Power Africa’s Beyond the Grid: Increasing Access through Small-Scale Energy Solutions

More than 240 million people live without electricity in rural and peri-urban communities across the six Power Africa focus countries. Recognizing that Power Africa cannot achieve energy access goals through the use of large grid extension projects alone, the U.S. Government has recently launched a new framework focused exclusively on unlocking investment and growth for off-grid and small-scale energy solutions on the African continent.

Known as “Beyond the Grid”, this new framework leverages Power Africa’s innovative transaction-focused model to galvanize collaboration, engage in critical actions to accelerate transactions, and drive systemic reforms to facilitate future investment specifically relating to off-grid and small-scale energy solutions. Beyond the Grid has been developed in close collaboration with investors, practitioners, and donors. Beyond the Grid strives to create an effective enabling environment, as well as increase access to finance and technical assistance in order to address some of the recurring constraints in the small scale-energy space.

Over a five year period, Beyond the Grid will partner with over 27 investors and practitioners that have committed to invest over $1 billion into off-grid and small-scale solutions to this underserved market. These private sector commitments will be significant in helping Power Africa meet and exceed its objective to provide access to 20 million new connections for households and commercial entities.

Mobilizing Finance
Sustainable, private sector-led business models for off-grid and small-scale energy solutions are beginning to succeed in the marketplace — bolstered by decreasing costs of renewable energy generation, new technologies, innovative business models, and a growing cohort of entrepreneurs meeting the demand of sub-Saharan Africa’s underserved populations. Building on this momentum, Beyond the Grid will utilize the various tools and resources of the 12 U.S. Government agencies which work together as part of the Power Africa team to mobilize finance to small-scale energy projects.

Enabling Environment
Growth of the small-scale energy sector hinges on the public sector providing transparent regulatory and policy regimes which provide clear, predictable rules for project development, investment and operation. However, existing policies and regulatory frameworks are not always primed to support new and emerging business models enabled by rapidly transforming energy technologies. In order to catalyze the private sector and the significant resources it can bring to bear, Beyond the Grid will support activities that create an enabling environment for development and investment in this space.
**Beyond the Grid Founding Partners***
- Acumen Fund
- Bamboo Finance
- BBOXX
- Capricorn Investments
- CrossBoundary
- d.light
- Embark Energy
- Energiya Global
- Fenix International
- Global Off-Grid Lighting Association
- Gray Ghost Ventures
- Invested Development
- Khosla Impact
- LGT Venture Philanthropy
- Liberia Energy Network
- Low Carbon Enterprise Fund
- Mosaic
- Off Grid Electric
- Persistent Energy Partners
- Powerhive
- Schneider Electric
- Shell Foundation
- Solar Sister
- SunFunder
- Tony Elumelu Foundation
- United Nations Foundation
- Virunga Power

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Power Africa represents a whole of U.S. Government, transaction-based development approach to increase access to power in sub-Saharan Africa. Power Africa works with African governments, the private sector, and other partners such as the World Bank and African Development Bank in six focus countries — Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria and Tanzania — to add more than 10,000 MW of cleaner, more efficient electricity generation.

For more information on Power Africa’s Beyond the Grid, visit [www.usaid.gov/powerafrica](http://www.usaid.gov/powerafrica)