

DUTCH GOV'T SUPPORTS GHACCO TO HELP MAINSTREAM CLEAN COOKING IN ASHANTI REGION.



Queen Mothers and some Assemblymen after the event at Ejisu Juabeng Municipality.

Ghana Alliance for Clean Cookstoves & Fuels (GHACCO) has received a support from the Dutch Government between the year 2016 to 2020 to undertake an evidenced based advocacy program in the Ashanti Region specifically Ejisu-Juaben Municipal Assembly. This Clean Cooking and Fuels project is entitled: "Voice for Change Partnership Program"- (V4C) that is implemented by Netherlands Development Organization (SNV) in collaboration with the National Alliance; GHACCO that represents stakeholder platform catalyzing the revolution and adoption of Clean Cooking Technologies and Fuels in Ghana.

The overall purpose of this project seeks to promote access to clean and affordable cooking stoves and fuel solutions for households and institutions in Ghana. This project is implemented in a way to ensure that clean cooking becomes a major impetus that focuses on improvement in climate change, environment and health through reduction on Household Air Pollution (HAP) that contributes to green-house gas emissions.

A two day event was organized that witnessed municipal stakeholders & actors made up of Chiefs, Queen Mothers and Assemblymen as well as the District Planning and Coordinating Unit (DPCU) Core Management, and Development Planning Sub-Committee, deliberated to help mitigate issues of unclean cooking and traditional open fire in the Ejisu Juabeng Municipal Assembly and Ashanti Region as a whole. The stakeholders and actors at the event overwhelmingly endorsed the advocacy program to see Clean Cooking and Fuels integrated into the medium Term Development Plan. This is as a result of video documentaries and evidence of pictorial presentations of baseline survey conducted by GHACCO that showed how devastating the impact of traditional cooking is taking toll effects on the people's health and their environment in the Municipality, Ashanti Region and the entire Country.

During the deliberation, the National Coordinator of GHACCO, Mr Raymond Kusorgbor indicated in a baseline research presentation that: “use of traditional cookstoves poses a number of health risks including eye, throat, and respiratory diseases, and the improved cookstoves & LPG businesses could create livelihoods for women & youth, as well as promote economic development of the district. Also the promotion of improved cookstoves could open districts to donor support and partnerships in the area of clean cooking, climate change, environmental protection and health among others.”

Furthermore, Mr. Kusorgbor reiterated that: “the reliance on traditional cookstoves encourages deforestation and climate change as traditional inefficient cookstoves is detrimental to women and children in terms of health, time spent on wood collection, school attendance, etc.” He assured GHACCO’s readiness to assist Metropolitan Municipal and Districts Assembly’s(MMDAs) in Ghana to accelerate the awareness campaign in respect of the need to adopt and benefits from improved clean cooking technologies and fuels like cooking bags, biogels, stoves and LPG, pellets, briquettes among others.

Speaking to the Ghana News Agency (GNA), Mr. Kusorgbor appealed to the stakeholders of the Municipal Assembly to mainstream clean cooking into their Medium Term Development Plan since there are no district level programmes related to clean cooking activities in the Municipality. He challenged the Municipal Assembly to support clean cooking businesses by i.e. exempting Improved Cookstoves (ICS)/LPG from district level taxes or market tolls, develop an awareness programme to mitigate the effects of inefficient or traditional cooking methods, support clean cooking businesses by lobbying local financial institutions to lend to clean cooking businesses as well as establish a district level framework for the promotion of ICS.

“ Finally I also appeal to the government to reduce import duties on components parts used in the manufacture of ICS to increase production and affordability, reduce import duties on imported cookstoves to increase availability, variety and competition as well as the removal of VAT on cookstoves to improve affordability in the country”- he emphasized.

The Head of Planning at the Ejisu-Juaben Municipal Assembly, Mr. Paa Kwesi Simons on behalf of the Municipal Planning and Coordinating Unit (DPCU), thanked SNV and GHACCO for this project with its enormous health, economic and environmental benefits. He expressed their readiness to support the clean cooking project for its reflection in the Medium Term Development Plan.

In addition, the Queen Mother of Juaben Nana Boafoaa II, presiding Member, Hon. Ansah Sasraku and the Convener for Gender, Hon. Lydia Nantwi highlighted on the benefits of clean cooking to women. They expressed their commitment to support this project and have it discussed during their next General Assembly for a resolution to be passed for its integration in their Medium Term Development Plan.



Some Ejisu Juabeng DPCU participants at the event