



Fireless cookers save trees!

In the Kalerwe slum in Kampala there is little possibility to plant trees, and even less to practice agroforestry. Nonetheless, under the guidance of Enid Kiviiri, households there are protecting trees – by making and using “fireless cookers”.

In a two-day training event led by Esther Nattabi, 15 women made beautiful and effective fireless cookers. As the pictures show, the women were proud and happy with the results! Once the food has been heated (rice, matooke, stew, whatever ...) in the conventional way, the cooking pot or pots are placed inside the basket, which is extremely well insulated with cotton cushions, and the food continues to cook with no further heat being required.

The saving is very significant. On average one family used charcoal costing 5000 shillings, but with a fireless cooker, this same amount charcoal lasts for 3 days. The saving in money is therefore at least 20,000 shillings a week or 80,000 shillings every month. This is the price of a sack of charcoal – so each month each family needs one whole sack of charcoal less.

How much wood does this save? On average, between the rainy and dry seasons, bags of charcoal in Kampala weigh 67kg¹. The conversion from wood to charcoal varies between 10 and 30%. Thus, on average, one sack of charcoal requires 335kg of wood – this is a significant amount of timber!

The Kalerwe Women’s group



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is therefore making a significant contribution to saving trees! The group intends to teach more community members, even though the materials are costly. Some members have even a business opportunity – to make and sell further fireless cookers!

The materials required for one basket cost about 80,000 shillings or 20 Euro.

Would training in making fireless cookers be a possible activity for your local group, church or mosque? Think about it!

With my best wishes, Keith Lindsey



¹ NATIONAL CHARCOAL SURVEY FOR UGANDA 2015 https://pfccparliament.go.ug/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/NationalCharcoalSurvey_FINAL.pdf