Women promoting clean energy on the roof of the world

Description of the project: This project in upper Bartang valley, Pamir, Tajikistan improves the life of women and local communities through efficient use of natural resources with affordable sustainable energy technologies. The project supports 55 women and their vulnerable families in 5 communities. Women and men participated in awareness raising and technical trainings, including exhibitions on sustainable energy solutions, workshops on the construction of solar water heaters and food dryers, trainings on women’s empowerment and a study tour in other villages. In all, 55 efficient cooking stoves, 75 parabolic solar cookers, 40 solar lanterns, 55 pressure cookers and 2 solar water heaters were distributed in the target villages. Additionally, 300 tree seedlings will be planted to regenerate the forest.

Climate impact: Renewables and resource efficient technologies such as solar ovens and water heaters, pressure cookers, or improved stoves significantly reduce firewood consumption (at least by 3 tons/year/family), mitigating CO2 emissions and indoor pollution, and improving comfort and sanitation. The reforestation component will help to reverse climate change impacts in an area that has suffered from an acceleration of desertification due to deforestation.

Gender impact: Little Earth focuses on empowering women as problem solvers and new technology experts and leaders. With extra hours gained during the day, on chores like gathering wood, and in the evenings, thanks to solar lanterns, women can pursue new sources of income such as embroidery or knitting. Children can study and stay in school. With additional income, beneficiaries can diversify and improve family diets, ensuring food security and better nutrition. Women are seen as valuable contributors in the communities, changing social dynamics for the better.

Scalability / replicability: Promoting affordable, low-tech and adapted renewable energy technologies to isolated, off-grid communities that are severely impacted by climate change is a model that can be replicated in many similar regions. Little Earth partners with another NGO and with local authorities. They would like to extend this initiative throughout the Bartang Valley and in other mountainous areas of Tajikistan, where patriarchal structures prevent change. Empowering women as problem solvers and leaders in their communities transforms the social dynamics and paves the way for stronger resilience.

Inclusive, sustainable waste management in Delhi

Description of the project: The inhabitants and enterprises of Delhi are generating excessive waste and civic authorities have no systematic sustainable waste management in place. A survey conducted in BudhVihar, a colony located in southwest Delhi, reflected that the locality has improper waste and drainage system, waterlogging, health issues. Each household generates a maximum 1 kg of kitchen waste everyday. To address this challenge, AIWC is training women from the locality in waste separation and home based compost system. They produce compost in a cycle of 45 days with ‘Khamba’, with a set of 3 earthen pots kept on top of each other. Layer of waste and cocopeat are filled in the pots on rotation and, after decay, the waste turns into organic matter.

Climate impact: Dumping of waste in landfill or burning it releases carbon dioxide and pollutes the environment. According to the Press Information Bureau, India generates 62 million tonnes of mixed waste containing both recyclable and non-recyclable waste per year, with an average annual growth rate of 4% (PIB 2016). This project aims to mitigate GHG emissions at micro level, sensitize the targeted households and support a sustainable waste management system at source.

Gender impact: The women from the Delhi suburb community were informed on various issues relating to waste, including health hazards. They were also trained to package and sell the compost to other households and local markets, either as organic matter or with sapling planted in a small pot. The project raises women’s technical skills and knowledge, and their capacities in income generating activities, as well as implementing preventive health measures.

Scalability / replicability: The project is cost effective and replicable at household level, as well as in other similar communities. It can also be scaled up to a community based waste management system, using the business model of compost pits and leading to a proper waste management system within the area.

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