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Replacing one million kerosene lamps with one million solar lanterns

Project description

Solanterns offers smoke-free, brighter solar lanterns at a lower cost than kerosene lamps; thus, health risks, and fire and environmental hazards are reduced, and investments opportunities are created for micro-entrepreneurs.



Business model

Solanterns builds on existing institutional distribution channels and rental services to reach poor customers and convince people to go solar.

High-visibility brand stores, cooperative societies, micro-finance institutions and others serve as sales points, partly offering financing for the purchase.

Youths are trained as micro-entrepreneurs to rent out lanterns to households who cannot afford the upfront investment. Over three years, households can either spend US\$ 146 on kerosene or US\$ 25 on a solar lantern.

Scaling up activities in 2011

- Distribute 20,000 solar lanterns (contributing to the goal of one million solar lanterns).
- Train 500 youths as freelance sales and rental agents.
- Raise US\$ 400,000 part equity and part working capital to scale up operations.
- Establish partnerships with youth groups and microfinance institutions to scale up the rental model.

Immediate needs

- Financial support to set up a micro-credit scheme for youth entrepreneurs trained as sales agents.
- Working capital to leverage economies of scale for importation and distribution.
- Contact to youth empowerment and employment organisations to share the income generation model.
- Linkages to social investors.



