

Government Of Karnataka Endorses Shell Foundation Campaign On Indoor Air Pollution

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- Shell Foundation awareness campaign launched in 111 Villages in Shimoga district
- Combined action with District Administration underway
- Inter-ministerial committee mooted to plan for Indoor Air Pollution Free State
- Toxic emissions and smoke from cooking claims 400,000 lives in India every year
- In developing countries this makes Indoor Air Pollution the most lethal killer after malnutrition, unsafe sex and lack of safe water and sanitation. 59% of these deaths are women.

Shell Foundation has undertaken a comprehensive program of engagement in 111 villages in Shimoga and is partnering with the district and state administration to drive awareness on the third largest killer in the country, Indoor Air Pollution (IAP).

Shell Foundation has received support from the Chief Minister's office on its proposal to appoint an inter-ministerial committee with participation of IAP experts, stove manufacturers, MFIs, NGOs and others to develop a blueprint for State action. The State Government has positively viewed Shell Foundation's proposal to adopt a mission of turning Districts with high firewood usage into "IAP Free Districts", starting with Shimoga as a model District.

The campaign currently in operation in the Shimoga district in Karnataka has received the support of relevant officials of the State and District administration namely Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj; Minister of Social Welfare; Deputy Commissioner, Shimoga District and CEO Zilla Parishad, Shimoga District. All the concerned departments are now working together with the Shell Foundation team to find ways to reach the message of reducing smoke in the kitchen across the district and eventually the state.

The campaign in Shimoga district is an initiative by Shell Foundation to focus on promoting the internationally-recognised, most effective and sustainable method for tackling IAP, namely 'improved stoves', which significantly reduce emissions and fuel use. At present, the program is taking the message to 111 villages in Shimoga district through a combination of on-ground static and interactive activities. The high intensity campaign is being conducted over a 90-day time period between October and January 2009.

The campaign is also being reached to the people through active support from the District Administration including the health and education infrastructure, village level health workers and demonstration of campaign for Gram Panchayats.

The current initiative follows a pilot campaign on IAP conducted by Shell Foundation in 2008 in the districts of Raichur, Koppal, Udupi and Mysore, which indicated that although small changes like 'keeping the kitchen windows open', 'installing a chimney or ventilator', 'keeping children

away from smoke' or 'use of dry firewood' can make a big difference in reducing IAP, the final focus needs to be on motivating people to change behaviour, with a focus on improved stoves.

At a press conference on November 19, 2009 in Shimoga, **Simon Bishop, Policy and Communications Manager for the Shell Foundation** said that, "We are very pleased that the Government of Karnataka has endorsed the campaign on creating awareness on Indoor Air Pollution. Through this initiative in Shimoga we hope the activities we conduct will be a showcase for a campaign that we would eventually like to expand across southern India. Our basic concern is that women should not be dying as a result of cooking meals for their families. If we can convince families to adopt improved cook stoves we will begin to prevent this from happening."

One person around the world dies every 20 seconds from the cumulative effects of IAP, resulting in approximately

1.5 million deaths per year, thus making IAP the fourth biggest killer in the world's poorest countries, after malnutrition, unsafe sex and lack of safe water and sanitation. (Source: World Health Organization).

Shell Foundation has also developed the concept of 'standardization of stoves' to be able to directly connect the campaign with the improved stoves. The mark called 'Symbol of trust' (see top of release for symbol) will appear on the packaging and marketing materials of all improved stove manufacturers i.e. those that have passed rigorous tests on minimum emissions and fuel reduction standards as laid down by international bodies. At the local level, this mark will double-up as a 'standards mark' to indicate an improved stove that will reduce smoke levels by as much as 55%, while using at least 40% less fuel.

111 villages, with populations larger than 2000 people, will be covered in this campaign in the Shimoga district across its seven taluks namely Bhadravathi, Sagar, Sorab, Shimoga, Theerthahalli, Shikaripur and Hosanagara.

The campaign running through a stretch of 90 days includes an outdoor campaign that communicates the message through posters and wall paintings. The Village to Village campaign involves engaging local villagers through neighbourhood gatherings hosting a stream of mobile van campaigns, flip chart stories, street plays, interactive games and contests to give people a sense of involvement.

The campaign is being taken to the doorstep using the concept of Sustained Activist Householder who is an active local village lady visiting various households and informing the villagers about the problems of IAP and its solution - use of improved stoves standardised with the 'mark of trust' through flipchart stories and distribution of leaflets. Smoke-less Stove demos being conducted at weekly markets will introduce villagers to the benefits and effective use of stoves by providing them with a first-hand experience of using the stove.

At present, the campaign by Shell Foundation will highlight to the villagers the presence of independent improved stove manufacturers like Envirofit and Selco who have launched a range of clean burning biomass cookstoves in the country designed by teams of globally recognized scientists and engineers.

The Shell Foundation sees this awareness campaign as one of the most exciting and important developments in its Breathing Space program, which aims to achieve a significant long term reduction in IAP by designing so-called improved stoves that are more emission and fuel efficient - and by developing a sustainable way to get them in to people's homes.

Notes to Editor

About Shell Foundation

Shell Foundation was established by Shell Group in 2000 as an independent, UK registered charity operating with a global mandate. It focuses on enterprise-based solutions to poverty and environmental challenges linked to the impact of energy and globalization. It acts like an investor, identifying financially sustainable solutions to these challenges that can be taken to scale and replicated to achieve global impact. By 2010 the Foundation will have used \$75 million to leverage \$350 million from other organizations.

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