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em[POWER]

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TRANSFORMING LIVES
FROM WASTELAND TO HOMELAND

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Dear Friends, Donors, Advisors, Members, Interns and Consultants,

On behalf of em[POWER] Energy Group family, I would like to sincerely thank each and every one of you for your continued support. Every donation whether it is through volunteer services or monetary helps ensures that we can continue helping our community locally and internationally.

I know there are a lot of other ways you could have spent this time and money, but you believe in our cause, so you chose to invest it in our project. Because of this investment, I want you to feel like part of our team. We're in this together. I want our success to be your success.

Our projects are across the globe and until one project site is fully operational, we will be sending you regular reports about our work and asking for donations in both voluntary service and monetary form. You'll know what your donation has helped fund, what accomplishments we have achieved and what our current needs are.

I hope you find this partnership valuable and worthwhile. I know the economy is tough, so thank you for investing your time and hard-earned money on our cause. Please consider telling your friends and family about our project - share the link on your blogs or social networks or just bring us up in conversation. You know your friends and family best so use your own words - tell them why you chose our project and what it means to you.

As part of my annual travel to project sites, this year I went to Uganda (em[POWER]'s New Project Site) and Thailand (em[POWER]'s Potential Development Site).

Facebook for images: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/EmPOWER-Energy-Group/263865670305557>
Em[POWER]: <http://empowerenergygroup.org/>
Warm Heart Worldwide Donation: <http://warmheartworldwide.org/>
Change A Life Uganda Donation: <http://www.changealifeuganda.org/>

As we expand, we seek and need more help! We need more specialists, advisors, members, organizations, donors to continue to expand and implement in our project sites.

Thank you again for all you have done to help this cause.

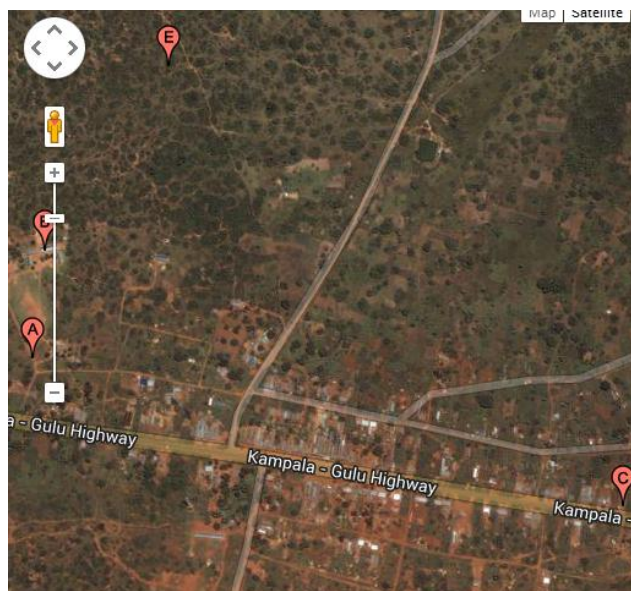
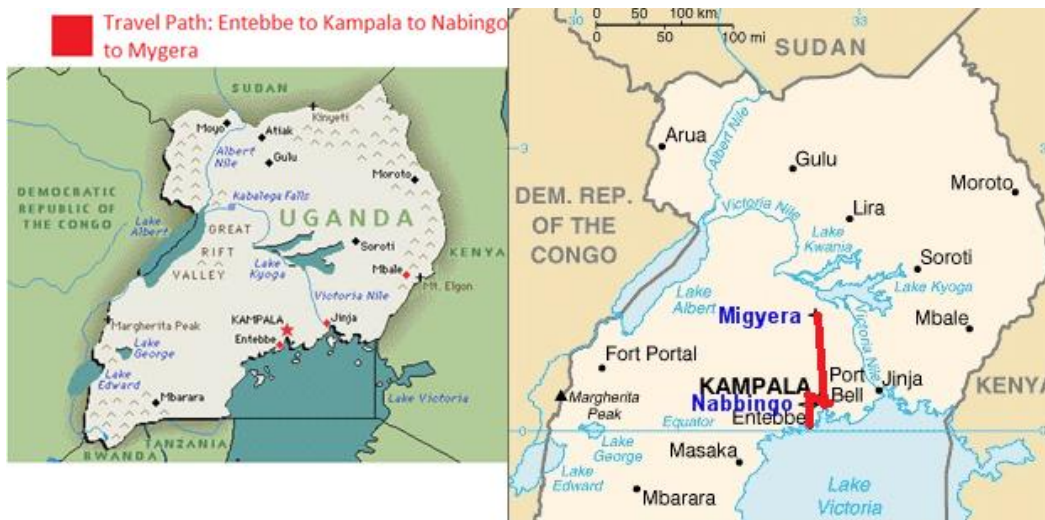
With gratitude,

