

Enhancing family life

As a father, Richard Mwamlima uses REDAVIA solar power to enhance family life and support his children's education.

Richard Mwamlima is a father and successful farmer in Shitunguru. He lives with his wife, Pilly Mwashiyombo, and their three young children, Brian (8), Bright (4) and Pascoe (under 1). Before REDAVIA established a solar mini-grid in the village, Richard was concerned that his family did not have the same opportunities as those in grid-connected towns.

He bought a solar home system but found that it was not sufficiently powerful to run multiple domestic appliances, particularly items such as a fridge, and the family did not have light in their home after 6pm.

Richard invested in a diesel generator, but this required frequent maintenance, was dirty and expensive to run.

The solar mini-grid uses battery storage, enabling the family to access 24/7 power which they pay for using a simple mobile top-up system. Richard believes that REDAVIA power has made a huge difference to his family's daily life: "now, if I want something cool, I can get it because I have my small fridge here... If I want a quick tea, I have an electric kettle." He can also see how reliable power gives his children access to experiences that

their peers in grid-connected towns take for granted: "if the children want to watch cartoon channels, they can do so any time they want."

"Our youngest son, Pascoe, was born just two days ago. My wife and I felt more relaxed about his birth than we did when she was expecting our older children as we knew that Shitunguru dispensary is connected to REDAVIA power and so light would be available if labour began at night."

Having electricity enables the couple's children to use a laptop to support their studies, "I bought this computer so that they learn by practice rather than theory."

Looking to the future, Richard says: "My dream for my children is that they can be highly educated and conduct research to come up with innovations to generate solar power. Alternatively, I hope to support them to build a small processing industry in the village."

