



FINAL PROJECT REPORT

PROVISION OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (BDS) TO 12 RENEWABLE ENERGY SMES IN UGANDA

**PREPARED FOR: ENERGISING DEVELOPMENT UGANDA
(ENDEV)**

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1 DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

BCG	Boston Consulting Group
BDS	Business Development Services
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CREEC	Centre for Research in Energy and Energy Efficiency
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
EnDev	Energising Development
EPCs	Electric Pressure Cookers
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
HRM	Human Resource Management
JDs	Job Descriptions
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
LPG	Liquified Petroleum Gas
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSSF	National Social Security Fund
OCA	Open Capital Advisors
OKR	Objectives Key Results
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health
PayGo	Pay As You Go
PESTEL	Political Economical Social Technological Environmental and Legal
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SMT	Senior Management Team
SWOT	Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats
ToR	Terms of Reference
UGX	Uganda Shillings
URSB	Uganda Registration Services Bureau

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3 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

GIZ Energising Development (EnDev) Uganda offered a second round of Business Development Services (BDS 2.0) to Ugandan Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the renewable energy sector. This consultancy followed an initial round of BDS support (BDS 1.0) that was given to 6 solar and 6 cooking energy SMEs, completed in 2021. Drawing from the learnings and recommendations of BDS 1.0, EnDev Uganda extended another opportunity to SMEs operating in solar and cooking energy sectors to receive tailored coaching, mentorship, and training in core business areas.

The Energising Development (EnDev) partnership is a joint impact-oriented global programme facilitating self-sustaining markets for modern energy solutions, financed by four donor countries. It cooperates with governments, non-government organisations (NGOs), and the private sector in over 20 partner countries in Africa, Latin America, and Asia. In Uganda, the EnDev Programme is implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, in close cooperation with the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development (MEMD). GIZ EnDev Uganda, facilitates access to modern energy services for households, social institutions, and small and medium enterprises through market development for improved cook stoves (ICS) and solar PV including fostering a conducive enabling environment.

The BDS programme was implemented by Belli Advisory over a period of 6 months, i.e., May to October 2023. The interventions were delivered following a co-creation approach in which the SMEs were tasked with developing business support documents to affirm the learnings received under each intervention area; Strategic Planning, Finance, Marketing, HR (including Gender Mainstreaming), Operations Planning, and Investment Readiness.

This report details activities undertaken by Belli Advisory as the consultancy firm contracted by EnDev to offer tailored support to the 12 renewable energy SMEs under BDS 2.0. The consultants executed work according to the approach documented in the pre-approved [inception report](#) and where they deemed fit, made necessary adjustments. The scope of work was generated from the consultancy Terms of Reference (ToR) and involved four core assignment areas which included:

- A. Conducting an initial assessment to identify and finalize a list of 12 SMEs to participate in the programme.
- B. Conducting a 360-business diagnostic of each of the selected companies to identify the BDS gaps; for the which specific interventions were developed.
- C. Offering BDS support to close the identified gaps.
- D. Conducting an information dissemination workshop that will bring together key sector players and stakeholders.

4 PROJECT SCOPE AND IMPLEMENTATION

Project implementation was guided by the 4 assignment areas, i.e., identification of the SMEs to participate in BDS 2.0, conducting a business diagnosis of company core function areas to identify gaps, delivering the BDS interventions in accordance with the gaps identified and finally, conducting an information dissemination workshop and as part of the workshop, recognize BDS 2.0 participants and discuss challenges and opportunities for renewable energy SMEs.

4.1 Overview & Selection of SMEs

The total number of SMEs selected to participate in the programme (BDS 2.0) were 12; 6 clean cooking and 6 solar SMEs. The selection of SMEs followed an E.O.I Process, during which an assessment criterion to narrow down on the 12 SMEs was followed. The companies were assessed against the criterion below:

1. At least three years of operation in the solar or cooking sectors in Uganda.
2. Availability of company financial, strategic and management data for assessment and analysis by BDS consultant.
3. Willingness and commitment to host teams from the BDS consultant and from EnDev Uganda to company specific premises during the duration of the trainings.
4. Availability of at least three (3) permanent staff to commit to the BDS training activities
5. Minimum average annual turnover/ sales revenue for the last 3 years of at least UGX 100M
6. Statutory documents that indicate legal operation of the business within the country.

33% of the companies selected were either female owned, or female led. The table below details the companies that were selected to participate in BDS 2.0¹.

Table 1: Shows the companies that were selected for BDS 2.0, their gender composition (in terms of management & ownership), and their level of growth.

	Category	Level of growth
Solar SMEs		
1. Sprinktech Limited	Male Led & Owned	Medium
2. W.WaterWorks	Male Led, Female Owned (51%)	Medium
3. Access To Solar Technologies	Male Led & Owned	Micro
4. BrightLife	Male Led	Medium
5. Solar Nuggets	Male Led & Female Owned	Micro
6. EMFS / Panda Solar	Male Led & Owned	Micro

¹ At commencement of the programme, all participating companies were asked to sign consent forms indicating their willingness to participate in the programme. Additionally, the consultants were required to sign Non-Disclosure Agreements. The signed consent forms and NDAs can be accessed using this [link](#).

