

Accelerating Access to Clean and Efficient Stoves can Mitigate Health Hazards in China

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Beijing, October 31, 2013 - Effective strategies to scale up the dissemination of clean-burning, fuel-efficient stoves for household cooking and heating can mitigate the health hazards associated with the burning of solid fuels, says a new World Bank report released today. World Banks Global Burden of Disease Study 2010 estimates that globally, household air pollution (HAP) resulting from the use of solid fuels for cooking and heating contributes to 4 million premature deaths each year. With more than half of its population still relies on solid fuels (coal and biomass) for cooking and heating in China, the case for urgent action is strong. The report, titled China: Accelerating Household Access to Clean Cooking and Heating, is the Phase I output of China Clean Stove Initiative (CSI), a collaborative effort of the Chinese government and the World Bank. Launched in 2012, it aims to scale up access to clean cooking and heating stoves for poor, primarily rural households, who are likely to continue using solid fuels beyond 2030. The report synthesizes the knowledge to date, emphasizes the market-based approach to achieving sustainability, and proposes a way forward toward achieving universal access to clean cooking and heating solutions. "The China Clean Stove Initiative reflects the World Banks shared commitment with the Chinese government to bring clean cooking and heating solutions to all of the countrys citizens by 2030," said World Banks Country Director for China Klaus Rohland. "It is our hope that this report will serve as a knowledge base and roadmap to encourage and engage all interested parties in working together on this important agenda." According to the report, household burning of solid fuels is a major health hazard in China, while more than half of its population, mostly in rural areas, still relies on solid fuels for cooking and heating and most of these households use traditional stoves. Mitigating the health hazards associated with household burning of solid fuels will require developing and implementing strategies for scaling up the dissemination of clean-burning, fuel-efficient stoves for cooking and heating that rural households are willing to adopt. The scaled-up access to clean and efficient stoves is also consistent with Chinas strategy to promote energy conservation, carbon emission reduction, and green energy in villages. The report points out that China is among the few countries that have long recognized the seriousness of the issue. During the 1980s and 1990s, Chinas National Improved Stoves Program (NISP) the worlds largest and most successful national improved stoves program distributed 180 million improved stoves. Today China has the worlds largest biomass stove industry, accounts for the greatest number of installed biogas digesters, and has the largest stock of solar cookers. Yet issues remain that impede the potential for larger-scale success and longer-term sustainability. The report provides specific recommendations to address the issues and lays out the way forward. To scale up access to clean and efficient stoves, the report recommends a three-pronged strategy: (i) strengthening institutional capacity and building an enabling environment, (ii) supporting supply-side market and business development, and (iii) stimulating household demand for clean and efficient stoves. The report emphasizes the market-based approach and proposes the results-based financing (RBF) framework to make government funding support more effective and efficient. The RBF framework includes three key building blocks: (1) defined clean stoves, (2) results-based incentives, and (3) a monitoring and verification (M&V) system supported by institutional strengthening and capacity building, and awareness-raising campaigns. The RBF framework not only integrates all of the strategys intervention priorities, but also helps to clarify the roles of government and the private sector in delivering the results; that is, the government plays a facilitating role, providing policy support and financial incentives to motivate market development, while the private sector responds to the incentives and delivers the results. "We are now moving forward with implementation of Phase II of the China CSII by improving the stove standards, testing, and certification system; strengthening institutions and building the capacity of key market players; supporting RBF pilots; and supporting preparation of the second national clean stoves program and provincial activities," said Yabei Zhang, World Banks Energy Economist, task team leader of China CSI and lead-author of the report. "We look forward to working together with all our partners in the next phase of the China CSI to accelerate our journey toward universal access to clean cooking and heating solutions," adds Yanliang Wang, Deputy Director General in the Ministry of Agriculture, the main counterpart ministry of the China CSI. China CSI is part the East Asia and Pacific (EAP) Clean Stove Initiative which comprises four country-specific programs (China, Indonesia, Laos, and Mongolia) and a regional forum to promote regional collaboration, learning, and knowledge-sharing on access to modern energy at the household level. EAP CSI aims to help client countries to achieve universal access to clean cooking and heating solutions by 2030, a goal set by Sustainable Energy for All Initiative launched by UN Secretary-General and fully supported by the World Bank. Media Contacts: In Beijing Li Li - (86-10) 5861-7850 Lli2@worldbank.org
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