

NGO INPUT ON INDOOR AIR POLLUTION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Millions of women and children in the developing world who are exposed daily to the indoor and outdoor smoke of inefficient biomass cooking fires suffer from chronic respiratory diseases. More than a million and a half die each year from related illnesses. Today there already exist inexpensive technologies that can immediately reduce the indoor and outdoor air pollution caused by cooking fires. The support of nations and stakeholders for the widespread introduction of these simple technologies can dramatically improve the health of women and children in the developing world.

NGOs call on CSD to set a target of cutting by half the number of people dependent on traditional polluting cooking by 2015. To accomplish this, NGOs support the following actions that will reduce the serious health and environmental problems caused by indoor air pollution:

1. The immediate and widespread introduction of: improved cook stoves, household biogas plants, retained heat cookers, solar cookers, the production of briquettes from biomass waste, and other local clean solutions.
2. The introduction of these efficient cooking technologies should include the intensive training of trainers, local volunteers and end users in their use and production using locally available materials.
3. The development of these programs should include input from local community leaders in order to determine the availability of commonly used building materials and fuels, and to respect local cooking traditions and cultural preferences.
4. Funding for coordinated international research programs should be provided for the development of even more efficient low cost, clean cooking technologies.
5. Funding should be provided for public information campaigns to increase the acceptance of clean cooking technologies in the developing world. National leaders and celebrities should be recruited to help popularize these technologies by emphasizing their health benefits and their convenience.
6. The growing cost of subsidizing imported fossil fuels is creating a drain on the economies of developing nations. Poor people are forced to revert to traditional cooking methods when they can no longer afford to purchase bottled gas or kerosene.
7. CSD should not support the introduction of fossil fuel-based cooking technologies that will result in long term dependence on increasingly expensive imported fuels such as LPG and kerosene.
8. To reduce outdoor pollution NGOs strongly support urgent international cooperation to reduce pollution from the aviation industry and an international agreement to introduce low sulphur diesel fuel by the shipping industry.
9. NGOs also support strong measures to reduce air pollution in urban areas, particular from transport and incineration. The solutions must address the roots of the problems. Thus, solutions must include appropriate urban planning, improved public transport and clean waste treatment with recycling.