Clean Cooking SMEs		
1. BM Energy	Male Owned, Female Led	Medium
2. ELSMAT Technologies	Male Led & Owned	Micro
3. EnerGrow	Male Led & Owned	Micro
4. Masrcorp	Male Led & Owned	Micro
5. Bukono AgroProcessors Ltd	Male Led & Owned	Medium
6. Aid Africa	Male Led , Female Owned	Micro

8 out of 12 companies committed fully to the activities of the program. It was unfortunate that Masrcorp, BrightLife, Bukona AgroProcessors, and Solar Nuggets were not able to fully attend to the activities of the programme, due to competing priorities and/or lack of capacity in terms of Human Resource to dedicate to the programme.

4.2 Company Diagnostic & Needs Assessment

Using a [pre-developed diagnostic model](#), a 360 diagnostic was done for each of the 12 SMEs selected to participate in BDS 2.0; to highlight the most predominant gaps in the core business functions. The findings guided the BDS interventions to be delivered to each SME. The assessment followed an in-depth understanding of each individual organization through a one-on-one interview with key representatives of each participating company, during which guiding questions were asked and documents to support the responses were reviewed or established. The detailed assessment sheets can be accessed using this [link](#).

4.3 Project Scope and Support Areas Covered

The objective of the assignment was to design and deliver tailor-made BDS training, coaching, mentoring, and consulting services to 12 renewable energy SMEs. Specifically, the consultants were required to design BDS interventions to address capacity gaps identified during the BDS needs assessment conducted. The scope, though guided by diagnostics done, was complemented by progressive discussions with the SME representatives for each phase. At the beginning of each BDS phase, the consultants engaged the company representatives in a comprehensive discussion to understand their desired outcomes of the support and what needed to be addressed. The table below summarizes the diagnostic findings of each participating company and the specific intervention areas, and needs covered during the assignment assessment. *Note that this table only details findings and interventions for 8 out of the 12 companies that managed to fully participate in the programme.*

Table 2: Company Diagnosis and Specific BDS Needs.

Company	Summary Findings	Discoveries, Gaps, and BDS Needs	BDS Interventions
<p>Access To Solar Technologies</p>	<p>Access To Solar Technologies' main challenge is their ability to raise enough capital to fund their inventory. Currently, their model relies on a just-in-time inventory management strategy which limits the ability to sell enough products and outcompete other solar companies in the Eastern Region. Nevertheless, the products are properly sourced, and the quality of their services positions them even better in the eastern market. There was also a need to develop a robust strategic plan to drive growth within the organization.</p>	<p>Product & Market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New product (solar water pumping) needs to be modelled to trace viability. <p>Management & Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing strategic plan with no implementation plan and initiatives to achieve the objectives not properly defined. - Senior Management Team (SMT) doesn't have the knowledge to implement the strategic plan. - No budget to support the implementation of the strategic plan - COO, Marketing, and HR positions are not currently filled. The CEO doubles as the COO. - Business management and leadership training required to upskill the senior management team. - There is a need to re-define the business model to make it more sustainable and profitable. <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Accountant is available who also doubles as an auditor 	<p>Product & Market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop business model on water pumps. <p>Management & Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review the current strategic plan and include strategies to implement the business model on water pumps. ➤ Cost the strategic plan. ➤ Develop strategy monitoring tool. ➤ Upskill SMT to monitor the strategic plan. <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review working capital policy. ➤ Develop financial model using the sales forecast. ➤ Review credit policy. <p>Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Define descriptors for the segments. ➤ Develop marketing strategy. <p>Operations Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ OSHA training. ➤ Relevant business processes were developed.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Use Quick Books for financial management - Cash flow/ liquidity constraints - No budgets relating to the products traded - No financial model - No audited accounts <p>Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No product (solar water pumping) marketing strategy developed. - No defined descriptors for market segments. No market segmentation and positioning strategy. - No defined and documented company marketing strategy. <p>Operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to develop business processes; - Sales and marketing process, Technical / installation processes, Customer Relationship Management, Inventory Management, Procurement & Sourcing, Risk management. <p>HRM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Job Descriptions are not matched to the strategic KPIs. - No performance management policy and plan. 	<p>HRM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Development of a Gender mainstreaming and women empowerment policy ➤ Performance management training ➤ Development of HR policies Manual ➤ Development of a company organogram ➤ Development of employee JDs.
<p>Aid Africa</p>	<p>Aid Africa's strongest point lies within their product. Their stove has a fuel efficiency of 33% according to tests done by</p>	<p>Product & Market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No defined business model to support the new social enterprise venture, i.e., sale of cookstoves. 	<p>Product & Market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop business model to support the cook stoves. ➤ Develop strategic plan.

