



VillageReach, Foundation for Community Development and Oasis Fund Announce Strategic Investment in Mozambique Social Business

VidaGas propane energy company secures \$1.4M investment from Oasis Fund

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, September 1, 2009 -- VillageReach, the Seattle-based social enterprise that increases access to healthcare for remote last mile communities, and the Foundation for Community Development (FDC), a Mozambique non profit that strengthens the capacities of underprivileged communities, today announced that the Oasis Fund, a European commercial investment fund specializing in social entrepreneurship, has committed a \$1.375 million investment in VidaGas, a VillageReach-FDC-owned propane energy company.

The announcement was made at SoCap09, the annual conference bringing together a unique mix of the world's top social innovators, investors and entrepreneurs to discuss social business development practices and opportunities. Craig Nakagawa, VillageReach CFO, and Keely Stevenson, Investment Executive at Bamboo Finance, advisors to the Oasis Fund, will make a joint presentation at the conference on September 2, titled *VidaGas: Anatomy of a Social Investment*.

The Oasis investment is a landmark transaction that will enable VidaGas to expand its customer base and energy service offering to significantly impact people in remote areas of northern Mozambique. Established in 2002, VidaGas was created to support the health system improvement program developed by VillageReach and FDC. The program has served more than 260 health centers and a population of over 5 million in remote communities in Mozambique. Propane enables the provision of critical health services, including vaccinations, equipment sterilization and night-time birthing. Without reliable energy supply from VidaGas, equipment failures and lack of inventory would have continued to negatively impact the health system.

More than 80% of Mozambique's population is rural and depends on charcoal and wood for basic cooking and heating in the home. Only 8% of the country is connected to the electrical grid. Clean, affordable propane from VidaGas provides a compelling alternative to burning charcoal and wood, which causes indoor air pollution. By responding to the needs of the public health system and the greater communities it serves, VidaGas has grown over 500% since its first year. Today, VidaGas is the largest propane distributor in northern Mozambique, providing 240 tons of propane in 2008 to the government health system, the hotel and tourism industries, small retail businesses and a growing number of households.

"I am extremely proud of the partnership we have forged with the Mozambique Ministry of Health and VillageReach, and with the results of our collaboration," said Graca Machel, president of the Foundation for Community Development. "With this investment VidaGas can have a dramatic, positive effect on Mozambique to help to improve the health of families and reduce deforestation."

"VidaGas' social mandate and successful business performance highlight our core belief that improving health systems in the most remote locations is possible and sustainable," said Allen Wilcox, president of VillageReach. "VidaGas' progress demonstrates the effectiveness of our model to enable comprehensive large-scale change in global health practices."

“We have been searching for the world’s best examples of entrepreneurial approaches to addressing poverty, and we take much pride in our new partnership with VidaGas,” said Jean-Philippe de Schrevel, Founder of Bamboo Finance, the investment advisor for the Oasis Fund. “VidaGas’ impressive accomplishments show the potential for channelling private investment capital into commercially viable businesses to change people’s lives everyday. “

Since its establishment in 2000, VillageReach has worked with public health systems and global health organizations to provide vaccines, medical supplies and training for rural health centers. The organization has been active throughout Sub Saharan Africa, which accounts for a disproportionate share of the 2.5 million annual childhood deaths by vaccine-preventable diseases.

About Oasis Fund and Bamboo Finance

Oasis Fund is a Luxembourg investment fund which finances innovative, growth stage, commercially viable enterprises that deliver basic goods and services that improve the lives of low-income communities. Bamboo Finance is based in Geneva, Switzerland and is the investment advisory firm of the Oasis Fund. More information can be found here: www.bamboofinance.com.

About VillageReach

VillageReach is a non-profit social enterprise that extends the reach of conventional healthcare services to remote, underserved communities by creating dynamic delivery and information monitoring systems. Its mission is to save lives and improve well being in developing countries by increasing last-mile access to healthcare and investing in social businesses that address gaps in community infrastructure. VillageReach has been given the highest-possible charity rating by GiveWell. See www.givewell.net.

About FDC

The FDC facilitates access to funds and technical assistance for communities and for other non-profit making organizations who also seek to help improve the living conditions of the poorest strata of the Mozambican population. Its objectives are attained through the communities themselves and/or national NGOs and in partnership with groups and institutions at various levels of Mozambican society who share its objectives and its values.

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