



Improved Cooking Technique, South Africa

This project is a great example of how innovation and a change in behaviour can help to significantly reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions and improve livelihoods. This innovative behaviour-change programme teaches local communities in South Africa to burn coal differently in order to be more fuel efficient, thereby reducing carbon emissions

Location



The project is located in 3 areas on the South African Highveld; the central-east region where the Gauteng-, Free State- and Mpumalanga provinces meet, in Qwaqwa, Eastern Free State province and in the southern part of Gauteng province.

Project



Basa Magogo – which means ‘light it up Grandmother’ in Zulu – was named after a Granny called Nebelungu Mashinini, who, with the help of the Nova Institute, perfected a method of constructing a fire, by placing the coal at the bottom of the stove and adding firewood on top. This new method significantly improves the cooking efficiency, reduces the amount of coal consumed and the smoke produced.

Conventionally, a fire is started by placing firewood and other ignition material at the bottom of the stove or brazier and coal is added on top. The Basa Magogo alternative involves placing the coal at the bottom of the stove or brazier, followed by placing the firewood or other ignition material on top, and then just a handful of coal on top of the fire. As a result the fire burns from the top downwards instead of from the bottom upwards. Since the conventional way is wide spread a comprehensive programme of small group demonstrations, surveys, monitoring and maintenance needs to take place.



This project helps to improve health and living conditions, provides significant savings for families and reduces CO₂ emissions. Finance from the sale of carbon credits is used to implement and operate this project.

Project achievements



Socio-economic impact:

- The project provides employment to area leaders, team leaders, demonstrators and survey field workers in every location where the project activity takes place
- Coal purchase savings average 40 euro per household per year which means additional savings
- Studies by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research in South Africa also show that the time needed to reach cooking temperature using Basa Magogo was 10 minutes compared to 60 minutes for the conventional heating method
- This technique reduces health risks by producing less smoke
- Savings in health costs for the average person is estimated to be at least 10 times less
- The development of Basa Magogo is a joint effort between researchers and community members that proves that continuous close interaction between people from outside the community and people from inside can lead to the creative step which triggers a substantial positive result

Environmental impact:

- Since the introduction of the project, there has been a drastic reduction in indoor and ambient air pollution and better visibility especially in winter
- Top-down or alternative ignition produces more useful heat from the same mass of coal and thus consumes up to 50% less coal

Checklist Project 301 257



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✓ Marketing material:	pictures are available
✓ Project development:	Nova Institute

For further information and to learn about availabilities please contact:

South Pole Carbon, Sales Department

sales@southpolecarbon.com

+41 43 501 35 50

www.southpolecarbon.com

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