



## Dear Supporter,

Welcome to SolarAid's first e-newsletter

Over the last year, SolarAid has been busy with solar installations, microsolar training, product design, fundraising, conferences and festivals.

### Hello Sunshine!

At the end of 2008, SolarAid announced the newly branded name 'Sunny Money' for its ground-breaking solar products. As the name suggests, these are simple, innovative products providing continuous, clean and free power. To many people, this means a sustainable route out of poverty.



Read more in our round-up of news from each country...

## MALAWI - Entrepreneurial spirit leads the way

In February 2008, SolarAid formed its first African team. Thanks to people like you, things have moved fast since then.

On a visit last April, SolarAid's chairman was struck by the extent of poverty. However, he also saw that the vision for a sustainable future, together with entrepreneurial spirit was very strong; it is this kind of spirit that will help SolarAid achieve its ambitious goals.

With the arrival of a voluntary engineer in May, progress was made in the research and assessment of the solar powered rope pump. The pump has the potential to vastly improve farming and food production across rural Malawi, and with hospital water needs averaging 50 litres per day per patient, the



Two children test out the solar powered rope pump in Mzuzu, Malawi. October 2008.

pump will have huge health benefits too.

SolarAid Malawi has been training many community-based organisations in microsolar and many more groups have come forward, eager to learn.



Our training group in Malawi

After launching a branding competition in June, the name 'Kadzuwa and Muuni' ('little sun' and 'light giver' in Chichewa) was decided upon for the microsolar lighting product. These products have proved popular, with almost 200 sold in the last month. The Malawi team is now looking at rolling out the products on a wider scale.



SolarAid Malawi stock 'Kadzuwa and Muuni'. Panels and converted light bulbs.

The entrepreneurs of Malawi have already excelled in promoting the product, showing great pride in being part of SolarAid.

## TANZANIA - Huge demand for microsolar

In June, SolarAid Tanzania opened its office in Dar es Salaam. Although at first the small team had no desks or seats, they still managed to sell 200 microsolar panels, highlighting that the market is ripe.

During a microsolar training session in August, in a particularly deprived area of Dar es Salaam, a young group of trainees was so amazed by the microsolar panel that when they heard music playing from a radio powered directly by the sun, they all cheered with delight "Umeme Rahisi!" ("cheap, easy power!").



Celebrating the new solar installation at Igoda Primary School, Tanzania. December 2008

By autumn, with growing distribution channels, the sale of solar panels was rocketing. For every panel sold, there were at least four people saving up to buy one.



Children of Igoda Primary School. Mtwara, Tanzania. November 2008.

By December six schools had been evaluated as potential macrosolar sites. Just before Christmas the team celebrated its first macro installation at Igoda Primary School in a remote region in the highlands.

The school has developed an ambitious income generating strategy to make the system more sustainable. When not used for lighting, the system will be able to charge 15 mobile phones. Each charge will earn the school 500Ksh (25p). This will serve the 6000 mobile phone owners in the area and enable the school to cover system maintenance.

SolarAid Tanzania is currently making final touches to the 'Solar Education Kit' which it hopes to distribute to 200 schools across Tanzania over the next four years.

## ZAMBIA - Solar for schools

SolarAid Zambia has seen nine successful macrosolar systems from inspection phase through to assessment and installation.

The systems have been installed on schools and community centres or 'CABLACs' (Capacity Building Learning Activity Centres). SolarAid Zambia is now extending further into microsolar for local entrepreneurs.



SolarAid Zambia team on the roof of Chilimboyi CABLAC, Zambia

With the recent arrival of a Country Business Manager, SolarAid Zambia is now looking to expand its reach into southwestern Zambia. One area in particular, Sesheke, appears to be well-suited to microsolar. Like many rural areas in Zambia, it is far from any connection to grid power; it is very poor and incredibly remote. Food production is seasonal and so is the average income, so an income-generating project could offer huge benefits to the region.



Solar lanterns in various forms. Zambia

## KENYA - Sunny Money takes off

With many solar demonstrations going on across rural areas, the possibility of solar products within every household is increasing.



Gavin Bowen demonstrates microsolar to children of Ibencho Primary School in Mahuru Bay, Kenya. December 2008

The Country Business Manager is expanding the team, bringing on board experienced salesmen and women. Recently recruited are 10 'Microsolar Franchisees', who have received training in the manufacturing, repairing and selling of Sunny Money products. The Franchisees are now responsible for setting up, sustaining and expanding their businesses within their communities.



The first five solar microfranchisees recruited in Mahuru Bay, Kenya. From left: Moses, Grace, Judith, Dan, Dickens. December 2008

To be selected for the roles, the candidates were required to canvass for their position, campaign locally and gather votes. This is an exciting opportunity, giving individuals from poor areas of Kenya a sense of hope and pride at being part of something big.



SolarAid's youngest volunteer. Tenzin Bowen, son of SolarAid's Country Business Manager in Kenya.

## Thank you

We have been astounded by the innovative ways in which our supporters have raised money for us over the last year: from dressing up as Santa in a 5K fun run, to cycling from London to Cornwall non-stop in just 21 hours, and from jumping out of planes to shaving off beards.

**Thank you to all our donors, supporters and partners, from all of us at SolarAid.**

Would you like to continue your support?  
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