While DC HydroPower is committed to working with Sabin and other villagers to ensure the sustainability of the project, they are also bringing in U.S. expertise. Under a USTDA-sponsored grant agreement, DC HydroPower is working with Ritoch-Powell & Associates (RPA), a civil engineering firm headquartered in Phoenix, Arizona, to design the hydroelectric stations. RPA believes this project will lead to additional opportunities for them — in fact, several other firms have asked them to provide services in East Africa and even beyond the continent. This cooperation demonstrates how USTDA’s support can assist U.S. firms while building vital infrastructure and promoting economic development. The Agency helped introduce RPA to an initial opportunity, and now the company is proving its value on the ground.

By employing the help of both local workers and U.S. experts, DC HydroPower is fulfilling the spirit of Umuganda, “coming together in common purpose to achieve an outcome.” They have created an international community of people united around the mutual goal of electrifying the Musanze District. By pooling their resources, talents and abilities, they will bring power to nearly 100,000 people.



INCREASING ELECTRICITY ACCESS ACROSS AFRICA

In July 2013, President Obama launched the Power Africa initiative to increase electricity access in sub-Saharan Africa. Given the Agency's long history of convening U.S. industry experts and African project sponsors to deploy clean energy solutions across the continent, USTDA has taken a leading role in the initiative. Since its launch, the Agency has sponsored 36 project planning activities that support the development of 667 MW of renewable power.



36

PROJECTS

USTDA has provided critical project planning assistance for 36 Power Africa projects.



667

MEGAWATTS

These projects support the development of over 667 MW of new power generation.



1.3M

HOMES

Combined, these projects are anticipated to generate enough energy to supply 1.3 million African homes and businesses.



\$6.4B

IN INVESTMENTS

USTDA’s investments could help leverage over \$6.4 billion in financing from public and private sources.