Nasir Uddin

em[POWER] Energy Group (referred to as em[POWER]) and ChangeALife Uganda (referred to as CALU) share a single, common goal of creating sustainable communities by giving them the resources they need to be self-sufficient. To achieve this objective, em[POWER] and CALU agree that the two organizations will work together by sharing resources, networks, and educational information, as enumerated below, to further each organization's goals. With a common mission and passion, em[POWER] has agreed to become their formal partner in the works in Uganda. It is different form of site and relationship than what is traditionally em[POWER] site. However, it is a great way for em[POWER] to expand its portfolio in a country and continent they do not have experience in. As part of all relationship, em[POWER] needed to truly assess the condition of the project in person. For that reason, Nasir Uddin, Co-Founder and VP of em[POWER], visited the site December 2013 for 1-week.

Goal: to assess the variety of projects of CALU as well as see the overall function and structure on-ground.

There are two sites that CALU works in are Nabbingo and Migyera.



- A** Migyera Health Clinic will be a Level 3 Health Center with a target opening date January 2012. It will open with basic supplies and equipment with a plan to be fully equipped by the end of 2012. Kampala - Gulu Hwy, Uganda (1.41050, 32.25659)
- B** St. Lawrence School is a UPE School which became a ChangeALife Uganda sponsored project in 2007. Since then the school enrollment has grown from 90 to 502 students. All students receive lunch. Kampala - Gulu Hwy, Uganda (1.41239, 32.25680)
- C** BUMU crafts shop - A women's microfinance group assisted by ChangeALife Uganda. The women are mothers of our children and were trained in craft making. Their baskets,bags and beads are sold in the US. Kampala - Gulu Hwy, Uganda (1.40791, 32.26693)

On Monday, December 16th, Nasir had a chance to meet some of the Staff of CALU as well as a team that was hired to look at Capacity Building along with Planning and Monitoring. This is as part of the Segal Foundation grant that they received. Em[POWER] intends to look at that report in order to have a better perspective on the challenges of CAL in Uganda.

The staff and leads of the program discussed the variety of programs of CALU: Child Sponsorship Program, Microenterprise Project, and Arts and Crafts program.



CALU Project Review with Nasir



Nasir Uddin with CALU Full Staff Taken During the Holiday Party

- Some of the challenges mentioned
 - o Find a way to drive more patients to the health unit
 - o Portable water to community (w/ storage)
 - o Hygiene and Sanitation programs
 - o Food and Nutrition programs
 - o Child Sponsorship Program (*needs sustainability*)
 - o Loan Project Expansion
 - o Additional activities that generate revenue

Meeting with Eva's Family (A Sponsored Child of CALU):

- Father is not supporting the family of 5
- Mother has not been active in working until the Child Sponsorship Program
 - o Currently:
 - Mother has been doing fair-trade baskets, craft classes



- Each basket with cover: 1.5 days to make
- Also maintains a chicken farm that is sold to the market

Meeting with Milay's Family (A Sponsored Child of CALU):

- Father passed away at a young age with a family of 2
- Great idea: drum system in household to store water
 - **Benefit:** to travel into town to get water every day by the kids rather than studying for school



- Milay's mom works on basket making that takes her sometimes 2-3 days
- Also attends sewing classes and loan program
- Also attends adult literacy program
- Milay and her mom runs a pig farm as well





Nabbingo Health Center Facility (a clinic partially supported by CALU):



Services provided in the clinic:

- A. Curative/Clinic Services
- B. Preventive Services
- C. Surveillance For Special Diseases
- D. Maternal and Child Health
- E. Inpatient Services

Process of patient admission:

Patient comes in --> Waits for Doctors/Nurses --> Doctors/Nurses Utilizes Government Issued Form to Collect Information --> either have the patient do lab tests AND/OR Get prescription for medicine.

