

Solar PV Electricity for the Poor 2007

A technique has been developed so that small low cost pv panels can be easily self-assembled by most people to power devices such as radios, torches, etc. They can also form the basis for small enterprises.

DIY Solar powering is quite unlike Solar Home Systems (SHS) and cannot easily be compared with it!

DIY Solar is just intended to make a little affordable electricity, for those without mains electricity, to power small appliances. **For example, most radios can be powered for under \$1.**

However ultra-bright LEDs now give the possibility for people to also make their own small lighting appliances. Oil lamps and candles can now be replaced by LED lights that last for many years with no running cost.

And for the more enterprising types there is the possibility of solar charging mobile phones!

We have volunteer helpers in several countries and an engineer is available to help in India.

There are sizeable projects going in Benin, Ghana, Haiti, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Nigeria and Tanzania. One, in Mongolia, is funded by the UNDP.

We believe that the best option is often to train local people in starting a small business with this technique. Few attempts have been made to do this but we have several successes in Kenya and a report about one is on the following website! Have a look at www.keyp.kabissa.org

The photo here shows this technique being used to make simple pv panels in Kibera.

Here is John Keane's own report;

"The group are called KCYP (Kibera Community Youth Programme) and they approached us as they were interested in using solar as an income generation project for the group.... That is exactly what has happened. It started with basic trainings and is now at the stage where the group are slowly using the capital they have to make their own panels for sale to the local community. They are focusing on 6 - 12 volt panels which can be used for radios, cassettes and mobile phone recharging.



I have worked with other groups here as well, such as one in Nanyuki (Near Mount Kenya) who have called themselves the 'Likii Solar Energy Programme' or LSEP. They are youth from a slum area called Likii Village who have quickly set up a small business. They were literally trained one day, producing panels the next day....and selling the day after!

For this latest training in Mbita (Western Kenya) I incorporated 'production and distribution' into the workshop whereby participants were split into groups on the second day and asked to make some panels, agree a minimum sale price, and then go out into the community as sales men and women. Two panels were sold in two hours. This gave the group even more confidence in the product as they made an immediate profit. The exercise also served to spread the word that cheap solar was now available in town! I am very hopeful that this group will also continue with the work now that the training is over."

He recently started a similar project in Neema, Tanzania. Visit www.neemacrafts.com

A programme has been made for BBC TV about DIY Solar in Sierra Leone and programme notes and video are available at www.tve.org

Click on [Hands On](#) and then [Batteries Not Included - Sierra Leone](#)

Other videos are found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=grgtZm6K4x4> where John Keane (now employed by Solar Aid) demonstrates using DIY Solar.

Solar Aid have adopted the DIY Solar technique that they are using in Malawi. Visit solar-aid.org/

Also on YouTube you will find a DIY Solar introduction clip at [=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nTtWqTI42TQ&mode=related&search](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nTtWqTI42TQ&mode=related&search)

To know about making a simple Cookit solar cooker go to http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WXOp_evISSA