

Editorial



It seems that Nepal can never rest. The aftershocks are becoming less frequent, slowly life is returning to normal and the monsoon season is coming to an end. Now would be a good for rebuilding. Instead the country is plagued by another catastrophe. After years of negotiation the new constitution was finally agreed with a 90% majority. That ought to be a milestone in the nation's history, however an india-based minority in Terai opposes the constitution with a brutality which has never been seen before in Nepal.

After outbreaks of violence with dozens of deaths the border to India has been blocked. The Indian government has done nothing to prevent this and may even support the blockade. That means that essential goods like fuel and gas but also building materials are no longer reaching Nepal. Nepal is completely dependent on these imports. Almost unnoticed by the outside world the situation is worsening rapidly without an end in sight.

Our stove makers are trying to continue work as usual. Despite all this year's problems more than 7.000 stoves have already been built. That is a outstanding achievement under the circumstances.

Please remember that we need mobile phones with cameras to help the stove makers document each new stove. If you can spare a phone with a working battery please send it to the following address:

Burkhard Dönitz
Rudorffstr. 34
80999 München

In the stove-making regions of Africa we are also making good progress. Due to events in Nepal we could not report on this in the last newsletters, with this issue we will bring you up-to-date with reports from Kenya and Ethiopia.

We hope you enjoy the newsletter

Dr. Frank Dengler, Chairman

Stove-counter September 2015 – altogether **35.749** smoke-free stoves in Nepal

Including 770 Rocket Stoves for temporary shelters

Light and Shadow in Nepal The Situation in October 2015

Life has settled down a little since the major earthquakes at the end of April and mid-May. The aftershocks which cause shock and fear amongst the population are slowly becoming less frequent. To date more than 400 aftershocks have been registered with force four or higher on the Richter scale.

In the meantime rubble has been removed from the main roads. Once again travel is possible between cities and supplies are reaching distant areas. The Nepalese government has published official figures on the extent of destruction in individual villages. To date we have not been able to get confirmation from each of the villages where we are active. The official figures and the reports we receive are inconsistent. Thanks to cellphones with cameras more and more stove makers are bringing their photos into the main offices. From the evidence to date we can see the greatest destruction was in Sindhupalchok and Dolakha and also in parts of Kavre and Ramechhap. Those last three districts belong to the area in which we are executing our environmental protection project.

Anita Badal needs lots of time to speak with the individual stove makers, to give them the chance to report their experience and maybe pass on advice to others.

Thanks to the many donations after the earthquakes the Ofenmacher could help many stove makers directly. We decided to give financial support to allow individual stove makers to act specifically on their individual needs enabling them to support their families. Mostly those helped used their aid to purchase new building materials, often corrugated iron with which they could build rain-proof temporary accommodation. These constructions often look convoluted as they had to be built quickly using material which could be salvaged after the earthquake.



A corrugate iron hut for the monsoon



Sita Tamang with her new pressure cooker

One of the stove makers who has been working for us longest saved some of the aid money for fertilizer for her vegetable patch. That was a wise decision as fresh vegetables are scarce as hardly anyone was able to grow anything. She harvested and sold time and again and reported that she earned 28.000 Rupees (ca. 250 Euro) from the sale.

Another lady proudly showed Anita a photo of her new pressure cooker essential for cooking in the mountains. She had retrieved her old pressure cooker from the rubble of her house but it was damaged beyond repair.

Following on the initial immediate aid activities we now plan a further aid action before the Dasain holiday. As the cold season is rapidly approaching each stove maker will receive a warm blanket in addition to further financial aid. Currently Anita is busy organizing the blankets via a large retailer.



Zucchini



Rice

Our small Rocket-Stoves have become a hit. Word spread rapidly in the villages that these also help save wood and allow rice to be cooked quickly. That is important for housewives. After Bel Bahadur several other stove makers also mastered the art and are trying to build and distribute as many rocket stoves as possible. In parallel negotiations are ongoing with the village mayors with the aim of ensuring that each newly built house is fitted with a smoke-free clay stove.



At least a roof!



Rocket-Stove Distribution

Sadly the overall situation in Nepal is not good. After six years of negotiations the new constitution was agreed with support by an overwhelming majority. Nonetheless there have been massive protests about a few points. Especially some people with Indian roots have become radical opponents. They have been protesting violently supported by the Indian state. An unofficial blockade has prevented transport of all goods from India to Nepal with dramatic consequences for daily life in Nepal. Especially lack of fuel and gas is causing major problems, for instance prohibition on driving and lack of gas for cooking in Kathmandu. Our wish for the Nepalese people: we hope you find lasting solution soon and not just a workaround for the upcoming Dasain holiday.

Christa Drigalla

New Energy in Kenya New Targets Agreed With the New Stove Makers

For weeks our experienced stove maker Regina has been on the road with her friend Purity building stoves in her home village of Ngobit. That is Training on the job for Purity. She has gained insights into the life of a stove maker and learned the most important skills even before receiving the official training. This is the way that we introduce new people to their new career. Once they have sufficient experience and know what they are getting in to they receive a formal training. As part of a group they learn the theory behind the stoves and complete their practical training. Katharina and I travelled to Ol Pejeta in Kenya to give this training.



