

## **SOUTH TONGU TO PRIORITIZE CLEAN COOKING INTEGRATION INTO THE MEDIUM TERM DEVELOPMENT PLAN.**

Globally, the international, national policies and community base initiatives towards enhancing environmental sustainability, reducing climate change and health impacts through using Clean Cooking and Fuels model have over the years seen positive response intertwined with a relatively well-supported funding interventions from some development partners. This includes the development partners likes Dutch Government that is supporting Ghana Alliance for Clean Cookstoves and Fuels (GHACCO) on the ongoing evidenced based advocacy program funded by Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the project called the “Voice for Change” (V4C) Partnership Programme in the Volta Region of South Tongu District in Sogakope.

In Ghana, focus had been built around policies to optimize economic, health and environmental benefits nationally with little priority given to clean cooking and fuels adoption programs at Metropolitan Municipal Districts Assembly (MMDAs) Medium Term Plans at the local governance level.

In the light of these development shortfalls, V4C Programme seeks to help mainstream Clean Cooking into medium term development plan for many MMDAs in Ghana with South Tongu District of no exception. Clean Cooking and Energy model on V4C focuses on improvement in climate change, environment and health through reduction on green-house gas emissions by promoting access to clean, and affordable cookstoves & fuels. The project is implemented by Netherlands Development Organization (SNV) in collaboration with GHACCO.

GHACCO engaged South Tongu District Assembly in Sogakope few weeks ago to deliberate issues of traditional open fires and the use of solid fuels for cooking that is one of the district’s most pressing health and environmental problems, directly impacting to many premature deaths, respiratory diseases suffered by the rural poor. Women and children are disproportionately affected by this massive challenge, suffering from Household Air Pollution of toxic smoke, time poverty, and consequences of deteriorating environments most particularly the mangroves and forest vegetation long the lower Volta Basin.

During the engagement in South Tongu District Assembly, the National Coordinator of GHACCO , Mr. Raymond Kusorgbor highlighted that: “ Improved Cookstoves ( ICS) and LPG businesses could create livelihoods for women and youth, and promote economic development of the district, open districts to donor support and partnerships in the area of clean cooking, climate change, environmental protection and health. GHACCO would assist the South Tongu Assembly to accelerate the awareness campaign in respect of the need to adopt and benefits from improved cookstove and LPG”.

Mr Kusorgbor noted that, developing a thriving local market for clean and efficient cookstoves and fuels, in the district we can saving lives, improve livelihoods, empower women, and protect the environment simultaneously as more than 13,400 death are recorded yearly. Hence he appealed to the local actors to help prioritize the issues to be mainstreamed into the Medium Term Plan.

Speaking to Local Media Houses in Sogakope the district capital of South Tongu, Mr Kusorgbor outlined the benefits of Clean Cooking are essential to addressing energy poverty and ensuring sustainable energy security for the local people since unsustainable woodfuel harvesting is contributing to forest degradation, deforestation, and impacts negatively on Climate Change. He called on the Assembly to mainstream improved cookstoves promotion into their medium term plans just as they do for rural electrification, agriculture, health, etc., and support clean cooking businesses by i.e. exempting ICS from district level taxes or market tolls.

Mr Raymond Kusorbor further appealed to the government to standardize and harmonize the testing protocols for ICS testing centers, develop regular training programmes and for ICS manufacturers, develop a framework to support ICS manufacturers secure carbon credit finance, explore possibility of getting financial institutions

interested in clean cooking businesses as well as secure revolving capital from carbon credit finance to help promote the sector nationally.

Many other development partners were edged to provide technical and financial support to government for the



development of a national strategy or action plan for the ICS sector that could help put the sector on a clear path of progress. Mr Kusorgbor also tasked for financial support to GHACCO to roll out awareness campaigns that would also help accelerate adoption of clean cookstoves, that could help attain Sustainable Development Goal 7.

Mr. Gershon K. Tудоabor, the District Planning Officer. Mr. Tудоabor of South Tongu Assembly, the Chiefs and the Assemblymen expressed optimism that the project will be integrated into the medium term development plan to optimizes the numerous benefits that comes along with Clean Cooking.

*A woman cooking with open fire in the South Tongu District of Volta Region.*