

PROGRESSIVE CLEAN STEPS

The Chikballapur district in Karnataka is an underdeveloped region where a large part of the population lives below the poverty line. The inhabitants still rely on traditional techniques to function in their day to day lives. Use of traditional indoor cooking methods is one such area where the community, especially women have struggled to progress for the past many years. The predominant use of firewood resulting in smoke emissions was not only deteriorating their health but was also harming the environment. There was a growing need for a sustainable and environmental friendly alternative to cooking.

Contributing its bit towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), Fair Climate Fund (a social enterprise) has been working with partner ADATS since early 2009 to provide around 12,000 households - that are members of a local community organization Bagepalli Coolie Sangha (BCS) - with a biogas unit (SDG7). The simple process requires organic waste to ferment in an underground unit, so that enough biogas is available to cook on a daily basis. This method of cooking reduces CO₂ (SDG13) and harmful smoke in the kitchen (SDG3), clears up organic waste, and saves households – especially women - kerosene, wood, and time (SDG5). Also, the 'slurry', which is the rest product that comes out of the digester, serves as a very good fertilizer.

A biogas plant of 2 cubic meters provides enough gas for a family to cook daily and to heat water in a safe and environmentally friendly way. What remains after fermentation is fertile manure. The biogas plants are financed by contributions from the participating families and reimbursed through the CO₂ credits that the households earn.

BCS also undertakes various development activities, including in the fields of health, education for children and adults, as well as small-scale lending, agricultural development, and activities to support widows and abandoned women.

In 2012, ADATS and BCS placed a biogas plant at Narsamma's house. Narsamma is a 56-year-old farmer with a husband and children.



Besides completing domestic chores and crop plantation, a big chunk of her time went in fetching firewood everyday. She would go to the woods, collect and carry the load on her head and upon returning home, cut them into smaller pieces, as required for cooking. The laborious and harmful process of cooking took its own time.

The biogas plant was installed with the intention of making life easy for Narsamma. The 2 cubic metre unit capacity provided enough gas for the family's daily cooking requirement.

This method of cooking also saved Narsamma approximately 16 hours a week of drudgery. Similar other biogas plants were placed on other community households so that more number of inhabitants could benefit from it.

“Rich people use gas for cooking and since I use biogas, I feel rich too. I can cook faster now, so my kids are on time for school. Also, I can give more time to farming now. I am very grateful.” says a gratified **Narsamma**.

With the mission to demonstrate that the carbon market can benefit people most vulnerable to the effects of climate change, **Neera van der Geest, Director, Fair Climate Fund** says, *“We are happy to help people like Narsamma, together with our partners in India and in the West. Our goal is to make climate neutrality the norm in a fair way. This means working towards a better climate and at the same time helping the most vulnerable people become resilient against the effects of climate change. We believe that it's everyone's responsibility to ensure that we provide future generations around the world with a secure environment and sustainable existence.”*

With persistent noble intentions to mitigate climate change, FCF continues to design carbon projects with local partners in India to increase the soil fertility and agriculture productivity of small and medium farmers like Narsamma.