



We would like to say a huge thank you to all of those who have supported SolarAid during 2009. It's been an exciting year which has seen us increasing our activities in Africa, lighting thousands more rural homes and empowering many new solar entrepreneurs through our **Sunny Money** micro-franchising. We have also continued to develop innovative solar products designed to bring clean, renewable power to the poorest people in the world. We look forward to working with you again in 2010 as we continue to build our programmes in **Malawi, Tanzania, Kenya** and **Zambia**, and start a new pilot project in **Argentina**.

Give the gift of light

Buying a SolarAid solar lantern gift card helps us bring clean, renewable power to homes and communities in rural areas. For each gift of £15 we will send you a gift card to give to friends or family.



PICTURES: GIFT OF LIGHT BY ANDY BODYCOMBE; MAIN PICTURE BY MARIANNE KENNOHAN; TRUCK IN THE DESERT BY GWYN ROBERTS; ALBUM COVER BY NICHOLAS MANN; HILDA LONGWE BY FISKANI MSUTU.

Hilda's bitter kerosene lesson

Hilda Longwe has good reason to be venturing into the **microsolar business**.

A widow with three children, Hilda lives in the Mzimba District of Malawi where she once made a modest living selling dried fish and kerosene. Like most rural households, her home was lit by a locally-made kerosene lamp known as a "koloboyi", made from a tin with a muslin wick.

One dark evening when Hilda was out, her children were lucky to escape unharmed when the kerosene lamp exploded, causing a fire which quickly engulfed the house, reducing Hilda's home and business to ashes.

Undaunted, Hilda obtained a loan to help re-establish her business, but although she persevered for several years, it struggled to survive. Then in 2009 Hilda started selling SolarAid's microsolar products and has seen her business picking up again.

Hilda is now optimistic that the microsolar business opportunity will help realise her ambitions for herself and her children for greater independence and a more comfortable life. Hilda praises SolarAid's "miracle products" and has vowed never to sell or use kerosene in her house again.

Help us to help entrepreneurs like Hilda by **supporting SolarAid**.



HILDA LONGWE WITH HER MOTHER AND CHILDREN



MOSES, KENYAN FRANCHISEE, DEMONSTRATES THE PROTOTYPE SOLAR TUBE LIGHT

Understanding needs in Kenya

In November, SolarAid staff Miguel and Marianne, spent **an enlightening week** with SolarAid franchisees in North Bungoma, Kenya.

The aim was to better understand how solar lighting can be used in rural areas. It was a great opportunity to discuss sales with franchisees and to understand what help they need to expand their businesses. It was also a chance to test some of SolarAid's exciting new product prototypes.

Group discussions were held with the franchisees and their customers about energy use and solar power. One star franchisee, Maximillar, made it clear that it's not just the expense of kerosene that is a burden for rural households, the cost of charging vital mobile phones is also much higher than previously estimated. People often need to hire transport on top of the cost of phone charging or have to walk long distances to charge their phones. Maximillar is certain there is a large market for microsolar and she is already using her own SolarAid charger to sell and promote solar phone charging.

Expect more about this in the new year. Read more about the trip in **Marianne's blog**.

Overland adventurers update

SolarAid volunteer, Gwyn, has arrived in Sudan on the latest leg of his **journey to Cape Town** in a partly solar-powered vehicle. Gwyn was recently named **Environmentalist of the Year**. Congratulations Gwyn!

Meanwhile, Susie and Jamie are nearing the end of their **Solar Cycle Diaries** trip around the world, having already pedaled nearly 16,000 km since leaving London in May, travelling via the Middle East and China before arriving in the US at the end of November. The team will be welcomed back to the UK in the spring.



GWYN'S CAMP IN THE DESERT

Raising awareness in Copenhagen

SolarAid took part in the **Copenhagen Climate Exchange**, informing the debate about the effects of climate change on the world's poorest people. We showed how SolarAid's work in improving the livelihoods of rural communities while reducing their dependency on fossil fuels can be a key component in tackling the crisis.

Welcome Cherie Blair as patron

We are proud to **welcome Cherie Blair** as our patron and pleased to announce that we are teaming up with the **Cherie Blair Foundation for Women**. This new partnership will help train our growing network of women solar entrepreneurs in Kenya and Malawi, using SolarAid's successful micro-franchise model, **Sunny Money**.

Busking for SolarAid

Summer might seem a long time ago, but you can bring back the sunshine with this exclusive collection of music from the **SolarAid Buskers' Stage** at the Big Chill festival. **Available by download only**, with proceeds going to SolarAid.



PLEASE CONTINUE YOUR SUPPORT Regular support is really important for SolarAid because it gives us the ability to plan our programmes and save fundraising costs.