	<p>CREEC. Their business model is robust considering their solution fits with the market in which they operate, however, since there are gravitating from being a development partner to a profit-making entity, there was need to draw out a strategic plan, develop marketing strategies and streamline operations in accordance with their new mission.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Product has been tested on the market and its viability checked. <p>Management & Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No developed strategic plan to support the new strategic direction. + Company has requisite team to implement the strategic direction, however, the SMT is not experienced in leading and implementing strategic plans. <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Use QuickBooks for financial management - No budgets relating to the business - No financial model - No recent audited accounts - Cash flow constraints <p>Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No developed marketing strategy for the product. - No defined sales plan and KPIs to guide revenue generations and distribution. <p>HRM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The company's organizational structure is not aligned to current strategic direction. - The JDs need to be redeveloped in line with the new strategic direction. - No developed performance management tools and procedure. - Compliance Training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop a budget to support the implementation of the strategic plan. ➤ Develop strategy monitoring tool. <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Financial policies development and training. ➤ Define pricing strategy. <p>Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop a marketing strategy. ➤ Define sales plan and KPIs <p>Operations Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Compliance training. ➤ Business processes were developed <p>HRM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Development of a Gender mainstreaming and women empowerment policy ➤ Performance management training ➤ Development of HR policies Manual ➤ Development of a company organogram ➤ Development of employee JDs.
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Management & Leadership training is required. <p>Operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to develop business processes to support the implementation of the strategic plan; - stove production, CRM, Inventory management, Sourcing, risk management, supplier management. 	
BM Energy	<p>BM energy is strong on product development since they have a wealth of experience and a production facility. Their stoves are popular for being durable and functioning efficiently. Investment readiness was not an urgent need considering that their business model is profitable outside of external funding. However, there is an urgent need for the company to streamline its day-to-day business processes and financial management. The company also needs to develop and put into effect a robust marketing strategy to reduce over reliance on Up Energy sales.</p>	<p>Product & Market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Business model for new product (Gen2 stoves) defined and known but not documented. <p>Management & Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to build capacity in terms of SMT to implement the strategic plan. - No defined strategic direction / plan - No quality monitoring of targets even at department level - No business model to define business lines. <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Estimated costs of production are not well known and not documented. - Costs not compared against business competitors. - There is no clear definition of the fixed costs and variable costs of production. - Transactions are recorded in a physical cash book. The financial management system is not used for day to day record keeping. - No asset register. 	<p>Product & Market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Re-define the business model to include Gen 2 cookstoves, automation of claddings, and production of EPCs. <p>Management & Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Strategic plan should be developed around implementation of the new business model. ➤ Develop a strategic monitoring tool to monitor performance around the implementation of the strategic plan. ➤ Cost the strategic plan and develop a budget <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Establish cost structure and document pricing definition. ➤ Develop finance policies to support proper record keeping to improve financial reporting.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bank Reconciliations are once in a while. - No financial statements provided however management accounts provided when requested. - No financial model. - No formally documented company-wide budget and there is no budgeting policy. - Training in financial accounting and financial management. - There is a need to recruit a CFO for financial business decisions. <p>Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No entry strategy into regional markets and key initiatives to implement the strategy. - Customer segmentation and definition of personas not done. - No competitor analysis, set targets and projections against each customer segment. - No defined promotion strategy. <p>HRM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organogram needs to be reviewed to ensure key roles are recruited and establish reporting lines. - Employee job descriptions (JDs) are not matched to the strategic direction. - No performance appraisal tools for each role and are not aligned with the strategic targets. - There is a need to review the human resource (HR) manual for any gaps and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop a budget/Budget monitoring process. ➤ Develop a financial model for projections. ➤ Basic Financial management training for non-finance managers - Interpretation of financial statements <p>Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Customer segmentation and definition of personas. ➤ Conduct a competitor analysis, set targets and projections against each customer segment. ➤ Define promotion strategy ➤ Define entry strategy into regional markets and key initiatives to implement the strategy. <p>Operations Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ OSHA training. ➤ Business processes developed <p>HRM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Development of a Gender mainstreaming and women empowerment policy ➤ Performance management training
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		<p>include gender mainstreaming policies and strategies.</p> <p>Operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training on general compliance to ensure continuous statutory compliance; URSB, NSSF, tax compliance, good business practices. - Review, update/develop processes on inventory management, procurement, logistics and supplier management, risk framework, sales process, Occupational Health, and Safety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Development of employee JDs.
<p>ELSMAT Technologies</p>	<p>ELSMAT Technologies have profitable and strong product lines (honeycomb briquettes and stoves), however the company lacks sufficient capital to ably manage their day-to-day operations. The company cannot afford to hire the right human resource making it almost impossible to concentrate on growth. Their financial management is poorly handled since there is no permanent or semi-permanent resource to handle planning and align revenue management to growth plans. Therefore, more emphasis needs to be directed to getting them</p>	<p>Product & Market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No defined business models for new product lines (Solar cooking stoves, LPG cylinders, and fire stater). <p>Management & Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No strategic plan. - There is no strategic monitoring tool to track performance - No SMT to implement the strategic plan. <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bespoke financial system still under development therefore lacks some functionalities. - Cashier is unable to do data entry - Need to hire an accountant - No financial model - No audited accounts - Cash flow limitations <p>Marketing</p>	<p>Management & Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Define business model for fire starters and briquettes. ➤ Develop strategic plan around the business model. ➤ Cost the strategic plan. ➤ Develop a strategy Monitoring tool <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop finance policies. ➤ Basic training for non-financial managers. <p>Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Document the existing marketing strategies. ➤ Develop KPIs and set targets <p>Operations Planning</p>

