Cross River State tackles deforestation with sustainable fuelwood and efficient cook stoves

Government: Cross River State (CRS), Nigeria

Region: Africa

Sectors: Energy efficiency, Land use and forestry

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Summary

Fuelwood is consumed by over 70% of the Nigerian population and central to the livelihood of the people in Cross River State.

Despite being the primary energy source for cooking, heating, cassava and palm oil processing, fish smoking and bakeries, it is also the most inefficient (especially when using the three-stone or tripod-stand cook stoves). In addition, the combustion of fuelwood poses a serious risk to human health due to the emission of short-lived climate pollutants, such as black carbon and methane. It is also a driver of deforestation. To mitigate these causes and effects, Cross River State has been selected as a co-pilot state for the **Sustainable Fuelwood Management (SFM)** project, alongside the other Nigerian states of Delta and Kaduna.

This exploratory project, funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), through the Energy Commission of Nigeria (ECN), simultaneously addresses sustainable fuelwood production and consumption. It focuses on establishing fast growing, sustainable fuelwood plantations and supporting the transition towards more efficient and clean cook stoves. Valued at just over $USD 20 Million, it will continue over a five-year period (2017-2022) and is currently entering its implementation phase. The project connects economic prosperity with climate protection and aligns with the state's vision of sustainable forest management within a low carbon economy by 2020.

Results

The project is currently transitioning from the inception phase to the implementation phase. Although final results are not available, the expected results include:

- **Increased engagement in sustainable forestry** by supply chain stakeholders, the local community and decision makers
- **Reduction in destructive extraction of fuelwood**
- **Reduction of short-lived climate pollutants** as the incomplete combustion of firewood from traditional cook stoves emits black carbon and methane
- **Improved health and living standards** through a reduction in respiratory issues and premature deaths linked to the use of inefficient stoves
- **Provision of alternative livelihood**s through the establishment of local supply chains for sustainable plantations and cook stove manufacturing.

Enabling conditions

Funding from UNDP-GEF, ECN and other monetary and in-kind support provided by the government of Cross River State was crucial to the project inception phase and its transition to the implementation phase. This was strengthened by a robust legislative framework (the Cross River State Forest Law, 2009) and the close collaboration between government ministries and agencies at the federal and subnational levels.

As an executing agency, the Government of Cross River State played an active role in moving the project to implementation. Specific actions taken by the government so far include:

- Identification of pilot communities
- Design of the sustainable fuelwood supply and consumption projects
- Consultations with the Cross River State University of Technology, clean cook stove fabricators and communities on choice of stove design and micro-finance institutions
- Gender sensitive, technical and business trainings for suppliers and farmers
- Educating communities on the connection between deforestation and the environment and climate

Challenges

- **Adoption and perception of new technology:** Communities may be reluctant to change their traditional cooking practices and may lack technical knowledge to understand the benefits of more efficient stoves.
- **Scaling up:** 23 communities need the establishment of fuelwood plantations, but currently the project only caters for the plantation of 10. Further funding is necessary to roll-out the program.

More information available from:

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