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Press Release
Envirofit International

Ministry of Education, Kaluworks and US Ambassador join launch of Envirofit clean cooking initiative for schools, communities and households

- Leading figures gather to support launch of new “institutional” cookstove to radically reduce fuel costs and air pollution in school, hospital and prison kitchens.
- Kenya first to tackle serious health impact of cooking at both community & household level.

Today at the Makini School in Nairobi, Ron Bills CEO of Envirofit a leading clean cookstove manufacturer was joined by senior figures including Dr. Mary Okello Director of the school, Dr. Manu Chandaria, Chairman of Comcraft and US Ambassador, Robert Godec, for the global launch of their institutional stove – an innovative and affordable solution to lower fuel costs and save lives.

Indoor air pollution caused by inefficient cooking on open wood fires and traditional stoves claims more than 15,000 lives in Kenya each year. Less known is that burning fuel inefficiently is burning a major hole in schools pockets. Recent reports suggest that schools who offer meals to students have a 28% higher enrolment¹ – yet providing lunch can also place a large financial burden with most spending 20-50% of their annual budget on fuel.

The institutional stove has been designed with a high performing combustion chamber that burns wood more efficiently – decreasing harmful emissions and fuel consumption by up to 90%. The stove uses state-of-the-art technology and design to create a product that schools can afford around 1/3 the approximate annual fuel bill of a school with 300 students. Envirofit has partnered with Equity Bank to help schools finance the purchase, and benefit from huge savings that are created, and are working with the Greening Kenya Initiative to make this available nationwide.

“Our chef would begin cooking at 6am and often lunch would not be ready for the children at 1. Now she starts at 10am and never misses a meal,” says School Head Master, Titus Ktoko, the first recipient of the institutional stove. “With the new institutional stove we can cook a meal for 300 students with just three pieces of wood.”

The stove has also been creating positive impact within the Ngelani community. Regina Musyimi, a parent of one of the students who supplies firewood to the school said “It used to take me 4-5 days to collect firewood for the school for 1 week, now it takes me only 2-3 days.”

Impact in the community extends beyond firewood as the stove also helps to educate the community about clean cooking. “When we launched the institutional jiko and the parents saw how it is consuming less firewood they wanted stoves for their home too,” said Mr. Ktoko. “We

¹ Finan, Timothy. Impact Evaluation of WFP School Feeding Programmes in Kenya (1999-2008): A Mixed-Methods Approach. Rome: World Food Programme, 2010.

then contacted Envirofit and they were able to supply the community with household stoves as well.”

Ron Bills, CEO of Envirofit said: “Through working with schools we can demonstrate the economic and social benefits of adopting clean cooking technology to households. 84% of Kenya’s population use charcoal and wood cookstoves – with families spending as much as 30% of their annual income on fuel costs. When you use these traditional types of stoves 90% of the fuel’s energy is wasted and the smoke generated is equivalent to smoking two packs of cigarettes a day.”

By promoting behavior change at the community level, Envirofit aim to influence a community to transform households. They are also working with corporates such as Kaluworks to explain the health impact this creates and make cookstoves available nationwide.

Kenya is the first country in which Envirofit will offer the institutional stove to schools and other community services such as hospitals and prisons – receiving a wave of interest from government, industry associations and institutions at the launch. Envirofit expect to install 1000 stoves in Kenya by 2015 and to make the product available across Africa later this spring.

About Envirofit:

Envirofit is the world’s leading clean cookstove business producing high performing biomass cookstoves that are efficient, durable, desirable, and affordable for households and institutions in developing nations. Envirofit was founded in 2003 to develop well-engineered technology solutions to solve global energy and health challenges, and in 2007 partnered with Shell Foundation to create a viable clean cookstoves business. Envirofit’s mission is to create products that reduce pollution and energy dependence while yielding health, environmental, and economic improvements. Using a market-based approach, Envirofit has pioneered the clean cookstove market, selling more than 700,000 stoves and have impacted over 3.5 million livelihoods across 45 countries.

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With just 3 pieces of wood the Ngelani Ranch Primary School can cook lunch for 300 student



