

December 2022

200 solar-biomass cookstoves for wild collectors

Smoky huts, expensive fuel, and the time-consuming search for firewood are now things of the past for thousands of people in Lesotho. At Christmas 2022, instead of giving out gifts to customers and business partners, we have again decided to help wild rosehip collectors in Lesotho acquire efficient cookstoves.

When they want to cook a warm meal or simply heat their homes on a chilly night, the people of Lesotho usually have no choice but to burn wood on open fires. On the one hand, this practice is leading to massive deforestation of urgently needed woodland, and on the other, the smoke from open fires can cause life-threatening illnesses. More people in the developing world die every year from illnesses attributable to household air pollution than from AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis combined.

One stove, many functions

The organization African Clean Energy came up with a solution to the problem: a solar-biomass hybrid cookstove that turns animal waste, crop residue, small sticks, etc. into energy – producing heat while emitting negligible levels of smoke. These nifty little stoves are also equipped with a solar panel, enabling them to generate electricity for LED lighting and smartphones, via the incorporated USB ports. Second-use smartphones are now being delivered with the stoves as part of a package deal.

Generating energy this way enables families to save more than 80 percent of the money that would otherwise have been spent on paraffin and candles, as they can run the stove on household biomass waste. That's money they can then spend on food and education!



Multi-talented: The hybrid solar-biomass stove brings cozy heat, light, and electricity for smartphones into people's homes and gives families a clean, smokeless cooking experience.

Partnership extended

To enable us to equip even more wild collectors and their families with these stoves, we have extended our close partnership with African Clean Energy until 2024. We are contributing 50 percent (€100) of the purchase costs for each stove, with households paying the remaining €100. During our five-year cooperation we have been able to partly finance 1,000 of these off-the-grid energy systems, helping around 7,000 people lead healthier, easier lives. As a nice side effect, each stove saves around three tonnes of CO₂ per year. That means a total emissions reduction of around 3,000 tonnes of CO₂ at the end of the project.