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Lighting Africa Newsletter - October 2009

The Lighting Africa newsletter is a briefing on the latest developments in the program and in the off-grid lighting market. It is provided to all member organizations and individuals in the Lighting Africa network. Help us help you tell your story by sending us your articles. However, Lighting Africa does not endorse the contents of the articles sent by its members. For comments, questions, or suggestions, please contact the Lighting Africa Project Team at support@lightingafrica.org

Top stories

Lighting Africa Phase 4 Report: A must-read to understand consumer needs in Africa

Lighting Africa has just published one of the most comprehensive studies on consumer needs in the off-grid lighting marketplace today. It is a one-stop shop of a presentation that provides manufacturers, distributors, donor agencies and potential investors with consumers' feedback on pricing, design, performance and cultural acceptability of products before and after trial periods in Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia. The study also explores end-user responses to grid-charged or solar-charged options for powering the products, and the alternative of cash purchase or payment over time. [Read report](#).



Lighting Africa about to finalize a testing tool for Africa: Have your say!

Lighting Africa is calling for inputs from the private sector to finalize a standard testing methodology for evaluating the performance of off-grid lighting products sold in African markets. A draft of the methodology is now available for review by off-grid lighting industry stakeholders. [Download the document](#) and [send your comments](#). The methodology is a tool that will help distributors (bulk-purchasing agents and importers) government regulators and NGOs to quickly identify good-quality products or verify compliance with minimum performance levels. Product testing is the foundation of Lighting Africa's [product awards](#) and its upcoming product reviews.

The path to the methodology

- Workshop on quality assurance - Nairobi, Kenya - May 2009

- Workshop on Products quality assurance - Virginia, USA - October 2007

Funding your business development - Call for proposals: Lighting rural Tanzania

The Tanzanian Rural Energy Agency (REA), in cooperation with the World Bank and Lighting Africa, has launched a competition to support the development and implementation of new business models to deliver innovative, low cost and high quality non-fossil lighting products to low-income consumers in rural Tanzania. Apply for grants of up to US\$100,000. Concepts notes due by December 31, 2009. For more information, go to www.rea.go.tz.

Other news

In Kenya, Lighting Africa joins the global celebration of World Standards Day

It is well known that conformity to the highest technical standards is critical to boosting consumer confidence. For Lighting Africa, adherence to standards for off-grid lighting products is an important part of its strategy to tackle climate change by ensuring the transition from fuel-based lighting to renewable energy-based lighting. Such was the



acclaimed message that Lighting Africa delivered on 14 October 2009, during the celebration of World Standards Day in Nairobi, Kenya following an invitation by the Kenya Bureau of Standards, [KEBS](#). [Read full presentation](#).

Ghanaian stakeholders brainstorm with Lighting Africa to stimulate off-grid lighting growth

Concrete steps to develop the off-grid lighting market in Ghana were discussed in Accra, Ghana between Lighting Africa and over 25 key local players including distributors, assemblers and importers. The discussions focused on the importance of providing solutions to the challenges regarding tariffs encountered at the points of entry, access to finance and the results of the Phase 4 report mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter. Participants were also given insights on the process for accessing E&CO funds. E&CO is a financial institution focused on energy and supporting micro-finance institutions. Distributors, assemblers and importers requested Lighting Africa's assistance in developing their marketing capacities and expressed their support for the World Bank's ongoing interventions to lower barriers on Ghana's customs and excise. [More details](#).



Quality off-grid lighting is an ideal solution when grid electricity is not available

Quality off-grid lighting, as advocated by Lighting Africa, has great potential to improve living conditions in urban slums where sizeable proportions of bottom of the pyramid (BOP) populations live. The program's expected impact in the poorest segments of society was highlighted during a meeting convened by UN Habitat's Global Energy Network for Urban Settlements (GENUS) on 26 October 2009. The meeting centered on the topic of: Promoting Energy Access for the Urban Poor in Africa; Approaches and Challenges in Slum Electrification. It brought together key agencies, institutions and stakeholders involved in urban energy issues in Africa. Read presentation or visit the UN Habitat website.