	<p>investment ready and enabling them to raise capital.</p>	<p>+ Marketing strategy defined but not fully developed or documented.</p> <p>HRM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to review the current organizational structure. - No JDs aligned to the strategic direction to support the roles. - No HR policies on; recruitment, health and safety, benefits, separation. - No performance appraisal tools aligned to each JD. <p>Operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No documented processes on production-quality management, risk management, sales and marketing, inventory management, procurement, and sourcing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Processes on production-quality management, risk management, sales and marketing, inventory management, procurement, and sourcing were developed. <p>HRM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Development of a Gender mainstreaming and women empowerment policy ➤ Performance management training ➤ Development of HR policies Manual ➤ Development of a company organogram ➤ Development of employee JDs.
<p>eMFS / Panda Solar</p>	<p>The company has a strong marketing strategy. The leadership has a wealth of experience in business and product management. Most of their business processes are technology driven, allowing for proper data management and decision making. The main challenges the company has included developing a robust strategic plan, cascading the strategic plan to all company departments, and recruiting the</p>	<p>Product & Market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New product line (Pay Go for solar home systems) defined but business model not documented. <p>Management & Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No SMT resources to support implementation of the strategic plan. - No defined strategic direction. <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Use QuickBooks for financial management + Account's function is remotely hired - No financial model - Audited accounts available but questionable 	<p>Management & Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review business model around PayGo and the solar cookers. ➤ Document the strategic plan incorporating the new product lines. ➤ Cost the strategic plan - develop a budget to support the implementation of the strategic plan. ➤ Develop a Monitoring tool to track performance against strategic goals. <p>Finance</p>

	<p>right resources to drive growth in accordance with the plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cash flow limitations especially on the products side. <p>Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is no geographical market segmentation, targeting and positioning strategy. - The company sets targets against sales per targeted geographical market. - There is no promotion strategy to aid brand visibility. - There is no entry strategy into regional market. (South Sudan, Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, and Ethiopia). <p>HRM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - JDs not aligned to the strategic KPIs. - No performance management policy and procedure. <p>Operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Document processes on distributorship, risk management, sourcing, and inventory management. - Review the procurement manual. + Have developed software and ERP system for business process automation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review finance policies. ➤ Develop a financial model to manage projections <p>Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Geographical market segmentation, targeting and positioning strategy. ➤ Develop promotion strategy to aid brand visibility. ➤ Define entry strategy into regional markets <p>Operations Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Training on business processes re-engineering. <p>HRM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Development of a Gender mainstreaming and women empowerment policy ➤ Performance management training ➤ Development of a company organogram. ➤ Development of employee JDs.
<p>EnerGrow</p>	<p>The company's business model is questionable because its highly reliant on grant funding. Overall, the financial management and investment readiness is excellent since the</p>	<p>Product & Market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + New product lines known to SMT but not defined (e- mobility and providing agro processing electric solutions) <p>Management & Leadership</p>	<p>Management & Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review the business model for viability and sustainability. ➤ Conduct a Gap analysis for the current strategic plan.

	<p>functions are outsourced. The company has a challenge with marketing and there is need to revise their business model, pricing to aid the newly developed marketing strategies to succeed. Leadership have commendable business management skills and their Human Resource is recruited skilfully to ensure they add their talent to the growth of the company.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Rudimentary plan guided by department targets. - No strategy monitoring tool <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Audited accounts available + Full time accountant available - Cash flow limitations + Investment readiness in form of Transaction Advisory (TA) currently being given by Open Capital Advisors (OCA) + Financial model not available for review <p>Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New product lines known but there isn't a well-defined marketing strategy. <p>HRM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a need to align performance appraisal tools and JDs to strategic goals. - Need for business process improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Include strategies to implement the business model. ➤ Develop strategic plan budget. ➤ Develop strategy monitoring tool. <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review finance manual. ➤ Review financial model. Review Pricing Strategy. ➤ Develop Company budget <p>Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop marketing strategy <p>Operations Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Business Process re-engineering <p>HRM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Development of a Gender mainstreaming and women empowerment policy ➤ Performance management training
<p>Sprinktech</p>	<p>Sprinktech demonstrated impressive performance based on their revenue, cashflow forecasts, profitability, and business model viability, clearly defined strategic goals, and the existence of a qualified SMT</p>	<p>Product & Market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + New product lines (building and maintaining industry fire systems and plumbing) with no defined models. <p>Management & Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Rudimentary planning guided by department targets. 	<p>Management & Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Conduct a gap analysis for the current strategic plan. ➤ Define the business model for the new products.

