

Renewable Energy for 15 Rural Cambodian Families

Progress Report September 2010

Cambodia experiences a rainy season for 4 months of the year from May to October (give or take a few weeks) which renders the vast majority of construction work very difficult – if not impossible.

The large pits that need to be dug in the earth for the biodigestors would collapse in on themselves come shower or storm, the concrete dome that must be laid and molded into shape will not set if there is water falling from the sky in a day-long deluge... What it boils down to – is that we cannot work under these conditions! Almost all of the country's structural work ceases at this time of year, CRDT's included.

Construction will begin in November 2010, after the rains have receded in their regularity. How long does a biodigestor take to materialize from hole in the Earth to fully-functioning clean power-making cooking gas and lighting provider? Well, the project beneficiaries put in most of the labor needed to make this happen, so how long a biodigestor takes to be realized very much depends on the life – their farming tasks and responsibilities – of the villagers in question. Anywhere from 4 days to a month is realistic!

Here is a couple of sample beneficiaries that wanted to express their impressions of biodigestors... They have not yet been chosen, but are still on the selection list.



Mr. Mom Kosal, 27 years old, has 1 child and he has been involved with CRDT since 2007 in a Saving Group CBO. He said that *“I know that biogas is important, I can use it as a lamp, for cooking and I will save a lot time not going to look for fire wood everyday”* he added *“It will not pollute the environment”* he also complained that *“now I have to find fire wood and I have to spend a whole day to go into the forest, and with the rains, it can be difficult to find dry fire wood”*

Mrs. Duk Savun is a farmer, 53 years old, has 8 children and she has been involved with CRDT since 2008 with the Eco-tourism CBO. She said that *“I just know a little bit about biogas - if I get it, I will use it for lighting, cooking and fertilizer for rice farming”* she added more *“not polluting the environment is a big benefit, and I will save more money and reduce the time taken to find fire wood”* furthermore she added *“In my current situation I face difficulties looking for fire wood, many people are involved and it takes a lot of time”*.



CRDT conducted a few meetings in Koh Pdao and in Yeav village, Kampong Cham commune, located in the northeast of Cambodia along the Mekong River to get an idea of who wants what...

38 families were represented at the meeting, so – there has to be a transparent way of picking 15 (for now at least – as time ticks on there will be more and more...) families to receive a biodigester from the funds that you all contributed to (thanks again by the way!) so the method chosen to pick out the current batch of lucky ones was a lucky dip! There is a huge need in this area for biodigestors and it is hard to say why one family should have one more than another in the same village, so to be fair and transparent – hands were dipped, and some got lucky!



Cambodia mainly has three main seasons are dry season, cool season and rainy season, the dry season runs from November to April on the back of the northeast monsoon. November to January are cooler while February to April are hot and dusty. November is the coolest month, April the hottest. Wet season runs from May to October courtesy of the southwest monsoon. During the wet season brings some 75% of Cambodia's annual rainfall. July to September are the wettest and rainy months that cause the vast majority of construction work to be very difficult.

Another meeting was conducted - as a result there are ten families that registered their name in the lucky draw list (Mr. Mom Kosal, Mr. Oun Sorn, Ms. Mey Pheara, Mrs. Hun Sitha, Mrs. Duk Savun, Ms. Sorn Meta, Ms. Mom Phalin, Mrs. Mom Samnang, Mrs. Sok Khaoun and Mr. Svay Nou) and the name list will be more updated after meetings in other villages are conducted.

By the way the selecting process will be finished in mid to late October 2010, and the work construction will begin in November 2010, meanwhile, the sand and stone would be available in place and work construction to easily achieve the goal. Thanks so much to everyone that donated money to make this happen!

In the meantime, you may be interested to see our other Global Giving project, working with indigenous people in the forest land of Monduliri. It is an area of very low food security and CRDT are helping these communities produce more and more variety of food themselves, through sustainable agriculture, in order to be less dependent on fragile forest resources.

See the project here:

<http://www.globalgiving.org/projects/help-ethnic-cambodians-serve-300k-of-tropical-forest/>

And just to let you know that if you donate between 12th-21st of October, Global Giving will match your donation by up to 50%!

Thanks! You'll hear from us again in November.