



Nots impacts families; Invests in renewable energy

By Michel Nkurunziza

THE GOVERNMENT of Rwanda is working to increase energy capacity through different projects. Rwanda's current installed capacity is 119MW and government targets 563MW by 2017 mainly from hydro, peat, methane, geothermal and solar.

Currently, only 18 per cent of the population in Rwanda has access to electricity. Government plans to have 70 per cent of the population connected by 2018.

This is equivalent to 1,708,000 households based on on-grid and off grid connections. Of these, 48 per cent will be connected on grid while 22 per cent through off grid connection. -

Figures from the ministry of infrastructures indicate that in terms access to electricity, currently there are 474,083 households that are connected to electricity while 23,197 new connections will be made by the end of June this year.

Ministry officials say private companies on ground will connect 314,000 households through off grid solutions in a bid to contribute to 22% of off grid energy.

One such company; Nots limited is investing in renewable energy by introducing solar lamps (Blue Power) and charcoal saving technique (Blue Charcoal).

NOTS is an impact enterprise that is working to improve livelihoods and protects natural resources in Sub-Saharan Africa by building renewable energy enterprises. As an impact enterprise, NOTS aims to

ronmental impact.

Bart Hartman, the chief executive of NOTS Impacts Enterprises limited says that company activities will improve livelihoods and reduce deforestation by producing renewable energy.

"Our target is to replace all kerosene lamps by solar lamps by 2020. About 40,000 people have already accessed solar lamps. Our focus is on rural areas where people rely on kerosene lamps every day. We are working with different cooperatives like SACCOS to make easily available the lamps to the people," Hartman adds.

Hartman notes that solar lamps save families about Rwf70,000 per year and improve health by reducing CO2 emissions from kerosene lamps.

Prices for lamps vary between Rwf 5,000 and Rwf25,000 depending on their capacity. They can also be used to charge mobile phones.

Usage of new lamps stands as low as 5 per cent, a figure that is blamed on lack of awareness on the part of the population and low incomes.

The company plans to sell 50,000 lamps by 2015 from about 6,000 that have already been sold.

NOTS Impacts Enterprises Limited currently has operations in the Netherlands, Mali and Rwanda.



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Bart Hartman the chief entrepreneur of NOTS Impacts Enterprises limited demonstrating how a solar lamp works (By Michel Nkurunziza)

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The Office of the Canadian High Commission in Rwanda is bringing some of these opportunities to you.

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