	<p>team to drive the strategic plan. Their business model is robust, profitable and sustainable. Their management team is enriched in skill and experience in running the business. The quality of their human resource is good but needed to be guided by developed business processes. The company has not fundraised in the past mainly because their business model generates sufficient revenue to facilitate business growth, however there was a need to document their strategic plan and financial management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Defined business model but not documented. + Clear strategic direction but not documented. - No strategy monitoring tool <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Use Odoo for financial management + Have a fulltime accountant - Costs of production per item or business line is not fully known - No financial model + Audited accounts available <p>Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No competitor analysis has been done for the new regional market (Congo). - No entry strategy into the regional markets. - No marketing plan. - Absence of a documented social media strategy. <p>HRM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a need to review the JDs and performance appraisal tools to ensure they are aligned to the strategic plan. - No clearly defined women empowerment strategies. - No documented company Operations Manual. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Revise the current strategic plan to include strategies to implement the business model. <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop a Finance policies manual. ➤ Develop a financial model including cost structure. ➤ Develop a companywide budget. <p>Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Conduct a competitor analysis for the new regional market. ➤ Develop an entry strategy into the regional markets. ➤ Develop a marketing plan including a social media strategy. <p>Operations Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Business Process development <p>HRM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Development of a Gender mainstreaming and women empowerment policy ➤ Performance management training ➤ Development of a company organogram ➤ Development of employee JDs.
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<p>W.Water Works</p>	<p>W.Water Works displays deliberate effort to improve most of its business core functions. This is mainly demonstrated by the ability to maintain a human resource in at least all functions (permanent or semi-permanent). The company's business model is bankable and has demonstrated sustainability over the years. However, there is need for management to drive operational excellence through implementation of the business process and entrusting employees with decision making.</p>	<p>Product & Market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New product lines known to SMT but not developed (carbon credits, portable solar water pumps for irrigation) <p>Management & Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Clear strategic direction but not documented. - No strategy monitoring tool <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Use QuickBooks for financial management - CEO needs basic financial management training + Have a full-time accountant qualified for the role - Financial policies are not fully adhered to - No companywide budgets - No financial model + Audited accounts available - Cash flow constraints – no clear cash budget planning. <p>Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Customer personas not clearly defined. - There is a need to conduct a Market segmentation and define the company's positioning. <p>No clearly defined and documented marketing strategy (including social media strategy / brand promotion strategy) including entry into regional markets.</p> <p>HRM</p>	<p>Product & Market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review the business model to include new products (carbon credits, solar water pumps, and training) <p>Management & Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Document strategic plan ➤ Develop a strategy monitoring tool. ➤ Develop budget to support implementation of the strategic plan <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Finance training for non-finance managers. ➤ Review existing finance manual and policies to identify gaps and update accordingly (especially, budgeting and credit). ➤ Develop a financial model for expenses and revenue projection <p>Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Define customer personas. Market segmentation and positioning. ➤ Develop marketing strategy including social media strategy / brand promotion strategy.
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a need to review the current organogram to identify resource gaps and align JDs to the strategic plan. - Review HR manual identify gaps and develop policies to address them. - No clear performance management procedure. <p>Operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need for general Compliance training on statutory requirements, good business practices, etc. - Training on occupational health and safety. - There is a need to review and develop policies around Inventory management, procurement and supplier management, CRM, Project management (Quality assurance), risk management, administration, contract management & sales. Training on implementation of the business processes based on the process outputs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop entry strategy to regional markets <p>Operations Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Business Process re-engineering <p>HRM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Development of a Gender mainstreaming and women empowerment policy ➤ Performance management training. ➤ Development of a company organogram.
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4.4 Delivery of Interventions

The approach followed; - training, consultancy, coaching and co-creation. To ensure learnings were internalized and will be implemented in the organizations, the consultants trained the SMEs (at times gave pre-work to be completed ahead of the trainings) and tasked the participants to develop the deliverables for each phase on their own (with guidance from the consultants). The deliverables done under each BDS phase are listed in **Table 4: Deliverables for each BDS Phase**. Additionally, the SMEs were advised to select change agents with adequate business acumen in the focus areas, who worked closely with the consultants to ensure that the learnings will be institutionalized.

The BDS support approach is further described below.

1. **Training:** involved a classroom approach of imparting knowledge to participants regarding a particular concept. The participants were left with exercises and tasks to complete on their own after which the consultants reviewed the work done and offered additional guidance where necessary. For companies outside of Kampala, i.e., Aid Africa, Elsmat, and Access to Solar, some trainings (HR, and Investment Readiness) were conducted virtually. While for the companies located in Kampala, all trainings were conducted physically at the company work premises. A flexible schedule was agreed upon by both the consultants and the participants. Training lasted between 2 – 4 hrs. depending on the content, availability of the participants, and their level of concentration. Training was majorly used for all BDS Phases, after which co-creation to develop BDS deliverables was employed.
2. **Co-Creation:** working together with the company representatives to develop deliverables that will support implementation of the BDS interventions. This approach was implemented for all BDS phases particularly, Strategic Planning, Marketing, Operations, Finance, and Investment Readiness.
3. **Coaching:** mainly implemented when developing Human Resource KPIs and JDs. The consultants guided the companies to streamline the JDs and performance management to the strategic goals.
4. **Consultancy:** provide knowledge on tools and best practices and solutions to problems identified throughout the project. This approach was mainly used during Strategic Planning.

4.4.1 Strategic Planning

Concepts under the strategic planning phase were introduced to companies based on their level of growth and strategic direction. During the strategic planning phase, the following concepts were used; -

- a) Business Model generation (**All Companies**)
- b) External Environmental analysis (PESTEL) (**All Companies**)
- c) Internal environmental analysis (SWOT) (**All Companies**)
- d) Product Portfolio analysis (BCG Matrix) (**Elsmat, Sprinktech, EnerGrow**)
- e) Values matrix – defining the organization’s culture. (**Sprinktech**)
- f) Goal setting (**All Companies**)
- g) Quality Monitoring (OKR model) (**All Companies**)

4.4.2 Financial Management

9 companies were supported under this phase (including Solar Nuggets). Financial management involved training companies on how to utilize MS Excel for financial modelling and cost-benefit analyses, budgeting, and ratio analysis through reviewing individual company financial management systems and reviewing audited accounts to train non-financial managers on basic finance principles. Concepts under the financial management phase were introduced to companies based on the gaps and current need. The core areas within financial management included;-

- h) Review and or development of financial manuals (**All Companies apart from EnerGrow**)
- a) Financial management training for non-finance managers (**BM Energy, W.Water Works**)
- i) Financial ratio analysis (**All Companies**)
- j) Budgeting (**All Companies apart from ELMSAT Technologies and eMFS (U)Ltd**)
- k) Financial modelling (**All Companies**)
- b) Cost – benefit analysis (**W.Water Works**)
- c) Usability of Financial management systems (**ELSMAT Technologies**)