Submission of Reports:

Initial Form Data Collection (this form varies based on patient-level)

- Name, Age, Address, Sex
- Date, Diagnosis, Weight

Data is transferred from manual forms:

- Goes from District to the Ministry Level
 - o Monthly Summary Form
 - o Limited weekly reports for HIV/AIDS related counts



Nasir holding BD Soloshot Mini (left) Parents Getting the Weight of Baby during Weekly Vaccination Day



Dedicated Nurses Vaccinating Babies during Weekly Vaccination Day at the Nabbingo Clinic

A briquette (or briquette) is a block of flammable matter used as fuel to start and maintain a fire. Common types of briquettes are charcoal briquettes and biomass briquettes. Charcoal contributes to 6% of total energy consumption in Uganda. Up to 10KG of wood is needed to produce 1 KG of charcoal. CALU is interested in a situation that is not meant to totally wipe out the current use of wood as fuel but creating an environment where government's policy to protect environment.

Meeting with Samuel Asimwe (Consultant that CALU is working with)

Technique that he proposes:



Mixer on the Left and Press on the Right



There are two design to the Briquets: Boneycomb (left) and Stick (right)

Meeting with a Youth Group that Samuel helped train:

- They started training others as well for free! It is great to see youth working together to do this rather than alternative negative business opportunities that other at their age are doing. It was very inspiring to hear them speak.



Nasir with Rhoda (CALU) and Kaye and John (Youth Group) Showing Off Their Honeycomb Briquette Outputs

Meeting with Women Group that Samuel also trained:



Nasir with Rhoda (CALU) and Ann showing off her Honeycomb and Stick Briquette Products



Samuel showing Ann's older design mixer and stick design machine (all manual)

Meeting with Our Lady of Charity Women Group (<http://olcwomengroup.com/>)

“Our Lady of Charity Women group was started in 2008 by the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity. The project is located at Mulago-Nsooba slum area, 5 kilometers from Kampala City Centre. The group has another branch in Bukoto Catholic sub-parish with 45 members. The purpose of starting the project was in response to the needs of marginalized girls, women within the surrounding area.”

This is a great group of people! They are doing fantastic work in variety of areas: hand craft, recycling of plastic materials, paper beads, tie-dye tailoring, gardening, mushroom growing, and briquette making, human rights awareness, and counseling. It is great group to support and learn from! They can train others with the amazing products that they make.



Nasir with Women Group in Kampala and Their Stove Design

Meeting with St Francis Migyera Health Centre

St. Francis Health Clinic, in Migyera is a Level 3 Health Center. It opened July 4, 2012 and provides basic health and maternity services to the community of Migyera and to all St. Lawrence School students. An overall a great infrastructure and set-up done by CALU team! The doctor on staff seems very knowledgeable with 10 other nurses available on staff. The facility followed the same structure as the Nabbingo Health Centre. The prescription looks well stocked. There are no unique codes for patients except Clinic generated numbers (just sequential order). There are very minimal government subsidies: malaria and vaccine. Patient going from one office to another with data being recorded in separate forms can result in missing historical trending as well as typographical errors. When old patient comes in, the patient records are manually dug through the paper to find old records. This can be very difficult and time consuming once there large amounts of patient. Short term: it may be good to establish a patient record system (a manual process) and cards.





Nasir with the staff and lab set-up of the Migyera Health Clinic

Meeting with another CALU Sponsored Family:

This was an inspiring sponsored family to hear from. The key reasons are the drive of the family! See below:



With the loan from CALU this family moved from the house in background from Right to Left!



Nasir assessing the Cassava Plant farm (left) and CALU Supported Mother Wearing Her Self-sewed Clothes (right)



John and his brother spend before and after school getting water for the family. They spend hours each week doing this rather than being in school, doing school work or other after school activities. The condition of the water was something unexpected for everyone. The source of this water during rainy season showed the amount of different inputs that came into the water system: animal and people feces, chemicals, and other toxic materials. Throughout the town the only clean system is the rain water capture system that runs out of clean water as the dry season progresses.

