# SEED Initiative
promoting entrepreneurship for sustainable development

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## 🏆 AFRICA
## WINNER 2014

Mobile Solar Computer Classroom is helping to bridge the digital divide in Uganda by making computer skills accessible, affordable and relevant to rural schools and community libraries in Uganda. The enterprise uses solar-powered computers to bring its technology to its trainees.

# The Mobile Solar Computer Classroom, Uganda

## BUSINESS MODEL

Mobile Solar Computer Classroom brings all the equipment needed to provide lessons on computer skills to schools and libraries, offering a digital literacy curriculum delivered over the course of two years. The institutions pay a small fee for the training sessions, the majority of the funding comes from awards, partnerships and grants.

The enterprise has two modified all-terrain vehicles equipped with solar panels, laptops, an internet router, a tent, tables and chairs. In using solar energy, it raises awareness of the benefits and availability of solar devices.

## ENTERPRISE FAST FACTS

| | |
|---|---|
| Location | Mukono |
| Year founded | 2008 |
| Sector | Education, Energy / Renewables |
| Product / Service | Computer skills training sessions |

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## Social impacts:

- Equipping 5,000 students, 100 teachers and 500 community members with competitive computer skills each year, including text processing, simple budgeting, presentations and internet research.

- Increasing the quality of education and computer literacy in rural Ugandan communities, and building a skilled workforce for the future.

## Environmental impacts:

- Demonstrating that solar power can be used in communities without reliable access to electricity.

- Encouraging the use of solar power, especially as an alternative energy source for things like lamps in schools, which are normally fuelled by kerosene.
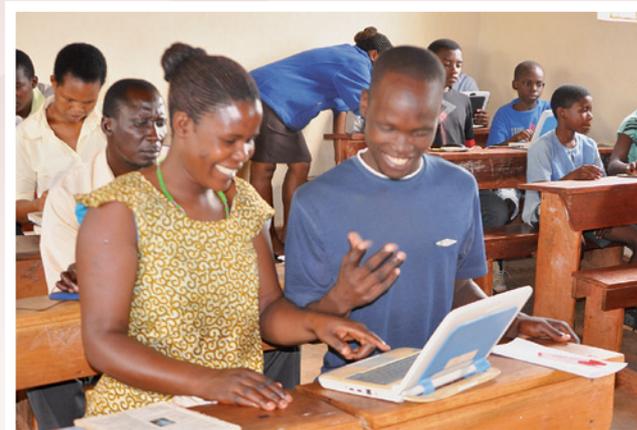
## Economic impacts:

- Providing the opportunity for lower socio-economic communities to gain computer skills they otherwise would not be able to afford–the enterprise works to ensure all clients can access its training.

- Building the foundations of a computer services industry in Uganda.

> Since 2008, the project has fought digital poverty by reaching 37,000 people who have been given a means to; access computers, build their skills and tap into a world full of opportunities.

## Scaling up activities:

- Visit 10 new schools and five new libraries over the coming year.
- Acquire more computers and more solar panels in order to continue existing partnerships and increase the amount of people able to access the service.
- Improve customer satisfaction by increasing the time students spend on computers and by interacting with more clients during each training session.
- Increase revenue by better enforcing payment of contracts with clients.



> Maendeleo Foundation recognises the importance of technology in economic development, and is committed to supporting schools and communities obtain the technology skills they need to build a productive computer services industry.

## Partnership

◐ **Maendeleo Foundation,** a Ugandan non-profit organisation, owns and implements the Mobile Solar Computer Classroom project. It first piloted the idea in 2008.

◐ **The Uganda Rural Literacy & Community Development Association** helps to connect the enterprise with libraries and schools in the West Nile Region that are in need of computer training. They market the enterprise's services and sponsor some schools and communities in the region who cannot afford to pay for the service.

◐ **Kikandwa Rural Community Development Organisation** supports the enterprise in fundraising for and sponsoring schools that cannot afford the services. They also contribute to the Mobile Solar Computer Classroom's curriculum development and design of training delivery.

The 2014 SEED Awards in Ethiopia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania and Uganda are largely supported by the European Union, which is made up of 28 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies.

### About the SEED Initiative

The SEED Initiative identifies and supports promising small scale social and environmental entrepreneurs around the globe, entrepreneurs who while working towards a greener economy also tackle poverty, marginalisation and social exclusion. SEED provides these entrepreneurs with know-how and networks, taking the lessons learnt at local level up to decision-makers to promote evidence-based policy making. For more information please write to info@seedinit.org or visit:

# www.seedinit.org

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