

Improved Cook stoves for Community Development (ICCD): A market based solution to an old health kitchen problem

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Partner profile:

Justice Development and Peace Commission (JDPC), Jos is the social development arm of the Catholic Archdiocese of Jos. The organisation involved in different aspects of human development which include democracy and good governance, women empowerment, Care for Children/OVC/HIV/AIDS, Emergency Preparedness and Response among others.

SOSAI Renewable Energies Company Ltd. operates in Northern Nigeria with its head office in Kaduna and offices in Minna and Kano. The organisation has an operational expertise in Renewable Energies (RE) and uses these technologies to carry out the business of promoting livelihoods by the sales and service of Improved Cook Stoves (ICS), Solar Home Systems (SHS), water filters and other services especially in rural and peri urban communities.

ICCD was implemented from July to December 2014 in Plateau State by a partnership of JDPC Jos and SOSAI with support from Christian Aid Nigeria.

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The improved cook stove model

Implemented through Christian Aid's partnership with the Justice Development for Peace Commission Jos (JDPC Jos) and Sosai Renewable Energy, Kaduna, the **'Improved cookstove for Community Development'** (ICCD) was a six month pilot project aimed at improving the health status of poor and marginalized households through the adoption and use of improved cook stoves (ICS).

The project specifically sought to:

- Increase awareness and knowledge on the benefits of the use of improved cook stoves through the provision of consistent, correct and relevant information in the project communities.
- Support the emergence of an active cook stoves market where cook stoves are easily available and at affordable prices, where women especially would have opportunities for setting up small business in cook stove commercialization to support household livelihoods.
- Improve access for poor and marginalised groups in Plateau State to improved cook stoves.

The project was implemented using a combination of a business model to increase accessibility to cook stoves by poor households and to ensure an increase in demand and uptake of improved stoves through community awareness and mobilisation.

70% of Nigeria's approximately 170 million people rely on traditional fuel wood stoves for cooking and heating despite the health dangers it poses. Despite the emergence of improved cook stoves that cost less to fuel and have no strain on health, the low levels of awareness of the benefits of improved cooks stoves and the seemingly high cost of purchasing the stove has hindered the uptake of these improved and clean stoves.

In six months of the project, ICCD reached over 567 people with improved cook stoves information, and 270 households in four communities within Kanke and Jos East Local Government Areas of Plateau State, Nigeria have transitioned to the use of ICS.

The project also contributed to an improvement in the livelihood of the target population, enhancing the quality of lives of poor households and protection of the most vulnerable groups; women.

Case study

Improving livelihoods for vulnerable groups

For Rita Munton of Amper community, the purchase of her ICS has had a double sided impact on her live.

By reducing what she spends on purchasing firewood in a month by over 60%, 55 year old widowed Rita has begun to put money away for her daughter's school fees which she was not able to do having to cater for her three children with the income she makes from selling vegetables.

Firewood is also used to fuel the improved cook stoves, but they burn way less than using the open fire method and also do not emit smoke.

Rita in addition also noticed a significant difference in the effect on her eyes.

"Using ICS has really improved my health in terms of eye problem. When I was using the old method, I suffer from pains. Now that I use ICS, my eyes feel better" she said.

The ICS demonstrations conducted by trained community volunteers trained played a big role in her decision to buy the stove.

Below: Rita Munton spends less on firewood and can now save for her daughter's school fees



Project Achievements

In July 2014, it was recorded that over 70% of the households in the four communities were unaware of improved cook stove and the benefit of its use, but with planned and monitored project activities the following achievements have been recorded:

- Through community outreaches and awareness activities, 567 people including 372 females became aware of clean and improved cook stoves, with 270 households purchasing an ICS within the six month period.
- The project also increased awareness of clean cook stoves through radio and SMS which reached over 3000 people in the State, promoting widely the demand for and use of clean cook stoves have been reached indirectly through information from radio jingles and weekly SMS blasts’.
- Going with the national population standard of household size, a total of 1350 lives have been improved upon during the project implementation period as a result of the adoption and usage of ICS.
- A business model applied which allows for instalment payment system has increased the accessibility of the stove to poor and marginalised families, who otherwise would not have been able to afford the stove with an outright purchase.
- 18 Trained and vibrant community based entrepreneurs (13 female and 5 male) and 8 community based agents.
- Project sensitization and awareness creation to State and Local Government structures – Ministry of Health Jos, State Ministry of Women Affairs, State Ministry of Health, Jos East and Kanke Local Governments
- Women trained on tracking the Savings made from less firewood purchase while using the ICS

Below: Esther Daniels has benefitted from using the improved cook stoves



The most vulnerable families now have access to affordable clean cook stoves, ensuring that communities are able to adopt health enhancing behaviours while improving their livelihoods”

Scaling up

With the successes recorded, Christian Aid plans to expand the project within Plateau and replicate in its other focal states -Anambra, Benue, Kaduna and FCT, adapting strategies to local context and environment.

Learning from the pilot, a three-pronged approach will be adopted, adding the element advocacy and lobbying for improved policy and practice for improved Cook stoves (in particular quality standards) to the current approach.

Christian Aid and partners are convinced that with buy in and investment from other key players in the sector, this project could be easily replicated across many states in Nigeria with a potential to ending energy poverty and reducing the deadly health implications of traditional cooking methods for millions of Nigerians.

We hope you get in touch if you want to be part of this life changing process.

“Using Improved Cook Stoves has helped me reduce the time I spend in the bush fetching firewood and I now use this time to attend to my grinding business and make more money.’

Esther Daniel, a project participant

