

Press release
 Munich, February 22, 2023

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**Boosting accessibility to affordable renewable energy in Africa:
 Four African SMEs selected for SESA "Call for Entrepreneurs 2022"**

Siemens Stiftung on behalf of the **Smart Energy Solutions for Africa** (SESA) consortium is excited to announce the names of the selected enterprises of the "SESA Call for Entrepreneurs 2022". Launched in September 2022, the open and competitive call for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) focused on Productive Use of Energy (PUE) solutions in Ghana, Malawi, Morocco, and South Africa. The inaugural call for entrepreneurs encouraged women-led enterprises to apply, resulting in over 30 percent of the total applications coming from female founders.

Meet the selected enterprises:

- Ghana: **Econexus Ventures Limited**, a female-led enterprise co-founded by Patience Alifo, provides affordable, reliable, and clean-burning bioethanol and cookstoves as alternatives to polluting cooking fuels.
- Ghana: **Nastech Power Solutions**, founded by Samuel Asare, develops affordable, reliable and durable solar energy solutions from electronic waste and recycled plastics.
- Malawi: **Smart Energy Enterprise** (SEE) under the leadership of Gift Mwangairo offers solar-powered irrigation systems, customised advisory services and access to markets for smallholder farmers.
- South Africa: **GREEN Solar Academy** is a female-founded independent training provider of solar PV systems, envisioning to make renewable energy accessible for all Africans. Antje Klauss-Vorreiter is the CEO of the enterprise.

The four enterprises have received sub-contracts ranging from €50,000 up to €70,000 per business over 18 months, with the aim of validating selected proof of concepts and business models for up-scaling. Beginning at the end of February 2023, they will join the SESA Incubator Programme: receiving mentoring and tailored growth support and capacity-building programmes to prepare them for follow-on funding and to strengthen the financial sustainability of their enterprises. They will also benefit from the consortium partners' diverse expertise, experience, and networks.

"Empowering entrepreneurs to increase the use of renewable energies will drive sustainable development and catalyse a more equitable and prosperous future for all. My heartiest congratulations to all, we are particularly delighted to have two promising women-led enterprises amongst the selected companies", added Dr. Nina Smidt, Managing Director and Spokesperson of the Board at Siemens Stiftung.

The European Commission-funded SESA project aims to ensure the applicability, replicability, adaption and scalability of innovative business solutions across Africa. A SESA expert jury selected the four enterprises after screening close to 100 applications based on their replication potential. Under its overarching vision of energy access for all, the selected solutions seek to enable economic growth along with creating jobs and contributing to low-carbon development.

SESA Project Coordinator and ICLEI Europe Representative, Magdalena Sikorowska welcomed the four companies into the SESA Consortium: “Your contribution and expertise will accelerate the implementation of clean energy projects and improve the socio-economic conditions of local communities. Within SESA, we aim at empowering entrepreneurs and developing local innovation!”

Smart Energy Solutions for Africa (SESA)

SESA is a collaborative project between the European Union and nine African countries (Kenya, Ghana, South Africa, Malawi, Morocco, Namibia, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Nigeria) that aims at providing energy access technologies and business models that are easily replicable and generate local opportunities for economic development and social cohesion in Africa.

Through several local active labs, it is expected to facilitate the co-development of scalable and replicable energy access innovations, to be tested, validated, and later replicated throughout the African continent. These solutions will include decentralised renewables (solar photovoltaics), innovative energy storage systems including the use of second-life electric vehicle batteries, smart microgrids, waste-to-energy systems (biomass to biogas), climate-proofing, resilience and adaptation, and rural internet access.

sesa-euafrica.eu/

About Siemens Stiftung

As a nonprofit foundation, we promote sustainable social development, which is crucially dependent on access to basic services, high-quality education, and an understanding of culture. To this effect, our project work supports people in taking the initiative to responsibly address current challenges. Together with partners, we develop and implement solutions and programs to support this effort, with technological and social innovation playing a central role. Our actions are impact-oriented and conducted in a transparent manner.

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This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 101037141. This material reflects only the views of the Consortium, and the EC cannot be held responsible for any use that may be made of the information in it.