



SMART VILLAGES
New thinking for off-grid communities worldwide

PRESS RELEASE

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Smart Villages Announces Winners in the 2016 Energy Innovation Challenge for East Africa

Smart Villages is pleased to announce SUJA Eco-Energy Company as the winners of the 2016 Smart Villages Energy Innovation Challenge for East Africa. Building on last year's success, this year's competition, in collaboration with the Cambridge Development Initiative, included an even broader range of partners and sponsors. Each of the three off-grid energy teams were recognised for outstanding achievement at the Dare to Change Dar conference in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Jacqueline Proneth and Suleiman Mzungu were named the winners of the Smart Villages Energy Innovation Challenge for SUJA, their social business manufacturing sustainable charcoal from a range of alternative sources including charcoal dusts, sugar cane, coconut husks and shells. Judges were impressed with the amount of primary market research and product development undertaken by Jacqueline and Suleiman during the DAREnterprisers course and by the flexibility of their manufacturing process. SUJA will be awarded \$3000 prize capital from Smart Villages as seed capital to get their business off the ground.



Gerald Mpangala (CDI Tanzania) Jacqueline Proneth (SUJA), Imaan Kara (CDI) Suleiman Mzungu (SUJA), Bernie Jones (Smart Villages) and Cobi-Jane Akinrele (CDI) with their award from the Smart Villages Energy Innovation Challenge for East Africa.



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Smart Villages would also like to recognise the other teams in the off-grid energy track, Tacode and Shara. Tacode qualified for a \$5000 microfinance loan from Unit Trust Tanzania for their start-up manufacturing charcoal from cow dung, which also markets the production technology to off-grid communities so they can manufacture their own product. Shara received a \$2500 award from NMB bank for their hybrid solar-wind minigrid business, primarily aimed at hospitals and schools in rural areas.

Each of the finalist teams worked for seven weeks with Cambridge Development Initiative (CDI) trainers in Dar es Salaam to refine and develop their business ideas as part of the DAREnterprisers course. This is the third year the CDI has returned to Dar es Salaam to run their entrepreneurial skills training course and it continues to grow year on year.

Cobi-Jane Akinrele, Director of Entrepreneurship for the DAREnterprisers course commented: "Each of the teams in the off-grid energy track of DAREnterprisers accomplished an incredible amount during the training. They have impressed us and themselves with how much they have learned, how confident they have become and we are certain that each team will leverage the awards they have received to get their off-grid energy businesses off the ground by the start of next year's course."

The DAREnterprisers course and Smart Villages Energy Innovation Challenge are strengthened by the contributions of expert partners. We would like to thank COSTECH, Energy4Impact and Practical Action for joining us on the judging panel, Anglogold Ashanti for supporting the Dare to Change Dar conference and a range of Tanzanian partners for supporting the DAREnterprisers course including The University of Dar es Salaam, Dar Teknohama Business Incubator (DTBi), the National Economic Empowerment Council (NEEC) and Buni Hub at Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH).

This is the third competition run by the Smart Villages Initiative as part of their international project evaluating ways of providing off-grid energy as a catalyst for development in rural villages. James Ogingo and Clifford Okoth of Chemolex were named the winners of the 2015 Energy Innovation Challenge for East Africa and Shaym Patra of Naturetech Infra was named the winner of the 2016 Off-grid Energy Impact Competition for India.

More information on the CDI's DAREnterprisers course and other tracks can be found at darenterprisers.strikingly.com

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Notes for Editors

Smart Villages

The Smart Villages Initiative is a three year project evaluating ways of providing off-grid energy as a catalyst for development for rural villages and encouraging the transfer of knowledge and experience between different developing regions. Through a series of international workshops and follow-up activities in Africa, Asia and Latin America, our aim is to provide policy makers, donors, entrepreneurs and other stakeholders with new insights into the challenges of supplying village-level energy and how they might be overcome.

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Cambridge Development Initiative

The Cambridge Development Initiative (CDI) is a student-run NGO based at the University of Cambridge committed to training entrepreneurs in the specific skills necessary to create thriving social businesses. By working alongside local communities and building strategic partnerships at local, national and international levels, they work to equip young African entrepreneurs with the skills to create positive change in their communities and beyond.

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