



## Philippines, Guagua, Pampanga, Ilaw: Livelihood Solar lamp making project

### **“We dream big, start small!”**

Electricity in the Philippines is expensive. With the advent of the use of solar energy as a source of light and the Philippines being a tropical country, the AIC group in Pampanga had the idea of asking the Technological Education Skills Development Authority (TESDA) to provide them with a trainer who could teach local people how to make solar lamps. The project began in April 2016.

### **Context**

The objective of the AIC volunteers is to improve the lives of the trainees, who come from poor families, by offering them a new livelihood opportunity. The AIC volunteers sponsored the training and bought the raw materials for them.

Some may wonder: why bother buying raw materials instead of the finished products, which are already available on the market? The reason is that if there are problems with a ready-made lamp, there is no way one can repair it, while if the trainees have the know-how, they can repair their lamps themselves.

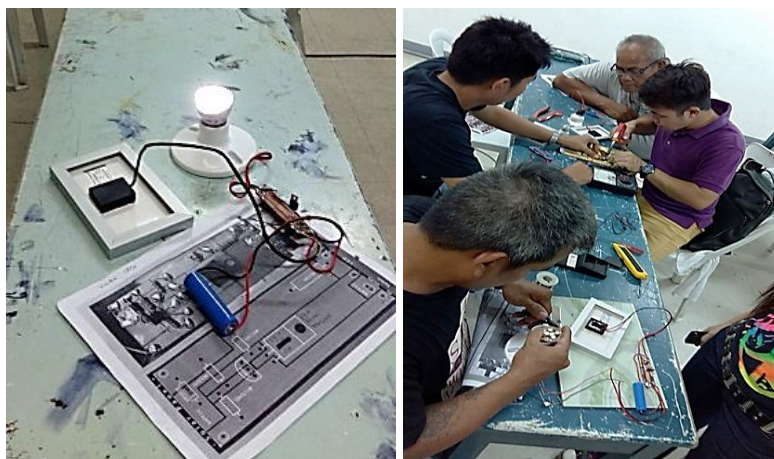


The technology is simple, once learned, it can become an easy source of income for the trainees. There are also several advantages to using solar lamps:

- They eliminate the use of candles, which can cause fires, especially in deprived areas.
- They can be used in times of crisis or typhoon, when there is no electrical power.
- They provide light without any expense except the manufacturing of the lamp. There are no more electricity bills to pay every month.
- They help to prevent global warming as they use a renewable source of energy.

## Project Theme and Activities

- The AIC-Philippines National President offered her school as the venue for the training.
- The materials and trainer's fees were shouldered by some other local AIC groups.
- The AIC volunteers checked the attendance of the trainees and monitored their progress.
- The Holy Rosary AIC group found a sponsor who commissioned the group to make solar lamps for their local area. The volunteers trained the workers and the sponsor bought the materials.
- The training was held over 5 days from 9 am to 4 pm. By the fourth day, all the trainees had mastered the technology of solar lamp making.



## Key Figures

- 850 PHP (\$18.50) is the cost of the materials needed to make a household lamp
- 2,000 PHP (\$43.50) is the cost of the materials needed to make an outdoor lamp.
- 8 trainees from different AIC-Philippines groups followed the training in April 2016.

## Future Prospects and/or Impact

- The project is still in its early stages. So far, not many materials have been bought, so it remains expensive. Once more materials are bought, the cost will go down. It is hoped that the project will spread and other local AIC-Philippines groups will adopt it in their area, at least the ones that can afford to do so financially.
- Once people have been trained, some will be selected and will receive a small amount of capital so that they can start generating an income from solar lamps. Initially, only a few will receive this funding.
- Later, the volunteers may buy their products and donate them to other families. For AIC's upcoming 400th anniversary, they hope to donate 50 solar lamps to selected people in need.
- The volunteers also plan to donate 50 solar lamps to 10 worthy participants from some of AIC-Philippines' other key projects (nutritional programs, visits to prisons, gift distribution activities, etc.) during the association's Assembly.
- With the guidance of St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac and the passionate and dedicated service of the AIC Philippines members, it is hoped that the project will be successful. It lessens the expenses of those living in poverty and at the same time helps achieve a clean and safe living environment.