

## Mitsubishi Electric Proposes New Design Concept for Enhanced Living by the Needy in Developing Countries

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Presenting new project led by young designers

Mitsubishi Electric Corporation (TOKYO: 6503) is pleased to present a group of conceptual product prototypes created by four young designers as part of the Small World Project, a design initiative aimed at improving the lives of people in the lowest income groups ("Base of the Pyramid" or "BoP") of developing countries.



The global population is expected to reach 9.3 billion in 2050, of which roughly 86% will be living in developing countries, according to the United Nations' 2010 Revision of the Global Population Prospect. The philosophy behind the Small World Project is that products and technologies owned by corporations should not merely benefit developed countries, but also be used to improve lives and resolve pressing issues affecting people worldwide.

Mitsubishi Electric's initiative involves four young designers from different lines of business. As the first step of the project, the designers reviewed Mitsubishi Electric technologies and products from a design perspective and developed concept models based on the question: "How can we deliver a product's essential functions and experiential value to BOP users?"

One of the main design concepts they developed is that items related to a product should be included with the product, for instance, putting food inside a refrigerator before delivering the refrigerator. This not only provides direct material aid, it also helps users better understand the product's value. Also, product and shipping costs can be effectively reduced by using reinforced cardboard for example, for product exteriors, with the material doubling as shipment packing. The exteriors can be coated to make it waterproof, heat resistant and so on.

Product functions should be simple and free of redundancy. Operating switches should be intuitive and easy for users to understand, regardless of language or literacy.

The surfaces of the exteriors can be printed with advertisements or the names of sponsors, providing new opportunities for company promotions. Advertising fees can be used to recoup expenses and provide the products at lower costs to users.

Concept products were proposed in the categories of diet, health and energy.

Category	Concept Product	Purpose	Included Items (examples)
Diet	Refrigerator	Long-term storage of food and stable diets	Foods
Health	Air purifier	Reduced health hazards due to unhygienic living environments	Medical supplies (gauze masks, etc.)
Energy	Solar panel, battery and power condenser	Power supply for areas without electricity	Light bulbs, etc.