Universal access to electricity could open an opportunity for Lighting Africa in Ghana

Ghana's adherence to the principle of universal access to electricity could offer an opportunity to further promote off-grid lighting in the country. Alternative energy sources to grid electricity were discussed during an all-stakeholder meeting gathering over a hundred participants comprising the Minister of Energy, the President of the Association of Ghana Industries, Lighting Africa and Volta River authorities. The President of Ghana's Institution of Engineers, Andrew Baffour, suggested that the Government relook at the energy generated in the off-grid sector and make efforts to associate the private sector and international organizations in the strategy to boost energy access. [More details](#).

Market news

SANYO Electric set to enter the African off-grid lighting market shortly

The Japanese electronics firm giant, SANYO Electric, is targeting the African market with a range of off-grid solar lanterns and charging stations products that will become available in the market in 2010. The firm has appointed a local distributor in Kenya and is looking at introducing their products to Kenya and in selected countries in Africa sometime early next year.

Opportunities for distributors to link up with international manufacturers

A growing number of manufacturers of good quality and affordable off-grid lighting products have expressed interest in partnering with local distributors in Ghana and Kenya. Lighting Africa is seeking to link up with

local distributors interested in distributing off-grid lighting products with these local and international manufacturers. Interested organizations in Ghana and Kenya should [write to Lighting Africa](#) for more details.

Resources & useful links

Mobile phones and off-grid lighting: Three lessons from Lighting Africa so far

There are strong parallels between off-grid mobile phone charging and off-grid lighting. Both have to tackle similar questions about the value of small-scale power products, adapt pricing models for low income consumers and determine whether individual or community-oriented solutions are more practical. Patrick Avato (Projects Officer, Sustainable Energy, IFC) shares three key lessons on Lighting Africa's similarities with mobile phones published in the GSMA's Development Fund Magazine. The GSM Association (GSMA), a partner to Lighting Africa, is the global association of mobile phone operators representing the interests of the worldwide mobile communications industry. Read the story on the [GSMA website](#) or on the [Lighting Africa website](#).

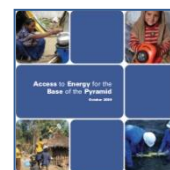


New SunConnect magazine – Issue No1 tells of rural electrification with photovoltaics

The first issue of the new magazine "Sun Connect" is out. It explores the technical and social demands posed by rural electrification which has witnessed enormous developments in Africa, Asia and South America in recent years. Firms and organizations are increasingly recognizing the economic aspect of this development. The magazine will be published four times per year. [Read more](#).

Access to energy for the base of the pyramid, a report published by Hystra

This report is the result of a consulting assignment undertaken on behalf of three leading energy corporations: GDF SUEZ, Schneider Electric and Total. The three companies agreed to share part of this work in a public report. [Read report](#).



Update your agenda

➤ Lighting Africa's Most Promising Products Awards - Competition is now closed!

The awards seek to recognize promising new products not yet available but scheduled to enter the African markets by early 2010. The deadline for entries is now closed, as of November 14, 2009. We look forward to announcing the award winners at the LA International Business Conference & Trade Fair 2010.

➤ Progress in white LED for general purpose lighting - Jan. 26-27, 2010, Stockholm, Sweden

The European Commission DG JRC, in collaboration with the Swedish Energy Agency, is organizing this workshop. Interested presenters are asked to send a title and a short one page summary of the topic (maximum 200 words) by mid-December 2009 to Mr. [Paolo Bertoldi](#). No registration fee applies.

Lighting Africa International Business Conference & Trade Fair 2010

Main attractions

- Conference and knowledge exchange sessions
- Off-grid lighting trade fair (exhibition)
- Lighting Africa Outstanding Product Awards ceremony
- Business-to-business networking opportunities

Side events

- Policy roundtables
- Product quality assurance sessions
- Discussions on carbon finance
- SME business training

Events information

- When: 18 – 21 May 2010
- Where: Nairobi, Kenya
- Participants: over 500 expected
- Main topic : *Coming soon*
- Proposed agenda: *coming soon*

Contact details

- For registration to the conference
- More details