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The Anagi stove – a case study

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I had an opportunity to visit the labs of IDEA headed by Dr. Amare in Kandy, Sri Lanka, and witness the production process of the Anagi stove (in March 2006). I am writing this based on what I saw and I am sure Dr. Amare can provide a far better analysis of what is happening on ground. A good amount of material already exists on Bioenergy/Stoves lists. By far, the most successful commercial stove program (personal view) without actually changing the cooking patterns. With some design changes and a lot of demonstration/training events (a lot), IDEA was able entice people to shift to using Anagi stove and commercialized the stove business, which is now a self sustained process with a market of over 300,000 stoves per year.

Every stove has its own story, so it will be hard to compare the success rates in other countries. In Sri Lanka, a tropical country, cooking can be easily done outside or sometimes have a detached kitchen. Cooking outside makes a large difference in terms on indoor air pollution levels - more of an intense personal exposure problem at the time of cooking. Main fuel source is wood and most of the time it is picked from the neighborhood areas - very little is bought. Still, the Anagi brought a dramatic change in the market - mainly from the fuel saving it was offering and the price of the stove. Lab tests put fuel savings and cooking time reductions of 30-40%, due to its design - please check the website for more details on the design - <http://www.bioenergylists.org/en/srilankaanagi>. On road, this stove sells for 100 -120 Rupees (approximately US\$2) with a lifetime of 2 years, which makes it very affordable, given the fuel/time savings it has a quick recovery time.

Best part of the story is the transformation of "Kumbukgete", a pottery village of 36 (or 39) families learned the process of Anagi stove manufacturing and transformed the social and business structure. First batch of production started here. Anagi is not only providing the livelihood for these families in a sustained fashion, but also hiring people from the neighboring villages. More than six years ago, these families used to make about Rs. 5,000 per month, which is now more than Rs.50,000 per month (anecdotal) purely based on stove production and sales. I have some pictures of houses of these families six years ago and now, where you can clearly see the change in the socio-economics of the village, which is a great example to follow. One of the manufacturers refused to sell some of his stock to a buyer (asking for more than 500 units), because he was already low of production for the day - with a 5000+ units in stock. So, you can imagine the production rates in the village.

This is still the standard stove with an improved combustion rate. Main points to focus are the benefits and amount of time and effort it took. This wasn't an overnight success - it took a lot of demonstration projects around the villages and towns to make it happen and to attract people to not only from the health point of view, but also fuel and cooking time savings.