4.4.3 Strategic Marketing

8 out of 12 companies were supported under this BDS phase. The concepts under strategic marketing were introduced to companies based on their current level of growth and strategic direction. These included the following;

- a) Customer segmentation (by geographical location and Persona) (**All Companies**)
- b) Marketing Strategy Development (Ansoff & Porter) (**All Companies**)
- c) Positioning - External (Michael Porter's 5 forces Model) (**All Companies**)
- d) Positioning - Internal (Competitor Analysis) (**All Companies**)
- e) Define the Marketing Plan (Marketing mix / 8Ps) (**All Companies**)
- f) Communication and Brand definition (**Elsmat, Aid Africa, Sprinktech, Access to Solar**)
- g) Customer Journey Mapping – to define key metrics for tracking (**eMFS/ Panda Solar, Sprinktech, EnerGrow**)

4.4.4 Operations Planning

The support under this phase included two aspects, i.e., Business Process Re-engineering and Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA). All 8 companies were trained on how to develop business processes that support the implementation of their strategic goals. Only 3 companies were trained in OSHA and those were; Elsmat Technologies, BM Energy, and Access to Solar Technologies.

4.4.4.1 Business Process Re-engineering

The participating companies were guided through business process re-engineering using a **co-creation** approach. The business process re-engineering session entailed a 5-step guide;-

- a) Review of the existing business processes to identify any gaps/leakages in the scope, procedure, or policy of the process.
- b) Re-engineering the process to close gaps and or improve the process.

- c) Developing procedural maps to guide process implementation.
- d) Documenting the policies/guidelines/rules that ensure adherence to the process.
- e) Identification of key process outputs to foster implementation.

4.4.4.2 Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) training

3 of the 8 participating Companies received an interactive-illustrative and demonstrative OHS training with pointers and guidelines drawn from the [Occupational safety & Health Act of 2006](#): To ensure a hazard free-work environment and preservation of the environment.

The key outputs from this training were;-

- a) Health & Safety policy BME-OHS-POL-001 ISSUE 001
- b) Environmental policy BME-OHS-POL-002 ISSUE 001
- c) Waste Management policy BME-OHS-POL-003 ISSUE 001
- d) Drug & Alcohol policy BME-OHS-POL-004 ISSUE 001
- e) Quality policy BME-OHS-POL-005 ISSUE 001
- f) PPE policy BME-OHS-POL-006 ISSUE 001
- g) Anti-Corruption and Bribery policy BME-OHS-POL-007 ISSUE 001
- h) Hazard Register
- i) Risk assessment matrix

4.4.5 Human Resource Management

All the 8 companies participated in this BDS Phase. The HR training comprised of the following; -

- a) **Development of a Gender Mainstreaming and Women Empowerment policy:** Companies were tasked to develop a strategy on women empowerment that they could implement over the strategic period. To cement this, the companies were encouraged to develop a policy; showing the company's commitment to implementing the strategy.
- b) **Review or development of an HR manual (where non-existent):** For those participating entities that didn't have an HR manual, a template was shared, and they were guided on how to develop one: with reference to the [Employment Act of 2006](#). For companies with an existing manual, key HR policies were reviewed and improved; were needed.
- c) **Review or development on a company organogram (where non-existent):** Based on the key roles required to fulfil the strategic objectives; the performance expectations of each role, coupled with the knowledge received during business process re-engineering, the companies were guided through a co-creation process to develop their organograms.
- d) **Training on Performance management:** Included, training the companies how to cascade the strategic initiatives up to the lower-tier employees. The HR professionals were guided on how to conduct fruitful appraisals and how to improve performance of employees at all tiers within the organization and role specific performance scorecards were developed.
- e) **Review of Job Descriptions (JDs) and linking them to performance expectations:** Finally, companies HR professionals were guided on how to develop complete job descriptions for each role – linking them to performance expectations – linked to the company strategic plan.

4.4.6 Investment Readiness

9 SMEs (including Solar Nuggets) were supported under this BDS Phase. The training covered various aspects including the importance of this process as well as the type of funding to request for depending on the stage of business cycle that they are in. The training included aspects of;

- a) Classification of investors (impact, commercial, grants, and others) and how to identify suitable investors for one’s business.
- b) Types of Investor documentation and how to prepare documentation that is appealing to a target investor.
- c) Mode of investor presentations: how to make a compelling pitch.
- d) The overview of the investment process

It was discovered that amongst the SMEs supported only 2 companies (W.Water Works and eMFS (U) Ltd) were familiar with fundraising process (both debt and equity). Based on their last mile data and or their ability to track the data, both BM Energy and eMFS (U) Ltd showcased impactful initiatives, which attract the interest of investors. Only three (Solar Nuggets, ELSMAT, and BM Energy) had unique value propositions that can easily attract funding.

