

THE INTEGRATED COOKING METHOD

In 1996, we began Rotary Solar Cooker projects in Africa and the concerns of the women were: What do we do when it's cloudy or rainy, can you boil water in 5 minutes or can you cook at night? We did not have a complete answer to their cooking needs. The African stoves were neither energy nor fuel efficient. However, after visiting ETHOS last year, I was convinced that the Rocket stove would be a valuable addition to our solar cooker program. Keep in mind, solar cookers are a supplement to wood with two important assets – solar energy is free and nonpolluting.

Three years ago, two Rotarians told us that 8 million Rwandans use 5,000 tons of wood daily – lung and eye disease is widespread due to the use of biomass fuels like manure, sorghum, maize, and beans. Access to clean drinking water is lacking. A pilot study was begun in July of 2003 in Kigali using the Integrated Cooking method. WHAT IS IT? It's hands-on teaching with follow-up visits on how to make and use solar cookers, fuel efficient stoves, and haybaskets – plus water pasteurization using a WAPI.

We held three 5 day workshops each with 25 participants who were women and men from the Ministry of Women Development from decision making positions. The selected site was KIST, (a Science and Technology College) with masonry, metal and carpentry departments and classrooms for our workshops.

The following instructors were present:

1. Larry Winiarski from Aprovecho Center
2. Margaret Owino and Faustine Odaba from Solar Cookers International
3. Wilfred and Marie Pimentel from Rotary International

TEACHING Larry gave hands-on instructions for building Rocket stoves for family and institutions emphasizing his 10 commandments! He used the haybox as a partner to the stoves. Larry will offer a testimonial to support solar cookers taught as a part of the Integrated Cooking Method. Solar Cookers International sent two experts in solar cooking and the making of haybaskets.

CLOSING CEREMONIES The American Ambassador to Rwanda closed our workshops. Certificates of completion were given and participants returned home to build and use solar cookers, stoves, hayboxes and conduct workshops. In August, Solar Cookers International instructors will return to evaluate and further instruct participants active in the Pilot study and award Diplomas making them Master Trainers qualified to teach in a three year Rotary program under the guidance of their NGO. The organizations which these people represent will conduct the day to day work and a Rotary club will handle the funding, monitor the project and administrative work.

Our workshops coincided with a concerted effort by the Rwandan Government to implement a new National Forest Policy promoting the saving of wood through use of energy saving stoves, solar cookers and hayboxes at all levels.

In closing, I have great respect and praise for the energy, creativity and solution centered people of Ethos and other groups who use their intelligence, time and talents to help others to preserve our fragile planet. At the same time, I feel there is a need to look at broadening the focus, expanding and integrating solar energy, perhaps with a better, larger solar cooker along with the stoves and hayboxes. Working together, we will be a humanitarian community solving the cooking problems of the poor.