

BRIGHT IDEAS

Azuri is leading next-generation energy in Africa.
 Our pay-as-you-go solar technology works to generate energy access, improve lives and economic opportunities, build sustainable markets and combat climate change.



City standards for rural homes: Azuri launches new DStv partnership

In March, Azuri celebrated a new partnership with MultiChoice Kenya to bring DStv content to off-grid and rural Kenyan households with Azuri's pay-as-you-go solar home systems.

With multiple packages available, rural and off-grid Azuri customers can now use their solar TV to access the same quality content available to on-grid households. DStv offers local and international stories, nail-biting sporting events including the Premier League, La Liga and Serie A, up-to-the-minute local and international news, as well as leading international series, movies, documentaries and children's shows.

The DStv and Azuri bundle is designed to suit the whole family, providing 24/7 entertainment and education from Azuri's solar powered 32" TV at the centre of the household.

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Now with an 80W solar panel and a 160Wh LFP battery (with an expected life of over 10 years before servicing), Azuri's new "always on" TV400 system provides peace of mind that householders are able to watch their favourite programs and charge smartphones whenever they want. Kenyan audiences have a choice of five DStv packages with a total of more than 150 channels championing Kenyan developed material alongside international content.

Customers will be delighted to choose between Zuku and DStv content packages to accompany their affordable yet state-of-the-art solar home system.

Once again Azuri proud to be leading the way in closing the energy gap between on-grid urban and off-grid rural homes.



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Azuri launches Inspiring Women's Award to celebrate solar role models

To celebrate International Women's Day 2021 and the first anniversary of the Azuri Brighter Lives Initiative, Azuri has launched the inaugural Inspiring Women's Awards to celebrate solar role models within the company's field operations.

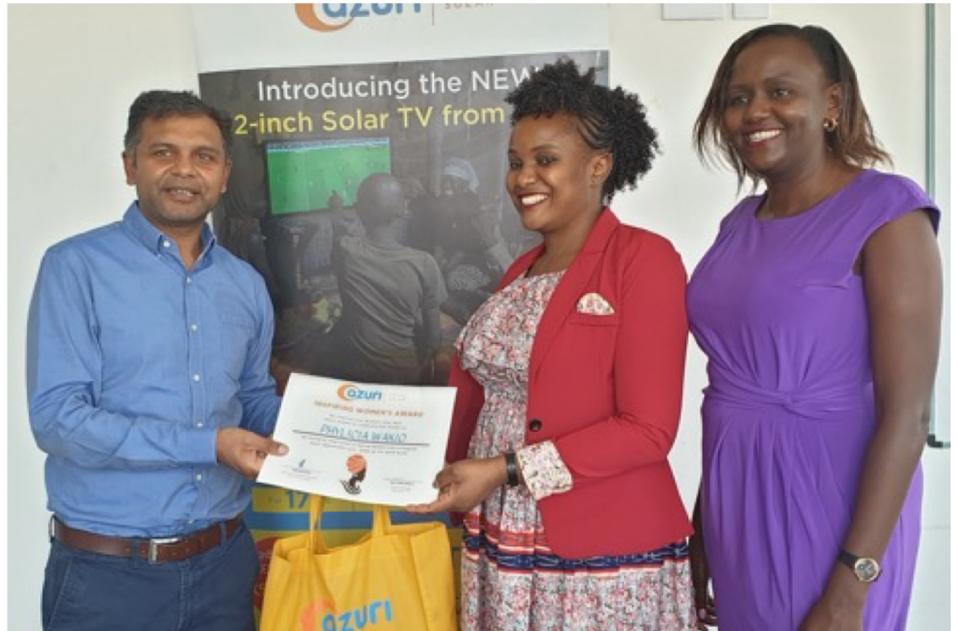
Based on peer feedback, the 10 most inspirational female staff, including field agents and customer care representatives of the solar company's Kenyan network, have been recognised for their outstanding contributions. The award is part of Azuri's Brighter Lives initiative which works to empower rural women in Sub-Saharan Africa through access to technology, in-depth commercial and technical training and equal opportunities employment.