Table 3: Highlights of BDS 2.0



Figure 1: Finance management Training with BM Energy



Figure 2: Stove making process: photo taken during business process re-engineering session at BM Energy



Figure 3: Marketing training with BM Energy



Figure 4: Strategic Planning session at BM Energy



Figure 5: Strategic Planning session at Elsmat Technologies - Mbarara



Figure 6: Strategic planning with Sprinktech Uganda team at Hotel Africana



Figure 7: Marketing training at Aid Africa - Gulu



Figure 8: Business Process Re-engineering training at Aid Africa - Gulu

4.4.7 BDS Deliverables

The consultants made a clear connection between the interventions and the deliverables for each phase. The strategic goals and targets set were cascaded to other departments, for example, during the finance phase the consultants guided the participants to analyse their revenues and according to past performance make judgements to achieve the financial goal set during the strategic phase or adjust the goal or strategies. The sales targets defined under the finance phase were key informants and determinants of the marketing plans, i.e., defining the marketing plan, the strategy, customer definition and journey mapping was done with the sales targets in mind. Business processes were determined by the companies' strategic objectives and were defined in a way that each role is guided to achieve the overall objective of the organization. The organizational structures too, under the HRM phase, were developed to support the strategic plan. The job descriptions and performance score cards were developed in view of driving the strategic plan and ensuring that the long-term goals are achieved. Finally, the consultants guided the companies to demonstrate to potential investors the viability of their businesses, through the long-term goals, financial growth projections, marketing plan for customer growth, and business resilience. The table below highlights the deliverables for each BDS phase.

Table 4: Deliverables for each BDS Phase

BDS Phase	Deliverables
Strategic Planning	<p>5-year strategic plan and an OKR model: to be used for quality monitoring of the strategic plan. 7 out of 8 companies managed to complete their strategic plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The company strategic plans can be accessed using this link. ➤ Company OKRs here.
Finance	<p>The deliverables for the financial management phase were based on what was covered with the company during the training. They can be accessed using this link. They included the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Finance manual, ➤ Financial model, ➤ Budget (with cashflow projections).
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A marketing plan and score card (to track marketing strategies). The deliverables can be accessed here. 6 out of 8 companies managed to complete their marketing plans. <i>Note: Majority of the companies preferred to update the OKR (developed under the strategic planning phase) with the marketing strategies they developed.</i>
Operations Planning	<p>All 8 companies managed to identify, map out and document their business processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Business Process documentation – here ➤ OSHA - here
Human Resource	<p>Only 2 out of the 8 participating companies manage to complete all the deliverables under this phase. The summary status of completion is documented in Table 5: Status of completion of the BDS Deliverables.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Gender Mainstreaming Policy - here ➤ HR Manual - here ➤ JDs & Performance Score cards - here ➤ Company Organizational Structure - here
Investment Readiness	<p>None of the companies completed all the deliverables of this phase. The deliverables for the financial management phase were based on what was covered with the company during the training. They included the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Investment teaser - here ➤ Pitch deck - here ➤ Financial Model ➤ Business Plan – here

4.4.8 Status of Completion Per BDS Phase

The consultants covered all the training areas as per the diagnostic reports, by **6th October 2023**. Even though the training for all the interventions under each phase was completed, not all participating companies managed to submit all the deliverables per phase. Majority of the companies committed to submitting the pending deliverables by the end of November 2023. The status of completion of the BDS deliverables for all the phases is summarized by the table below.

Table 5: Status of completion of the BDS Deliverables

Phase / Deliverable	ELSMAT	Sprinktech	EnerGrow	W.Water Works	eMFS (U) Ltd	Access to Solar	AID Africa	BM Energy
Strategic Planning								
Strategic Plan	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green	Red
OKR	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red
Financial Management								
Finance Manual	Green	Green	White	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red
Financial Model	Red	Red	Green	Red	Green	Green	Red	Green
Budget	White	Red	Green	Green	White	Green	Green	Green
Marketing								
Marketing Plan	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red
Marketing Score Card / Updated OKR	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red
Operations Planning								
Business Process Documentation	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
OSHA	Green	White	White	White	White	Green	White	Green
HRM								
JDs & Performance Scorecards	Green	Red	Red	Green	Red	Green	Green	Red
Organogram	Green	Green	Red	Green	Red	Red	Green	Red
HR Policies and Procedures Manual	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Gender Mainstreaming	Green	Green	Red	Green	Red	Green	Red	Red

Investment Readiness								
Investor Teaser	Not Submitted	Not Submitted	Not Submitted	Not Submitted	Not Submitted	Not Submitted	Submitted	Not Submitted
Pitch Deck	Not Submitted	Not Submitted	Not Submitted	Submitted	Submitted	Not Submitted	Submitted	Not Submitted
Financial Model	Submitted	Not Submitted	Submitted	Submitted	Submitted	Not Submitted	Not Submitted	Not Submitted
Business Plan	Not Submitted	Not Submitted	Not Submitted	Submitted	Not Submitted	Not Submitted	Not Submitted	Not Submitted

Legend

	Submitted
	Not Submitted
	Support not given

4.5 BDS 2.0 Closing workshop

The closing workshop sought to make a case for the importance of business development support services in aiding renewable energy SMEs to become investor ready; to identify and harness available funding opportunities. The discussions revolved around identifying the challenges outlined by businesses in accessing financing, the financiers ‘fears’ in extending the required funding to the SMEs, and how BDS can adequately fill this gap. Additionally, the dialogue(s) ‘unpacked’ how else BDS can be better utilized to position these companies to achieve their long-term goals. Certificates were issued to 8 of the BDS 2.0 participants that completed the programme; to recognize them for the effort and dedication to the programme. Overall, the highlights for the workshop included;

1. Expert panel discussions by key stakeholders in the renewable energy space, including, financial institutions, renewable energy experts, BDS service providers, and entrepreneurs: on the topics of access to finance for renewable energy SMEs and the future of BDS for these companies.
2. Interactive, collaborative sessions for participants to share experiences, and co-create actionable strategies to address identified challenges.
3. Networking opportunities for participants to connect with peers, potential investors, financiers, and renewable energy experts.