CALU Water System:

Creating a commercial water system is the best approach to sustainable clean water system! It allows for community to be involved as well as income generation method for the village. Water is foundation of life and will be direct solution to all the nutrition and health concerns in the community.



Nasir with CALU teams and Engineer in front of the Water Reservoir by the school (left); Full view of the Source of the water along with the transformer 1.5KM away (right)



Unused eco-toilet behind the clinic: looks to be in great condition and well designed.





Nasir spent the day hearing all the amazing things CALU is doing with the school and the sponsored students and parents!





Warm Heart Worldwide

Helping rural Thai villages to pull themselves
out of poverty.

The following blog comes from Nasir Uddin who spent a week at Warm Heart In December. It will be featured in <http://warmheartworldwide.tumblr.com/>.

I have been involved with Warm Heart since its early days in 2008-9 when I worked to help raise its profile at Rutgers University. In fact my first collaboration with Michael was as a Rutgers undergrad when I helped to develop training curriculum through Global Pact (<http://globalpact.org>), an organization he founded to build an international network to take on the world's problems, no less! You could certainly say that Michael has personally been responsible for lighting a fire under many of us as we go out into the world and launch our working lives.

Warm Heart has a vision which is, unfortunately, fairly rare in today's NGO world. Most NGOs go into a community with a predefined solution without taking into consideration the true needs of the local residents and how to get them involved. Warm Heart works hard to really assess how the solutions will impact different areas of the residents' livelihood, not just on pushing through the project. For that reason, I have become increasingly interested in understanding the organization and how I can help to support it.

After meeting Michael several times in the US in the intervening years after he shifted to Phrao and through regular emails, my goal has been to deepen the involvement between Warm Heart and my own NGO, em[POWER] Energy Group (<http://empowerenergygroup.org/>). Em[POWER] was founded by students with different specialties from Rutgers and Princeton University five years ago. It has been my ongoing passion as I continued my graduate schooling and began working full-time for companies who manufacture medical devices.

Em[POWER]'s mission is to find sustainable solutions through renewable resource-oriented development for waste-picking communities – people who sell waste for their livelihood – in usually remote areas of the developing world. My particular area of focus has been the telemedicine project. Telemedicine is defined by the World Health Organization as “the use of information and communications technology to deliver health care particularly in areas where access to medical services is insufficient”. Over the past year, I have personally funded the software development for a simple and inexpensive solution to carry out preventive health tests to people living in remote areas.

That's where my connection with Warm Heart comes in. In each of our project sites – we recently expanded into Uganda, for example – we come across local problems and rely on our network of local and international experts and organizations for support in helping us roll-out, implement and fine-tune our different project solutions. We also share similar problems so it's good to brain storm and share stories.

Over the Christmas break this year, I finally had my first opportunity to come to Phrao for a short week-long visit. There were two primary reasons for my trip:

- 1) To bring a sustainable solution – the telemedicine project – to address health concerns faced by local communities at our project sites and to initiate implementation;

- 2) To obtain deeper and first-hand understanding of Warm Heart and its projects with the end goal of creating a formal partnership between em[Power] and WH.

Warm Heart was facing a serious issue with thousands of residents in the Phrao District who suffer from high blood pressure and diabetes and who aren't getting the proper care. Local clinics – Mae Wan clinic where Warm Heart is located alone serves 6000 residents – are sorely understaffed and underfunded. Nurses are unable to go from village to village and health workers are not trained to collect medical data. It has been a real struggle for Warm Heart to collect the data so that those who are at high risk can get support.

Em[Power] volunteered to develop a cell phone and web software system integrated with medical devices such as a blood pressure measuring device. In fact, it took over four years and the involvement of several successive volunteers to finally obtain permissions to pilot the telemedicine project. Crucial to the viability of the solution was the fact that most of rural Thailand is covered by 3G internet networks.