Azuri's Brighter Lives initiative was launched in February 2020 and features a program of tailored recruitment, training and mentoring specifically targeting rural women who are largely under-represented in the workplace. The programme is designed to help women build success together, learning from role models and creating powerful bonds to improve business success. Brighter Lives specifically targets rural and off-grid communities to benefit less connected women.

Nominations for the awards included recommendations from agents inspired to join Azuri from seeing female role models in their jobs, team leaders impressed by their colleagues' work ethic and appreciative new-starters looking to celebrate their female mentors.

One of the winners, Dynnah Pesa, said "I am so grateful to hear that I am inspiring to my peers. I was the first one to begin selling the items in Kakamega and so happy to now be a team leader. I strive to encourage my team so that they can succeed and in turn provide for their families. I am so happy to see that they voted for me. This has given me a push to keep on encouraging my team."

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From Left: Azuri's East Africa General Manager Snehar Shah presents winner Phylcia Wakio (Call Center Rep) with her award, alongside Training Manager Catherine Maina

Cabinet Secretary of the Kenyan Ministry of Energy, Hon. Charles Keter, said "I would like to offer my congratulations to the winners of the Inspiring Women's Awards. I trust this public recognition will inspire even more women to join the renewable energy industry and support Kenya's transition to clean energy for all"

Jane Marriott, the British High Commissioner, also lent her support to the programme by saying: "Congratulations to the wonderful women recognised by this award on International Women's Day, a chance to celebrate those women who deserve our recognition and gratitude all year round. Businesses for the future need diverse workforces at their heart, so I'm delighted to see this initiative from Azuri. The UK is proud to support gender equality in Kenya and across the world, which is more vital than ever as we build cleaner, greener societies for future generations."

With the success of the inaugural launch in Kenya, Azuri is looking forward to rolling the Inspiring Women's Awards out to all territories from 2021 onwards.

The Brighter Lives Initiative enables gender gap research, affirmative access to technology, entrepreneurial women's empowerment and education programmes and female-led support and mentorship groups throughout Kenya. The most recent report of Brighter Lives research is due to be published later this year.

Simon Bransfield-Garth, CEO of Azuri said "Brighter Lives was created to encourage full and active participation of women in the Azuri workforce. On this first anniversary of the launch of the program, I am delighted to see the impact that has been achieved and its effect on encouraging more women into the workplace"



INSPIRING WOMEN'S AWARD



Youth4Climate: Why 1.5 is the hot topic for Pre-COP26

'Youth4Climate: Driving Ambition', the youth contingent of COP26, has been noted as a worldwide litmus test for youth attitude towards climate change. High profile school strikes and protests such as Fridays for Future, made famous by Greta Thunberg, have rallied younger activists to raise awareness and lobby lawmakers for environmental measures. This year, 1.5 is the goal.

The 2015 Paris Agreement, an international pact to systematically tackle the climate crisis, committed to limiting the global temperature rise to 2 degrees Celsius but aiming to not exceed 1.5 degrees. A major study says by 2025 there's a 40% chance of at least one year being 1.5C hotter than the pre-industrial level. Beyond this, the temperature would lead to extreme weather with irrevocable damage to plant and animal habitats with significant impact for farming, food production and human health.

In his 6-months-to-go speech, COP26 President Alok Sharma reiterated that since signing the Paris Agreement, "the world has not done nearly enough" despite the science getting "starker" and time running out to make a difference, making the roadmap to 1.5C his key priority.

In richer economies, the total energy requirement is not growing and the focus is on the need to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and to accelerate the reduction in overall energy used in order to avoid tipping the world over the 1.5C line. This is likely to involve such changes as fewer flights, electric cars and extensive household insulation.

