

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS MODELS FOR CLEAN COOKSTOVES DISSEMINATION (PROFOGONES)



CLEAN COOKSTOVES PROFOGONES OVERVIEW

- **PROJECT COST:**
\$5.30 MILLION
- **FUNDERS:**
SREP, IDB
- **IMPLEMENTER:**
FUNDACIÓN VIDA
- **PROJECT DURATION:**
2014-2019
- **COUNTRY SERVED:**
HONDURAS

THE PROFOGONES PROJECT

The PROFOGONES project is supported by the Scaling-up Renewable Energy in Low-income Countries Program (SREP) of the Climate Investment Funds (CIF), and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), through its Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF). It was designed to structure a sustainable, private clean cookstove market that would respond to the needs of the rural, urban and suburban populations.

Designed in 2013, the project intends to: improve clean cookstove quality and performance; strengthen clean cookstove enterprises and the supply chain; increase access to cookstove finance; enhance demand through marketing, promotion and awareness raising; create a knowledge and dissemination platform.

Development challenge:

More than half of Honduran households cook with fuelwood on rudimentary cookstoves that are highly inefficient, unhealthy and unsafe. They have major negative health impacts on families, including respiratory diseases caused by indoor air pollutants. The use of traditional cookstoves not only impacts the health and well-being of families but it also impacts the environment, notably through the harvesting of biomass and the emission of greenhouse gases (GHG).

IMPLEMENTATION:

A Honduran NGO with a substantial track-record in successfully managing internationally funded projects, Fundación Vida, was selected to take charge of project implementation. This was Fundación Vida's first experience in the cookstove sector. In January 2014, Fundación Vida experienced a series of internal challenges that resulted in the slow release of project resources, which in turn halted hiring procedures and impeded access to financial resources. Recovering from these setbacks, Fundación Vida saw considerable collaboration with international NGOs and CSOs, allowing PROFOGONES to better understand the cookstove sector as well as its own strategies and challenges.

DELIVERY CHALLENGES AND HOW PRACTITIONERS RESPONDED

PROFOGONES encountered some unexpected delivery challenges during the implementation process, which necessitated certain changes in approach to adapt to a changing environment. First, the cookstove market proved volatile due to competing donation-based programs. This challenge was addressed by re-focusing the project on market segments with the purchasing power to acquire a quality cookstove. The second delivery challenge arose from undue focus on quantitative targets, namely implementing 50,000 cookstoves. This focus hampered the strengthening of a private sustainable clean cookstove market. This challenge was eased by re-focusing attention on creating strategic changes that would facilitate transformation from a donor-driven market to a demand-driven market. The third challenge was the lack of coordination between stakeholders in the cookstove market, which impeded the

achievement of project objectives. To address this challenge, the project created the National Coordination Platform which, for the first time, brought together manufacturers, implementers, donors and government organizations. The National Coordination Platform greatly facilitated effective clean cookstove delivery in different market segments, between different projects and programs as well as coordinated promotion efforts and the exchange of technical and social information.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

PROFOGONES has succeeded in strengthening the cookstove market in Honduras. The project activated the Honduran mobile cookstove supply chain through an agreement with the National Coffee Institute (IHCAFE, Instituto Hondureño del Café), which saw a first lot of 500 cookstoves installed in the homes of small coffee farmers. IHCAFE has already requested an expansion of the collaboration to other territories.

Further, PROFOGONES created a solid coordination unit between a diversity of value chain stakeholders, reinvigorated local cookstove manufacturing and implementation and created various knowledge products (market, gender, legal framework).

The Coordination Platform created by PROFOGONES meets regularly and continues to reach out to government organizations to advocate for the interests of the sector. Recently, the Platform approached the newly created (May 2017) Presidential Climate Office (Clima+) to coordinate cookstove implementation efforts. Moreover, the Platform is conceiving the National Clean Cookstove Strategy with government officials. Also, the project established a National Clean Cookstove Quality Standard, and delivered over 10,000 cookstoves among beneficiaries between January 2014 and December 2017.

CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED:

The present case study highlights a number of lessons about project implementation and developing markets for clean cookstoves. An effective strategy appears to consist of increasing access to a high-quality product and service (mainly mobile cookstoves), either through direct sales or sales facilitated with micro-loans from cooperatives and farmer organizations.

It is possible that resources will result in structural changes to the cookstove market when invested in: subsidies, microcredits, sales, marketing of cookstoves and cookstove parts (including training, technical follow-up, etc.).

Furthermore, this project has demonstrated the importance of creating a space for strategic thinking to emerge between project managers. Ideally, this entity would create the conditions for project managers and implementers to reflect, be challenged and, without pressure, be self-critical. ■

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