


NATIONAL

Solar power initiative to light over 1,000 homes

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A resident of Sombetini in Arusha Region, Ms Catherine Peter, explains to the regional administrative officer, Mr Lemueli Kileo, recently how a solar electric tool works. From left are the director of the German firm Mobisol, Mr Allan De Mello, and Arusha regional manager for Vodacom, Mr Philemon Chacha. PHOTO | THE CITIZEN CORRESPONDENT

By The Citizen Reporter

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IN SUMMARY

- The system owners enjoy an extended warranty of three years for the battery and solar controller and 20 years for the PV panel, according to him.

Arusha. The Vodacom Tanzania and a German solar power company, Mobisol, have teamed up in an initiative aimed at providing solar electricity to 1,000 households.

Under the arrangement, Mobisol's customers will receive their ready-to-use solar home systems for which they will pay in monthly instalments via Vodacom's M-Pesa. After three years of making such payments, the clients become sole owners of the energy system.

Speaking at the launching ceremony, Mr Thomas Gottschalk, general manager of Mobisol, said the innovation is aimed at providing an environmentally friendly source of energy as well as further economic development.

"The affordable, durable products meet the latest technological standards. Harvesting the infinite African sun, Mobisol furthers sustainable ecological and economic development," said Mr Gottschalk.

The system owners enjoy an extended warranty of three years for the battery and solar controller and 20 years for the PV panel, according to him.

Mobisol's comprehensive customer services include remote monitoring of the systems, free repair service, a free-of-charge customer service hotline and easy customer communication via short text messages (SMS).

Ms Catherine Peter, Mobisol's 1,000th customer, said: "I'm extremely excited about owning my first solar home system. Thanks to the small monthly rates I can afford a bigger 120 Watt system.

I use it to illuminate my home so my children and grandchildren can study at night – and I am planning to start my own business charging my neighbours' mobile phones."

When officially launching the project, the Arusha Regional Commissioner Magesa Mulongo, said such project was vital for spearheading rural electrification.

"Today, we celebrate the 1,000th installation in Tanzania – tomorrow, we aspire for the solar revolution to improve the lives of millions of people in Africa," said Mr Mulongo.

For his part, Rene Meza, Vodacom Tanzania's managing director said: "We remain committed to offering our customers products and services that are best suited to their lifestyles."