

Solar lantern for people living without electricity

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Panasonic's new solar lantern.

Panasonic Corporation today announced that it has developed a solar lantern that doubles as a charger for people living without electricity. With a built-in rechargeable battery to store solar energy during the day, the lantern provides light at night and can also be used as a power source to charge small mobile devices like mobile phones. The company plans to bring the lantern to the market in autumn this year after conducting marketing research in off-grid areas in Asia and Africa. A prototype of the new solar lantern will be displayed at official side events at the 5th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V) to be held from June 1 to 3, 2013 in Yokohama. Panasonic will introduce the product to a variety of stakeholders joining the TICAD V.

About 1.32 billion people, or approximately 20% of the world's population, are still living without electricity. Many of these people use [kerosene lamps](#) for lighting. However, kerosene lamps not only fail to provide sufficient light but also emit [toxic fumes](#) and pose a fire risk. In addition, people living off-grid are facing a problem of charging their mobile phones, which have become a popular [communication tool](#) for them.

To meet those challenges, Panasonic has developed the new solar lantern that provides clean and safe lighting and a [power source](#). Gearing up for the planned product launch this autumn, the company will further refine the solar lantern to make it practical and convenient for everyday use by taking into account such specifications as brightness, charging time and battery run time in addition to the charging function for mobile phones and other small devices.

Besides selling at retail stores, Panasonic will make the product available to the wider public through the utilization of support programs offered by governments and international organizations and tie-ups with NPOs, NGOs and other [social groups](#) in efforts to contribute to the development of society. Starting with the solar lantern, its first product for BOP markets, Panasonic will continue to accelerate the development of BOP markets and strengthen marketing activities and product development to help improve the lives of people in regions without electricity.

Panasonic launched last year the "100 Thousand Solar Lantern Project" as part of its corporate citizenship activities, aiming to donate a total of 100,000 solar electric lights to people in regions of the world without electricity by 2018, the 100th anniversary of the company's founding, through local social institutions including NPOs and NGOs.

More information: panasonic.net/citizenship/lantern/

Provided by Panasonic Corporation

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