

Small pet foods business gets a power boost from the Shoprite Group

"Our business would not survive another 12 months with constant rolling blackouts. We had to find an alternative solution," said Harvard-trained entrepreneur, Nhlanhla Dlamini, who founded [Maneli Pets in 2016](#).

The small, Johannesburg-based pet foods manufacturer uses refrigeration and dehydration machines that run on 24 to 48-hour cycles. During stage 5 and 6 loadshedding, the factory had to close, with raw materials going to waste, affecting their bottom line and ability to provide consistent work to all 60 employees.

"It became clear we needed a long-term sustainable power solution. We started installing solar panels in 2018 but required funding to conclude the process. Banks are not open to those types of requests, particularly for SMMEs. We were finally able to complete the solar power system with financial assistance from the Shoprite Group's small business development division, [Shoprite Next Capital](#), which enabled us to install the required inverter and battery," he explains.

With a capacity of 200KWh from the battery and 100KVA from the inverter, the installation produces a total of 100kW per hour, which is enough to run production during stage 1 to stage 5 and partially during stage 6 loadshedding. This will also make it possible for Nhlanhla to put more of his employees back to work.

Maneli Pets was onboarded by the Group in 2021, initially in just five Checkers stores in the Western Cape. The demand for their 100% natural pet treats and snacks grew so fast that the business was supplying to over 200 stores within less than a year and is now available at all [Checkers](#) stores nationwide.

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