In developing countries, however, there is increasing demand for energy as connectivity and energy access are key impact measurements for economic development. How then, do developing nations balance this with reduced environmental impact? One approach is, instead of following the established fossil-fuel model of development, go renewable from the start.

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Azuri previously welcomed COP26 President Alok Sharma to Kenya in his capacity as UK Secretary of State for International Development, highlighting the importance of off-grid solar in rural communities.

Within Sharma's \$100billion per year finance target, Youth4Climate is lobbying for ringfenced funds to be applied to sustainable and renewable solutions. By building solar infrastructure as the first step to connectivity for off-grid households, communities leapfrog much of the need for fossil fuels altogether and begin their electricity journey from a sustainable start.

This has the potential to create a world-leading sustainable economic development journey which sees universal inclusion through a digital economy, including access to education, computing technologies, communication and finance, all through clean, often distributed, energy.

The starting point for such an innovation is household power, which is where paygo solar is leading the way. Azuri's affordable pay-as-you-go solar home systems enable households to access 24/7 energy and entertainment with high quality products for affordable weekly instalments, which otherwise would have been far outside their budget.

With ringfenced finance, technologies such as paygo solar can provide mass renewable energy connections to avoid fossil fuels altogether, contributing to the net zero emission goal and the 1.5C target. Soon, rural and off-grid communities may be leading the world in combined energy quality, affordability and sustainability.

From struggle to success: Rebecca's story of overcoming stereotypes

Rebecca is a local star, knocking down gender stereotypes and trailblazing paths for rural women in Zambia as an Azuri Agent. Whilst supporting her family and developing her own professional skills, Rebecca has excelled in demonstrating her commitment to success and helping others to achieve the same.

Rebecca Tembo is an Azuri Agent from Chilanga District in Lusaka, Zambia, and has become the model agent in her community. Taking every opportunity to learn, Rebecca has upskilled herself in technical challenges and troubleshooting so she can assist her customers in the field and has developed her soft skills in customer management to ensure she has a steady income.

Despite her achievements, Rebecca still faces frustration and resistance due to local gender stereotypes. "When people see me, they don't think I am the financier of the family. They are surprised when they see I am working independently, which can be nice, but often they think I can't do my work until I have proven them wrong."

With a common expectation that solar and technical jobs are "men's work", Rebecca often faces comments and expectations that she cannot succeed in her career. In response, Rebecca has prioritised learning as many business skills as possible to succeed.

Since becoming an Azuri Agent, Rebecca has learned how to use smartphones to access online learning and skills development, managing to squeeze courses in-between customer visits. Rebecca uses social media to promote herself and Azuri products, improving her customer reach and brand awareness to bring in more and more customers to her portfolio, and has also branched out to research the impact of solar on health and environment.



Rebecca selling the Azuri Quad to a customer in Zambia

Rebecca's reputation as the local solar agent has grown considerably as she puts in the work to set herself apart. Watching training videos of how to fix common problems, applying her experience to customers' situations to show them how best to benefit from the products and regularly practicing her technical skills has marked her out as a rising star of solar.

"My hard work is shown in being able to earn and spend my money as I want to. My mother is an entrepreneur and now I can support her business, helping her to succeed and expand just as I am doing. I pay for my sisters' education now and I am saving to continue my own studies one day too. It's a great thing to be able to help your family!"

Rebecca is determined to defy expectations and forge her own path, showing the way for others to follow.

Whilst many women in rural areas are still affected by stereotypical views of women's roles and abilities, many programmes are working with the UN Sustainable Development Goal for gender equality to support and train women for success.

Azuri is proud to provide equal opportunities employment and support to enable Agents to excel whatever their circumstances.

Look out for the publication of the latest Brighter Lives gender research activities to find out more about what Azuri is doing for equality, women's empowerment and outreach programmes.

Rebecca concludes: "People might underestimate me. I will keep proving them wrong and proving that women can do anything".

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