KIWANJA.NET
MINDFUL SOCIAL CHANGE

MOBILE DATABASE · REPORT

# UGANDA CHARGING2

| | |
|---|---|
| **Author / organisation** | Jan Chipchase |
| **Year recorded** | N/A |
| **Region** | Africa · Uganda |
| **Category** | Other |
| **Original source** | research.nokia.com |
| **Archive page** | kiwanja.net/mobile-database/uganda-charging2/ |

*This document is part of the kiwanja.net Mobile Database, an archive of more than 700 articles, reports and projects on mobile technology for development, collected between 2003 and 2010. It is reproduced here for reference; the original author's rights are retained.*

**Explore more.** Browse the full archive at kiwanja.net/mobile-database.
Looking for support with your own social change work? See kiwanja.net/work-with-me.
Ken Banks offers coaching, mentoring and strategy support.

# Rural Charging Services, Uganda

## How to Stay Powered Up Without Access to Mains Power

Jan Chipchase, Indri Tulusan

NOKIA

# Introduction

Uganda is a country coping with a severe energy crisis resulting in frequent power cuts. In addition, access to mains electricity in rural locations is limited. Given that mobile phones require power, and access to power can be unpredictable – how do people keep their mobile phones and other electrical devices charged?

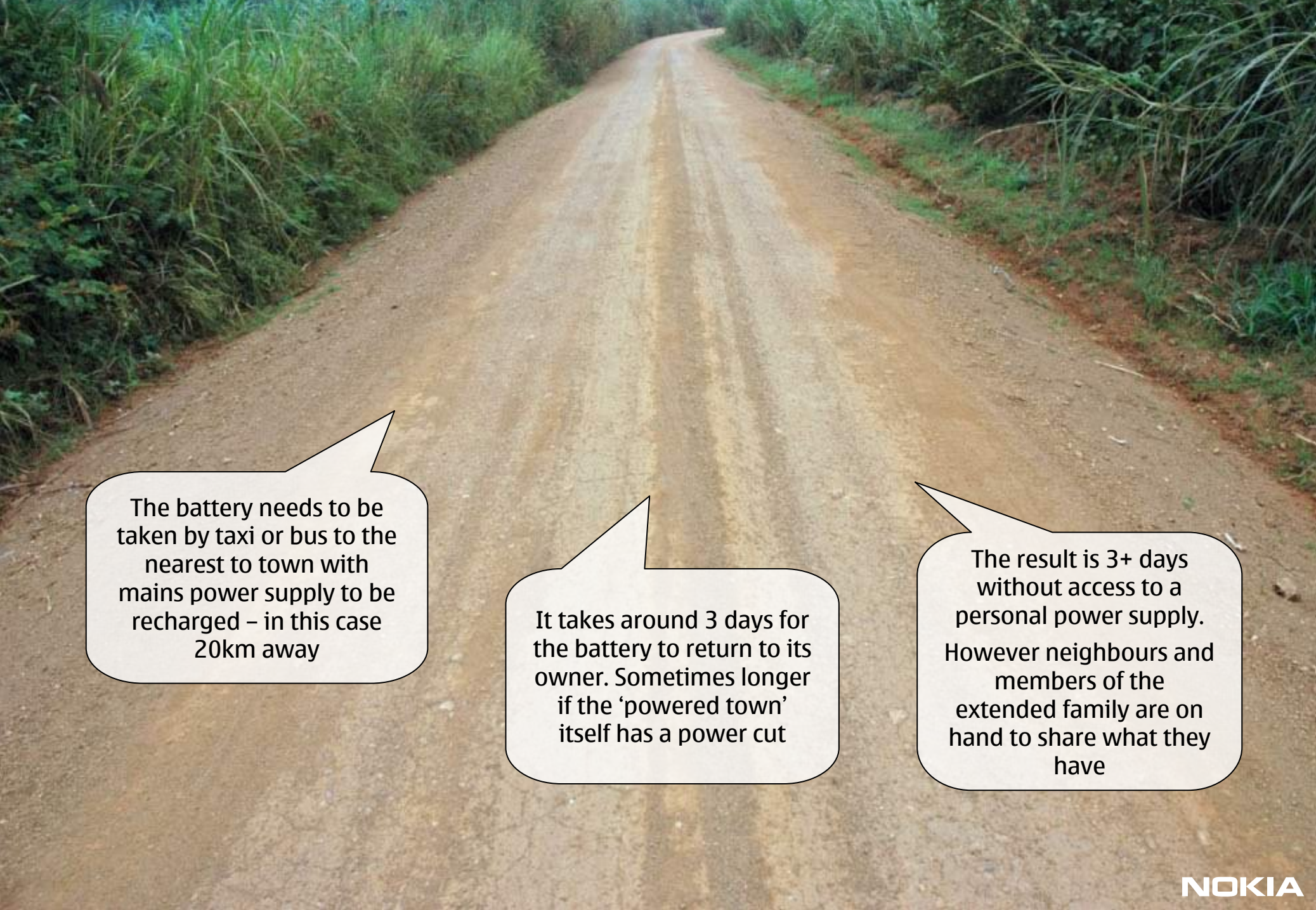
For many Ugandan rural communities with no access to mains power car batteries are the primary means of providing electricity to the home. Businesses such as bars also run off car batteries but they are more likely to have their own power generator. A used car battery costs 30 to 40 dollars and can keep a household powered for a month. In a bar the same battery might last a week. The homes we visited ran electrical items included radios, CD players, television and domestic lighting.

It can take 3 to 5+ days to have a car battery recharged and the process is as follows:

- Deliver the car-battery to a charging service, often tens of kilometers away the nearest town with mains electricity access. The battery is taken and returned by a trusted and friendly taxi driver or trader
- It takes 3 days to charge a battery, longer if the town where the service is based itself experiences power cuts
- The cost of charging a battery around 1,000 Ugandan shillings (0.4 Euro), not including delivery. As a comparison a mobile phone battery costs half as much to be recharged

The following photos were taken as part of a Nokia study into shared phone use in Uganda

In rural locations car batteries are widely used to power the home
A battery such as this might last one month in the home before needing to be recharged (in a busy bar it might last one week)
EXIDE
NOKIA


The battery needs to be taken by taxi or bus to the nearest to town with mains power supply to be recharged – in this case 20km away
It takes around 3 days for the battery to return to its owner. Sometimes longer if the 'powered town' itself has a power cut
The result is 3+ days without access to a personal power supply.
However neighbours and members of the extended family are on hand to share what they have

NOKIA

Battery charging service provider
UBL
UBL

It costs 1000 Ugandan shillings (0.4 Euro) to recharge a battery. Delivery is not included.
UDL
NOKIA

INCOE
NOKIA

Luwangu
Fanny
Indicating whose battery is belongs to whom

Battery delivery is not included in the price, but for an additional charge the boda boda (motorcycle) drivers can make a delivery
Phone number of delivery service
UDL
DO YOU WANT GOOD SERVICE OUT OF YOUR AUTOMOTIVE BATTERY? FOLLOW THIS:
DO'S
DON'T'S
FEDERO 2003
CULTURAL LEADERS
ONE UGANDA

UBL
UBL
NOKIA

LUGAVE
BATTERY CHARGERS
NOKIA

BANNAKALUNGU
BATTERY CHARGING,
REPAIR, & GOOD ACID.
EXIDE
NOKIA

Lack of access to power is comparable to access to mains water
Water delivery costs 200 Ugandan Shillings (0.1 Euro)
STOP
NOKIA

/end
NOKIA