Purity and Regina making a stove

Katharina and Bernard (back) visiting stove maker David

Regina is a little disappointed at the moment. We visited most of our experienced stove makers and their trainees up front, most of them several times, Regina and Purity only once. Now we are investing time and energy to explain to Regina and Purity that, that is only because they were already working so well and had little need for additional training or advice. Nonetheless we promised them that we would visit again in a few days and were rewarded by their smiles.



Enthusiastic trainees

Finally, success!

Due to the previous experience of the trainees the training could be reduced to five days this time round. In part experienced stove makers were used as trainers. We want to enable them to give trainings without our support in future. Gilbert was trained along with seven

other apprentices. He is a potter and makes the inlays which give the stoves stability even with bad quality soil. When he knows how a stove is built, he will understand what is important during production of cylinders of fired clay.

After several months testing the new strengthened stoves we are sure that the chosen solution works and that the stoves will remain stable for a long time. Now we can concentrate on delivering to satisfy the enormous demand. Seven freshly qualified stove makers will help us. We agreed with Bernhard, the new on-site coordinator, that 500 stoves should be built by the end of the year.



Gilbert the potter...



... and the inlay

Gilbert's pottery turned out to be a bottleneck. In order to ensure that the required production (around 100 inlays per month) can be achieved, tools have to be purchased, a dry room has to be built and assistants have to be employed. Gilbert is optimistic and strongly motivated; we support him fully.

After the training we visited Regina and Purity, who will soon be on the road on their own, as agreed. Both are part of a group which is saving to buy solar lamps. Each month enough is saved so that one of the group can buy a lamp. There is only one condition to joining the group: the household must have a smoke-free stove.

Frank Dengler

Christoph Ruopp in Ethiopia

6 Months of Project Work, 3 Months Cycling Through the North

The journey by bus to the provincial capital Alem Ketema ca. 150 km northeast of Addis Ababa is adventurous. Around five hours' drive at maximum speed over bumpy dirt roads. Across a one thousand meter deep river bed and then up again to reach Alem Ketema. Upon arrival a happy reception by the friends and acquaintances from my first visits.

In the spring of 2014 we trained nineteen highly motivated stove builders, both men and women. Now only three remained. The others simply did not get enough orders. The problem: the public was not sufficiently informed why the cost and complicated work involved in building a stove make sense.

It was clear that one or more of us would have to stay for a while in Alem Ketema to introduce a simpler stove and to stabilize the project. I didn't want our engagement to become bogged down, so I decided to close my own stove making company for nine months

to be able to work on the project in Alem Ketema for six months. I used the remaining time for a cycle trip through the wild, fissured north of Ethiopia.

In the first two weeks I got an overview of the overall status of the project. During this period I lived in a guest house built twenty years ago by the Menschen für Menschen project. After three weeks my Tukul (traditional African round hut) was ready.

Many of you will ask yourselves why I wanted to live in a Tukul with a local family four kilometers outside Alem Ketema. In my opinion if you really want to help people you have to understand them and that is best achieved if you live with them.



Together at my Tukul with my guest family



Practical Training

Each day I rode by bike into the city to work. The challenge was to derive and optimize a simpler stove construction. The main changes: only room for two pots and formed directly from clay rather than being built from clay bricks. After many tests the new stove named Chigr Fechi (which means something like Problem Solver) was created. To ensure significant distribution we had to train new stove builders – this time only women. The training was supported by Luc Maystadt, the section head, and Nils Hasenfuss also a stove maker from Germany.



Stove makers and coordinator Abewaw (2nd from left)



Visiting a stove maker

In spring the three of us trained fifteen stove makers on both theory and practical aspects of making the new stoves. It was a great help that I could be on site for the entire period and so was able to help the freshly trained stove makers as they made their first stoves. Most of the stove makers live around 10km from Alem Ketema. My mountain bike was one of my greatest assets! Some of the stove makers were even not reachable by bike – I had to

complete the journey on foot along narrow mountain paths. By the end of my stay about half the stove makers were still active building reasonable stoves now.

Stoves need to be authorized in Ethiopia. The local energy authority is responsible for this. I managed to get help from the German Society for International Co-operation (GIZ) in Addis Abeba. We executed a one week test procedure in their laboratory in the capital, which the stoves passed with flying colors! The official report is currently under production and will be published shortly.



Chigr Fechi in Test at the GIZ ...

... and in live operation

Upon returning from my journey to the North I spent another week in Alem Ketema and of course was curious to know how the project had continued during my absence. To my great pleasure I learned that already more than one hundred energy-saving smoke-free stoves had been built in Alem Ketema and the surrounding area!

We are very optimistic that stove building will be increased further after the monsoon. Our local team is working at full tilt to ensure this.

It was an interesting and educational period for me. I had fun and learned a lot working with the local team to make the project a success and ensure the in future much less fuel is required for cooking and that people no longer have to sit in smoke-filled huts.

Of course it is not just that I helped change things in Ethiopia, I too was changed by my experience there. I came back with a different perspective on life and our society.

Christoph Ruopp

The Chulo-Newsletter

Issue 10, October 2015



Editor's note:

Many thanks to the [Georg Kraus Stiftung](#), which financed Christoph's stay in Alem Ketema enabling training of the new stove makers and improving the understanding of the local population for the benefits of smoke free stove.

Christoph Ruopp reports on his experience in Ethiopia (project and travel through the north) in presentations. Part of the takings will be donated to the Ofenmacher.

We will keep you informed about presentation dates and locations via the [Internet](#).

Imprint

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