The table below highlights some of the moments captured during the BDS 2.0 closing workshop.

Table 6: Highlights from BDS 2.0 Closing Workshop



Figure 9: Panel discussion - fundraising for Renewable Energy SMEs.



Figure 10: Group photo of women in Renewable Energy posing with tokens from EnDev



Figure 11: EnDev Project Manager Un-Young Yong giving opening remarks at the workshop.



Figure 12: EnDev Project Manager Un-Young Yong handing over a certificate to a BDS 2.0 participant



Figure 13: Panel discussion on Access to Finance for Renewable Energy SMEs.



Figure 14: EnDev Cooking Energy Programme Component Manager handing over an appreciation token to a female BDS 2.0 participant.



Figure 15: EnDev Project Manager Un-Young Yong handing over a certificate to a BDS 2.0 participant



Figure 16: EnDev Project Manager Un-Young Yong handing over a certificate to a BDS 2.0 participant



Figure 17: Group photo (from left to right); Belli Advisory, SNV, Bethel Advisors, EnDev Project Manager, StartHub Africa, Shona Uganda, Anuel Energy, EnDev Cooking Energy Programme Component Manager, and Energy Advisor.



Figure 18: Panel discussion on the future of BDS for Renewable Energy SMEs

5 CHALLENGES, OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Challenges

1. Delays by the companies to submit deliverables, due to competing priorities disrupted project timelines.
2. Out of the 12 selected companies, only 8 committed to the BDS program. Additionally, some of the participants only committed in hope that they would receive funding from EnDev. This gave a false picture of the ability of these SMEs to transfer learning and implement the solutions to the gaps identified.
3. Limited time for the BDS. Considering the time and dedication required to run day to day operations of the business and given the scope of work, there wasn't sufficient time to allow for the companies to give full attention to the deliverables and commit to implement the interventions to witness change.

5.2 Observations

1. Companies at a higher level of growth (W.Water Works, Sprinktech) will most certainly transfer learnings and implement strategies better than the smaller companies. Level of growth in this case is described as; - at least 1Bn turnover, a well-constructed and skilled Senior Management Team (SMT), a well-defined strategic direction.
2. A number of the companies committed to the BDS in hope of receiving grant funding at the end of the program. This affected the diagnostic because such companies gave a picture of what they thought the EnDev team would like to see.
3. Majority of the participating companies have limited HR capacity especially in terms of SMT to drive their strategic objectives. This will also hinder implementation of learnings to achieve their desired level of growth.
4. Mindset change was required for majority of the companies to appreciate the BDS. This shortened the time these companies had to receive from the consultants.
5. Audited accounts for most SMEs were inaccurately prepared. SMEs are advised to outsource audit services to experts to enable them to obtain a clearer picture of their current stand and therefore make meaningful decisions.
6. Majority of CEOs or management personnel were not forthcoming about their company's financial performance in form of bank balances and revenue targets, and or audited accounts. This information was only received towards the end of the programme, and it created a limitation in the amount of support the companies received. SMEs are advised to be more transparent to consultants to therefore receive the much-needed support they require for their growth.
7. On a case-by-case basis it was common to find that most of the systems (Odoo, desktop versions of QuickBooks, and Bespoke systems) are not able to fully capture all components of financial management for instance on budgeting, cashflow statement.
8. Majority of the SMEs supported are reluctant to address capacity gaps related to fundraising. This will limit their ability to attract the right financing for their business ventures and eventually stifle their growth.

9. Majority of the companies that have financial management systems are not utilizing the full functionality and capabilities of the systems. There is need to conduct comprehensive audits to ensure these systems' functionalities are fully utilized.

5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 To companies

1. Companies (especially the micro SMEs) need to practice the Separate Entity principle – separating business finances from personal finances. A step towards achieving this would be first and foremost recruit an accountant to manage the company's finances.
2. Additionally, in order to facilitate the separate entity principle, there is need (especially for the micro SMEs) to purchase financial management systems to aid reporting and generation of relevant data.
3. Companies ought to be intentional in involving their finance personnel in the day to day running of the business in order for them to understand the company's strategic vision and therefore make relevant finance decisions that will facilitate achievement of the strategic objectives.
4. Companies are encouraged to adopt performance management as a best practice to ensure employee productivity and that there is a significant contribution of each resource to the strategic direction of the organization. Performance appraisals should be done at least once a year and performance score cards should be revised often in accordance with the strategic plan.

5.3.2 To EnDev

5. Most companies need additional support on brand management – to fully appreciate how to define and grow their brands on the market.
6. Overall, fundraising from non-traditional lenders (banks, money lenders) is new to the SMEs, implying that most of them would possibly need more time and training before they are investor ready despite their expression in presently seeking non-traditional funding.
7. Additional training on how to implement and track gender mainstreaming issues is required. Most of the SMEs, are incorporating gender mainstreaming policies and are cognisant of gender issues but are not tracking their performance in that regard. It will be important for SMEs to be intentional about tracking their effort to appeal to potential impact financiers.
8. A longer BDS program to include mentorship of these companies to realize the plans they developed during this BDS would be ideal. In the extended BDS, the consultants assigned to the project can also train the companies in the interventions not covered under BDS 2.0.
9. HR personnel in these organizations should be trained and supported in implementing HR policies within their organizations. This can be done as part of a longer BDS program.