The initial pilot project will be at Mae Wan clinic and cover blood pressure monitoring in the villages. Later we hope to add other preventive tests such as blood glucose and ECG. Hopefully with the data, we will then get permission for the clinic to send medicine to the patient, or provide transportation to the clinic or closest hospital. Imagine how just the ability to collect a simple blood pressure reading can lead to someone living in a remote village being able to avoid disablement or death by hypertension.

Along with Michael and PJ, who served as translator, we were able to demonstrate the device at Mae Wan clinic and obtain permission for the pilot project. The next step is getting six cell phones loaded with the app and six blood pressure monitoring systems to Phrao. The first round of cell phones has been funded by donations and Warm Heart will be buying the first round of blood pressure devices. Warm Heart will also provide the local health workers with the necessary training.

Figure 1: Nasir and Michael explaining to the nurse (left) the cell phone and device use (right)

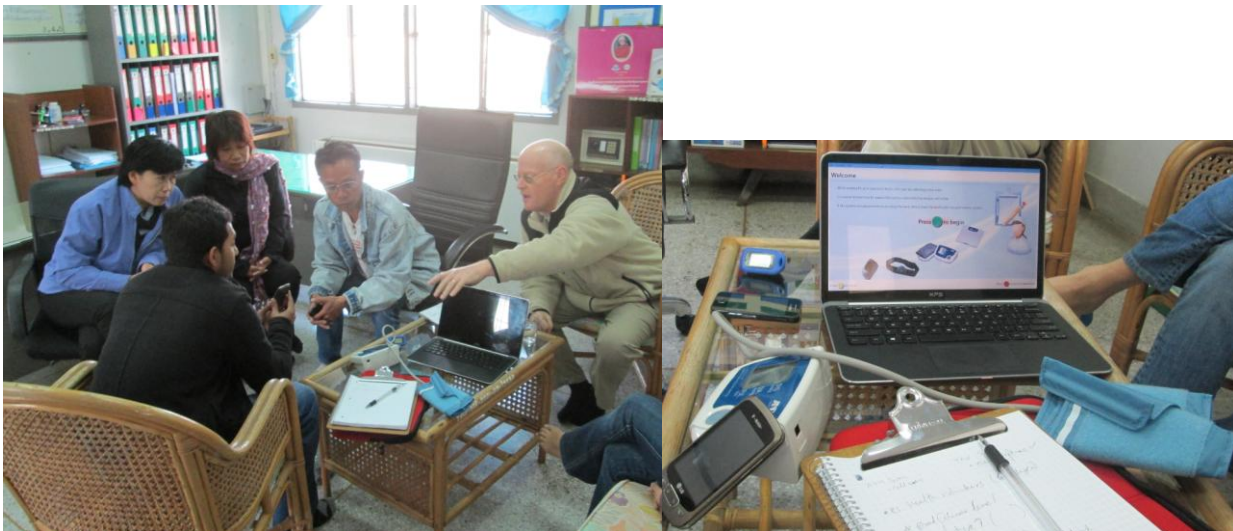




Figure 2: Nasir Uddin (r.) and Warm Heart president Michael Shafer (back), with approval team members of Mae Wan Clinic

I spent the rest of my week exploring all of Warm Heart's projects in addition to reviewing the final paperwork and process for the telemedicine program and the formal partnership agreement. The projects I was most interested in were the biochar renewable energy work that Michael is doing as well as its Fair Trade weaving and sewn products.



Figure 3: Spent two days building this Biochar drying pit and this is the pit in action!

From the first morning after waking up in Phrao, I knew WH would be unlike any other place I have ever travelled to. Michael Shafer has really taken his vision and all his years of experience and created a community which many people consider to be their home. He and his wife Evelind are really immersed in the local community and practice what they preach.

I am looking forward to seeing if the organization can become truly sustainable and if the local community can continue some of these projects without Warm Heart. Likewise, I'm hoping the telemedicine public health project can expand throughout Phrao valley and even into the rest of Thailand. The photo below shows me saying goodbye to Michael and Evelind but it's also the hello to a lasting partnership with Warm Heart Worldwide.



Figure 4: Nasir saying goodbye to Michael, Evelind, and some volunteers at the Chiang Mai airport

For more information on both organizations, please visit the websites below.



em[POWER] Energy Group, Inc.